INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

India has a rich mythical and spiritual tradition that has forever been a haven to the dreams and imagination of sensitive minds. This axiom synchronises with the mind of Shashi Tharoor. Though history is understood as the bygone, and good fiction is predominantly aesthetic as well as semantic creation, what is attempted in this thesis is a presentation of how the fusion of fact and fiction warrants an interesting reading of Shashi Tharoor's works. Tharoor's concept of history offers a poignant and unique vision of the contemporary state of India, which necessitates an in-depth study.

The transformation of human history into metahistory, literature, fiction and narrative throws open in Tharoor's works, an immensity of facts and interpretations of current affairs. His adaptation of certain narratives shows how in humanity the intellectual and political monstrosities of a time become out-of-joint and how the historical detective captures essential elements of interest for the reader. The procedure followed in this research project is interpretative, as it reviews the political scenario of India with emphasis on the post-independence era, as imagined in the fictional consciousness of the author. As the twenty-first century has begun with the Indians accounting for a major chunk of the world's population, their chorus will resonate throughout the world and, therefore, an eminent author's work which will undoubtedly cover international reading, is naturally 'pastures new' for an aspiring scholar. As Leona Toker remarks, "when a novelist undertakes scholarly, biographical research, his awareness of possible incursions of ficton upon fact is no less acute than that of a professional historian" (Toker 64).

Therefore, since a sweeping yet clear and highly personalized examination of contemporary India is seen in the author's works, the scholar here feels that it deserves to be retold to the rest of the world. Shashi Tharoor had a leading position as the first lieutenant to Mr. Kofi Annan, the leader of the largest service organization of the world, the United Nations. This, coupled with his own patriotism uncoloured by jingoism, his clarity of vision, felicity of words, choice of expression, and a combined style of lucidity and embellishment which is highly palatable to the academic as well as the non-academic reader, makes the possibilities of such a research very attractive and alluring. While later chapters seek to illuminate specific novels and works, a connecting line of thought to find out elements of faction in them is also intended. The researcher has not attempted a strict balance of space and attention within the field, the reason being that some chapters are long because these works raise acutely interesting problems for this study, which can be dealt with at some length. Where a work lends itself to brevity of treatment, no attempt is made to pad this out. Though there is a certain lack of direct involvement with the politics of the day in the early generation of English educated Indians who attempted to create literature in English, this is not so with Shashi Tharoor. The Rising of 1857 jolted the Indian lethargy into resistance against the British rule and the Indo-Anglian novelists could no longer remain mere spectators. Tharoor's two great works, *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) and *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* (1997) are the result of this national consciousness. The first work, due to its multiple perspectives, has been given more importance in this study than the other works of the author. The present work will attempt to bring out a clear picture of how the author has viewed the Indian political, social and cultural situation and given an imaginative rendering of history, through his fiction.

Shashi Tharoor

To give the briefest of résumé, Shashi Tharoor was born in London in 1956 and educated in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and the United States of America. He procured PhD at the age of 22 from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Since 1978, he worked in the United Nations, serving as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, whose Singapore office he headed. Since October 1989, he was a senior official at UN Headquarters in New York, where, until late 1996, he was responsible for Peacekeeping Operations in the former Yugoslavia. From January 1997 to July 1998, he was Executive Assistant to the UN

Secretary General Kofi Annan. In July 1998, he was appointed Director of Communications and Special Projects in the office of the Secretary General. In January 2001, he was appointed by the Secretary General as Interim Head of the Department of Public Information. In June 2002, he was confirmed as the Under Secretary General for Communications and Public Information of the United Nations. He still continues as one of the main makers of peace and understanding among nations.

Tharoor is the author of numerous articles, short stories and commentaries in Indian and Western publications. His books include *Reasons of State* (1982), a scholarly study of Indian foreign policy, *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), a political satire, and *The Five-Dollar Smile and Other Stories* (1990). His second novel, *Show Business* (1992), received a front-page accolade from *The New York Times Book Review* and was made into a motion picture titled 'Bollywood'. *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* (1997) was published on the 50th anniversary of India's independence, and was selected as the 'New York Times Notable Book of the Year.' On 13 August 2001, Penguin Books (India) published Tharoor's latest novel *Riot* (2001). The U.S. edition was published by Arcade on 28 September 2001. In October 2002, Tharoor painted verbal pictures and descriptions for M. F. Husain's work, *Kerala: God's Own Country.*

Tharoor, the Writer

As a diplomat and writer, Shashi Tharoor has explored the diversity of culture in his native India. Exploring the themes of India's past and its relevance to the future, he has produced works both of fiction and non-fiction. In reaction to his works, *The Great Indian Novel* and *Show Business*, Tharoor has been referred to as one of the first writers of satirical novels currently operating in English. To Tharoor, satire is a potent genre for reaching out to all kinds of people. He says in an interview with Harry Kreisler:

> Satire. . . enables you to recast and to reinvent both the epics and the history. . . in a light that is so unfamiliar that it immediately provokes a fresh way of looking at them. . . There is a second element. If I can borrow the wonderful statement of Molière. . . 'If you want to edify, you have to entertain.' So your duty as a writer is to amuse people enough that they want to read the serious points you want to make. They'll get that instruction, and they'll get that education if you like, through the process of having been entertained. (globetrotter.berkeley.edu)

Shashi Tharoor is the winner of numerous journalism and literary awards, including a Commonwealth Writer's Prize in 1991. In 1998, he was presented with the Excelsior Award for Excellence in Literature.

Tharoor's gift as a novelist, his powers of social observation, the eye for minute details, and his ability to convey the subjective atmosphere of an experience make his narratives read more like novels than like non-fiction. In the bewildering social change of the late sixties, Tharoor's journalistic approach proved a uniquely appropriate one. It has the combination of the objectivity of journalism and the intimacy of a story both of which satisfy our present need to make sense of a kaleidoscopic world, always more astonishing than the wildest fiction. Thus, Tharoor explores the endless possibilities of history in the disguise of a novel, or 'novel as history,' interrogating the boundaries of both fact and fiction to represent a postmodern world.

Tharoor embodies many of India's defining dualities. A novelist and a diplomat, he infuses a vividly descriptive, sweeping and highly personal examination of contemporary India with unexpected drama; he alternates between compelling autobiographical passages and sections grounded in his expertise in global politics. As he considers the major issues facing India today, Tharoor contrasts the freewheeling Bombay of his childhood with the slowly changing village society in Kerala, and reports on his observations as a regularly visiting expatriate. Each telling anecdote illuminates some aspect of Indian culture, from politics to religion, creating a mosaic that reflects India's endless variations on the theme of life. Senior Editor David Huebner recently spoke with Mr.

Tharoor about the challenges of reconciling his literary and professional lives and managing the image of the United Nations. To the question how he compromised his roots in India and his job in the United Nations, Tharoor replied:

> I see myself as a human being with a number of responses to the world I see around me. I manifest some of those responses in my writing and some of them in my work. I try to keep the two firmly apart though. So, in my writing I deal with nothing but India, at least so far, and then in my work I deal with almost everything but India. (Tharoor, www.divainternational.ch 2004)

When questioned how he could handle both without mixing them, Tharoor replies:

> . . . I think they are both such essential parts of me that if I were to neglect either aspect of my life, part of my psyche would wither. As a UN official, I am bringing to bear a lifetime of interest in international affairs, a PhD in international affairs, a PhD in international politics, and a concern with the fate of the world that goes back to my childhood; and as a writer, George Bernard Shaw said it better than I could: 'I write for the same reason that a cow gives milk'. It is something that has to come out. Both of

> these are choices that are not really choices; they are things I feel I have to do because of who I am. (Tharoor, hir.harvard.edu 2002)

His book *Reasons of State* (1982) is on Indian foreign policymaking. It is highly praised by all the highbrow clan who are directly or indirectly connected with diplomatic affairs. It is a scholarly study and the prodigious scope of knowledge matches his formidable style latent in this book, which is enriched with his longstanding and dedicated involvement with international affairs in the U.N. The unities and diversities of the author's writings make it imperative to attend to the transfusion of History and Literature that is Fact and Fiction which amounts to **Faction**. Tharoor attempts not so much to bring about the fusion of Fact / History, and Fiction / Creative Imagination, as to assert that the boundaries between the two have irreparably broken down, to transform Fact and Fiction, hitherto separate entities, into a new genre called Faction. Faction by now is a coinage familiar to the academic as well as reading fraternity. Shashi Tharoor depicts the problems of the day through his various narrative strategies like diaries, letters, discussions, journalistic articles, short stories, novels, farce and literary criticism on politics, diplomacy, foreign affairs and current political policies. We see an endless slippage of Fact into Fiction in his works. When Fact is clothed in the garb of Fiction, and fabrications of the imagination presented as authentic Reality, Tharoor creates a replica of the postmodern world where the Real has disappeared into the 'mediated.'

The Great Indian Novel (1989) is a reinvention of India with a dazzling marriage between Hindu mythology and modern Indian history. It is a parodic version of the Mahabharata with the literally translated title *The Great Indian Novel* where the Sanskrit 'Maha' means great, and Bharatham means Narrative of India. By transferring Fact into Fiction, applying imagination to historical facts, this parodic, symbolic and allegorical work becomes a gateway to the author's thinking process. We see a puranic redaction; though all redactions are not parodies, Tharoor is using parody, making fun of many of our systems of governance.

The short stories in the collection *The Five-Dollar Smile* (1990) are fairly representative of the whole of his fictional work. The enjoyment he has derived in writing them seems communicable to the readers. It was once suggested that an acid test should be done to answer the question "could this have been written only by an Indian?" To this the author replies in the "Introduction" to the book: "for most though not all of my stories and certainly my novels, I would answer that this could not only have been written by an Indian, but only by an Indian in English" (12). In that lay their principal vindication. Tharoor moved on to Calcutta with his parents and tried his hand at writing and acting out three one-act plays. In a circumstance, when politics had moved on to the more absorbing question of "who can get what post how?" and beliefs and principles no longer even received lip-service, it struck him that the only valid way of portraying the Emergency without seeming either tiresome or excessively formalistic was through the medium of low comedy. History, in the old days, repeated itself as tragedy, the second time as farce. And farce is the medium of the playwright, not the historian. Despite this essential Indian inspiration, the plot of *Twenty Two Months in the Life of a Dog* (1990) is based largely on Mikhail Bulgakov's novella *Dog's Heart* (1987). Tharoor's work more particularly derives from an excellent stage adaptation of Bulgakov which he had seen in New York.

The book *Show Business* (1991) is a true picture of Bollywood, the Bombay film world with its tinsel opportunism and shallow relationships. It is realistic to the core and does not believe in sugar-coated camouflages. It leaves a bittersweet taste in the reading palate. The undercurrents of Bombay's commercial cinema are brought to light from its remarkable beginning.

A historical work like *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* (1997) reviews the past, present and future of independent India at socio-economic, political, linguistic, cultural and even spiritual levels. It is an engaging reflection on the 50th anniversary of Independence. The book blends academic analysis and personal observation on a whole range of topics and problems that India confronts: caste, religion and economics.

Tharoor passionately espouses the vision of a cosmopolitan, tolerant, liberal and modern India that he believes truly defines the identity of his country. It is an eloquent argument for the importance of India to the future of the industrialized world. Here, elements of political scholarship, personal reflection, memoirs and polemic combine with erudition and scholarliness.

Riot (2001), set against the background of the Babri Masjid issue in North India, is a novel critics have been raging about. Here again Tharoor has presented a fusion of history and imagination, taking an actual historical fact and weaving a love story around it.

For M. F. Husain's *Kerala: God's Own Country* (2002) Tharoor has written beautiful captions and descriptions. His colourful write-up for the lifelike beauty and scenic still lives of the great artist are complimentary to both of them. Kerala in all her natural loveliness is verbalized in this Husain-Tharoor combination.

In *Nehru: The Invention of India* (2003), Jawaharlal Nehru is portrayed from a new angle. Though it is reminiscent of Nehru's *Discovery of India* (1946), Tharoor's book is diametrically opposite in its theme, vision and purpose. The compilation of his articles published in various publications like *The New York Times*, *International Herald Tribune, The Washington Post*, *The Indian Express*, and *The Hindu*, show a beautiful blend of imagination interwoven with a profound urgency to tell the truth.

Bookless in Baghdad (2005), a collection of essays on reading, spans a broad range of concerns, as Tharoor says in the Preface, "emerging from my own experience as an Indian writer and reader. But they share a literary province none of my writings on non-literary subjects have been included in" (ix). To him, "books are like the toddy tapper's hatchet striking through the rough husk that enshrouds our minds to tap into the exhilaration" (x).

Shashi Tharoor as a twentieth century Indian novelist in English is primarily concerned with the changing national scene in respect of the political upsurge, which compelled the British to withdraw from India. The freedom movement in India was not only a political struggle but an all-pervasive national experience for the first few decades. It changed the Indian urban life extensively, and to some extent, the rural life too. Since a novel's subject is man in society, its subject matter should also be closely related to the upheavals and tribulations of the society. Hence no Indian writer writing in those decades or writing about them, could avoid reflecting this national upsurge in his novels. Some of them made this struggle the direct theme while others used it as a backdrop to their personal narrative. However, it acquired almost always a central place in their novels and whatever their subject, they basically turned towards the politics of the day, often dealing with the actions, beliefs, and experience of the people involved in the freedom struggle. As such the measure of their success depends on the extent to which they integrate the felt political reality into the fabric of fiction, thus reaching out effectively to a large section of the reading public. Thus, Faction is a device that brings a novel greater accessibility and social acceptance. In *Studying the Novel: An Introduction*, Jeremy Hawthorn aptly defines the functions of **faction**:

> The term comes from the American author Truman Capote and is a portmanteau word (fact + fiction) to refer to novels such as his own *In Cold Blood* (1966). In this work primarily novelistic techniques are used to bring actual historical events to life for the reader. The term has thus come to denote a work that is on the borderline between fact and fiction, concerned primarily with a real event or persons, but using imagined details to increase readability and verisimilitude. (22)

Almost by definition, 'Faction' is a revolt of the individual against homogenized forms of experience and monolithic versions of truth. Only through an openness of ideas and form can any true 'new' information be reported; otherwise writers seek not only new facts, but also new ideas and forms through which they can develop a new meaning and, therefore, perhaps approach truth. Faction can also be called a better way to make communication of reality more effective. Like John Fielding and Truman Capote, the pioneers of the genre of Faction, it seems that Tharoor wants to appropriate for himself, the prestige of his era's dominant literary form and, in part, to shape the critical standards for judging his work. Tharoor defines a virgin territory of literature where he may even be the sole inhabitant.

