

Memory, Emotional Loss, and Social Responsibility in The Sense of an Ending

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Abstract

This study analyzes Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* through an ethical criticism approach, focusing on moral responsibility, accountability, and the ethical dimensions of memory and emotional loss. The paper argues that Tony Webster's retrospective narration demonstrates how selective memory and self-deception operate as ethical distortions that impair moral judgment and enable the avoidance of responsibility for past actions. Tony's reliance on partial recollection reveals the instability of personal narratives and their role in shaping ethical self-perception. Emotional loss, expressed through regret, guilt, and delayed moral awareness, functions as a catalyst for ethical reflection and compels the narrator to reassess his past conduct and its consequences for others. Drawing on principles of narrative ethics, the study conceptualizes memory not merely as a cognitive process but as an ethical domain in which moral responsibility is negotiated and reassessed. The gradual disclosure of suppressed truths exposes the ethical consequences of misremembering and highlights the necessity of honest self-examination. Furthermore, the novel links individual moral failure to broader social responsibility, emphasizing that ethical accountability extends beyond private conscience to include obligations toward others. The study concludes that *The Sense of an Ending* presents memory and morality as fundamentally interconnected, positioning ethical remembrance as a prerequisite for moral awareness, responsible judgment, and sustained engagement with others within a shared social and moral context. **Keywords:** Memory Construction; Emotional Loss and Guilt; Ethical Responsibility; Narrative Unreliability; Moral Consciousness

1.1 Introduction

In contemporary English fiction, memory has become a central narrative and ethical concern, reflecting broader debates about identity, responsibility, and moral accountability in late modern societies. Literary narratives increasingly challenge the assumption that memory functions as an objective record of the past, emphasizing instead its selective and reconstructive nature. Within this critical framework, Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* (2011) emerges as a significant exploration of how personal memory shapes ethical self-understanding and moral judgment. The novel foregrounds memory as a fragile and unstable construct, revealing how acts of remembering are often governed by emotional self-interest and retrospective justification rather than factual accuracy. By presenting memory as an interpretive process rather than a reliable archive, Barnes aligns his narrative with theoretical perspectives that conceptualize recollection as an ethically charged reconstruction of experience rather than a transparent recovery of the past (Ricoeur, 2004). Julian Barnes's sustained engagement with themes of memory, time, and moral responsibility is structurally embedded in the narrative voice of *The Sense of an Ending*. The novel is narrated by Tony Webster, whose retrospective account initially appears coherent and balanced but gradually reveals significant gaps, contradictions, and omissions. Tony's narration exemplifies the concept of unreliability, not as intentional deception but as a consequence of selective recall and moral defensiveness. Through this narrative strategy, Barnes exposes how memory functions as a mechanism of self-exculpation, allowing the narrator to minimize his ethical responsibility for past actions. The act of narration thus becomes inseparable from moral judgment, transforming memory into a site where ethical accountability is negotiated, deferred, or denied (Ricoeur, 2004). Emotional loss constitutes a crucial dimension

of the novel's ethical inquiry, operating as a catalyst for delayed moral awareness rather than immediate emotional response. In *The Sense of an Ending*, loss extends beyond personal grief to encompass the erosion of ethical responsibility and emotional engagement. The suicide of Adrian Finn represents a pivotal narrative event that destabilizes Tony's self-perception and exposes the long-term consequences of emotional detachment and moral indifference. Rather than producing instant remorse, this loss generates a belated confrontation with guilt, illustrating how ethical awareness may be suppressed for decades through narrative rationalization. Barnes presents emotional loss as a disruptive force that compels the narrator to reassess his past actions and acknowledge their impact on others (Barnes, 2011). Beyond its psychological implications, the novel situates memory and emotional loss within a broader framework of social responsibility. Barnes challenges the assumption that moral accountability is limited to overt actions, emphasizing instead the ethical significance of silence, neglect, and passive complicity. Tony's gradual recognition of his responsibility toward others reveals how private moral failures produce enduring social consequences. The novel thus critiques contemporary moral disengagement by demonstrating how individuals evade responsibility through selective remembrance and narrative simplification. In this sense, *The Sense of an Ending* positions personal memory as a site of ethical and social interrogation, where individual experience is inseparable from collective moral life (Barnes, 2011).

