

1. Redrawing History as Fiction through Historiography

History, in its broadest sense, is the totality of all past events, although a more realistic definition would limit it to the known past. History and historiography terms are used, often in conjunction, to denote the study and recording of past events.

Historiography is the written record of what is known of human lives and societies in the past and how historians have attempted to understand them.

Of all the fields of serious study and literary effort, history may be the hardest to define precisely, because the attempt to uncover past events and formulate an intelligible account of them necessarily involves the use and influence of many auxiliary disciplines and literary forms. The concern of all serious historians has been to collect and record facts about the human past and often to discover new facts. They have known that the information they have is incomplete, partly incorrect, or biased and requires careful attention. All have tried to discover in the facts patterns of meaning that illuminate the human past.

A general belief about history is that it is a science of *res gestae* (Latin word), meaning, it tells story of the past most objectively, unlike the works of fiction that is deliberately imaginative. What is, however, generally missed is that absolute truth is not only elusive for the historian but also unrealizable, bound as it is to the vicissitudes of the literary imagination. As, Thomas B. Macaulay believes, the historians, unlike the scientist, is condemned to inadequacy by the very nature of his task. The historian must strive for an end, which is in the end unattainable, that of combining in a single forum the diametrically opposed powers of creativity and analysis, imagination and control. As Macaulay terms it as, "Perfectly and absolutely true" (72).

The purpose of history as a serious endeavour to understanding human life is never fulfilled by the mere sifting of evidence for facts. Fact-finding is only the

foundation for the selection, arrangement, and explanation that constitutes historical interpretation. The process of interpretation informs all aspects of historical inquiry, beginning with the selection of a subject for investigation, because the very choice of a particular event or society or institution is itself an act of judgment that asserts the importance of the subject. Once chosen, the subject itself suggests a provisional model or hypothesis that guides research and helps the historian to assess and classify the available evidence and to present a detailed and coherent account of the subject. The historian must respect the facts, avoid ignorance and error as far as possible, and create a convincing, intellectually satisfying interpretation.

Until modern times, history was regarded primarily as a special kind of literature that shared many techniques and effects with fictional narrative. Historians were committed to factual materials and personal truthfulness, but like writers of fiction they wrote detailed narratives of events and vivid character sketches with great attention to language and style. The complex relations between literary art and historiography have been and continue to be a subject of serious debate.

Macaulay commenting on the concept of history of Hayden White writes:

Hayden White strikes a similar chord. In fact, more forcefully in his writing on historiography, wherein he repeatedly draws our attention to the historian's ideology, colouring his representation of the past. The issue of ideology points to the fact that there is no value neutral description of any field of events, whether imaginative or real; not only in all representation but in all languages is politically contaminated. (129)

Hence, the concept of history is politically explicit, and cannot remain so, without being so. Even the issue of ideology cannot remain aloof from political subjugation.

White makes explicit definition of Historiography in his essay on *Historiography as Narration*, as:

Historical stories, the product of 'narrativisations' 'cannot be said to correspond to anything other than the general story types of which they are instantiations. The story told is an allegory of how real events can be said to replicate the structural pattern of generic story types: fables, epic, romance tragedy, comedy and farce, etc. (3)

Since any set of events can be variously employed, it is the imagination that ascertains the precise contours they will finally take on. Their production, however is, not exclusively a matter of individual predilection but an aspect of the way culture determine the boundaries of the thinkable or follow able. This is what Whites makes clear in *The Content of the Form*: "In the historical narrative the systems of meaning-production peculiar to a culture or society are tested against the real events to yield to such systems" (45). This removes narrative form the fact versus fiction impasses and retrieves it as part of the cognitive process of fixing the limits between the fictive and the factual of which fiction is an indivisible constituent.

On the other hand, fiction is narration of unreal acts and incidents that are creation out of fantasy and imagination. According to *Oxford Learners Dictionary* fiction is "works of imagination." As such fiction can be of any subject matter, and is a sheer work of an individual's fantasy. Robert Scholes and Carl H. Klaus in *Elements of Literature* opine that fiction, "begins in the creative possibilities of human language in the desire of human beings to use their language creativity" (1).

Here lies the basic difference between history and fiction; the first is based on reality and the second is sheer imagination. History is created to narrated the past

happenings into present but fiction, is of no limitation. Clearing the concept of fiction, Scholes and Klaus writes:

[. . .] Fiction has its origin in the joy of creation, literature can be intensely serious. It can use its formal beauty as a way of enabling us to contemplate the most painful and terrible aspects of existence, or as a way of celebrating those things we value most highly in life. In the end, fiction enriches our lives because it increases our capacities for understanding and communication. (1)

As such, any fiction and history are two separate parts of literary creations. However, when it comes to citation of factual events, a historian has to depend on historiography, a way of interpreting and analyzing the historical facts and data, whose history goes as back as to Western Roman Empire.

With the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century ad, the traditions of classical education and literary culture, of which historiography was part, were disrupted and attenuated. Literacy became one of the professional skills of the clergy, which carried on the task of preserving and expanding a learned, religious culture. Many monasteries kept chronicles or annals, often the anonymous work of generations of monks, which simply recorded whatever the author knew of events, year by year, without any attempt at artistic or intellectual elaboration. The achievements of past historians, however, preserved in monastic libraries, kept alive the idea of a more ambitious standard, and early medieval writers, such as Gregory of Tours, struggled to meet it. Similarly, *The Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (Ecclesiastical History of the English People, 731) by the Venerable Bede, an English monk, achieved the integration of secular and ecclesiastical history, natural and supernatural events, in a forceful and intelligent narrative.

The revived vigour of intellectual and literary life in the High Middle Ages is reflected in the historical works of the English monk William of Malmesbury, the German Otto of Freising, and the Norman Orderic Vitalis. Although most of the later medieval historians were clerics and wrote in Latin, the traditions of secular historiography were also revived by chroniclers who wrote in the vernacular languages. Jean de Joinville recorded the deeds of his king, Louis IX of France, on crusade; Jean Froissart wrote of the exploits of French and English chivalry during the Hundred Years War.

Nineteenth-century historians transformed the intellectual and professional standing of the subject. The cultural circumstances were propitious, since rapid industrialization and urbanization kindled a new popular interest in the past, founded on nostalgia for a vanishing order, and expressed in a desire to recreate the past imaginatively. This outlook was reflected in the rise of the historical novel, and in important innovations in archaeology and the study of art and architecture. The leading historians of the day, like Leopold von Ranke in Germany, combined powers of empathy with a close critical attention to the surviving documents of the past. In a formidable sequence of works beginning with *Histories of the Latin and German Nations from 1494 to 1514* (1825), Ranke moved well beyond the documentary techniques of the 18th-century erudite. His method combined a close reading of the text with a careful reconstruction of the historical circumstances in which it was composed; only by these means, he maintained, could unreliable documents be detected and the essential meaning of the text be recovered. Training in these methods was the hallmark of a new breed of academic historians, who were trained under Ranke's supervision and who came to dominate German universities. It went hand-in-hand with proper provision for the conservation of state records.

