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Fictional Paths to "A Larger Truth" in American New Journalism

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

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Declaration: I declare that the following MA thesis is my own work for which I used only the sources acknowledged in the text and listed in the Bibliography.

Prague, 31 July 2006   **Kryštof Chamonikolas**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

PREFACE

Truman García Capote (1924 – 1984) and Norman Kingsley Mailer (born 1923) were renown in the 1960s as both novelists and journalists. In two of their best-known and often most valued works, *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences* (1965) and *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel – The Novel as History* (1968), they attempted to combine their novelistic and journalistic skills to a yet unprecedented degree and create what Capote himself termed a "nonfiction novel". They wrote book-long texts which 'read like novels', but were simultaneously well-researched and highly accurate journalistic reportages on real events. Originally started as magazine assignments, they both established themselves as landmarks of the 1960s American novel and as central works of the American new journalism, a literary and journalistic movement and genre attempting to blend literary writing techniques with journalistic factuality and accuracy.

Despite their common aim and status as "nonfiction novels", however, *In Cold Blood* and *The Armies of the Night* represent radically different, even antithetic types of both novel and reportage. A more detailed analysis and critical assessment of their differences and their relationship to other similar works, which I will attempt in this MA thesis, should enhance our understanding of the whole phenomenon of American new journalism and the nonfiction novel in the 1960s and 1970s. It will also elucidate some commonly misused terms such as "fact" and "fiction", "truth" and "falsehood", "reality" and "fable", as well as reveal some intriguing relationships between these frequently misunderstood concepts in the largely altered, media-constructed postmodern world of the 1960s and beyond.

Apart from dozens of newspaper and magazine reviews and articles in academic journals, the existing scholarship on the American new journalism and the "nonfiction novel" consists, to my best knowledge, of only three book-long studies written between 1976 and 1981. Their common drawback is that they all, more or less, attempt to map out the whole genre by

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discussing a larger number of works by each major new journalist, and they focus predominantly on broader theoretical or literary historical questions, while paying significantly less attention to a more detailed textual analysis. For example, John Hellmann's *Fables of Fact: The New Journalism as New Fiction* (1981), the most insightful and most analytical of the three studies, dedicates only 30 pages to a close reading of three of Norman Mailer's nonfiction novels. Mas'ud Zavarzadeh's *The Mythopoeic Reality: The Postwar American Nonfiction Novel* (1976) is primarily concerned with the theory and typology of the genre and pays even less attention to close textual analysis. John Hollowell's *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel* (1977) provides a useful introduction into the historical background and initial aims of new journalism as an alternative to conventional corporate journalism. However, its understanding of the new journalistic writing in a literary theoretical context appears rather insufficient and unconvincing, partly because it fails to support its argument by a more substantial textual evidence. Hollowell also adopts many of the terms mentioned above from common discourse without questioning their traditional meanings and addressing the problematic nature of these concepts.

In my MA thesis I hope to address these shortcomings and base my theoretical argumentation on a more extensive and more focused comparative textual analysis of especially Capote's *In Cold Blood* and Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* as the most distinct representatives of the significantly diverse genre of new journalism and the nonfiction novel. I will also briefly discuss some other new journalistic texts and their relation to these two major works, but I will not attempt to cover the whole genre in its entirety, given the limited space of this thesis.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE QUEST FOR "A LARGER TRUTH"

1.1 Literature Facing Fictiveness of Postmodern Reality

In the politically turbulent and socially unstable 1960s, many American novelists found traditional realist fiction[1] no longer able to credibly reflect or faithfully imitate the social, political, or psychological realities of the external world, a function it used to have, or was believed to have, from the late eighteenth until the early twentieth century. At the same time, many American journalists and scholars realised that conventional journalism, based on external observation of 'important' political and social events, and on their allegedly faithful and objective rendition in a newspaper or TV reportage, was no longer able to *meaningfully* report the overwhelmingly complex and in many ways surreal events in politics and society – events defying any 'objective' treatment.

In the era of President Kennedy's assassination, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam war, demonstrations against the government, and significant changes of lifestyle, including the sexual revolution, emancipation of women, and the discovering of Eastern religions and consciousness-altering drugs, these bizarre events became in themselves more fascinating and in a way less probable and less 'real' than many fantasies invented by the most imaginative novelists. This blurring of hitherto commonsensical boundaries between what is 'real' and what is merely imagined, what is 'fact' and what 'fiction', was further enhanced by the increasing role of television in reporting these events. The TV was suddenly able to deliver authentic sound and image from places as distant as the Moon 'directly' and often 'live' to millions of people. At the same time it tended to present these events in a selective, simplified and dramatised format,

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[1] By the terms "realism" or "realist fiction" I do not refer to a specific period of literary history, but to any fiction attempting to create life-like images which would *represent*, through the supposedly transparent medium of language, 'typical' phenomena existing in the 'real' external world, outside of the literary text and largely independent of its language. This definition includes novelists writing in the 1930s to 1960s such as John Dos Passos, John Steinbeck, or Richard Wright, who, while occasionally experimenting with various modernist techniques including internal point of view and stream of consciousness, did not question the representational or even documentary value of their fiction.

often with manipulative effects on the audience. Besides their cognitive function as sources of information about the external world, mass media played an increasing role in the *shaping* and *transforming* of these real events into dramatic news *stories*, in mediating and *narrating* the news to the audience. As such, they became an integral part and an active co-creator of the fictive postmodern reality.[2]

At approximately the same time, late structuralist, and poststructuralist philosophers, linguists, literary and media theorists, and social scientists, including Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Marshal McLuhan, J. Hillis Miller, Lévi Strauss and others, systematically challenged the taken-for-granted concept, deeply rooted in the Western rationalist thinking and inherent to both realist fiction and conventional 'objective' journalism, of language as a system of signs with fixed referential meanings, a transparent medium able to directly represent a stable phenomenological reality (i.e. external reality preceding the language or text and independent of it). These theorists contend that literary, critical, social scientific, political, journalistic or just everyday discourse creates or modifies our notion of reality rather than represents reality, by operating within and imposing on us an artificial, while seemingly commonsensical, system of labels, categories, divisions, binary oppositions, hierarchies, causal relations and associations. In his seminal 1966 lecture 'Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', for instance, Jacques Derrida talks about the absence of any "central signified", an original point of reference existing outside of the structure of discursive signification (280), and argues that "language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique" (284).

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[2] In *Presidential Debates: Forty Years of High-Risk TV* (2000), for example, Schroeder analyses the way in which results of presidential elections since the 1960s have been significantly influenced by the live TV broadcasts of the candidates' debates, and argues that, beginning with the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates, the carefully constructed televised image of the candidate and his rhetorical strategies have become more important than the "substance" of the debates. The influence of the US media on public opinion and the ability of political elites to largely control and manipulate the news is discussed in detail for example by Epstein in *News from Nowhere* (1973), by Graber in *Mass Media and American Politics* (1997) or by Bennet in *News – The Politics of Illusion* (2005). The general influence of especially the electronic audiovisual media on the way we process information and conceptualise the world around us was first extensively discussed by McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (1964) and *The Medium is the Massage* (1967); more recently for instance by Gozzi in *The Power of Metaphor in the Age of Electronic Media* (1999).

The American novelists, as well as some journalists, responded, to this altered and largely fictive, media-constructed nature of postmodern reality and to the difficulty or even impossibility to write about it in a realistic or objective manner, in several ways, according to Hollowell (3-20) and Hellmann (1-20):

1. Despite the described difficulties, many successful novelists, including Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, William Styron, and John Updike, to a certain extent adhered to and experimented with traditional forms of realist fiction. Their focus on an individual character and her/his internal experience is admittedly narrower than that of classical social realism of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, their fictional worlds, while clearly products of imagination, more or less resemble the real world, are presented as its credible versions or indirect comments on the existing social or political phenomena.

2. A group of postmodern novelists, including Thomas Pynchon, Donald Barthleme, Kurt Vonnegut or John Barth, most radically rejected the assumptions of the realist novel and instead resorted to experimentation with highly self-reflective fictional forms and created their own autonomous fictional worlds. These "fabulators"[3] selectively refer to the external world as merely a background against which they construct its absurd and fragmentary versions.[4] The 'real world', or rather the world that has so far been presented and constructed by realist fiction and conventional journalism, serves as a framework of expectations which are being constantly frustrated and undermined by self-reflective or obtrusive narrators, by inversions of time and space, disruptions of cause and effect, and through language and style consciously obstructing rather than facilitating the narrative presentation. The unfamiliar reading experience becomes somehow similar, or rather parallel, to the unreal experience of the everyday 'real world'.

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[3] Also "fabulists" (Hellmann); both Hollowell and Hellmann adopt this term from Scholes, Robert. *The Fabulators.* New York: Oxford UP, 3-31.

[4] Hutcheon disagrees that postmodern art is entirely autonomous and detached from life, and argues that it does refer to the external world, although in a provisional, unstable, ironic and critical way – see footnote no. 5 in Chapter 2, p. 21.

3. The 1960s American literature witnessed a massive boom of journalistic or documentary writing, and various types of usually autobiographical or confessional nonfiction, with different levels of creativity and literariness. Many nonfictional texts from this period, including James Baldwin's essays or *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, are highly valued as social, political or cultural commentaries by creative writers and other intellectuals. These works reflect their authors' *subjective* experience, expressed with a strongly personal perspective (as opposed to the totalising and anonymous viewpoint of the 'objective' media) – and often in a creative style.

4. A relatively loose group of journalists, including Jimmy Breslin, Joan Didion, George Plimpton, Gay Talese, Hunter S. Thompson and Tom Wolfe, and two already well-established novelists, Truman Capote and Norman Mailer, developed in the 1960s a type of writing that combined the factuality and accuracy expected of journalism and other nonfiction with the literary creativity and narrative structure typical of fiction – although, as I will argue later, each of these authors had a different type of fiction in mind. First appearing in the format of a short-story reportage in various magazines, and from mid-1960s also as an extended novelistic reportage, this type of writing, most commonly called the "new journalism",[5] and its more complex genre, the "nonfiction novel",[6] attempted to create mature literary works which would nevertheless be factual in their contents. The new journalists' goal was to use all available fictional techniques in order to "seek a larger truth than is possible through the mere compilation of verifiable facts" (Talese vii), i.e. to report on real events more faithfully and with a deeper insight than everyday corporate media, and to address the shortcomings of both conventional journalism and realist fiction in dealing with the fictiveness of the postmodern world.

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[5] Some theorists have pointed out that this type of writing was not entirely "new" – see Chapter 2 for a discussion of the genre's historical and theoretical context.

[6] Truman Capote first used the term "nonfiction novel" in 1966 in an interview conducted by George Plimpton in the *New York Times Book Review* (Plimpton 2), shortly after the publication of *In Cold Blood*. Other terms such as "documentary novel" or "autobiographical novel" are also occasionally used, sometimes with a different emphasis, to refer to a similar concept of a novelistic reportage.

1.2 Structure, Thesis and Sources

The "nonfiction novel", the new journalism's most complex form in terms of its literary structure and potential reporting capacity, will represent the main object of study of my thesis. I would like to focus especially on a comparative textual analysis of the two best-known representatives of the genre, namely Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965) and Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* (1968), and on their critical reflections and influences in a broader context of the American new journalism. I would like to argue that in terms of their literary and journalistic form, i.e. their narrative structures and reporting strategies, these two "nonfiction novels" represent two completely opposite poles in the new journalism's effort to create mature literary works which would, simultaneously, offer an alternative to conventional corporate journalism and deliver "a larger truth".

In the first part of my analysis (Chapter 3), the two texts will be discussed as fictional literary works and compared from the point of view of their literary form, namely their narrative structure, the role and visibility of the narrator, the narrative transmission of plot, their genre etc. In the second part of my analysis (Chapter 4), building on the first one, I will treat the two novels as journalistic texts – reportages on real events – and compare them from the point of view of their reporting strategy, the role and visibility of the reporter, their alleged objectivity or conspicuous subjectivity, and the extent to which the texts and their authors conceal or expose their mediating and transforming role in the (re)construction of the 'facts'.

In his nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences*, Truman Capote adopts a more traditional, realistic narrative technique. His invisible third-person omniscient narrator, a relatively plain style and other narrative devices are creating an illusion of direct witnessing and immediacy, and concealing the process of the narrative transformation of the story. In *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel – The Novel as History*, on the other hand, Norman Mailer adopts a more inventive, postmodern or "fabulist" literary strategy. He creates an unusual and fairly complex narrative structure with a visible self-

reflective narrator and the narrator's *alter ego*, appearing in the story itself as the main character called "Mailer", the observer and interpreter of the story. This self-reflective narrative technique, in combination with a contrived and ironic style often adopted by the narrator, emphasises the subjective and *literary* treatment of the story and draws attention to the process of its narrative transformation and interpretation. These significantly different literary forms chosen by the two authors for their new journalistic novels have a crucial impact, overlooked by many theoreticians, on their markedly different reporting strategies and journalistic qualities.

Truman Capote's unusually deep and thorough reportage, based on years of research and hunting for the minutest details of the real events, in many ways resembles conventional journalism. It is not only susceptible to minor and major imprecision, but, more importantly, it usually fails to attribute pieces of information to their sources and conceals the presence of the reporter, his role in the selection of the discovered facts and in their arrangement and representation in the text. Like most corporate journalism, *In Cold Blood* takes pains to conceal, under a veil of realism and alleged objectivity, the unavoidably biased view and interpretation of the 'reality'.

Norman Mailer's reportage, on the contrary, offers a more radical alternative to traditional journalism, in that, besides referring to the externally visible and verifiable facts, it at the same time consciously and overtly emphasises the presence and subjective view of a biased and often unreliable reporter, and draws attention to the narrative transformation and interpretation of the real events in the literary text. *The Armies of the Night* opposes conventional journalism and embraces techniques of postmodern "fabulist" fiction in that the *literary form* and *self-reflective narration* become so visible and so unavoidable in the process of reading that they can be considered parts of the contents or the 'message' of the text.

In Chapter 5, I will comment on some other new journalistic writing and relate it to Capote's and Mailer's works according to the literary and reporting criteria outlined above. In the Conclusion I would like to assess the different literary techniques and reporting strategies

adopted by the new journalists, in terms of their ability to 'faithfully' address the fictive nature of the postmodern reality and their ability to cope with the impossibility of objective reporting on such complex and largely media-constructed (rather than 'real') events.

Of the primary sources discussed in my thesis, I will analyse in detail Truman Capote's 1965 nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences* (in citations referred to as *"ICB"*) and Norman Mailer's 1968 novelistic reportage *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel – The Novel as History* (in citations referred to as *"AOTN"*). I will also briefly discuss other new journalistic novels (see Bibliography), especially by Tom Wolfe and Hunter S. Thompson, and comment on some other new journalistic writing represented mainly in Tom Wolfe's and E. W. Johnson's anthology *The New Journalism* (1973).

Of the secondary sources, I will frequently refer to and rely on the following:

1. Tom Wolfe's 1973 essay 'The New Journalism', John Hollowell's *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction novel* (1977), John Hellmann's *Fables of Fact: The New Journalism as New Fiction* (1981), and Mas'ud Zavarzadeh's *The Mythopoeic Reality: The Postwar American Nonfiction Novel* (1976), will be my main secondary sources, providing a historical and theoretical introduction to the new journalism, and offering, together with numerous scholarly essays and articles (see Bibliography), a wide spectrum of critical reflections of the new journalistic writing.

2. In my analysis of the narrative structure of the two primary texts I will rely on the terminology, categories and concepts of several theoretical sources, especially Seymour Chatman's 1975 essay 'The Structure of Narrative Transmission' and his 1978 study *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, and Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1972), as well as on other works on literary theory (see Bibliography).

3. My assessment of the reporting strategies and the allegedly objective versus conspicuously self-reflective treatment of facts in the analysed primary texts and in both new and

conventional journalistic writing in general, will be also based, besides some of the sources already mentioned, on selected theoretical studies criticising the objectivist myth present in the Western journalism and public discourse. These studies include George Lakoff's and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), R. Gozzi Jr.'s *The Power of Metaphor in the Age of Electronic Media* (1999), W. Lance Bennet's *News – The Politics of Illusion* (2005), and other scholarly works in modern linguistics, discourse analysis and media studies (see Bibliography).

4. When discussing the referential, representational, interpretive or manipulative qualities of language and text, and of the fictive, discursively constructed nature of the postmodern world, I will rely, besides some of the sources already mentioned, on several seminal works of poststructuralist literary criticism, media and communication studies, and philosophy, including Jacques Derrida's *Writing and Difference* (1967), Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (orig. 1969) and 'The Discourse on Language' (orig. 1971), and Marshal McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (1964) and *The Medium is the Massage* (1967).

5. To support my discussion on the way postmodern art responds to the fictive and textually constructed quality of the postmodern world, I will quote Linda Hutcheon's *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (1988).

1.3 Fictional – Fictive - Fictitious

In a large part of the critical discussion of the new journalism and the nonfiction novel, a significant terminological and conceptual confusion was caused by the different understandings of the terms *fiction, fictional*; *nonfiction, nonfictional*; and *novel, novelistic*. For example, Tompkins (125) objects that Capote's term "nonfiction novel" is nonsense since it represents an oxymoronic coinage of what he sees as two contradictory concepts; Siegle (437) adds that "the nonfiction novel makes us uneasy by its apparently oxymoronic nature – its mixing of reality and fiction, of journalist and novelist, of factuality and imagination". Talese

(vii) asserts that the new journalism is not fiction because it reliably adheres to fact, and Merrill (112-115) claims that Mailer's *Armies* resembles a novel by its structure, but is not a novel because it is based in reality, instead of imagination. These conceptual difficulties seem to arise from the fact that the above-mentioned critics often adopt the popular but misleading association of fiction with falsehood or imagination, and nonfiction (including journalism) with truth or fact. Misleading because it is only concerned with the contents of the writing, its denotative reference (fact versus falsehood; reality versus imagination), and so fails to take into account the very *form of this reference* (literary/creative versus non-literary; artistic versus informative). Traditionally, fiction has been associated with fictitious events and nonfiction with fact. In reality, however, a lot of writing labelled as "fiction" refers, at least partly, to real-world events, places, persons or texts, while "nonfiction" (including newspaper articles presented as "news", or the recently popular autobiographies by former politicians, entrepreneurs or celebrities) may very easily refer to completely fictitious events – and they often do.

