Tesis Doctoral

Departamento de Filología Inglesa: Literatura Inglesa y Norteamericana

Universidad de Sevilla

The Narrative Technique of the Postmodernist Novel: Tradition and Innovation in the Novels of B.S. Johnson

por
Brian Crews

Director: Dr. D. Manuel Almagro Jiménez

Sevilla, 1992
Introduction

Part One: The Nature of the Novel

1.1. Mode, Genre and Literary Kind
1.2. History and Ideology
1.3. Beyond the Traditional View: Recent Trends in Criticism
1.4. Beyond Historical, Convergent and Osmotic Theories
1.5. Realism
1.6. The Novel as Oppositional Discourse
1.7. The Nature of Narrative: Fact v Fiction

2. Narratology and the Elements of the Novel:

   Introductory Remarks

2.1. The Rules of the Game
2.2. The Frame and Narratology
2.3. Towards a Narratological Model
2.3.1. Time and Chronology
2.3.2. Mode
2.3.3. Voice
2.3.4. The Role of the Narrator
2.3.5. Narrative Function
2.3.6. The Narratee

3. The Governing Principle

3.1. Mode: Literary and Non-literary Kinds of Discourse
3.2. The Governing Analogy

4. The Determination of Codes

5. Story

5.1. Plot Typology
5.2. Kernels and Satellites
5.3. Sequence, Contingency and Causality
5.4. Surprise and Suspense

5.5. Further Considerations of Story

5.6. Setting
5.7. Character

6. Style and the Games Authors Play

6.1. Public and Private Games
6.2. Style and Anti-style
6.3. Parody and other Games as Anti-style
6.4. Further Considerations
6.5. More Personal Games 263
6.6. Possibilities 268
6.7. Games: Concluding Remarks 271

Part Two: The Postmodernist Novel

1. Postmodernism: Some Preliminary Remarks 275
1.1. Postmodernism: History and Ideology 284
1.2. Some Precursors of Postmodernist Thought 306
1.3. Postmodernism: The Oppositional Discourse of Unbelief 327
1.4. Postmodernisms: The Debate Continues 339
1.5. Metafiction 353
1.6. A Pause in the Debate 358

2. Postmodernism, the Novel and Narratology 360
2.1. The Novel and the Postmodernist Novel 361
2.2. The Elements of the Postmodernist Novel 369
2.3. What are postmodernist novels playing at? 379

Part Three: The Novels of B.S. Johnson

1. B.S. Johnson and the Novel 389
2. The Novels of B.S. Johnson 441
2.1. Travelling People 444
2.2. Albert Angelo 465
2.3. Trawl 486
2.4. The Unfortunates 503
2.5. House Mother Normal 520
2.6. Christie Malry’s Own Double Entry 536
2.7. See the Old Lady Decently 557

Part Four: The Narrative Technique of B.S. Johnson

1. The Nature of Narrative and B.S. Johnson 583
1.1. B.S. Johnson and the Narratological Model 588
1.2. The Narrative Technique of Travelling People 602
1.3. The Narrative Technique of Albert Angelo 627
1.4. The Narrative Technique of Trawl 652
1.5. The Narrative Technique of The Unfortunates 679
1.6. The Narrative Technique of House Mother Normal 707
1.7. The Narrative Technique of Christie Malry’s Own Double-Entry 737
1.8. The Narrative Technique of *See the Old Lady Decently*  
2. The Games B.S. Johnson Plays  
2.1. *Travelling People*  
2.2. *Albert Angelo*  
2.3. *Trawl*  
2.4. *The Unfortunates*  
2.5. *House Mother Normal*  
2.6. *Christie Malry's Own Double-Entry*  
2.7. *See the Old Lady Decently*  

Conclusion  
Works Consulted
Introduction.

There has been a great deal written about postmodernist narrative up to now, and while many critics coincide as to its nature, there is also a good deal of disagreement. While a number of critics have put this argument in perspective to some degree, none of these emphasise sufficiently the relation that clearly exists between novel and postmodern, a relation that should be clear if we consider that most manifestations of postmodernism in literature can be found within the development of the contemporary novel. Clearly, literary criticism on postmodernism tends to focus on how it appears in narrative, but what we find is that postmodernist ideology and features just happen to be found there when the novel takes advantages of existing possibilities to move in a particular direction. So, what has to be made clear is that there is a definite link between the development of the novel as novel and the appearance of what is called the postmodernist novel. At the same time, we will go on to show that those aspects of narrative which are considered postmodernist must also be considered as aspects of novel, which is one of the reasons that some critics believe that postmodernism has not been indicative of change or a breakthrough.

What we are suggesting, then, is that the ideological implications of postmodernism are similar to those involved when we consider the novel and its development. For this reason it is necessary to come to
a fuller understanding of the nature of the novel as such. For example, when we consider the novel from a narratological point of view, we discover that the postmodernist novel really only takes advantage of already existing possibilities, although there are particular tendencies and emphases which allow us to distinguish the postmodernist novel from its predecessors to varying degrees.

The basis of our argument is that we need to understand more fully the nature of the novel, both historically and ideologically in order to understand the emergence of postmodernist narrative. It is also worthwhile to reconsider the defining constituents of the novel, to what extent they are constant or variable, what possibilities are available to the novelist and how he takes advantage of them. This is related to how novelists frame their works, which means it is necessary for us to describe in detail the categories of discourse which are common to all narratives.

For these reasons there is a need for a more fully comprehensive model for the analysis of the novel as such in order to be able to understand the nature of the postmodernist novel in particular. Only when the ideology and elements of the novel have been fully understood can we then opine as regards the peculiarities of the postmodernist version.

Now, a definition of the novel has always presented critics with problems. Throughout history there have been continual changes and apparent innovations. While these apparent changes in the nature
of the novel and its ideology exist, the source for them lies in the novel itself. It is a protean form which in its beginnings embodied but at the same time reacted against other forms of narrative, and even if we were to suppose that it involves the assimilation of other genres, it is none of those.

The novel is an open-ended form and is thus more subject to ideological changes. Because of this, critics have tended to see its history as its definition. However, it is not enough to see the novel as a series of developments and reactions, or say that some novels are mainstream and others experimental or innovative. There is a need for a definition which covers the novel in all its manifestations, which should also include the contemporary, which in spite of receiving labels like experimental, avant garde or postmodern, if these labels are in themselves meaningful, are still novels.

Curiously, in the same way as there is no single, definitive definition for the novel, there is none for postmodernism. Furthermore, the phenomenon which manifest or embody postmodern ideology, or have been affected by it, have a great deal in common with the novel as we shall later describe it. Therefore, we must have an adequate vision of the novel in order to make it clear that postmodernism and novel are analogous in that they make use of while they contest the ideologies that they are contemporary with as well as those that have preceded them. Moreover, to define postmodernism will be to define tendencies that have always existed in the novel since its beginnings, perhaps with the proviso
that what tended to be implicit is now made more explicit, either because the author is more aware or the reader is; a reader who, until recently, had been unable to appreciate or classify as postmodern, the ideology he found there.

The novel is like most phenomena in that it is subject to change. It develops, grows, changes; but while we can talk of innovations, novels, even postmodern ones, are still novels and changes tend to have been of degree. While we can talk of innovation in terms of technique, it will be curious to note that these innovations take place in an area the novel has dealt with always; the novel is a text where cultural codes and forms of expression, literary and non-literary, intersect, interfere and react. Every novel is made up of a unique set of variables—-the elements of the novel—-which each author can exploit to whatever degree, and under the influence of any ideology, emphasising here and minimalising there, but always with the same tools and materials at his disposal.

Nowadays, there are clear tendencies within the novel to differ from traditional realism, but that in itself was a trend which made a particular use of available cultural codes; codes which some writers now believe to be inadequate forms of representation. In fact, representation or recreation as such has come to be seen as unrealistic and traditional realism rightly treated as a fallacy. However, the novel can be seen as a growing, developing text with clear origins and marked trends and tendencies which ought to be explained.
Moreover, to a great extent they can be explained in terms of attitudes towards realism, in that the novel always deals with its own relation with reality or realism.

To come to an understanding of what the novel is, it is worthwhile to consider what it has been or what it has been considered to be in the past in order to have a steadier view of its nature, taking into account historical and ideological changes which have been emphasised by earlier critics. The limitations of each of these views will be discussed to lead us beyond merely, historical, osmotic or convergent theories of the novel to a more inclusive oppositional stance, which should explain many of the apparent anomalies and contradictions of the novel form. That the novel and realism are terms which have been virtually interchangable for critics will lead us to examine the nature of realism, or realisms, as such, to be followed by an explanation of the problems regarding the nature of fiction and narrative as well as exploring the question of just to what degree tradition and innovation are relevant factors. Broadly speaking, it will become clear that the novel is curiously anti-traditional and we will have to ask what are the conventions, codes or elements of the novel that make up the set of variables each author uses so uniquely. This will lead us to investigate the whole question of narratology and the games authors play, which are also areas in which there are obvious variables: the kind of game and the degree to which an author plays, the framework adopted and the
conventions that are observed or transgressed. These are the variables on whose use the labelling of novels -- mainstream, experimental, conventional, modern and postmodern-- depend.

There is a curious relation between tradition and innovation in postmodernist narrative which again can be explained by understanding more fully the nature of the novel as such: its ties with realism and the contemporary will provide us with clues as to how postmodernism can be manifested there. The novel as a constantly evolving form, which came out of existing forms which it adapted and parodied, means that an innovative use of already existing traditions is part of its essence. This is also the case with the postmodernist novel which does the same, but this is just part of the nature of the novel itself. Innovation is part of the tradition of the novel, but real innovations are relatively few.