The intellectual standing of historians was also enhanced by their claim to write history in a dispassionate, objective way: historians should not take sides, nor should they seek to make propaganda out of the past; their task was essentially one of reconstruction. “Historicism” is the label that refers to this somewhat austere approach to the past: it means a respect for the otherness of the past, and for the gulf that separates us from it. Ranke and his followers were opposed to the association of history writing with state propaganda. They also coveted “scientific status in an academic world in which the natural sciences enjoyed unrivalled prestige. On the strength of these claims, history became an academic discipline in its own right, and a key subject within the German university curriculum. Its senior practitioners enjoyed considerable cultural authority.

Many modern historians trace the intellectual foundations of their discipline to this development of the 19th-century German universities, which influenced historical scholarship throughout Europe and America. French interest in the history of civilization was sustained by François Guizot, and the new scientific methods were applied to medieval history by Fustel de Coulanges. In England, the brilliant style of Thomas Macaulay continued the Enlightenment mode of a personal, essay-like history, but more exacting methods were applied in the universities. With colleagues and students at the University of Oxford, William Stubbs established English history on foundations of a thorough examination of sources, a movement carried forward by Samuel R. Gardiner and Frederick W. Maitland. George Bancroft was the first notable writer of United States history, and American universities in his time increasingly accepted the influence of German methods. By the end of the 19th century, history was firmly established in European and American universities as a professional field, resting on exact methods and making productive use of archival collections and new sources of evidence.

However, the professionalization of history was achieved at considerable cost to its social relevance. Whereas the philosophic historians of the Enlightenment had aimed to understand the entire development of mankind and to instruct their audience in the ways of progress, the new breed of academic historians in the 19th century was less ambitious. The effect of prioritizing the analysis of primary sources was to make the narrow monograph and the editing of texts the most respected forms of publication. Newly founded academic journals, like the *English Historical Review* (1886) and the *American Historical Review* (1895) confirmed the trend. The writing of history became associated with the demonstration of technical skills rather than the illumination of large problems.

The major exception to this narrowing of focus was the preoccupation of many historians with nationalism. The 19th century was the first age in which mass nationalism became a political and cultural force to be reckoned with. This was true both of those nations that were struggling to achieve statehood at the expense of great empires like the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman, and of well-established countries like France where the introduction of representative democracy placed a premium on national consensus-building. History, which defined the nation in terms of past achievements or past sufferings, came to be regarded as one of the most powerful ingredients of popular nationalism. All European countries produced history in this vein – from the urbane Lord Macaulay in England to the impassioned romantic Frantisek Palacky in the Czech lands. In Germany much of the neutrality that had characterized Ranke's best work was lost during the next generation as historians placed their labors in the cause of the German Second Empire. In the United States historians celebrated the virtues of the Founding Fathers of the American Revolution, and traced the unfolding of the "manifest destiny" of

the American people. For these writers history was the handmaiden of nationalism, and they were not too scrupulous about the balance or objectivity of their accounts.

The first half of the 20th century was characterized by political extremism, as both Fascist and Communist states strove to achieve complete uniformity of thought by totalitarian methods. In Hitler's Germany many historians trained in the nationalist historiography before World War I colluded in the production of a Nazi version of the past. Stalin imposed a comparable agenda on historians in Communist Russia. Grave damage was done to the integrity of the historical profession in both countries.

In the western democracies of Britain, France, and the United States, on the other hand, these extremes were avoided. Nationalist history was already in discredit because of its association with the pointless slaughter of World War I. G. M. Trevelyan, one of the most widely read historians in the English-speaking world in this period, showed a profound respect for the English past in almost everything he wrote, but *English Social History* (1944) was an exercise in nostalgia rather than a nationalist charter. More broadly, there was a retreat from ideologically committed history, and much soul-searching about the epistemological standing of historical knowledge. Carl Becker in America and R. G. Collingwood in Britain gave currency to historical relativism – the belief that historical truth is unattainable and that all history writing is moulded by the individuality of the writer. L. B. Namier, a Polish refugee working in Britain, established a new school of political history that dealt with power and patronage rather than ideas and ideals.

In the long run, however, the first half of the 20th century proved to be significant primarily with regard to experiments in the enlargement of the scope of history writing, which would transform the discipline after 1945. Around the turn of the century it became apparent to a growing number of historians that the industrial and urban transformation

through which Western societies had been living over the past two generations required a new approach to history, in which economic and social change would be brought to the forefront. For some historians, the lead taken by other disciplines like economics and sociology in addressing such questions acted as a further spur. The theories and techniques of the social sciences became increasingly relevant. Here was the beginning of the inter-disciplinary movement that has proved so fruitful in historical practice in recent decades.

Annales, a popular journal from the west follows approach that became very influential after 1945 was the use of quantitative methods. This was the inevitable consequence of harnessing history to the social sciences, since quantitative method was at the heart of subjects like economics and sociology. A new field of quantitative history came into being, based on the collections of numerical data made by Western states since the 18th century in order to calculate their tax revenues or their populations or their rates of mortality. French historians of the Annales School were pioneers in sophisticated demographic history and in the serious analysis of long sequences of economic data like prices and volumes of trade. But it was in the United States that quantitative history was taken up with the greatest commitment. At a time when the prestige of the natural sciences was unprecedented, quantitative methods lent a strongly scientific cast to historical research. The increasing use of computer analysis from the 1960s confirmed this impression. A high-profile branch of quantitative history, known as *Cliometrics*, advanced the claim that statistics could not only yield more precise descriptive statements about the past, but could also solve major issues of historical explanation – at least in economic history: Robert W. Fogel's *Railways and Economic Growth* (1964) was a striking example. Economic historians relying on quantitative methods were among the most vociferous proponents of the view that history was – or ought to become – a science.

But they were not the only ones. In Britain E. H. Carr in *What Is History?* (1961) firmly placed history in the scientific camp, not because of its methods (which he took much delight in demystifying) but because he regarded it as part of the scientific endeavor to increase mankind's understanding and mastery of the environment, which is equally related to the unfolding of history as fiction.

These debates were conducted within academia, with little resonance outside. They were soon overtaken by changes in the scope and tone of history writing that reflected a transformation in the relationship between university and society. The historiographical developments in the first half of the 20th century had been achieved in an academic environment that would still have been recognizable to the founders of the discipline two generations earlier. Universities were small and often somewhat removed from the society around them; their students came from comparatively privileged backgrounds and went on to fill influential positions in politics, administration, and education. Historians were respected luminaries in intellectual elite. By the 1970s the picture had completely changed. The era of mass higher education had arrived; between 1960 and 1980 a threefold increase in university students was the least that European countries experienced. The composition of the new student body was also markedly different. With the growing inclusion of women students, working-class students, and students from ethnic minorities, it was far less homogeneous and potentially much more radical. Meanwhile teachers in universities, including historians, grew in number and declined in status.