2.2 . Research Problem

Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* occupies a significant position in contemporary English fiction for its sustained engagement with memory as a subjective and unreliable narrative construct. While the novel has frequently been read in terms of personal recollection and narrative unreliability, critical discourse has not sufficiently examined how memory operates as an ethical mechanism through which emotional loss reshapes moral awareness and social responsibility. The central research problem of this study lies in exploring how individual memory, marked by selectivity, distortion, and omission, contributes to the formation—or deferral—of ethical accountability within the narrative. More specifically, the study investigates how experiences of emotional loss generate guilt and retrospective self-examination, compelling the narrator to reassess his moral obligations toward others and society. The problem, therefore, is not merely how memory represents the past, but how it actively mediates the relationship between emotional loss and the emergence of social responsibility, raising critical questions about whether the narrator's moral awakening signifies genuine ethical transformation or a belated narrative attempt to rationalize past indifference.

1.3. Aims and Objectives

This study aims to examine Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* through an ethical critical framework by analyzing how memory and emotional loss operate as moral forces that shape ethical judgment and social responsibility within the narrative. It seeks to demonstrate how memory functions not as a neutral recollection of the past but as an ethically charged process that mediates guilt, accountability, and retrospective self-evaluation. By focusing on narrative unreliability and emotional loss, the study explores the ways in which delayed moral recognition emerges as both an ethical awakening and a potential strategy of moral evasion, thereby revealing the novel's broader ethical critique of individual responsibility in a contemporary social context.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to current scholarship on contemporary English fiction by advancing an ethically oriented reading of Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*, foregrounding the moral and social implications of memory reconstruction and emotional loss. By integrating ethical criticism with narrative analysis, the study addresses a critical gap in existing research that has largely privileged psychological and formal approaches to memory while underestimating its ethical function. It demonstrates how narrative unreliability operates as a mechanism of moral negotiation, through which responsibility is deferred, reassessed, and ethically problematized. Moreover, the study situates the novel within broader debates on narrative ethics and moral accountability, thereby offering a critical framework applicable to the ethical analysis of memory, guilt, and responsibility in contemporary literature. As such, this research enhances interdisciplinary dialogue between memory studies, ethical criticism, and literary narratology.

2.Theoretical Framework

2.1 Memory Studies

In contemporary literary and ethical criticism, memory is increasingly conceptualized not as a passive record of past events but as an interpretive and ethically charged narrative construction. This study draws on Paul Ricoeur's and Pierre Nora's seminal contributions to understand memory as a subjective and morally

consequential act. Ricoeur emphasizes the narrative dimension of memory, arguing that recollection is inseparable from interpretation and self-understanding. Memory, therefore, is not merely cognitive recall but a process through which individuals negotiate ethical responsibility, reconstruct past actions, and confront the consequences of moral choices. By highlighting the interplay between remembering and forgetting, Ricoeur frames memory as a site of ethical reflection, where accountability, guilt, and moral awareness are continually re-evaluated (Ricoeur, 2004). Pierre Nora's concept of lieux de mémoire complements this perspective by underscoring the mediated and selective nature of memory. Nora demonstrates that memory is constructed through symbolic, social, and cultural frameworks, often shaped by absence, loss, and deliberate forgetting. This theoretical lens is particularly pertinent to Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*, where the narrator's recollections are partial, retrospective, and morally inflected, reflecting both ethical evasion and the potential for delayed moral awakening (Nora, 1989). By integrating Ricoeur and Nora, this study situates memory as a central mechanism through which ethical consciousness emerges in the narrative. Memory is therefore treated as an active, morally significant practice that mediates the relationship between emotional loss, self-reflection, and social responsibility, aligning the analysis with the principles of ethical criticism and narrative ethics.