Broadly speaking, we can say that the novel works within a clearly definable set of categories of discourse, but, traditionally, the tendency is to make choices within these categories, as regards narrator, point of view and so on, in such a way that they seem to be inevitable: this is also so as regards story which allows the author to give an impression of verisimilitude by suggesting that there is no possible alternative to the choices made within a single structure. In order to discuss the nature of these choices, we have to know what possibilities exist for choice within categories of discourse and even story,
which will enable us to discover in what ways the postmodernist author can undermine the conventional treatment of narrative. We will find that this often involves the novel going beyond the bounds of the single structure, suggesting or even making use of alternatives within the same category, which is a way of installing and then subverting the choices it makes at the same time. Thus the kind of questions to be asked are just what does the novel involve, what are its defining constituents, to what extent are they constant or variable, what options are available to novelists and how do they take advantage of them.

Prior to outlining the steps to be followed in this study, it is worthwhile considering a few questions put by Seymour Chatman in his concluding remarks to *Story and Discourse* which he believed should be answered in order to justify further investigation into the novel (1988 263-66). Part of the treatment involved in this work is in response to them as the following comments will suggest.

Basically, a need was found to complement existing criticism and at the same time put it in perspective as well as to see different areas of criticism as complementary and not exclusive. The distinction which Chatman makes between story and discourse is helpful, but it is essential to see that activity or choices in one area usually affect those in another, which requires us to emphasise the relation between the two in the same model. Partly, this is achieved by making use of a variety of theoretical sources and a synthesis of
several narratological models which involves a further examination of labels and concepts used in narratology, to point out inconsistencies and gaps and to clarify the interrelation between story and discourse. In this respect, it was felt appropriate to consider narrative in terms of codes, which, although impressionistic, provides a link between the two, while other considerations such as mode and analogy are also determining factors in both areas.

Chatman feels that several areas of narrative are worthy of further investigation and one of the aims of this study is to extend the theoretical possibilities for the analysis of some of these, including character and setting. He also highlights a need for clarification regarding the codes of verisimilitude, which, with regard to both story and discourse, ought to become clearer here, particularly with regard to the realist tendency towards persuasion which is achieved by implying the inevitability of the choices made both in categories of discourse and in story. Other areas of uncertainty are also dealt with. While Chatman speaks of contingency, this study explains how this involves the substitution of causality by the arbitrary will of the author, which, while it also happens in more traditional narratives, is even more worthy of attention in the contemporary novel. Here, the nature of the narrator and narratee are further explained, with particular regard to the roles that they play and how these are determined by the choice of mode as well as other factors.

In broad terms, narratology is used here to
explain the possibilities that exist for variety in narrative and how certain choices govern others, and the ideas of game and play are also introduced as an area worthy of exploration and as playing a part in the metanarrative function of a text. In fact, metafiction and the metanarrative function, while they are areas that have been explored at length, although not by Chatman, require to be seen in terms of a model which considers it as part of the available possibilities of narrative, rather than breaking away from convention. Another point not discussed by Chatman and which has received very little consideration elsewhere but which seriously affects the nature of a text is the idea of the governing principles of a narrative, which here are described in terms of mode and analogy.

The main impetus behind this study is to apply a new working model for narrative to a complete body of work by a single author in a methodical manner. Moreover, it is inclusive rather than exclusive, allowing for the consideration of questions brought up in a variety of different areas of study, such as literary theory, narratology and stylistics, not to mention the particular attention paid to postmodernism and postmodernist narrative. Furthermore, the author chosen and the kind of narrative that he writes are in need of a great deal of further investigation, which ought to be justification enough in itself.

Throughout this study a variety of examples are taken from different periods in order to suggest the nature of the trends that have occurred throughout the
development of the novel. However, it is important to appreciate that all kinds of narrative can be analysed in terms of the same model, and what is most significant is that we will see how the postmodernist novel can be described in terms of the same categories, and even the same possibilities that existed for its predecessors. In fact, the use of this model will make it apparent that the postmodernist novel can only be understood in terms of the possibilities that exist for the novel as such, which will further support our assertion that novel and postmodern are analogous. In fact, the use of the model with its explanation of the ideology underlying the novel will allow us to account for what some might call a particular sub-genre or category in narrative, that of the postmodern, which still remains to some extent unfamiliar.

So, in general terms, we can say that it was found that there is a need for a broader perspective with regard to the study of the novel, in order to have a more inclusive model to explain the nature of narratives in the interrelated terms of mode, codes, as well as categories of discourse, elements of the novel, story and the games authors play. Moreover, the proposed model includes, as part of it, the discussion of the ideological background without which the rest becomes gratuitous. This final aspect is not considered by Chatman, nor does he consider style or games, and the tendency is to find that most critics concentrate on a particular area rather than seeing them as complementary.
Recent developments in narrative theory, many based on Russian formalist theory will allow us to understand further the possibilities and limitations of the novel as such which will enable us to state that novel and postmodern are akin to one another. These will help us to first come to terms with the ideology of the novel, to enable us to state just what a novel is, what are its common features, its possibilities, varieties and modes and just how can we speak of novel at all. Then, once we have isolated the possibilities within the novel we should consider in what ways the novel has made use of them in the past, and in what way the postmodernist novel has gone on to make use of them, which will make it clear to what extent the postmodernist novel is a reaction against or a continuation of already existing novelistic possibilities, but always seen in terms of these possibilities. Moreover, it is necessary to consider the strategies that are available to the novelist and to see the nature of postmodernist strategies in perspective: not simply as innovations but as a determinate kind or disposition of available possibilities.

There are many considerations involved in such an undertaking in order to arrive at any definite conclusions and they include the following: the novel as a distinct mode or literary kind; the novel in its historical context; the novel and its ideology; recent developments in criticism; the novel and its relation with realism; modes available to the novelist; and the relation between novelistic discourse and other modes of
discourse, even that between fact and fiction. All of this will lead us to consider the novel in terms of recent narratological theory and whether there are rules for writing novels, which will involve a discussion of play in literature and in the novel as such.

After this it will be necessary to describe the categories of discourse within which all narratives must work, or which belong to them, which necessitates a consideration of the determination of codes as complementary, particularly as this allows us to appreciate the relation between story and discourse. We will then draw attention to the governing principles of narrative, which will be seen in terms of mode and analogy prior to discussing the nature of story and the games that authors play. Each of these areas will be discussed with the use of examples in order to suggest possible trends throughout the development of the novel and allow us to better understand the postmodernist novel as novel.

Once these aspects of the novel have been clearly explained, then it should be possible to see the postmodernist novel in a clearer perspective and to assert that the predispositions of postmodernist narratives are available within the already existing variety of possibilities that determine the nature of the novel as such.

However, it will be necessary to explain just what we consider to be the nature of postmodernism prior to suggesting what is the nature of postmodernist narrative, and having done so, and in the light of the
statements made about the nature of the novel it should be possible to clearly relate the two. Once we have described postmodernism in historical and ideological terms, in a manner parallel to the way novel is described, we will suggest what the possibilities for postmodernist fiction are in these same terms, that is according to its ideology, narratology and the games postmodernist authors play, although the latter will be considered particularly within the context of their poetic, or what will be called metanarrative function, where they draw attention to the nature of the narrative rather than the message for its own sake or adornment, thus suggesting the relation between games, narratological choices and the ideology of the postmodernist narrative. However, that alone would be rather too general so that the novels of B.S. Johnson have been chosen in order to give a solid practical basis for this study and these too will be looked at in the terms already outlined: a general ideological or broad view of the novels will be followed by a detailed discussion of each of them according to the established model. We will find that his novels are ideal for a number of reasons.

Now, we have said that novel and postmodern are analogous and we will discover that they are so fundamentally because they are forms of oppositional discourse. Moreover, postmodernist narrative tends simply to emphasise aspects of novel which are already part of its inheritance, not the least of these being its hybrid and anti-traditional nature. That is not to
say, however, that the postmodernist novel does not indicate some kind of breakthrough. It does, in the same way as the modern novel meant a break with tradition in its day. However, breaks with tradition must always be considered in terms of their predecessors and it is significant to consider the fact that the novels of B.S. Johnson break with the past by concentrating on what he believes the novel does best, usually at the expense of other concerns, particularly the realistic tendency towards naturalistic description of setting and character. The significance of this will gradually become clear, but we will find that what he does is take advantage of particular possibilities of the novel in order to turn it into an oppositional discourse of a different kind. By considering his novels we will arrive at a fuller understanding of the nature of the novel as such, particularly because Johnson’s novels are engaged in an open dialogue with the novel form.

We will see that the postmodernist novel involves, not so much a break, but a change in direction for the novel, but such changes are not isolated occurrences: there have been many throughout history and even of a kind similar to that which took place with the movement towards the postmodernist novel. One of the main differences is simply when it has happened, which brings about a new understanding and use of existing possibilities. In fact, the postmodernist novel does what the novel has always done, or at least some of the things, only it does so in a more overt manner. It belongs to tradition and convention but tends to draw
attention to the nature of them, often by commenting on or subverting them, or by overdetermining the various possibilities for alterations and transgressions within these very conventions.

We have said that the point to be made is that novel and postmodern are similar which will be explained fully in due course. Suffice it to say in general terms that both are contemporary and that both are of an oppositional nature. The variables and constants remain the same in traditional and postmodernist novels, and innovations can only be seen in the light of an existing tradition. An analysis of B.S. Johnson's novels will show that there is some kind of breakthrough which does involve a kind of rejection, but it is not a total rejection: as we have said, Johnson simply insists on doing what the novel is best at, for him, and forgets the rest; or we could say that the postmodernist novels of B.S. Johnson are a result of him pushing the novel form in a particular direction, emphasising alternative possibilities which have always been available to the novelist. After all, Johnson clearly acknowledges the tradition to which he belongs, naming Sterne, Joyce and Beckett as his predecessors.