Many, perhaps most, academic historians confronted these changes with a determination to maintain the traditions of the discipline, either from motives of self-preservation, or because they genuinely believed that the new students should not be palmed off with an inferior product. But the running was increasingly made by younger

historians who responded to the fertile atmosphere of political dissent which marked the Western world during the 1960s and 1970s: the peace movement, black power, the women's movement, the beginning of green politics. Dissent even defiance became the hallmark of campus life, and the study of history was deeply affected. Historians in increasing numbers turned their attention to groups previously absent from the historical record especially women, blacks, and sexual minorities. The exclusion of these groups from scholarly work had been based on a belief that they had contributed little or nothing to history, and that primary documentation was lacking. The radical historians of the 1960s and 1970s constructed new historical narratives that enlarged the range of historical actors. They also uncovered many sources of relevance to the new agenda, and for recent history they made systematic use of interviewed informants, a practice that quickly came to be known as oral history.

One major beneficiary of the radical climate was Marxism. Karl Marx had elaborated his theory of history between the 1840s and the 1860s, but for a long time it was much better known among revolutionary socialists than among historians. After 1917 it became the official view of history in the Soviet Union, and it was taken up between the wars by a small group of Western historians, mainly as an intellectual resource against Fascism. Only in the new atmosphere of the 1960s did Marxism become a major influence on historians, which is why it makes sense to consider it as a contribution to 20th-century historiography. Marxism was an effective means of advertising identification with the workers or the underdog more generally, and it immediately suggested that history was politically relevant. But Marxism was more than a radical talisman. Its influence on the writing of history proved to be enduring because of the purchase it offered on some of the most intractable problems of historical explanation.

Perhaps the most difficult of these problems is how to conceive of historical societies as wholes, particularly in view of the fissiparous tendencies of specialist research. Marxist historians start from the materialist premise that the character of all societies is determined by the way in which people fulfill their material needs (hence the term “historical materialism”) a society based on the factory will be very different from one based on the plough. The outcome in each case will be a distinctive pattern of economic relationships or mode of production. This is the economic base, upon which is constructed the institutions of law and the state, with their supporting ideology. Hence, the labeling of particular societies as “feudal” or “industrial capitalist,” without assuming a total coherence in every particular, Marx nevertheless provided a powerful organizing model. The extent of its influence can be measured by the fact that today it is habitual to begin a historical survey work with an account of the economy, on the assumption that this sets significant limits to what we can expect to find in the sphere of politics or culture.

But Marx himself was centrally preoccupied with historical change – with understanding it in the past, and with predicting its trajectory in the future. His theory of social structure was, in a sense, merely the preliminary to uncovering the dynamics of human development. This Marx did by identifying the contradictions that make any social structure to a greater or lesser degree unstable. Given human creativity, technological advance and its appropriate relations of production have a tendency to run ahead of the political system, which is likely to reinforce the existing outmoded economic structure rather than facilitate the emergence of the new one. These are the preconditions for acute class conflict between the protagonists of the old order and the new – between the feudal class and the bourgeoisie in the transition to mercantile capitalism, and between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the transition to socialism. Ultimately therefore, social

change comes about as a result of the growth of human productive power: Marx's theory of social change is no less materialist than his view of social structure.

During the 1960s and 1970s Marxism was taken up enthusiastically by many historians. Part of its appeal lay in its promise of "total history." The call for a history that transcends the conventional demarcations of sub-disciplines had been made by the Annales School as early as the 1930s, but the Annales historians had failed to develop a practicable model. On the other hand, Marx's materialist premise and his theorization of the mode of production lent themselves well to a history that encompasses elites and masses, and considers politics and culture in relation to production. The potential of this approach can be gauged from the distinguished works of E. J. Hobsbawm, ranging from *The Age of Revolution* (1962) covering the period of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, to *The Age of Extremes* (1994), which surveys the short 20th century from 1914 to 1991.

Marxism also appealed as an effective means of writing emancipatory history, or history from the perspective of marginalized groups. It emphasized trajectories of progressive change in history, it located the forward march of history with subordinate classes instead of the controlling elites, and it articulated the structural significance of these classes. Eugene Genovese's work on the 19th-century slave plantations of the American south and E. P. Thompson's on the emerging working class of the Industrial Revolution in Britain were two of the more remarkable achievements in this genre.

By the 1980s an increasingly significant innovation was the application of gender to historical work. The women's liberation movement had demanded a shift of perspective in history, as in all other disciplines. Initially this had produced studies of notable women in the past and of women's historical experience that had no obvious bearing on mainstream history and could easily be ignored by the majority of male

historians. But women's historians who worked in academia aimed to transform the discipline of history as well as furnish their sisters with a usable past. The most effective means of doing so proved to be gender history.

The concept of gender is premised on the notion that sexual difference is historically constructed rather than a biological given, and that it permeates much more than the immediate relations between men and women. Beginning in the United States, and spreading quickly to Western Europe, feminist historians demonstrated that gender is a structuring principle historically that is as significant as class, and one that has marked the lives of men as well as women. This perspective has been fruitfully applied to fields as diverse as the history of the family, of political movements, and of poverty. A broad survey such as Olwen Hufton's *The Prospect before Her: a History of Western Women 1500 to 1800* (1995) is not just a women's history but a contribution to our knowledge of early modern Europe.

Meanwhile the Annales School, the principal locus of new ideas between the wars, continued to contribute important new perspectives. The members of the school carried light ideological baggage: most were avowedly non-Marxist and few acknowledged the influence of feminism. But the fundamental commitment of the Annalists to inter-disciplinary work continued to pay rich dividends. In dialogue with the social sciences, Fernand Braudel in the 1950s elaborated an influential concept of historical time as divided into three planes: the history of events, the history of conjunctures (e.g. economic cycles), and the almost motionless history of the landscape and of deep mental structures (*la longue duree*).

Another group within the Annales School, led by the medievalist Jacques Le Goff, drew on the findings of anthropology to develop the study of collective mentality in past societies, focusing on the instinctual and emotional aspects of everyday life, rather than

the intellectual achievements of the elite. This blend of anthropology and history has now become characteristic of the large and popular field of cultural history, which studies representation and discourse, rather than events and developments per se. Cultural historians have produced an exciting body of work, but its aim of reconstructing the mental world of the past still keeps it firmly attached to the original program of historicism in the 19th century.

2. Historiography as a Post-Modern Approach to Redraw History as Fiction

Historiography is the method of historical research. It is based on the available data, and hence is accepted as genuine source of studying of data, preferred by many. But the development of different kinds of history during the 20th century raises the question of whether there is still a unified, coherent field in historiography. It is no longer possible to speak of a hierarchy of histories, with political narrative at the pinnacle, because the counter claims of other branches, particularly social history are too strong. But until recently there did exist, a broad consensus about the methods of historical enquiry and the status of historical explanation. Historians generally took the view that they employed an empirical method, in which the ultimate test of their findings was whether they were supported by validated evidence. It was accepted that historians quite often differed sharply over large-scale questions of interpretation, sometimes for reasons that were extraneous to the issue in hand, but the evidence placed a limit on how widely interpretations could diverge. Epistemological debate among historians was muted, with only an occasional flurry caused by books like E. H. Carr's *What is History?* (1961) and Howard Zinn's *The Politics of History* (1970).

