

Turbulent Flow: Chaos as a Narrative Technique

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Inelegant versions of existence are often aesthetically negotiated through unorthodox and irregular aspects of narration. They are deemed immoral when considered against the backdrop of the traditional aspect of developing the narrative's plot linearly. When Chaos Theory advanced upon the scientific discourses of study, it asserted a sense of importance on the free play of multiple consciousnesses in the empirical world's various meaning-making processes. To adhere to the organicity of empirical experiences, even writers had to acknowledge the presence of the "the great gulf between knowledge of what one thing does – one water molecule, one cell of heart tissue, one neuron – and what millions of them do" (Gleick 8). The relational dynamics and flow of characters and events in a narrative provide the text with an instability that is turbulent and audacious enough to be aesthetically still.

Each fissured stroke of a character's presence, absence, entry, and exit in the flow narrative may have the capacity to be designed in a manner where they supply meaning in addition to the dialogical text. The writer's intent may intrude assertively in the text and the manner in which meaning reaches the reader. Meaning is still, however, negotiated between the writer and the reader but the entry point of signifiatory alterations in the text remains an expression of free will by the writer. Along with the awareness of chaos as potential in the scientific domain of discoveries, many organic minds witnessed the presence of chaos as a technique and form in the aesthetic realm of literature without the conscious canon of discourse as a staunch theory.

Around the 1960s, cognitive audacity of the organic intellectuals provided a chance of revisiting much of literature but with a varied perspective enabling the supply of a new text from an old book. Chaos was not the discovery of something new. It was always already present in each deterministic system that has been conceptualised as total, complete and absolute. The revelation emphasised that dissipation is a part of stability in a system. It arises from within a stable system and is not introduced from the outer, immoral realm of a system. Randomness or chaos in a pristine and precise system arises from the midst of regular and routinely movement of elements within it.

Writers had long conceptualised that the chaotic arrangement of narrative instancing can unravel beauty that otherwise would have eluded a representational image in the text through the intent of words. Traffic, for example, works in a similar manner. Understand the concept of an individual

who wishes to learn the art of driving a car. Isolated tracks of a driving school offer her the space of frolic and play without the interruptions of other reckless and righteous drivers around her. Her capacity to learn driving the car is easily achieved in the linear atmosphere of the learning school. It would be, however, infinitely removed from the empirical reality and actuality of the world around. Traffic, by its fundamental nature, is turbulent and, thus, chaotic. Each shape of the road and its modulations that are extended to ease the congestion of a road patch in an area have the untimely defeat when it supplies higher rates and instances of congestion further on from the moment of its applicability.

Humans endlessly believe that a tendency to support a linear module in application around them, like the assembly line of the industrial revolution, signifies order, efficiency, and comfort. Such a comfort, paradoxically, is a stagnant expression of existence. Through the metaphor of traffic, organic minds of the twentieth century in the field of science adhered respect to the capacity of uncertainty on the trajectory of a deterministic individual, for example, driving is a negotiation between the self and the impact of choices that the other drivers endlessly take. Isolated movements, like the ones eternally taught in traditional physics, help conceptualise a phenomenon in a manner so that the human mind can comprehend it, still, it rarely exhibits the behaviour that humans witness in the formation of weather and clouds for instance.

James Gleick was a meteorologist, and in his book *Chaos* (1998), he expressed how he would often look out his window to witness the fiddling of clouds above his house while his extremely expensive and specialised computer repeatedly asserted, through taut and precise algorithms, that it would be sunny outside for days at a stretch. His contribution is remarkable for his stances of reality, of being worthy enough to counter the discourses of traditional physics, the terminology of which has been adopted through generations without a single utterance of doubt. He claimed and contested that the sole reason why weather conditions are elusive is that small changes in the initial conditions lead to drastic changes in the final condition, and thus no change is insignificant, irrelevant, or merely a dissipation when the functionality of a system is concerned.

Aesthetically, the turbulence of such nature was asserted in various texts even before James Gleick was born. Gordon Slethaug, who wrote *Beautiful Chaos* (2001), explored the implications of chaos theory in some literary works. He asserted that these writers explored the nuances of chaos and its aesthetic consequentiality of causing turbulence in a text. Slethaug asserted that texts “are subject to turbulence at almost any point” (Slethaug 63). The writer of *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science* (2018), Katherine Hayles admitted that “writing is turbulence, or more precisely, brings turbulence into being” (24). Such writers provide a direction in which

intellectuals could witness the always already presence of chaos and its varied nuances.