Curiously, B.S. Johnson has rarely been called a postmodernist author, which may account for his being so often misunderstood. In fact, that is just one more of the reasons for undertaking this study. We shall see how his novels embody what we call postmodernist but that, at the same time they are clearly related to novelistic tradition and convention, although rather than making
use of them innocently, he does so in an informed and innovative manner. Essentially he is part of the antitraditional tradition of the novel, and his novels, in an open dialogue with tradition and convention, foreground and defamiliarise the artifice involved in narrative. This is essentially the nature of Johnson's oppositional discourse. However, although we can see this author as embodying those elements that we consider typical of postmodernism, we can say that the postmodernist turn of the author is a result of his having pushed the possibilities of the novel in a particular direction, which enables us to state that the postmodernist novel is a result of development within the novel albeit in the light of contemporary ideology. That is why it is so important to understand the nature of the novel's history and ideology in order to appreciate its developing tendencies but at the same to understand that we are able to consider it as oppositional discourse throughout. Of course, there are varying degrees to which the novel is oppositional and the ways in which tradition and convention are taken advantage of vary, some narratives being more and some less self-conscious or self-reflexive.

So, in the light of our discussion of the novel as such, an analysis of the novels of B.S. Johnson will allow us to state that while the postmodernist novel is a special kind of oppositional discourse, this has always been part of the nature of the novel throughout its development to varying degrees, as well as allowing us to clarify the basic paradox that lies at the heart
of postmodernism and postmodernist narrative in particular. That is to say, that it is inextricably linked to convention and tradition and must always be considered in the light of it. We shall see that in postmodernist narrative, innovation consists in the particular use of existing conventions, traditions and possibilities. However, most important of all, we can state that the ideology of the novel, at its most profound is that of postmodernism and that the novel is always preoccupied with its relation to realism and reality to some degree. The novels of B.S. Johnson are more openly so.

So, in this study, different branches of literary criticism are brought together and make it clear that in order to understand the nature of postmodernism, it is first necessary to clarify the true nature of the novel as such in order to arrive at some of the conclusions suggested above. It is possible to read the whole study chronologically, but it may be felt more practical to read all of the sections on ideology, narratology or games together prior to consulting the corresponding section regarding the novels of B.S. Johnson. So it is possible to read the sections independently but the point to be made is that they are all complementary, and all equally necessary to arrive at a full understanding of the nature of the novel, the postmodernist novel and the novels of B.S. Johnson.
Part One

The Nature of the Novel
1.1. Mode, Genre and Literary Kind

Considering that the novel is an openended and hybrid form which always bears some relation to other modes of discourse, both literary and non-literary, one of the first problems to confront us is to decide whether it is, in fact, a distinct literary kind and, of course, its nature. When we come to talk about any mode, genre or kind of literature, Alastair Fowler’s Kinds of Literature (1982) is of considerable assistance and one way of overcoming the difficulties in describing any genre is to see it in terms of Wittgenstein’s family resemblance theory, and this allows us a greater degree of flexibility and inclusiveness, which is itself helpful when we consider the novel as such (Fowler 1982 41). The often idiosyncratic nature of any instance of a genre, with an apparent lack of defining or shared characteristics, which is particularly true of the novel, would account for this necessity. However, the idea of a family resemblance theory has its limitations too, and Fowler fills the gaps it leaves by discussing the question in the light of tradition, which through influence, imitation and inherited codes, allowing for polygenesis or multiple influences, and the changing nature of genres) allows us to place a work within a genre, although any work, and not only the novel, can go back to and use other forms and conventions. So, in these terms, what we could say here is that novels bear a family resemblance to one another, but also that the novel as such is polygeneric, with its roots and
influences in many earlier kinds of literature.

To describe genre, Fowler isolates what he calls the generic repertoire or categories of any given literary kind. These are: representational aspect (narrative, dramatic, etc.), external structure, meter, size, scale, subject, values inherent to kind, mood, occasion, attitude, setting, character, degree of entanglement, appropriate style and the reader’s task (1982 Chapter 4). However, not all of these can be applied to novels, or vary from novel to novel. Although novels are usually narrative, they can change their representational aspect; settings continually change, as do mood, subject, scale, character and so on. Moreover, particularly more recent novels fail to determine their values and even something like the absence of meter is not a fixed trait as meter does appear in some novels. All of this is further suggestive of the difficulty of describing the nature of the novel, but one possibility is to consider the question of mode, which might allow us to explain what seems at first rather generically elusive (Fowler 1982 106).

In fact, Fowler speaks of kind as a noun and of mode as an adjective, where mode involves a selection of features from a corresponding kind. So, many kinds have their corresponding mode like epic, tragic, comic, biographical, and so on, as well as there being non-literary examples like topographical, mythological or apocalyptic. Hence, as regards the novel, we can speak of that kind in terms of several modes including, comic, epic, tragic, biographical, picaresque, historical,
romance and so on. This means that, in literature in general, many kinds can take different external forms, which is particularly the case of the novel as it had been of satire and pastoral previously.

The comprehensive or inclusive nature of the novel means that it lacks homogeneity and its development can be seen in terms of its assimilation of other kinds. Moreover, the rules that govern the nature of novels are often those belonging to those kinds they have adopted for their mode.

The antitraditional nature of the novel has lead many to consider it to be ageneric, but this is not the case. As Malcolm Bradbury puts it: "The novel is not a traditional literary genre, like tragedy or comedy, but a general, varied categorically distinctive form like poetry and drama. . . . There is no one kind of matter [novels] contain or effect they produce" (Possibilities 1973 278-9). That in itself could be considered as a defining element as many novel types exist which have their roots in earlier fiction, which has gradually brought about the existence of distinct subgenres. Furthermore, in general, we can also subdivide the novel in terms of its subject matter. While the adoption of a particular mode might change the external form of some novels, the choice of a particular subject matter can also determine the nature of the sub-genre to which a novel belongs. This is the case of many novels.

Different elements of subject matter which can bring about or suggest sub-genres would be setting (urban, rustic, regional, university, etc), or plot or
mythos (adventure, war, crime, political, etc.) Even genre itself can become a choice within the novel with a work like Ulysses being clearly omnigeneric (Fowler 1982 Chapter 7). So it seems that the tendency is to talk, not of novels, but of kinds of novels, which are dependent on generic categories, which as well as those mentioned include mythic types (quest, divine retribution) and parody and pastiche, which are in turn dependent on antecedent schools and movements (Fowler 1982 Ch. 7).

Therefore, we should not have a static idea of the novel or even of genre in general as they are in a continual process of development. It has even been suggested that subgenres can develop into distinct forms with their own repertoire (Fowler 1982 Ch. 4). If we consider that the novel as such is a hybrid, then it will later become clear how some contemporary novels are self-consciously even more so. In particular, the postmodernist novel can be considered as having developed a sub-genre that can be called the self-begetting novel, which is typical of many recent narratives. All of this should allow us to see the novel as polygeneric and polymorphic, but unfortunately to speak of the existence of many kinds of novel means that we are forced to speak of it in terms of something else rather than allowing us to suggest what novel is. Although, these comments about mode and kind are helpful (and more will be said about mode as a category of discourse within our narratological model), they do not allow us to state precisely what the defining
characteristics of the novel are. While we seem to have no alternative but to speak of it in terms of mode, subject matter and so on, we still have to discuss precisely what elements of tradition give rise to the novel and, if we believe in a family resemblance theory, we have to search for the complex similarities that novels have with one another. These are the kind of questions that we will go into now.
1.2. History and Ideology

In broad terms, the novel is any fictional prose narrative, but even that is an inadequate description in that there are non-fiction novels, novels which use poetic devices and those which do not necessarily tell a story. The traditional idea is that character is represented either statically or in process as the result of actions or events, while at the same time it embodies some organising principle, the plot a theme or an idea. However, these are elements that are found in forms of narrative other than the novel and any of these elements may be emphasised at the expense of the others.

Since the novel first came to be known as such, critics and novelists alike have produced innumerable definitions and each has emphasised different aspects as being typically characteristic of the form. We will look into some of these definitions later, but generally what we find is that, due to the nature of the novel, the majority of critics, as we said, tend to view it in its historical context. All of them coincide in seeing it as a product of the 18th century, but find its origins in the literature that preceded it.

Generally speaking, the origins of the novel are to be found in the classical literature of Greece and Italy. In the second century B.C. Aristides wrote a series of tales and there are also the examples of the narratives of Miletus, Heliodorus, Longus, Apuleius, Longus and Petronius, which might be considered as some of its predecessors. Most critics also coincide in
seeing the Italian novella as being the form which is most closely related to the novel's development. Not only works like the Decameron or Cento Novelle Antiche but the French nouvelle and romances (for example Rabelais' Gargantua or the romances of Mlle de Scudéry) as well as narratives in Spanish (particularly Don Quijote by Cervantes) were also very influential. To this background of classical literature, romantic cycles, pastoral literature and picaresque tales we can add the English interest in narrative in Arthurian literature and the stories of Charlemagne. From the 16th century onwards there is a good deal of English narrative from the Euphues of Lyly through Sydney's Arcadia up to the first English novel, Robinson Crusoe by Defoe. But this is a purely factual outline of narrative works and types that preceded the novel and does not help us to decide what the novel is. While most critics agree that the novel drew on many kinds of writing: medieval romance, the courtly literature of France and Italy, the Picaresque tradition, epics, ballads, anecdotes, folktales, myths, legends and all that we have mentioned; definitions tend to differ and all tend to pinpoint a different cause or different traits as being definitive, ideologically or otherwise, rarely coinciding in the prime causes for the fundamental changes that produce the novel or influence its development. In fact, they leave us still with the need to describe novel in terms of mode. However, there is one point in which many critics coincide, which is that the question of reality or realism tends to be
central to an understanding of the novel.

Novelists have been continually troubled with their ability to recreate reality and "The history of the novel is . . . the history of the novelist's search for an adequate view of life" (Kettle 1967 I 24). This also suggests that the form is also closely linked to the developing ideologies of its time and its author. This is not a surprising statement coming from a Marxist critic like Arnold Kettle when, as Terry Eagleton has suggested, history and ideology is always embodied in a work as much by its absence as by its presence (Eagleton 1978 Ch. I). Kettle also sees the rise and development of the English novel as something that "like any other phenomenon in literature, can only be understood as a part of history" (25). The historical and ideological changes that are involved are related to a dichotomy which many critics point out: the difference between novel and romance.