The historical novel is usually concerned with an imaginative re-reading of history, rather than a blind reproduction of historical events. However, in contemporary times, when the very concept of 'history' as 'fact' is problematized, the hitherto rigid boundaries of 'fact' and 'fiction' have opened up, transforming 'history' into what has been called **Faction**. So, the modern authors apply their imagination in the construction of history. While the ancient writers wanted to be as truthful as possible to history, their deviations and imaginative changing of facts were forgiven. A sincere attempt to write a history with the help of ancient, unbiased, unsugared and unedited history has been found nearly impossible. To make history palatable, consciously or unconsciously, modern writers use their imaginative powers liberally. As a result, factuality coupled with creativity gives forth a study of existing facts or truths, a new dimension, a new potential.

History has been traditionally regarded as the silent, imperceptible, natural, organic development of society which is basically stagnant and incapable of altering anything consciously. The writer of faction makes it mobile and dynamic. There has risen, of late, a concrete historical and philosophic manner, a new humanism, a new concept of progress coupled with imagination; a humanism which wishes to preserve the basis of future human development. This new historical humanism is unable to transcend the limits of that age except in a fantastical form, a fusion of fantasy and truth. While fact is real or truth or history, fiction is imagination. A novel can either be pure fiction or pure fact or an interesting combination of both and hence the new coinage fact + fiction – **Faction**.

The Novel: A Generic Overview

The term **faction** has many connotations in social and political situations. But in the sense that faction denotes a kind of creative writing that inseparably and dialectically combines the historical or factual and the imaginative or fictional, 'faction' can be placed significantly in the literary history that takes into account the development of various kinds of novelistic writing. In other words, elements of 'factional' writing can be encountered in varying degrees in other kinds of fiction as well. Therefore, it becomes imperative here to present at least a short overview of the major kinds of fiction – an exercise that is expected to throw light on that particular kind of fictional writing which Shashi Tharoor's works most appropriately demonstrate.

The term **novel** is now applied to a great variety of writings. Novels are extended works of fiction written in prose. "Fiction is thus in-built in fiction and the novel is Janus-faced" (Barat 24). The novel is distinguished clearly from the short story and the novelette. The term for the novel in most European languages is 'roman' which is derived from the medieval term 'romance.' The Italian novella is a short tale in prose. Long narrative romances were written in prose by Greek writers as early as the second and third centuries A. D.

An important predecessor of the latter was the **Picaresque** narrative which emerged in the sixteenth century Spain. "It is a term derived from the Spanish 'picaro', originally a low-life character who lived dishonestly by his wits but later anyone at odds with, or outside, society" (Ousby 217-8). The picaresque novel, an episodic narrative describing the progress of the picaro, began with the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) and Mateo Alemani's *Guzman de Alfarache* (1559), translated into English by James Mabbe. In English literature the tradition began with Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) and Richard Head's *The English Rogue* (1665). In the 18th century, it continued in the work of Daniel Defoe notably *Moll Flanders* (1722). Novels such as Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* (1836-7) and *Nicholas*

Nickleby (1838-90), which are often loosely called 'picaresque,' are picaresque only in the general sense that they tell an episodic story in which the hero goes on a journey. The protagonists are models of amiable innocence or resolute virtue. *Don Quixote* (1605), one of the progenitors of the modern novel, was an early Picaresque narrative; in it, an engaging madman who tries to live by the ideals of chivalry in the everyday world is used to explore the general relations of illusion and reality in human life. In America, writers such as Herman Melville and Mark Twain maintained a more active interest in roguery, and particularly in the confidence trickster. But even there, from Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) onwards, the picaresque novel is increasingly subsumed into the literature of the journey and the open road. That tradition, investigating the ambiguities of freedom as enjoyed by the outsider, has continued in the 20th century. Picaresque fiction is realistic in manner, episodic in structure and often satiric in aim. Twentieth century developments bring modern psychological novels that are picaresque in style.

The realistic novel is characterized as the fictional attempt to give the effect of realism, by representing complex characters rooted in a social class with mixed motives; they operate in a highly developed social structure, interact with many other characters and undergo plausible and everyday modes of experience. As example, we have eighteenth century writers like Daniel Defoe and William Fielding. This novelistic mode achieved a high development in the works of the master novelists of the nineteenth century including George Eliot, Jane Austen and William Dean Howells in England and America, Henri Beyle Stendhal in France, Ivan Turgenev and Leo Tolstoy in Russia. The prose romance has, as precursors, the chivalrous romance of the Middle Ages and the Gothic Novel of the eighteenth century *Rob Roy* (1817), *The Three Musketeers* (1844-45) by Alexandre Dumas, Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1845-46), American fictions of Edgar Allan Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, William Faulkner and Saul Bellow. Other common subclasses of the novel are based on differences in subject matter, emphasis and artistic purpose.

For instance, **Bildungsroman** and **Erziehungsroman** are German terms signifying 'novel of formation' and 'novel of education.' An important sub-type of the **Bildungsroman** is the **Kunstleroman**, the artist-novel, which represents the growth of a novelist into the stage of maturity that signalizes the recognition of the protagonist's artistic destiny and mastery of an artistic craft. James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914-15) is an example for artist-novel.

The **Social Novel** emphasizes the influence of the social and economic conditions of an era on characters and also embodies an implicit or explicit thesis recommending political and social reform.

Examples of social novels are Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1952) and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

Since the **Political Novel** is a fairly recent phenomenon, many critics have tried to define it as a literary genre. In order to be a novel at all, the political novel must contain the usual representation of human behaviour and feelings, yet must also absorb into its movement, the hard insoluble pellets of modern ideology, however abstract they may be. Zulfikar Ghose quotes Stendhal here: "Politics as a work of literature, is like a pistol shot in the middle of a concert, something loud and vulgar, and yet, a thing to which it is not possible to refuse one's attention" (qtd. in Ghose v). In modern times, the political novel has become a fascinating and popular form of novel, fitting admirably the Aristotelian concept of "Man as a political animal." Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil of Two Nations* (1835), Stendhal's *The Carter House of Prama* (1839), Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (1940), George Orwell's *1984* (1949), Andre Malraux's *Man's Fate* (1934) and Maxim Gorky's *Mother* (1906-07) belong to this genre of novel written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The **Regional Novel** emphasizes the setting, speech, social structure and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local colour, but as important conditions affecting the temperament of the characters and their ways of thinking, feeling and interacting. Beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century, the novel has displaced all other literary forms in popularity. Henry James' prefaces, gathered into one volume as *The Art of the Novel* (1934), exemplify the care and subtlety that have been lavished on this craft. The use of symbolist and expressionist techniques and of devices adopted from the art of the cinema, the dislocation of time sequence, the adaptations of forms and motifs from myths and dreams, and the exploitation of stream-of-consciousness narration in a way that converts the story of outer action and events into a drama of the life of the mind became prevalent in this period.

William James coined the phrase **stream-of-consciousness**. It is one of the delusive terms which writers and critics use. It is delusive because it sounds concrete and yet it is used as variously—and vaguely—as 'romanticism,' 'symbolism,' and 'surrealism.' We never know whether it is being used to designate the bird of technique or the beast of genre—and we are startled to find the creature designated is most often a monstrous combination of the two. Stream-of-consciousness is properly a phrase for psychologists. The phrase is most clearly useful when it is applied to mental processes, for a rhetorical locution it becomes doubly metaphorical; that is, the word 'consciousness' as well as the word 'stream' is figurative. Hence, both are less precise and less stable. If, then, the term stream-of-consciousness is reserved for indicating an approach to the presentation of psychological aspects of characters in fiction, it can be used with some precision. It is the basis from which contradicting and often meaningless commentary on the stream-of-consciousness novel can be resolved. In the opinion of John O' Hara, the novelist may even be saying ". . . shocking, or provocative, or entertaining, or stimulating, or instructive things" (17), but the stream-of-consciousness novel is identified most quickly by its subject matter, which, rather than its techniques, its purposes, or its themes, distinguishes it. Robert Humphrey says:

> Hence, the novels that are said to use the stream-of-consciousness technique to a considerable degree prove, upon analysis, to be novels which have as their essential subject matter, the consciousness of one or more characters; which means, the depicted consciousness of one or more characters; that is, the depicted consciousness serves as a screen on which the material in these novels is presented. (5)

A **fantasy** is a story based on and controlled by an overt violation of what is generally accepted as possibility; it is the narrative result of transforming the condition contrary to fact into 'fact' itself. Such violation of dominant assumptions threatens to subvert the norm. This is not in itself a socially subversive activity: it would be naïve to equate fantasy with either anarchic or revolutionary politics. It does, however, disturb 'rules' of artistic representation and literature's reproduction of the 'real.' Fantasy fulfils and manifests our human power to transcend the human. Fantasy does not always invent supernatural regions, but presents a natural world inverted into something strange, something 'Other'. It becomes domesticated, humanized, turning from transcendental explorations to transcriptions of a human condition. The fantastic cannot exist independently of that 'real' world which it seems to find so frustratingly finite. Rosemary Jackson aptly remarks:

> Fantasy is that kind of extended narrative which establishes and develops an antifact, that is, plays the game of the impossible . . . a fantasy is a story based on and controlled by an overt violation of what is generally accepted as possibility. . . . The fantastic is always a break in the acknowledged order, an irruption of the inadmissible within the changeless everyday legality. (21)

The **Involuted Novel** is a work whose subject incorporates an account of its own genesis and development. Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962) best illustrates this genre. It employs multilingual puns and jokes, incorporates esoteric data about butterflies and strategies from chess, crossword puzzles and other games, parodies, other novels and sets, elaborated traps for the unwary reader. This is also an era of what is sometimes called the **antinovel**, i.e., a work which is deliberately constructed in a negative fashion, relying for its effects, on the deletion of standard elements, on violating the traditional norms and on playing against the expectations established in the reader by the novelistic method, and convention of the past.

The Nouveau Roman (The New Novel) for which Allaine Robbet-Grille's *Jealousy* (1972) is an example, leaves out such standard elements as plot, characterization, description of states of mind, normal setting in time and space and a frame of reference to the world in which the work is set. We are simply presented in this novel, with sequence of perceptions, mainly visual, which we may naturalise by postulating that we are occupying the physical space and sharing the hyper acute observation of a jealous husband, from which we may infer also the tortured state of his disintegrating mind.

Besides fabulation and non-fiction novel, which are the more radical forms of postmodernism, there is the novel about itself which is the **problematic novel**. Writers hesitating to take the radical path to fabulation or reportage, sometimes build this very hesitation into the text. Whereas the fabulator is discontented with reality, and the non-fiction novelist is impatient with fiction, the problematic novelist is loyal to both but is diffident of reconciling them and makes the problematic nature of his undertaking his subject-matter. What is more, he makes the reader participate in the aesthetic and philosophical problems that the writing of fiction presents today. George Louis Borges' *Short Stories* (1935), and Thomas Pynchon's *Lot 49* (1966) are some examples of this class. Introducing the author and the question of authorship into the text and exposing the conventions of art are not themselves a totally new phenomenon. These have become such a recurrent feature in postmodernist literature as to be a constituent of it, with the result that the alliance of writer, character, plot and reader becomes part of the subject of the novel. A lot depends of course on how the novelist goes about his job. Admittedly, this self-consciousness or reflexiveness could become a sterile gimmick at the hands of lesser artists. An instance of this device is B. S. Johnson's *Albert Angelo* (1964).

One twentieth-century variant of the historical novel is known as **Documentary Fiction** which incorporates into a novel not only historical characters and events, but also contemporary journalists' reports: for example, John Dos Passos' *USA* (1938); and E. L. Doctorow's *Ragtime* (1975). Documentary Realism, according to Lars Ole Sauerberg:

> . . . explicitly or implicitly acknowledges borrowing 'directly' from reality, that is, from kinds of discourse intended for non-literary purposes. The principle at work in documentary realism can be illustrated by the well-known gimmick of an event or figure of undisputed

> historical origin suddenly introduced into the otherwise fictitious world of the fictional text. . . . (8)

What we usually specify as the **Historical Novel** however, began in the nineteenth century with Sir Walter Scott. The historical novel not only takes its setting and some characters and events from history, but makes the historical events and issues crucial for the central character and narrative. Some of the greatest historical novels also use the protagonists and actions to reveal what the author regards as the deep forces that impel the historical process. Historical novels may often document the life of an earlier society, especially during a socio-political crisis, like the Plantagenet England in Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819); the Southern American aristocracy at the time of the Civil War in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936); or the Russian society during the Napoleonic era in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869).

If a comprehensive study is made of the novels from 1875 till India's independence, a wide spectrum of political novels written by the Indian as well as English authors can be ranged. Some of the senior Indo-Anglian novelists in this period are S.M. Ghosh, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Chaman Nahal, Khushwant Singh, Manohar Malgonkar and Kamala Das, while Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Salman Rushdie, Arundati Roy and Shashi Tharoor belong to a later generation. E.M. Forster, John Masters, Paul Scott, M. M. Kaya, Edward

Thompson and others are the prominent Anglo-Indian authors. Among the later Indo-Anglian ones, it may be said of Shashi Tharoor that he paints a much wider literary and aesthetically superior canvas. The impact of recent political events on contemporary Indians is his favourite theme.