The purpose was to attempt and etch various forms in which chaos exhibits its potentiality in a text. One such form is the Turbulent flow, where the flow of the narrative asserts a sense of chaos which offers a chance of inflicting meaning upon a text which otherwise could not be attained. It is inspired deeply by the works of Gleick, Slethaug and Hayles when concerned with the scientific aspect of the research and explored a way towards the aesthetics of chaos supplying it with a theory that is rarely needed but the exploration of which could supply readers with an insight that would enhance their experience of the text.

Narrative gaps and ruptures may seem insignificant to an unaware mind, but it is through them chaos flows into the text and extends the plurality of meaning. These gaps, disturbances, and ruptures were blatantly shunned by the scientific discourses for a long, long time. It was stated that “for most physicists, turbulence was too dangerous to waste time on” (Gleick 121). Such statements expressed the state of the human condition when sections of organic intellectuals wished to explore the improper and immoral gaps of chaos in scientific and literary narratives. Gleick elaborated the presence of turbulence in a stabilised and controlled system through the example of water flow through a pipe. A perfectly smooth pipe attached to a perfectly modulated source of water is supposed to be perfectly shielded from vibrations and dissipations of any kind. The flow and vents may be controlled, but the turbulence of the water is untamed when it comes out of the hose. Gleick observed the unrest that was caused in physicists as they were unable to comprehend the empirical chaos of a controlled situation, and they wondered “how can such a flow create something random?” (122). One can wonder how humiliating it must have been for traditional intellectuals in the scientific field to witness the eternal presence of dissipation in their deterministic system while they shunned its existence as irrelevant and absent from a perfect system.

The writers of the Turbulent Flow adhere to the potential of dissipation in the narrative flow. The gaps and ruptures in the narrative may seem immature or irrelevant to the unaware reader, but they provide aesthetic experience to those who patiently approach the realm of chaos in literature. Toni Morrison, in her novel *The Bluest Eye*, fiddled with the linear flow of the narrative and introduced turbulence in the narrative. While introducing Mr. Henry in the novel, the subjectivity of the narrator intrudes the linearity of the narrative. It impacted the readers’ present understanding of the character himself by a conclusion that is made from the events that happen later in the narrative. On seeing Mr. Henry, Claudia stated her opinion in a manner that altered the way the reader would negotiate with him, “We loved him. Even after what came later, there

was no bitterness in our memory of him” (Morrison 14). The linearity of the narrative is breached by a gap through which the effects and events of the past, being recollected in the present scenario, alter the future negotiations of the readers.

Morrison admitted that her intent in *The Bluest Eye* was to “break the narrative into parts that had to be reassembled by the reader” (Introduction x). These narrative gaps ensured that Morrison could dismantle the narrative only for it to be reassembled by the readers in their own nonlinear manners of existence with which they affiliate meaning to the text that was without dialogue but with context to the lack of chronology of the narrative, which impacted the interpretation that was bombarded on the characters of the narrative even without their committing a crime while they are introduced as offenders. Hayles asserted that a gap in the narrative is “never merely a void” (73), but is a “fold that conceals or a tear that reveals” (73). Such a tear in the narrative fabric is an aesthetic gap and “through this gap chaos pours” (73).

Clarissa’s introspections of herself in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) are designed such by Virginia Woolf that they cause a rupture in the cognitive trajectory that rationality flaunts as a stable and deterministic. Woolf narrated about Clarissa’s introspect: “Perfect idiocy she knew (and now the policeman held up his hand) for no one was ever for a second taken in” (13). The usage of commas and other sentences to capture the fleeting state of Clarissa’s mind could be used in the narrative, but Woolf asserted her organicity to enable the readers’ in feeling the turbulent flow of Clarissa’s cognition, the one each individual in a system holds. The random nature of comprehension that humans hold towards the events that unfurl around them is the natural state of being. It aids the interpretative audacity of the readers who wish to approach the aura of a character so intense and split in the situation she has been shaped by and for.

Slethaug explored the nuances of traffic and how each individual utterance of a car’s movement alters the manner in which the other cars state their reality. Not only does, he says, “traffic piles up in unpredictable ways but their very design, meant to minimize disorder, often contributes to chaotic behaviour” (77). Despite the linear plans of engineers to decongest often intensify the traffic pile-ups, they also inflict a realisation in the traditional intellectuals that controlled circumstances, situations, and conditions do not always and eternally unfurl controlled outcomes and patterns in a system. Turbulent Flow is the embrace of turbulence in the narrative escape by various writers where they respect and admire the effect of dissipative turbulence in their narrative and how it sustains the character’s dynamicity in the text.