In his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye rejects the understanding of *fiction* as falsehood or unreality, and instead defines it in terms of its form, as "a work of art in prose" (Frye 303), and associates *fictional* with "creative" or having "an integrated pattern" (307). For Frye a "verbal structure" is fictional, that is literary, if its "final direction of meaning is inward", i.e. if it points primarily to itself and its own aesthetic form; nonfiction, on the other hand, has no specific aesthetic form and refers primarily "outwardly", i.e. outside of the text – and is, unlike fiction, evaluated according to the accuracy with which it represents these external phenomena (73-74). Scholes (*Elements of Fiction* 1-2, quoted by Hellmann 17-18) defines fiction, similarly to Frye, as something that is artistically "made" or "shaped". Drawing on both Frye and Scholes, Hellmann also rejects the association of fiction with falsehood and of nonfiction with truth (Hellmann 3) and claims that there is no binary opposition between fact and fiction (18). Instead, he suggests that fact and fiction involve "two distinct activities that can

be left separate or merged" (18) – *fiction* refers to a literary quality and *fact* to subject matter (18, 20, 24).

In order to prevent any terminological or conceptual confusions, I would like to adopt Frye's and Hellmann's view, and define *fiction* or *fictional writing* in terms of its form, i.e. as writing structured or shaped by a predominantly literary form, having aesthetic qualities, and referring primarily to itself, its 'createdness' and its aesthetic form. *Nonfiction* or *nonfictional writing* is then writing which is not significantly structured or shaped by an aesthetic design, lacks a distinct literary form, and refers primarily outside of itself, towards the external world, with various degrees of accuracy and factuality. My understanding of *novel* is partly in line with Frye's – it is a genre or a "species" of fictional prose and can be defined, and distinguished from short story, in terms of its length, complex literary structure, and a more detailed development of character (Frye 303-307).[7]

For a discussion of a given text's contents and their factuality, I will use the terms *factual* and *fictitious* – the former for textual contents referring to existing external phenomena, and the latter for textual contents referring to partly or completely imagined or made up external phenomena. Another useful term is *fictive*, which I will use to describe the unreal and constructed nature of the postmodern world – a world that is not entirely fictitious, but whose perception is heavily distorted and constructed by the media, and by numerous biases invisibly present in our language, social discourse, and hence in our conceptualisation of the world.

The term *new journalism* will be used to designate a type of literature and a body of writing combining and blending, systematically and to an unprecedented degree, fictional (that is, literary, aesthetic, narrative) *form* with journalistic (that is, verifiable, accurately reported) *subject matter*. This emerging genre is associated, in the 1960s and 1970s, with Jimmy Breslin,

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[7] In my opinion, though, Frye's distinction between *novel* and *romance* (*novel* closely related to the social reality and "real people" and dealing with typical or verisimilar events; *romance* associated with emotions and dissociated from social reality and ignoring principles of verisimilitude) is no longer relevant for postmodern fiction, which is consciously blending different genres and forms, and intentionally undermining notions of reality or probability.

Joan Didion, George Plimpton, and Gay Talese as its early pioneers and authors of short-story reportages, and especially with Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, Hunter S. Thompson, and Tom Wolfe, who developed this type of writing to its most complex and sophisticated form of a novelistic reportage sometimes referred to as the "nonfiction novel".

In order to avoid the potentially misleading connotations of the term "nonfiction novel" discussed above, and to respond to the fact that different authors and critics use the term for different groups of texts,[8] I will introduce my own term *new journalistic novel* to include all texts by the new journalists named above which have the length and complex literary structure of a novel, while dealing with factual subject matter and maintaining high standards of reporting accuracy. I will selectively use the term "nonfiction novel" when appropriate, especially to refer to Capote's *In Cold Blood,* or citing critics and authors who have adopted the term from Capote.

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[8] See the different uses of the term e.g. by Capote, Zavarzadeh, and Hellmann, discussed in Chapter 2.

2. HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL CONTEXT

2.1 New Journalism: A Brief History

Summarising a critical debate in the 1960s and 1970s on whether the new journalism is really 'new', Hollowell (33-36) points out that the blending of fictional techniques and formats with factual subject matter is obviously not a completely unprecedented invention of the new journalists. He lists several British and American creative authors who, besides short stories or novels with predominantly fictitious subject matters, also wrote short stories, memoirs, sketches or longer pieces of prose which, although artistically shaped or formally inventive, were more or less factual. Usually based on the author's own experience, these texts were often written as an extensive reportage to be published in a newspaper or magazine. Mark Twain's travel writings and memoirs, including *Roughing It* (1872) and *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), Stephen Crane's 1890s sketches and newspaper articles, and especially Ernest Hemingway's *Green Hills of Africa* (1935)[1] are mentioned by Hollowell as a few examples of such a combination of artistic technique with journalistic subject matter. Zavarzadeh includes also James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) or John Hersey's *Hiroshima* (1946) as earlier examples of the American "nonfiction novel".

Besides their blending of artistic form with journalistic contents, these earlier works share with the new journalism and the nonfiction novel of the 1960s and 1970s the way their purpose or function, from the point of view of a reader or a critic, has developed over time. At the time of their creation and publication, most of these older works, as well as a significant portion of the new journalistic writing, were primarily read as artistically shaped but factual reportages. Since then they have been categorised by booksellers and librarians mostly as "nonfiction", because of their thematic factuality and disregarding the fact that they display various degrees of fictional, that is literary, form. Despite their categorisation as nonfiction, the

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[1] A comparison of *Green Hills of Africa*, *In Cold Blood*, and *The Armies of the Night* in Merrill (107-118).

main reason why they still maintain the attention of readers and critics is that they 'read like' good short stories or novels. Decades ago they may have been powerful documents valued for their factuality; today they are appreciated as literary works along with other fiction, with the only difference being that their contents are more or less strictly based on real events. These events in themselves are already distant and less familiar to contemporary readers, but remain fascinating mainly thanks to the living literary form in which they are presented.

The beginning of the new journalism as a movement and an emerging genre, and the beginning of a corresponding critical debate, is dated by Hellmann (1-2) to 1965, when the journalist Tom Wolfe published his first collection of short-story reportages, *The Kandy-Kolored Tengerine-Flake Streamline Baby*, and Truman Capote published his novelistic reportage *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences*. In the preface to his collection, Wolfe explained the emergence of a new reporting strategy and its fictional forms with a need to go beyond the limitations of conventional reporting. Capote asserted in the acknowledgements of his best-selling book and in follow-up interviews that he had invented "a serious new art form: the 'nonfiction novel'", and described it as "a narrative form that employed all the techniques of fictional art but was nevertheless immaculately factual" (Plimpton 2).

Before the establishment of the nonfiction novel, most new journalistic texts had a form of short-story reportages published in magazines including *Esquire*, *New York* (both under Clay Felker as their literary editor) or *Rolling Stone*. The authors were journalists including Jimmy Breslin, Joan Didion, Michael Herr, George Plimpton, Terry Southern, Gale Talese, Hunter S. Thompson and Tom Wolfe, as well as some fiction writers, especially Truman Capote and Norman Mailer.[2] Their writing, sometimes also referred to as "higher journalism", was, according to Hollowell (8, 11), a product of the writers' rebellion against conventional standards

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[2] Brief historical overviews of early new journalistic writing in Hellmann (1-2), Hollowell (10-11), Staub (55-56) etc.

of 'objective reporting' and its shortcomings, and followed a general tendency in the 1960s American literature towards nonfiction, including confessional and autobiographical essays and various other types of 'literature of fact'.

Besides Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, the best known new journalistic novels include Norman Mailer's *Miami and the Siege of Chicago: An Informal History of the Republican and Democratic Conventions of 1968* (1968), *The Armies of the Night* (1968), *Of Fire on the Moon* (1970) and *The Executioner's Song* (1979); Hunter S. Thompson's *Hell's Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga* (1966), *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream* (1971) and *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (1973); Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968); and Michael Herr's *Dispatches* (1977). Zavarzadeh adapts Capote's term "nonfiction novel" to include other documentary or autobiographical works with literary qualities from the same period, including John Hersey's detective story *The Algiers Motel Incident* (1968), Oscar Lewis's 'novelised' anthropological studies *The Children of Sánchez* (1961) and *La Vida* (1966), and Andy Warhol's experimental book *a* (1968).

Although Norman Mailer's *Executioner's Song* (1979) is sometimes symbolically cited as the last major new journalistic work, the genre has had innumerable followers who, up until today, combine in various forms factual contents with literary form, and are often described as representatives of "creative nonfiction", "narrative journalism" or "literary journalism". It is almost impossible to identify any specific movement or major genre within the thousands of autobiographies, documentary novels, memoirs, personal essays, 'true stories', and other books churned out by publishers every year and categorised by booksellers and librarians as "nonfiction". Many of these works are nominated for prestigious awards for nonfiction literature, either due to their high documentary value or their literary qualities. In their anthology *Literary Journalism: A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (1995), Norman Sims and Mark Kramer attempted to identify a new generation of "literary journalists", many of them

associated with *The New Yorker* magazine, who use creative or literary techniques in their reportages and personal essays. In the two introductory essays of the anthology, Sims and Kramer furnish this loosely defined group with a basic theoretical backing. The anthology contains works originally published in magazines and essay collections in the late 1980s and the first half of the 1990s by younger authors such as Joe Nocera, Mark Singer, Tracy Kidder, Adrian Nicole LeBlanc and Mark Kramer, who started writing in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as by older-generation authors including Jane Kramer, Joseph Mitchell or John McPhee, who were already writing in the 1960s and were directly influenced by the new journalists including Tom Wolfe and by other creative nonfiction authors such as A. J. Liebling, John Hersey, and Lillian Ross (Sims 4).

2.2 New Journalism: A Theory

For approximately a decade after the emergence of new journalism and the "nonfiction novel" as alternatives to conventional journalism and realist fiction, the critical debate of the literary movement and genre was mostly limited to immediate responses by reviewers and critics in newspapers and magazines and, as already suggested in Chapter 1, it often dealt with terminological difficulties. A more comprehensive academic discussion was initiated in 1973 by an essay 'The New Journalism' by Tom Wolfe, the mastermind of new journalism and its main theoretician and practitioner. It appeared as a preface to *The New Journalism*, an anthology edited by Wolfe and Johnson, presenting samples of the first 10 years of new journalistic writing, with each text accompanied by Wolfe's commentary.

2.2.1 Wolfe: New Journalism as Realism

In his introductory essay, Wolfe first describes the emergence of a "new" or "higher" journalism in the first half of the 1960s as an alternative to the unsatisfactory standards of conventional corporate journalism based on fast and superficial reporting which failed to capture a deeper

meaning of crucial phenomena of the contemporary American society. Working as a columnist and feature writer for the *Herald Tribune* and its Sunday supplement *New York*, and later also for *Esquire*, Wolfe, along with Gay Talese, Jimmy Breslin and other journalists, started writing reportages which "read like a short story": they were based on detailed "scenic" reporting and full dialogues, and as a result, many readers and reviewers suspected that these reportages were "made up" ('New Journalism' 11).

Wolfe explains how his, Talese's and Breslin's short-story features became gradually longer and more complex, often using different points of view within one article (15-19) and achieving a "depth of information" by "entering people's minds" (21). The new journalists would spend a considerable time with the people they were writing about, interviewing them about their feelings and trying to capture dialogues, gestures, facial expressions, and other details: "Breslin made it a practice to arrive on the scene long before the main event in order to gather the off-camera material, the by-play in the make-up room, that would enable him to create character" (14). With this strategy in mind, George Plimpton trains and travels with a professional football team to write *Paper Lion* (1964), John Sacks gets military training and goes to Vietnam to write *M* (1966), Hunter S. Thompson travels with Hell's Angels to write *Hell's Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gang* (1966), Norman Mailer takes part in a demonstration against the Vietnam war to write 'The Steps of the Pentagon' for *Harper's Magazine*, later incorporated into *The Armies of the Night* (1968) (26-27).

The goal of the new journalistic reporting was, according to Wolfe, to capture "the subjective or emotional life of the characters" (21) by writing "accurate non-fiction with techniques usually associated with novels and short stories" (15). As examples of these fictional techniques, Wolfe mentions marked style and a distinct voice (18); unusual typography, including dots, dashes, exclamation marks, italics, series of colons (": : : : : : :"); and the use of interjections, "nonsense words" and onomatopoeia (21).

In a more controversial part of his argument, Wolfe claims that the new journalists are reviving once abandoned techniques of *social realism* of Fielding, Smollett, Balzac, Dickens or Gogol ('New Journalism' 31), and lists four realist devices allegedly used by the new journalists: first, scene-by-scene construction; second, recording dialogue in full to define character; third, adopting a "third-person point of view", which Wolfe specifies as "presenting every scene to the reader through the eyes of a particular character, giving the reader the feeling of being inside the character's mind and experiencing the emotional reality of the scene"[3]; and fourth, "recording of everyday gestures, habits, manners, customs" and other "symbolic" details which would establish the subject's "status life" (31-32). Speaking about types of narrative strategies and perspectives available to the new journalists, Wolfe favours traditional third-person invisible omniscient narrators typical of realism, as is clear from his claim that "most of the best work in the form has been done in third-person narration with the writer keeping himself absolutely invisible, such as the work of Capote, Talese, the early Breslin" (42).

In addition to that, Wolfe argues that in the second half of the 1960s, the emerging new journalism, so far merely an alternative to conventional journalism, started having literary ambitions and was "dethroning the novel as the number one literary genre" (3). Since traditional novel based on social realism is no longer able to capture the fragmented reality and enormous changes of lifestyle (28-31), "the Novel" has allegedly lost the "supreme status" it used to enjoy from 1875 until 1965 (35). The contemporary "Neo-Fabulists", including John Barth, Jorge Luis Borges, John Gardener, or Gabriel García Márquez, have merely contributed to the decline of the novel's prestige, according to Wolfe, by completely avoiding the fragmented and incomprehensible postmodern reality and turning towards myth and fable (39-41). These "novels of ideas, Freudian novels, surrealistic novels ('black comedy'), Kafkaesque novels" (29) are rejected by Wolfe as nihilistic, because of their timeless settings, and because their characters

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[3] I would argue that this type of third-person narration from a character's *internal* point of view (i.e. "figural narration"; Stanzel 23-29) is a type of narrative strategy typical of modernist rather than realist fiction; in fact it could be seen as modernism's reaction against realism's totalising omniscience.

"have no background, no personal history, are identified with no social class, ethnic group or even nationality" (40) and "often speak, if they speak at all, in short and rather mechanical sentences that, again, betray no specific background, or else they use inexplicably archaic diction" (41).[4] Wolfe predicts that what he sees as a decadent neo-fabulist anti-novel will soon be replaced by a new type of "journalistic novel" or "documentary novel" that will be based on social realism and detailed reporting (35).

Two significant objections can be made against Wolfe's argument. First, his description of the new journalistic forms and strategies applies mainly to the early new journalism written in the form of short-story reportages by himself, Talese, Breslin and other journalists, and also to Capote's nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood* (1965) and Wolfe's own novelistic reportage, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968). It seems from Wolfe's essay that he, Capote and their colleagues attempted to report on complex social phenomena in a more insightful and 'intimate' way than the corporate mass media, but did not yet, in the early and mid-1960s, question the whole concept of objective reality and of the possibility of its realistic representation. The early new journalist only had to be patient and careful enough, the implication goes, to capture all the details including those that only exist in someone's mind, in order to reach and report the fairly stable, if hidden, truth.

Writing his essay as late as 1972, however, Wolfe seems to ignore some more recent developments not only in poststructuralist philosophy and literary theory, but also in the new journalism itself, namely in the new journalistic novel of the late 1960s and early 1970s, including his own *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968), Mailer's *Armies of the Night* (1968) and *Of Fire on the Moon* (1970), and Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1971) and *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (1973). These novelistic reportages, more extensive, thematically richer, and more complex in terms of their narrative structure than the early new

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[4] For a critique of Wolfe's (and also Hollowell's) view of postmodern art as completely autonomous, anti-referential, and detached from external reality, see next page, especially footnote no. 5.

journalistic short-story reportages, adopt reporting techniques and narrative forms which are largely hostile to the notions of a stable reality, objective reporting and realistic technique. Instead, as I will argue later, they are formally much closer to the self-reflective fabulist techniques of the postmodern novel, dismissed by Wolfe in his essay.

Secondly, his conception of the novel is excessively associated with social realism and based primarily on the novel's contents and purpose; as a result, he talks about a revival of realistic "techniques", while in practice he advocates a return to the serious, socially relevant, real-world *contents* of the realist novel. The seemingly nihilistic and self-centred fabulations of the postmodern novelists, with their timeless settings, nameless characters, and with very little and highly distorted reference to the real world, seem as if empty and purposeless to Wolfe, and as such cease to be novels. He fails to see that, in terms of its literary structure and *form* of reference, the postmodern novel actually represents a highly sophisticated alternative to the rather structurally flat and artistically outdated realism – and a plausible response to the fragmentary and fictive nature of the postmodern reality.[5]

As a result of his theoretical misconceptions, Wolfe fails to address what I believe is the major drawback of conventional journalism and realist fiction, namely the way they focus on an allegedly objective and direct presentation of their subject matter. As such they systematically, if often unintentionally, conceal the interpretive and potentially manipulative role of the reporter-narrator or author-narrator in the transforming process of selection, organisation, and final narrative presentation of either the factual world or its fictitious imitation – as is clear from Wolfe's preference of invisible third-person narrators.

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[5] In *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), Linda Hutcheon argues that while modernist art struggled for complete autonomy and separation from life (4, 43), postmodernism is "resolutely historical, and inescapably political" (4): although on the surface postmodern art seems self-reflexive, focused on the process of its own production and reception, and on its parodic intertextuality (22), it is, paradoxically, also referential in the sense that it represents "a critical revisiting, an ironic dialogue with the past of both art and society" (5), and in that it draws attention to the discursive and textual nature of reality (16, 22, 24).