The novel as a genre is directly associated with society. It exists at a point where we can recognize the intersection of the streams of social history. The novel, therefore, has a generic habit of reaching out to history on the one side and society on the other. Mulk Raj Anand himself, an eminent Indo-Anglian novelist feels that an artist cannot evade contact with the people and their problems in society. Novel as a literary form has an important role to play in a changing society where it helps in solving the problems arising out of social and political turmoil. It is undeniable that we can fruitfully draw aesthetic and literary conclusions from the correct evaluation of those social and historical foundations.

The historical novel arose at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The characters of the historical novel are generally influenced by the historical peculiarities of their age. The question of historical truth in the artistic reflection of reality has been a topic of much debate. Goethe influenced the rise of the historical drama, which had a direct and powerful influence on the rise of the historical novel in the works of people like Sir Walter Scott. Leo Tolstoy observed that in historic events the so-called great men are labels giving name to events and like labels they have but the smallest connection with the events themselves (Horsley 232). Their action, in a historical sense, is involuntary and is related to the whole course of history.

Another recent offshoot of the novel is the form that one of its innovators, Truman Capote, named the **non-fiction novel**. This uses a variety of novelistic techniques to give a graphic rendering of recent characters and happenings, and is based not only on historical records but often on personal interviews with the chief agents. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965) and Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song* (1979) are instances of this mode; both these books offer a detailed rendering of the life, personality, and actions of murderers, based on sustained series on prison interviews with the protagonists themselves. A third variant is the **fabulative historical novel** that interweaves history with fantasized, even fantastic events. All these are, when teamed together, nothing but Faction. Paul Dukes, while writing about historical fiction, welcomes "the current boom in historical fiction", but says, "Novelists need to ground their stories in a soil of solid fact" (107). The words of MacKinlay Kantor echo a similar sentiment. He says, "The term 'historical novel' has a dignity of its own and should be applied only to those works wherein a deliberate attempt has been made to recreate the past" (30). He implies that 'Faction' is not an entirely new phenomenon, for ". . . the prophet, the novelist, and the playwright command sublimer realms than those of technical history because they reconstitute life in its wholeness (30).

Metafiction has been defined as fiction whose primary concern is to express the novelist's vision of experience by exploring the process of its own making. A novelist's vision, or the message he wants to convey, is closely related to the form of his work. When metafictionists write as they do, calling attention to the writing process itself, this is no mere exhibition of craftsmanship. Admittedly, this possibility does exist, but Laurence Sterne, Vladimir Nabokov, John Barth, and many others do not limit themselves to the technical aspect of writing fiction. What they have in common is a deep concern for verbal creation and communication. However, their opinions differ as to the possibilities of communication and the making of fiction. Their different conceptions are revealed in their attitudes to the narrator, narrative and narration in their works.

Patricia Waugh notes that metafiction "suggests not only that writing history is a fictional act, ranging events conceptually through language to form a world model, but that history itself is invested like fiction, with interrelating plots which appear to interest independent of human design" (48). **Historiographic metafiction** is like postmodernist architecture. It is overtly and resolutely historical—though admittedly, in an ironic and problematic way that acknowledges that history is not the transparent record of any sure truth.

The intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both the world and literature. Today there is a return to the idea of a common discursive property in the embedding of both literary and historical texts in fiction, but it is a return made problematic by metafictional assertions of both history and literature. Historiographic metafiction points to this fact by using the para-textual conventions of historiography to both inscribe and undermine the authority and objectivity of historical sources and explanations. How can a historian (or a novelist) check any historical account against past empirical reality in order to test its validity? Factors are not given but constructed by the kinds of questions we ask of events. The past is a thing which cannot be eradicated, which accumulates and impinges. What postmodern discourses both fictive and historiographic ask is, how we come to terms with such complexity.

Parody is a genre closely associated with metafiction. Both are central to postmodernist perception, and parody developed as a reaction to the failure of the 18th century convention of satire. In the words of Rose Margaret:

> In the 19th century, satires served no moral purpose. . . . Some writers revived the use of the word 'parodic' and emphasized the ambivalence of parody as a form of literary criticism containing elements of respect for its target and

> spoke of it as being both dependent on and independent from its object. (33)

To parody is not to destroy the past. In fact to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it. Although accompanied by a comic effect it has been seen that parody need not necessarily ridicule the work of its target.

The term 'Parody,' in contemporary usage, designates a form of literary satire, distinguishable from other forms of satire, by its imitative mode, its internal dependence on the devices and conventions of its satiric target. Linda Hutcheon says, "Parody is perfect postmodern form in some sense, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (1985: 227). Barbara Johnson sees parody in a different way: "Treating discourses as performance, parody enacts its critique of literature from within literature, foregrounding the artifice or factitiousness of its model's representation of reality, reversing the formal self-effacement on which the parodied discourse depends for its claims to mimesis or truth" (1985: 38). Michele Hannoosh interprets:

> Parody fulfills the function attributed to it in Formalistic theory. It destroys categorically the old charge levelled against Parody, namely, its destructive effect on both individual works and in general. In rebounding upon itself, leaving room for other versions, or even suggesting the

> forms these might take, parody ensures that the tradition it revises will continue even beyond itself. (116)

Faction

Many of those currently interested in exploring the affinities between history and literature have argued that historical narratives do not derive their authority from a reality imitated but merely from the cultural conventions or subjective preferences which determine the nature of the paradigms constructed. The conception of the act of 'imaging' history does not entail any such radical separation of the 'composed' world from the real one. When the novel can effectively embody the imaginative understanding of the historical world, this implies an encounter with what Joseph Conrad calls the "external and objective reality in which men are fated to live" (235-6). Let us further assume that one can reasonably try to determine whether a patterning of experience fits this external reality well or badly. Within the world constituted as real by the novelist, the various literary modes help to clarify the obstacles confronting us as we try to make sense of our own history.

In complex narratives, this pattern is subverted in a variety of ways, and confidence in the inquirer's ability to apprehend the meaning of empirically observed fact is qualified. With the exception of D. H. Lawrence, whose romanticism leads him to reject all the main elements in an objective model of inquiry, the novelists included, take seriously the task of accumulating fact and moving from evidence to construction. In the narratives in which an ironic tone is powerfully present, the scepticism towards which irony can tend, is checked by our sense, as the narrative unfolds, that there are both 'facts' and 'truths' to be discovered. Each narrative tests common assumptions about the way in which we arrive at our conclusions. Fiction can illuminate the nature of the historical imagination. Lee Horsley's study gives new insights into the complex process of 'imagining history' and strongly argues the case for a humanistic approach. Her analysis shows how writers have brought alive in their work an individual struggle to comprehend some of the most important political phenomena of the twentieth century.

Novelists are able to use empirical narratives as contexts within which they judge the robustness of competing constructions of historical reality. But there is also a wide-ranging discussion of issues in the discourse of historical narrative which will engage the attention of anyone interested in twentieth century political literature and historical interpretation. "Most of our modern day critics have chosen to study the history-novel connection within the theoretical frames of postmodernism and post-colonialism," says T. N. Dhar, "to explain and evaluate the history-fiction connection with reality in very specific terms" (205). Lee Horsley in *Political Fiction and the Historical Imagination* clearly states how writers, while writing in what has truly taken place, can contribute 'facts' and 'truths' in a renewed way:

> This insistence on seeing reality as it is, not as we might wish it to be, and on the constancy of human inconstancy, implies that men best bear responsibility for their history by continually renewing their understanding of the individual perception and experience of political action. By giving form to the intellectual activity of comprehending political life, both novelists and writers of factual narratives can contribute to such a renewal. Whether or not they do so effectively depend on the ways in which, and the extent to which, they put their political imaginations 'at the bar of judgement' as they take readers through the process of historical construction. (12)

As **Faction** and **historiographic metafiction** are almost comfortably interchangeable terms, they may be dealt in greater detail in this chapter. Some works like those of Daniel Defoe claim veracity and actually convince readers that they are factual, but most readers today have a double awareness of both its imaginative constructedness as well as its basis in the 'real,' as do readers of contemporary **historiographic metafiction**. In such narratives, there is a strong relation between story and history. Every history is a story of some stature which was propagated for a reasonable period of time, and which the historian wishes to reinstate. What is literally true of it is in a sense what distinguishes the historian from a teller of fictitious or mendacious stories. Storytellers can certainly silence, exclude, and absent certain past events and people, but historians have also done the same.

Faction is, therefore, engaged in the examination of what the New Historicist critic Louis Montrose has characterized as the preoccupation with "the textuality of history" and "the historicity of texts":

> The post-structuralist orientation to history now emerging in literary studies may be characterized as a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the textuality of history. By *the historicity of texts*, I mean to suggest the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing—not only the texts that critics study but also the texts in which we study them. By *the textuality of history*, I mean to suggest, firstly, that we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence, unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question—traces whose survival we cannot assume to be merely contingent but must rather presume to be at least partially consequent upon complex and subtle social processes of preservation and effacement; and secondly, that those textual traces are

> themselves subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are construed as the 'documents' upon which historians ground their own texts, called 'histories.' (781)

Faction is thus the legitimate voice of a world where reality has irrecoverably been lost, where history is created out of the fragments of textual mediations.

Harold Nye is of the opinion that ". . . literature and history were considered branches of the same tree of learning, a tree which sought to interpret experience for the purpose of guiding and elevating man" (68). It is this very separation of the literary and the historical that is now being challenged in postmodern theory and art, and recent critical readings of both history and fiction have focused more on what the two modes of writing share than on how they differ. They are both identified as linguistic constructs highly conventionalized in their narrative form and not at all transparent either in terms of language or structure; they appear to be equally intertextual, deploying the texts of the past within their own complex textuality. But these are also the implied teachings of historiographic metafiction. Like those recent theories of both history and fiction, this kind of novel asks us to recall that history and fiction are themselves historical terms and that their definition and interrelation are historically determined and vary with time. In the writing of both fiction and history, our confidence in empiricist / positivist epistemologies has been shaken, but perhaps not yet destroyed.

Michael J. Arlen observed in *The Atlantic* that the Factionist is less of a reporter than an impresario: ". . . it is not that the New Journalist does not present the totality of someone's life, because nobody can do that, but that with his ego, he rules such thick lines down the edges of his own column of print" (94). By the end of the decade, a variety of critics concluded that Faction was dangerous for a variety of reasons. It risked turning the reporting of news into mere entertainment; with the Factionist's use of scenes and dialogue, distorted facts, the new reporting style would replace the hard-won tradition of objectivity with a cult of mere egotism.

There has been a long tradition dating from Aristotle that makes fiction not only separate from but also superior to history which is the mode of writing limited to the representation of the contingent, and the particular. To Aristotle, the historian could speak only of what had happened, of the particulars of the past; the poet, on the other hand, spoke of what could or might happen and so could deal more with universals. This was not to say that historical events and personages could not appear in tragedy, nothing prevents some of the things that have actually happened from falling into the category of what might probably happen. Nevertheless, many historians have since used the techniques of fictional representation to create imaginative versions of their historical, real worlds. It is part of the postmodernist's stand to confront the paradoxes of fictive historical representation, the particular, the general, the present and the past. But Linda Hutcheon, in her work *Intertextuality, Parody and the Discourses of History*, posits:

> History and fiction have always been notoriously porous genres, of course. At various times, both have included in their elastic boundaries, such forms as the travel tale and various versions of what we now call sociology. It is not surprising that there would be overlapping of concern and even mutual influences between the two genres. (1988: 106)

She continues to elaborate on the challenge historiographic metafiction offers to realism:

> It is a contemporary critical truism that realism is really a set of conventions, that representation of the real is not the same as the real itself. What historiographic metafiction challenges is both any naive realist concept of representation and any equally naïve textually or formalist assertions of the total separation of art from the world. (1988a: 3)

The metanarratives and falsehoods propagated in the Enlightenment period have nourished the postmodern concern with the multiplicity of dispersed truths relative to the specificity of place and culture. Following the Enlightenment, both the realist novel and the tradition of narrative history can be said to have been born in the nineteenth century. These genres looked upon a narrative work—representational, yet separated from human experience and historical processes—as self-sufficient and closed, the autonomous product of an individual subject, the author.

Historiographic metafiction keeps distinct its formal auto-representation and its historical context. In deliberate contrast to modernist radical metafiction, it attempts to demarginalize the literary, through confrontation with the historical. On the thematic level, life and art meet trying to break the walls between literary fantasies and the actualities of the world. The metafictional and the historiographic also meet in the intertexts of the novel.

Fiction and history are narratives distinguished by their frames—frames which historiographic metafiction first establishes and then crosses, positing both the generic contracts of fiction and of history. Postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological. Some instances of historiographic metafiction point to other implications of the rewriting of history. Rewriting past events effectively alters them. The real gets rewritten in its representation. In Nietzschean terms, there are no facts ('the real'), only interpretations. Thus, postmodernism posits that the representation has totally replaced the real. In other words, under the purview of the postmodern practice of re-writing, history is representation, and therefore textual / fictional. The problematizing of the nature of historical knowledge points both to the need to separate and to the danger of separating fiction and history as narrative genres. One cannot say that history and fiction are part of the "same order of discourse." They are different though they share social, cultural and ideological contexts as well as formal techniques. Novels incorporate social and political history to varying degrees; historiography in turn is structured, coherent and teleological as any narrative fiction. Both historians and novelists constitute their subjects as possible objects of narrative representation.