Morrison calmly introduced the trajectorial conclusion of her narrative in

the prologue she supplied to *The Bluest Eye*. She accorded the readers with the knowledge that no marigolds bloomed in the fall of 1941 and Claudia narrated, “We thought, at the time, that it was because Pecola was having her father’s baby that the marigolds did not grow” (3). An event that is vital in understanding the actuality of the text is delivered to the readers in a manner where the climax, in the context of the Aristotelian model, is nonlinearly situated in the introductory briefing as such. Claudia’s perspective statement conjured a sense of pity and sympathy for Pecola and a sense of detest and contempt for her father. Normalcy for the readers is when they host these emotions towards the conclusion of the narrative. Such a breach in the narrative ensures that the novel is read always and already with a blue, painful eye igniting more concern towards the how rather than what occurs in a totalitarian system for which the writers provide an aesthetic expression of dissent.

Imposing incestuous inflictions on Pecola’s father, Morrison hints at the development of characters through the context of Pecola’s situation, while Pecola herself rarely claims a narrative space of dialogism. Morrison extended her audacity and submitted the end of the narrative at the beginning itself in order to sustain the blue eyes of the readers throughout the narrative when she created a rupture through the articulation of Claudia, “Nothing remains but Pecola and the unyielding earth. Cholly Breedlove is dead; our innocence too” (4). The destination of the narrative is already deduced for the reader and the emphasis, like any aesthetic expression and experiences, lays on the journey that is embarked upon after being unsettled by such turbulent fissures in the narrative that succumbed the readers to the conclusion while venturing the introduction itself.

Morrison accepted, “But since why is difficult to handle, one must take refuge in how” (4) as she unfurled the consequentiality that led to the creation of Pecola and her tragedy through the hands of those who inflicted her with their version of reality and beauty rather than finding it in her. Morrison’s intent of embarking Pecola as a mute essence moulded and shaped by the constraints of the society designs itself through the turbulence of the narrative. Hayles commented on the linearity of the narrative “When I return to the chapter’s beginning with the foreknowledge of the end, I can see plainly enough that it was all there in the beginning, had I only known how to read it” (Hayles 67). Morrison folded the narrative in such a manner that the turbulence etched the knowledge of the end at the beginning of the narrative in order to attain the attention of the readers towards the causes and reasons for a character’s misery rather than the culmination of her narrative as an individual. Pecola suffered is the fact that Morrison clarified, but the fictionalisation of the parameters with which her beauty was judged and rebuked remains the sole venture of the readers to explore through the rupture caused by Morrison.

Arthur Miller, in *Death of a Salesman*, fractured the stage settings and directions, and through these gaps, he wished to nourish the narrative flow. “The entire setting is wholly or, in some places, partially transparent” (7), he admitted about the setting in which he made his play flow. There is an apron in the front which “serves as the backyard as well as the locale of all Willy’s imaginings” (7). The events of the past are mostly designated to this area and “whenever the action is in the present the actors observe the imaginary wall-lines, entering the house only through its door at the left” (7). However, “in the scenes of the past these boundaries are broken, and characters enter or leave a room by stepping ‘through’ a wall on to the forestage” (7). The complexity of the stage setting enabled him to harbour turbulence in his play without eternally insisting a dialogue to impose a Spatio-temporal shift in the events of the narrative.

The flow of events through these breaches of past and,nt enhance the subtle play of nonlinearity in the narrative which, in turn, intensifies the dynamics of the characters. Nonlinearity, as physicists observed in scientific models, interferes with the linear flow of factors and values, and the result of such interferences is not eternally catastrophic for the system or the elements within the system. The American dream is negotiated in the play by Miller with the emphasis on the split in an individual between the dream that is imposed through the articulations of billboards and advertisements, and the potency of the individual to be imaginative and dreamy. Willy regretted the present exclusively in the context of the past that he cherished as a salesman. Each moment and event in the present dwelled in him to create a presence of the past essences, which he endured and laments in the present.