2.2. Psychoanalytic Approach

Repressed Memory, Guilt, and Narrative Unreliability

The psychoanalytic approach, grounded in Freudian theory, provides a rigorous framework for examining the relationship between memory, guilt, and moral consciousness in *The Sense of an Ending*. From this perspective, memory is not conceived as a stable or objective record of the past but as a psychologically mediated construct shaped by unconscious defense mechanisms. Repression plays a central role in this process, as experiences associated with emotional pain or moral discomfort are excluded from conscious awareness in order to preserve psychological stability. (Freud, 1915) This psychoanalytic understanding directly informs the concept of narrative unreliability, which constitutes a central feature of the novel's structure. Tony Webster's narration is marked by selective recollection, rationalization, and omission, all of which function as unconscious strategies of self-protection rather than deliberate acts of deception. His unreliability thus emerges from psychological self-deception, whereby ethically troubling memories are repressed yet continue to influence the narrative indirectly. (Phelan, 2005) The Freudian model further elucidates how internalized moral judgment shapes narrative distortion. Repressed memories do not disappear but remain active within the unconscious, generating a persistent sense of moral unease. As these suppressed elements gradually resurface, the narrator's confidence in the coherence and fairness of his remembered past is destabilized, revealing the ethical consequences of repression and the fragility of self-constructed moral narratives. (Freud, 1915) Moreover, the delayed emergence of guilt in the novel demonstrates how narrative unreliability is sustained until psychological defense mechanisms begin to collapse. Ethical awareness does not arise at the moment of action but develops retrospectively, once the narrator's authority over his own story is undermined. This process compels a reassessment of past actions and exposes memory as a site of ethical conflict rather than narrative certainty. (Phelan, 2005) By integrating psychoanalytic theory with narrative unreliability, this approach reveals that distorted memory in *The Sense of an Ending* performs a dual function: it safeguards the self from immediate moral pain while simultaneously obstructing ethical responsibility. The act of narration thus acquires a quasi-therapeutic dimension, though one that remains incomplete, as full moral reconciliation is continually deferred. (Freud, 1915)

2.3. Ethical and Social Criticism

Ethical and social criticism examines how narratives engage readers in moral reflection by representing characters' choices, consequences, and relationships within their social contexts. Narrative ethics emphasizes that storytelling inherently conveys moral values, not only through the content of the narrative but also through the way events are recounted and interpreted. In this framework, narrative functions as a medium that fosters ethical engagement by connecting characters' decisions and past actions to broader social consequences, guiding readers toward evaluating ethical dimensions embedded in the text (Lothe, 2025). In Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*, Tony Webster's retrospective narration exemplifies how remembering and forgetting are ethical acts, shaping one's responsibilities toward others and highlighting the consequences of past behavior. The novel's use of selective memory and unreliable narration underscores the subjective and malleable nature of personal recollection, revealing how distorted memories can complicate moral judgment. Through this lens, memory is not a purely psychological process but a socially and ethically significant activity, influencing how individuals understand themselves and their obligations toward others (Rovaletti, 2013). Ethical and social

criticism also addresses the link between personal moral agency and broader social responsibility. By portraying the repercussions of past actions on relationships and society, Barnes's narrative demonstrates that reflective storytelling invites readers to consider how personal histories intersect with collective norms and values. The ethical dimension emerges both from introspection and from the narrative's capacity to mediate accountability, encouraging audiences to engage with the social implications of characters' choices. Consequently, the novel exemplifies how literature can function as a moral arena, where memory, reflection, and social consciousness intersect to illuminate ethical complexities in human life (Lothe, 2025; Rovalletti, 2013).