Ian Ousby strongly feels that postmodernism is an international movement, affecting all the contemporary arts, which has succeeded modernism: "In literature, and particularly the novel, it rejects realism in favour of a heightened sense of artifice, a delight in games and verbal pyrotechnics, a suspicion of absolute truth and a resulting inclination to stress the fictionality of fiction" (221). All these traits were already present in modernist works. Its distrust of traditional mimetic genres, allied to the philosophical climate of structuralism and deconstruction, has also encouraged postmodernism to embrace popular forms, such as Detective Fiction as exemplified by Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (1983). Equally postmodernist is the blurring of boundaries between the genres—novel and journalism in Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965), the New Journalism of Tom Wolfe and others, and Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (1974). The fiction of Salman Rushdie would seem to confirm the link between postmodernism and postcoloniality, already suggested by the Magic Realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Postmodernism deliberately confuses the notions that history's problem is verification while fiction's is veracity. Both narrative history and fiction are signifying systems in our culture. It is the constructed, textual nature of discourses that historiographic metafiction reveals. Both factual history and fiction are cultural sign systems, ideological constructions whose ideology includes their appearances of being autonomous and self-contained. History is a kind of fiction in which we live and hope to survive, and fiction is a kind of speculative history by which the available data for the composition is seen to be greater and more various in its sources than the historian supposes. As old fashioned narrative or 'realistic' historiography becomes problematic, the historian should reformulate his vocation not any longer to produce some vivid representation of history as it really happened, but rather to produce the concept of history.

The binary opposition between fiction and fact is no longer relevant in any differential system; it is the assertion of the space between these entities that perhaps matters. But historiographic metafiction suggests the continuing relevance of such an opposition, even if it be a problematic one. Some novels establish and then blur the line between fiction and history. This kind of generic blurring has been a feature of literature since the classical Epic and the Bible, but the simultaneous and overt assertion and crossing of boundaries is more postmodern. Umberto Eco has claimed that there are three ways to narrate the past: the romance, the swashbuckling tale and the historical novel. Historical novels he feels, “not only identify in the past the causes of what came later but also trace the process through which these causes began slowly to produce their effects. The device points to a way of narrating this past historiographic metafiction and non historical fiction” (97).

What is the difference between postmodern fiction and what is usually regarded as nineteenth century historical fiction? It is difficult to generalize. Historical fiction is

> . . . set in a period of the past, whether recent or distant, realized with some degree of attention to the atmosphere and details which differentiate it from the present. Customarily, though not invariably, historical novels mingle real events (such as a war or revolution) and real public

> figures (a king or queen, a political or military leader) with fictional characters and events. (Ousby 138)

The history of the historical novel begins in the early 19th century with Sir Walter Scott. It is true that, before him, novelists who did not choose to aim at fidelity to contemporary life had already begun to abandon the deliberately unspecific settings – unspecific in place as well as time – which the romance and the fable had preferred. Victorian novelists were usually at their most creative when writing what could be called quasi-historical fiction, "novels set not in a remote past which had to be researched, but in a more recent past which could be captured largely through recollection, since it lay somewhere in the writer's childhood or only just beyond" (Ousby 138-9). Historical fiction had shrunk into the 'historical romance,' fiction of popular appeal which critics regarded as lying outside mainstream serious literature. Ousby strongly feels that from the twentieth century onwards, this confident dismissal has been challenged by novelists themselves. On the face of it, this revival is particularly surprising, ". . . since it occurred at just the time when academic historians had finally turned their backs on the storytelling confidence which had supported predecessors from Gibbon to Macaulay" (Ousby 140)

History plays a number of distinctly different roles and different levels of generality in its various manifestations. Historical fiction is that which is modelled on historiographics to the extent that it is motivated and made operative by a notion of history as a shaping force. Historiographic metafiction plays upon the truths and lies of the historical record. In certain novels, some known historical details are deliberately falsified in order to foreground the possible minimum failures of recorded history and the constant potential for both deliberate and inadvertent error. Another difference lies in the way in which postmodern fiction uses detail or historical data. Historiographic metafiction incorporates, but rarely assimilates such data. The impact of the new mixing of fiction and fact is clear on popular if not academic history in the recent years.

The 'non-fictional novel,' in its 'factional' variety, influenced writers like Thomas Keneally who wrote historical novels, often of the recent past. The non-fictional novel of the 1960s and 1970s did not just record the contemporary hysteria of history. It did not merely try to embrace the fictional element inevitable in any reporting and then try to imagine its way towards the truth. There are non-fictional novels however which come close to historiographic metafiction in their form and control. Many postmodern novels define the new seriousness that acknowledges the limits and powers of 'reporting' or writing of the past, recent or remote. Since history is three dimensional, it partakes of the nature of science, and philosophy. Postmodern novels raise a number of specific issues regarding the interaction of historiography and fiction that deserve more detailed study to bring about the characteristics of Faction.

In the opinion of David Bennett, one of the postmodern ways of literally incorporating the textualized past into the text of the present is that of parody. As he observes, "The term 'Parody' in contemporary usage designates a form of literary satire distinguishable from other kinds of satire by its initial mode, its internal dependence on the devices and conventions of its satiric target" (29). Parodic inter-texts are both literary and historical. The mixing of fact and fiction as in the writing of Daniel Defoe has been borrowed by many writers. Postmodern intertextuality is a formal manifestation of both a desire to close the gap between the past and the present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context. The resulting style is Faction. It is not a modernist's desire to order the present through the past or to make the present look spare in contrast to the richness of the past. It is not an attempt to void or avoid history. To what does the very language of historiographic metafiction refer? To a world of history or one of fiction? History's referents are presumed to be real, fiction's are not. But what postmodern novels teach is that in both cases, they actually refer at the first level, to other texts. We know the past only through its textualized remains. Historiographic metafiction problematizes the activity of reference by refusing to bracket the referent or to revel in it. History is natural selection. Mutant versions of the past struggle for dominance, new species of fact arise, and old saurian truths go to the wall, blindfolded and smoking last cigarettes. Only the mutations of the strong survive. The weak, the anonymous, the defeated leave few marks. History loves only those who dominate her. It is a relationship of mutual enslavement. All issues like subjectivity, reference ideology, underlie the problematized relations between history and fiction in postmodernism. But many theorists today have pointed to narrative as the one concern that envelops all of these, for the process of narrativization has come to be seen as a central form of human comprehend and formal coherence on the chaos of events. Narrative is what translates knowing into telling. It is this translation that obsesses postmodern fiction. The conventions of narrative in both historiography and novels are not constraints but enabling conditions.

Historiographic metafiction, like both historical fiction and narrative history, cannot avoid dealing with the problem of the states of their ‘facts’ and of the nature of their evidence, their documents. We are epistemologically limited in our ability to know the past since we are both spectators of and actors in the historical process. Historiographic metafiction suggests a distinction between events and facts that is shared by many historians.

From the time of Plato and Aristotle onwards, western aesthetics has centred on **mimetic** principles. It can be said that mimesis, or the depiction of reality, and Fantasy, or the departure from reality, form the twin impulses behind literary creation. Kathryn Hume, in an analysis which ranges from the Icelandic sagas to science fiction, from Malory to Pulp Romance, and from the Odyssey to the Nouveau Roman, systematically examines the various ways in which fantasy and mimesis contribute to literary representations of reality offering forms of escape in adventure stories, pastoral, farce and pornography; complementing each other in expressive presentations of 'new' realities; pressurizing readers to accept a didactic author's interpretation of reality; or battering the reader into agreeing that his or her interpretation cannot be proved. She asserts:

> Only by acknowledging fantasy i.e. imagined fiction as a legitimate response to reality, and to our demand that reality be meaningful, can we appreciate its role in literature's power to give readers a sense of meaning and its centrality to the creative imagination. As long as we assume more knowledge to be a great thing readers will naturally feel a sense of satisfaction. (Hume 98)

The **fabulative historical novel** interweaves history with fantasic events. An examination of some of the roots of literary fantasy reveals it to be characterized by this subversive function. Mikhail Bakhtin's seminal study, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929, 1963), places modern fantasists such as E.T.A. Hoffmann, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Edgar

Allan Poe and Jean-Paul Sartre, as the direct descendants of a traditional literary genre: the Menippea.

Menippean satire was present in ancient Christian and Byzantine literature, in medieval Renaissance, and Reformation writings. Its most representative works were fictions such as Petronius' *Satyricon,* Varro's *Bimarcus* i.e. *The Double Marcus*, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* known as ss*The Golden A,* and Lucian's *Strange Story.* It was a genre which broke the demands of historical realism or probability. The menippea moved easily in space between this world, an underworld and an upper world. It conflated the past, present and future, and allowed dialogues with the dead states of hallucination, dream, insanity, eccentric behaviour and speech, personal transformation, and extraordinary situations, were the norm.

While writing on Magic Realism, Liam Connell says, "The similarity of the formal properties of Modernism and Magic Realism has been amply recognised" (98). The term **Magic Realism** is used to describe the prose fiction of Jorge Louis Borges in Argentina, as well as the work of writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez in Colombia, Gunter Grass in Germany and John Fowls in England. These writers interweave in an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales. Robert Scholes popularized metafiction as an overall term for the large and grooving class of novels which depart drastically from the traditional categories either of realism or romance and also fabulation for the current mode of free wheeling narrative invention. These novels violate in various ways standard novelistic expectations by drastic and sometimes, highly effective experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday; the fantastic, the mythical and the nightmarish renderings blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. Magic realism is a term for one manifestation of postmodernism, first applied to the large body of spectacular, fantastic fiction produced in South American countries since World War II, notably the work of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, whose *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1970) is generally regarded as its paradigm. It juxtaposes apparently reliable, realistic reportage with extravagant fantasy, not just in a spirit of inscrutable playfulness but also in response to the manipulation of fact and information in South American politics. In this regard, Ian Ousby attests to the political functions of magic realism in the context of South American literature:

> Indeed, magic realism assumes that truth is best viewed as a communal, collaborative construct. . . . Such emphasis makes it an essentially comic genre. Magic realism has

> since been identified in other literatures, including the work of the Czech novelist Milan Kundera and the Italian Italo Calvino. The chief examples in English are the novels of Salman Rushdie, Angela Carter, Graham Swift and Peter Carey. In the European tradition, it is possible to see Rabelais and Kafka as precursors of the magic realist idiom, while Rushdie's work points back through the English novel to Dickens and Tristram Shandy. (180)

A different approach concentrates on significant details, insisting on the process of native perception and leaving the elaboration of more abstract moral conclusion to the reader. Tolstoy's technique of de-familiarisation requires a patient regard for appearances. Through a similar technique, short stories maximize the fragmentation effect by concentrating upon a piece of the work, which is placed under a strong unusual light. A last category includes redundant texts from the journal prose of Rabelais to contemporary writers who play with the signifier. The information density of such texts slides towards zero. "Most journalists experience a professional tug of war between the desire to tell a good story, and the desire to report, thoroughly analyse, and explain" (Hanson 36). Recent tabulators include Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, Donald Bartholomew, William Gass, Robert Coover, and Ishmael Reed. Robert Scholes' *Fabulation and Metafiction* (1979, an expansion of his

The Fabulators 1967); James M. Mellard's *The Exploded Form*: *The Modernist Novel in America* (1980); and Patricia Waugh's *Metafiction* (1984) are excellent studies on works of fabulation and metafiction.

The term **postmodernism** is sometimes applied to the literature and art after World War II (1939-45), when the effects of the first war on Western morale were greatly exacerbated by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atomic bomb, the progressive devastation of the natural environment, and the ominous fact of over population. Postmodernism involves not only a continuation, sometimes carried to an extreme, of the counter traditional experiments of modernism, but also diverse attempts to break away from modernist forms which had, inevitably, become in their turn conventional.

'Postmodernist' is the term used in literary parlance to refer to a corpus of literature that has been written in the mid-1950s, '60s and after, largely in America, and to a lesser extent in Latin America, Europe and Britain. Postmodernism is thus an international literary genre in the first place, a phenomenon including as it does in its canon, the pioneers—the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges; the Russian expatriate, Vladimir Nabokov; the chief French practitioner, Alain Robbe-Grillet, and such latter-day British instances as Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing, B. S. Johnson and John Fowles; and the by now well-known American figures like

Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vennegut Jr., John Barth, Donald Bartholomew, Ken Kesey, Norman Mailer and John Hawkese, to mention a select few. Most of the post-war literature is truly 'postmodern' in the sense that it evinces a new sensibility and thus effects a clear departure from modernism that preceded it.

Another important genre is the **myth**. According to Michael McKeon: "Myth is defined by its capacity to disentangle itself—to provide an 'escape' from history. . . the original formula of a myth degenerates or evolves as you will, beyond the stage where the distinctive characteristics of the myth are still recognizable. (6) Myth is often the form adopted by many postmodern writers. In classical Greek aesthetics, 'mythos' signified any story or plot, whether true or invented. In its central modern significance, however, a myth is one story in a mythology—a system of hereditary stories which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain (in terms of the intentions and actions of deities and other supernatural beings) why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances, and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives. Most myths are related to social rituals—set forms and procedures in sacred ceremonies—but anthropologists disagree as to whether rituals generated myths or myths generated rituals. When the postmodernist uses myth, it assumes the nature of a tool for subversion, a comfortable medium for dissolving the boundaries that traditionally exist between genres and identities.

Postmodernist art challenges the distinctions between the highbrow and the popular. It endorses **pop art**, which in an earlier era has been relegated as crass and trivial. The postmodernist penchant for the pop is due to a number of reasons. One is the artist's sense of dissatisfaction with the dominant art form of his time, and another the inaccessibility of the art form to the common man. This inaccessibility is in most cases due to the cleavage that will have arisen between art and entertainment. The new art strives to bridge this gap by large scale assimilation of elements of popular culture. New art forms are often, as the Russian Formalists believed, simply the canonization of inferior sub-literary genres. To state the same conversely, art needs constantly to revitalize itself by rebarbarization or revulgarization, 'barbarus' and 'vulgus' being Latin terms meaning the savage and the common man respectively. Modern literature, like literature in every age, did strive to incorporate elements of popular culture into its body. The proportion of the elements of popular culture in modern literature was minimal or peripheral; it was the preponderance or centrality of symbols and classical myths that in the main characterized it. Modern literature as seen in Shashi Tharoor has had recourse to myth in order to control, order and give shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.

