

I. London Fields as the Postmodern Historiographic Metafiction.

This project focuses on Martin Amis's *London Fields* (1989), a black comic novel, murder mystery. In general it is the late twentieth-century London's history of environmental, social and moral degradation and looming threat of world instability and nuclear war (referred to as "The Crisis") along with the hegemonic and contradictory representation of history and femininity. Throughout the novel the narrator-Samson Young –often depicts social moral crisis through the degraded and irrational activities of the characters especially through the Nicola Six.

The novel, being a metafiction, is intensely self-reflexive when it describes its own writing procedure. The novel is all about the creation of fiction through the help of social events, circumstances, peoples and their activities. The author includes the writing activities of fictional characters along with the biography of fictional character. The narrator who is unreliable, suffering from two decades long writers block goes to the London from America where he finds the ready- made story of love, violence and murder which is saleable. By taking the social events along with the fictional character's stories and diaries he forwards his plot of the novel. The narrator also takes interview with protagonist, Nicola Six to forward his plot and also adds the letters from his friend Mark Aspery.

The novel begins with authorial note about the uncertainty of the title. Here author describes the dilemma of giving title to his creation which makes the text as metafiction where he states that he tries to write sixty pages novella the title "Murderee" but the novella becomes long and the title cannot cover it. Then he changes the title to London fields. As author puts ironic faith he doubts upon his story telling but narrator claims it as real event. The narrator comments upon the story and claims it unbelievable but real story. He states: "This story is true story but I can't

believe it's really happening"(2). He calls it as the murder story and a love story of late century. He becomes happy and says: "What a gift. This page is briefly attained by my tears of gratitude" (2), when he finds the readymade story.

Narrator describes the situation of London when he arrives there as 'taut and meticulous as a cobweb' and people as kickers. He compares the condition of the present London with the London of ten years back calls it 'terrible carpet'. He thinks that England was heading towards destruction so he presents the dim and dark picture of social-moral crisis of contemporary England along with the looming threat of world instability and social change caused by the changing values along with the changing century. He constructs the plot of the novel around the periphery of love story which leads not towards creation but towards destruction. The creative love becomes destructive which is the symbol of end of everything. The 'death of God' is the end of faith upon Godly figure but the death of the love is the end of world.

The narrator expresses the authorial agony when he becomes ready to write the script of novel. He expresses his confusions of where to start the writing. He says: "hurry I always assumed I'd start with the murderess with her, with Nicola Six. But no, that wouldn't feel quite right. Let's start with the bad guy. Yeah. Keith. Let's start with the murderer (5)".

London Fields is the black comic novel, murder mystery published in 1989 against the backdrop of environmental, moral and social degradation and the looming threat of world instability and nuclear war (referred to as 'The Crises'). The novel is the history of instability, uncertainty, horror and dilemma of changing century. The satiric tone of the novel is mixed with deep personal introspections to a dark sense of foreboding and eventually panic at the approach of the deadline or "Horror day."

The novel begins with the horror day to write the horror history. Along with the history of the characters the author writes the history of London as well as the horrible history of the world. The ecliptic situation is indicated by the "Christian fear of millennium. The degraded condition of the contemporary history is presented through the horror setting of the novel along with the misguided mentality and immoral activities of all the characters. All characters present some sort of devastation and immorality as they are interested towards anti creativity and destruction. The creative power of love becomes destructive when the protagonist searches her murderer through the act of love. She not only plays with several men but also destroys their familial relationship. The history of socio-moral degradation is shown through the immoral and anti creative activities such as anal sex, abortions and death of female character. The history of political instability is shown through the nuclear war, World War II. The environmental instability is shown through the hot temperature and erosion of the ozone layer referred by the repeated phrase 'low sun'. The phrase 'sky is falling' indicates toward the fear of falling of the atom bomb from the aircraft. The reference Enola Gay (imaginary childhood friend of Nicola Six) is the most satiric tone towards the human civilization when it indicates toward the aircraft used for bombardments in Hiroshima.

The novel is set on the 5th November, 1999, the climax of the century which is the 35th birthday of the protagonist, Nicola Six. Nicola being a female is a marginalized character of the patriarchal society is put to the centre but she is again at the margin of the historical representation of the fact from the patriarchal perspective, when she is presented in an ambivalent and contradictory manner. She becomes the politicized figure of historical representation. Her existence in the novel shows the history of contradictory representation of female which mystify their self and creates

ambiguity. The novel not only represents the ambivalent nature of female self but also the ambivalent nature of history and historical facts and questions the absolute know ability of history. The historical facts are subverted and twisted when they are represented through the text.

Regardless the obvious patriarchal and hegemonic representation of historical facts and logo centric overtones of *London fields*, a critical lance of postmodernist historiographic metafiction places the spotlight on the important ways in which historical facts are semiotically transmitted and contradictorily represented, with the help of self-reflexivity and parodic intertextuality. Author's representation of historical facts in an ambivalent manner shows the political and ideological nature of representation of the history. What is the politics behind the ambivalent representation could be? Do ambivalences and contradictions can compare the past with the present in proper manner? If so why parody is necessary to compare past and present in postmodern historiographic metafiction?

This research not only assumes that Amis constructs the plot of the novel through historical events to represent the contemporary crisis but he also creates the fictional narrator, Samson, and his (narrator's) activity of creating the plot from social events. While the author representing the historical facts by using technique of self reflexivity, parodic intertextuality along with the multiplicity in narrative techniques, he defends against the fixity and historical facts with reliance upon textual play to show historical re-conceptualization and provisional nature of history.

Though the historical facts are presented in an ambivalent and contradictory manner the novel mystifies the absolute know ability of the past. The paradox is created by showing the contradictory nature of the female character, Nicola Six who is marginalized in the name of putting to the center. All most all the things is

presented in destructed and chaotic manner to represent the contemporary socio-political situation but presenting the female character as protagonist and demystify the female self shows the patriarchal domination inherent in the authorial tone.

Although the female character in the novel *London Fields* is often represented as an ambivalent and paradoxical manner, she is vitally important as she illustrate the plurality, heterogeneity and diversity of the historiographic representation. Sara Mills, who uses stylistic, analysis and narratology to argue that the novel is not only structured around Nicola's passivity but also naturalizes her lack of agency:"it is not simply the case that the female character is acted upon...but the fact that she wishes to be acted upon and paradoxically strives to bring that about"(216). Underlying mills' analysis is the concept that neither Amis form nor his content represents the reality but left femininity into the ambiguous dilemma.

Another critic Susan Brook argues about the ambivalent and contradictory representation of female in the history and says:

Amis expresses his ambivalent attitude towards aesthetic form through his use of female character, Nicola Six is linked with aesthetic form and beauty, Amis anxieties about power and limitations of such form [...] Nicola are both author and the text. She is radically deconstructive figure who embodies the slippery nature of textuality, breaking down opposition between form and content, the mediated and the real, the natural and the unnatural, language and body. (87-88)

London Fields deconstructs the distinction between the form and formlessness embodied in its digressive narrative structure. Yet the novel also invokes a polarity between Nicola as sublimating aesthetic form and Keith as base, material formlessness. Amis maps his desires and fears about aesthetic form onto Nicola's

body, thereby displaying an anxiety about the way art fixes and reifies while relying on a reifying connection between femininity and form.

In this regard Susan Brook in his essay "The Female Form, sublimation and Nicola Six" shows the conflict between form and formless by saying:

Samson sees Nicola as both a muse and the raw material or content for his text. However, Nicola is an author figure and her description as "a rivulet of black ink" suggests that she is the text itself. She embodies the disturbing, destabilizing effects of writing, down to her ambiguous name, variously herd as "sex," "sick" and seeks." She is linguistic style, with its slippery, parodic qualities, as well as plot, with its structure: she therefore breaks down the distinction between forms and content [...] this female form is contrasted with male formlessness, as Keith, who acts "in the name of masculinity " is "formlessness- he had no form," while Nicola can "lend form to his chaos. (91)

The novel *London Fields* raises questions about form and representation through a specific representational content: it is a novel not only about ontological and linguistic instability but the connections it establishes between femininity and aesthetic form. Its content and the signifiers associated with Nicola's "female form"(71).