The position is very different today. Historiography has been exposed to strong criticism. This is partly because it is a textual subject, and postmodernism rejects the notion of an authoritative or authentic reading. But Postmodernists also attack history because they maintain that the great trajectories that historiography has built around nation, class, and religion are fictions – as grand narratives reject the notion of people who think they know about the past. Both as a mode of enquiry and as a map of knowledge, history is more exposed position than at any time since the 17th century.

During the 1960s the working-class or lower-middle class realism of writers such as Kingsley Amis, John Braine, and Alan Sillitoe, with their emphasis on city life and

restrictive provincialism, gave way somewhat to more international influences. This change invited in desire and will of people to explore their own identity and culture, which helped gain them international influence. *Possession: A Romance* is a similar attempt to explore the possibilities and difficulties faced by the characters of Roland and Dr. Maud. Byatt in *Possession: A Romance* makes an sincere attempt to expose the history to the forefront; however, ends up in creating more confusion. Her narration of the lost culture and mysticism ends up in creation of a vague concept of fiction and history, mingled with each other hard to demark one from the other.

History is seen as natural selection, mutant versions of the past struggle for dominance. It is constructed on the basis of discursive practices. New species of fact arise, and old saurian truths go to the wall, blindfolded and smoking last cigarettes. Only the mutation of the strong survives the weak, the anonymous, and the defeated leave few weeks. History loves only those who dominate her, and it is fiction that can handle and distort history, as *Byatt* displays in *Possession: A Romance*.

Thus, by underscoring the need for meta-fictional rethinking, *Possession: A Romance* politicizes the history through ironic under cuttings and make us believe that history is fiction and fiction is history.

Although, there are ample criticism and works on *Possession: A Romance*; however, there have been no serious efforts on analyzing the text from the point of history as fiction and its delimitation which the present researcher has undertaken. For the same, the first introductory chapter will be ‘Contextualizing Byatt and Her Writings,’ where attempts have been made to deal on post-modern history and memory studies, with brief information on Byatt’s works and her technique of writing.

Similarly, the second chapter – theoretical works deal on “Post-modern history and memory studies,” where attempts have been made to view memory studies as a

part of the post-modern history. Besides, the research will also attempt to analyze the need of memory studies in post-modern era. The second chapter textual analysis – “History as Fiction in *Possession: A Romance*,” which will seek to find clues on aforesaid issues. Finally, the last chapter will conclude with a short “Conclusion,” of the research work.

3. Post-modern Recovery of History in *Possession: A Romance*

In Byatt's *Possession: A Romance* the history can be recovered through the plot of the novel, that exposes the double layer of meaning. The novel presents a challenge, because it requires the way we read and interpret the text, and not only postmodern trend but, also literature as a whole. This literary hybridization destabilize our interpretations of traditional works, and, at least in the case of the postmodern romances, manage both to reread their tradition and revitalize its twentieth-century appearance. Thus by allying themselves with previous texts in their genres and by fusing conventional and postmodern narrative strategies, they are reviving the re-reading of postmodern history from memory perspective.

Possession: A Romance is a novel of wit and romance, at once an intellectual mystery and a triumphant love story. Revolving around a pair of young scholars researching the lives of two Victorian poets, Byatt creates a haunting counterpoint of passion and ideas. The novel concerns the relationship between two fictional Victorian poets, Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte, as revealed to present day academics Roland Mitchell and Maud Bailey. Following a trail of clues from various letters and journals, they attempt to uncover the truth about Ash and LaMotte's past before it is discovered by rival colleagues.

The multiple narrative voices, the open contradictions, and the consistent resistance to totalizing answers in a postmodern romance like *Possession: A Romance* can be seen as an allegorical mode of the high romances of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as questioning the apparent uniformity of women's popular romances. This is a way of the restoration of those complex and sophisticated qualities that formerly characterized the romance but seem to have disappeared from in the

twentieth-century literary manifestations. However, the revival of the history as shown in *Possession: A Romance* is the coming of the memory study in full fledge.

Possession: A Romance unravels hidden history through the mode of memory; a growing trend of presenting fictions, in the recent days. Through devices like fluctuating narrative perspectives, paradox, ambiguity, and self-reflexivity, the novel moves to the memory avenues explored by two Harvard academicians; Mitchell, the male character and Dr. Maud, the female lead. Roland, the poet, though accidentally comes across a bundle of papers neglected in one of the London Library which seems to have important information on a Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash takes it as a personal invitation to explore the lost history and sneaks the paper out of the library. Roland is lured, as Ash is one of the prominent literary figures (fictional), in the literary scenario.

The paper has otherwise story of Ash's famously claimed married life. The book containing sheets of papers, 'the Pandora's box' is described as:

The book was thick and black and covered with dust and almost in rags. Its boards were bowed and creaking; it had been maltreated in its own time. Its spine was missing, or rather protruded from amongst the leaves like a bulky marker. It was bandaged about and about with dirty white tape, tied in a neat bow. (1)

When Roland first got the book, he was in need of something special to carry out his research work. However, when he knew, what he accidentally possessed, things were neither in his control nor, his mind. First, Roland hardly knew what to of those extraordinary writings, a bundle of letters corresponded between Ash, the Victorian

poet and LaMotte, his contemporary. However, what he hardly knew was that it was going to open the Pandora's Box of troubles.

The letter opened "Dear Madam" (6) and ended without a formal salutation. It was addressed to LaMotte, and when the reply came, similar was the trend, with no salutation. This discovery "profoundly shocked" (6) Roland and the feelings of the young academic were:

. . . then, in his scholarly capacity, thrilled. His mind was busied itself automatically with dating and placing this unachieved dialogue with an unidentified woman. There was no year on the letters, but they must necessarily come after the publication of Ash dramatic poems, *Gods, Men and Heroes*, which had appeared in 1856. (6)

This finding was going to change his life, for, the parallel structure of his feelings, longing for something to happen mysteriously were aroused by the letter.

He feels compelled to take away the documents secretly - an unprofessional act - and begins to investigate. The trail leads him to Christabel LaMotte, a minor poet and contemporary of Ash, and to Dr. Maud Bailey, a modern LaMotte scholar and distant relative of LaMotte's family, who is drawn into helping Roland with the unfolding mystery. They become obsessed with uncovering the truth and unearth more letters and evidence of an affair between the poets, and their own personal romantic lives - neither of which is happy or even satisfactory - develop and become entwined in an echo of Ash and LaMotte, whose story is told in parallel to theirs.

The news of this affair will make headlines and reputations in academia, and colleagues of Roland and Maud become competitors in the race to discover the truth, for all manner of motives. And the truth is this: Ash's marriage was barren and unconsummated, although he loved and remained devoted to his wife. He and LaMotte

had a short, passionate affair resulting in the suicide of LaMotte's lesbian lover and the secret birth of an illegitimate child, whose existence LaMotte sought to conceal from Ash, but whom he did once meet, unknown to her. As the Great Storm of 1987 strikes England, all the interested parties come together in a dramatic scene at Ash's grave, where documents buried with Ash by his wife, who was believed to hold the final key to the mystery. However, the recovery of history takes place, courtesy, Roland and Maud.