Myth in the modernist perspective was a mode of perception which alone can expand consciousness enabling the inclusion of the other within the self. The moderns strove to relate myths to the contemporary situation, to find equivalences for mythos, which resulted in the myths being parodied or satirized. In *The Family Reunion,* Eliot seeks to find a contemporary analogue for a classical Orestes myth. *The Great Indian Novel,* a parodic version of the Indian epic Mahabharata, relates the mythical or puranic characters to Indian politics and democracy. Thus the moderns endeavour to preserve a certain degree of continuity with the past. The emphasis however, is on 'impersonality' in its many forms, whether it is distance through myth, hardness through image or lucidity through point of view.

Since the nineteenth century, the borders between literary genres have become blurred and fluid. The limits between the novel and the short story, the long poem, autobiography, biography and history have been interrogated and made permeable. But in any case, the conventions of the genres are played off against each other, and there is no simple, unproblematic merging.

This merging of genres was discernible in many discourses, including journalism, in the mid-twentieth century. In *Fact and Fiction*

(1977), John Hollowell elaborates on the postmodernist trend in New Journalism, which narrowed the gap between fact and fiction, in what they termed Faction. Proponents like Mailer, Capote and Thompson described a character's subconscious from an assumptive role which is slightly 'mischievous,' inventing the psychosis of a character and the formative chain of events that brings them to a literal climax. These writers in effect challenged the boundaries of fact and fiction, which in the beginning of the twenty-first century, demands more attention than it did fifty years ago. Dan Wakefield argued in his 1966 article that the Faction of Capote and Wolfe created a new fusion of the journalist's eye for detail and the personal vision of the novelist:

> Such reporting is 'imaginative' not because the author has distorted the facts, but because he has presented them in a full instead of in a naked manner, brought out the sights, sounds and feel, surrounding those facts and connected them by comparison with other facts of history, society and literature in an artistic manner that does not diminish but gives greater depth and dimension to the facts. (88)

While critics disagreed as to the merit and even a definition of Faction, by the end of the sixties there was little doubt that the varieties of reporting called, **New journalism**, 'the non-fiction novel' and 'the literature of fact' had stimulated a widespread re-evaluation of traditionally journalistic practice and commonly came to be known as 'Faction.' Yet, "there *is* the possibility of an awakening in the individual. . . a questioning where our society, our culture leads to, and the madness of it all, may act as a catalyst" (Powell 162).

Faction cannot be dismissed on the basis of traditional approaches to journalism. Since Friedrich Nietzsche, human civilization seems to have lost its moorings on facts and reality once and forever. All forms of contemporary writing can be seen to interrogate reality in some form or the other. Facts have been replaced by their representations and interpretations. Today it is hard to read a good text without finding in several articles the 'art leads,' the detailed characterization and the scenic reconstruction that characterize the form. Faction has played a role in changing even the most conservative of newspapers. It is not uncommon to find in leading dailies even one page that does not reflect greater probing and interpretation of facts than in previous years. Here Tom Wolfe writes about the restrictions put on the writer: "If a writer were a freeman and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his feeling and not upon conventions, life is a luminous halo, a semi transparent envelope surrounding from the beginning of consciousness" (31). The individual American in the 60s found himself daily confronted by realities that were as actual as they were fictive. Both novelists and reporters found themselves faced with situations demanding responses, situations to narrate which they found their tools inadequate. A significant number turned to Faction, working separately, and novelists and reporters were engaged in revising their narrative forms in order to better confront a new set of realities. While evaluating new journalism as new fiction, John Hellman asserts:

> Living and writing in the 1960s, reporters such as Wolfe, Thompson and Herr found themselves saddled with rules and formulas that made it impossible for them to deal with their subjects. A who-what-where-when-why style of reporting too did not suffice. They revolted against the rigid forms in which isolated facts are presented in declining order of importance and 'on the one hand. . . . on the other hand' news analysis which was common. They sought new forms and frankly aerated their personal perspectives. (ii-iii)

Writers as Wolfe, Breslin, Talese, Didion and Tharoor used fictional techniques in more complex and sophisticated ways than did their predecessors. The works of Stephen Crane and Mark Twain, for example, were often sketches written as preliminary exercises to fiction. In some articles, for example, there are long passages of straight historical narration, indicative of the older journalistic tradition. The techniques of interior monologue and stream of consciousness as employed by Wolfe or

Talese have seldom been used before in the sustained ways that these writers employ them. Contemporary journalists use novelistic techniques in order to provide greater psychological depth and to portray dramatically important social issues.

Consequently the traditional mimetic novels of earlier years have been partly replaced by 'the non-fiction novel' or reportage. Taking the cue from Alain Robbe-Grillet who writes a type of fiction like *La Jalousie* in which obviousness and transparency precluded the existence of any transcendence, the non-fiction novel seeks to purge the text of all traces of fiction as far as possible. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965) and Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* (1968) may be cited as non-fiction novels. *In Cold Blood* is a 'true' report, buoyed up by the author's hard research, of a multiple murder committed in Kansas in 1959. Mailer's is an account, which slides from history to fiction and vice-versa, of the author's participation in the anti-Vietnam War March on the Pentagon in 1967. Lars Ole Sauerberg points out:

> Mailer has chosen to counter point one version, which is not quite fiction in the sense of a made-up story, but an autobiography-as-fiction. . . which is not quite history, but the historian's eye-witness source. . . . The conventional frames they impose on reality are intended to exert a multi-appeal or full saturation effect. (69)

In the 1950s, there were promises of a new journalism and early in the sixties newspaper men experimented with fictional techniques. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* lent a new seriousness to the talk about a higher journalism. In his novel *In Cold Blood*, although Capote insisted upon the factual accuracy of all the situations and dialogue that he depicted, his narrative read more like a novel than like a historical account. Pegi Taylor elaborates: "He read about the murder of four members of the Clutter family in a small town in Kansas. . . he devoted the next six years, to researching the crime, compiling 6000 pages of interviews and then wrote his stunning non-fiction novel" (30). Perhaps more than the political reportage or more than Tom Wolfe's New Journalism, *In Cold Blood* stimulated a critical debate about a new form of literature that continues throughout the decade and is now accepted as **Faction**. No writer before Capote had so thoroughly blended journalistic techniques with the sophisticated narrative skills of the novelist. Paul Levine feels that he had single-handedly "created a new literary genre that is the envy of both the novelists and reporters" (607). They could equal neither impeccable factuality nor the narrative skill with which he told his story. Noman Mailer followed Capote's lead by concocting his own aesthetic for *The Armies of the Night*. The subtitle of this book, "History as a Novel, The Novel as History," reflects his desire to promote the validity of his impressionistic journalism. Capote's *In Cold Blood*, for instance, shares many of the concerns of Faction and is of obvious importance in the development and recognition of the genre; still, it is a transitional work which is close to conventional journalism in the illusion of objectivity. Capote seeks an impersonal, omniscient point of view close to realistic fiction in the limitations of its rather conservative techniques.

Numerous pieces written by Truman Capote or about him by others are filled with references to his childhood. Although the events and characters in his stories and novels more often than not have a link to actual experiences in Capote's life, it is almost impossible for anyone to state flatly, "This happened to Capote," or "He witnessed these events," or "He knew the person who is this character," or "This is what Capote believed" (Capote 1985: 83) Sauerberg thinks that clearly Capote was claiming a generic status for his narrative "which is closer to what we expect from fiction proper than from history or reportage" (20). Sauerberg also attests:

> Capote after interviewing witnesses and murderers and the affected family members had to decide upon the best possible presentation of their material for ends not primarily concerned with any 'objectivity' or 'factuality', but with something rather more complex that may provisionally be called literary truth. . . . (22)

Capote was not particularly concerned with what everyone thought of as truth. On a talk show in the eighties, Capote discussed "the non-falsehood lie." He liked such oxymorons. Earlier, in the sixties, he had coined the term non-fiction novel. "The non-falsehood lie" is 'true'," he claimed, "because it amuses me more that way" (1985: 72).

Everything a writer experiences, sees, and hears is filtered and then undergoes radical changes as it is processed and refined in the imagination before it is recast and presented in fictional form. In "Self-Portrait," Capote asks himself whether he was truthful and responds: "As a writer—yes, I think so, privately—well, that is a matter of opinion; some of my friends think that when relating an event or piece of news, I am inclined to alter or over-elaborate. Myself, I just call it making something 'come alive' " (1985: 81). In other words, a form of art; art and truth are not necessarily compatible bedfellows. In interviews, in confessional essays, and in fictionalized autobiography, Capote suggests that because he was a lonely and fearful child, he had a rich fantasy life. John Malcolm Brinnin—a close friend of Capote's for years—even though Capote later denied their intimacy—has written of Capote's ways of escaping from the unpleasantness of everyday life. When he was a boy and supposed to be in school, he would play truant and spend much of his time in Central Park, near the Plaza Hotel. He would sit in the park dreaming of paperweight cities and towns where everything happened the way he wanted it to. This is where his Faction began. But Harold Nye who knew Capote personally remembers the berserk way in which the latter behaved during the time of the prisoner's execution. He recalls, "When Smith came in Truman ran out of the building; he would not witness it" (70).

The Muses Are Heard (1956), the author's memorably ironic work of non-fiction written during this time, did not sell well in spite of its many good reviews. This led him to develop another prose work based on an actual occurrence, the 'non-fiction novel' and his best known book, *In Cold Blood* which combines the methods of journalism and fiction.

How do we distinguish fiction from non-fiction? What are the basic differences between literature and journalism? What is the 'non-fiction novel'? *In Cold Blood* (Capote), *The Armies of the Night* (Mailer) and *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (Wolfe, 1968) have each formulated a tactical definition of the genre. But the non fictional novel should not be confused with documentary novels, a popular and interesting genre which allows all the latitude of the fictional writer, but usually contains neither the persuasiveness of fact nor the poetic altitude fiction is capable of reaching. The author lets his imagination run riot over the facts. The dramatic effect of actual events is imaginatively heightened to make a good story. Mailer felt:

> When the book is a novel as well as history, the author is freed from the obligation to create the ostensible mood of objectivity sought by most factual reporting. The non-fiction novel strives for a wider metaphorical and symbolic context than does conventional journalism. By applying the imaginative resources of fiction to contemporary history, the author of faction transcends the clichés and formulas of conventional reportage. (25)

The non-fiction novel is a synthesis of diverse tendencies in society. The writing of history in the form of a novel will transform an isolated event or a group of isolated events into a significant reflection of the social climate of the sixties. Faction writers affirm that reality is mysterious and finally unknowable; to state the facts, is to have created a fiction. A new synthesis of reportage and fiction is created. A personal form of reportage combines the empirical virtues of journalism with the imaginative insights of the novel. The resulting style is Factional. The non-fiction novel recreates the milieu in which events occur and reflect the attitudes and behaviour of the characters rather than mere facts. The historian is the narrator on the basis of such evidence as he has been able to accumulate. He is not only the author, he is a person, a projection of the author's empirical virtues, since Herodotus and Thucydides, the historian has been concerned to establish himself with the reader as a repository of fact, a tireless investigator and sorter, a sober and impartial judge, a man; in short, an authority who is entitled not only to present the facts as he has established them, but to comment on them, to draw parallels, to moralize, to generalize and the end product is Faction.

Sometimes some reporter employs various 'fictive' elements that distinguish the script from conventional reportage. While the author is a typical reporter on the scene, getting the 'story,' meeting the deadlines and trying to remain objective, he will also let us in on what a typical news story cannot tell; his own reactions, omissions and errors that underscore the impossibility of ever really knowing what happened.

Several writers of fiction have previously created non-fiction works that closely resemble the non-fiction works of Capote, Mailer and Wolfe. Perhaps the most notable example is George Orwell. His *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) and *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) rely heavily upon the 'close-to-the-skin' writing that characterises new journalism or Faction. A few of Hemingway's war reports and especially such non-fiction works as *Green Hills of Africa* (1935) and *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) develop from intentions similar to those of Capote and Mailer.

Many talented freelance writers successfully used fictional techniques thirty years earlier. Reportage was made more literary. Careful research, fictionalized scenes and extensive dialogue were combined to bring a new level of sophistication. Although Wolfe dates the beginnings of Faction in the sixties, fictional techniques were apparent in the magazine articles of the forties and fifties. Wolfe thinks that the new style began early in the decade when some of his friends, writing for the Sunday supplement of the *New York Herald Tribune*, began to experiment with fictional techniques in new feature stories and columns.

There was a widespread experimentation in non-fiction. A greater freedom in the form and style was encouraged. In a 1972 article, Harold Hayes emphasized the economic factors in the rise of the new journalism:

> If there has been any great change to accelerate the possibility of writers dealing non-flexibly with language and with form, it is not only because of the birth of the new journalism form but because now there is a commercial disposition among literary work to see that imaginative writing now is more appealing to readers even when they read facts. (12)

Norman Mailer's long article on his 1967 march on the Pentagon, later becoming the Pulitzer Prize winner *The Armies of the Night* is a typical example of how a great multitude wanted fact and fiction to be combined or mixed for interesting readability. That work of Faction was a roaring success.

Beyond the economic necessities and the enterprising editors of the sixties, the rapidly developing underground press contributed to the general atmosphere of freedom from which Faction grew. Increasingly, even the more established media are resenting the restrictions on the use of language, and there was a distrust of purely official factual versions and people yearned for alternative writing experiences. The pervasive tradition of 'objective' reporting was to be counteracted. The insatiable interest of the people, especially the Americans, in celebrities and personalities in the limelight dominated the view of history to an unusual degree in the sixties. The best and the worst new journalism exploded private lives hidden from the camera, with an intensity barely short of libel.