For a critic like Arnold Kettle, the rise of the middle class is a determining factor in the development of the novel. This phenomenon, which he describes as "a realistic prose fiction, complete in itself and of a certain length" (26), opposes or reacts against romance and the romantic, which do not concern themselves with real life, but involve escapism and fantasy. However, he recognises that this is all just a question of degree, and rightly so. To sum up briefly this attitude towards the novel, it suggests that whereas feudalism tended to express the thoughts and emotions of courtly idealism, the novel rejects a stable pattern of an idealistic
moral code and the romantic view of life that accompanied it. Moreover, it was the bourgeoisie who essentially reacted against this sense of order to move towards a need for objectivity and realism.

However, this historical marxist view of the rise of the novel is rather limiting, although it does help us to achieve some insight into the nature of the novel. That is, the novel is tied up with ideological changes and in this case was a reaction against a particular ideology (feudal) and a particular form of writing (romance). But to see this only as characteristic of the novel in its beginnings is to fail to appreciate what the novel does throughout its history. The novel, since then, has never ceased to embody some reaction against ideologies and styles.

It has already been stated that realism is a defining element in attitudes towards the novel in its beginnings. However, it will become clear that attitudes towards realism change and that we should not speak of realism but of realisms. In fact, most of the changes that take place in the novel take place precisely because of a change in this attitude towards realism. One such change in attitude is to see realism as not residing "in the kind of life it presents, but in the way it presents it" (Watt 1983 11). Although the novel as a form tends to present all manner of varieties of experience, there is no particular perspective, literary or otherwise, which is adopted, which leads to an epistemological question regarding the relation between the work and reality.
According to Ian Watt, in an attitude that is reminiscent of Arnold Kettle's, realism, and I would suggest the novel as such, begins with a rejection of any idea of the universal and is much more personal and individualistic in its stance towards reality (13). The novel put an end to conformity with tradition and its primary criterion was "truth to individual experience -- individual experience which is always unique and therefore new" (13). Curiously, Watt touches here upon an ontological question rather than an epistemological one, which many critics had felt to be an area in which only contemporary or postmodern novels were more innovative and hence has a direct bearing on our vision of them. However, this has tended to be seen more as a question of originality rather than suggesting the relevance, at least in the light of postmodern ideology, of a lack of shared values and traditions.

At this stage of novel criticism it was the absence of formal conventions in realism that began to attract attention whereas more recent critics began to see realism as a convention in itself. Later it will become clear that this tendency in the novel for innovations at any level to become absorbed and accepted as part of the canon or convention in order to be rejected later is typical. But this idea of rejecting the conventional is seen more in the light of plots which avoid those taken from mythology, history and previous literature to be replaced by accounts of individual experience which in the novel has replaced the collective tradition. However, even this move towards a belief in individual
experience as “the ultimate arbiter of reality” (Watt 14-15) is in turn rejected once it has been assimilated, which, as has been suggested, shows the tendency of the novel to reject old truths. Curiously, it is this prooccupation with the contemporary and individual that makes the novel such an easy receptor of postmodern ideology.

The greatest innovation for a critic like Watt was the fact that plot was subordinated to the “pattern of the autobiographical memoir” (15), which is in itself “an assertion of individual experience” (15). What becomes clear with this assertion is that the adoption of a particular mode would appear to be innovative in itself, whereas that is precisely the nature of the novel, to adopt particular modes of expression for a particular effect. In some modern and postmodern novels, it is the use of a different mode of expression that is the source of its novelty, but in general it will become clear that the use of particular varieties and especially the use of a variety of non-literary modes of expression is precisely what makes the novel the novel. It is not just one mode but several which begin to be made use of, suggesting that the novel is not only open to new trends in ideology but to any literary and non-literary forms of expression. It is a fact that the tendency during a particular period was to take advantage of the possibilities of autobiography and, considering the nature of the novel which reacts against such things, it leads us to believe that the incorporation or use of other modes is simply part of
that nature. That is, when the limitations of one mode, autobiography, become clear, other modes begin to be made use of. It can be said, then, that existing modes of expression form yet another set of variables for the novelist and is one more source for innovation in the novel. The novel can extend the range of kinds of expression that can be made use of and through the use of analogy can adapt language to particular ways of seeing in order to imitate stream of consciousness, for example (the analogy is clear), or to make use of any other technique.

As far as the realistic novel is concerned, Watt emphasises individualisation and realistic particularity as regards characterisation and description as well as the breaking with the canons of prose style, individuation of place and time and the need for causation between past experience and present action. But these become areas of variability when considered in terms of contemporary ideology, which allows us to see the novel as taking advantage of its possibilities, or not, depending on the nature of the novel concerned. Watt saw the use of figurative language as being a tendency which did not allow the use of language to correspond with reality, which was the end of such realistic fiction. However, this type of game, which every author plays, is inevitable in all literature and becomes another area in which the novel itself can play, making use of or rejecting available figures, or introducing new ones. That the “function of language is much more largely referential in the novel than in other
literary forms; that the genre itself works by exhaustive presentation rather than by elegant concentration" (35), is more of an impression of realistic fiction than a fact. That it is "a full and authentic report of experience" which includes the details regarding individuality and particularity through details "which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms" (35), was a hope for realistic novelists rather than anything else as the realistic fallacy clearly shows. Moreover, this was one of the attitudes that was reacted against so strongly in modernist and postmodernist novels, although the preoccupation with reality still remains.

What have been considered to be common traits in the novel are important. They are conventions that have existed and against which many authors reacted. But curiously, in spite of reactions against formal realism, most authors parody or make use of these conventions. In the end, verisimilitude was the aim, in spite of the use of a fictional form, and the novels that have been produced since still have a curious need to make the reader aware of their relation with "truth".

On a few occasions we have suggested a difference between experimental and non-experimental novels. Marjorie Boulton makes such a distinction in her The Anatomy of the Novel. Her definition suggests that experimental novels are something like mainstream novels but with innovations included. She says that the history of any art is a series of
innovations with virtually all major works of art as in some sense experimental in their day, and vilified by many in their day; that it is impossible to rule a thick black line between traditional and experimental works; and, in our present field, that 'eccentric' novels appeared almost as soon as those we generally regard as typical. (1975 49)

However she goes even further to identify what we usually call experimental, modern and even postmodern in many mainstream, realistic or traditional novels (Boulton 150-160). The techniques that are used in many experimental novels were already to be found in Sterne, whom a postmodernist author like B.S. Johnson acknowledges as his master. However, the question of degree comes in here, with experimental writers tending to make much more frequent and blatant use of these techniques or games that we will discuss in greater detail later.

One point that is touched upon by Boulton is the idea of relative importance. She speaks about this in connection with the nouveau roman where these ideas are distorted (163). In more general terms we could associate changing attitudes as regards relative importance as governing the changes that take place throughout the history of the novel. As always, these changes are a question of degree.

Up to now, most of the changes we have mentioned that have taken place during the development of the novel have been clearly linked to history and ideology.
Most critics coincide in seeing that development as also linked to a series of reactions, initially against romance, in the novel’s beginnings, and later against traditional realism when we move up to modernism. This is also the case with a critic like David Daiches, although he delimits three specific areas in which these changes have an influence (*The Novel and the Modern World* 1968 Chapters 1 and 2). These were: a new view of the nature of consciousness, a breakdown in public agreement of significance and a new idea of time. Because of this, new techniques and innovations were required and there was a tendency to focus on private rather than public concerns, although this had already been considered as part of formal realism according to Ian Watt. Specifically, the questions of characterisation and the development of character, psychological accuracy and the relation between past and present, the independence of consciousness from chronological sequence and so on lead to attempts to create more fluid ways of presenting consciousness and in particular to the stream of consciousness technique, where association rather than logic is the governing factor. Once again, this is simply an attempt to be more realistic, when the limitations of conventional realism are appreciated. A new vision of reality requires new ways of articulating it; even romance had been an attempt at realism. Writers like Woolf attempted to impose and convince their public with a personal view; others like Joyce would present all possible points of view simultaneously, or present multiple points of view.
like Conrad. In the end, all are reactions to an awareness of the limitations of available conventions and result in experimentation. However, as Marjorie Boulton points out, this kind of experimentation already existed and there already had been digressions through association in Sterne, stream of consciousness and multiple points of view. Moreover, the tendency to do these things and the significance of them are questions of degree. Not only that, but even stream of consciousness technique has become an accepted convention like any other.

Our definitions up to now have been partial. They have tended to focus on a specific period of the novel's development. But even so, certain commonalities and certain misconceptions about the novel become apparent. Most critics coincide in the importance of the influence of history and ideology. However, there is a tendency to focus on the question of realism and attitudes toward it as being intrinsic. Unfortunately, some definitions tend to confuse the realistic novel with the novel as such, which results in a very limiting view. However, this confusion simply emphasises the importance of realism, realisms, or simply attitudes towards reality. When these attitudes change, the result is a change in attitude towards the novel.

Nowadays, it is readily accepted that realism is a fallacy, but the acceptance of this may not have changed the kind of novel that appears today as radically as some people might think. In spite of breaks with formal realism, novelists continue to grapple with the problem
of being realistic or simply state the futility of such an attempt. After the several reactions against the traditional novel, and later against established modernist tendencies, the novel curiously remains a recognisable form. This makes it clear that a definition is required which goes far beyond those we have considered up to now. But at least two landmarks have become clear in the novel's history and they have involved specific conceptions of reality: the reaction against the feudal ideology of romance and later the modern reaction against the conventional realism of the nineteenth century novel. But it is not clear just to what extent these reactions brought about real innovation and, in addition, many novelists continued and continue to write after the manner of the mainstream.