2.2.2 Hollowell: New Journalism as Return to the Empirical

In his 1977 study *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel*, John Hollowell adopts many of Wolfe's assumptions. First, he implicitly associates the novel with fictitious but true-to-life social realism, and fiction with fictitious contents (3-20). Similarly to Wolfe, he is sceptical about the self-reflective, absurd and "darkly surrealistic works" of the postmodern novelists (17), and quotes several other critics' views that the fabulators' radical break with social realism represents a decline of the novel as a genre (6-9). Since he conceptualises novel in terms of its contents rather than its form, Hollowell sees the emergence of the "empirical", fact-oriented, "nonfiction" novel as a reaction *against* the "fictional" (that is, in Hollowell's terms, the fantastic, imaginative, allegorical, mythological) postmodern novel (18-20), and hence he fails to see the close affinity of their literary form. Secondly, he slightly extends Wolfe's conception by arguing that one of the defining features of the new journalism, besides the reporter's detailed knowledge of the subject matter and a close relationship to the people involved, is also a presentation of the reporter's *personal* and *subjective* reactions to the reported events, as opposed to the *impersonal* and allegedly *objective* attitude of the conventional journalism (21-23). Lastly, the new journalism adopts a specific language, style, and "storytelling techniques of fiction" in order to offer a deeper psychological insight into the principals, and an interpretation of the otherwise meaningless events (24). These allegedly fictional techniques include scenic construction, recording dialogue fully, recording "status details", and using point of view in a complex and inventive way (four devices already mentioned by Wolfe), as well as "interior monologue" and "composite characterization" (25-31). The use of a character's interior monologue, Hollowell explains, involves a *transformation* of a character's memories and opinions, retrieved by the journalist from the interviewed subject, into the character's internal monologue: "Events are reported *as if* a subject were thinking them" (italics original, 29). "Composite characterization" is based on a blending of several interviewed subjects into one character "who represents a whole class of subjects" (30).

Hollowell's views are susceptible to the same type of objections as is Wolfe's essay. First, he also deals mostly with early new journalistic writing and ignores some of the more recent developments in the late 1960s and 1970s. Secondly, some of the "fictional techniques" he claims new journalism is based on strongly resemble techniques of the social realistic novel. Lastly, Hollowell believes that the new journalism still can, despite all the difficulties, report a complex external reality without exposing the presence of the reporter and the very process of reporting and its narrative transformations. In fact, in the above-mentioned discussion of the "status details", complex point of view, interior monologue, and composite characterisation, Hollowell explicitly, if unintentionally, admits that the early new journalistic techniques do involve some of the invisible narrative transformations typical of conventional journalism and realist fiction. But similarly to Wolfe, he does not seem to be aware of their covert and potentially manipulative nature.

2.2.3 Hellmann: New Journalism as Self-reflective Fabulation

John Hellmann's *Fables of Fact: The New Journalism as New Fiction* (1981) offers a comprehensive critique and a reconsideration of the previous debate on the status of new journalism, its literary forms and its relation to fact. Hellmann shifts his focus from the early new journalistic writing, published in magazines in the form of short-story reportages, to the more extensive and more complex novelistic reportages published in the late 1960s and 1970s, written especially by Norman Mailer, Hunter S. Thompson, Tome Wolfe and Michael Herr. With these developments in mind, Hellmann rejects Wolfe's and Hollowell's views that new journalism and the nonfiction novel are related to realism and represent an "empirical" alternative to the allegedly nihilistic and self-absorbed postmodern fiction. Instead, he argues that new journalism and the nonfiction novel developed parallel to the "fabulist fiction" as a reaction against realist fiction and traditional journalism (Hellmann xi). As already mentioned in Chapter 1, Hellmann, drawing on Frye, defines *fiction* as a *literary form that points primarily to*

itself and its aesthetic quality, and as such can be viewed independently of the factuality or fictitiousness of the subject matter (3, 18, 23). He therefore approaches the new journalistic novel as a major genre of contemporary *fiction*, because it combines "journalistic subject" (Hellmann consciously avoids the term "fact" here) with *fictional form* – that is form based on its literariness, aesthetic quality, its "fabulist techniques", and its primarily inward, self-reflective, reference (xi, 24, 33).

The fictional techniques of new journalism are related to the fabulist techniques of the postmodern novel: the events are often narrated in a contrived or ironic style[6] by self-reflective or even obtrusive narrators, the story tends to be episodic or fragmentary, and the text is often framed by forewords and other metatextual devices – with all these features designed to draw attention to the fictional, created nature of the narrative (Hellmann 13-15); the self-reflective narrator sometimes becomes so obtrusive and so much concerned with the process of narrating that the text becomes *metafiction*, a novel about writing a novel, or literary reportage about reporting (15). This fabulist fictional technique functions in two important ways: first, instead of representing or imitating a reality, it reflects its fragmented, constructed and somehow fictive nature; secondly, it reveals the transforming role of the individual "organizing consciousness" (also "experiencing", "perceiving", or "transforming consciousness") of the reporter in experiencing and interpreting the real events – instead of presenting facts themselves, the new journalistic novel conveys the reporter's personal experience and interpretation of the facts (13, 16-17, 25-26).

Unlike Wolfe or Hollowell, Hellmann managed to pinpoint the central feature of the literary structure and reporting technique of the new journalistic novel, namely its potential ability to admit and transparently expose the biases, narrative transformations and potential manipulations inherently present in any verbal representation of reality, and to make them an

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[6] According to Hutcheon, irony is a central feature of postmodern art – it is instrumental in establishing critical distance and takes part in postmodernism's parodic intertextuality (4-5, 19, 23, 26); see also footnote no. 5, p. 21.

integral part of the writing, one of its themes and meanings. He argues that the difference between conventional journalism and new journalism is not one of *objectivity* versus *subjectivity* (as Hollowell partly believes), but represents "a conflict of a disguised perspective versus an admitted one, and a corporate fiction versus a personal one" (4). It follows from Hellmann's argument that both new journalism and conventional journalism are essentially *fictional* because they involve narrative transformations and manipulations of the reality by the reporter's perceiving and organising consciousness. However, while the conventional journalism, and also imitative realist fiction, conceal their fictional nature under the veil of objectivity or realism, the new journalism, especially in its most developed novelistic form, fully exposes and conspicuously parades its fictional qualities.

2.2.4 Zavarzadeh: Nonfiction Novel as Direct Transcription of Experiential Reality

Although Mas'ud Zavarzadeh's *The Mythopoeic Reality: The Postwar American Nonfiction Novel* (1976) was published before Hollowell's and Hellmann's works, and although Hellmann admits (x) it influenced his study, the book has less relevance for my work and is somehow incompatible and incomparable with the rest of the debate. First, *The Mythopoeic Reality* focuses only on the nonfiction novel and defines this term differently from the theorists mentioned above. As a result, he discusses a wider range of postwar American novelistic narratives with both literary and documentary value, including those that are not associated with new journalism and excluding some that are. Secondly, in his purely theoretical treatise on the anatomy and typology of the nonfiction novel, Zavarzadeh offers almost no direct textual analysis, and introduces a set of entirely new terms and concepts of his own invention to replace some traditional and often confusingly ambiguous terms and concepts such as *fiction/fictional* and *fact/factual*. This terminology based on neologisms and coinages of traditional terms helps describe and properly analyse some of the central ideas, but at the same time, as is often the case in poststructuralist theory, somehow defies comparison or criticism.

The postmodern world is described by Zavarzadeh as "fictual" – a mixture of uncertain and strange fact, and a fictional, destabilising pattern imposed on it; the nonfiction novel is unique in its ability to reproduce this "fictuality", based on a *tension* between the factual and the fictional (56). The nonfiction novel is "bi-referential", i.e. both "self-referential" (having aesthetic control associated with works of art) and "out-referential" (externally verifiable), with both of these modes of reference acting against each other simultaneously and on the same level (56-57). The tension between these two modes of reference makes the nonfiction novel different from what Zavarzadeh calls the "fact novel", where the narrative arrangement and other novelistic devices have a superficial or decorative character and are added on top of the primarily fact-oriented text, without producing any *tension* between the form and the contents: "The fact novel is a mono-referential narrative which is more concerned with truth, information, and smooth, pleasurable presentation than with the inherent factual ambiguity of extreme situations" (64).

In a more controversial part of his argument, Zavarzadeh argues that the postmodern novel, which he terms "transfiction" and describes as "mono-referential", pointing solely towards itself and its fictional form by "baring of literary devices" (38), and the nonfiction novel are two "radical narrative reactions to the current epistemological crisis" in that they are "*noninterpretive* narrative forms" (emphasis mine; 4). In a sharp contrast to Hellmann's, and also my own, understanding of the nonfiction novel and fabulist novel as openly and conspicuously *interpretive* and *transformational*, Zavarzadeh insists that "the nonfiction novel moves toward a zero degree of interpretation of man's situation [...] by *empirically registering the experiential realities*" – and so becomes "the most immediate narrative manifestation of the epistemological crisis"; instead of interpreting the facts, the nonfiction novel "can only *neutrally transcribe* the texture of the fictional reality" (emphasis mine; 41):

> The reality which is transcribed in the nonfiction novel is inclusive and non-selective since the nonfiction novelist does not apply axiological criteria [...] to his observations and does not "select" elements of his experience in order to project a total perspective on life. (44)

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> The nonfiction novelist, in contrast to the fictive novelist (who reaches for order behind the unruly and fragmentary experience) and the transfictionist (who possesses the fabulous by inventing the metafabulous), accepts the bizarre, fictive nature of reality as the experiential *donnée* of contemporary man and transcribes it. The registered fiction of facts, consequently, replaces the fiction of fantasy [...]. (italics original, 45)

As a result of this alleged refusal by the nonfiction novelists to select, categorise and interpret the "experiential reality", and their effort to instead directly "transcribe" the "fictual" reality as they experience it, complete with all its bizarreness and fictiveness, the nonfiction novel, unlike "factual narratives", "is written not *about* but *in* facts" (italics original, 46). Zavarzadeh concludes his argument as follows:

> The nonfiction novel is the "fiction" of the metaphysical void. In the absence of shared, preestablished norms, it maps the surrounding objectal world, without imposing a projected pattern of meaning on the neutral massiveness and amorphous identity of actual people and events. Its response to the confused and contradictory interpretations of reality, which are all the product of an Aristotelian compulsion to explain and label experience at all levels, is to return to noninterpretive, direct contact with reality. Faced with the fictuality of contemporary experience, the nonfiction novelist doubts that there is more to the world than what can be apprehended through the senses and that an informing "truth" lies behind the ordinary world of appearances. (68)

While both Zavarzadeh and Hellmann show they are fully aware of the covert narrative transformations and potential manipulations present in realist fiction and conventional journalism, and while both insightfully pinpoint the *tension* in the nonfiction novel between the outward and inward direction of reference, they widely differ in their views on the role of interpretation and narrative transformation in the genre. It appears that Zavarzadeh partly failed to acknowledge the self-reflective and conspicuously interpretative narrative technique in some of the new journalistic novels; but the difference between his and Hellmann's assessment also results from their significantly different choice of primary texts to which they attach the term "nonfiction novel". While Hellmann focuses on more or less self-reflective and interpretive nonfiction novels by Mailer, Thompson, Wolfe and Herr, and disregards other writings that do not comply with his criteria, Zavarzadeh concentrates on predominantly noninterpretative

nonfiction novels. As a result, Zavarzadeh discusses Andy Warhol's *a* as central to the concept

of nonfiction novel, because it indeed transcribes, without any selection or interpretation,

a segment of the strange reality of the 1960s (Zavarzadeh 42), praises Capote's *In Cold Blood*,

despite some faults, as a prime example of this noninterpretive nonfiction novel (115-127), and

feels it necessary to defend Mailer's *Armies* as 'still' belonging to the genre, despite its overt

interpretation of reality (154-175). Hellmann, on the contrary, does not include Warhol's *a* at all,

probably for its obvious lack of narrative, novelistic design, discusses *In Cold Blood* as

immature and peripheral to the genre because of its realistic technique and covert narrative

transformations (Hellmann 42) and treats *The Armies of the Night* as a cornerstone and the most

developed example of the nonfiction novel (36-49).

As previously indicated in Chapter 1, I will adopt in the following chapters Hellmann's

theoretical perspective and his emphasis on the self-reflective and conspicuously interpretive

and transformational narrative and reporting strategy in Mailer's, Thompson's, and Wolfe's

nonfiction novels. Therefore, in Chapters 3 and 4 I will treat Capote's *In Cold Blood* as

peripheral and Mailer's *Armies of the Night* as central to the genre. In Chapter 5, I will briefly

discuss other new journalistic novels and short stories in relation to these two opposite poles –

the realistic and covertly transforming narrative and reporting techniques represented by *In Cold*

Blood, and the fabulist, self-reflective and overtly transforming techniques epitomised by *The*

Armies of the Night. I will refer selectively also to Wolfe's, Hollowell's and Zavarzadeh's

studies when appropriate.

2.2.5 Kramer: Literary Journalism as Entertaining Personal Essay

Although my work is primarily concerned with the new journalistic novel of the second half of

the 1960s and 1970s, I would like to briefly discuss a more recent development in the type of

writing that combines literary narrative form with journalistic subject matter – the literary

journalism of the 1980s and 1990s. Norman Sims's 'The Art of Literary Journalism' (Sims & Kramer 3-19) and Mark Kramer's 'Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists' (Sims & Kramer 21-34), two essays published as a theoretical introduction to the already mentioned anthology *Literary Journalism: A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (1995), summarise the practices and principles developed and followed by a group of literary journalists. Many of them were associated with *The New Yorker* and Sims describes them as the followers of the 1960s and 1970s new journalism (Sims & Kramer 4, 9). Mark Kramer's 'Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists', the main theoretical statement of the movement, indicates that the literary journalism of the 1980s and 1990s represents a retreat from the highly complex and self-reflective narrative techniques and reporting strategies developed by Mailer, Thomson and Wolfe in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and a return to more traditional and artistically less ambitious short-story reportages and personal essays, in which the presence of the reporter-narrator and her/his role in the narrative transformation of the subject matter and in the process of reporting itself remain largely suppressed or concealed behind the text.

According to Kramer's eight 'Breakable Rules', literary journalists should, first, "immerse themselves in subjects' worlds and in background research" (22), second, "work out implicit covenants about accuracy and candor with readers and with sources" (23), third, "write mostly about routine events" (27), fourth, "write in 'intimate voice,' informal, frank, human, and ironic" (28), fifth, use "plain and spare" style (30), sixth, "write from a disengaged and mobile stance, from which they tell stories and also turn and address readers directly" (31), seventh, use narrative structure, "mixing primary narrative with tales and digressions to amplify and reframe events" (32), and eighth, "develop meaning by building upon the readers' sequential reactions" (33).

Comparing these rules with Wolfe's characterisation of new journalism, it becomes obvious that scenic construction, recording of full dialogue, or recording of status details are no longer central to literary journalism – a sign of the literary journalists' general tendency to move

away from reportage, a central concept for new journalists, towards personal essay, memoir, or a type of personalised feature. (Interestingly, Sims and Kramer hardly ever use the words "reporting" or "reportage" in their preface, and instead usually prefer the term "essay".) Kramer explains that writing about routine events is necessitated by current problems with access and related legal issues (27-28), while Sims suggests that "stories about wandering, work, and family – about the things that happen all the time – can reveal the structures and strains of real life" (3), a statement indicating an indirect return to the typifying and totalising tendencies of realism. When Kramer specifies what he means by "intimate, informal, frank, human, and ironic voice" and "plain and spare" style (28-31), his description and examples mark a radical departure from the intentionally complicated and contrived style and fragmentary language typical of Wolfe, Mailer or Thompson. Instead, they evoke elegant, smooth and unobtrusive expression usually associated with 'lighter' types of entertainment. Kramer says he advises his students of creative nonfiction writing to

> find their voices by imagining they're telling fairly close friends whose wit they respect about an
> incident they'd observed and taken seriously, linked to fields they'd studied. What emerges is a
> sociable, humorously self-aware, but authoritative voice – I hear it at dinner parties when people
> tell anecdotes. Reading it feels companionable. (29)

Two of Kramer's rules seem to promise more literary inventiveness: writing "from a disengaged and mobile stance", and "mixing primary narrative with tales and digressions". When Kramer elaborates on these ideas (31-33), though, it becomes clear that what he has in mind are not sophisticated narrative structures of the new journalistic novel or the fabulist fiction, but superficial decorative arrangements of the plotline to create suspense, keep the attention of the reader, and make the "story" more interesting.

I would argue that the literary journalism of the 1980s and 1990s and other creative nonfiction of the past decades represent a retreat from the complex and self-reflective narrative structures and reporting strategies of the new journalists of the 1960s and 1970s, and a return to more

conventional reporting strategies, and narrative or essayistic forms. There seems to be in our time a generally growing trend towards types of nonfictional writing which combine fact and imagination, journalistic reportage and narrative prose, and which include documentary texts, political autobiography, conspiracy theory stories published after the 9/11 attacks, and innumerable texts published on the internet in the form of personal weblogs. To my knowledge, there exists no comprehensive scholarship which would critically discuss the factuality and literary qualities of these writings. Although some of the texts may be based on highly accurate reporting or display unusual literary qualities, they hardly ever combine a complex literary form with factual subject matter to such an extent and as consciously as the new journalists did in the 1960s and 1970s.

3. "HISTORY AS A NOVEL"

3.1 Capote's Covert Narrator: Illusion of Pure Mimesis

Interviewed by George Plimpton in 1966, shortly after the publication of *In Cold Blood*, Truman Capote says:

> My feeling is that for the nonfiction-novel form to be entirely successful, the author should not appear in the work. Ideally. Once the narrator does appear, he has to appear throughout, all the way down the line, and the I-I-I intrudes when it really shouldn't. I think the single most difficult thing in my book, technically, was to write it without ever appearing myself, and yet, at the same, time, create total credibility. (Plimpton 38)

In describing the writing technique used in his allegedly new genre, Capote reveals an interesting aspect of the narrative structure of his "nonfiction novel". Namely, that he makes no difference between, on the one hand, "the author" or "myself" (i.e. Capote the writer), and, on the other hand, "the narrator" or "the I-I-I" (i.e. the narrator's voice speaking in Capote's novel).[1]

Capote tells us that he consciously decided to exclude "himself" from the text as a visible character (witness or reporter) or as a distinct narrative voice, despite his declared effort to "create total credibility". Capote believed that this choice of narrative technique was the right solution to an unusual literary riddle he had to face: his "nonfiction novel" was a novelistic and at the same time journalistic text, shaped by not only aesthetic criteria, but also by its communication function and reporting strategy. In order to better understand the relationship between the decisions made by Capote the novelist and those made by Capote the journalist, I would like to first analyse the narrative structure of the text as a *novel*, a literary work with its own fictional world and its own narrative voice or voices, independent of the real historical world existing outside of the text.