Similarly another critic Philip Tew in his essay "Martin Amis and late – twentieth-century Working-class Masculinity *Money* and *London Fields*" intended to critique masculinity in the class perspective. He argues that in *London Fields* Amis mock upon the masculinity which is self conscious in explicit way. He further states:

Amis intensifies the satirical and comic mode found in his previous work and centers his texts on the exaggerated, vulgarities and domestic impulses, and literal and verbal frenzy of patriarchal masculinity. In

contrast to Schoene-Harwood, such self consciousness is explicit in Amis work, not insidious. This self-reflection relentlessly considers the masculine in terms of action, events, and underlying desires, helping to evoke the heterogeneity of elements that impact individuals or groups [...]reflexive masculinity (as implicitly singularized category would naturalize Amis's self evident class perspective). (71-73)

Other critics have interpreted Amis unproblematically in class terms, responding mainly to the topographical rhetoric of his narratives and marginalizing subtler nuances in the book *Martin Amis: Postmodernism and Beyond*. Such a strategy allows critics secretly to universalize the presence of patriarchy (as though undifferentiated or monolithic and further permit a self-avowing prejudice such as Lea and Schoene do when they claim to be engaged in an emancipator project. At best this is posturing. Lea and Schoene do broadly identify one context that is relevant to an understanding of Amis's novels-the visibility of masculinity. They state:

Masculinity has now become visible as a gender, and in many of its flesh-and-blood realizations it appears both ready and suitable. However, as a fixed set of ideologically motivated imperatives and ideas, inscribed and upheld by patriarchal heteronormativity, it still proves to be as markedly resilient and persistent as it is now anachronistic.(73)

London Fields remains unresolved, factored, and less mimetically inclined. Because of its greater disassociation, *London Fields* remains more disjointed in terms of its characterization, and its focus spread wider: an apocalyptic world situated as an insistent and yet unspecified subtext. Its archetypes are rendered through almost pantomimic grotesqueries. Ben Knights regards the novel as fundamentally

articulating "collective fears haunting in the moment of writing-nuclear war (accidental or planned), the degradation of the city, the emergence of an alienated and violent underclass, escalating environmental and atmospheric degradation"(qtd. in *Martin Amis: Postmodern and Beyond*, 81)

Similarly another critic Susie Thomas thinks that the Women and non-white races are suppressed in Amis authorship because they do not have a voice. Susie Thomas has a point here, arguing that "if he had wanted to, Amis could easily have included black characters who disprove the prejudices articulated in the novel, but no other perspective is offered"(13). This shows the ambiguous representation of the female character who creates and destroys the form at the same time.

The above mentioned criticisms cannot touch the issue of historiographic metafiction which the novel clearly shows by using the description of historical facts of socio-moral and politico-economic crisis along with the historical reference of World War II, economic depression, nuclear holocaust and the fictional past of characters by using the self-reflexive nature of metafiction. Not only that the novel totally is about the imaginary reconstruction of the past by bringing the textual references of other writers and establishes the relationship between fiction and what Edward Said calls "world". The novel raises the issue of subjective description of objective facts which clearly establishes the novel as the history of contemporary London and the history of whole world of crisis by mixing the characteristics of metafiction. It is the metafiction written from memory about the history.

This thesis is library-based research; it mainly draw on the concept of the postmodernist historiographic metafiction and vocabularies. As the focus of the research is a postmodernist critique which de-establishes the centre seeking tendencies of the historical representation of fact by showing the multiplicity and

diversity in a history when it is represented through the text. The representation of the history invites the intertextual references from the past literature and history which creates the multiplicity and diversity. It mainly falls back on Linda Hutcheon and Patricia Wough whose historiographic interpretation of the text establishes the novel as postmodernist historiographic metafiction.

Historiographic metafiction according to Hutcheon are "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self reflexive and yet paradoxically lay claim to historical events and personages" (114). In other words it is imaginary reconstruction of the history in fictional works. Historiographic metafiction copies the history and ironies it through the means of parody.

It is a piece of writing history through a work of fiction in a way that has not been previously recorded. For example Sahara woodruff is depicted as postmodern female character in the Victorian setting. It blurs the boundary of historical facts and moves freely in a fictional space carrying the twisted historical facts. There are historical facts in historiographic metafiction but they are falsified by questioning upon its authenticity.

To get more clear idea about the genre, historiographic metafiction, this research tries to analyse the difference between old historicism and new historicism and their impact on postmodern historiographic metafiction.

The old historicism explains literary works in terms of the 'influence' of history upon them. Old historicist takes truth is objective that gained by the author from historical events and context. New historicism, in general, concerns with the text's position in relation to ideological, social and political context. The main interest of the new historicist way of thinking about history is that it cannot be separate from the literature. In other words literature and history both are the human perspective to

look at the certain period of time. When new historicism comes as the reaction against the new criticism, which regards a text as an autonomous aesthetic entity in the grounds that literary criticism should not be affected by circumstances outside the text but focus on the text itself. New historicism takes the history as written from power perspective. While representing the history through the text the truth is twisted according to the power. Michael Foucault in this regard argues about History that: it is not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth"(1145).

New historicism began to study and write fiction by focusing on cultural and intellectual position of author and historical context. It thinks that every text studies through the historical context that is why every text is a product of time, place and circumstances. But historiographic metafiction studies the history by incorporating the characteristics of metafiction in general and taking history as its topic to create fictional universe around historical facts. Hutcheon by taking the argument of Anton Chekhov claims that the world of history and the reality is the world of provisionality and indeterminacy which blurs the boundary between fact and fiction, where he states:

Past events can be altered. History gets rewritten. Well, we've just found that this applies to the real world too ...Maybe the real history of the world is changing constantly? And why? Because history is a fiction. It's a dream in the mind of humanity, forever starving ...towards what? Towards perfection. (qtd. in Hutcheon *Poetics*, 111)

The re-writeable nature of the past creates the multiple perspectives which break the single perspectives to look at the past which hints towards the changeability and diversity of historical truth.

Historiographic metafiction like new historicism incorporates multiple voicing of historical facts and mixes it with self-reflexive tendencies of metafiction. The act of narrating the past event in the present is not the issue of historiographic metafiction. Past events are taken as subject matter in historiographic metafiction and it is ironized by searching the subjective description of factual details which creates the multiplicity in historical truth because truth is related to certain perspective. Both fact and fiction are ideological representation so there is no single reality because of the changing nature of reality according to human understanding. In this regard Linda Hutcheon argues that Historiographic metafictions are "novels that are intensely self-reflective but that also both re-introduce historical context into metafiction and problematize the entire question of historical knowledge" (285-86). Historiographic metafiction presents how historical events are represented from different perspective.

This research mainly searches the two elements; self-Reflexivity and parodic-intertextuality of the historiographic metafiction in the novel to prove the hypothesis. When historiographic metafiction searches the multiplicity, it crosses the genre boundary and incorporates the other genre so it becomes parodic intertextual. Parody in general is to copy something or someone to ridicule. But according to Linda Hutcheon: "to parody means not only to ridicule and destroy the past but to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it" (126). She argues: "Parody is not a ridiculing imitation of standard theories and definitions that are rooted in Eighteenth century theories of wit [...] parody as repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity" (141).

Hutcheon introduces and uses parody in her writing which is called ironic quotation, pastiche, appropriation and intertextuality usually considered central to postmodernism both by its detractors and its defenders. Parody becomes a way of

ironically 'revisiting the past' of both art and history. When the past is revisiting it creates the multiplicity and diversity which creates contradiction in meaning creation.

Specifically, Hutcheon suggests that postmodernism works through parody to "both legitimize and subvert that which it parodies" (*Politics*, 101). "Through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference" (*Politics*, 93). Instead of dehistoricizing the present postmodernism can rethink history and shed light on new critical capacities.

Parodic intertextuality includes the other texts references to make the meaning of the certain text. La Capra argues "the past arrives in the form of text and textualized reminders-memories, reports, published writings, archives monuments and so forth and that these texts interact with one another in complex ways"(qtd in *Poetics*, 129). So parodic intertextuality searches the multiple voices in the text to question the authority of single truth and reality and invites the local narrative to search the marginalized perspective.

Historiographic metafiction searches the marginalized perspective and presents the ex-centric characters as the protagonist of the fiction, as Lukas argues:"The protagonist of historiographic metafiction are anything but proper types: they are the ex-centric the marginalized the peripheral figures of fictional history" (qtd. in Hutcheon *Poetics* 144).

Similarly, Self-reflexive qualities of historiographic metafiction creates self image in order to comment upon its own self. It is self-conscious use of style that draws the spectators' awareness to the fact that he or she is reading an unreal thing. In other words it disillusioned the reality that literary works are unreal. John Barth contributes a short definition of metafiction as being a "novel that imitates a novel

rather than the real world" (qtd. in Currie 161). Metafiction is modes of writing that comment on their own activities they are self reflexive. It is Anti-realist aesthetics involves the principle that 'progressive' texts should reflexively foreground their own construction, their own processes of signification. Metafictional works as Patricia Wough argues are those which "explore a theory of writing fiction through the practice of writing fiction." (2)

Postmodernism often involves a highly reflexive intertextuality. In this regard Wough defines metafiction in *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-conscious Fiction*, as: "...fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality[. . .] Metafiction explores[s] a theory of writing fiction through the practice of writing fiction" (2).

Metafiction attempts to blur the line between fiction and reality. In metafiction authors often break out of the narrative to address the nature of what they are doing in the novel.

Some of the characteristics of metafiction identified by Victoria Orłowski include: the violation of narrative levels, specifically intrusions in the narrative to comment on the writing, involvement of the author with the fictional character, directly addressing the reader, openly questioning how narrative assumptions and conventions transform and filter reality. . . ." the reliance on "unconventional and experimental techniques" such as: a rejection of conventional plot a display of "reflexivity (the dimension present in all literary texts and also central to all literary analysis, a function which enables the reader to understand the processes by which he or she reads the world as a test)" (Orłowsky, *Metafiction*, 14).