Initially, things do not occur the way, the scholars have wanted them to be. Reading the paper, Maud learns that rather than being related to LaMotte's sister, as she has always believed, she is in fact directly descended from LaMotte and Ash's illegitimate daughter, who was raised by LaMotte's sister and passed off as her own child, and she is therefore heir to their correspondence. Roland freed from obscurity and a dead-end relationship, manages to live down the potential professional suicide of the theft of the original documents, and sees an academic career open up before him. But, the documents might be lost not the similarity there occurs between Maud and her ancestors, as described:

The old woman trod softly along the dark corridors, and climbed the stairs, standing in uncertainty on various landings. From the back, we are going to see her clearly now – from the back and in the shadow, she might still have been any age. She wore a velvet dressing-gown, and soft embroidered slippers. She carried herself upright and without creaking. (446)

These mystic woman was the recent decent of the child born out of the relationship of Ash and LaMotte. And Maud, in return was her child that means Ash and LaMotte were her immediate ancestors.

However, unlike the Victorian lovers, Maud, who has spent her adult life confused, frigid and untouchable, finds her human side and sees possible future happiness with Roland. And the sad story of Ash and LaMotte, separated by the mores of the day and condemned to secrecy and separation, is resolved at last through Roland and Maud.

A characteristic of the late twentieth century is that certainties are continuously called into question, and thus allegory becomes a suitable form for expression of human desires and passion. The model is certainly not alien to postmodernism on the contrary; history is a classic example of double discourse, as well as a textual mode that – like postmodern literature--avoids establishing a center within the text, because in allegory the unity of the work is provided by something that is not explicitly there. This last point is where postmodern recovery of history differs from traditional ones. Most histories depend on the existence of a recognized and more or less universally accepted frame of reference outside the text.

The comparisons between, for instance, people and insects in Byatt's novella are quite explicit, so much so that one reviewer accuses Byatt of applying the message with a trowel, and another sighs that she follows the reader around with a cowhorn, instructing him in thought and reaction, rather than rendering an action and letting the reader enjoy the illusion of freedom in his engagement with the text. The description of the clash between an aristocratic society and a new, work-oriented one seems to invite a political reading, and the feminization of the insect metaphors suggests a reading in terms of gender struggle. But the apparent transparency of the comparisons is illusory, and the meanings of the analogies remain unsteady.

Byatt uses common, even trite, metaphors, but she uses the same metaphor in several different ways, which draws attention to language itself and means that readers

will have to reevaluate their interpretation of the text over and over again. Both the figurative and the hackneyed – meanings and the literal meanings are present at the same time, and so metaphors and analogies become more than embellishments. They turn into tools that are used to establish and emphasize the double voice that is an integral part of the language and culture.

The double layer of plot that runs in the story is supported by metaphors and indeed highly appropriate postmodern devices, because they are obvious vehicles for ambiguity. A living metaphor always carries dual meanings, the literal or sentence meaning and the conveyed or utterance meaning. The strain between the figurative and the literal meaning is constantly underscored, since ants and butterflies appear both as insects and as metaphors for human behavior. As, Byatt cleverly puts poems in the form of letter conversed between the two lovers. These letters are source of coming of fiction into reality that expresses the two layers of meaning in the novel. In one of these letters, Byatt writes:

Know you not that we Women have no Powers/
In the cold world of objects Reason rules,
Where all is measured and mechanical?/
There we are chattels, baubles, property,
Flowers pent in vases with our roots sliced off,
To shine a day and perish. But you see, /
Here in this secret room, all curtained round/
With flickerings and twinklings, where all shapes. (410)

These poetic lines have two layers of meaning, running parallel to each others.

LaMotte, the beloved, dare to crush the traditional aspect of viewing woman and female, but, with no success. The second meaning is of the daring character of LaMotte, who despite being a female dares to challenge the traditional aspects of feminism of the day.

These concepts have helped to make the novel – an ideal platform for post-modernist readings of the history. These writing seek to foreground the ontological duality of metaphor, its participation in two frames of reference with different ontological statutes. This it accomplishes by aggravating metaphor's inherent ontological tensions, thereby slowing still further the already slow flicker between presence and absence. All metaphor hesitates between a literal function in a secondary frame of reference and a metaphorical function in a real frame of reference; postmodernist texts often prolong this hesitation as a means of foregrounding ontological structure.

The women have been relegated to the domestic sphere and as a result has been able to exert their power over household matters is no revolutionary insight. What give the observation new life are the analogies with bee and ant societies. One reviewer expresses his disaffection with the device thus: one “must endure the elaborate comparison of insect and human societies, an idea that I might not be alone in finding hackneyed” (61). This comment fails to acknowledge that in the novella, as in nature, ant and bee communities are predominantly female. Everything is run by and determined by females, down to the sex of the embryos. The male ants and the drones are sex objects, just like the male butterflies that flaunt their brilliant colors to attract the females, and fertilization of the females is the sole justification for their existence. When Byatt describes such a male-dominated society as the nineteenth-century English aristocracy through resolutely gendered metaphors of bees, ants, and butter flies, one of the results is to challenge the conventional picture of this society.

An epigraph is used in *Possession: A Romance* to head several chapters, particularly those early on in the book. Byatt uses it as a structural device, primarily for a subtractive function, to outline the common themes which formulate in that particular

chapter. Each epigraph serves to point the reader to important images or ideas that are going to be expanded upon throughout the chapter.

The prominence of comparisons, analogies, and metaphors places the novella in the tradition of allegorical writing, a quintessentially medieval or Renaissance genre. But allegory is also characteristic of postmodernism. A characteristic of the late twentieth century, as well as of modern literature, is that certainties are continuously called into question, and thus allegory becomes a suitable form for expression. The model is certainly not alien to postmodernism: on the contrary, allegory is a classic example of double discourse, as well as a textual mode that--like postmodern literature--avoids establishing a center within the text, because in allegory the unity of the work is provided by something that is not explicitly there.

This last point is where postmodern allegories differ from traditional ones, however, because most allegories depend on the existence of a recognized and more or less universally accepted frame of reference outside the text. But where, for example, a Protestant allegorist like John Bunyan could presuppose his reader's knowledge of the Bible, the postmodern allegorist can take no referent for granted. As a consequence, postmodern allegory is notoriously unstable, and a conventional allegorical interpretation of a work like *Possession: A Romance* becomes impossible, because no single key can explain the meaning of the analogies.