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[1] Contemporary narrative theory clearly distinguishes between the *real author*, a physical being existing completely outside of the narrative text, and the *narrator* or the *narrative voice*, an integral part, in fact the cornerstone, of most narrative art. (Chatman *Story and Discourse* 147-151)

3.1.1 Struggle For Realism: Covert Narrator

Compared with especially the postmodern 1960s fiction, *In Cold Blood* represents a relatively rare example of a novel with a third-person omniscient narrator who remains practically 'invisible', or rather 'inaudible' in the text. The reader can 'hear' the narrator's voice, but most of the time is not aware of the narrator's presence, of her/his[2] thoughts and values, her/his involvement in the story, or of her/his arranging hand in the organisation of the *story* into a *narrative discourse*.[3] Such a *covert narrator* (Chatman *Story and Discourse* 196-197) is usually associated with two types of writing. One of them is the realist and naturalist fiction of the nineteenth and early twentieth century; the other one is traditional journalism and its main genre, news reportage, as we know it from most contemporary serious media.

The general predominance of this narrative form among realistic novelists and traditional twentieth-century journalists is a result of their shared effort to achieve maximum *realism* and *objectivity*. Objectivity in the literal sense: a 'realistic', or 'life-like', presentation of 'objects' (usually persons or events) existing in the 'real' external world or in the 'true-to-life' fictional world; a presentation avoiding the presenter's subjective commentary or views on the contents presented. The first prerequisite for achieving such an objectivity and realism is then the existence of a writer-presenter, who stays outside of the literary text and its world and who is able to reliably observe and faithfully render this world, and, at the same time, refrain from standing in the way between the presented 'reality' and the reader. Her/his realistic presentation must be as direct and as unmediated as possible; from an aesthetic and literary theoretical point of view, it must be *mimetic*.[4]

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[2] I am using a gender-free reference to the narrator to emphasise that it is indeed a genderless narrative voice and to distinguish it from the physical author-reporter, who will be gendered as appropriate when referred to.

[3] Modern narratology distinguishes between *story*, i.e. the 'content' of a narrative, usually a chain of events in the fictional world, and *(narrative) discourse*, i.e. the specific selection, organisation and expression/presentation of the story events. (Chatman *Story and Discourse* 19, 146)

[4] *Mimesis*, direct presentation based on *showing*, as opposed to *diegesis*, indirect presentation based on *telling*. (Chatman 'The Structure of Narrative Transmission' 214; Genette *Narrative Discourse* 162-163). This distinction originally comes from Aristotle's *Poetics*, according to which epic poetry, drama and music are based on "mimêseis" (plural of "mimêsis"), translated by W. H. Fyfe as "representations of life" (Aristotle 1447a).

3.1.2 Narrator as Editor

According to Chatman, however, "pure mimesis, that is, direct witnessing, is an illusion. [...] It is clear that the author must make special efforts to preserve the illusion that the events are literally happening before the reader's eyes" ('The Structure' 215-216). As I have already suggested, one of these "special efforts" to create an illusion of "direct witnessing" is the presenter's hand remaining invisible in the process of presentation. When we read *In Cold Blood*, we are mostly not aware of the presence of any distinct narrative voice. As in realistic fiction and traditional journalism, the narrator-reporter in Capote's nonfiction novel remains mostly hidden and her/his point of view is not distinguishable from Capote the writer and journalist.

Although the novel's *implied author*[5] is responsible for the highly selective transformation of a story into a narrative discourse (in this specific case, the transformation of a real event into its novelistic account), s/he still preserves an illusion of objectivity and of unmediated, mimetic presentation, by often assuming narrative-communication roles which, according to Chatman, imply a very limited degree of "narrative intervention" – namely those of an *editor* and a *stenographer* ('The Structure' 238-248; *Story and Discourse* 167-178).

In order to make the presentation of events, characters, and speech as direct and unmediated as possible, the implied author of *In Cold Blood* very often avoids the role of a narrator (that is, a 'teller'), and instead adopts the role of mere *editor* of already existing written texts or other records. The novel is abundant in letters and other texts written by the characters, such as Perry's father's letter to the Kansas State Parole Board (*ICB* 125-130), Barbara's letter to Perry (138-142), and Willie-Jay's subsequent analysis of her letter (143-145), selective quotations from Perry's diary (257-258), Don Cullivan's letter to Perry (260-261), or selected passages from a scientific article on sanity in criminals (298-301). This mode of

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[5] According to modern narrative theory, the *implied author* is yet another narrative persona at least potentially present in most literary works – an image of *an* author and her/his values constructed by the text and reconstructed by the reader, often markedly different from the *real author* as well as from the *narrator*. (Booth 70-73)

presentation is most mimetic of all and effectively erases the narrator's voice. The implied author-editor merely quotes already existing texts and records (i.e. writings created by other 'authors'), and incorporates them into her/his own text, usually by furnishing them with quotation marks or indentations and by giving the copied texts a certain format or font. The author-editor may also supply additional 'source information' about when, by whom, and in which context the text was produced or presented. The only narrative intervention on the part of the implied author-editor is then her/his creative selection of the texts or parts of texts to be quoted and their specific positioning within the surrounding text.

Another strongly mimetic mode of presentation, frequently adopted by the implied author of *In Cold Blood*, is based on transcripts of dialogues and speeches uttered by the characters. The implied author acts here as a *stenographer*, directly recording the character's speech acts and merely transforming them from oral to written text. The only signs of a narrator's presence are then quotation marks, dividing the characters' direct speeches from the narrator's speech, and tags such as 'she said', etc. As Chatman points out, however, the use of quotation marks and speech tags is highly conventionalised and the reader does not usually perceive them as signs of a significant narrative intervention (*Story and Discourse* 166).

The presence of a narrator conventionally becomes more visible, especially as the mode of presentation becomes less mimetic and more explicitly mediated. This is usually the case when the narrator describes persons and settings; non-speech actions, such as bodily and other movements; and characters' internal processes, such as thoughts or feelings. Although Capote's narrator tries to remain 'objective' and merely depict, in neutral language and plain style, the externally visible or otherwise verifiable 'facts' of the novel's world, we can hear more distinctly the narrator's voice and are possibly much more aware of her/his presence as a mediator in the process of narrative transmission:

> [H]is face [...] seemed composed of mismatching parts. It was as though his head had been halved like an apple, then put together a fraction off center. [...] It was true that the tightening action of a smile contracted his face into its correct proportions, and made it possible to discern

> a less unnerving personality – an American-style "good kid" with outgrown crew cut, sane
> enough but not too bright. (Actually, he was very intelligent. An I.Q. test taken in prison gave him
> a rating of 130; the average subject, in prison or out, scores between 90 and 110.) (*ICB* 31)

Despite her/his visibility in this paragraph, the narrator still tries to suppress her/his mediating role in the description of Dick's external appearance and distance herself/himself from the description by the impersonal "seemed composed", "as though" and "it is possible to discern", and especially by inserting the side note on Dick's I.Q. score. In this digression, separated from the rest of the description by parentheses, the narrator suddenly switches back to the editorial mode of presentation discussed above. The implied author-editor quotes, in a different and almost scientific language, an already existing record of Dick's I.Q. score and some other statistical figures, as if to check the potentially interpretive or biased description of Dick's appearance, and to provide additional information directly to the reader, without mediation through a narrator's voice.

The reader may have an even stronger sense of narrative mediation and interpretation if the otherwise covert narrator starts rendering a character's speech or thoughts in indirect form:

> Some interpreting person must be converting the characters' thoughts into indirect expression,
> and we cannot tell whether his own slant does not lurk behind the words [...]. The indirect form
> in narratives implies a shade more intervention by a narrator, since we cannot be sure that the
> words in the report clause are precisely those spoken by the quoted speaker. (Chatman *Story and*
> *Discourse* 197, 200)[6]

Much of modernist and postmodern fiction of the twentieth century frequently uses indirect and especially free indirect style in order to blur, consciously and for artistic effects, the borders between the narrator's and the characters' speeches and thoughts. The narrator of *In Cold Blood*, on the contrary, tries to avoid any mode of presentation that could raise doubts about who the speaker is at a given moment, as can be seen in the following extract from the narrator's summary of Dewey's press conference, rendered in partly tagged semi-indirect style (a mixture of direct quoting and paraphrasing):

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[6] The different impact of *immediate speech* and *free indirect speech* on the narrative structure is also discussed in detail by Genette (*Narrative Discourse* 174).

Then, responding to questions, he said no, neither of the women had been "sexually molested," and no, as far as was presently known, nothing had been stolen from the house [...]. However, Dewey was "pretty darn sure" that no connection existed between this purchase and the crime [...]. And yes, he told the reporters, he did have an opinion whether the murders were the work of one man or two, but he preferred not to disclose it.

Actually, at this time, on this subject, Dewey was undecided. (*ICB* 81)

Here the narrator, in order to clearly separate her/his speech from that of Dewey, uses partly tagged semi-indirect speech (instead of free indirect, for instance), with every statement carefully attributed to its speaker ("he said no...", "he told the reporters") and with marked quotations of selected expressions typical of the speaker's style ("Dewey was 'pretty darn sure' that..."). The transition from the character's speech back to the narrator's speech is clearly signalled by a new paragraph and, again, by an "Actually" to signal a marked shift of narrative tone.

In many other instances throughout the text, the implied author-editor steps into the natural flow of the narrative by inserting different types of editorial notes, providing additional information to the quoted texts or direct speeches:

It was a late afternoon, and the driver of the car, a middle-aged traveling salesman *who shall here be known as* Mr. Bell, was tired. (italics mine; 171)

"... Because, after a couple of months, they tossed me out of the orphanage, and she [his mother] put me some place worse. ..." (132)

Sunday 31 January. Dick's dad here to visit Dick. Said hello when I saw him go past [the cell door] *but he kept going. Could be he never heard me. Understand from Mrs. M* [Meier] *that Mrs. H* [Hickock] *didn't come because she felt too bad to. Snowing like a bitch. Dreamed last night I was up in Alaska with Dad – woke up in a puddle of cold urine! ! !* (italics author's; 258)

The family was represented by Mr. Clutter's younger brother, Arthur, who had driven a hundred miles to be there. He told newsmen: "I just want to look at them [Smith and Hickock]. I just want to see what kind of animals they are. The way I feel, I could tear them apart." (280)

While talking to Donald Cullivan, Smith said, "They [the Clutters] never hurt me. Like other people. Like people have all my life. Maybe it's just that the Clutters were the ones who had to pay for it." (301)

In the first of the above extracts, the narrator informs us that the original name of a character has been changed. The editorial mode of this note is marked by the highly formal and metatextual "who shall here be known as", repeated three more times in the novel when three other characters are being introduced under changed names. In the other four examples, editorial notes in square parentheses are inserted in Perry's direct speech, in a quotation from Perry's diary, and in two other characters' direct speeches. Besides being very unusual in narrative fiction, most of these editorial notes, appearing throughout the book, would seem absolutely unnecessary and even bizarre to a reader of a novel, since they provide additional information which is always clear from the context. Their main purpose, therefore, is not to explain to the reader what might otherwise be unclear, but, first, to signal the presence of an author-editor and suppress the visibility of the narrator and check her/his mediating role; second, to further emphasise the editorial or stenographic mode of presentation, typical of nonfiction and journalism and antithetical to narration proper; and third, to demonstrate the authenticity of the quoted speeches and texts.

3.1.3 More Nonfiction than Novel

Despite the predominantly nonfictional mode of presentation described above, Hollowell (69-85) argues that *In Cold Blood* is a novel, with its literary form and "narrative structure" (70). What gives the book a literary rather than nonfictional form, according to Hollowell, is Capote's selection of material and its artistic organisation and rearrangement into a dramatic narrative order,[7] and an effective use of foreshadowing, dramatisation, and other forms of heightening: "*In Cold Blood* is organized by the 'scenic' construction of the novel rather than by the historical or chronological summary common to history and journalism" (72). Galloway also claims that Capote's rearrangement of events to produce suspense constitutes a novelistic technique ('Why

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[7] *Order of narrative discourse*, i.e. the relation between the order in which events or temporal sections are arranged in the narrative discourse and in the story, and *duration of narrative discourse*, i.e. relations between narrative time and story time, are discussed in detail by Genette (33-112).

the Chickens Came' 155-156). As Merrill points out, however, this kind of resemblance to fictional structure is superficial – the documentary material is merely arranged in a climactic manner, but the whole book lacks a deeper "imaginative structure", development of character and theme (*Mailer Revisited* 110).

Based on the preceding analysis, I would argue that the editorial and stenographic modes of presentation dominate the narrative structure of *In Cold Blood*. Although the text is organised, on the surface, in a dramatic, 'novel-like' order, the *covert narrator* makes special efforts to remain invisible in the text and to create an illusion of mimesis, i.e. of a direct unmediated presentation. The frequent occurrence of highly mimetic, "non-narrated", or "minimally narrated" presentation (Chatman 'The Structure' 146-147) delivered by an implied editor, stenographer, or journalist, also helps authenticate other text sections which, viewed on their own, display a higher degree of narrative mediation by a more audible narrator's voice. In other words, the plentiful quotations of existing texts and tagged direct speeches of characters seem to be surrounding the narrator's speech by a certain framework of objectivity and realism,[8] and thus contributing to the general *nonfictional mode of the text*.

3.2 Mailer's Overt Narrator: Narrative Process Exposed

"From the outset, let us bring you news of your protagonist" (*AOTN* 3). The very first sentence of Norman Mailer's novel *The Armies of the Night* anticipates an openly fictional, playful and self-reflective narrative structure, based on a mode of narrative transmission significantly different from Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*.[9] Instead of a covert narrator struggling for an illusion of direct mimetic presentation, the narrative structure of *Armies* is based on an 'audible'

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[8] The narrator's summary of Dewey's press conference (*ICB* 81-83) starts and ends with a substantial number of direct quotations of Dewey's speech. The section quoted and discussed above as an example of a higher degree of mediation and narrative intervention, only comes in the middle of the summary, surrounded by an objective/realistic framework of "minimally narrated" direct quotations.

[9] These two texts have already been compared e.g. by Hellmann (*Fables of Fact* 64-65), Hollowell (*Fact & Fiction* 91), Merrill (*Mailer Revisited* 107-115) from the point of view of their *journalistic* reporting strategy, but mostly without a deeper analysis of their *literary* narrative structure.

overt narrator (Chatman *Story and Discourse* 219-250) – making her/his presence clearly visible in the text; addressing the reader in her/his own voice; commenting, with varying degrees of distance or irony, on the actions, thoughts and speeches of the "protagonist"; and referring self-reflectively to her/his own writing and narration. Instead of presenting the 'objective facts' of the story, as Capote's novel aimed to accomplish, *Armies* presents the main character's *subjective view and interpretation* of the story events – and emphasise the process of their narrative mediation and transformation.

3.2.1 Narrator and Protagonist

While Capote's covert narrator took special efforts to eliminate her/his mediating presence in the text, Mailer's narrator emphasises her/his central position in the narrative transmission not only by her/his visibility, but also by splitting the narrative perspective between herself/himself and Mailer the protagonist – and thus further contributes to the high complexity of the novel's narrative structure. The controlling third-person narrator shows all signs of omniscience and narrative authority: s/he knows more than any of the characters, can anticipate events, and s/he often comments on the story, the protagonist's actions and thoughts, as well as on the narrative discourse and the process of writing. At the same time, the narrator uses Mailer the character as a primary perceiving and thinking subject – s/he often looks at the novel's internal world through the protagonist's eyes and has access to his thoughts and feelings. The following two passages, both from Part I of Book One, demonstrate the difference between the two narrative perspectives and modes of presentation, which Stanzel (23-29) distinguishes as *authorial narration* and *figural narration*:

> On a day somewhat early in September, the year of the first March on the Pentagon, 1967, the phone rang one morning and Norman Mailer, operating on his own principle of war games and random play, picked it up. That was not characteristic of Mailer. (*AOTN* 4)

> He found something finally which seemed appropriate, and pleased with the precision of these
> generally unused senses in his feet, took aim between them at a point twelve inches ahead, and
> heard in the darkness the sound of his water striking the floor. (31)

The first extract renders a plain description of externally visible events and imitates the neutral voice and 'objective' *perspective from outside* of an omniscient third-person narrator, typical of both conventional journalism and realistic fiction. "Mailer" is a mere object of this presentation. In the second extract, however, the narrator moves into the protagonist's head and perceives the whole scene from the his *limited perspective from inside*.[10] As "Mailer" steps into the darkened men's room and, unable to find the light switch, starts feeling with his feet for the bowl, the whole unfortunate event is mediated through his senses. The reader suddenly becomes clearly aware that what is being presented has been 'filtered' through the character's *organising consciousness*.[11]

Throughout the novel, the narration oscillates between such different modes of presentation and often combines, and blends, different perspectives and voices within one paragraph or even one sentence. For example, while Mailer the protagonist is getting increasingly drunk, and therefore decreasingly able to see and remember the 'objective' facts of the evening, the narrator, instead of taking over from her/his drunk hero and recording the rest of his actions from outside, is more and more giving way to Mailer's blurred and subjective vision of the events from inside and to his stream of thoughts:

> Thus composed, illuminated by these first stages of Emersonian transcendence, Mailer left the
> men's room, descended the stairs, entered the back of the orchestra, all opening remarks held
> close file in his mind like troops ranked in order before the parade, and then suddenly, most
> suddenly saw, with a cancerous swoop of albatross wings, that de Grazia was on the stage, was
> acting as M.C., was – no calling it back – launched into the conclusion of a gentle stammering
> stumbling – small orator, de Grazia! – introduction of Paul Goodman. All Lost! The magnificent
> opening remarks about the forces gathered here to assemble on Saturday before the Pentagon, this
> historic occasion, let us hold it in our mind and focus on a puddle of passed water on the floor
> above and see if we assembled here can as leftist and proud dissenters contain within our minds

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[10] The difference between internal and external point of view is discussed, for example, by Genette (186).
[11] I adopt this term from Hellmann – for a more detailed theoretical discussion of the concept and its role in new journalistic and postmodern writing, see Chapter 2, p. 24.

the grandeur of the two – all lost! – no chance to do more than pick up later – later! after de Grazia and Goodman had finished dead-assing the crowd. Traitor de Grazia! Sicilian de Grazia! (*AOTN* 32)

This highly poetic paragraph reveals a narrative technique sharply different from and much more complex than that in Capote's novel. As I have shown in the first part of this chapter, the implied author of *In Cold Blood*, in order to support the illusion of mimesis and objectivity, clearly divides characters' speeches and quotations of written texts from the narrator's speech, attributes different parts of the text to their originators, and strongly prefers direct quotations of characters' speeches and other modes of presentation implying no or very little narrative intervention. In the above extract from *The Armies of the Night*, on the contrary, different voices, perspectives, styles and modes of presentation largely overlap and replace each other, often right in the middle of a sentence and in a fast succession: a) the narrator's neutral description of the character's actions from the outside ("Mailer left the men's room…"), b) the narrator's ironic, stylistically marked, or metaphorical rendering of the character's thoughts and perceptions ("all opening remarks held close file in his mind like troops ranked in order before the parade", "and then suddenly, most suddenly saw […] that de Grazia was on the stage"), c) free direct quotations of the character's thoughts ("small orator, de Grazia!", "all lost! – no change to do more than pick up later – later!", "Traitor de Grazia! Sicialian de Grazia!"), and d) free direct quotations of the character's imagined and never delivered speech ("let us hold it in our minds"), etc.