Historiographic metafiction is the characteristics of postmodernism in fiction. For Ondaatje postmodernism in art is that which self consciously reflects its status as art with a focus not on history's truth but on the idea that history is produced or created in telling, and a rejection of fixed, and stable meaning. In post modern fiction reality appeared absurd, surreal and most importantly ambiguous. Because of the contradictory or paradoxical nature of postmodern fiction the fixity of meaning is halted and multiplicity is created. In this regard Hutcheon on the preface of the book *Politics of Postmodernism* states:

Paradoxes, in general, can delight or trouble. Depending on temperamental make-up, we shall be either seduced by their stimulating teasing or upset with their frustrating lack of resolution. There is no delicate postmodern; the self-reflexive remains distinct from its traditionally accepted contrary- ... (X)

Historiographic metafiction being self-reflexive and parodic-intertextual is paradoxical and contradictory which creates multiplicity and heterogeneity by giving the space for marginality and local narrative which is against the notion of singularity in meaning this resembles to Lyotardian notion of 'Incredulity towards Metanarrative'.

This research establishes the novel as historiographic metafiction by searching specially the two characteristics of historiographic metafiction that are self-reflexivity and parodic-intertextuality, which are overlooked by most of the criticism done upon the novel *London Fields*. Not only that it searches how historical evidences are manipulated and twisted while they are represented or re-written from the memory. While history arrives to us in textualized form, it is fictionalized and falsified therefore reality is put to the question mark in historiographic metafiction. And it searches the other perspective to look at the history, so marginalized voices starts

emerging from grand narrative which challenges the meta-narrative and gives the space for local narrative which are according to Lyotard are multiple in numbers. In this sense the study of the novel as the historiographic metafiction is very significant.

Although this study makes significant use of concepts developed in postmodernist scholarship, it does not offer a comprehensive analysis of postmodernist literary theory. Rather, an analysis of historiographic metafiction as conceptualized by Hutcheon and Waugh remains the primary tools of analysis. Since the major objective of the study is to demonstrate the self-reflexivity and Parodic Intertextuality with multiplicity in narrative structure to search the historiographic metafictional qualities of the novel, a comprehensive discursive analysis of Amis lies outside the scope of this project. Given the nature of this research, available time and resources, this study does not offer an analysis of Amis own complex relationship with the contemporary social realities, even though, such an analysis would definitely contribute towards unearthing the ambivalent and contradictory representation of history in the novel *London Fields*.

The present research has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents a brief introduction of the research and its theoretical aspects. It serves as a brief introduction of the idea of the entire work. The second chapter explains the novel as historiographic metafiction. This chapter is divided into two sub chapters. The first sub chapter searches the self-reflexivity in *London Fields*. The second sub chapter searches the parodic-intertextuality in the novel. Some abstracts from the text as evidence are analyzed to prove the hypothesis of the study which is the crux of the research. The third chapter is the conclusion of the research which shows the implication of Lyotardian notion of "incredulity towards metanarrative" through the help of two sub chapters arrives on the basis of textual and theoretical evidences. The research concludes that Amis's *London Fields* is the Post modern historiographic metafiction.

II. Self-Reflexivity and Parodic-Intertextuality in *London Fields*.

The novel, *London Fields* as historiographic metafiction deals with the history writing through the means of fiction. Like other historiographic metafiction it takes the help of memory while dealing with the past. The memory plays a great role while reconstructing the past. The narrator, Samson frequently moves to the past to reconstruct the present which creates paradox in the novel. The past reference of London Fields is a park in Hackney, east London, but the novel is set in west London, like most of Amis's works. The park in which the narrator, Sam, walks with various characters- Nicola Six, Guy Clinch and Keith Talent-is Hyde Park in central London. Sam reminisces that he played in "London Fields" as a boy, and wants to return there before his death. Along with the narrator's memory the characters' memory also plays vital role in the case of plot construction of the novel. Nicola the protagonist of the novel moves to her childhood memory and also violates the reality by knowingly falsified it. Nicola is also presents as the male fantasy figure who show the century long domination by patriarchy and male authorship. She becomes vague and ambiguous in the male authorship where she is represented thorough the male ideology. To show the chaotic and destructive scene of the end of the changing century the author presents all most all the characters in misguided and distracted condition. All of the characters become victimized by the ideological construction of the author to meet his needs to represent the chaos of the ending century.

Historiographic Metafiction is a purely postmodern form of fiction, which plays with multiplicity, heterogeneity, contradiction, uncertainty and so on. Historiographic metafiction being postmodern form questions the absolute representation of the factual details of the historical past by presenting the fact in contradictory manner which creates multiplicity. History is taken as a tool to parody

while compare the present with the past. Like modernism it deals with the past but unlike modernism it searches the loopholes from the window of the present. But does not impose the present belief in the past events and asserts the specificity and particularity of the individual past event. Unlike the traditional and modernist novel it does not lament for the past harmony. But like modernism it takes the self-reflexivity as new critics claims "text is self sufficient entity." But through self- reflexivity postmodern historiographic metafiction, criticizes upon its own writing procedure and makes relation with the worldly events to show the partiality of text without history which is outside the text.

Historiographic metafiction is a postmodern form of fiction writing in which the history is written from memory and memory itself has fallible nature of forgetfulness. Memory plays an important role in such fictions. When history is written from memory the reality is twisted. But historiographic metafiction legitimizes the twisted reality and subverts which it legitimized which creates multiplicity. In *Midnight's Children*, the narrator Saleem violates the truths and makes mistakes. He is telling lies in such a way that the readers, despite knowing the truth are willingly suspending their disbelief. In Saleem's case it is 'memory's truth' because whatever he recalls has been lent to personal authenticity. Rushdie mentions: "He is also remembering, of course and one of the simplest truths about any set of memory's in that many of them will be false"(15).

The historical details become irreverent and relatively unimportance in historiographic metafiction. Lukacs in this regard believes that historiographic metafiction plays with the realities and creates lies. He states:

Historiographic metafiction plays upon the truth and lies of the historical record. In novels like *Foe*, *Burning water*, or *Famous Last*

Words certain known historical details are deliberately falsified in order to foreground the possible mnemonic failures of recorded history and the constant potential for both deliberate and inadvertent error.(qtd. in Hutcheon, *Poetics*, 114)

To accomplish this re-presentation of the past, historiographic metafiction, "plays upon the truth and lies of the historical record. Certain known historical details are deliberately falsified in order to foreground the possible mnemonic failures of recorded history and the constant potential for both deliberate and inadvertent error" (Hutcheon 294).

The narrator, Samson young, in the novel *London Fields* brings several historical details but they become irreverent and unreal when there is no fact behind them. To indicate the horror of the end of the century and fear of nuclear holocaust the narrator brings reference of the history and says:

The millennium, coming so soon, so hard upon, is bad timing. In the year 999, I the year 1499, in the year 1899, (and in the year between: the millennium is a permanent millennium). The human being is standing in tiptoe, head cracked back in his neck, with only nostrils, pouting lips and lump of straining forehead visible above the rising tide. (236)

There is no historical evidence of destruction and horror in the indicated history. To indicate the socio-moral decay, the loss of old values and norms and dilemma of the society caused by the changing century along with the changing of the thinking process, the author creates horror by bringing the past reference but historical details are unrelated. The horror setting of November 5 ends without being any destruction to

the world. The Christian fear of millennium is halted and the crisis upon the world remains the same as usual.

The narrator brings the reference of environmental crisis caused by the human activities and human incarnations. The human incarnations are more destructive than the natural destruction. He describes the contemporary destruction by:

Of course, in these days of gigawatt thunderstorms, multi megaton hurricanes and billion acres bush fires, it was easy to forget that there were man-made devices-pushbutton, fingertip-which could cause equivalent havoc. But all this stuff was man-made, not acts of god but acts of man. [...] Guy shut his eyes and helplessly watched himself running north through low flames and winds of soot; then her room, torn open to a sick sky, and act of love performed among the splinter-forgivable, but with her beauty quite gone, and everything spoiled and sullen and dead. (176-77)

The narrator sets the horror setting of November 5 as dark and gloomy to show climatic point of destruction, which is the collide point of the world. He presents the continuity of people's activities in the situation harassment of holocaust. "Even in a nuclear holocaust ... people would still be brooding about accents and cocked pinkies, about maiden names and settee or sofa, about the proper way to eat a roach in society" (24). But nothing happens to the world. The narrator states: "As she clothed them she consulted her breasts, which told her that the big event wouldn't happen and that little one would"(252).

When narrator takes the end of love is the end of everything to indicate the end of the world along with the end of the century it becomes clear that end of love is the end of humanity along with the creativity and regeneration. Hope expresses her

agony towards the ending millennia and takes it as a wrong number where she says: "All these wrong numbers,' said Hope. I've never *known* there be so many wrong numbers. From all over the world. we live in a time,' she said,' of wrong numbers"(252).