A propos of what has just been said, it would be worthwhile to consider the definitions offered of the novel up to now as tending towards a definition of the nature and development of realism. This is clearly reductive for the reasons previously expressed and because "What was a temporary stage in literature became a fixed definition" (Hutcheon 1980 38). This is a misconception of which not only critics but novelists, even B.S. Johnson to some degree, have been guilty, tending to find fixed conventions and paradigms where there has always been development. Johnson's attitude will be discussed later but another point that Hutcheon makes gives a little more insight into the problem. Whereas a critic like Ian Watt foregrounds the lack of a
paradigm as a characterising element of the novel, something which modernist authors and critics would tend to contradict, she feels that parodic self-reflexiveness is paradigmatic in the novel and that

the realism of the 19th century, which is based almost entirely on what will be called a mimesis of product, will be seen more as a reductive limitation of novelistic mimesis than as a paradigm or the defining characteristic of the genre. (5)

This suggests a different vision of the novel which, while it requires the novel to be aware of available modes and conventions, takes us beyond the assessment of the novel form as dependent upon verisimilitude or referentiality. That is not to say that the question of reality is no longer important, but what we will find is that the mimesis of product, while having been a major concern, gives way to other concerns where mimesis of process, an admission of the futility of attempts at mimesis, as well as other developing tendencies as regards the author's relation with reality, become apparent.

So, it is clear that one major limitation has been overcome and that the definition of a particular stage in the development of the novel is reductive. This would coincide more with what has been implied previously by Marjorie Boulton in that we ought to see the novel as continually evolving, openended and virtually all inclusive. More will be said about this facet of the novel a little later.
1.3. Beyond the Traditional View: Recent Trends in Criticism

In the previous section it was becoming clear that traditional views of the novel were gradually being superceded due to recent ideological tendencies. Although the attitudes towards the novel that have been described up to now have been very selective, this is so because they are some of the most typical. Moreover, it is not our intention to say that they are not valid points of view, but simply that they are reductive and limiting. It is therefore necessary to go beyond them to discover more completely the true nature of the novel and thus find out if we can talk about a postmodernist novel at all. It might be suggested that modern and postmodern novels, or simply experimental novels as such, simply take an extreme view of the relative importance of certain variables within the novel and use particular devices to an extreme degree, or more simply, that novels are conceived, written and viewed in terms of a particular ideology, while still existing within a clearly definable, developing tradition.

David Lodge deals with the problem of the novel and developing tendencies in his essay "The Novelist at the Crossroads," where he considers recent theories about narrative. To begin with he sums up the theory of Scholes and Kellogg in their The Nature of Narrative as follows: "there are two main, antithetical modes of narrative: the empirical, whose primary allegiance is to the real, and the fictional, whose primary allegiance is
to the ideal" (1971 3). He then goes on to suggest, which is essentially the point we wish to arrive at, that the novel is

a new synthesis of pre-existing narrative traditions, rather than a continuation of one of them or an entirely unprecedented phenomenon, it accounts for the great variety and inclusiveness of the novel form: its capacity for being pushed, by different authors, in the directions of history (including autobiography), allegory or romance while still remaining somehow the novel. (4)

As we have seen, previously, to all intents and purposes, the novel tended towards realism, either as a formal characteristic (fiction treated as history) or an aesthetic end of telling the truth. What coincides with what has been said up to now is the idea of realism being the dominant mode which holds the other three kinds of narrative together in some kind of synthesis.

However, the belief that the novel synthesis is breaking down suggests that realism is no longer considered as valid, although the preoccupation, we will find, is still with reality. The recent developments in the novel from modernism on are seen as a reaction against "the individual experience of a common phenomenal world" which recedes as "the concept of the unique person dissolves" (Lodge 1971 5). This leads the writer to explore fictional modes of expression while there is at the same time an equally real tendency to
"move in the opposite direction -- towards empirical narrative and away from fiction" (9). This clearly shows that the mode of expression adopted is yet another variable in the novel which, as Lodge says, synthesises pre-existing narrative traditions. Therefore, we can suggest that there is no radical break in the novel after realism, simply the development of distinct tendencies which still make use of already existing modes of expression, although just how they are used and the degree to which they are used is in what their innovative nature consists.

The idea is then that when we move beyond realism, we find that the novel goes in two directions: towards *fabulation* or towards the non-fiction novel, although there are those who hesitate about what direction to take and "build their hesitation into the novel itself" (22). Lodge calls this kind of writing the *problematic novel* (22), which exploits the three modes already mentioned (novel, non-fiction novel and fabulation) without committing itself to any of them in particular. In a sense, these new tendencies in the novel could be called postmodern which, as we have seen, can be considered as exploiting available narrative modes in different ways and to a different degree.

It seems that the novel and the development of its various forms, problematic, non-fiction and fabulation, are a result of ideological changes regarding the nature of reality, realism and the most suitable modes of expression. This development is linked to the contemporaneous nature of all these novel forms which
embody already existing modes through adherence to conventions or by the flaunting, omission or parodying of them. Whether an author is absent in his works or all too apparent, whether realism is sought after or all too clearly avoided or denied, whether the customary modes of expression are used or rejected, these are all two sides of the same coin, dependent upon the stance adopted towards reality by the author and dependent on an awareness of the history and tradition of the genre that he is working in. All this considered, it might begin to sound absurd to talk of postmodernist novels rather than to think in terms of tendencies, which are not new (although perhaps more extreme), in a period which has been called, rightly or wrongly, postmodern.

So far, the tendency has been to describe particular kinds of novel, and while some sense of coherence and development has been traced, it is not sufficiently clear what they all have in common. Here is one view that is well aware of this problem:

In sum, the novel is a complex structure by virtue of its scale, prose character, and matter: it is more extended than most poems, deals with a larger range of life (this being a definitional statement, not a moral judgement), appeals to the reader through a broader variety of approaches, has a different relationship to working language, and above all states its character and intentions and conventions with less immediate clarity and a greater degree of
gradual, worked, and in this sense empirical persuasion. Hence novels will tend to be more discursive, and more contingent, than in poetry; and their stronger referential dimension will be shown not only by attentiveness to people as they talk, think, and act, places as they look, institutions as they work, but also to large processes of human interaction as they occur over a long chronological span, a large area of space, a large sector of society. (Bradbury 1973 280)

From what we have seen up to now, it is the ideas of variety and contingency that begin to appear as the only constants in the novel, and it is precisely this that Bradbury emphasises here. However, like many other critics before him he tends to concentrate on the novel as a referential object which is not simply a "self sustaining entity" but a "species of persuasion" whose structure is dependent on a devised series of events with conscious or intuitive laws of causation equally devised by the author and thus becomes yet another variable in the novel.

Bradbury draws a distinction between the word and what is told but gives less emphasis to stylistics than to what he calls structure. Moreover, in spite of his desire for a poetics of the novel, he seems to move away from the possibility and simply suggests that there might be hope for a methodology that would allow us to adequately describe a given novel, obviously influenced by his awareness of the variety, contingency and so on
that we mentioned. But it is precisely this that leads him to make perhaps his most helpful statement which is that any novel is "a unique conjunction of variables, not having a definable generic nature" (289). While this would seem to deny a definition of the novel that is all inclusive, it supports what we have already said. All that remains is to define the possible variables. That the novel is not generically definable supports our assertion that it participates in already existing genres, developing from them, even reacting against them, but it is definitely linked to and should be seen as part of a tradition which at different times it accepts, rejects or parodies. This tendency itself, or the author's stance towards conventions or tradition should be considered as one of these areas of variability.

To sum up briefly, what we have with the novel is an area where illusion meets reality, the fictional meets the empirical, romance meets realism. This suggests that the nature of the novel is paradoxical and it seems that in many writers, not only modern writers, the awareness of this paradox is developed resulting to varying degrees in fabulation, non-fiction or even problematic novels, where these opposing tendencies are mixed often with overt manipulation by the author. It is a phenomenon which is inextricably linked to history and therefore ideology. Moreover, the novel seems to emphasise representational truth and moral issues, at least critics tend to emphasise this aspect of the novel which has led many to a reductive definition of the
novel, seeing nineteenth century realistic fiction as a paradigm. However, what should be made clear now is that conceptions of realism change. What happened with modernism, for example, and what many authors had realised long before, is that realism (or realisms) is a fallacy, that there are only approximations, hence the element of persuasion in the realistic novel, which we mentioned earlier. The epistemological problems of representation became primary then, leading to the kind of stream of consciousness and playing with perspective that Daiches pointed out. Even in postmodernism it seems that the novel continues to deal with this problem of reality and realism or the lack and even impossibility of it. All this suggests that realism, hence the novel, is something dependent upon changes in society and changes in our conceptions, historically and ideologically. As there can be no fixed idea of what reality is (this is true even of the nineteenth century, a transitory period, which many critics held to be one of shared values and consensus), the novel, as it always exists in some relation towards it, is not a fixed but an openended form. It is essentially rhetorical, involving communication and is always influenced by outside forces. This would account in part for this view of the novel being an always unique set of variables.
1.4. Beyond Historical, Convergent and Osmotic Theories

For the most part we have been discussing the evolution of the novel, but such an evolutionary idea still leaves many questions unanswered and it is necessary to investigate further the paradox of the idea of the novel as a form of fiction linked to realism. A historical theory that romances became realistic thus becoming novels is very limiting. An osmotic theory, that changes in society were absorbed by literature, bringing about the appearance of the novel is partly true but equally reductive. The convergent theory that various types of narrative link to create the novel has an element of truth in it but oversimplifies. All three are to a certain extent valid and considered together offer a convincing explanation of how the novel appeared. However, the exact nature and continuing development of the novel require a more satisfactory explanation which is available in an alternative, oppositional theory which encompasses them all. More will be said of this a little later.

The abiding factor which seems constant in the development of the novel is that realism and changes in attitude towards it have brought about the major changes in the novel since its beginnings. A little more should be said about it. Robert Alter writes:

... the realistic enterprise has been enormously complicated and qualified by the writer's awareness that fictions are never
real things, that literary realism is a tantalising contradiction in terms. If modern philosophy can be said to begin with Descartes's methodological skepticism, his making ontology essentially problematic, a whole tradition of the novel, as the paradigmatically modern narrative genre, is informed by that same critical philosophical awareness, beginning about half a century before Descartes with Cervantes. Ontological critique in the novel, moreover, is carried on typically not as discursive exposition but as a critical exploration through the technical manipulation of the very form that purports to represent reality. (1975 x)

From this, it seems that to attribute ontological critique solely to postmodernism is a little premature in that Alter dates it back as far as Cervantes. However, he is distinguishing different kinds of ontological critique, the former, discursive exposition, which we could relate explicitly to metafiction, and the latter, technical manipulation of the form (critical exploration), which can be associated with any self-conscious work, virtually all good novels coming into this category. This latter kind of ontological critique is also a form of metafiction, which suggests that metafiction as such is not exclusively postmodern but a feature of many so-called traditional novels.