Here and throughout the novel, the frequent use of free direct and free indirect style artistically blurs the borders between what is said or thought, on the one hand, by the narrator and, on the other hand, by the protagonist – and raises doubts about who is speaking at a given moment and whether it is a direct *verbatim* quotation or the narrator's indirect paraphrase. This modernist technique, developed especially from the 1920s by authors including Virginia Wolfe, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Marcel Proust, William Faulkner, and later Jack Kerouac, emphasises the artifice and the fictional nature of the narrative process.

As Merrill (116) points out, Mailer's narrative technique resembles *The Education of Henry Adams* in that it combines a "distancing" third-person narration with the subjective perspective of the protagonist. Instead of presenting the events and her/his interpretation of them in the first person, as an eye-witness and participant could justly do, the narrator introduces the main character, a fictional version of Mailer the author. Calling the protagonist "Mailer", and later also "the Novelist", "the Historian", "the Beast", and other mock-names, the narrator establishes her/his internal link and kinship with the protagonist, while, at the same time, keeping an often ironic narrative distance from him.[12] This allows the narrator, according to Hollowell (92-93), to mock and exaggerate the protagonist's foibles, and thus view her/his own involvement in the story from a changing and ironic distance:

> Yes, Mailer had an egotism of curious disproportions. With the possible exception of John F. Kennedy, there had not been a President of the United States nor even a candidate since the Second World War whom Mailer secretly considered more suitable than himself, and yet on the first day of a war which he thought might go on for twenty years, his real desire was to be back in New York for a party. (*AOTN* 119)

The narrator further reveals that "Mailer" is jealous of Lowell's popularity (*AOTN* 45), that he is afraid of police violence (*AOTN* 56), and that he hopes to get arrested and released soon so that he does not get cold and hungry and so that he can attend a party in New York on Sunday night (*AOTN* 118-119). Most of his actions, including his incident in the men's room and his poor performance in the Ambassador, are rendered with irony already present in the language and style of the narration:

> Some damn mistake had been made, an assault from the side doubtless instead of the front, the bowl was relocated now, and Master of Ceremonies breathed deep of the great reveries of this utterly non-Sisyphian release – at last! – and thoroughly enjoyed the next forty-five seconds, being left on the aftermath not a note depressed by the condition of the premises. No, he was off on the Romantic's great military dream, which is: seize defeat, convert it to triumph. (*AOTN* 31)

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[12] According to Hutcheon, ironic distance and parody are central modes of presentation in postmodern art – see also footnotes no. 5 and 6 in Chapter 2, pp. 21, 24.

The irony here is based on a combination of highly marked technical and military terminology ("assault", "relocated", "the premises", "defeat") and a contrived poetic style, with complicated sentence structure and formal vocabulary indicative of an excessively high register ("doubtless", "utterly").

Thus, by often mocking "Mailer" and presenting him, with irony, as a "comic hero" (*AOTN* 53), the narrator exposes the protagonist's highly subjective involvement in the story and his biases, and thus overtly undermines his reliability and trustworthiness as an objective observer of the novel's world. Since the narrator mostly relies on the character's point of view, and also given the obvious autobiographical link between Mailer the character and Mailer the author, the unreliability of the character-observer consequently also undermines the reliability and objectivity of the novel's narrator and implied author.[13]

3.2.2 "The Words He Would Not Say": Importance of the Non-Essential

Every page of *Armies* is abundant with names and other direct references to real historical persons, events, places, speeches and literary and journalistic texts. While this admittedly seems to place the book in a specific historical context, the predominant focus of both the narrator and the protagonist is undisputedly on the non-essential. The more the narrator gives way to Mailer's perceptions, thoughts, and internal monologues, the narrower and more limited and seemingly arbitrary appears to be the selection of the minutest details. An example, analysed in length by Hellmann (43-49), of this obsession with insignificant details (that is, insignificant for conventional journalism or history), is "Mailer's" several-page-long observation and contemplation of the marshals' faces (*AOTN* 150-154). It is in their facial expressions that both Mailers are tying to find a key to or an explanation of the historical and political reality. The passage is, nevertheless, not at all based on a detailed external description, but is rather

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[13] The explicit subjectivity and unreliability of the observer and of the authorial narrative voice will have a crucial impact on the way the text refers, as a journalistic document or reportage, to the extratextual reality. This issue will be discussed in larger detail in the following Chapters.

interwoven with "Mailer's" memories, an imagined dialogue, subjective and seemingly irrational reactions to and internal comments on the relation between the marshals' small town mentality and the current political conflict.

Out of all the speeches delivered by the organisers and invited speakers during the evening in the Ambassador and during the rallies in the following two days, some are merely mentioned as taking place at a certain moment in the plot. The only speech fully quoted in the text is "Mailer's" incoherent and completely unprepared talk in the Ambassador, meaningless in terms of its political message, and mostly dealing with the non-essential, including his accident in the men's room. It also seems interesting to note that while Mailer is one of the celebrities of the Ambassador gathering (*AOTN* 32-52) and stands right on the stage, in the midst of the event, what is mediated through him to the reader is an image incomparably more limited than that perceived by the audience and the journalists watching the whole event from outside or from above, i.e. from the neutral ground of the auditorium. "Mailer" is not only drunk, but is also blinded by the strong lights and cannot hear his fellow speakers because of the "terrible acoustics" (52).

I would argue that this focus on seemingly insignificant details and their integration into the story, further emphasises the highly *subjective* and *fictional* nature of the text. Using her/his access to the protagonist's mind and adopting the complex narrative technique described above, the narrator is even able to render events that have never happened, but which take place in "Mailer's" mind. An example is the protagonist's 'internal dialogues', such as his imagined conversation with Lowell (*AOTN* 41-42):

> Lowell's eyes looked up from the shoe, and passed one withering glance by the novelist, saying much, saying, "Every single bad thing I have ever heard about you is not exaggerated."
>   Mailer, looking back, thought bitter words he would not say: "You, Lowell, beloved poet of many, what do you know of the dirt and the dark deliveries of the necessary? What do you know of dignity hard-achieved, and dignity lost through innocence, and dignity lost by sacrifice for a cause one cannot name. What do you know […]."

It is interesting to note that the narrator is again laying bare the imaginative fictional construction of such a dialogue when s/he states explicitly that the communication did not really take place but only happened through eye-contact, and by rendering the quotations (as well as other thoughts of the protagonist) in a poetic and lofty, parodying style.

In the chapter 'Why Are We in Vietnam' (*AOTN* 180-189), the protagonist's "sleeping thesis" about the suppressed schizophrenia of the American society, obsessed with Christianity, corporate economy, and TV culture, as the main cause of the otherwise futile Vietnam War, is constructed by the authorial narrator for the first time in the text as if completely without the active presence of the consciousness of Mailer the protagonist. The fact that the main character and reflector of the other events is asleep and the "argument in his brain" is "submitted to the reader" (180) by the authorial narrator, poses questions about the reliability and seriousness of these ideas and, again, exposes their fictional nature: are they a Fieldingian digression made by Mailer the author-narrator, or an inconsistent contemplation of Mailer the protagonist on the passage into dream?

3.2.3 More Novel than Nonfiction

The above analysis shows that the authorial narrator of *Armies* is clearly visible throughout the text; her/his mediating presence can be felt not only in explicit commentaries or digressions, but also in simple descriptions of actions and speeches, thanks to a stylistically marked and frequently ironic language, and thanks to a diegetic, i.e. openly narrative, mode of presentation – as opposed to the ostensibly mimetic, predominantly editorial and stenographic, presentation we have seen in Capote's text. The 'narratedness' of the text and its literary (rather than nonfictional) form are further emphasised by a playful, *self-reflective* and, according to Hellmann (1-65), *metafictional* nature of the narrative, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

In sharp contrast to Capote's *In Cold Blood*, the complex and self-reflective narrative structure of *Armies*, based on an actively intervening and visible narrator and an openly unreliable character-observer, exposes the book's *fictional form* and the process of narrative transformation of the story. While Capote's nonfiction novel consciously conceals its narrative transformations and struggles for an illusion of realism and direct mimetic presentation of the story, *The Armies of the Night* constantly and openly parades its literary devices and emphasises the transforming role of the narrative process.

Both texts are dealing with real events, and thus, from the point of view of their contents, they are both often qualified by reviewers, publishers, librarians and some critics as a special (that is, creative) type of nonfiction. In terms of their literary form *per se*, however, their status seems to be significantly different: *In Cold Blood* is closer to nonfiction and journalism (and realistic fiction), in that it focuses on the story and the 'facts' of the real world (or, in realistic fiction, of the fictional world); *The Armies of the Night* is a postmodern novel *par excellence*, in that it draws our attention primarily to itself, its literary form, and to its interpretation and fictional transformation of the uncertain and in many ways fictive 'reality'.[14]

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[14] The close relationships of *In Cold Blood* to "universalist" realistic fiction and of *The Armies of the Night* to "self-reflexive" postmodern art are also discussed by Hutcheon (115, 117).

4. "THE NOVEL AS HISTORY"

Although both *In Cold Blood* and *The Armies of the Night* 'read like novels' and can be very well critically analysed and interpreted as such, they constantly refer to real and at least partly verifiable historical events. Ever since their first publication, both books have been marketed by their publishers, interpreted by their readers, critically evaluated by their reviewers and literary critics, and categorised by many librarians not only as novels, but also, and even more frequently, as journalistic reportages, nonfictional documents or commentaries on contemporary events and socio-political realities existing outside of the texts, preceding and inspiring their creation.[1] The aim of this chapter is to compare the significantly different ways in which the two books refer to historical reality as *journalistic texts*, and analyse the relation between this reference and the literary form and narrative structure of the books, discussed in the previous chapter.

4.1 Capote's Covert Reporter: Manipulation of Reality Within "Factual Accuracy"

In any thorough interpretation of Capote's *In Cold Blood*, the issue of the book's factuality and documentary value is unavoidable. Although in theory the text *per se* could be read, as I have shown in the previous chapter, as a rather traditional and artistically uninventive realistic novel on fictional, if life-like, events, the author and the publisher use every opportunity to assure the readers that *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences* is strictly factual and meets all the standards of accurate journalistic reporting.

The journalistic nature of the text is supported by the fact that it was originally published not as a book, but as a series of four long articles in the *New Yorker* in September and October

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[1] Most critics are concerned with the faithfulness and documentary function of the two books; they usually mention their "distinct literary forms only as a part of their different journalistic techniques – for example Hellman (1-65), Hollowell (65-96), Langbaum (573-574), Sauerberg (20-22, 64-70), Tompkins (125, 127, 166-171).

1965.[2] Each of the four instalments was introduced by the editor's note: "All quotations in this article are taken either from official records or from conversations, transcribed verbatim, between the author and the principals" (quoted by Tompkins 125). A similar claim of factuality is made by Capote himself in the 'Acknowledgements' at the beginning of the book (*ICB* 8). Interviewed by George Plimpton in 1966, Capote says that his "nonfiction novel" was "a narrative form that employed all the techniques of fictional art but was nevertheless *immaculately factual*" (italics mine; Plimpton 2). After describing his lengthy and thorough investigation and recording of all available details, he concludes: "One doesn't spend almost six years on a book, *the point of which is factual accuracy*, and then give way to *minor distortions*" (italics mine; Plimpton 41). In another interview in the *Saturday Review*, Capote says his aim was to write a book which "would be precisely like a novel, with a single difference: *every word of it would be true from beginning to end*" (italics mine; quoted by Tompkins 125).

While these explicit claims of factual accuracy are not integral to the text itself, they appear on its periphery (in the acknowledgments) and in its immediate literary context (interviews, advertising), and thus create a certain framework of expectations and standards for the reading, interpretation, and criticism of the book. They establish the status of the text as related to journalism and as being explicitly factual; the text is introduced as a "true story", reported by a journalist and merely edited for the purposes of publication. The illusion that the presented story has been merely recorded and artfully edited by the author is further enhanced by the internal structure of the text itself, which was discussed in detail in Chapter 3, namely by the use of an invisible third-person omniscient narration and with the choice of the *editorial and stenographic mode of presentation*. Capote the reporter-novelist conceals his mediating role in the process of narrative transmission and creates an illusion of direct mimetic presentation; he avoids overt commentary by plainly depicting events 'as they happened' and merely quoting

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[2] Capote, Truman. 'In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences'. *New Yorker* 25 September 1965: 57-92; 2 October 1965: 57-175; 9 October 1965: 58-183; 16 October 1965: 62-193.

other texts and direct speeches; the author inserts editor's notes in the text to emphasise the 'objectivity' and nonfictional nature of the book and to imply that the text was merely assembled by a journalist-editor, rather than narrated by a creative and potentially manipulative artist.

4.1.1 Narrative Transformation of Facts Concealed

Despite his extensive investigation and research and his claims of accuracy, Capote nevertheless did "give way to minor distortions" – in most cases probably unintentionally, but often with critical consequences. In an *Esquire* article published in June 1966, Tompkins offers persuasive evidence of minor and major factual inaccuracies and inaccurate quotations in the novel, some of which have significant impact especially on the overall image of the criminals and their mental state at the moment of the crime. On the basis of the official police and court transcripts, Tompkins argues that Capote suppressed important sections of Perry Smith's confession, which suggest that he cut Mr. Clutter's throat with full consciousness and intent, rather than in a fit of insanity (Tompkins 167-168, 171). Tompkins interviewed Mrs. Meier to find out that she never held Perry's hand, never heard him cry and never heard him say, "I'm embraced by shame" (168). Tompkins argues that, according to two reporters who were present at the execution and took notes, Smith never apologised (168, 170); he questions Smith's and Capote's version of what happened, according to which Smith shot all four victims (170). Tompkins concludes his argument (171):

> And so were the facts transformed. Perry Smith, who could hardly utter a grammatical sentence while dictating his confession, becomes *le poète maudit*, corrects the grammar in newspaper articles about him. To judge from his confession, Perry Smith was an obscene, semiliterate and cold-blooded killer. [...] For premeditated murder performed in cold blood, Capote substituted unpremeditated murder performed in a fit of insanity. Art triumphs over reality, fiction over nonfiction. [...] The killer cries. He asks to have his hand held. He says, "I'm embraced by shame." He apologizes.

It seems that both Capote and Tompkins naïvely believed that the most complex social, legal, psychological, and political aspects of Dick's and Perry's lives, crimes, and deaths could be

addressed with complete objectivity and that there was one single truth which could be reported "in cold fact", independent of any subjective interpretation. Capote, however, did not "transform" already existing and well-established "facts", he merely reconstructed one of several similarly plausible versions of the facts. While Tompkins relied primarily on official transcripts of the suspects' formal testimonies and confessions delivered before police officers and the court, Capote drew heavily on much more intimate and informal interviews and correspondence with the convicts themselves. Hence he acquired a much deeper, if undoubtedly biased and often misleading, understanding of the murderers' mental world and was able to present their, as well as his own, *subjective interpretation* of the highly complex and ambiguous events.

Capote's account being based on subjective interpretations of real events would be acceptable as a type of journalistic writing, had Capote not insisted that *In Cold Blood* was "immaculately factual", and "true from beginning to end", but instead openly admitted and exposed in the text his own involvement in the case and with the convicts, his investigation and material collection and, most importantly, the process of selection and transformation of these materials into the nonfiction novel. Several reviewers and critics pointed out after the publication of *In Cold Blood* that Capote entirely left out from the book his own role in the story as a witness and reporter, the influence he had on the interviewed, and the way in which he selected and used his material. Thus, some of them argued, Capote deprived his novel of a higher artistic complexity and raised doubts about what else he left out of the story and how his presence and experience influenced the narrative:

> And he himself was very much part of the experience of many of the characters. His presence, his
> actions, his questions must have affected them [...]. If he has removed himself from the
> experience, we are entitled to ask what else he may have chosen to remove or suppress. (Garrett
> 11)

> He might have enhanced the reportorial quality and given us a more intricate novelistic structure
> had he made us aware of his evidence, of how he came to know the facts. (Langbaum 573)

> But how much of their words were, nevertheless, Capote's art and none of their own? Any
> interviewer has an effect on the interviewed; [...] Why does Capote leave himself out of it? He is
> one of the prime actors. (Yurick 159)[3]

Describing his reporting methods in the already mentioned interview in the *New York Times Book Review* (Plimpton 2-3, 38-43), Capote reveals what sources he relied on, how he collected and processed the material and how much of the available information he actually left out. First, Capote collected a significant amount of material over the course of five or six years, but in his nonfiction novel used only a fraction of it. Secondly, while using some official records, he relied heavily on interviews with those involved in the case, and especially with the convicts themselves, after they were arrested and sentenced to death, visiting them frequently in their cells and maintaining a regular correspondence with them. Thirdly, Capote admits that he never took notes or used a tape-recorder, although he claims he had trained himself to remember what he heard with a "95 per cent accuracy" (38). Fourthly, Capote says that scenes, dialogues and continuous speeches often evolved from separate interviews. As an example, he describes how he reconstructed, from separate interviews, a long narrative by the schoolteacher about going with the sheriff to the Clutter house and finding the four bodies:

> Well, I simply set that into the book as a straight complete interview – though it was, in fact, done
> several times: each time there'd be some little thing which I'd add or change. But I hardly
> interfered at all. A slight editing job. The school teacher tells the whole story himself. (Plimpton
> 38)

Lastly, in an intriguing contrast with his claims that his work is based on "factual accuracy" and avoids even "minor distortions", Capote admits that he did present his own opinions in the book by selecting certain views or versions of the events and suppressing or excluding others:

> Now in that particular section where Perry talks about the reasons for the murders, I could have
> included other views. But Perry's happens to be the one I believe is the right one. [...] I make my
> own comment by what I choose to tell and how I choose to tell it. It is true that an author is more
> in control of fictional characters because he can do anything he wants with them as long as they
> stay credible. But in the nonfiction novel one can also manipulate: if I put something in which

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[3] Similar observations made by Dupee (3).