The narrator brings other historical details to indicate the horror of the world but it is also irrelevant and become twisted. The historical records are knowingly falsified in historiographic metafiction to questions the absolute "know ability" of the past. In this novel also the historical events are falsified. The historical details in the novel states:

That is the moment of full eclipse in November 5, as the chancellor made his speech in Bonn, two very big and dirty nuclear weapons would be detonated, one over the place of Culture in Warsaw, one over marble Arch. That until the case of the flow of fissionable materials from Baghdad, the Israelis would be targeting Kiev. [...] that the sky was falling. (251)

The reference of Bonfire Night which occurs in November 5 is also become irrelevant because the plan of destruction changes into failure task and November 5 becomes the festival for celebration. British people celebrated Bonfire Night on memory of a famous event in British history the Gunpowder plot on 5 November 1605. In which a group of Roman Catholics planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament while king James I was inside. Originally the Bonfire Night was calibrated as victory for proletarians over Catholics. November 5 is the day of celebration. It becomes clear when the narrator describes the celebration:

Guy came out onto the fading afternoon. He looked at the pass or ticket she had left for him and wondered how he would ever kill all that time.

Bent with his bah, he stood by the garden gate. He looked up. Already the sky was dotted with fire bursts, rocket- trails: its proxy war. Soon, all over London, a thousand, a million guys would be burning, burning.

(290)

Narrator describes November 5 as "Bonfire Night of Final Night" (271) but the night is not the final night of the world because it is celebrated by all of the people even by the narrator. He describes his involvement in the celebration by: "After she'd gone, night fell, and I worked on the fire, I spent the evening staring at the lamp lit back window"(264).

As history is written from memory in historiographic metafiction the reality is falsified because of fallible nature of forgetfulness. The narrators of such novels are unreliable when they falsified the reality. Hutcheon argues:"Historiographic metafiction acknowledges the paradox of the *reality* of the past but its *textualized accessibility* to us today"(114).

In the novel, *London Fields* the narrator become unreliable when author put ironic faith upon him and says: "But as you see I kept ironic faith with my narrator"(1).The history of America as well as of the world is reconstructed through the help of memory. The memory of the protagonist Nicola Six creates the horror setting of nuclear war, where the city is represented as the bull's-eye surrounded by concentric circles of devastation. Narrator states: "On television at the age of four she saw the warnings and the circles of concentric devastation, with London like a bull's-eye in the centre of the board"(11). The childhood friend of Nicola Six, called Enola Gay, is the recurring memory of her about the bombardments where narrator states: "Right from the start she had a friend – Enola Gay. Enola wasn't real. Enola came from inside the head of Nicola Six" (11). When past is recalled through memory the

reality is deliberately falsified. Nicola makes the false story about her friend, Enola and says about her childhood, which she spend in a dreadful orphanage and she befriended with tragic girl, Enola, who is raped by pitiless Iraqi and produces a child called Little Boy. After that she becomes unable to perform a sexual relationship with any man. Narrator states: "During her early years of orphanage Nicola had befriended a little Cambodian girl[...] when she was twelve Nicola went on to the charity school while her soul mate was 'adopted' or framed out to a pitiless Iraqi. The man abused her [...] she has a child: a son"(79).

Imaginary reconstruction of Nicola's past is ironically compared to the bombardments of Hiroshima. Narrator states about Nicola's childhood and says:

When Nicola was just a little girl she had a little friend called Enola Gay. Enola shared in all Nicola's schemes and feints, her tantrums and hunger-strikes, in all her domestic terrorism. Enola didn't exist Nicola invented her. When adolescence came Enola went and did a terrible thing. Thereafter she kept a terrible secret. Enola had borne a terrible child, a little boy called 'Little Boy'[...] Terrible though the child was, Enola shone through Little Boy with the light of many sun. (43)

Here, the false story about her friend turns out to be a real incident of World War II. When Guy reads the war memoir titled *The Light of Many Suns* he knows that "Enola Gay was the plane that flew the mission to Hiroshima. The pilot named the aircraft after his mother. He was once her little boy. But Little Boy was the name if the atom bomb. It killed 50,000 people in 120 seconds" (186-87).

In Historiographic Metafiction the history is written from memory and it is critically examine by analyzing the records and survivals of the past. The inquiry to the past in a skeptical way shows the discontinuity and fragmented condition of the

history which becomes the matter of reconstruction. Hutcheon, by taking the idea of Gottschalk argues:

The imaginative reconstruction if that process is called historiography. 'Imaginative reconstruction' or intellectual systematizing –which ever model suits you best-is the focus of postmodern rethinking of the problems of how we can and do come to have knowledge of the past[...]It is historiography's explanatory and narrative emplotments of past events that construct what we consider historical facts. (92)

London Fields brings the reference of past to reconstruct it. The characters past set the dark and dim background of the novel. Characters tells their past through memory and records in their diary. Nicola personal diary plays vital role to reshaping the lost past for the narrator, Samson Young, who knows each and every shards of historical events from her. Her diary is the source from where he got the Nicola's past. It becomes clear when he states:"Before I left, Nicola gave me back her diaries and told me to throw them"(41). The other characters also provide to him the materials for writing. Now here's a pleasing symmetry. From their writing, the past of London and the contemporary threat of world instability and horror or socio-political crisis are known by the narrator where he says: "All three characters have given me something they've written. Keith's brochure, Nicola's diaries, Guys fiction. Things written for different reasons: self –aggrandizement, self-communication, self-expression. One offered freely, one abandoned to chance, one coaxingly procured" (28).

In Historiographic Metafiction the fact and fiction are blurred to create a dazzlingly original portrait of lost time and place. Ondaatje in his novel, *Running to the Family* narrates the past event by mixing it to the present. He returns to his homelands from Canada after twenty-five years and writes the history from memory

which blurs the fissure between what is fact and what is fiction. In historiographic metafiction the past and present are put together to create discontinuity and plurality.

In this regard Hutcheon argues:

However, the binary oppositions that are usually set up in the writing on postmodern-between past and present, modern and postmodern and so on-should probably be called into question, if only because, like the rhetoric of rupture(discontinuity, decentering and so on), postmodernism literally names and constitutes its own paradoxical identity and does so in an uneasy contradictory relationship of constant slippage[...] But this is the structure that implicitly denies the mixed, plural and contradictory nature of the postmodern enterprise.(20)

In the novel, *London Fields*, when narrator, Samson Young, returns to London after ten years and starts writing about the socio-political history the memory of past haunts him time and again. He compares the London before and after the decade and says:

I have out about a bit since then; yes I have made several tremulous stories. The first thing I noticed in the street (I must steed in it) struck me as quintessentially, English [...] so far, though, it doesn't seem as bad to say. At least it's intelligible, more or less. The years have been gone and what's been happening? Ten years of relative Decline. (10)

When he narrates the story of London's decline, he time and again jumps to the American contemporary history of passivity and decay to satirize the false American dream. He states:

For some time now it seemed that the dreamlike of America might become too strong and troubled [...] America is beyond power she acts as in a dream, as a face of God. America thought she was awake,

brightly awake, but in reality she was sleeping, and deep dreaming [...]

America cruelly stung, breathing deeply and not coming out to play.

Marriageably she slept, and dreamt, and thought she was awake. (234)

Historiographic Metafiction takes the history as its essential element and subverts it's by ironies it depicts the hegemonic and bias representation which blurs the logocentric notion of writing history and gives the space for marginal voices. Though its play upon "known truth" historiographic metafiction questions the absolute know ability of the past, specifying the ideological implications of historical representations. In its process of redefining 'reality' and 'truth' historiographic metafiction opens a sort of time tunnel which re- discovers the histories of suppressed people such as women or colonized natives. For example John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* rediscovers the history of female who is isolated from the society because of bias patriarchal rules and norms. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Moors Last Sigh* are also the other suitable examples. In reconnecting history and fiction, Hutcheon remarks that "postmodern fiction suggests that to rewrite or to represent the past in fiction and in history is in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological" (209).

The novel *London Fields* also opens sort of time tunnel of hegemonic and bias representation of women in patriarchal society where truths about the women are made by the male gaze. In *London Fields* the female although is put to the centre of the novel she is marginalized when she is dominated and suppressed by male guided ideology. The female protagonist Nicola Six is paradoxically represented in male authorship to continue the century long male domination. She is represented paradoxically where she denies the male ideology and act according to her free will but ultimately becomes prey to male ideology and become sex object in the male

hands and willingly dies when her youth is over. Here vague representation of womanhood to represent the contemporary crisis shows the conclusive and teleological representation. The females are represented as enigmatic in the patriarchal society where the reality is created by male. In the novel *London Fields* when narrator states: "I was now being a little too glib-or a little too something, for the enigmatic miss Six. (These last sentences were in fact direct quotes from a long letter I was writing to Mark Aspery)" (222), it becomes clear that the male standards judge the women as enigmatic.

The womanhood is taken as trouble in the patriarchal society. When the daughter of Keith and Kath born it is taken as serious wrong where narrator represents contradictory and dominating social view when he states: As Kath started on the dishes Keith sat by the stolen fire and frowned at the new arrival. There was something wrong with the baby. The trouble with the baby was that it was a girl. Keith looked deep into himself and rallied"(5).

Nicola is compared to the dangerous destruction of the universe's 'black hole' when she by accepting the male ideology, utters "a black hole. Nothing can escape from me"(66) after every sexual intercourse. Here natural sex is compared as the destruction like in the biblical myth, where sex is the main cause of fall from the heaven. Myth becomes the guiding principle in the male ideology which sets the norms and guided the female through it. The comparison of women to the black hole of the universe and acceptance of the idea by female had shown the century long male domination.