3. Memory and Narrative Unreliability

In Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*, the theme of memory is deeply intertwined with the concept of narrative unreliability, where the narrator's subjective recollections shape the reader's understanding of past events. Narrative unreliability refers to a narrative situation in which the storyteller's account is not fully trustworthy, either because of cognitive limitations, emotional distortions, or deliberate evasions. Studies of the novel emphasize that Tony Webster's narration cannot be accepted at face value, as his account of the past is filtered through his selective memory and personal justifications, which ultimately raise questions about the validity of his perspective on both events and their moral implications. Tony's narration exemplifies how memory—and thus narrative—operates not as a neutral recorder of facts but as an interpretive process shaped by individual perception and emotional needs (Rossi, 2016). Barnes's use of first-person narration deliberately foregrounds the fallibility of memory. From the outset, Tony presents himself as someone who remembers "what he believes happened," suggesting from the first page that his account is a personal reconstruction rather than an objective history. The novel repeatedly highlights moments where Tony's recollection diverges from the fuller truth, requiring the reader to reassess earlier assumptions. In the critical literature, this is understood not simply as a narrative trick but as a thematic exploration of how individuals construct meaning out of their pasts. The fluidity and fragmentation of Tony's memory serve to demonstrate that memory is both subjective and malleable, influenced by emotional investment, shame, and the desire to view oneself in a favorable light. Such fragmentation is not random; it reflects the active role the narrator plays in shaping his own identity through selective remembrance and omission (Bushra, 2023). The ethical dimension of narrative unreliability becomes apparent when Tony is forced to confront the limits of his own understanding. Only later in the novel does he learn crucial information that contradicts his previously held memories, revealing that his earlier narrative omitted essential details about his involvement in others' lives. This shift does not merely alter the plot but reframes the entire ethical narrative of the text: Tony's self-presentation is revealed as an incomplete moral self-portrait, shaped by repression and self-deception. Because Tony narrates events that he does not fully comprehend, the novel invites the reader to question how memory shapes moral responsibility. Barnes's text suggests that personal memory without critical reflection can obscure moral accountability, as individuals tend to remember what justifies or comforts them while forgetting what challenges their self-image. Consequently, narrative unreliability becomes a mechanism for exploring how memory influences ethical awareness, revealing the gaps between what we think we did and what actually happened. Furthermore, by destabilizing the narrator's authority, Barnes implicates the reader in the interpretive process. The reader must engage actively with Tony's account, recognizing the limitations of subjective memory and reconstructing a more comprehensive understanding of events from indirect clues and implied contradictions. This dynamic emphasizes that truth in narrative is not wholly contained in the narrator's words but emerges through interaction between the text and the reader. Therefore, memory and unreliability function not merely as stylistic features but as central devices for examining the complex relationships among memory, identity, and moral responsibility in human experience.

4. Emotional Loss and the Experience of Guilt

Emotional loss is at the heart of Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* and the instability of self narrative lift loss further from interior emotional landscape to key battleground in moral struggle. The book's idea of loss is not only restricted to the loss of a person or even an intimate relationship but also to the full erosion over time, within the protagonist's mindspace, of moral predictability and narrative authoritativeness. The sense of loss for Tony Webster occurs on multiple layers: the loss of a teenage sweetheart; the end of friendships and, as importantly, snappily put by Nick in the unimprovable line "It's not what happens to people that is significant but what they think happens to them;" finally, it is an implosion of a narrative – vibrant and consistent – of experience. At first, these losses trigger defensive cognitive strategies—selective memory, repression, rationalization—that enable Tony to escape ethical responsibility and represent his deeds as trivial or morally defensible. Therefore memory isn't a verifiable history of events, but a narrative structure for protecting the

self so that one can believe in the innocence of being. Yet as the story progresses, Barnes exposes the illusionary nature of this construction by associating emotional loss with belated awakening and moral disorientation. The nightmare of suppressed memories turns his loss into deep regret, as Tony becomes forced to reckon with the moral cost of emotional self-isolation and simmering animosity. This awakening shatters the presumption that moral culpability is fully dependent on deliberate intent, showing instead how insensitivity, silence, emotional abandonment can be equally ethically devastating. The representation of Adrian's suicide in the novel, as I have been suggesting here, contributes to this analysis: it shows suicide not as an entirely individual decision but a socially situated act that registers in overwhelm moments of psychic failures and unthought responsibilities. From this standpoint, guilt becomes relational rather than individual, implicating those who position themselves as onlookers rather than as people with ethical responsibility. Tony's late recognition that his emotional and verbal distancing from others indirectly caused Adrian's own misfortune demands a reevaluation of ethical and moral responsibility grounded more in the effects of one's actions than intention. The logic is that emotional loss awakens morality; it doesn't reconcile or redeem, but reveals the delusion of moral neutrality and disengagement. Barnes takes care never to depict guilt as a purifying or comforting presence; it is, rather, an insistent and disquieting form of self-awareness that shakes the self and emphatically reveals moral self-justification as a limited enterprise. In connecting emotional loss to the incognizability of memory, and thereby the belatedness of moral realization, *The Meaning of the End* ultimately presents loss as a necessary (even if painful), rather than avoidable feature of moral awakening, and guilt as an inescapable component of social being and self-understanding in today's world. (Barnes, 2011).