The works of reporters like Tom Wolfe, Jimmy Breslin, Joan Didion, Gay Talese, and Hunter Thompson have experimented with fictional techniques by rebelling against the conventional standards of objective reporting. Their works have been collectively called New Journalism which incorporates the characteristics of Faction. These writers have generated a new kind of non-fiction that defies our usual clarifications of 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' since they combine elements of both genres in a variety of ways. More than the novels of the sixties the new journalism and non-fiction novels have served the function of fiction, showing that fiction is not dead.

The term ‘New Journalism’ has been associated with Tom Wolfe’s work and the term ‘non-fiction novel’ has been used by Truman Capote, and together they have been a new united force in the history of representation in contemporary American society. This marks a new era which has re-defined the relationship between the representer and the represented. As Pegi Taylor says, one cannot deny that “it takes tremendous craft for a non-fiction writer to dominate his subjects” (28). The author of the non-fiction novel is not an all-knowing omniscient narrator, he is a character feeling, knowing, discovering and evolving through the narrative. Such an author presents a fresh perspective of reality, which was denied by conventional methods of narratology. Wolfe and Capote developed the forms simultaneously as the most visible experiments in a genre responding to a unique shift in American culture.

Capote’s ‘non-fiction novel’ went far beyond mere journalism. He proved that Faction could be raised to the level of art. This goal could be accomplished by blending carefully recorded dialogue, psychological depth, and novelistic form with what he called the realities of journalism. Several admirable reporters since then have shown the possibility of narrative reportage. According to Capote, the techniques of the non-fiction novel can be applied to any contemporary event. Separating the spurious from the authentic has been a preoccupation of Western metaphysics, right from the time of Plato. Capote and Wolfe literally turn

Western artistic tradition on its head by questioning the very validity of the concept of authenticity. In literature this new trend has been shown by many writers. Shashi Tharoor, the author under study, becomes relevant in his innovative combination of fact and fiction to represent the crisis and bizarre disorder of a postcolonial, postmodern ethos.

The fusion of novelistic techniques and factual reporting, which is a form of Faction, raises complex questions beyond the scope of a strictly literary study. The traditional distinction between ‘art’ and ‘non-art’ seems to be continually evaporating. Besides *In Cold Blood* and *The Armies of the Night,* a number of recent books have undertaken to blur the distinctions between fact and fiction. Anthropologist Oscar Lewis’ documentaries read more like novels and the subjects telling their own stories have been fictionalized. Lewis has worked out of a whole new literary domain. Hence fiction competes with sensitively written social science. Alfred Kazin observes that despite the many novels published during the decade, the dominant trend is the increasing power and significance of non-fiction writing in a form that he calls “the imagination of fact” (247).

A fact-fiction theory provides a critical framework to the genre. A narrow conception should not be imposed on it. Mailer with his prophetic and epic tone, Thompson with his fierce caricatures, Wolfe with his stylistic and analytic distance from the events he reports and Herr’s intense exploration of his participation in them, Tharoor's timely fusion and separation of fact and fiction, have all acquired for Faction the highest stature in literary expression, though the input of each author has characteristic variations. Each of them combines a journalistic approach with a frank acknowledgement and exploration of the crucially central role of the imaginative human subject in transforming consciousness into contemporary prose narrative. Capote's *In Cold Blood* shares many of the fundamental concerns of Faction and is of unmistakable significance in the development and recognition of the genre; still, it is a transitional work which is close to conventional journalism in the illusion of objectivity. Capote narrates from an impersonal omniscient point of view and his narration is close to realistic fiction in the limitations of its rather conservative techniques. The postmodern Faction writers have effectively broadened the realm of fictive nobilities in their attempt to defy the belief in a postmodern 'reality.'

This new phase of literary representation has also witnessed a period of intense experimentation and critical confusion in fiction. The rise of Faction however has closely paralleled explosive changes in society generally and by the end of the sixties, and some of the best writing of the decade was clearly non-fiction. The use of fictive techniques has occasionally led to abuses and in the hands of careless reporters, the results have sometimes been disastrous. New Journalism has not replaced conventional objective reporting nor was this ever the intention of its exponents. Yet in the relatively staid, formula-ridden world of traditional journalism, a new voice was heard. More importantly, established novelists turned temporarily from fiction to write about contemporary issues. Those critics who praised the vitality of the combination saw in it a fusion of the journalist's passion for detail and the novelist's personal vision. And more so, the once demarcated differences between journalism and literature, between elite art and the popular arts, became increasingly difficult to distinguish.

"The successful reporter is one who can find a story even if there is no earthquake, tsunami, assassination or civil war," says American historian Daniel Boorstin (17). If he cannot find a story, he must make one by the surprising interest he unfolds from some common place event. This change in our attitude toward news is not merely a basic fact about the history of American newspapers. It is a symptom of a revolutionary change in our attitude toward what happens in the world, how much of it is new, surprising and important. Demanding more than the world can give, contemporary readers require that something fabricated to make up for the world's deficiency. New Journalism prioritizes the subjective perceptions of the writer over the representation of an 'objective' reality. The usual vision of the journalist as a dispassionate observer who gathers facts but stays out of the action himself has yielded to that of the participant observer. The best reporters of the sixties actually sought out 'the story' and often made news themselves in the process. As emphasized earlier, this breakdown of the 'real' was symptomatic of social change. Gore Vidal attests to this: ". . . True Revolution can only take place when things fall apart in the wake of some catastrophe – a last war, a collapsed economy" (285).

The interest of novelists in reportage in the wake of New Journalism was making it a more legitimate literary activity. For the novelists who turned to the imagination of fact, the genre represented an attempt to appropriate the prestige of the novel to reporting. The association between novel and reportage was at once realistic and symbolic (Leech and Short 157). Ronald Sukenick says: "Fiction as a form of invention, a way of bringing into being that which did not previously exist, is a term that can be applied to the arts in general, and perhaps to other intellectual disciplines" (8). The most radical boundaries crossed, however, have been those between fiction and non-fiction and – by extension – between art and life.

In the March 1986 issue of *Esquire Magazine*, Jerzy Kosinski published a piece in the 'Documentary' section, called "Death in Cannes," a narrative of the last days and subsequent death of French biologist, Jacques Monod (13-9). Typically postmodern, the text refuses the omniscience and omnipresence of the third person and engages instead, in a dialogue between a narrative voice (which both is and is not Kosinski's) and a projected reader. Its viewpoint is avowedly limited, provisional and personal. However, it also works and plays with the conventions of both literary realism and journalistic facticity: the text is accompanied by photographs of the author and the subject. The commentary uses these photos to make us, as readers, aware of our expectations of both narrative and pictorial interpretation, including our native but common trust in the representational veracity of photography. There is a fusion of the real and unreal.

In addition to being 'borderline' inquiries, most of these postmodernist contradictory texts are also specifically parodic in their intertextual relation to the traditions and conventions of the genres involved. When T.S. Eliot recalled Dante or Virgil in *The Waste Land* (1922), one sensed a kind of wishful call to continuity beneath the fragmented echoing. In the words of Linda Hutcheon, "it is precisely this that is contested in postmodern parody where it is often ironic discontinuity that is revealed at the heart of continuity, difference at the heart of similarity" (1985: 185). Parody as seen in Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* is a perfect postmodern form in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies. It also forces a reconsideration of the idea of origin or originality that is compatible with other postmodern interrogations of liberal humanist assumptions. During the 1960s, there were pervasive social changes in America affecting the response of novelists and journalists. A most interesting response has been a form of non-fiction that relies upon narrative techniques and intuitive insights of the novelist to chronicle contemporary events. Critics who have praised the works of Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, Tom Wolfe and others have seen in their works, a new fusion of reporting or narrating and fiction, and have called them 'non-fiction novels' and 'New Journalism.' Some detractors have labelled them 'Para Journalism.' Others call it 'Faction,' a fusion of 'fact' and 'fiction.' During the decade, major changes in journalistic conventions and a new involvement of novelists in current history coalesced in a unique way. The forms and styles of all arts are shifting rapidly, perhaps more rapidly than ever before. Such hybrid forms as the non-fiction novel demand examination not only for the vivid portrayal of contemporary life they provide, but also for what they tell us about a new genre in literature.

While novel is considered pure fiction, the term 'non-fiction novel' may appear paradoxical. But it is significant in writing for certain important reasons. They reflect changes in the style and form of traditional journalism. The non-fiction novel demonstrates a changing relationship between the writer's conception of his role and the production of an artistic work in society. The writer's choice of documentary forms rather than imaginative fiction raises a new form in modern writing.

The transformation of a standard **magazine formula** to an artistic portrait is typical of the Faction writer. His work must be held together by a narrative line. Critics have placed it astraddle the literary no-man's-land between fact and fiction showing technical virtuosity. Such works have a tremendous power to involve the reader. The narrative reads like a novel largely because of the use of re-constructions instead of scene by scene historical narration, the ironic heightening of the dialogue and the skilful manipulation of point of view. Stacks of documents, public records and interviews are needed for the writing of Faction. Factual accuracy as well as the imaginative manipulation of it is given importance. The author would want his work to be processed in both ways, with the impeccable accuracy of fact and the emotional impact found only in fiction. To reconstruct conversation, he elicits and tirelessly double- checks the recollection of the neighbours who were present when something happened. He gains access to their confessions, diaries, letters and special narrative accounts. All these materials permit and enable the writer to reconstruct as closely as possible, the scenes and situations. This is how Faction takes shape.

Like a biographer working from documentary materials, he constructs a final narrative that includes events and incidents at which he has not been present. Unlike a typical historical account, dramatic events are fore-shadowed and dialogues take on a hidden meaning not apparent in its original context. Since the writer must inevitably select materials from the real flow of life that is fact, he has to impose a form, a narrative structure upon the experience he has so carefully documented. Though there can be documentary ambitions for the non-fiction novel, the writer clearly recognizes the need to select and arrange his materials for maximum emotional impact. It is the writer's ability to capitalize on the hidden meanings of the selected significant moments that contributes to the narrative impact of the book. But throughout, a silent alliance is maintained between the narrator and the reader.

A choice of the third person and omniscient narration in Faction promotes a semblance of **objectivity**. Each major section of the narrative is told from the successive windows of other people's interest and information. Factional works are organized by the **scenic** construction of the novel rather than by the historical or chronological summary common to history and journalism. 'Facts' never speak for them since the writer's selection and arrangement inevitably impose a design of fiction in it. Faction is not just a presentation of facts but a manipulation of the arranger. This is reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's words: "I find something just a shade suspicious in the maintained illusion of objective factual presentation. Facts do not sing themselves as Emerson maintains, facts are silent and any singing they do depends on their orchestration by a human arranger'" (235).

Beyond the techniques of characterization, some of the Factional writings are closer to **fiction** than to **journalism** on a symbolic level. The books achieve a suggestive power and become universal in a way that most reportage is not. David Lodge has pointed out that what is seen in Factional works is not so much a matter of invented characters and actions, as a philosophic fiction or fallacy which the traditional novel encourages (1966: 98).

New Journalism or Faction overcomes the limitations of conventional journalism and realistic fiction by exploiting fully and frankly, the power of shaping consciousness found in fabulist fiction. Both fiction and journalism are forced by an implausible reality into radical breaks with the traditional author-reader contract. The demanding new duties of fiction to somehow shape a meaningful world and define a vital relationship with it also lead inexorably to a third similarity between the two forms, their similar function being artificial myths / fables. Paul Dukes in his article "Fictory or Faction?" clearly states: "Before the rise of academic history, there was no clear distinction between what was said to have happened and what had actually happened in presentation often made to justify the policies and enhance the reputations of Kings and Queens and other outstanding individuals" (106). Thus Faction reveals and problematizes the power politics and ideological hegemony that underlie all discourses.

Local colouring and screen writing have steadily paralleled novel writing. A biographical sketch of actor Amitabh Bachchan, without Tharoor saying so even once, figures prominently in the development of the techniques of the non-fiction novel *Show Business.* Movies like *Gandhi* and *Mugal-E-Asam* are other examples of the merger of fiction and non-fiction. Journalistic assignments become something more in the artistic hand of the author. Fictional techniques as scenic reconstruction, flash backs, foreshadowing and the heightening of dialogue for dramatic effect are seen. They are complementary in bringing out a work of Faction. Attentiveness to facts, and an ear for ironic details can produce artistic results. While striving for objectivity, reports are given a narrative sense that makes the works read like short stories. Working from overheard conversation, diaries and letters of the characters or celebrities, and his own observations, the writer of Faction carefully chooses scenes and conversations to create a coherent narrative. Factional ingredients like dialogues, appearing to be realistic, are included. Truly revealing personality sketches that often rely upon the characterization techniques of the short story are drawn. Emotional detachment may be shown as well as scenic reconstruction and an ironic heightening to emphasize it.

Faction as a genre, it seems, has a bright and enduring future in the postmodern world. In sociological and investigative practices Faction has opened up new possibilities, marking the demise of traditional fiction. The worship of the novel as a sacred form had reached a peak in the sixties, then suddenly began to tail off as it became apparent that there is to be no golden post-war period in the novel. By the early 1960s, a more spectacular form of new journalism or Faction had begun. The new journalism was victorious on status, and a financial success.

Detractors of Faction often assume that it is a hybrid form that mixes the content of fiction (falsehood) with that of fact (truth). By the mid sixties such critics as Dwight MacDonald in *The New York Review of Books* attacked the Faction writers for "turning facts into more and mere entertainment" (qtd. in Cumming 23). The new product, though it reads like fiction, is not fiction. It is or should be as reliable as the most reliable reportage although it seeks a larger truth. This possibility of attaining a higher truth was what made the new writers abandon the limitations of conventional writing. The Factionists communicated the experience and meaning of their subjects in their entire ambiguity and complexity, through the use of such fictional devices as construction of scenes, dialogue, interior point of view and the recording of significant details of dress and milieu.