The author presents the female character, Nicola, as a cause of socio-moral devastation and decay where he makes the birth day of her as the destruction day of the world which indicates the bias nature towards femininity. The anti creative anal sex

of Nicola Six indicates the infertility of modern civilization. The womanhood compared to the infertility is a dangerous domination upon her productivity. She is linked to the dark side of life. Her birth day November 5 is presented as the ending day of the world where eclipse occurs. Narrator states: "Still, the earth's new tilt meant that London would get the full eclipse. London would witness 'totality' on November 5"(212).

The novel also presents the exploitation of female in the patriarchal society. The female like Debbie Kinsit are sexually exploited even in the underage. Keith sleeps for four years with her in return for cash payments to her mother. Narrator depicts the explicit exploitation by: "Debbie was special because Keith has been sleeping with her since she was twelve years old [...] and shockingly naked: untassled, ungimmicked, unschool-uniformed [...] but Debbie was always naked for her Keith, as nature indeed [...] last autumn. Debbie had celebrated her fifteenth birthday" (34).

Lukacs felt that the historical novel could enact historical process by presenting a microcosm which generalizes and concentrates. The protagonist therefore should be a type, a synthesis of the general and particular, of "all the humanity and socially essential determinants" (*The Historical Novel* 39). In regards to this definition Hutcheon argues that "the protagonists of historiographic metafiction are anything but proper types They are the proper types, they are the ex-centrics, the marginalized and the peripheral figures of fictional history"(114).

In the novel *London Fields* the protagonist is the female, who is the ex-centric and peripheral figure of the history. Nicola is suppressed and dominated even though she is put to the centre she is marginalized like Sahara in the *French Lieutenant's Women*. She is represented in ambivalent and contradictory manner in the patriarchal

authorship which further represents the long history of male domination. The vague representation of her as an active and passive at the same time puts her to the margin.

The fissure between fact and fiction is amalgamated in historiographic metafiction. Hutcheon in this regards cites the view of Paul de Man in her book *Poetics of Postmodernism*, where he states: The binary opposition between fiction and fact is no longer relevant: in any differential system, it is the assertion of the space between the entities that matters" (qtd. in Hutcheon *Poetics*, 113). The historical fact of World War II is presented through the description of Hitlerian Hubris, which is the cause of entire destruction of Jews along with the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which indicates the loss of humanity and great fear of millennium. To show the horror of nuclear holocaust in the climatic point of the change of the millennium the historical fact is presented where narrator states: "A thousand years. The Loan company was ready, was eager, to underwrite a millennium. Hitlerian Hubris. [...]Hitler was still running the century" (252). Along with the historical fact the fiction is put together to undercut the binary opposition. The narrator creates the horror setting of vulture from his imagination and states: "Above, the low sun painted the shape of an eagle on to the cirrus haze. Today an eagle, with eagle eye; tomorrow a vulture, perhaps fixed over London carrion" (270).

Historiographic Metafiction writes the history from memory as doing so it rewrites the history through the help of historical reminders. It re-writes the personal history along with the history of the nation and the history of the world. In the novel, *Running to the Family*, Ondaatje reconstructs his lost personal identity by writing his personal history along with the colonized history of the nation, Ceylon through the traces of its historical events, the mythical references and the fictive stories made by

the society where fact and fiction are intermingled. Hutcheon in her *Politics of Postmodernism* argues:

Historiographic metafiction represent not just a world of fiction, however self-consciously presented as a constructed one, but also a world of public experience[...]How do we know the past today? Through its discourses, through its texts-that is, through the traces of its historical events: the archival materials, the documents, the narratives of witnesses... and historians. On one level, then, postmodern fiction merely makes overt the processes of narrative representation- of the real or the fictive and of their interrelations. (34)

In the novel, *London Fields* the author Martin Amis re-writes the personal history of failure in writing and failure in love, personal suffering from disease along with the personal experience of agony and pang towards the morally degraded society through the fictional narrator, Samson Young. While re-writing the personal history he also reconstructs the London's history of socio-moral degradation along with the American history of failure of dream and world history of environmental degradation, horror of nuclear holocaust, instability, natural calamities, trauma of war, and worldwide crises.

Amis as Samson Young, in the novel, a nonfiction writer of America who suffers from a decade long writer's block, moves to the London where he finds "unified, dramatic and pretty saleable" (2) unwritten real incident of violence, crime and moral degradation. He mixes it with the personal history of pang and suffering from the contemporary crisis. He presents the dim, dark and dirty picture of the world to represent the history of decay, degradation and moral dilemma. His personal history of anxiety and suffering is presented through the personal experience of disease and death at the end of the novel. The history of worldwide infertility and

barrenness is presented through the infertility of the narrator as he says: "sexually I'm dead"(118) and Nicola's interests towards the anal sex, repeated abortions and her death indicate the "feminine ending"(22). The sexless relation between husband and wife (Guy and Hope) after the birth of their son also indicates the end of further creation and Enola's inability to perform the sexual acts with any one indicates the end of productivity and regeneration. All these infertility of the characters, hints towards the barrenness of the bomb-dropped land of Japan, which is taken as the inhuman activities caused by the human civilization.

The history of socio-moral degradation is shown through the irrational activities and violation of socio-moral norms by the characters. The history of the loss of faith is depicted through the death of love, god and death of humanity and human values. Nicolas desire for destruction, Keith's tiltation towards crime and Enola's seduction by pitiless Iraqi are the examples of socio-moral degradation.

The history of eco-cultural degradation is presented through natural disaster, hurricane, heavy rainfall and global warming (indicated by the repeated phrase "low sun"). History of horror and holocaust is shown through the phrase "the sky is falling" which is the common fear of all people all over the world, which shows the fear of instability, uncertainty and death. The phrase "sick sky"(176) shows the environmental degradation because of the science experiment and air pollution. The air is polluted, the water is polluted, the food is polluted and the whole atmosphere is polluted. Everywhere there is the sound of horror, terror and fear. To represent the decay and destruction the author takes the help of historical reference, mythical reference of fear of millennia where heavy rainfall caused the death of evil world for new and virtuous creation. The biblical allusions of Eve and Virgin Marry plays

significant role when they both presents the role of destruction of heavenly pleasure and creation of heavenly figure respectively.

The portrait of the city in Amis's text is rather bleak to represent contemporary reality of fear and danger. The weather in London is either hot and dry or rainy and windy. Pollution and cityscape combine with the low-lying sun in order to produce the greenhouse effect. Or it may be that the muggy temperatures are due to overpopulation and body-heat. The sun is presented as the destroyer and describes: "at the end of the street like a nuclear detonation [...] setting the horizon on fire" (265), once the "giver of all life", has now become "the life taker, the carcinogenic sun" (148). It leaves "just fire and blood ... [turning] slums into crystal battlements" (265). "You want it out of your sight" (265). "Why didn't it go away? Why didn't it go out?" (251). Emulating solar aggression, the rain hurts with its whiplashes. "The rain made toad stools of the people in the street [...] as the wet souls converged at the entrance to the underground, faceless stalks, in mackintoshes, beneath the black flowers of their umbrellas" (195). It seems to dissolve people as in some bizarre baptism before they step into the underworld. "The rain is terrible. [...] in a northern city, suspended from soiled clouds [...] unclean water" (205) indicates the difficulties created by the pollution. Dead clouds loom heavily in the lower sky (244). Another constant of London weather is the wind. Storms and tempests have periodically wrought havoc since time immemorial (10). In *London Fields* the description of the winds "tear through the city [...] Softening it up for an exponentially greater violence" (43) shows the havoc created by the natural disaster. The weather gives us a pre-view of the nuclear blast, it "makes us feel [...] what it is to live in a universe" (43). This is not only the history of the London but the history and reality of the world, which Amis

writes while expressing his personal experience of horror caused by the world wide instability and socio-moral crisis.

The historical facts are brought together with the fictional elements. Facts and fiction are amalgamated in such a way that the binary opposition between them is suspended. The factual events of bombardments in Hiroshima is presented through the imaginary childhood friend of Nicola, called Enola Gay, who is raped by pitiless Iraqi got a child called 'Little Boy'. After that event Enola cannot perform sexual relationship to any man. Here, the fact of devastating effects of nuclear explosion is present through the infertility of Enola when she becomes sexually unable. The barrenness of bomb-dropped land is shown through the infertility of women and death of female character Nicola and her desire for destruction and passion for anal sex is the hints of end of creativity and end of regeneration along with the "feminine ending" (22). The reference of "terrible rain"(132), sick sky (177), hot weather (209) the world wide raining (124) are also the realities of the contemporary time which indicates the decline of the world. Here, harsh realities are presented through the fictional characters that are the imaginary creation of author through the means of narrator. Facts and fiction are mixed together.

To present the contemporary socio-moral degradation and the looming threat of world instability, the author copy the ready-made story from the society 'waiting to be written down '(2). When he copies the reality he describes it from his perspective which makes the subjective description of objective facts. He adds fiction and imaginary characters from his mind in the "real story" (2). The fear of changing century, the threat of nuclear holocaust, the loss of faith upon god, the moral decay, the loss of humanity are the facts of the then contemporary society of London as well of the world. To present such instability Martin Amis creates imaginary narrator,

Samson Young, and expresses his intense agony towards contemporary crisis, world instability and looming threat of nuclear holocaust. Where, narrator further creates imaginary characters and imaginary plot, mixing it with the historical facts of horror. He also brings the mythical reference of fear of millennium and loss of heaven to amalgamate the fact and fiction to represent the chaos of the contemporary world.