I don't agree about I can always set it in a context of qualification without having to step into the story myself to set the reader straight. (Plimpton 38)

It seems that for Capote, his specific selection, arrangement and narrative transformation of the 'facts' is not in conflict with the declared factuality of the book. Although he admits, in the above excerpts, that he turned separate interviews with the schoolteacher into one narrative, and that he left out important views on or versions of Perry's motive, for Capote the facts still remain facts, they only undergo "a slight editing job" in order to better fit the literary form of a novel and to represent the author's views and comments.[4]

A closer textual analysis of *In Cold Blood* combined with our knowledge of how Capote collected and treated his material reveals a reporting technique based on a wide range of transformations and omissions of the 'facts'. As suggested above, the most significant narrative transformation of the reality is a complete omission of what Yurcik (159) correctly calls "one of the prime actors", namely Capote the journalist. Reading *In Cold Blood*, we learn, for instance, many details about the two criminals' lives and movements before the murders and in the period between the murders and their arrest; we learn how they acted, what they said, and what their thoughts and reactions were in specific situations. What is completely eliminated from the text, however, is the fact that Capote himself learned about most of these 'facts' several years after they happened and in a completely different context, namely from interviews with the convicts themselves, already sentenced to death and awaiting their execution. Events and speeches which, as I have shown in Chapter 3, seem to be presented by an implied reporter-editor without any narrative mediation directly to the reader, are in fact based on Capote's selection and reconstruction of what he remembered Dick and Perry telling him in reaction to his specific questions. In addition to that, Capote had to rely on their memories and on what they themselves consciously selected to tell him, or suppress, about their actions, words, and thoughts, which

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[4] This paradoxical contradiction in Capote's claims is the result of the *objectivist myth*, described and critiqued, for example, by Lakoff & Johnson (168-188) and Cozzi (18-22): According to this myth, deeply embedded in the Western social discourse and inherent to our way of thinking, even complex social phenomena exist 'out there', as 'facts' or 'objects' independent of language and their description by the language. The way Capote unconsciously embraces this objectivist myth, while Mailer is trying to resist it, will be discussed in detail further in this work.

took place several years before. Only twice does the text itself hint at the presence of "a journalist" as someone to whom a direct quotation is addressed (*ICB* 216, 331), but nothing more is revealed about the identity or the role of this journalist. Therefore, rather than openly exposing the mediating presence of Capote the reporter within the whole story, these references to "a journalist" merely support the underlying misleading assumption that the other speeches and actions were not addressed to any journalist, but simply happened and were somehow recorded by an invisible omnipresent observer.

Another narrative transformation with potentially manipulative effects, partly admitted by Capote himself in the interview cited above, but completely concealed behind the text, is the practice of constructing scenes, speeches and dialogues from pieces of information gathered in separate interviews and in differing contexts. For example, Bobby's testimony (*ICB* 50), originally recorded by the police as a series of the investigators' questions and Bobby's answers, is, similarly to the schoolteacher's testimony, transformed by Capote into a continuous narration. Moreover, it is delivered by Bobby in a calm voice and composed style hardly to be expected from someone who has just found out his girlfriend was brutally murdered and who is being interrogated by the police as a suspect. In other cases even more radical and less visible transformations take place – information gathered from interviews or written correspondence between Capote and the protagonists is used selectively and out of its original context and transformed into a completely different form, such as a reconstructed dialogue between characters or as a descriptive authorial narration.

Despite his struggle for realism and authenticity, Capote also significantly modifies the way the two protagonists speak, thereby distorting the general image of their personalities and social backgrounds. Capote has both murderers speaking in standard English, and Perry's polished expression even indicates a well-read autodidact with a higher degree of literacy:

> "'For this killer or killers,'" said Perry, reading aloud. 'That's incorrect. The grammar is. It ought to be "For this killer or *these* killers."' (*ICB* 97)

This image is in a sharp contrast with an official transcript of Smith's confession, taken down by a police stenographer and quoted from police records by Tompkins (168):

> I think we was debating who was going to do what and who was going to start it, so I told him, "Well," I says, "I'll do it," so I walked over to Mr. Clutter and he couldn't hear us talk from where we was over at the door. We was kind of talking in a whisper. I walked over to Mr. Clutter and Dick come over close [...].

Although the transcript may have distorted the suspect's speech, the stylistically clumsy and grammatically faulty expression evokes a speaker with very little formal education.

Lastly, as Kaufman (21) points out in his review of *In Cold Blood*, Capote suppressed or underplayed, in the process of selecting his material, many interesting themes and issues, such as the latently homosexual relationship between the two criminals or Hickock's predilection for underage girls. Asked by Plimpton what turned the criminals back to the Clutter house after they had almost decided to abandon their scheme, Capote replies:

> Oh, Dick was always quite frank about that. I mean after it was all over. When they set out for the house that night, Dick was determined, before he ever went, that if the girl, Nancy, was there he was going to rape her. It wouldn't have been an act of the moment – he had been thinking about it for weeks. He told me that was one of the main reasons he was so determined to go back after they thought, you know for a moment, they wouldn't go. Because he'd been thinking about raping this girl for weeks and weeks. (Plimpton 39-40)

Despite his primary efforts, both as a journalist and as a novelist, to fully understand and insightfully present to the readers the criminals' psychology, their internal views and motives, Capote consciously suppressed this crucial and rather fascinating theme: Hickock drove several hundred miles and participated in a brutal and otherwise motiveless murder of four people after he had been thinking "for weeks and weeks" about raping a girl he had never seen. In the text itself, however, Hickock's unfulfilled desire to rape Nancy is never even hinted at as a possible motive and is only mentioned by Perry in his confession as something that merely came to Hickock's head after he saw Nancy in Mr. Clutter's house (*ICB* 244-246).

4.1.2 Capote's Conventional Reporting Strategy

Hollowell praises Capote for skilfully selecting and rearranging his factual material and imposing a novelistic form, based on a narrative structure, scenic construction, heightening, and dramatisation (70-74, 77, 85). Although Hollowell admits that Capote's "reluctance to speak in his own voice conceals his strong personal involvement in the case and his skillful manipulation of the reader's reactions" (73), he nevertheless insists on the book's factuality: "Capote says merely: all this *happened*, these facts *exist*" (italics original; 74). For Hollowell, the events simply "happened" and the facts "exist" independently of the order, context, or narrative form in which they are presented; Capote's selection, rearrangement and narrative transformation of the facts allegedly contributes to the novel's literary quality, without undermining the factuality of the facts.

Hellmann, on the contrary, recognises that some experience, and complex social or political phenomena, are inseparable from the language and the narrative form in which they are presented. He points out that Capote, by leaving himself out of events in which he played a considerable role as a participant, reporter and commentator, adhered to a traditional form of realistic fiction, and, under the illusion of objectivity and realism, interpretively selected and manipulated his material to an extent which raises doubts about the book's factual credibility (Hellmann 64-65).

Capote's reporting technique seems to be similar to that of conventional journalism. It creates an illusion of a direct presentation of 'objective facts' by concealing the very process of reporting, selecting, arranging, and contextualising of the information, and by suppressing the interpretative role of the reporter. It is exactly this technique's declared 'objectivity' and adherence to 'pure fact' that make its invisible interpretations and subtle manipulations much more problematic and objectionable than many "minor distortions" and inaccuracies.

4.2 Mailer's Self-Reflective Reportage: Narrative Transformation Deconstructed

[I]f what you write is a reflection of your own consciousness, then even journalism can become interesting... (Norman Mailer interviewed by Steven Marcus)[5]

Norman Mailer's account of the 1967 march on the Pentagon is much less susceptible to the kind of criticism which followed the publication of Capote's nonfiction novel. All the objectionable narrative transformations and potential manipulations of the historical reality that we can discover *concealed behind* the text of *In Cold Blood*, inherent to Capote's reporting technique, but invisible in the text itself, become much more plausible in *The Armies of the Night*, exactly because they are made fully *visible in* the text, inherent not only to Mailer's reporting technique, but also integral to the text itself, as one of its main structural features and themes. In his book, Mailer displays, consciously and conspicuously, a high degree of *literary construction*, imagination and *personal mediation* of reality. Although he refers to 'real' and often verifiable historical events, persons, places and texts, his extensive and deliberate use of complex narrative techniques emphasises the highly subjective and fictional nature of his document. The text's frank exposure and acknowledgement of the subjective literary mediation of historical fact then turns out to be not a mere choice of a narrative structure or aesthetic form, but rather one of the central themes of Mailer's novelistic reportage.

Unlike Capote, Mailer makes no explicit claims of absolute factual accuracy. When he talks about his book being, among other things, a "history", he does so directly in the text rather than in an interview or editorial note on the text, and he does so with modesty rather than with authority – his account "was to the best of *the author's memory* scrupulous to facts" (italics mine; *AOTN* 255). At the same time that Mailer claims his novel is based in historical reality, he also consciously undermines its factuality and objectivity by emphasising repeatedly throughout the text the transforming role of "the author" and his "memory", inseparable from the presented facts themselves. When, in the first part of Book 1, Mailer digresses from the main story line to

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[5] Plimpton, George, ed., & Alfred Kazin, intro. *Writers at Work; The Paris Interviews*. New York: Penguin Books 1977 [c1967]. 276.

remind us, in his self-reflective playfulness, that what he is writing is a history, not a novel, he does so with irony[6] and in an ostensibly novelistic, Fieldingian style:

> Of course if this were a novel, Mailer would spend the rest of the night with a lady. But it is history, and so the Novelist is for once blissfully removed from any description of the hump-your-backs of sex. Rather he can leave such matters to the happy or unhappy imagination of the reader. (*AOTN* 52)

The book is a history, but history written "as a novel", and the "Novelist", although "blissfully removed" from his usual duty of a creative fabulator constructing intriguing fictitious events, is nevertheless still present, with all the novelistic devices at his disposal, ready to *fictionalise the history*.

On the back cover of the first 1968 paperback edition of *The Armies of the Night* (New York: Signet Books), several photographs capture the march, the protest banners, and the demonstrators being beaten by the police, as if to illustrate the atmosphere and to authenticate the book's fidelity to historical reality. Below the photograph, a quotation from a *San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle* review starts with, "A Fantastic Document, rousing journalism, outrageous, perceptive, an American writer's statement...", indicating the factual and journalistic mode of the account. In addition to that, a rough map is provided of the area between the Lincoln Memorial and the Pentagon where the reported events took place, adding further visual support to the authenticity of the text, and placing the text in the context of a physical, geographic reality. If these clues, peripheral to the text and provided by the publisher rather than the author, have produced certain expectations in the reader concerning the objectivity and journalistic factuality of the book, the text itself is constantly frustrating these expectations and undermining, or at least questioning, its own factuality.

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[6] Ironic distance, created by self-reflective and parodic play with traditional art forms, is cited as a central feature of postmodern art by Hutcheon (4-5, 11, 16, 19, 22-26, 43) – see also footnotes in Chapters 2 (pp. 21, 24) and 3 (p. 43) for Hutcheon's understanding of the role of irony and parody in postmodernism.

4.2.1 Self-Reflective Personal History

History as a Novel – The Novel as History: the subtitle of the book not only refers to its two sections, considerably different in terms of their literary and reporting structure, style etc., but also immediately raises doubts about the status of the text and emphasises the hybridity of its function, form and genre:

> It is obvious the first book is a history in the guise or dress or manifest of a novel, and the second is a real or true novel – no less! – presented in the style of a history. (*AOTN* 255)

This uncertainty about the text's status is not at all resolved in the book – rather, the frequent digressions discussing the differences between novelistic and historical writing, and the explicit references to the protagonist as "Novelist" and "Historian", further contribute to the book's conspicuous *self-reflectivity*. As already suggested towards the end of Chapter 3, *In Cold Blood* and *The Armies of the Night* differ not only in their narrative structure and other literary devices, but also in their primary semantic reference: while Capote's novel refers almost exclusively to its story, Mailer's novel refers to itself, to its literary form, and to the narrative transformations of the story. The same is true about the two books as journalistic texts. Capote's book creates an illusion of pointing 'directly' to the historical fact; Mailer's book, on the contrary, points to itself, to its historicity, to its own historical reference and its likewise self-reflective form.

As indicated in Chapter 3 in my analysis of the novel's narrative structure, Mailer the novelist-reporter is visibly present in both the narrative discourse, in the guise of an overt and self-reflective narrator and commentator, and in the reported story, as a character-observer called "Mailer". Before the historical facts are presented to the reader by the self-reflective, digressing and commenting author-narrator, they are first processed and transformed by the *organising consciousness*[7] of Mailer the character-observer. This other transformation of facts, central to Mailer's reporting technique, is, again, completely transparent and takes place directly in the text, before the reader's eyes. While Capote removed himself as a reporter and novelist from

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[7] I adopt this term and the concept it stands for from Hellmann (1-65); see p. 24 for a more detailed discussion.

both the text of *In Cold Blood* and from the reality it refers to, and so concealed behind the text

his at least potentially manipulative selection and transformation of the facts, in *The Armies of*

the Night we find not one, but rather two 'Mailers' standing, ostensibly and self-confidently, in

the way between the historical reality and us, showing us overtly how they themselves are

selecting and transforming these facts.

The whole four-day event is reported, in the first book, *History as a Novel*, scene-by-

scene from the perspective of Mailer the protagonist. As I have argued in Chapter 3, his

perspective is inevitably *limited* and as if 'from inside', rather than omniscient and external.

Mailer is writing a history or reportage completely different from what we usually term history

or journalism – he is writing an "intimate", that is subjective and highly personal history:

> To write an intimate history of an event which places its focus on a central figure who is not
> central to the event, is to inspire immediate questions about the competence of the historian. Or,
> indeed, his honorable motive. The figure he has selected may be convenient to him rather than
> critical to the history. Such cynical remarks obviously suggest themselves in the choice of our
> particular protagonist. (*AOTN* 53)

Mailer is writing not so much about the historical facts themselves, as about his protagonist's

(and hence also his own) version and interpretation of the complex events. The 'factual reality'

presented in Mailer's reportage is viewed explicitly from his limited point of view and processed

by his perceiving consciousness. The reportage presents a description of the historical events

inseparably interconnected with their highly subjective interpretation. As Hellmann points out,

Mailer's reporting technique is consciously novelistic and presents "history through the medium

of his protagonist's exposed consciousness" (39-40). In the process of reporting and writing, the

facts are undergoing almost the same type of biased selection, narrative transformation and

subjective interpretation that we have discovered concealed behind the text of *In Cold Blood* and

preceding its creation. Yet *The Armies of the Night*, unlike Capote's nonfiction novel, overtly

exposes the reporter's organising consciousness, and thus makes us fully aware of what is being

selected or excluded, how the facts are transformed into a narrative, and what biases and motivations played a role in his subjective interpretation of the facts.

4.2.2 Objectivity of Media versus "Instinct of a Novelist"

Mailer contrasts, either explicitly or by implication, his subjective, self-reflective and openly interpretative reporting technique with the allegedly objective and mimetic technique of conventional journalism:

> The method is then exposed. The mass media which surrounded the March on the Pentagon created a forest of inaccuracy which would blind the efforts of an historian; our novel has provided us with the possibility, no, even the instrument to view our facts and conceivably study them in that field of light a labor of lens-grinding has produced. (*AOTN* 219)

By doing so, Mailer not only emphasises the American media's inaccurate coverage of the protest march, but also exposes the biases and fictional nature of conventional journalism: journalism constructing dramatic 'stories' and manipulating their interpretation, but doing so covertly, under the veil of objectivity and direct presentation.[8]

At the very beginning of *The Armies of the Night*, before Mailer gives us his own version of the events in the Ambassador on Thursday evening, he quotes an article from the *Time* magazine covering the same event, but giving an account completely different from Mailer's and much more superficial. The relatively short *Time* story gives little insight into what really happened. Besides using a clearly biased language ("Washington's *scruffy* Ambassador Theater, normally a pad for *psychedelic frolics*, was the scene of an *unscheduled scatological* solo last week..."; italics mine, *AOTN* 3), the article focuses primarily on Mailer's poor performance and quotes Mailer's statements out of context, thus showing Mailer and the whole event in the least favourable light. Although the article is strictly 'factual' (i.e. dealing with events which really happened and could be confirmed by other witnesses etc.), its reporting technique, based on

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[8] Bennet presents a critique of the "myth of objectivity and objective reporting", and discusses the way contemporary mass media (and political elites controlling the media) can construct and manipulate the images of reality through *fictional* techniques, including dramatisation, fragmentation, framing, use of political symbols etc.

a *covert* selection, exclusion and transforming rearrangement of the facts, distorts the final image of the alleged reality to a hardly acceptable extent. Mailer's subsequent account ("Now we may leave *Time* in order to find out what happened"; *AOTN* 4) is equally selective, transformative and, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, based on his *limited perspective from inside*, moreover influenced by his intoxication. But Mailer, unlike conventional journalists, openly acknowledges his mediating role and exposes in the text the process of his subjective interpretation of the events. By reporting the event in what I have described as a highly self-reflective *fictional form*, he exposes the *fictiveness* of conventional journalism.