There is one more concept in process of decoding the lost history. The question is: who is in charge of decoding the history? In contrast to symbols, which are generally taken to transcend the sign and express universal truths, allegories and metaphors divide the sign, exposing its arbitrariness. Thus the historical concept ends up in allegorical impulse, which in turn has its root in the memory study. In contemporary literature, there can be seen reflection of the postmodern emphasis on the

reader as co-producer, since it invites the reader's active participation in meaning making. When, we learn about the venture of Roland and Maud, we (readers) are self engaged in the venture. But the manifestations of authorial power: led us to the desired place; that the ending of the novel, or the writer provides us. The relentless didactic works that resolutely direct the reader's interpretations is what comes out of memory, in which there are flavors of future in relation to that of the future.

One of the features of the memory studies is they do not have a fixed trend in depicting the world around them, but are depended on what they take for. If, on the other hand, allegories serve to destabilize the relation between word and meaning, between form and essence, such texts become very suitable expressions of the postmodern distrust of accurate representation. In *Possession: A Romance*, we find readers can discover several meanings in dialogue with each other, and the hierarchical relation between a monologic message and the allegorical form that obscures it collapses. Monologue plays a vital role in the making of the history in memory studies. During the course of their investigation, Christabel finds the role of love and history associated with poetry:

That is not badly put. And having written it, I am now full of a kind aesthetic love of my countrymen as of our wind. I would go on, if I were a poet, to write the poem of its keening. Or if I were a novelist, I could go on to say that in sober truth its monotonous singing can drive you half mad for silence, in the long winter days, like a man thirsting in a desert. (337)

Poetry is a recitation, largely based on memory. As such, this work precisely becomes a postmodern trend of history reading.

As such, the comparisons between, for instance, poem and in Byatt's novella are quite explicit, so much so that one reviewer accuses Byatt of applying the message with a trowel and another sighs that she follows the reader around with a cowhorn, instructing him in thought and reaction, rather than rendering an action and letting the reader enjoy the illusion of freedom in his engagement with the text.

The description of the clash between an aristocratic society and a new, work-oriented one seems to invite a political reading, and the feminization of the insect metaphors suggests a reading in terms of gender struggle. But the apparent transparency of the comparisons is illusory, and the meanings of the analogies remain unsteady. Byatt uses common, even trite, metaphors, but she uses the same metaphor in several different ways, which draws attention to language itself and means that readers will have to reevaluate their interpretation of the text over and over again.

Both the figurative or the hackneyed meanings and the literal meanings are present at the same time in the novel to depict that the metaphors and analogies become more than embellishments; and they become tools for emphasizing the double voice that is an integral part of language. In doing so, Byatt means to expose and excavate the past histories.

History and memory go in parallel as the story develops in the novel. History is indeed highly appropriate postmodern devices, because they are obvious vehicles for ambiguity. A living history is like the findings of Byatt in the novel. In an attempt to discover the lost history of the Victorian era lovers, when the present day lovers (or could be lovers) venture in an odyssey from the London Library to the county of English, they unearth various human sentiments. Sentiments flow from one to other, like, Maud notices Roland:

She was wholly aware of Roland, sitting behind her on the floor, wearing a white toweling dressing-gown, leaning up against the white sofa which he had slept during his first visit, and on which he slept now. She felt fuzz of his soft black hair, starting up above his brow, with imaginary fingers. She felt his frown between her eyes. He felt his occupation was gone; she felt his feeling. He felt he was lurking. (430)

Human sentiments are sufficiently fragile, but the wonder is, when it really turns fragile. For Maud, Roland was a mere University researcher, whom she disliked initially for his venture of unearthing the lost lovers' story. She was against the project, partly, poet Ash was of his ancestral clan and, also because, she did not liked Roland and his straightforward mannerism. But, now things were changing, at least for Maud. She was finding the very awkward and stupid Roland easy-going and loving. Somehow, love had erupted from the unexplored areas in her mind. It is certainly post-modern ways of knowing and understanding each other.

Histories are ways are as they are; or are the ways an individual taking them for. As such, things in today's world are beyond good and bad; but depend on the mentality of an individual. Roland, the university researcher is a straight forward and easy going guy. But, as most would do so in the situation, he walked away with the documents from the library, which is an illegal act. His act, according to him justifies as they open up possibilities for the research on unraveled avenue. The text contains plenty of proofs and possibilities to endorse the hypothesis that history can be rewritten through the mode of memory.

The once unknown and, initially, showing distaste towards each other, the two researchers happen to develop more fondness for poems, love letters and other secret personal documents of former lovers of Victorian period. The history as such has a

claim that the lovers weren't lovers but poets as well as scholars. The researchers begin to develop more suspicious as to the surface historical truth so they begin to study the poems and letters that were written and exchanged between the so called Victorian poets the following lines cited from the text illustrate the growing curiosity of the researchers:

Proserpine was between pages 288 and 289. Under page 300 lay two folded complete sheets of writing paper Roland opened these delicately .they were both letters in Ash's flowing hand both headed with his Great Russell street address and dated, June 21st and no mention of any year. Both began dear madam; and both were unsigned. One was considerably shorter than the other. (5)

Thus, Roland accidentally discovers two letters from research in London library. His interest quickly shifts from professional to personal and historical records and research to collecting. As personal letters erupted in frequent interval, with 'dear madam' and unsigned letter, there was a lot of space of speculation of the couples. In the same way researcher entangles with full of dilemma and confusion of remembering and the forgetting state.

Writing in fiction seeks to foreground the ontological duality of metaphor, its participation in two frames of reference with different ontological statuses. This it accomplishes by aggravating metaphor's inherent ontological tensions, thereby slowing still further the already slow flicker between presence and absence. All metaphor hesitates between a literal function in a secondary frame of reference and a metaphorical function in a real frame of reference; postmodernist texts often prolong this hesitation as a means of foregrounding ontological structure.

Using analogy displays the metaphor's reference to the real world: the world of Roland and Maud. But, the question is, is theirs' world the real, real one? Or, is it the readers' world that is real? And, who can really claim that if this (readers) world is real in real sense. As a consequence, Byatt's technique of offering metaphorical descriptions in the form of analogies ensures that the post-modern vacillation between literal and figurative meanings is constantly present in form of real and illusion.

The metaphors are unstable not only because they hover between two frames of reference: their figurative meanings are also shaky. A metaphor induces comparison, but since the grounds of similarity are not forever given, metaphors serve to emphasize the freedom of the reader as opposed to the authority of the writer. Since the interplay between metaphorical and literal meaning destabilizes both the fiction and reality and the metaphors themselves, this is one of the clearest signs of its post-modernity. As is rightly said, in post-modern history, things are not what they seem.

Coming to history as a memory study, it is concerned with the personal issues of the past. The very historian's attention tilts towards the personal matter of the former lover's letter. In this way after reading this suspicious letter Roland knows this is the handwriting of Randolph Henry Ash then Roland remains in the position of duality between accepting the exiting reality and ignoring the new truth. Hence in response to the letter written as, "Dear Madam, since our extraordinary conversation, I have thought of nothing else" (20). To which the feeling of Roland is expressed as following:

What Roland liked was his knowledge of the movement of Ash's mind stacked through the twists and clear in an unexpected epithet but these dead letters troubled him, physically even because they were only beginning. He didn't imagine Randolph Henry Ash ,his pen moving

rapidly across the paper but he did have the thought of the pads of long covered sheets before preserving them in the book instead of jettisoning them, who? He must try to find out. (20-21)

The fascinating fact on the novel is that the characters in both the time frame are indulged in summoning their beloved addressing 'dear madam.' After reading the letters Roland feels difficult to accept the fact that Randolph Henry Ash writes such shocked letter addressing to woman. Then it creates so many assumptions regarding the new truth and already created reality that is to say he sees the gap between the reality and history because history has taught him that Randolph is the great poet and scholar but after reading this letter he finds the contradictions in history and new truth.