Miller introduced the rupture in Willy’s personality through the reminiscences he held of his son’s fixing of his car when Biff was young and the present scenario where, in the present, Biff and Happy are upstairs from their father and discussing the rift that Biff has with his father. It is floated that Biff often made Willy proud through his acts of intelligence in the past that made Willy imagine a future for Biff as an impressive salesman like him. As Biff grew up, he diverged from the linear trajectory that his father anticipated out of him and that caused the lament in Willy who lamented the glorified past. While Biff and Happy are talking upstairs, Willy is downstairs and unaware that he is audible to his sons:

HAPPY. You’re not still sour on Dad, are you, Biff?

BIFF. He’s all right, I guess.

WILLY. (underneath them, in the living-room). Yes, sir, eighty thousand miles -
eighty-two thousand!

BIFF. You smoking?

HAPPY. (holding out a pack of cigarettes). Want one?

BIFF (taking a cigarette). I can never sleep when I smell it.

WILLY. What a simonizing job, heh! (Miller14)

Willy hosted a gap in his essentiality and that enhances the turbulent aspect of the narrative. The random leaps of cognition that caused Willy a sense of lament and regret ruptured his mind. It was represented through the stage setting and the flow of the narrative entirely for the audience to unravel the nonlinear cognitive leaps of a troubled mind much like theirs in empirical situations that they face eternally in their experiences of reality. Miller conceptualised that the gaps he wishes to provide for the narrative, through them chaos shall pour which shall aesthetically extend the debate and concern of modern human parameters of linear progress while being reduced to unaware elements in a system. Like the smooth pipe that can, without utmost obviousness, supply a happy and perfect flow, American dream progressed with a similar claim in the consciousness that adhered to their trust and belief in its claim. Willy was a consequence of the American dream, and he was turbulent even though the claim of the dream was to bring linearity and happiness to the element who wished to reach and arrive at it.

Miller comprehended the aspect of nonlinearity that shielded an element through the afflictions of a system. The conditional inability of Willy to negotiate the contours of turbulence that bombard his mind causes him to be troubled and be in agony throughout the narrative. The flow of narrative depicts the angst of his personality and extends the aesthetic claim of nonlinearity as an embrace of existence rather than its dissipation. Willy was unwilling to embrace the divergent trajectories of life that his sons had chosen in their lives. Without compromises, Willy wished everything to be circular in motion and right in the linear trajectory of existence. He denied the aspect of life which is dynamically unstable in nature and defiles being routinely in the behaviour of any sort.

A puncture in the narrative floated the essence of Willy to a realm where a woman is placed in the context of his wife, Linda. The presence of the woman gapes through a dialogue that Willy uttered as a praise for his wife while she was present before him:

WILLY. You're the best there is, Linda, you're a pal, you know that? On the road - on the road I want to grab you sometimes and just kiss the life out of you . . . There's so much I want to make for-

THE WOMAN. Me? You didn't make me, Willy. I picked you.

WILLY (pleased). You picked me?

THE WOMAN (Who is quite proper-looking, Willy's age). I did.
(Miller 29)

In the linear trajectory of the narrative, Willy's lament and guilt cause a rupture through which the relevance of the woman in the past is turbulently negotiated through the emphasis of her aura being more than that of Linda in the present. The aversion of asserting a flashback by Miller is crucial in understanding the Turbulent Flow of the narrative. It is a knitting factor through which emotions and feelings are associated. The ruptures cause the simultaneous existence of the past in the present and vice versa. A human being is never consciously devoid of his/her past, and the organic nuances of his son caused turbulence in the stabilised and perfect existence of Willy. Willy, pleasing the woman in the stage presence of Linda, etches a zone of polarity between the past and the present that are rarely distinct features and attributes in his mind. While being seated in the dining area, Willy is placed in front of the audience as a voice awaiting affiliation with context. He is heard advising Biff to wait for schooling to be over:

Then when you're all set, there'll be plenty of girls for a boy like you. (He smiles broadly at a kitchen chair.) That so? The girls pay for you? (He laughs.) Boy you must really be makin' a hit.

(WILLY is gradually addressing - physically - a point off stage, speaking through the wall of the kitchen, and his voice has been rising in volume to that of a normal conversation). (Miller 21)

The knitting of two varied stands in the moments of observation by the reader causes a sympathetic blend of the past and the future. To enhance and extend the turbulence of the narrative, Miller depicted the entry and exit of Biff and Happy through the walls as well, signifying the past essences of their character. Young Biff asked Willy, while looking in the direction of the car offstage, "How's that, pop, professional?" (22). The readers witness the presence of Biff and Happy in the past of Willy not merely as abstractions but actual interactions that intensify the unsettled attributions of Willy's shattering cognition caused by the deviation from the American dream.