5. Social Responsibility and Moral Awakening

In *The Sense of an Ending*, Julian Barnes articulates social responsibility as an ethical imperative that emerges from belated self-awareness and the collapse of morally comforting narratives, presenting moral awakening as an unsettling recognition of one's entanglement with others rather than a voluntary ethical achievement. The novel interrogates simplified notions of responsibility grounded solely in intention or direct causality, revealing instead how silence, emotional withdrawal, and passive detachment function as morally consequential forms of action. Tony Webster initially understands himself as a marginal figure whose limited involvement in past events exempts him from ethical accountability; however, the narrative steadily dismantles this assumption by demonstrating that responsibility is fundamentally relational and cannot be avoided through claims of neutrality. Barnes portrays moral agency as embedded within social interactions, where even seemingly minor gestures—such as careless words, emotional neglect, or the refusal to intervene—can generate enduring ethical consequences. As Tony revisits his past, memory operates less as a transparent record than as a defensive structure designed to preserve self-coherence and moral innocence. Yet the gradual surfacing of repressed details exposes the insufficiency of this self-protective narrative and forces the protagonist to confront the impact of his behavior on others' lives. This confrontation redefines responsibility as an obligation that arises from proximity to the Other rather than from conscious intent, aligning moral accountability with relational exposure rather than deliberate wrongdoing. The persistence of the past in the present further reinforces this ethical framework, as Barnes illustrates how unresolved actions continue to shape social and psychological realities long after they have been rationalized or forgotten. Moral awakening in the novel is therefore marked not by redemption or reconciliation, but by ethical disquiet and self-alienation, as Tony recognizes that his former indifference constituted a failure to respond to the ethical demand posed by others' vulnerability. Adrian's fate crystallizes this logic by demonstrating how personal tragedy cannot be isolated from the social environment in which it unfolds; responsibility, in this sense, is distributed across a network of relationships rather than confined to a single agent. Barnes's use of an unreliable retrospective narrator intensifies this ethical inquiry, compelling readers to scrutinize the mechanisms through which individuals narrate themselves out of responsibility and transform omission into innocence. Social responsibility thus emerges as an enduring moral demand that exceeds legal culpability and resists narrative closure. By refusing to offer ethical consolation, the novel suggests that genuine moral awareness involves accepting the irreversibility of one's impact on others and living with unresolved responsibility. Ultimately, *The Sense of an Ending* presents moral awakening as an ongoing ethical condition rooted in the recognition that the self is always already implicated in the lives of others, and that responsibility begins precisely where attempts at moral disengagement fail (Levinas, 1969).

6. Discussion

The present study examines how Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending* constructs an ethical exploration of memory, emotional loss, and social responsibility. The novel demonstrates that memory is not a neutral archive

but a selective, interpretive process that mediates moral awareness. Tony Webster repeatedly acknowledges the unreliability of his recollections, noting, “What you end up remembering isn’t always the same as what you have witnessed”. This indicates that memory is both constructive and ethically charged, shaping identity and self-perception. By framing memory as an interpretive act rather than a factual record, Barnes underscores that the act of remembering is inseparable from ethical responsibility. Memory functions as both a revealing and concealing force, and Tony’s selective recollections initially allow him to avoid confronting his moral failures. This aligns with contemporary scholarship emphasizing the ethical implications of narrative memory, where the stories we tell about our past influence moral judgment and relational accountability (Pamuk,2020). Emotional loss in the novel is central to the development of ethical consciousness. Barnes portrays loss as a complex psychological experience that destabilizes the self, rather than an immediate moral catalyst. Tony reflects on his remorse, stating, “Too much time has passed, too much damage has been done”. Here, remorse signifies a recognition of irreversible consequences, distinguishing it from transient guilt. The temporal dimension is significant: moral awakening in Barnes’s narrative is delayed, occurring as previously suppressed memories resurface and force critical reflection. Emotional loss thus functions as both a psychological and ethical turning point, compelling Tony to confront the effects of his actions and inactions on others. This perspective aligns with research on autobiographical memory, suggesting that memory and emotion are inseparable and that reflection on past affective experiences can facilitate moral development (Vanello,2026) Another crucial aspect is the novel’s reconceptualization of social responsibility. Tony’s initial self-perception as a passive bystander exemplifies a limited notion of moral accountability. Barnes challenges this view by showing that omission and silence carry ethical weight. Adrian’s suicide, for example, is not the outcome of a single act but the result of a network of relational dynamics, including Tony’s disengagement. The novel thus advances a relational conception of responsibility, emphasizing that ethical accountability arises from our interactions and dependencies rather than solely from deliberate actions. Tony’s belated recognition of his role in these events illustrates that responsibility is embedded in social contexts and requires ongoing reflection. Barnes suggests that self-narratives can obscure moral truth, but ethical awareness emerges when one confronts the consequences of their omissions and inactions(Barnes,2011) Narrative structure further reinforces these ethical concerns. Barnes’s use of a first-person retrospective narrator highlights the instability of memory and challenges the reader to consider how self-narratives shape moral perception. Tony’s successive revisions of his recollections reveal the interpretive and selective nature of memory. As such, narrative unreliability serves an ethical function: it demonstrates that self-perception is provisional and that ethical clarity demands critical engagement with one’s own storytelling. The ethical demands of narrative extend beyond the protagonist, prompting readers to consider their own potential for selective recollection and delayed moral awareness. Finally, the novel situates these individual ethical issues within broader cultural and temporal contexts. Barnes critiques the tendency in contemporary society to sanitize personal histories and avoid confronting uncomfortable moral truths. Responsibility, the text suggests, persists across time and cannot be evaded through narrative manipulation or retrospective justification. The novel positions moral awareness as a continuous, dynamic process, requiring sustained reflection on memory, relational interdependence, and ethical consequences (Vanello,2026). By highlighting the persistence of memory’s ethical significance, Barnes encourages readers to recognize the ongoing responsibilities embedded in their own narratives and relationships.