Self-Reflexivity in *London Fields*

Self-Reflexivity is the modernist and new-critic mode of writing and criticism respectively, in which art describes about itself to break the relationship between world and text. Text is self-sufficient entity for new critics. Postmodernism copies the modernist idea of self-reflexivity and use it to search irony in the text through the self image in which the theory of writing is described in the text itself. Self-reflexivity is a tool to self criticized in the postmodern art form. Self-reflexivity shows the art as fictional creation from imagination when it describes about its own writing procedure. Postmodern metafiction is the literary works that openly reflects upon its own process of artful composition. It is the anti-illusionary form of art which desires the critical and active readers to discards the traditional notion of 'willingly suspense the disbelief'. So it repeatedly refers to its own fictional status where narrator is self conscious. Self-reflexivity in historiographic metafiction works as dual existence to represent the past and to exaggerate itself in the present. In this regard Hutcheon in her *Politics of Postmodernism* argues: "The ideological as well as historiographic implications here are overt. The text self-reflexivity points in two directions at once towards the events being represented in the narrative and towards the act of narration itself" (71). The criticism upon the narration becomes the tool of self-reflexivity in historiographic metafiction.

The novel *London Fields* represents the history through the narration and questions the representation by putting ironic faith upon the narrative technique. The narrator questions himself, "Am I a reliable narrator? (50)." The narrator in the novel knows the reality that he is one of the characters in the book when he states: "I think I'm in the book written by somebody else" (261). The narrator time and again appears and makes comments that he is writing the novel which creates the self-reflexive tendency of metafiction to describe itself. In the novel the narrator describes the writing process by: "I have Thrufaxed all twelve chapters off to Horing Ultrason, where, it seems, my stocks already rising high"(148). Three nights ago, or three dawns ago, as I was girding myself for Chapter 9, (103). The narrator also shows writing activities by: '... agrees that the opening is strong. So is the denouement.' 'What the ending?' 'It's the middle we're disturbed about. What happens?' How should I know? I mean, I can't tell until I've written it "(103). He further describes the writing process when he deals with the third chapter, 'when I take on chapter 3, when I take on Guy Clinch...' (15). not only that, he has described: "Documentary, evidence. Is that what I am writing? A Documentary? As for artistic talent, as for the imaginative patterning of life, Nicola wins. She out writes us all" (28).

Patricia Waugh in her *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-conscious Fiction*, provides a comprehensive definition by describing metafiction as "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (2).

The novel opens with narrator, Samson's explaining of happiness because he has found the readymade story, which is already happening, waiting to be written down. This indicates the self-reflective nature of novel as the metafiction. The

narrator states: "This is the story of a murder. It hasn't happened yet. But it will. (It had better.) I know the murderer, I know the murderee, I know the time, I know the place, I know the motive (her motive) and I know the means[...]It's what she always wanted"(1).

The novel is self-reflexive when it talks about the book itself at the very beginning of the novel. The beginning of the novel presents an authorial note to show the debate about the title of the book so it reflects the self image by showing the debate about the title. Where the author states: "A word about the title. Several alternatives suggested themselves. For a while I toyed with *Time's Arrow*. Then I thought *millennium* would be wonderfully bold [...] I wavered and compromised with things like *London Fields*, or *The Murderee: Final version...*" (1).

Patricia Waugh further states that: "Far from 'dying', the novel has reached a mature recognition of its existence as writing, which can only ensure its continued viability in and relevance to a contemporary world..." (19).

Towards the end of the novel the narrator repeats the first chapter to make the reader conscious that they are reading the fiction but not the real thing. Writing activities is presented within text when narrator says:

I've just taken a casual glance at the beginning –who knows, with a little work, might somehow accommodate a new ending. And what do I see? Chapter 1: The Murderer. 'Keith talent was a bad guy... You might even say that he was the worst guy.' No. I was the worst guy. I was the worst and last beast. Nicola destroys my book. She must have felt a vandal's pleasure. Of course, I could have let Guy go ahead and settled for the surprise ending. But she knew I wouldn't. Flatteringly, she knew I was not quite unregenerate. She knew I wouldn't find it

worth saving, this worked thing, this wicked book I tried to write,
 plagiarized from real life. (299)

Explicit use of metafictional technique, as Waugh describes it, stems from modernist questioning of consciousness and 'reality.' Several common epithets used to describe contemporary metafiction are: self-conscious, [...], narcissistic or auto-representational (Currie 14).

The novel becomes self-referential (auto-representational) when it uses the reference of the dartboard and compares it with the text, world and characters. The dartboard is the novel itself when Samson's pen is shaped like a dart (14), the writers activities of writing are compared to playing the darts. And it is also a trope for representation of the world. More broadly a picture of the board appears on page 98, shows the relation between world, text and character as it presents the black hole in between the dartboard which represents the black hole of the universe, character (Nicola Six), and text. However, the dartboard is also London –the circles of concentric devastation, with London like a bulls' –eye in the centre of the board (16). And femininity: the center of the dartboard, a black hole, invoking Nicola. Nicola Six describes herself as black hole of the universe after sexual intercourse when she states: "A black hole. Nothing can escape from me (66)." This suggests that analyses of the novel should attend to its status as social commentary as well as metafiction.

The novel as metafiction also employs intertextual references and allusions by creating biography of the fictional character Samson young that claims himself as a non-fiction writer of America and has to face two decades long writers block and also suffers from tuberculosis. The novel also presents and describes the fictional work of imaginary character Samson Young who is also the narrator of the novel. The narrator constructs the plot of the novel through the help of Guy's short stories, Nicola's diaries

and Keith personal darting dairies along with the books in the Keith's library. He regularly meets Nicola, interviews with her and writes the plot of the story.

Narrator describes his writing activities in the novel by: "... I can finish a chapter in two days, even with all the fieldwork I have to go out and do. Every third day, now, I do more fieldwork, and wince and gloat into my notebook. I write [...] I have laid out my two previous publication on the desk here. *Memories of a Listener. On the Grapevine*. By Samson Young. Me" (29).

In the novel *London Fields* the author requests to the reader to survive him because authors are surviving through the readers. He states: " Nothing can survive devastation so through. Children survives their parents, Works of art survive their makers. I failed in art and love. Nevertheless, I ask you to survive me. Writers survive through their reader" (299).

The novel become self conscious and opens the reality that it is an art but not the reality. It becomes clear that the novel *London Fields* is written from memory when the narrator gives the responsibility to complete the novel to his friend Mark Aspery after his death. He states:

On your desk in the study you will find a full confession. That's all it is now. Perhaps it is also an elegy to the memory of an unfortunate lady, whom you knew. But I can't justify any of it and am indifferent to its destiny. I die intestate, and without close family. By my literary executor: through everything out. If an American publisher called Missy Harter makes inquires, do me the courtesy of delivering a final message. Send her my love. (299)

The writing activity of imaginary character is presented through the writing activity of Keith "while he was actually plagiarizing an earlier passage from *Darts: Master of*

Discipline. Keith was also originating it in his inimitable way. But the whole world – on certain screens, in certain contingency plans – was definitely a dartboard. Keith bent upon his notebook and slowly wrote: Remember you are a machine. Delivering the dart the same way every time" (253).

Similarly, author expresses his agony of the writer that whether the readers take his text positively or not. When, author as a narrator repeatedly interviews with Nicola to forwards his story's plot ahead "then I went over Nicola for an update" (149). He interacts with Nicola and expresses his agony towards her shows authorial consciousness towards the readers which makes the novel not as real but fictitious construction from author's ideology. The narrator states: "Nicola, I 'm worried about you, as usual. And in a peculiar way, as usual. I 'm worried they're going to say you're a male fantasy figure" (165). The character Nicola accepts the author's skeptic towards her and says: I 'm a male fantasy figure. I've been one for fifteen years. It really takes it out of a girl." (165). Author's interaction with the characters foregrounds the anti-illusionary nature of the text. He further says:

'But they don't know that.' I'm sorry, I just am. You should see me in bed. I do all the gimmicks men read up on in the magazines and the hot books.' Nicola so they'll think you are just a sick dreamer. Who cares? You're hard to categorize, even in the male fantasy area. Maybe you're not a sexpot. Not dizzy enough. You're not hot lay either [...] I'm fingering you for a femme fatale. (166)

The author is conscious about the criticism upon his female character Nicola who is represented as sick dreamer and hard to categorize in the novel, to continue the century long domination upon women by patriarchal society in male authorship. She becomes hard to categorize and enigmatic for the male is the ideological

representation about the female. The author fears from the feminist critics who may claim that Nicola is represented as unknown territory as Simone de Beauvoir claims that females are represented as "unknown territory" in male authorship.