Similarly the contradiction guides him to the researching mysteries upon the poet's correspondence. According to the letter Roland find the unknown woman, whose name is Christabel LaMotte, who is a renowned Victorian poet. After then Roland reads the article written by Crab Robinson and he gets some clue about the meeting between Christabel and Ash. Just as the Clues Roland find Maud Bailey who is expert on Christabel in the hope of finding Christabel and Maud' correspondence. They devout on the view point of resolving his contradiction they visit the St. Etheldrede churchyard where Christabel was buried which lies in Croysand le wold village. Two historians happen to see the inscription on the graveyard which is as:

Here lie the mortal remains of/Madeleine LaMotte/Elder daughter of
Isidore LaMotte/Historian And of his beloved wife Arabel
LaMotte/Only sister of Sophie, Lady Baily/Wife of sir george Bailey of
Seal Court/Croysant le wold/Born January 3rd 1825/Laid to rest may 8th
1890/After mortal trouble/Let me lie still/Where the wind drives and the
clouds stream/Over the hill/Where grass's thousand thirsty mouth/Sup up

their fill/Of the slow dew and the sharp rain/Of the mantling snow
dissolv'd again/At the Heaven's sweet will. (70)

Through the reading of the inscription Roland and Maud Bailey get the information about Christabel's family members, relatives, birth date and death date. In one hand they can't get proper information from that inscription, on the other hand they memorize the family history of Christabel Via grave's inscription. In a way very collection of the past the act unknowingly leads them to revisit the history. Then they visit the above mentioned family members to avoid the doubts and queries.

By the same way historians try to see people and places according to inscription but they never get the complete expected information then again they have great confusions. When they visit Christabel's family they get so many letters about correspondence between Christabel and Randolph Henry Ash. In that letter they only write and exchange subjects matter concerning to professional and formal topics. In response to the Randolph Henry Ash's letter Christabel writes, "I am a creature of pen, Ms Ash, my pen is the best of me, and I enclose a poem" (87). From this illustration historians come to the point that time and again they exchange the letter raising the issue of poetry. From that exchanged letter they are poets in the sense that they send their original poem of expecting the proper comment.

Roland and Maud become excited after the reading of the letters because of the initiation of private affair of poets but not in open way. It is a sensational exposition to the young researchers. For them it is like a jackpot, which was certain to make their life change for ever, and probably list them in list of great researcher of their age. The finding of the letter initially shock them, as their core belief is disbelief on the discovery of the letter. However, it is memory that manipulates them towards another finding. The letter of Ash contains as:

And it is true, as you said, across the whole hearth that I too have a house which we have a wife. You asked me to speak of her and I was speechless. I know not how you constructed that I grant it was your absolute right to ask and yet I couldn't answer. I have a wife, and I love her not as I love you. I think your house did not love me, and I should not have come.

(198)

Above mentioned lines illustrate that these writings are written in response to Cristabel' letter and this writing exposes the extra love affair between Christabel and Ash marriage. Ash has been involved in extra lover affair by hiding his own married condition. History is never concerned with about the dark side of personal matter so historians first get that sort of love affairs of the so called Victorian poets. Roland and Maud study that memoir from the postmodern perspective then it highlights the hidden truth, in a way the identity and reality change throughout the collected letter of the Victorian lovers. So memory studies suggests that identity and truth are contingent which keep on changing that is to say memory study challenges the notion of fixity and objective truth.

Similar to the post-modern trend, Ash sometimes goes apart from his wife to maintain sexual relationship with Christabel. However, this very uncommon and often trend turns into a deep relationship in due course of time. Ash writes letter to his wife Ellen, but Historians shows their doubts on it, as:

[We] read exactly like the letters of solitary husband on holiday, taking on his wife of an empty evening .Unless it's significance that he never says what you were here or even I wish you could make of it apart from there obvious reference to drowned is which we knew about think about

it if you were a man in the excited state of the writer of the Christabel letters. (210)

This given lines say that Randolph Henry Ash has just pretended as if husband remembering to his wife but as such he is not really doing so. On the contrary he is enjoying with another woman on the holiday that means they are in romance.

On the other hand, Roland and Maud are in still on process of reading correspondence with addressing, as:

My very dear,

[. . .]

I don't wish to do irreparable damage to your life. I have at least so much of rational understanding left to me, as to beg you – against my desire, my own hope, and my own true love – to think before and after. [. . .] I send my love; now and always. (201)

From that writing also Roland and Maud easily single out that they are lover and they are in love affair. Likewise memoir represents Victorian poets identity has shown in just in alternative way that means they are lover and beloved not merely poets.

As the two historians proceed on their work they happen to see the journal written by Sabine Lucrece Charlotte De Kerocoz which tells about the Christabel father's way of story telling and his behavior towards daughter as well as Christabel's walks of life in the Journal she express that “we have been looking for her Christabel for two days she went out yesterday morning to walk up to the Church as she has increasingly done over these last weeks .it turns out that the villagers have been her standing they say for long period” (374). From these lines both historian enter in the confusion why she is being out of contact for long time that's means it creates so many

curiosities and only get the idea of out of contact but they can't acquire the supposed information.

In this way, Roland and Maud both stand as in the position of getting the unfolding the new truth but in time they aren't able to do so. There cannot be a firm and ultimate truth in today's world, as in the novel. In this context memory studies gives the fluid truth and through the memoirs historians gain the continuous changing fact but they don't get the objective truth. In that process they collect the letter written by Ariane Le Minier to Maud Bailey, where they read:

I was certainly under the Impression that students of LaMotte believe her to have lived a secluded life, in happy lesbian relationship with Blanche Glover, you know of any lover a possible lover who might have been the father of this child? The question imposes itself the suicide of Blanche connected to the history related in the text? Perhaps you can enlighten man? (379-380)

After investigating with lines from the letter they come to know Christabel has lesbian relationship with Blanche Glover. Hence different kinds of guess are progressing in their mind when they read Blanche Glover suicide. In the Victorian time, a poet of such fame getting involve, in such a lesbian relationship is not believable in the begging but the chain of information can lead them to the acceptance. The history as such has a claim that the lesbian relationship was not identified in the Victorian era; hence that was not the matter of gender issue. Thus so called history always hides the seamy side of the period and the ugly aspect the reality therefore memory studies represents that marginalized issues with the extra emphasis

Despite the so many attempts of collecting the letters and visiting the relatives they can't way out from the contradiction between new reality and already existed

reality. So far as the concerned of the authenticity of the findings the historians and leading experts make a decision of excavating the grave of Ash. The excavation of the grave is one of the most crucial findings in the course of the novel. The following cited lines exemplify the leading experts dig up grave:

Went on digging, Hilderbrand began to crawl closely around the rim of Cropper's excavation, the very bases of the yew and the cader began to shift to move laterally and to complain .Cropper pushed at the box with useless finger chipped at a corner with a wife, took envelope, slipped hid knife under the seal, and opened it. Inside were letter and a photograph.
(498)

After digging up the grave of the Randolph Henry Ash, the excavated box containing letter dwells upon the possibilities of unfolding of the hidden truth. What they attempt was the only one last option so they have applied it. Then they get the series of the information in the single letter which is written by Christabel in the last moment of their relationship in view point of exposing the hidden fact but unfortunately Randolph's wife doesn't let to know that letter. Instead of handover this letter Ellen buries the letter in the grave of Randolph Henry Ash so that it remains secret for long time.