A starting point for any good journalist should be the truth which he tempers with moral judgment and aesthetic control derived from experience. The writer moves past press releases and press agents to penetrate the mysteries behind the appearance. This openness enables the writer to break through the press packaged insights and perspectives which permeate the corporate fiction produced by conventional writing. The writer of Faction exploited the transformational resources of human perception and imagination to seek out a fresher and more complete experience of an event and then to recreate that experience into a personally shaped fiction which communicated everything approaching the wholeness and resonance it had left for him. The conventions and techniques of realistic fictions most fully developed during the later 19th century did not seem to satisfactorily convey contemporary experience.

The Factionist's motive is to achieve a literary style comparable to fiction and to portray characters with psychological depth. In Faction, the writer attempts to reconstruct experience as it might have taken place. He uses the techniques of fiction to convey information and to provide background to his reportage, not usually possible in earlier forms of writings. Tom Wolfe argues in "The New Journalism" that an aggressive and ambitious group of feature writers in the early sixties began to experiment with fictional techniques to create a livelier reporting that might save a dying reporter. Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*

(1722) heaps realistic detail on detail to create an illusion of an eyewitness report of the Great Plague of 1665. While it was fiction masquerading as fact, Defoe's account was long regarded as an accurate historical record. Nineteenth century literature and periodical journalism too reveal examples of personal reporting and colourful sketches that rely on fictional techniques, but usually as warm-up for short stories and novels. Factual narration and fictionalized story-telling blend thoroughly in the works of some authors making them purely Factional.

The genre 'Faction' gained new sophistication. Lithan Ro's sketch of Hemingway and Capote's treatment of Marlon Brando and Shashi Tharoor's treatment of Amitabh Bachchan are well-known. The reporter's or narrator's method involves staying with the subject long enough for revealing scenes described convincingly. Many gifted writers produced 'sketches' or 'lives' of personalities in the early sixties by acting on the theory that if a reporter followed a famous celebrity closely, he could write very interesting details about his 'inner life.'

As a major category of Faction, attention may be focused upon the 'new' patterns of social organization or trends that reflect important changes in national manners and mores. Tom Wolfe thinks that when major histories of this era are written, these changes will be seen as major developments in literary writing. John Hersey's *Algiers Motel Incident* (1968) explored the racial tensions between blacks and the police during the Detroit Riots of 1967. Hersey depended upon official records, court transcripts and extensive interviews to provide a documentary history of the case. Although the book was carefully researched, Hersey presents the evidence and allows the reader to draw his own conclusions. Though he wanted to avoid the artifice of a "fictionalized reconstruction," he could make it a beautiful piece of Faction.

Another category of Faction includes **political and social reporting** in subjects ranging from the Civil Rights Management to Political Conventions. Garry Wills wrote a series of excellent articles on the Southern Christian leadership council culminating with "Martin Luther King is Still on the Case." Wills' moving account describes the Vashville garbage workers who travelled to the humble church where the slain leader's casket lay after his assassination. More than that, Wills reflects upon Dr. King's rhetorical power and the political strategies he employed in urging new rights for American minority groups. His work on facts around the subject and their details were fictionalized and they seem justified.

Although the social ferment of the sixties revived old dilemmas and imposed special demands on writers of fiction, it also generated new possibilities. Brooding about the sweeping changes in social values, mores and lifestyles, some of the best novelists complained about the difficulty of writing fiction at all in a period in which daily events seemed to pre-empt the possibilities of the novelist's imagination. Many novelists, in fact, temporarily turned away from the creation of fiction toward forms of social commentary, documentary, parody and a vigorous kind of reportage. The novelist's pre-occupation with the rush and frenzy of events in the sixties diverted the impulse for fiction into the special kind of journalism, Faction.

In a literary work, there are numerous factors that contribute to the process of meaning construction. The layering of these factors contributes to complex inter-lacing of assorted strands of meaning in the rich fabric of the text. The use of **myth**, for instance, intensifies the text's capacity for meaning and gives it multi-dimensionality. This can be clearly seen in *The Great Indian Novel.* Certain novelists and journalists in the twentieth century reflect an unusual degree of self-consciousness about the writer's role in society. In this age of sick hurry and divided aims, the gravest problem faced by the author was to define reality and represent it. Everyday events continually blurred the comfortable distinctions between reality and unreality, between fantasy and fact. Fictionality is, in most cases, a historically variable property. Fictional real sometimes arises through the extinction of the belief in a mythology. In other cases, fictionalization originates in the loss of the referential link between the characters and events described in a literary text. Fictional domains are not necessarily consecrated as much from the beginning of the existence. According to Thomas G. Pavel:

> The frontiers of fiction separate it on one side from myth, on another from actuality. Fiction is surrounded by sacred borders, by actuality borders and by representational borders. Discourse oriented analysis of fiction claims that fictional terms only mean but do not denote the actual work. Exemplary and ideological fictions often start with a non fictional basis, from which the construction derives a form of legitimacy. It would not take much sense to examine the structure of fictional worlds nor the interplay between these and actual worlds. Reality in fiction is just a textual convention, not so different from the compositional conventions of the rhyme pattern in sonnets etc. (81)

Any new situation, new kind of character, new social class or group portrayed, new extreme of personal interior detail, or new depth into low, unsavoury, or repressed matter—all these , at least theoretically, affirm the worth of the fiction and offer the reader something that can be viewed as a personal gain. As long as we assume more knowledge to be a good thing, readers will naturally feel a sense of satisfaction, and the experience gained by assimilating the story will be meaningful if only because it is new, an augmentation of the state the reader enjoyed prior to the reading. The act of noticing something never before seen makes the observer feel that his own existence has been validated, and reinforces his sense of purpose. For all these, the author writes the existing theories in a new way.

Another value which may enhance a work's ability to convey meaning is its **aesthetic** perfection. Fine craftsmanship gives the discerning observer a sense of satisfaction. Insofar as fiction attempts to solve a problem in the narrative structure, success is assured. The intricacy of detail is exciting. The delicacy and precision of implication can win admiration. This feeling has nothing to do with moral content. One may applaud a subtle portrayal of evil or ineptitude. As a rule, therefore, enjoying a work aesthetically can give us a sense of meaningful intellectual activity. For this, the author intermingles fact and fiction.

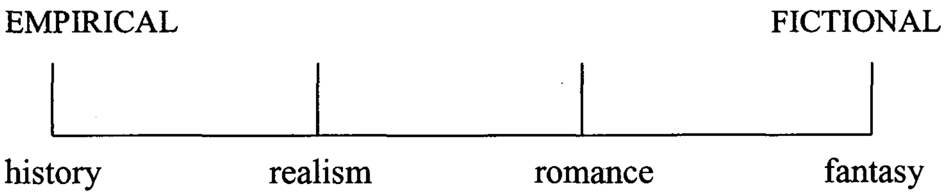
All these experiences of meaning are limited and personal. They help readers feel that they can relate to some local portion of the cosmos – to social patterns, to a love affair, to the interactions of Americans and Europeans. The experience given by reading fiction lets readers feel in control of anxiety-laden situations, some of which, in some guise, might arise within their own lives. As long as readers are satisfied with this limited kind of control, realistic literature is effective at conveying a sense of meaning in a Factional way.

The celebration of the rise of **non-fiction** in recent years has led quite naturally to a fierce critical backlash. The preference for non-fiction over fiction constitutes the subversion of the public taste. Though the novel did not die in the mid-sixties, the growing popularity of non-fiction in recent decades is apparent even from the most cursory review of magazine trends. Until about the forties, magazines had printed about one third non-fiction and two thirds fiction. By the mid-sixties this proportion nearly reversed itself. A perusal of bestseller lists for the last decade reveals a concomitant rise in memoirs, confessions, autobiographies and a host of 'how-to' books by psychologists, doctors and others.

The writers of 'The Literature of Fact,' 'The Non-fiction Novel,' 'New Journalism,' 'Documentary Fiction' or 'Historical Novel' do not in any real sense constitute a school or movement. But they prompt critical questions like "What is a novel?" "What is the difference between fiction and non-fiction?," "What distinguishes literature from journalism?" etc. Although their viewpoints greatly reduce the complexity and variety of recent fiction, it can be rightly concluded that the new writers who have come to prominence in the sixties appear to be doing things differently from their predecessors. For although no clear pattern for the new kind of novel has emerged, the works of people like Hawks, Barth and Pynchon reflect the revival of older narrative forms in new combinations in preference to the conventions of realism.

There is an empirical relationship as well as a fictional mode in the nature of the narrative of Faction. The empirical novel, according to Scholes and Kellogg, includes history and biography, documentary and journalism. Its commitment is to mimesis, or the realistic representation of experience. The fictional mode, in contrast, includes such forms as romance, fable, allegory and myth. Its allegiance is to an imagined world distanced from the world of experience and less bound to the contingencies of everyday life (Scholes and Kellogg 23-5). On the two part scheme that Kellogg and Scholes propose in *The Nature of the Narrative* (1966), non-fiction novels are examples of the empirical mode. In *The Novelist at the Cross Roads* (1971), however, British critic David Lodge observes that Scholes' prediction that fabulation will dominate the future of fiction tells only one side of the story (1971: 198).

The disintegration of the novel into empirical and fictional modes is a reversal of the historical synthesis of history, biography and chronicle on the one hand, and allegory, fable and myth on the other, from which the novel originally evolved. The modes of narrative can be roughly represented as points along a continuer. The empirical representation of history metamorphoses into the fictional representation of fantasy through the media of realism and romance. This has been depicted by John Hollowell in the following manner:



(Hollowell 20)

Moving from left to right along with continuum, the direct representation of experience would be history or a purely empirical narrative. The extreme at the right would be fantasy or a purely imaginary world. Between the extremes lie realism and romance. Realism strives to present the world “as it is,” i.e., closely allied to history, “as it might be” or, “as it should be.” The pure types are suggested by the chart, however, since most narratives are combinations of the various elements. Yet it is possible to say that the central tradition of the novel is somewhere in the centre, in the area encamping realism and romance, thus making it Faction.

The worlds we speak about, actual or fictional, nearly hide their deep fractures, and our language, our texts, appear for a while to be a transparent media unproblematically leading to truth. Various neo-Kantian approaches assume that there are no worlds strictly speaking, but only world versions occasioned by theories, texts, works of art, with no autonomous existence outside these. To the referential paradigm that unduly perhaps generalizes realistic schemata to fictional activity, we find here a counterpart, wherein intimacy between a text and an idiosyncratic world is generalized to all types of knowledge. Strong realism often dismisses fiction as false or spurious discourse. Various types of regionalism answer the demarcational question by positing clear-cut limits between the actual world and the world of fiction. Most contemporary readers and writers are aware of the difference between fact and fiction, but there is by no means a universal pattern. The transferring of an event across the border of legend can be labelled mythification. The Factionist develops a relationship between mythification and de-familiarisation. He projects an event into a mythical territory if not to put it into a certain kind of perspectivity, to set it at a comparative distance, to elevate it onto a higher plane so that it may easily be contemplated and understood.

Tom Wolfe has claimed that Faction depends on the use of **realistic techniques** (22). However he and other New Journalists and Non-Fiction novelists have moved beyond the conventions not only of journalism but of traditional fiction as well. The novelist attempting to set down his world in the early 1960s found that the conventions of realistic writing shared many of the limitations of conventional media writing since the two were based on similar assumptions about reality. As a result, he became an experimentalist, not only of a theatrical love of the avant garde, but out of a simple need to find a way to better know and communicate reality.

For the fiction writer of the mid-twentieth century, change and fragmentation were the felt realities that literally replaced the sum of beliefs, habits, expectations, and other cultural norms that generally characterize a society. American reality of this era was undergoing such vast transformations under the influx of new technologies, neo-economic processes and media explosion that the realistic methods of conventional fiction were rapidly becoming obsolete and insufficient in representation. This problem was compounded by the fact that realism was but a fictional mode – a set of literary conventions and techniques developed in the late nineteenth century to enable the writer to describe the typical experience of members of large classes in society. So, Faction became a necessity.

The major difference between New Journalism and contemporary **fabulist fiction** is one of contract in both forms. The writer contracts an agreement with the reader which frees the former from the need to establish the illusion of reality. In his desire to break through the crisis of credibility in an incredible world, the fiction writer has escaped the problems of plausibility and fragmentation by the radically simple device of assuring the reader that he is dealing with pure fantasy. The new writer has escaped promising the reader that he is dealing in pure fact. The 'true fact' has indubitably taken advantage over the invented tale, to begin with that of being true. It allows us to access unknown regions into which no writer would have dared venture, and brings us with one leap, to the edge of the abyss. This is what Acharya Mahapragya means, when he says, "Generally our inclination is towards illusion and not towards the truth. . . we are inclined to hold the reflection instead of the reality" (208).

The realistic novelist convinces the reader by saying all this did not really happen, but it could have credibility. The fabulist convinces on the basis of the internal cohesion of his purely imaginary works. The Factionist on the other hand needs only convince on the basis of verifiable sources and his personal integrity. According to Zulfiker Ghose, "All this actually did happen, so do not blame me if it does not seem real. Every form produces its own idea, its own vision of the world. Form has meaning and what is more, in the realm of art only form possesses meaning. . . ." (13). The fiction writer and the New Journalist have both leapt over the contemporary breakdown of the classic contractual agreement between author and reader based on notions of plausibility and suspension of disbelief. Moreover they have both, by this same leap, solved the problem of a lack of a stable body of manners and morals. By giving up all claims to the actual works, the fabulator frees himself from its vagaries and can deal instead in the more universal elements of idea and pattern. Likewise, by claiming the actual world as the content of his works, the Factionist justifies writing directly about the phenomena as self-evident signals of meaning; he can deal with them directly, attempting to decipher their literal and larger significance. Their ephemerality and strangeness are themselves often major subjects of his works. Ghose adds, ". . . since written sentences can work in a succession of horizontal lines while what is seen or experienced or contained by a consciousness at any given movement is a multiplicity of thoughts, images and sensations, therefore, a narrative is obliged to produce a highly edited version of reality" (13).