Alter does mention specifically a kind of self-conscious novel which are "purposeful experiments with
form . . . [intended] to draw our attention to fictional form as a consciously articulated entity rather than a transparent container of real contents"(x). This seems to create a dichotomy between consciously experimental, or postmodern, metafictional novels and the kind of novel which belongs to the traditional ideology of the literary canon as described by F.R. Leavis in *The Great Tradition*, with its quasi marxist critical view of a bourgeois society, its changes and its effects on the individual. This is the kind of literature which accepted the realistic fallacy which has been so strongly reacted against in recent times. However, Leavis describes a very limited canon in a very reductive manner and fails to appreciate that writers were struggling with and reacting against it even in the nineteenth century. Moreover, if the source (not to say model) of the novel is in Cervantes, then ontological critique, metafiction and literary doubleness were already there.

This reference to Leavis brings us back to the question of the canon and literary poetics. Walter L. Reed states that "once written down, the unwritten poetics loses its collective, historical character; an actual set of general habits is transformed into an ideal set of specific rules" (1981 3). This is what happened with Leavis’s book, where he believed himself to be writing down what writers thought themselves to be writing. However, the novel has always resisted this kind of codification and what is a more valid approach is to see that "the modern novel, . . . from Cervantes
to our time, could be described as an outsider model that writers insist on regarding as essentially incompatible with the passage from an unwritten poetics to an official system of genres" (Guillen 1971 127). So that the novel as an outsider, a phenomenon that places itself in opposition to tradition and rather than being able to submit it to a specific definition, the novel’s essence should be seen as "the idea of a novelty confronting literary tradition" (Reed 1981 3). The novel can be seen as essentially opposing conventional forms of literature and is suspicious of them and of the canon. Effectively, the tradition of the novel can be summed up in its antitradiationalness. Reed puts it this way: "From Don Quixote onwards the novel has adopted an antagonistic stance both toward the literary canon and toward its own precursors" (4). This is the basis of the oppositional theory of the novel and allows us to see the postmodern novel as clearly part of this antitradiational tradition. Moreover, the novel actually becomes involved with and explores fictions that lie outside the literary canon in that there is usually a confrontation between literary fictions and those that come from other aspects of culture: history, politics, science, economics and so on. Note that fictions is the operative word here. That the use of any mode for narrative involves a certain amount of fictionalising, is a point that will be dealt with later. Basically, the novel "[expands] literature's repertoire of forms to achieve a broader representation of life in society" (Reed 7) as well as there being a kind of dialectic
between literature and other existing paradigms in our culture, which is a dialectic that also exists between the novel and literary tradition itself. Reed goes on to put it this way:

the novel characteristically opposes itself to types of literature more traditional than the novel. . . . This is not to say that novelists are not formally indebted to other novelists, but that the rules of the game forbid overt acknowledgement of this debt, except in the form of parody; such is not the case with poetry or drama. (7)

Another part of this oppositional theory is to see the novel as opposing itself to poetics as such in that "theoretical orders of poetics should be viewed, at any moment in their history, as essentially mental codes--with which the practicing writer . . . comes to terms through his writing" (Guillen 1971 390). Curiously, Walter Reed points out three ways in which writers come to terms with poetics which we might be able to regard as corresponding with the kinds of novel Lodge describes.

The first strategy Reed mentions is the "realist strategy of rejection" where the novel places itself within "the real world of non-literary discourse" (11); the second is the fictionalist strategy of incorporation and transcendence where the novel includes examples of other genres and criticism of them; and the third is vulgarization where "popular literature is made to challenge the canonical" (12). As we said this is
reminiscent of Lodge's discussion of non-fiction novels, fabulation and problematic novels, which is a starting point which might allow us to see all of the theories put forward as capable of being considered in the light of an oppositional theory of the novel. However, it should be made clear that not all novels work in this way and many share and respect the literary etiquette of the novel form. In this sense, the coming to terms with poetics or just to what extent the novel is oppositional discourse is something that must vary: it is a question of degree. Moreover, rather curiously, it has become clear that the rise in popularity and prestige of the novel and even the existence of a novelistic canon, has led to film beginning to set itself up in opposition to it. But the novel itself, equally aware of these things has also done so in the form of what some call the postmodernist novel. This ought to be seen in the light of the oppositional theory which would allow us to consider this tendency as part of a continuous development necessarily aware of tradition, poetics and the canon.

In spite of this, to describe the novel, any novel, it is necessary to see it in terms of "the interaction between existing conceptions of literature and nonliterature that are brought critically to bear on the literary" (Reed 13). The novel, as we have suggested, investigates the relation between them; the relation between fiction (appearance) and reality or the relation between literary and non-literary fictions. This is something that has existed since the beginnings of
the novel, particularly in terms of an opposition between modes of discourse, but which has tended to be implicit. For example, many traditional nineteenth century novelists, like Dickens or George Eliot, have made particular use of the language of law, politics and economics within their traditionally conventional Victorian fictions. When novelists came under the influence of postmodern ideology, rather than revolutionise the novel, it seems that they simply made these oppositions and all their ontological implications more explicit. Once more, the question of degree within a clearly continuously developing tradition comes in.

In his book Reed refers to the Russian critic Bakhtin in such a way that it becomes clear that both share similar ideas. Later more will be said about Bakhtin's theories, but basically his idea of the dialogical imagination states that the novel must always stand in opposition to the older poetics of literary tradition, coinciding with what we have already said about Reed.

Perhaps it is necessary to be reminded here that we are attempting to discover in what ways novels were once innovative and to describe the novelistic tradition so that the influence of the postmodernist breakthrough can be seen in its true perspective. So far, it seems that all novels have something to do with reality and our appreciation of it, either admitting the impossibility of representing the real, or searching for new ways in which to do so, but almost inevitably opposing or contesting existing modes of doing so,
literary and other. This makes it less surprising that novel and realism have often been discussed as interchangeable terms.

The novel is essentially tied to realism whenever realism is conceived as more real than literature, since the novel always operates in reaction to literature. However, all realisms as such are naive. They conceive the view from inside one set of categories as natural, all categories outside such a view as unnatural. . . . Novels are not naive in this way. They are always aware of the opacity of cultural categories, which to realists look like windows (realists forget they are looking through something.

(Holquist and Reed 1988 417)

These comments by Michael Holquist and Walter Reed are very enlightening. They look upon the novel as a phenomenon that quotes reality by making use of any existing mode or dialect. This helps to explain the tendency for concepts of realism to change and the ensuing difficulty in codifying the novel. Hence the tendency for the novel to consistently oppose the tradition that has preceded it and the continual amplifying of the modes of discourse that are made use of within this protean form. It is worthwhile to quote extensively from Holquist and Reed’s article here:

When the formal features that inhere in a particular attempt of the novel to oppose a particular set of literary conventions
become, in their turn, canonized, then the novel, to do its work, must become unrealistic--achieve a higher or surrealism, or articulate what was below previous realisms. (417-418)

Once more, this is reminiscent of the explanations Lodge offers for developments in the novel and, to relate it further to what other critics cited have suggested, would explain modernist innovations as described by Daiches or those of the experimental novel (a reaction against the unrealistic mainstream novel) as summarised by Marjorie Boulton in her Anatomy of the Novel, at least in a broader context, and which we will look at later). Of course, it should be made clear that up to this point the emphasis has been on historical and ideological aspects of the novel, perhaps inevitably. As we have said, later we will discuss narratological models, like Gerard Genette's, which, like all good grammars, is intended to be descriptive and all inclusive, allowing even for the transgressions that we find (not only) in the postmodernist novel. Similarly, we shall discuss elements of the novel and technique, or the games authors play, where the fact that the novel is traditionally antitraditional, that it makes use of and expands the range of the canon through parody, burlesque, mixing modes and so on, means that innovation is largely dependent on historical and ideological changes.

These facts are explained away to a large extent in Holquist and Reed's article when they continue their
discussion of attitudes towards realism:

The so-called realism of the novel . . . is an open-ended series of realisms, a series of protocols set forth by novelistic texts in which narrative codes that are traditional or conventional in the contemporary institution of literature confront narrative codes that are perceived as extraliterary: codes of historical explanation, oral anecdote, scientific observation, legal contract, etc. No single code is given its full authority, and the claim of each is contested in the particular resolution of the text. (418)

It is curious to note that virtually the same as has been said of realisms here could be said (and has been said by Linda Hutcheon in her Poetics of Postmodernism) of postmodernist phenomenon. Essentially, what we will discover is that it may not be advisable to speak of postmodernist novels but of novels written and read in the light of a new ideology, which are still novels, not so unlike their predecessors in their antitradiational heterogeneity. Holquist and Reed put it this way:

The novel is . . . particularly susceptible to being read [and written] in the light of various ideologies. A novel is a cracking tower of ideologies, from which different ages and different readerships may draw this or that ideological fraction but in which there always remains more complex substance (crude) to be refined, no matter at what
level a particular reading is extracted.