The trigger of the pair of stockings folds the two women in the assertively unaffected flow of Willy. On seeing Linda mending the stockings, Willy bursts in disappointment, "Will you stop mending stockings? At least while I'm in the house. It gets me nervous. I can't tell you. Please" (58), but Miller breached the stage to let the chaos pour for the audience to witness:

THE WOMAN. (He [Willy] suddenly grabs her and kisses her roughly.) You kill me.

And thanks for the stockings. I love a lot of stockings. Well, good night.

WILLY. Good night. And keep your pores open!

THE WOMAN. Oh, Willy! (The WOMAN bursts out laughing, and LINDA's laughter blends in. The WOMAN disappears into the dark. Now the area at the kitchen table brightens. LINDA is sitting where she was at the kitchen table, but now is mending a pair of her silk stockings.)

LINDA. You are, Willy. The handsomest man. You've got no reason to feel that.

WILLY (coming out of the WOMAN'S dimming area and going over to LINDA). I'll make it all up to you, Linda, I'll -

LINDA. There's nothing to make up, dear. You're doing fine, better than -

WILLY (noticing her mending). What's that?

LINDA. Just mending my stockings. They're so expensive.

WILLY (angrily, taking them from her). I won't have you mending stockings in this

house! Now throw them out! (LINDA puts the stockings in her pocket). (Miller 30)

The nipping visual of Linda stitching the damaged stockings also weaved the strand of Willy's guilt. Merging laughters foreground the split in the reactions of Willy on the same ornament. Miller's fissured turbulence in the character of Willy, being divergent and convergent of past and present, has narrative references and affectuations, and he aesthetically insisted the turbulence neither through the dialogues of the characters which narrated the gap nor through the distinct flashback involving the characters. He asserted the presence of the past in the absence of the present, and that ruptured the narrative.

The aesthetic capacity of chaos that has been endured by literature sans a theory for literature is in itself a journey towards chaos. Literary texts that embark beyond the spatio-temporal praxis of existence in which they conceptualised owe their survival to certain, willing or unwilling, chaotic essences that sustain the text to be read and reread over the ages and regions. Turbulent Flow is an audacious attempt by various writers to console the cognitive itches of the readers and ensure them of the capacity of meaning-making even when

there exists a lack of linearity. The scientific field of enquiry in the twentieth-century encompassed the divergent views of reality. Literature, however, has articulated the marginal stances of existence from time immemorial to be empathetic, sensitive, and sensible towards the empirical dynamicity of individuals about whom it is about.

The providence of hope is eternally towards humanity when the purpose of literature is sought. In attaining such a sense of belonging, writers moved towards the associative capacity of the readers. They comprehended the capacity of the readers to relate to the nonlinear leaps of the narrative exclusively to provide the imaginative scape innumerable individuals host in their consciousness even when conditioned impeccably by the linear mannerisms of life. Chaos in literature adheres to the form and design that causes a literary work to be existent. It is often beyond the readers and the writers themselves. It is about humanity.

Empirical experiences of humanity may be curtailed as abnormal if not belonging to the traditional linearity of the system in which an individual is born and raised. Organic writers accommodate the leap of chaotic endeavours within the text to perforate the taut morality of existence that defies the dissipative agency of cognition and imagination to be existent exclusively by claiming them as immoral and decadent to the human state of existence. The immorality of chaos, as defended by physicists as well, is an unhinged perspective that has more to do with the morality of the self rather than the morality of the other. The turbulent narrative may be offensive to the practitioners and protectors of the linear flow of narrative, but it is dependent exclusively on the person who witnesses it as what.

Chaos theory in literature celebrates the lack of totalitarian fixity and reality exclusively to relate it to the dynamics of empirical life and not to the diagrams of a liquid boiling in a vessel in perfect circles splitting right in the middle at the surface. Reality is raw, ugly, and thawing with imperfections, because the fissures of dissipation are not eternally departing towards immorality but often a different morality that is subjective, highly, to the parameters with which consciousness visits them. An individual's morality may be posed as immorality in a system dislocated by time and space.

Chaos, thus, emphasises on the organicity of experience that may not always already be encapsulated in the terminology of expression that is flaunted by the isolation of morality in any system. One should, as one must, imagine chaos as a dialogical embrace of stability and instability with the intent to celebrate the fluidity of static variables and consonants of life. It may be ugly at first, and in the last as well, but then what is beauty? One must ponder.

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