While the fiction writer insists on fantasy, the Factionist claims **fact in fiction**. But both assert the necessity of an imaginative pattern-making consciousness. Faced with a breakdown in the actual world, the writer of fabulist fiction frees himself as far as possible, from all relationship with it, turning inward, to create a world with a meaningful design. The fabulator and the New Journalist become one in the writer of Faction. Confronted with the same problem, the New Journalist ties himself exorably to the actual world but turns his imagination outward to create a meaningful design from his experience of it. Both the fiction writer and the New Journalist have abandoned the relative luxurious concerns and methods of the realistic novelist in a stable society; instead, focusing on the more basic powers of fiction – the ordering of a meaningful world and the defining of a relationship with it.

The American Dialect Society defines 'truthiness' as "the quality of preferring concepts or facts one wishes to be true, rather than concepts or facts known to be true" ("Truthiness," www.americandialect.org). The controversy is not expected to affect the book's sales, rather than to increase them. As the old show-business adage goes, any publicity is good publicity, especially in the book business, which is looking more like show business with each passing year.

A similar reaction has protected Alex Haley's Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Roots* (1976), an admittedly fact-based-but-fictionalized account of his family's history. *Roots* became a runaway success as a book and one of the most-watched made-for-TV movies of all time. Its popularity has survived for thirty years, despite Haley being sued for plagiarism and accused of simply making up large passages. When challenged, Haley called his work 'Faction', a blend of fact and fiction in an effort to give his people some 'myths' to live by. That effort worked. After years of having our national memory of slavery shaped by the mythologizing of *Gone with the Wind* (1936), or *Mandingo* (1959), Haley's 'fiction' fed a national curiosity about a black family's side of the story. The 'truthiness' of *Roots* seems more real than fiction, even though it was essentially fiction based on fact. If the Faction is of high principles and is morally good, it is considered positive. If it is controversial like *The Da Vinci Code* (2004), it is considered negative.

In fact, the age of 'truthiness' began long ago in the movie world with the all-purpose disclaimer, based on actual events. If publishers can get away with marketing fiction as non-fiction simply because fudged facts sell better than reliable ones, what is to become of history? What becomes of serious journalism? Audiences are confused enough about whether they should trust major media without book publishers adding to the confusion. Still, Ronald Hilton in his essay, "Literature: Faction not Fiction-Correction" says such writing may becloud the search for the real, "even though the device has been used as a narrative device in many historical novels" (wais.stanford.edu).

The established print and television media daily create press packaged fictions of events which become the national reality. The networks claim to 'mirror' reality delineating carefully illustrated and documented detail. The media fictionalises its facts to create more interest in the viewer's minds. In the early 1960s, the press was even accused of unconsciously fuelling riots. Modern quantum physics has shown that even the most delicate instrument of observation necessarily alters the phenomenon observed. The need to break through the media-created corporate fiction is one of the major motivations and themes of new journalistic works. The Faction writers had found their voice, breaking free from outmoded academic preconceptions and from rigid journalistic forms. The tendency of the media not only to fail to reckon with the new realities but actually to further distort them is a major problem for one who is trying to understand 'a global village'. The journalists had found their voice, breaking free from the outmoded academic preconceptions and from rigid journalistic form.

Faction is new for the same basic reasons that contemporary fiction is new. Both were forced by an implausible reality into radical breaks with the traditional author-reader contract. The demanding new duties of fiction to somehow shape a meaningful world and define a vital relationship with it also led inexorably to a third similarity between the two forms, their similar function as artificial myths/fables. The new writer approaches his subject matter from the vantage point of a relentless witness and detective, as an involved participant or from the inside of the subjects themselves. Above all, the new writer of the form wishes to use his imaginative powers and fictional craft to seek out and construct meaning. The contemporary fiction writer and the New Journalist have cut themselves loose from these problems by making new contracts with the reader, thus freeing themselves to acknowledge and exploit the formative and metaphoric powers of their imaginations. The fabulist / Faction writer would say, "I have abandoned the real, so I have only my imaginative creations to give you." The new journalist would say, "I have tied myself completely to the actual, but I can give it to you only as I have humanly and thus imaginatively, experienced and recollected it." They both together re-invent the world. The two major innovations of contemporary 'fabulist fiction' or Faction and new journalism, the separate contracts and the similar emphasis upon imagination have enabled these writers to overcome the contemporary crisis in realistic fiction in order to better deal with a new experience of reality. Working from opposite agreements with the reader concerning the nature of their relationships to reality, the two forms nevertheless both work toward fabulist forms and concerns.

Reporting an event immediately after it takes place guarantees its recognition in the popular imagination. As the gap between real time and narrative time widens, recollection of the event becomes more and more scanty. However, instead of mere reporting and description, if the writer indulges in an imaginative recreation of the event, the incident becomes round and whole and alive.

There are some dangers in this. The writer finds a tension between the requirements of a true account of his subjects and those of a strong narrative; he may sacrifice truth for effect by overly dramatizing. When this occurs, New Journalism becomes simply a version of 'yellow journalism.' Some journalists have sacrificed the accuracy of individual facts for atmosphere and effect. Finally, the use of such fictional techniques as composite characters and compressed narratives, while actually having a long tradition in journalism, certainly violate the journalists' contract. If they are revealed to the reader, they turn the work into realistic fiction with strong demands of reportage. But "A true social reading of a work of literature is not a hunt for scraps of historical fact or information, but an engagement with issues that belong entirely within the fictional world" (Smith 90).

The search for the authentic within the spurious and vice versa has been a predominant task of the latter half of the twentieth century, and is still continuing into the future. And it is with that task in mind that we turn to the exploration of the non-fiction works of Capote, Mailer, Wolfe and Tharoor. According to Capote, the techniques of the non-fiction novel can be applied to any contemporary event. Like a biographer working from documents, the Factionist constructs a final narrative that includes events and incidents at which he has not been present. Unlike a typical historical account, dramatic events are fore-shadowed and dialogues take on a hidden meaning not apparent in its original context. Since the writer must inevitably select materials from the real flow of life, that is, fact, he has to impose a form, a narrative structure upon the experience he has so carefully documented. Faction is often based on three crucial ingredients: (1) the timelessness of the theme, (2) the unfamiliarity of the setting, and (3) the large cast of characters that would allow the writer to tell the story from a variety of points of view. In this light Tharoor's works have employed Faction to epic dimensions and parodic ends.

Though there can be documentary ambitions for the non-fiction novel, the writer clearly recognizes the need to select and arrange his materials for maximum emotional impact. No writer can record all the events or dwell on each minute detail. So, scenes and conversations with the most powerful dramatic appeal are chosen. He selects only these scenes or incidents that contribute to his Factional purposes. The writer's ability to capitalize on the hidden meanings of the selected significant moments contributes to the narrative impact of the book. But throughout, a silent alliance is maintained between the narrator and the reader.

When Picasso said that all art was false, he was drawing attention to the exaggerated manner of seers and prophets to a simple fact, namely, that art cannot be a carbon copy of life, and thus, in that specific sense cannot be free. Fiction should not be taken in its narrow technical sense. Truth is found in all imaginative literature as much in novels and short stories as in poetry and plays, in written as well as oral creations. In his brilliant treatise *The Sense of an Ending* (1967), Frank Kermode defines fiction simply as "something we know does not exist but which helps to make sense of and move in the world" (96). Just as the rational / political animal that man is, he has transformed this natural world into the human landscape, so does this fiction-making animal endow the glow-worm of consciousness with his psychological and creative energies and refashion 'reality' with his imaginative power.

There are fictions that help and fictions that hinder. They can be called beneficent and malignant fictions. What is it then about fiction's good or bad that makes it so appealing? Why does man have to take leave of reality in order to ease his passage through the world? What lies behind this apparent paradox? Why is the imagination so powerful that it keeps us so constantly away from the animal existence that our physical senses will impose on us? If art must dispense with telling the literal truth, it does acquire in return incalculable powers of permeation in the imagination. Something has to be added to truth to make it more palatable, artistic and therefore enjoyable.

False testimony or fiction is intolerable to anyone obsessed with the need for responsibility and fair justice. History, supposedly truthful and objective can in fact, not be so. It is always hoped that a professional historian would write a fair book. But often he knowingly or unknowingly distorts the truth. The non-fictional novel of the 60s and 70s influenced writers like Thomas Kelly who wrote historical novels of the recent past. The ideas of the sixties had licensed a revolt in the minds of new writers against homogenized forms of experience. Variety was the need of the hour. In some of the works of this time, there was a very serious kind of direct confrontation with social reality in the present.

John Hollowell in *Fact and Fiction* (1977) discusses this aspect of new journalistic writing, which is relevant for an understanding of

Faction as well. Literary observers have generally been much slower to perceive the close relation between the experimental techniques of these two forms. It is claimed that the New Journalist is the ultimate realist and the actual nature of his own work may be understood as a calculated response to literary and journalistic attacks on the validity of the work. The New Journalists share with contemporary fiction writers an emphasis upon the perceiving consciousness as a transforming power and a desire to avoid the distortion caused by an attempt to disguise that power. As a result, the two forms – New Journalism and Faction – have many technical and thematic similarities:

a) Both often organize their materials framed into narrative by Forewords, Afterwords or other devices.

b) Both use a self-conscious and highly obtrusive narrator and alter the usual conventions of punctuation or graphic composition.

c) They are either episodic or obviously contrived.

d) Both use allegorical and mythical patterns drawn from classical and popular culture sources.

e) Both have heavily mannered styles.

f) Both adopt a stance of parody or satire.

g) Both are characterized by a concern with large philosophical and social issues.

h) In both fabulist fiction (Faction) and New Journalism, the traits relating to the author's assertion of his controlling presence are found.

Yet the effect of the New Journalist's Foreword or Afterword is really rather ambiguous. However much it may serve as fact, its position outside the work also reinforces the reader's perception of the fictional form and thus the structuring of an experience by the author, which the work embodies. The New Journalist's frame of his work emphasizes the factual nature of the content. Contemporary experimental fiction and New Journalistic works share many more similarities in the central role of the author as transforming agent, similarities that contrast sharply to the conventions of realistic fiction. In both forms, the author is often visibly present as either narrator or character or both. The devices emphasizing the work as a product of the external world and internal mind enable the authors of contemporary fiction to draw alterative to the all-important role of imagination in dealing with either the imaginary or the factual. For, while the fiction writer and the New Journalist have established exactly opposed contracts with their leaders, they both intend to obtain a basis for their highly imaginative approaches to the problematic nature of contemporary reality, a basis stronger than that the realist has enjoyed. The central assumption of the experimental strategies by which both the fiction writer and the New Journalist deal with contemporary reality is the power of an individual consciousness to perceive pattern in experience. While realistic fiction is a product of the author's creative imagination, it has, as a rule played down the role of being a transforming power in order to accentuate the illusion of reality for its fabrications. Fiction to be sure, is a social product and narrative fiction has always been not a falsification of reality but a necessary ordering of it.

Preliminary to an exploration into the implications and scope of Faction, different forms of the genre novel and their characteristics have been discussed. Various apparatuses of the Factional narrative, namely, parody, historiographic metafiction, fantasy, magic realism, paradox, myth, stream of consciousness and metafiction, have been brought under focus in this chapter.

The following chapters will see elaborate analyses of the works of Shashi Tharoor and the modalities he has incorporated to establish a Factional design in those works. The second chapter entitled "The Mythopoetics of History in *The Great Indian Novel*" will examine the re-presentation of Indian history as well as mythology, and attempt to bring out the satire laced with wit and humour in the work. The battle for power and the hollowness of the Indian political scenario in pre- and post-independence India can be discerned here. The puranic redaction will be analysed in detail to bring out the Faction interspersed throughout the narrative.

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Chapter III, "Between Oblivion and Memory: Bricolage in *Riot*," will examine how the problem of the Babri Masjid in Northern India and the already existing fire of communalism were fanned into a fire of hatred between the Hindus and Muslims, as shown in the novel through a love-story, intricately and delicately woven by the author using letters, diaries, etc. as means to establish Faction.

Chapter IV entitled "On the Threshold of Light and Darkness: A Reading of *Show Business*" examines how the novel *Show Business* reveals the ephemerality of the filmdom, especially in Mumbai. Steeped in external satire, jibe, humour, and sarcasm, it will open up the internal sufferings of a tortured soul, the rise, fall and resurrection of an average Indian film actor whose fusion of heart and head contributes to the framework of Faction in the novel.

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Chapter V, "*India: From Midnight to the Millennium*—The *Faction* of a Nation," deals with the perspective that Tharoor offers in the book, *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* – that of an Indian with a profound empathy for his native culture combined with a study of India's progress as well as degeneration. India's past, present and future will be analysed and the fusion of ideas, ideals, phobias and paranoia in the Indian psyche will be shown in the analysis of the book.

Chapter VI, "Prismatic Perceptions: An Analysis of Tharoor's Minor Works," provides a picture of the wide variety of ways in which

Faction has been lavishly and thickly buttered on the story-bread. Each of the stories, and the farce that will follow, will elucidate the Factional aspect in each of them. Though the characters and context, the topographies and environments are different, the collection *The Five-Dollar Smile and Other Stories* will show us many facets of Faction. The entire thesis will end in the concluding analysis of the major findings of the thesis and attempt to provide a pattern of how Tharoor's narratives blur the distinctions between the real and the fictional.