(419)

In this sense it should be remembered that the traditional novel has always tended to be read traditionally. A revaluation of the origins of the English novel (which is what we are doing here), reading Cervantes and Sterne in particular in the light of this new ideology suggests that even postmodernist novels are like these, the most typical of world literature:

Continually demanding a renewal of its realism, the novel accentuates the ambiguities of literary representation. On the one hand, the objects represented (roads, coins, furniture, bodies, persons) are given an autonomy from the dominant semantic field of the narrative; they signify, but on a different level or plane. On the other hand, the medium of representation (point of view, narrative voice, prose style, the printed page) calls attention to its intermediary role; it dramatizes itself as the bearer of significance. The strategies of such accentuation are diverse, but the novel is a special case of what semiotics calls a staggered system. It is in this sense, in its radical displacements of signifier and signified, that Tristram Shandy is the most typical novel of world literature, as Shklovsky claimed. In its cultivation of imbalance, it is the staggered system par
excellence. (418)
It is curious that the importance of process, of the intermediary role of the medium of representation is emphasised here, as this calling attention to itself is often attributed as being typical of postmodernist writings. Perhaps we should again see this as being a trait of the novel as such which once again varies according to degree and which may be less apparent in more realistic works. Moreover, the above quotation might lead to a view that this idea of displacement suggests, considering the nature of Sterne's novel, formlessness or anarchy, when it has already been stated that convention and form are an indispensable part of the novelistic tradition. However, it is necessary to consider in what ways novels are formal.

It is clear that the novel is a heterogeneous phenomenon as it is also clear that codes or modes of representation (or discourse) from distinct areas of culture are involved. Various modes, literary and non-literary interfere with one another but without any fixed rules as regards how they should interact. However, there are rules for any given mode, which is what makes it recognisable and allows authors to recognise them for the sake of imitation or parody. Holquist and Reed coincide in this respect when they suggest that a certain protocol is observed, but a protocol which is made up of a heterogeneous set of rules for various text acts that do not have to be literary and which are often forgotten for the sake of effect (Holquist and Reed 415). They also put it to the
reader that while other kinds of literature might be studied in terms of the way in which they follow convention and tradition, the novel ought to be studied for what it forgets (417). This is probably just another way of saying that the novel is oppositional discourse:

Ideally conceived, therefore, the history of the novel is the story of a series of narratives which subtend the catalogue of narrative restrictions that successive cultures have imposed on the way a self might be told. (Holquist and Reed 423)

All of this reminds us that the novel, as its name suggests, is always new and always now, and that it should not be judged in terms of spacio-temporal criteria. That is why most of the definitions of the novel that exist are so limiting as they tend to consider a particular stage or phase of the novel as being typical. This is, as we already said, particularly true of realism in the novel, which many considered to be paradigmatic. Moreover, some tendencies in the novel such as modernism as well as postmodernism can be seen as being reactions against what was previously considered to be realistic. As Linda Hutcheon's remarks show, the period of Victorian realism (in spite of the variety and heterogeneity of the period) was a phase that has been looked to as paradigmatic, and as we will suggest that postmodern writers like B.S. Johnson in particular set themselves up in opposition to that paradigm, that realistic fallacy, then we should briefly
ask, in spite of what we consider to be the antitradi
tional or anticonventional nature of the novel just what modern and postmodern writers believed they were reacting against: all of this with a view to suggesting that even traditional novels already included the elements of their more experimental counterparts. After all, it has already been made clear that novel and realism have often been discussed in the past as interchangeable terms and what we may really be discussing is the myth of the postmodernist breakthrough.
1.5. Realism

Although the concept of realism changes from one period or generation to another and what was realistic for one becomes conventional and romantic for another, realism is generally associated with the literary techniques that are characteristic of the nineteenth century. This is probably so, and was made possible because of the nature of that period when values were, apparently, relatively stable. Elizabeth Deeds Ermath explains:

Fictional realism is an aesthetic form of consensus, its touchstone being the agreement between the various viewpoints made available by a text. To the extent that all points of view summoned by the text agree, to the extent that they converge upon the same world, that text maintains the consensus of realism.

(1983 ix-x)

Clearly, the epistemological and ontological preoccupations of modern man have led to a breakdown of that consensus and nowadays we find ourselves in a culture which has never been more heterogeneous and which has reacted strongly against that aesthetic form. But an aesthetic form it is, and it ought to be appreciated that it is simply one convention among many, a convention which came about initially through the reactions we have described already, particularly against romance. In this sense it is not surprising to find that Wallace Martin writes:
The positive terms used to define it are implicit negations of their opposites: realism is not selective, not idealized, not imaginary, not dependent on fate and accidents, not stylized – in short not conventional. (1986 63–64)

However, having initially stated that realism is a convention (or that realisms involve a series of conventions) brings about a (not very) startling discovery that "To admit that realism has any identifiable characteristics of a literary or verbal sort, is to admit that it too is based on conventions, and thus to tamper with its claim to present reality without mediation" (Martin 63–64). Of course, to state that authors were unaware of the mediated nature of the reality they presented would be fallacious, although this was, in fact, what readers and authors allowed themselves to be persuaded to believe, to a certain extent, during this period. As time passed and the fallacious nature of this claim to realism became more apparent and its acceptance less acceptable, the effect gradually became something like this: "That novels should be made of words and merely words, is shocking, really. It's as if you had discovered that your wife was made of rubber . . ." (William Gass Fictions and the Figures of Life in Alter xx). It was not the intention of authors to follow a particular set of rules or conventions, but with time codification did begin, a codification that the novelists themselves began to set themselves in opposition to, but which allows us to
identify particular traits.

Basically, the convention of realism exists in order to give credibility to a text rather than to suggest that what is represented is reality, although that is sometimes the effect and even the intention of the author. The latter case might be considered to be the kind of novel produced by Scott or Trollope, where the use of a biographical or historical mode and the inclusion of real events and even characters, leads the reader to believe in what is taking place, perhaps even beyond the usual limits of suspension of disbelief. The conventions that are required for credibility or suspension of disbelief could be considered as the following: the selection of everyday subject matter, objectivity and natural causality as opposed to chance, fate or providence (Martin 57). Ideologically, this is determined by a commitment to a scientific view of man and society, implying that this kind of novel is more true than others. Clearly, this ideology has been rejected, because of changing attitudes towards reality and realism, although for the sake of credibility, many contemporary authors continue in this tradition.

In order to achieve credibility or realism, what became conventional was to include non-essential reportorial detail. Even the inclusion of apparently meaningless information at random, or simply randomness in the telling of the story (digression, etc.) was evidence that the story really happened (Jakobson 1978 38-46). what also gives this impression is simply the use of the real, that which requires no justification
and depends on this idea of consensus in society that we have already mentioned. This also applies to the author's desire to achieve cultural *vraisemblance* through the use of cultural stereotypes or the inclusion of accepted knowledge. This could be related to what Roland Barthes calls the cultural code of a work (see *S/Z* 1974), where verifiable historical, geographical or other information is referred to.

Jonathan Culler discusses these ideas in his *Structuralist Poetics* (Culler 134-160) and goes on to state that even the literary genres and conventions that an author makes use of allow a further level of naturalisation as they too involve consensus and give greater credibility. What he means is that there is a process of naturalisation brought about by the assimilation of conventions which leads to the reader ignoring or forgetting that they are, in fact, conventions. Consider, for example, the convention of being allowed to enter into the thoughts of a character: this is clearly fictional, but allows the reader to further understand the character's motives and so on, thus making the story more believable:

The conventions with which we feel most comfortable, far from being a detriment to a story's credibility, are the very features that naturalize it and thereby make it believable for us;

and

Fictionality and the access to the consciousness of characters are the primary
conventions on which realistic narrative is founded. There are others of a linguistic nature [too]. (in Martin 69)

According to Culler, an author may also draw attention to devices used in other texts, deeming them artificial, so that any departure from convention would suggest authenticity; and a further level of naturalisation would be the refusal to synthesise different styles or points of view, leaving it up to the reader to make up his mind which one he prefers.

All of these tendencies in realistic fiction thus codified suggest that realistic narratives, in spite of views to the contrary, do depend on convention, although just what kind of conventions will be discussed later. But then, social reality itself involves convention or consensus which would account for, partially, the similarities between historical and fictional narratives. Both show the beginning of a particular situation and show how it leads, finally, to a change in that situation with all events relating to one subject, person or place, and one issue of human interest which explains why things began and ended where they did. Indeed, it is these conventions regarding narratives about the past which allow the possibility of narrative rather than getting in the way of it. In order to appreciate reality, conventional practices are required otherwise all that is left is a sheer mass of facts. This is part of the ideology behind realistic narrative, which depended, not so much on a general agreement about the nature of reality, but required an approximate
consensus as regards the correct rules for communicating. For some, the result is a conformism which avoided the question of reality (although I would not agree on this point) and was really the acceptance of a unitarian, simplistic, communicable reality which, ultimately, has been propagated by those in control of political power (see Lyotard 1984).

However, it is certain postmodernist attitudes that regard realism in this way and its reaction against it, if the reaction has really been against realism, has been an attempt to replace one kind of realism with another. In spite of fabulation, problematic novels and so on, ideologically, the realistic, modern, and postmodern novel are all equally concerned about and faithful to realism. Moreover, the codification of realistic conventions took place a posteriori and does not really consider Victorian realism as a whole at all. There was really no time when conventions were fixed and realists were just as concerned about the working out of the real vs fictitious problem as our contemporaries. The fact that all narratives are essentially fictitious is something to be looked into later, but that Victorian realists were already aware of the nature of the medium that interposed itself between themselves and reality is indubitable. In a very illuminating study of realism, George Levine makes this very clear:

there is a direct historical continuum between the realists who struggled to make narrative meaningful and modern critics who define themselves by virtue of their separation from
realism and even narrativity itself. (1983 4)
The same has to be said of postmodernist critics too, who, with their modern counterparts, set themselves up in opposition to realism but are also part of the continuum (although not all critics agree on this point).