In the second book, *The Novel as History*, Mailer quotes a number of newspaper and magazine articles reporting on the rallies at the Lincoln Memorial and outside of the Pentagon. Different media give significantly different estimates of the number of protesters (*AOTN* 244-246), different or even contradictory accounts of the first clashes between the protesters and the MPs guarding the Pentagon (*AOTN* 260-262), and of the police violence (*AOTN* 272-276). While some of these quoted journalistic texts clearly support Mailer's implied stance, he uses them in a completely different way from Capote. Capote used quotations of other texts and speeches without any comments on their status or reliability – he merely adopted them to contribute to his version of the story, to emphasise his role as a mere reporter-editor and to 'let the facts speak for themselves'. Mailer, on the other hand, explicitly comments on the reliability of his sources and the American media in general ("It is not a paper famous for its lack of bias [...]", *AOTN* 261; "One must, of course, as always, beware of adjectives and estimates of number. Adverbs are to be shunned", *AOTN* 282). He often quotes two or three versions of the same event, sometimes including his own, primarily in order to expose the crucial differences and sometimes complete contradictions between these 'factual' reportages, with the ultimate goal to question not only the reliability of these specific news sources, but also to question the whole concept of objectivity and direct mimetic reporting on which conventional journalism is based.

Mailer's prime objective here is neither to prove that most of the news reports on this concrete event were imprecise, biased or simply 'wrong', nor to merely replace them with another 'true' or 'objective' account. Instead, he draws our attention generally to "the processing methods of American newspapers" (*AOTN* 267); he exposes and, in a way, deconstructs the very process underlying the selection and *narrative* (that is, *fictional*) transformation and manipulation of fact inherently present in, but artfully concealed behind the 'realistic' images created by conventional journalism – a process which, as I have argued, is likewise concealed behind Capote's "true account".

For Mailer, traditional journalism and history, because of their 'invisible' reporting techniques (that is, techniques of covert transformation and possible manipulation) and because of their effort to present events 'objectively' and directly to the reader, fail to faithfully render and really understand the intimate nuances and internal ambiguities of highly complex political or social events:

> It may be obvious by now that a history of the March on Pentagon which is not unfair will never
> be written, any more than a history which could prove dependable in details! (*AOTN* 262)

What Mailer does instead of focusing on the 'facts' and trying to present them directly to the reader, is, rather, he makes an effort to "recapture the precise feel of the ambiguity of the event" (*AOTN* 53). Mailer argues that the only way to do that is, paradoxically, through "the instinct of a novelist", that is through self-reflective fictional techniques and an openly subjective interpretation of these complex and ambiguous events:

> However, the first book can be, in the formal sense, nothing but a personal history which while
> written as a novel was to the best of the author's memory scrupulous to facts, and therefore a
> document; whereas the second, while dutiful to all newspaper accounts, eyewitnesses reports, and
> historic inductions available, while even obedient to a general style of historical writing, at least
> up to this point, while even pretending to be a history (on the basis of its introduction) is finally
> now to be disclosed as some sort of condensation of a collective novel – which is to admit that an
> explanation of the mystery of the events at the Pentagon cannot be developed by the methods of
> history – only by the instincts of the novelist. (*AOTN* 255)

4.2.3 Mailer's Postmodern Reporting Strategy

While Capote's book focused entirely on a presentation of mere 'facts' and concealed the process of reporting and narrative transformation and manipulation behind the text, *The Armies of the Night*, besides its rendition of historical events, is also *about* the very process of reporting and narrating these facts and about all the selective transformations and subjective interpretations of 'reality' any reporting and narration necessarily entail.

As Hellmann (35-65) argues, Mailer's self-reflective *metafiction* is more credible and more faithful to the postmodern reality than Capote's realism, exactly because it "admits to the complex role of inevitably fictionalizing consciousness" (65).[9] Mailer recognises that, especially in the age of electronic mass media capable of constructing images of reality, it is no longer possible to report objectively on complex social and political events. He understands that bias and interpretation are already present in the postmodern reality itself and in the language we use to represent this reality, and offers a truly new type of journalism which adopts a postmodern *fictional form* as an alternative to the misleading positivism of realistic fiction and conventional journalism.

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[9] See Conclusion, pp. 76-78 for a more detailed assessment of Capote's realism and Mailer's metafiction in terms of their credibility and their ability to meaningfully report on the fictive postmodern reality.

5. FROM REALISTIC REPRESENTATION TO POSTMODERN FABULATION

It follows from my analysis in Chapters 3 and 4 that Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* and Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* represent two opposite poles of new journalism in terms of their literary form and narrative technique, and their treatment of facts and reporting strategy. *In Cold Blood* focuses almost solely on a direct mimetic representation of its contents and thus is tightly related to the literary form of realistic fiction and to the reporting strategies of conventional journalism as well as other nonfiction. *The Armies of the Night*, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with exposing and exploring the reporting processes and the narrative transformations of its contents, and thus embodies many features of postmodern fiction. *The Armies* offers a really new type of journalism which conspicuously undermines and questions the very possibility of realism and objectivity, revealing the fictive and narratively constructed nature of reality itself.

The majority of other journalistic writing could be placed somewhere between these two extreme poles and may be discussed, as I will briefly attempt bellow, as approximating either Capote's realist and nonfictional or Mailer's postmodern and openly fictional mode of presentation. As already suggested in Chapter 2, the former mode is typical of the earlier phase of new journalism in the mid 1960s and connected, besides Capote's nonfiction novel, mainly with short-story reportages by Breslin, Talese, Southern and Wolfe, and with documentary books by Joe McGinnis or John Sack; the latter mode represents a later development of new journalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s and is associated especially with novelistic reportages by Mailer, Thompson, and partly also Wolfe.

5.1 New Journalistic Short Story

Wolfe's anthology of new journalism (Wolfe & Johnson 55-394) illustrates the wide range of new journalistic styles and techniques that developed within the genre in the 1960s and early

1970s. It reprints short-story reportages originally published in magazines between 1963 and 1972, as well as extracts from some major novelistic reportages, including Capote's *In Cold Blood*, Sack's *M*, Thompson's *Hell's Angels* (all 1966), Mailer's *Armies of the Night* or Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (both 1968). Most of the earlier short stories and extracts seem to partly support Wolfe's description of new journalism as being related to realistic techniques; other short stories and extracts, however, demonstrate that new journalistic techniques widely vary, from those of realism to those of postmodernism, from an illusion of direct mimetic presentation to self-reflective fabulation.

Rex Deed's short-story interview 'Ava: Life in the Afternoon' (Wolfe & Johnson 56-64), reprinted from *Do you sleep in the nude?* (1968), Gay Talese's 1963 reportage 'The Soft Psyche of Joshua Logan' (65-79), and Terry Southern's 'Twirling at Ole Miss' (161-171) from his 1967 collection *Red Dirt Marijuana and Other Tastes*, are fairly good examples of the new journalism described by Wolfe in his essay. Deed renders his interview with an aging star, Ava Gardner, in an unabbreviated 'scenic' format and with narrative structure of a short story. The reporter's questions and Gardner's answers are tagged and put into quotation marks to signal the presence of a narrator, and the text includes authorial narration surrounding and permeating the interview, and capturing, in line with Wolfe's "realistic techniques", the setting of the interview, the interviewee's external appearance and behaviour, her authentic way of speaking, her side comments and off-topic exchanges with the reporter before and during the interview, as well as events which are interrupting the interview. Deed's strategy reveals details that in conventional journalism normally remain hidden 'behind' the interview – traditional interview tends to be abbreviated, edited, stylistically amended, stripped of the context and setting and focused merely on 'relevant' questions and answers. Talese's and Southern's reportages are also narrated scene-by-scene and include details normally left out from conventional journalism. While Talese uses a third-person omniscient narration and thus completely conceals the presence of the reporter-narrator, Southern uses a first-person narration with the reporter present in the story as a minor

character-observer, a strategy also discussed by Wolfe and Hollowell as common in early new journalism.

Nicholas Tomalin's 1966 story written for *The Times*, 'The General Goes Zapping Charlie Cong' (Wolfe & Johnson 197-203), and Michael Herr's 'Khesanh' (85-115), written for *Esquire* in 1969, are reportages from the war in Vietnam, narrated in the first person by the reporter as a participant-observer. This form can still be seen, to some extent, as 'realistic', viewed from a camera-eye perspective, the account has the authenticity and suggestive immediacy of a TV reportage or film documentary, without any explicit commentary or interpretation by the narrator. However, what we see already emerging here is the perceiving and to some extent transforming consciousness of the reporter – the 'reality' of the events is processed through his emotions and his fear, and the reader starts to be aware of the reporter's presence, and of the process of reporting taking place 'behind' the text.

In a 1972 story for *Rolling Stone*, 'Charlie Simpson's Apocalypse' (Wolfe & Johnson 127-160), Joe Eszterhas first reports on a murder and its investigation using a third-person invisible narrator, but at the end, in a kind of an appendix, introduces himself as a reporter and describes, in a first-person narrative, how he came to the town two weeks after the shooting and interviewed people to learn more about the case and to write a reportage. This narrative strategy already seems to be significantly deviating from traditional techniques of realist fiction, and represents a move towards the playful and self-reflective forms of postmodern literature. Although the story has no obtrusive narrator and avoids commentary, the appendix provides the main plotline with certain metatextual framing – it exposes the origin of the story, the presence and methods of the reporter, and triggers a fluid interplay between the two parts of the text, between their different perspectives and literary forms.

'The Kentucky Derby Is Decadent and Depraved' (Wolfe & Johnson 172-187), Hunter S. Thompson's reportage on a major sports event originally published in *Scanlan's Monthly* in 1970, embodies a most radical departure from realism and traditional reporting towards what is

in fact a literary parody of journalistic writing, whether 'old' or 'new'. Thompson's "gonzo journalism", most developed later in his two *Fear and Loathing* books[1], consciously refuses to analytically represent external reality, and instead draws all attention to the confused and half-psychotic mind of the reporter and his emotions. Experiencing the real event almost constantly under the influence of alcohol and drugs, the reporter and first-person narrator is unable to fully understand or even see what is going on around him, thus becoming comically unreliable. Such a fragmentary and anti-referential text completely defies any definition of objective reporting or realist representation – although adhering to 'real' events as its subject matter, Thompson's reportage becomes a parody of reality, an openly fictional narrative construct, a fable on the impossibility of reporting.

5.2 New Journalistic Novel

The new journalistic novels, some of them represented in Wolfe's anthology by short extracts, show an even larger variety of literary forms, narrative techniques and reporting strategies than those discovered in the short-story reportages.

5.2.1 Capote, McGinnis and Sack: Illusion of Realism

As shown in detail in the previous two chapters, Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965) complies with Wolfe's definition of new journalism as related to realism[2] by adopting a fairly traditional realist narrative structure, based on an invisible and completely unobtrusive third-person narrator, and a fairly conventional reporting strategy, with the reporter keeping himself completely out of the story. The same strategy with an invisible reporter-narrator is adopted by John Sack in *M* (1966) and Joe McGinnis in *The Selling of the President* (1969), two book-long documents on, respectively, the Vietnam War and Richard Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign, also

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[1] *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream* (1971) and *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (1973); for further details see Bibliography.

[2] In his commentary to an extract from *In Cold Blood*, Wolfe praises Capote's nonfiction novel, but objects it does not use point of view and its dialogues are not extended enough to "develop character" (Wolfe & Johnson 116).

represented by short extracts in Wolfe's anthology. While Capote gave his nonfiction novel at least a superficial fictional arrangement and insisted on its artistic qualities, Sack and McGinnis do not declare novelistic ambitions; they write unusually detailed and insightful nonfictional texts, capturing behind-the-scene events which are otherwise only accessible to the public through the simplifying and biased mediation of the mass media. These documentaries are susceptible to the same type of criticism as *In Cold Blood* and some of the early new journalistic short stories: they structurally resemble conventional journalism and realist fiction in that they conceal the mediating role of the reporter-narrator and his interpretive selection and transformation of reality into a narrative text, in order to create an illusion of direct mimetic presentation and realism – an illusion that the contents are presented by an invisible omniscient and omnipresent observer. As such, they silently accept the misleading assumption that there exists a stable phenomenological reality which can be simply captured, depicted or represented through language as a transparent medium.

George Plimpton in *Paper Lion* (1964) or Hunter S. Thompson in his early book *Hell's Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga* (1966) deal with similar subject matters as Capote, McGinnis or Sack, but they enhance the literary as well journalistic quality of their reportage by including themselves as main characters and first-person narrators, with a specific and necessarily limited point of view. Thanks to this more complex narrative strategy, they can draw attention to their own experiences and roles in the story and thus avoid the representational and objectivist fallacies of conventional journalism and realist fiction accepted by many of the authors discussed above.

5.2.2 Wolfe: Experimental Transcription

The core section of Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968) is presented by an invisible third-person reporter-narrator, but goes much deeper into the "subjective or emotional life of the characters" (Wolfe 'New Journalism' 21) by adopting different characters' internal

points of view, an experimental strategy typical of modernism rather than realism. In addition to that, the story is framed by Wolfe's first-person narrative in which he presents himself as a minor character and describes his meeting with Ken Kesey and Merry Pranksters. Wolfe first approaches the journalistic assignment as a disengaged outsider – a smartly dressed reporter and intellectual from New York with little understanding of the San Francisco beat and hippie psychedelic movement:

> All I knew about Kesey at that point was that he was a highly regarded 31-year-old novelist and in a lot of trouble over drugs. He wrote *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962). (9)

> He talks in a soft voice with [...] a plain country accent about something – well, to be frank, I didn't know what in the hell it was all about. Sometimes he spoke cryptically, in aphorisms. (13)

As he describes Kesey's first experience with LSD, however, Wolfe's first-person authorial speech and his perspective from the outside begins to merge with Kesey's words and thoughts and his internal point of view; the reporter-narrator gradually abandons quotation marks and speech tags in order to report on what Kesey said and thought and how he felt under the influence of drugs, in a free indirect style and often in a stream-of-consciousness form (41-47). Throughout his reportage on Merry Pranksters, their psychedelic road-trip and Kesey's hiding in Mexico, Wolfe employs special graphics (including italics, unusual punctuation, lower case characters at the beginning of paragraphs, words in upper case etc.) and special linguistic devices (including verbless or unfinished sentences, long sentences with a complicated and often fragmented structure, onomatopoeia etc.), as if to invoke or emphasise the equally unusual, complex and fragmentary vision of reality altered by drugs:

> He turns away ... there is the cool limelit bower, cathedral in redwoods, serenity ... he turns back to the bus slowly :::::::: IT IS STILL THERE! THE TUNNEL! ::::: THE BUS! ::::: NOW PAINTED AS IF BY A MASTER, A VERY TITIAN (108)

> Haul ass, Kesey. Move. *Scram. Split flee hide vanish disintegrate.* Like *run.*
> Rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrevrevrevrevrevrevrevrevrev   or are we gonna have just a late Mexican re-run of the scene on the rooftop in San Francisco and sit here with the motor spinning and watch with fascination while the cops they climb up once again to *come git you* - (255)

Despite his inventive use of graphics and modernist experimentation with language and point of view, and despite his ability to report with insight and from an internal perspective on complex realities, Wolfe's narrative technique and reporting strategy stop halfway between Capote's illusion of unmediated realism and Mailer's self-reflective fabulation. Although *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* can hardly be associated with the techniques of social realism advocated by Wolfe in his essay, the overall aim and design of this novelistic reportage could be regarded as representational and to some extent 'realistic': it employs unusual textual and linguistic means to capture and render the events as they happened, or rather as they appeared to their participants, in the form of what Zavarzadeh calls a "noninterpretive" or "neutral transcription" (see Chapter 2, pp. 26-27).

As argued in the previous chapters, however, the noninterpretive or neutral nature of such a transcription is illusory and, unlike Mailer, Wolfe fails to fully expose this illusion in the text. He acknowledges at the beginning of the narrative and in an 'Author's Note' at the end of the book (367-368) that he only met and interviewed the subjects several years after the events and, with no firsthand experience, had to rely on their memories, recordings and other second-hand sources. But he does not reveal what kind of questions he posed in the interviews and *how* he selected the available material and used the various sources. Thus partly exposing the presence of a reporter-narrator, he still conceals behind the text the selective and necessarily interpretive transformations of his interviews and other material into the narrative text.

5.2.3 Mailer and Thompson: Reality Undermined

The reporting strategies and narrative techniques used in Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* (1968) or Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream* (1971) are largely self-reflective and at times conspicuously non-referential or even anti-referential. They almost entirely defy Wolfe's theoretical claims that new journalism is

based on realistic technique and reporting of "status details". While Wolfe praises Mailer's and Thompson's ability to "suggest the emotional reality of the event", he nevertheless indirectly implies that their strategy, focused mostly on the reporter's experiencing consciousness, could easily become egocentric and irrelevant (Wolfe & Johnson 188-189).

Although Mailer is not primarily concerned with the events themselves, as Capote and in part Wolfe are, and instead focuses on the different ways in which the events can be experienced, interpreted and narrated, his ultimate goal still is to report on and interpret the complex political realities and at least provisionally grasp their unstable significance. By adopting a complex self-reflective narrative technique typical of postmodern fiction and by fully exposing the role of the narrator-reporter in experiencing and narrating the events (as discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4), Mailer provides one or more conspicuously limited and biased versions of the realities, makes his own commentary, and lets the readers choose what they want to believe.

For Thompson, on the contrary, reality is already so strange, incomprehensible, fragmentary and fictive that it is impossible to report on it in any meaningful way. His "gonzo journalism" is based on his own experience as a reporter and first-person narrator, but the way he experiences and renders reality is significantly influenced by consciousness-altering drugs and by Thompson's furiously emotional engagement or paranoia. Reporting almost constantly under the influence of drugs, he is no longer able to distinguish between what is 'real' and what is mere hallucination. Thompson does not attempt to understand or interpret – he merely places the meaningless fragments of reality side by side with his drug-induced imaginations and hallucinations – to reveal and parody the horrors and absurdities of both.