By the same token they take letter which is written at the last moment of their relationship, however the letter is single and that gives detail answer of the mystery and that letter contains information about their illegitimate daughter as well her photograph. In that letter Christabel writes:

You have daughter, who is well, and married and the mother of a beautiful boy. I send her picture and they tell me you are ill – and so our daughter was born in Brittany, in the convent and carries to England

where Sophie took her and brought her up as her own, as we had agreed and I will say that Sophie has and cherished her as well as anyone not her time mother might do. (500)

After reading this letter historians find that Victorian poets who indulge in the extra marital affair, illegitimate child birth and adultery which are taken as crime in Victorian period, such issues were in the margin. That much marginalized issues are ventriloquized in the post modern recovery of the history by the virtue of the memory studies. The things which the history takes asocial these issues are brought out as social in memory studies.

Regarding the letter written by Christabel, historians Roland and Maud sees Christabel's daughter Maia' wedding photograph in that situation they express their feelings. The photograph of the wedding is a crucial breakthrough in the findings of the lost history, as it takes the readers and scholars to the new breakthrough. As, it presents the present day scholars with the clue that Roland and Maud, indeed have has a relationship. As the excerpts go:

She looks like Christabel,' said Maud 'you can see it. She looks like you, ' said Roland .He added, ' she looks like Randolph Henry Ash ,too the width of the brow ,the width of the mouth the end of the eyes brows these so like Randolph Henry Ash . She said, ' I have seen this we have one .she was my great – Great grand mother. (504-5)

They imagine the similarity between the ancestors of Maia and Maud from that already snapped photograph. They come to the point that Christabel is grandmother of Maud too from these findings. Maud is indirectly searching her roots through deferent kinds of the collection and she revisits her family history too. From the persisting research tells that before this research Maud herself did not know her own family roots.

In course of reading the letter Roland and Maud further keep on knowing the hidden facts via the long letter which was written after knowing Randolph Henry Ash is ill. Christabel updates their long gaps through this letter:

Randolph I send you my blessing, and I ask yours and your forgiveness, if it may be. For I know and must have known that you have a generous heart and would have cared for us me and Maia but I had truth best ,now is it not? – I was afraid ,you see that would wish to take her ,you and your wife ,for your very own and she was mine ,I bore her – I couldn't let her go and so I hid her from you and you from her ; for she would have loved you ; there is a space in her life forever ,which is yours. (500)

As the process of recreating the past through the collection they get the proper reason of Christabel writing this detail letter. In the letter Christabel mentions her obligation of taking this issue in secret. In the letter, she says to Randolph that they he already has a wife; to which Christabel says that she does not want to break the family relationship that is to say she time and again expresses her love in every moment. On the other hand the Victorian society was not so liberal to accept these types of problem in way she has to depart from her lover due to social rule and order.

The investigation and analysis into the Victorian era yielded to the finding of the lost history of the famous Victorian poet hence finally the historians decide to dig the grave of former lovers. While digging the grave they happened to find a letter which clarified every confusion and mystery pertaining to the former lovers. In the letter it was mentioned that the love, that had developed, had gone beyond the normal level of emotional attraction. Their affair had flourished in the establishment of physical relationship and eventually in the birth a child. The letter, that was found in the grave, represents the confessional attitude of lovers having understood the crucial

necessity and colorful history of the former lovers, the historians develop different viewpoint on the subject of the role romance in romanticizing life thus the researcher concludes and investigating of memory yielded in the reconstruction of the history of the role of romance in romanticizing the arid lives of the analysts and historians.

Thus, the odyssey of the present day couple; Roland and Maud end up digging up the past; but the question remains, what they have achieved in the process. And, the simple answer is that they have understood each other well; despite their initial dislike to each other. One of the features of living in post-modern time is amid differences, in a parallel structure; like the two levels of meaning presented by *Possession: A Romance*. Byatt presents her double layered of ideas through the fusion of history and fiction. It is a tool to recapture the lost history, which is nothing but fiction in the making.

4. Conclusion

After a thorough analysis of Byatt's *Possession: A Romance*, the present researcher has come to a conclusion that history is associated with unearthing the forgotten past which in turn makes the present history as fiction and vice-versa. In literature, fiction and history go hand in hand, as what is history today becomes fiction for tomorrow, which eventually leads to the findings of buried secrets and mysteries; a typical way that changes history to fiction.

Possession: A Romance is a two facet story; one that takes place in the latter part of the twentieth century, and other in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It narrates the attempts, ups and downs in the relationship of two academics, who are in a venture of unearthing the history of two Victorians poets love story. Roland Mitchell and Dr. Maud Bailey, the central characters of the story start their journey from a library in London, from the hints Roland gets from a sheet of old papers wrapped in an old book in the library. He is later joined by Maud, and together, they start their venture on unearthing the lost history of two Victorian poet's love story.

A Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash is a married man of dignity and status in the contemporary society. The researchers delve deeper into the turbulent lives of the two poets through their letters, journals and poems. They trace the Victorian poets' secret from London to north Yorkshire coast, from spiritualist situations to the fairy haunted far west-Brittany. However, his secret aspect is, he is in relationship with LaMotte, a poet of his time. They establish their relationship through code letters they send to each other, untitled, unnamed and without a proper salutation. In doing so, their relationship goes as far as sexual and, a child is born to them. But, the interesting part of the novel is the present day, researcher Dr. Maud's cousin sister is the living

descendant of Ash and LaMotte's relationship. This love relationship was not known until; Roland unearths them from the grave, by unearthing its' remains.

Thus, despite the conflicting relationship between the present day couple; of Roland and Maud, the novel gives a happy ending to the Victorian era lovers. It is likely that the present day lovers will find solace in their relationship amid their dislikes; a feature of the post-modern love story. Thus, the essence of the novel, revisiting of history in post-modern time by blending history with memory study comes to an ending. Memory study, a prominent feature of post-modern literature is adding flavor to the revisiting of history from an entirely different perspective. Thus, *Possession: A Romance* is a journey into the excavation of a fiction and challenging the entire concept of the realm of present history.

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