Parodic- Intertextuality in *London Fields*

Parodic-intertextuality in historiographic metafiction works as the reference from other books and history written in the past. Historiographic metafiction as a mode of writing fiction incorporates the technique of parodic-intertextuality by copying past and put it together with the present. So past and present come as interchangeably in such fictions. The use of parody clearly makes the comparison between past and present to search the irony. Hutcheon in her book *Poetics of Postmodernism* argues:

Postmodern intertextuality is formal manifestation of both a desire to close the gap between past and present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context [...] it is not an attempt to void or avoid history. Instead it directly confronts the past of literature and of historiography, for it too derives from other texts (documents). It uses and abuses intertextual echoes, inscribing its powerful allusions and then subverting that power through irony. (118)

A parody also called pastiche, in current use, is an imitative work created to mock, comment on, or trivializes an original work, its subject, author, style, or some other target, by means of humorous, satiric or ironic imitation. Hutcheon, taking the idea of Jameson argues that parody plays with the past in the present context, where she states: "But the looking to both the aesthetic and historical past in postmodernist architecture is anything, but what Jameson describes as 'pastiche', that is the random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, the play of the random stylistic allusion"

(*Politics* 27). Parody brings the reference of literature and the historical records to pastiche the past and put it in the present context.

As the literary theorist Linda Hutcheon puts it, "parody ... is imitation, not always at the expense of the parodied text" (35). Another critic, Simon Dentith, defines parody as "any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice" (1). Parody may be found in art or culture, including literature, music (although "parody" in music has an earlier, somewhat different meaning than for other art forms), animation, gaming and film. Parody is by no means necessarily satirical, and may sometimes be done with respect and appreciation of the subject involved, while not being a heedless sarcastic attack.

Hutcheon in her *Poetics of Postmodernism* argues that parody is not only ridiculing imitation but repetition with critical distance to search irony in the parodied text, where she states:

What I mean by 'Parody' here –as elsewhere in this study- is not the ridiculing imitation of the standard theories and definitions that are rooted in eighteenth century theories of wit. The collective weight of parodic practice suggests a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity. In *Historiographic Metafiction* [...] the parody paradoxically enacts both change and cultural continuity. (26)

The novel *London Fields* foregrounds the realities of the contemporary society where socio political atmosphere is dark and dim because of the world instability, change and decay. The human values are lost, the society become corrupt, everywhere there is threat and horror. The environment is degraded and polluted because of the human

activities. To indicate such socio-moral, politico-environmental and looming threat of nuclear holocaust the author brings the past reference to show the continuity of the decay from the past. The writer uses the intertextual parody in the novel by borrowing references from other books and the past historical facts are parodied with the harsh realities of the present.

To indicate the horror he brings the reference from the book, *The Light of Many suns*. The title of the book itself indicates the hot atmosphere to show the greenhouse effect caused by the science experiment, human behavior, nuclear explosions and wars. The repeated phrase, "low sun" (209,186,174) indicates the hot atmosphere in which all the living beings compelled to live. The book turns out to be a war memoir where the narrator states: *The Light of Many Suns* turned out to be a war memoir: rather remarkable in its way. Guy finished his *Fashion a la mode de champagne* and shamefacedly went on drinking the claret, which he suspected would have a restaurant piece of about three times. The character reads the book at the same time they view the contemporary world through the same perspective so that the picture of the real world also become dark and dim just like the fictional world presented in the book they read.

Narrator in the novel reads the several texts and forwards the plot of the novel. He brings the reference of someone text and says:

Somewhere else in *More Die if Heartbreak* Bellow says that America is the only place to be, because it contains the 'real modern action'.

Everywhere else is 'convulsed' in some earlier stage of development.

That's true. But England feels like the forefront of something, the

elegiac side of it, perhaps. It makes me think of Yeats's lines (and here my memory still holds): We have fallen in the dreams the ever-living

Breathe on the tarnished mirror of the world, And then smooth out
with ivory hands and sigh. (65)

Through the help of Parodic- intertextuality of literature and history, the author forms the meaning of the text. To form the horror setting and theme the narrator repeatedly brings the reference from horror books such as Martin Gilbert's *The Holocaust* to show the fear and terror created by the nuclear holocaust and "Hitlerian Hubris"(252).

The narrator not only reads the literature written in the past but also includes the reading activities of other characters. Guy Clinch reading activities of a modern edition of *Goodnight, Moon*, shows the windy atmosphere and the innocent bird suffering from the trouble." Nine hours later, at four in the morning, Guy turned the page and said: The north wind doth blow, And we shall have snow, And what will poor Robin ho then, poor thing?'. . .He'll sit in a barn, And keep himself warm, and hide his head under his wing, poor thing!'(101).

Hutcheon, in her *Poetics of Postmodernism*, takes parody as a tool which twists the past and combines it with the present. So for her, 'parody' is "ironic contamination of the present by the past" (27). She further states: "And just as modernism (oedipally) had to reject historicism and to pretend to a parthenogenesis birth fit for the new machine age, so postmodernism in reaction, return to the history, to what I have been calling parody to give architecture back its traditional social and historical dimension, through with a new twist this time" (26).

The novel returns to the history to do parody with it with the contemporary realities. It brings the Biblical allusions, which works as the Christian history. To show the contemporary horror the novel alludes the horrible settings 'Christian Fear of Millennia' from the Bible. "Terrible rainfall" (132), hot temperature referred by the "hot sun" (196) and reference of hurricane also hints towards the end of the world.

Hutcheon in her *Politics of Postmodernism* argues that postmodern parody copies the past events to ironies it. She argues: "Postmodern parody does not disregard the context of the past representations it cites, but uses irony to acknowledge the fact that we are inevitably separated from that past today – by time and by the subsequent history of those representations" (90).

The dark events of the past recorded in the human history plays the important role to form the horrible setting of the novel to represent the reality of the contemporary society. But the historical facts arrives in the novel in the twisted form which presents the horrifying glimpse of the events from the frustrated and traumatic experience where the past is appear not in chronological order. Enola Gay, the plane mission to the Hiroshima and the little boy, the bomb is shown indirectly through the imaginary character. The World War II and nuclear holocaust is presented through memory of the Keith. Narrator explains Keith in relation to the war where he states: "for example, barely heard of World War II. Keith's father, who had certainly heard of world war II, and had successfully deserted from it, might have asked if everyone knew the terrible things they did to some of our boys(241).The war is referred to as "cathartic war" (125), "proxy war"(227) and "thermonuclear war" (149).

The past of dart is bringing through the book written by Kim on titled *Darts: Masters the Discipline*. From which the past of the dart as well as the history of the civilization is bring together with the present world like the dart board, concentric circle of destruction in the middle of the board. The dart board presents the world of horror and terror when the hole in the middle of the board is compared to the "Black Hole" of universe towards which the present world is heading. To show the human civilization through the dart's past the narrator brings the reading activities of the Keith who time and again brings the reference from the book.

The dart shapes the structure of the novel where the writing pen of the narrator shapes like the dart indicates the writing activities is compared to the dart playing. The novel *London Fields* crosses the generic boundaries to bring the intertextual parody as Hutcheon claims in her *Poetics of Postmodernism* that "Intertextual parody crosses the generic boundaries"(139), when he includes all the genres in the novel. The references from Renaissance writer, Shakespeare's drama *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and the romantic poet John Keats's love poems further plays as a parody of the past literature to the present realities to ironies the present through the comparison between past and present.

The protagonist of the novel, Nicola six, is compared to the Shakespeare's plays character Desdemona of *Othello*, and Lady Macbeth of *Macbeth*. The loyal and true lovers of the renaissance period are parodically put together with false love and deceive of Nicola six who loves more than two persons. From Shakespeare's *Hamlet* the story of Ophelia is bringing to show the obscenity of the Hamlet's lover. The narrator says to the Keith: "Curious how madness and obscenity go together. Like madness and anti-Semitism. Shakespeare was right. Ophelia ..." (245). The author brings the textual references from Romantic poet John Keats's love poems, to compare the past with the present vulgarized love. When Keith and the narrator talks about the poets longing to go outside the time and make the world in the imagination to escape from the harsh realities of the existing world. Narrator states:

"The lover looks to the star as an image of, of constancy. What Keats is expressing here is a yearning to be outside time. Suspended with his fair love. But I think the uh, movement of the poem gives a little twist to that reading. The star is identified with purity. The clean waters. The newly fallen snow. Yet the lover must be bold .He must come down

from the Heavens, and enter time.' Exactly, Keith. The lover knows he cannot escape the human sphere, with all its ecstasy and risk, "swoon to death": for the Romantics, Keith, death and orgasm are equivalent. 'Yeah, well, same difference.' The first eight lines really are quite beautiful, but I can't help feeling that the sestet is terrible tosh. What now? The odes? I think not". (226)

Similarly the allusion of Biblical characters Eve and Virgin Mary periodically shows the contradiction. Nicola compares herself with Virgin Mary who is being pregnant without man and got the Christ. Nicola, doing sex with several and who desires for the creation without sexual intercourse. When she does not show her desires for creation, she says: "I'm not going to lose my figure and get up in the middle of the night. I won't be time-processed, medianized – not by you. It would have to be Like the Virgin Mary: Nobodies Baby mamma"(181). But later she is compared to the Eve, the cause of fall of man from the heaven. The happy creation in the heaven causes the disaster. The happy Ophelia become so sad after the death of Polonius is compared with the Eve kisses which brings the sorrow and suffering of the world. And Eve kisses are compared to the kisses of the Nicola to bring the past and present together and ironies the preset. When she kisses to the Guy her kisses is compared to the Eve kisses to Adam in the garden of the heaven. The narrator states:

She now gave him a series of literary kisses, Maud, and Geraldine, and Eve in the garden, and (a happy creation) Ophelia Before and after the Death of Polonius. Then she threw in the Grand-a-Night Hooker. She did enough, in any case, she confidently imagined, to rebrim his sobbing boner. Then she reached for her handbag with the last of many sighs. (245)

The kisses of Nicola are compared to the end of the heavenly pleasure and fall from the heaven, when the kisses is compared to the Ophelia before and after the death of her father. Before the death of her father she was happy but the sudden death of her father she becomes mad and her happiness goes forever. The kisses caused sudden and unusual breath and embarrassing situation of horror and terror.