While Mailer in Washington D.C. fulfilled his assignment (although what he produced is admittedly a very unusual, highly personal and novel-like reportage), Thompson in Las Vegas completely fails to render any relevant information on the two events he is hired to cover. Instead, his and his "attorney's" adventures full of illegal drugs, driving offences, terrified hotel

maids and unpaid bills constitute the central subject of the 'reportage'. Although Thompson occasionally uses a tape recorder or tries to make notes, as we learn directly from the text (41, 161-168 etc.), his records are so fragmentary and incomprehensible that he can hardly reconstruct the story from an external and sober point of view. Instead, the very first paragraph of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* establishes Thompson's preference for an internal and subjective view blurred and distorted by drugs:

> We were somewhere around Barstow on the desert when the drugs began to take hold. [...] And suddenly there was a terrible roar all around us and the sky was full of what looked like huge bats, all swooping and screeching and diving around the car, which was going about a hundred miles an hour with the top down to Las Vegas. And a voice was screaming: "Holy Jesus! What are these goddamn animals?" (3).

It is only after this introduction and from this perspective that Thompson explains how he was hired to cover a motorbike race in Las Vegas, rented a luxurious convertible and filled up its trunk with "extremely dangerous drugs" in such a variety and amount that it "looked like a mobile police narcotics lab" (4).

Similarly to Mailer, Thompson adopts a self-reflective reporting strategy: instead of referring directly to the reported events (as Capote did), *Fear and Loathing* is mainly concerned with Thompson's futile attempts to make reportage. Despite his efforts, Thompson is not able to cover the motorbike race, because the hundreds of motorbikes are zooming across the desert too fast and hidden in clouds of dust: "The idea of trying to 'cover this race' in any conventional press-sense was absurd" (38). Later Thompson fails to cover a police conference on narcotics because he is too high on drugs and because he knows about drugs more than any of the official guests and speakers:

> We sat patiently through the first two hours, although it was clear from the start that we weren't going to Learn anything and it was equally clear that we'd be crazy to try any Teaching. It was easy enough to sit there with a head full of mescaline and listen to hour after hour of irrelevant gibberish. ... There was certainly no risk involved. These poor bastards didn't know mescaline from macaroni. (143)

What Thompson really learned and conveyed in his book is a rather vague feeling that the realities of Las Vegas, the symbol and "Heart of the American Dream", are themselves so absurd and terrifying that they surpass the wildest drug-induced imaginations. Thompson calls his experience of the external reality "that other trip" and finds it unbearable compared to the worst hallucinations: "No, this is not a good town for psychedelic drugs. The reality itself is too twisted" (47).

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 "Fables of Fact": The Birth of a New Mimesis

Despite the common effort to "seek a larger truth" (Talese vii), the American new journalism of the 1960s and 1970s can hardly be conceptualised as a unified literary movement or journalistic school. The literary traditions and their corresponding narrative techniques embraced by the new journalists differ as widely as only possible. Capote's *In Cold Blood* and a lot of the early new journalistic writing by Breslin, Southern and Talese, as well as some of Wolfe's short stories, follow the traditions of the nineteenth-century realist fiction: they tend to use invisible third-person omniscient narrators and aim at a direct representation of reality. On the other hand, Wolfe's experimentation with language and text and employment of a mobile internal point of view and stream of consciousness in some of his short stories and especially in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* could be structurally linked with the modernist fiction written by Virginia Wolf, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, William Faulkner or Jack Kerouac. Lastly, Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* and Thompson's "gonzo journalism" employ highly visible self-reflective narrators who consciously obstruct the process of representation and expose their subjective involvement in the stories they themselves experience rather than just observe – similarly to the metafictions and postmodern fabulations of Laurence Stern, John Barth or Thomas Pynchon.

In a type of writing which besides its literary qualities also strives for an accurate journalistic treatment of its subject matter, these choices of a literary form are not merely subject to individual preferences and tastes of the readers and critics, but have a crucial impact on the reporting strategy and journalistic quality of the texts. My analysis has demonstrated that the different literary forms and narrative techniques adopted by the new journalists are not merely added 'on top of' the journalistic contents of the texts, for decorative reasons or in order to make the reportage more readable. On the contrary, they are an integral part of the reportage itself and of the overall message or image delivered by the new journalist.

There appears to exist a fairly regular relation between the literary and the reporting qualities of new journalistic writing. The more the texts incline towards the realist literary forms and narrative techniques, the more they tend to approximate the conventional journalistic strategies based on an invisible reporter and an allegedly objective treatment of external facts. On the contrary, the more these texts bare their literary devices, adopt self-reflective narrative techniques, and thus move towards the modernist and especially postmodern literary forms, the more they move away from conventional journalism – they employ a visible reporter and expose her/his active role in the process of the selection and narrative transformation of the reported events.

From this point of view, I would argue that the postmodern self-reflective narrative techniques and reporting strategies especially of Norman Mailer and Hunter S. Thompson prove to be more successful in delivering "a larger truth than is possible through the mere compilation of verifiable facts" (Talese vii) than the realist literary forms and 'objective' journalistic strategies of Truman Capote and other early new journalists, including some of the earlier texts by Tom Wolfe. While conventional journalism, realist fiction and Capote's version of new journalism believe in objectivity based on a direct mimetic representation of stable external facts, Mailer and Thompson convey the 'facts' together with the reporting and narrative processes which take part in the construction and manipulation of these 'facts'.

As already indicated in Chapter 1 (p. 4), the poststructuralist thinkers including Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, or more recently Edward Said and Judith Butler, question the objectivist myth inherently present in much of the literary, journalistic and public discourse. They assert that our notion of reality is constructed or shaped, rather than simply reflected, by allegedly objective and commonsensical textual representations of the external world and by our discursive practices. If we accept this poststructuralist thesis and view historical reality as textual or discursive, it follows that any reporting strategies and narrative transformations are an integral part of the reality they attempt to represent. From this point of

view, the early new journalists including Capote conceal, similarly to conventional journalism and other forms of 'objective' discourse, a crucial component of the reality itself, and present us with only a part of the "larger truth" they were seeking. Mailer and Thompson, on the contrary, offer a much more comprehensive image of the 'real world', simply because they also expose its textual and discursive nature. The postmodern new journalists thus do what Derrida sees as the defining feature of poststructuralist social-scientific discourse: they think "the structurality of structure" (Derrida 280), i.e. they subject their own discourse to the same critique they apply to the object of the discourse.

Mailer's metafiction, a self-reflective novelistic reportage about the difficulties of writing about fictive and media-constructed realities, embodies, according to Hellmann,

> a unique solution to the difficulties contemporary writers have experienced in the area of mimesis and interpretation. As an alternative to the limited capacities of realistic fiction, the naïve positivism of conventional journalism, or the solipsistic tendencies of fabulation, this strategy affords Mailer a basis from which to directly approach the extreme, often surreal and implausible reality of the postmodern world. (Hellmann 36)

While Capote seems to believe that language and written text can be a transparent medium capable of delivering a stable phenomenological 'truth' directly to the reader, Mailer and Thompson expose the fallacy of such a belief by incorporating all the unavoidable biases and narrative manipulations into the text itself. They understand "the fiction-making process to be such an inherent part of 'reality'" (Hellmann 36). Their postmodern fiction on journalistic subject matter "admits to the complex role of inevitably fictionalizing consciousness. It seems much more factually credible, fictionally lifelike, and thematically rich" (Hellmann 65).

Capote, similarly to many conventional journalists, insists on the objectivity and strict factuality of his reportage – although his nonfiction novel systematically conceals, as I have argued in my thesis, a significant part of the realities it attempts to mimetically represent. Mailer and Thompson, on the contrary, are constantly undermining the authorial omniscience and reliability – and thus become, paradoxically, more reliable reporters than Capote and

conventional 'objective' journalists. Mailer's and Thompson's subjective, interpretive, and overtly *fictional* mediation of the real events through conspicuously unreliable narrators, therefore, proves to be more 'faithful' to the reality than Capote's ostensibly *nonfictional* and allegedly objective account. It is more 'faithful' exactly because it fully exposes the process of selection and interpretation of the facts through the *organising consciousness* of the reporter-protagonist.

"The result has been one of the major literatures of the postmodern era, a literature offering mimetic and interpretive power where realistic fiction and conventional journalism have proven unsatisfactory" (Hellmann 65). When Hellmann talks here about "mimetic power", he is implicitly suggesting a radical redefinition of the whole concept of mimesis and representation. The new journalistic "fables of fact" (Hellmann) display a completely new type of 'mimesis' and 'realism': they are overtly fictional and self-reflective "mimêseis" or "representations of life" (Aristotle 1447a) which, unlike the schematic representations in the positivist sense, include a critique of their own language and form and fully acknowledge their mediating and transforming role. By self-reflectively exposing the discursive and textual nature of reality, which realist fiction and conventional journalism systematically conceal, these postmodren fabulations provide a more faithful and more 'realistic' representation of the generally unstable and fictive, media-constructed reality. Speaking about the way postmodern art refers to external reality, Hutcheon points out that

> the social, historical, and existential "reality" of the past is *discursive* reality when it is used as the referent of art, and so the only "genuine historicity" becomes that which would openly acknowledge its own discursive, contingent identity. (italics original; 24)

6.2 Possibilities for Further Research

In my MA thesis, I have relied, where appropriate, on the existing scholarship on the American new journalism and the nonfiction novel. John Hellmann's 1981 study *Fables of Fact: The New*

Journalism as New Fiction proved to be the most relevant and most insightful of my sources, especially because it explores in a most comprehensive way the close link between new journalism and postmodern art. My textual analysis of some of the major new journalistic works has revealed significant theoretical deficiencies in other major studies in the field, some of which failed to use adequate textual evidence for their argument. Most objectionable and least convincing appeared to be especially John Hollowell's claims in *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel* (1977) that new journalism was related to realism, his adherence to the traditional humanist assumptions about an external phenomenological reality independent of the language of its representation, as well as his failure to critique the terms such as "fact" and "fiction" and the concepts they traditionally stand for.

This work has contributed to existing scholarship on new journalism and the nonfiction novel by a more focused and more detailed textual analysis. I have put special emphasis on a comparative assessment of the diverse narrative techniques of the new journalistic writing and their relation to the equally diverse reporting strategies adopted by the new journalists. I have supported and further developed Hellmann's argument that new journalistic writing should be approached as a type of fiction, that its literary structures and narrative techniques have a crucial impact on its journalistic quality, and that the most reliable and most faithful way to report on the fictive postmodern reality is through self-reflective fictional techniques of postmodern art.

My thesis has mainly focused on a close analysis of two of the best-known and most influential new journalistic texts. Further research could utilise the methods adopted in my thesis in order to further explore other new journalistic works, including the short-story reportages by early new journalists in the mid-1960s and especially other major nonfiction novels by Mailer, Thompson and possibly also other authors affiliated to the new journalistic group. So far these works have only been discussed in a cursory manner by a limited number of scholars and usually without more extensive textual evidence elucidating the intriguing relationship between these texts' fictional form and journalistic subject matter. A detailed analysis of literary narrative

structures and reporting strategies would be especially useful in mapping and critically evaluating some of the journalistic and nonfiction works with literary ambitions written from the 1980s up until the present day, a field yet largely unexplored and evading serious academic attention.

RÉSUMÉ

Diplomová práce *Fictional Paths to "A Larger Truth" in American New Journalism (Beletrie jako cesta k „větší pravdě" v Americké nové žurnalistice)* se zabývá americkou „novou žurnalistikou" (new journalism), literárním směrem rozvinutým především v 60. a 70. letech 20. století, který beletristickou, narativní formu zpracovává skutečné události a usiluje přitom o maximální spolehlivost a přesnost.

Práce se teoreticky opírá o celou řadu studií, především však o knihu Johna Hellmanna *Fables of Fact: The New Journalism as New Fiction (Vybájená skutečnost: Nová žurnalistika jako nová beletrie)* z roku 1981, která se nejpodrobněji zabývá vztahem mezi literární formou a dokumentárním obsahem románových reportáží především od Normana Mailera, Huntera S. Thompsona a Toma Wolfa. Diplomová práce dále odkazuje na teoretické studie z oblasti literární teorie a teorie vyprávění jako např. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film (Příběh a vyprávění: narativní struktura v beletrii a filmu)* od Seymoura Chatmana z roku 1978, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (do češtiny přeloženo chybně jako *Rozprava o vyprávění: esej o metodě)* od Gérarda Genetta z roku 1972 či *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction (Poetika postmodernismu: historie, teorie, fikce)* od Lindy Hutcheon z roku 1988.

Nejběžnějšími žánry „nové žurnalistiky" jsou povídková reportáž a románová reportáž, často označovaná jako „nonfiction novel" („román faktu", doslova „nefikční román"). K jejich hlavním autorům patří novináři a romanopisci Jimmy Breslin, Truman Capote, Joan Didion, , Gay Talese, a již zmínění Mailer, Thompson a Wolfe. Ačkoli tito volně spříznění autoři používají výrazně odlišné literární formy a píší o odlišných tématech, spojuje je snaha „najít větší pravdu, než jaké lze dosáhnout pouhým shromážděním prokazatelných faktů"[1], tedy psát

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[1] "[New Journalism] seeks a larger truth than is possible through the mere compilation of verifiable facts." (Talese vii)

výrazně detailnější, komplexnější a pronikavější reportáže, než jaké nabízejí standardní komerční média ve svém zjednodušeném, schematickém a často zkresleném zpravodajství.

Cílem těchto autorů bylo, aby jejich literární dokumenty byly nejen plnohodnotnými a umělecky vyspělými povídkami a romány, ale také spolehlivými, přesnými a podrobnými reportážemi o skutečných událostech. Tato diplomová práce je proto založena na podrobné analýze a porovnání několika reprezentativních děl tohoto literárního směru z obou těchto hledisek. Práce nejprve přistupuje ke zkoumaným textům jako k dílům krásné literatury a zkoumá jejich literární formu a použité narativní strategie (typy vypravěčů a jejich „viditelnost" v textu, způsoby prezentace literárního děje a míra jeho zprostředkování vypravěčem, použité literární prostředky, jazykové a stylistické prostředky, typy kompozice atd.). Poté se práce zabývá tím, jak zvolená literární forma a narativní struktura ovlivňují způsob odkazování textu k vnější realitě, tedy ke skutečným politickým či společenským událostem (přítomnost či absence autora-novináře jako jedné z postav děje, míra vyjádření či potlačení jeho vztahu k předmětu reportáže, prezentace „pouhých faktů" či autorovy interpretace a komentáře, důsledné uvádění a evaluace zdrojů informací či jejich potlačení v textu atd.).

Nejvíce prostoru je věnováno analýze a srovnání dvou nejznámějších románových reportáží z tohoto období, a sice *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences* (*Chladnokrevě: Pravdivé vylíčení čtyřnásobné vraždy a jejích důsledků*) od Trumana Capoteho z roku 1965 a *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel – The Novel as History* (*Armády noci: historie jako román, román jako historie*) od Normana Mailera z roku 1968. Literární textová analýza těchto dvou děl ukazuje, že autoři se svou literární formou hlásí ke zcela odlišným literárním tradicím a že zvolili velmi různé, v jistém smyslu protichůdné narativní postupy, jakož i různé způsoby žurnalistického zachycení skutečnosti. Povídkové a románové reportáže ostatních představitelů nové žurnalistiky jsou v diplomové práci analyzovány pouze stručně a výběrově a jejich literární a žurnalistické charakteristiky jsou posouzeny ve vztahu ke výše uvedeným dvěma textům.

Capote a podobně také někteří další autoři literárních reportáží vytvářejí dojem nezprostředkované, mimetické prezentace, a to především pomocí „neviditelného" vševědoucího vypravěče ve třetí osobě. *In Cold Blood* se tak svou formou blíží tradičnímu realistickému románu a neliterárním (publicistickým, dokumentárním) textům.

Mailer (a podobně také např. Thompson a do jisté míry Wolfe) naopak dává přednost explicitně zprostředkovanému, diegetickému způsobu prezentace. Používá také vypravěče ve třetí osobě, avšak vypravěče výrazně stylizovaného a „viditelného" v textu, který ve stylu Henryho Fieldinga či Laurence Sterna zasahuje do toku vyprávění, nápadně ovlivňuje jeho strukturu a chronologii a otevřeně komentuje nejen představované události, ale také svoje vlastní vyprávění a svou roli zprostředkovatele děje. Vypravěč navíc zpochybňuje svou vlastní autoritu a spolehlivost tím, že události zachycuje z pohledu novináře Mailera, který je přítomen jako svědek a ústřední postava příběhu a který je představen jako rozporuplná a charakterově nedokonalá osobnost a jako značně zaujatý a nikoli zcela spolehlivý pozorovatel. *The Armies of the Night* se tak svou sebereflexivní a explicitně zprostředkovanou formou vyprávění podobá postmodernímu románu, který v 60. letech uvedli do Americké literatury např. Thomas Pynchon, Donald Barthleme, Kurt Vonnegut či John Barth.

Tyto literární a narativní odlišnosti se poté projevují ve výrazně rozdílném způsobu žurnalistického zachycení skutečných událostí. Přestože Capote a někteří další autoři z jeho okruhu usilovali o maximální objektivitu, realističnost a bezprostřednost podání, jejich reportáže často vykazují podobné nedostatky jako tradiční žurnalistika. Capote především z příběhu zcela vyloučil sebe jakožto svědka, reportéra a aktivního účastníka, a zatajil tak důležitou část zachycované skutečnosti: svou roli ve výběru a narativním zpracování zjištěných informací. Pod iluzí objektivity a realističnosti tak dochází ke skrytým proměnám či úpravám skutečných událostí do podoby výsledného narativního podání – a tím i k potenciální manipulaci čtenáře.

Mailer a jemu blízcí autoři naopak explicitně upozornili na svou aktivní přítomnost ve světě, o němž píšou, a na to, že oni sami ovlivnili jak samotné události, tak jejich textové

zpracování. Především Mailer a Thompson tak učinili svou roli ve výběru a narativním zpracování skutečných událostí jedním z témat svých literárních reportáží. Použitím postmoderních literárních postupů pro zachycení vnější, mimoliterární skutečnosti tak vytvořili nejen komplexní a formálně originální beletristická díla, ale z pohledu poststrukturální filozofie a literární teorie, zpochybňující existenci fenomenologické reality nezávislé na lidském myšlení a jazykové reprezentaci, také výrazně věrohodnější, úplnější a působivější reportáže, než jaké nabízí autoři inklinující k realismu a pokoušející se o objektivní reprezentaci.

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