7. Conclusion

This study has examined Julian Barnes’s *The Sense of an Ending* as a sophisticated narrative inquiry into the interdependent dynamics of memory, emotional loss, and social responsibility, arguing that these elements collectively shape ethical consciousness in contemporary society. The analysis demonstrates that memory in the novel operates not as a transparent or factual record of the past, but as a constructed, selective, and ethically charged process. Through this narrative strategy, Barnes exposes the instability of retrospective self-narration and underscores the extent to which personal memory is implicated in moral evasion and self-exculpation. Central to this inquiry is the figure of Tony Webster as an unreliable narrator whose ethical limitations are gradually revealed through narrative gaps, contradictions, and belated disclosures. The distortion of memory in his account does not merely signify cognitive failure but reflects a deeper moral deficiency rooted in avoidance of responsibility. As the narrative progresses, memory becomes the site of an implicit ethical trial, in which the narrator is compelled to confront the consequences of his past actions and omissions. This delayed confrontation highlights the novel’s critique of passive complicity and moral indifference. Furthermore, the study establishes that emotional loss in the novel transcends a purely psychological framework and acquires a

distinctly ethical and social dimension. Experiences of loss—particularly those associated with suicide and the erosion of interpersonal bonds—function as catalysts for moral re-evaluation and retrospective judgment. Guilt, in this context, emerges not as an immediate emotional response but as a product of deferred ethical awareness, generated by the recognition of harm caused through neglect, silence, or indifference. Barnes thus links emotional loss to moral accountability, emphasizing the long-term ethical implications of seemingly inconsequential actions. At the level of social responsibility, *The Sense of an Ending* articulates a gradual movement from ethical disengagement toward moral awareness. The novel foregrounds the inseparability of individual actions from their social repercussions, challenging the notion that moral responsibility can be circumscribed within the boundaries of private experience. Tony Webster's eventual recognition of responsibility underscores the novel's broader ethical argument: that the refusal to acknowledge one's role in the lives of others constitutes a form of moral failure with enduring social consequences. In synthesizing these findings, this study contends that Barnes's novel should be understood as an ethically oriented narrative that interrogates the reliability of memory and the moral implications of storytelling itself. By framing narration as an act of ethical accountability, *The Sense of an Ending* invites readers to reconsider the relationship between self-narration, truth, and responsibility in modern life. The contribution of this study lies in its integration of memory studies, psychoanalytic insights, and ethical criticism, offering a multidimensional reading that situates the novel within ongoing debates in contemporary literary scholarship. Despite its contributions, the study is necessarily limited by its reliance on specific theoretical paradigms. Future research may extend this analysis by incorporating comparative perspectives, broader cultural frameworks, or interdisciplinary approaches that further illuminate the ethical and social dimensions of memory in contemporary fiction.

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