In Historiographic Metafiction self- reflexivity and parodic-intertextuality creates multiplicity and contradiction. Being postmodern form of fiction writing it criticizes the logocentric notion of representation and gives the space for the marginalized and ex-centrics to do so it includes the local narrative and undercuts the grand narratives. When historiographic metafiction gives the space to the marginalized and local narratives to undercuts the master narrative or logocentric notion it resembles to the idea of Lyotard according to him Postmodernism, is "incredulity towards meta-narratives". In other words, the implication of the self-reflexivity and parodic-intertextuality of historiographic metafiction is with the Lyotardian notion of postmodernism. Lyotard in his essay "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" his reply to Hebermas is absolutist in a most un-postmodern, of oppositional and avant-garde, way: "Let us wage the war against totality; let us be witnesses to the unpreventable; lit us activate the differences and save the honor of the name" (82). Hutcheon argues that postmodern historiographic metafiction is the contradictory phenomena which can delight or trouble by their frustrating lack of resolution. She further argues: postmodernism, itself paradoxical in its contesting of conventions" (129).

Hutcheon in her essay "Modeling the Postmodern: Parody and Politics" argues that parody and self-reflexivity creates paradox in Postmodern historiographic

metafiction by putting together the past and present together along with the self-critical tendency. She argues:

Postmodernism in art today [...] seems to be art marked paradoxically by both history and an internalized, self-reflexive investigation of the nature, the limits and the possibility of the discourse of art. On the surface, postmodernism's main interest might seem to be in the process of its own production and reception as well as in its own parodic relation to the art of the past. (19)

As Postmodernism begins to include the marginalized issues it questions totalizes, centralized, hierarchized and closed system. To do so it creates unresolved thematic contradiction through the use of parody and self-reflexivity at the same time. To create contradiction and paradoxes it also uses heterogeneous and dissimilar ideas together. Hutcheon in her *Poetics of Postmodernism* she quotes the idea of Lyotard where he argues: Much of the debate over the definition of the term "postmodernism" has revolved around what some see as a loss of faith in this centralizing and totalizing impulse of humanist thought "(58).

Hutcheon in regard to the contradictory nature of the postmodernism argues that it challenges the center-seeking tendency, totality and all existing hierarchy. She argues: "What I think the art of postmodernism would say, instead, is something like this: 'Let us inscribe and then challenge totality; let us (re)represent the un(re)presentable; let us activate differences and admit that we thus create the honor of the name and the name itself' " (55).

The novel ends by creating multiplicity, uncertainty and paradox when it indicates the false ending. The novel turns out to be one of the terrifying dreams of the narrator which creates confusion in the reader. The narrator includes the description of the

dream by: "Yesterday, in the hour before dawn and her arrival, I had a prophetic dream. I know it was prophetic because it's now come true. Yesterday, I dreamt I ate my teeth. That's what murder feels like. I failed, in art and love. I wonder if there's time to wash all this blood off my hands" (299).

The death of the narrator who works as the author creates the postmodernist concept of authorial exclusion from the text. The death of the protagonist, Nicola hints to the loss of the centre which creates centerlessness. The death of narrator and protagonist is indicated towards the end of the novel by: "You return, I fear, to a scene of some confusion. I will be lying on your bed, quite neatly, I hope, eyes open to the mirrored ceiling, but with a stoical smile on my face. In a car on the ledge, under a sheet, lies another body, rather less peacefully composed" (299). The novel turns out to be written by Mark Aspery as a memoir. The narrator turns out to be one of the characters of the Nicola's personal diary when he says: "she out wrote me. Her story worked. And mine didn't There's really nothing to say" (298-99).

In the shadow of the novel is the mysterious Mark Aspery, whose pen name is also Marius Appleby, who time and again appears on the narration of the novel through his letters and through narrator's memory. As Mark Aspery, he writes what appears to be highly popular fiction, true life memoir of his seduction of a large-bosomed lady on an exotic foreign exploration. At the end of the novel, it appears that Aspery has appropriated Sam's narrative for his own when narrator gives the responsibilities of completing the work to him at the end of the novel.

III. Incredulity towards Metanarratives

Martin Amis both subverts the traditional narrative convention and the traditional plot construction. The novel, *London Fields* represents the fragmented multiple identities of both place and characters which crosses the border and closes the gap between past and present, popular and high culture, fiction and truth. Entrapped in the contest of parodic allusion to the Christian myth of fear of millennia, fall from the heaven, Freudian and other theories and various literary works, *London Fields* acquires a new identity. It amalgamates both past and present, imagination and present reality frequently moves to the literary and historical reference.

London Field, an imaginary location of the novel suggests a paradox: a rural or pastoral place within a modern urban setting. Samson's narrative refers again to this inherent paradox, as he remarks that in London "there are no fields," only fields of attraction and repulsion, only force fields. The title indicates the ambiguities and contradiction to the reader inherent in Amis creation of imagined London: there is conflict between the descriptions of London locations within the novel and their location in reality. The topography of the imagined city cannot fit exactly onto the topography of the real city, Just as Sam realizes that "this is London and there are no fields", and just as he is unable to return to the "London fields" of his childhood, it is similarly impossible for us to return to the stage of London as a field. *London Fields* exists simultaneously as a real place in the real London, and as an imagined and dreamed –of place "present all along" on every page of the novel, and the scene of murder. The paradoxical and contradictory nature in post modern historiographic metafiction plays an important role as it blurs the boundary between truth and imagination to undercut the hierarchy. The dilemma indicated by the title is the

dilemma of the present world which is caused by the changing human norms and values along with the changing century.

In the novel, self-reflexivity is developed by employing intertextual references and allusions by examining fictional systems, incorporating aspects of both theory and criticism, presenting and discussing fictional works of an imaginary character, authorial violation of narrative levels by examining intruding to comment on writing, involvement their-self with fictional characters, directly addressing to the reader, openly questioning how narrative assumptions and conventions transform and filter reality, trying to ultimately prove that no singular truth or meaning exist. As metafiction *London Fields* also use unconventional and experimental techniques by rejecting conventional plot refusing to attempt to become 'real life'. To reveal the fictional nature of the work the novel uses the metafictional strategies. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. Amis emphasizes dissatisfaction through the use of fragmentary composition, self-reflexion, and parodic-intertextuality to create irony to the present through the help of nasty past. The present is horrible as equally as the past nuclear holocaust world wars and bombardments because of socio-moral degradation, and looming threat of world instability and fear of social dilemma caused by changing century. In the novel the past and present is compared through the parody.

By intertwining extra textual discourses within his retelling of the past, Amis establishes a multi-leveled text: on the level of the story, he playfully highlights his characters' sense of despair, isolation and inherent horror; beyond the story, he parodies literary applications of psychoanalytic discourse. In addition to intertextual references Amis further develops his idea about the modern contradiction and,

complexities by focusing towards open and contradictory ending. The novel turns out to be an elegy written in the death of an unfortunate girl, Nicola Six, by Samson Young in a book written by Mark Aspery. The death of central character and narrator hints towards the end of centre and end of authorial control over the narration. The story turns out to be one of the memoirs of Nicola Six written in her personal diary which is plagiarized by Samson Young. The multiple, open and contradictory ending of the novel, focus on the contemporary dilemma of the society where no one can get any fixity and stability.

Through the novel, the ignored history of female domination is rewritten through the help of memory and historical facts. To show the harsh realities of domination the author uses the reference of past hegemonic representation of domination of the women in the myth. Nicola becomes the vulgarized modern mythical character "Eve" who destroys the universe like Eve destroys the heavenly pleasure when she is compared to the black hole. By using the parody the novel shows the irony in the present by comparing past and past. She is indicated as a horror symbol of end and decay of the morality along the world crises and traumatic experience.

Like every other literary devices in the book, the characters themselves are parodies of their archetypes, uniformity, flat and almost comic –bookish in nature. The plot challenges the notion of conventions and end in complexities creating multiplicity. The implication behind showing the multiplicity through inclusion of marginalized female character as protagonist, acceptance of multi-narrative technique along with self-reflexivity and parodic-intertextuality shows in the novel the authorial control over the story resembles the Lyotardian notion of "incredulity towards metanarrative" which believes on the inclusion of local narratives to blur the hierarchy and logocentric representation of the 'grand narratives'. For him the incredulity towards the metanarrative is the postmodern quality of the text where centre is challenged by the margin and text loose the authenticity by losing its authorial control.

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