Uncertainty and indeterminancy of meaning, solipsism and other postmodern traits are also revealed in realistic fiction although the Victorians attempted to overcome the problems inherent in confronting reality. This is precisely what distinguishes them from postmodernists like B.S. Johnson who felt that it was impossible to avoid lying or the misrepresentation of reality (Aren’t You Rather Young to be Writing Your Memoirs 1973). He, like other contemporary writers, was more aware of and hindered by the limitations of the novel form and, although he exploited many of its possibilities, his attempts to be faithful to reality tend to testify to the impossibility of doing so. However, realistic writers in the nineteenth century tended to be more optimistic in their attempts to overcome the limitations of form and convention. Levine explains: “Their narratives do not acquiesce in the conventions of order they inherit but struggle to reconstruct a world out of a world deconstructing, like modernist texts, all around them” (1983 4). Unlike the postmodernists, but like the modernists, they considered it possible to bring us closer to “what is not ourselves and not merely language” (Levine 4), although, like both, they were fully aware of just how arbitrary their
constructed order was, in the same way as traditional, romantic texts had been. This is clear in the self-consciousness of eighteenth and nineteenth century narratives where the reader is constantly reminded of this through what modern critics would call metafiction and parody.

The fact that realism was a reaction against romanticism has a lot to do with its unliterary nature, which brings us to talk of conventions that have little to do with literary genres, although these are often parodied and so on, usually to show up their limitations. Hence, the conventions that are recognisable in realistic fiction depend on an ideological commitment to "plausibility and truthfulness" (Levine 7), which means that to a great extent it remains unconventional in literary terms. Moreover, this commitment to the truth means that there is a tension in realistic fiction which is found in some kinds of postmodern novels, a tension between the desire to persuade the reader of the truthfulness of what is written, while constantly reminding him of the nature of what he is reading. Part of this is related to the non-literary nature of the novel, where "[realism is] the representation of experience in a manner which approximates closely to description of similar experience in non-literary texts of the same culture" (Lodge 1977 25). The reader, then, believes, or allows himself to be persuaded, precisely because particular, non-literary conventions are being used in a work of literature, a detail which might suggest a further
insight into the paradoxical nature of the novel and of realism. For similar reasons, novels are often referred to in terms of epithets which originally had very unliterary connotations: historical, biographical, epistolary and so on. However, certain tendencies towards these non-literary modes within the realistic novel began to be considered as hardened conventions and recognised as such by the novelists themselves, in spite of development and disruption. Moreover, we can also find tendencies in the realistic novel, going back as far as Jane Austen, to make use of these non-literary modes within a clearly literary tradition. It is curious that her novels are often referred to in terms of previously existing literary kinds like comedy of manners, and as Levine puts it, "a romance form is required to resolve [her] realistic materials" (1983 139). However, even during the nineteenth century we find that realistic writers tended to criticise the use of hardened conventions taken from romance. Levine quotes George Gissing:

[Realism] merely contrasts with the habit of mind which assumes that a novel is written to please people, that disagreeable facts must always be kept out of sight, that human nature must be systematically flattered, that the book must have a plot, that the story should end on a cheerful note, and all the rest of it. (1983 7)

This reiterates the unconventionality of realism as Victorian writers themselves saw it and suggests that
Realism, as a literary method, can in these terms be defined as a self-conscious effort, usually in the name of some moral enterprise of truth telling and extending the limits of human sympathy, to make literature appear to be describing directly not some other language but reality itself (whatever that may be taken to be); in this effort, the writer must self contradictorily dismiss previous conventions of representation while, in effect, establishing new ones. (Levine 1983 8)

Curiously, this is reminiscent of the idea of the novel as persuasion, while it also suggests that the realistic novel has a great deal in common with both modernism and postmodernism in its rejection of previously existing conventions. It takes us back to the assertion that from realism to modernism there is a continuum. Contrary to what modernists might think, realism was always in process and writers did not believe in any kind of naive realism but were aware of the difference between truth or reality and its representation or appearance. As we have said, that did not prevent them from trying to "embrace the reality that stretched beyond the reach of language" (Levine 1983 12), but that very attempt seems to be what many modern critics have reacted against. Moreover, what Levine ascribes to realistic writers is precisely what modern writers hoped to do. Joyce, Woolf and others did reject previous conventions of representation self consciously in order to tell the truth or describe
reality. It would seem then that the realistic fallacy is not something propagated by the Victorians, but invented and ascribed to them by modernists and postmodernists. This may seem exaggerated, but, to say the least, it should be stated that criticism has had a very narrow and reductive view of the novel's development in the nineteenth century.

Realism can perhaps be differentiated from modernism and postmodernism more readily by identifying a feature that has been overlooked until now: realism depends heavily on the assumption that there is a link between a word and its referent, which leaves it openly threatened by the contemporary awareness of the breach between the text and its referent. It is in this sense that some modern and postmodern writers have taken us beyond realism by showing up the limitations of what is now clearly fallacious. However, as we have seen, many realistic writers were also aware of the fallacy, although the tendency was to try to persuade us that there was a relation between the two.

Briefly, then, realism, like modernism and postmodernism, rejected traditional forms and is antiliterary and therefore antigeneric in its expression. Realists believed that it was possible to articulate experience beyond words and, like the moderns, they struggled with this epistemological problem. Because of this, throughout its development, the realistic novel manifested itself in various literary forms, but there was a continuing tradition of self-consciousness (from Don Quixote on) which
emphasises realism's awareness of other literary forms and the techniques that were required to avoid their and even its own unreality. The self-consciousness became something of a tradition in itself and can be found in most of the major Victorian novelists from Scott, through Thackeray, George Eliot and Dickens to Hardy, and was clearly to be found in their predecessors, Sterne and Fielding. Each of these authors shows an awareness of form and audience and draws particular attention to the nature of their work in its reaction against romance. With some exceptions, particularly Dickens, they were un-ideal, un-romantic, un-poetic, un-sentimental, un-heroic and so on, all of which became the conventional in English fiction: consider Anthony Trollope.

Earlier, we suggested that consensus was a typical trait among realists and indeed their was consensus as to their aim of finding or searching for some coherent and moral idea of reality, but the view of consensus, put forward below by Ioan Williams, is really an ill-informed and mistaken generalisation shared by many critics about the nature of realism formulated in the twentieth century:

there is no doubt that the mid-Victorian novel rested on a massive confidence as to what the nature of reality actually was ... [and] the most fundamental common element in the work of the mid-Victorian novelist ... is probably the idea that human life ... may ultimately be seen as unified and coherent.
(1974 x and 13)
The truth of the matter was that, considering the epistemological dominant of the age (see McHale 1989), realism was an attempt to discover moral order, not to describe it. There seems to be an error, then, involved in the point of view some people have of realism which misinforms their interpretation of the nature of modernism and postmodernism. A little more will be said about that later.

Realistic novelists, like the postmoderns after them (see Lyotard) realised that narrative dominates our vision of the world and struggled with the relationship between their narrative and reality. Realism is connected with modernism in that many novelists, like Thackeray in particular, tried to go beyond existing conventions and were aware of the limitations of their form, the singleness of their vision, the gap between the word and its referent. Thus in Thackeray and others, parody, digression and anti-climax become the norm, tendencies that we usually associate with more contemporary writers. As Gissing would have liked, he refused to satisfy his readers, refused plot, refused to impose the conventions of romance on the developing convention of realism and often drew attention to the fictionality of his work. Therefore, the elements of fragmentation, normally associated with modernism and postmodernism, were already there in Victorian realism. There was metafiction to be found too in the real sense of self-consciousness and instability that we find there as regards our articulation of reality through language.
What we are getting at is that realism clearly can be seen as part of a continuum of antitradition and antiliterariness which has always been preoccupied (like all novels) with the problem of the real. Levine states:

early modern writers [and postmodern writers] detected a complacency, a moralism, an insistence on explaining everything and tying it neatly, a sentimental and self-indulgent impulse from which they had to free themselves. But fresh readings of Victorian fiction constantly turn up subversions of these qualities . . . . (Levine 1983 140)

Here the existence of naive realism has been denied and it has been shown that there are clear links between traditional realism and modernism. However, in spite of its preoccupation with the real, modernism could be said to have brought literariness and art back to the novel with Henry James and his preoccupation for form. The loose baggy monsters that he described are no doubt more realistic, which might explain why some critics and philosophers point to a reaction against High modernism as being the starting point for postmodernism. There were, of course, authors like Trollope who would more easily be the target for criticism from modernists. His kind of fiction would coincide with the conventions we mentioned earlier, where extremes are always avoided, the fiction purports to describe the real world where everything is quotidian and order is conventional and arbitrary. However, this kind of thing is probably more the exception than the rule, and many writers from
Fielding and Sterne onwards were very self-conscious about the strategies of narrative and the fact that they exploited conventions that were at odds with the realism they advocated. What these writers very often convey in their search for realism is an uncertainty about the nature of reality and an awareness of the complexity of their medium. They were aware of pluralism and of their audience and would often disrupt complacency or suspension of disbelief by refusing to follow romantic conventions and order.

Common to all novels, among their many variables, are plot and character, perspective and narrative stance, the struggle between the real and the fictitious, the heroic and the ordinary, the particular and the universal; and it is in these areas that we can most clearly find a continuing sense of development change and discovery. There are distinct ideological stances as we shift from the realistic novel to postmodernism and each period has lent itself to some kind of codification of its significant features by critics, although the sharp distinctions that many would like to draw necessarily depend on oversimplifications as we have already seen. What is common to each period is that it has tended to be anti-traditional and anti-conventional, even anti-heroic and anti-romantic. Since Cervantes, authors have been self-conscious and aware of limitations in point of view, the conventionality of omniscience and intrusive narrators. Therefore, the differences exist perhaps more in the degree to which authors play in these areas and in the underlying
ideology that leads them to do this. It is worthwhile noting what George Levine says about realism in general terms. It could very easily be applied to the novel as such:

realism is not static but progressive. Its history is largely a dialectical one. That is, it moves from parody of a discredited literary mode (thesis-antithesis) to a new imagination of the real . . . , which might be described as a synthesis. This synthesis, however, quickly is perceived as conventional itself and thus subject to further parody . . . .

[T]he kind of synthesis I am talking about (as we can find it in Conrad and later) is no longer safely called realism. It is another stage of the history of the novel, profoundly informed by the realist impulse, yet no longer realism in the sense that the nineteenth century novel might be seen as realistic.

(1983 331)

There is a clear sense of continuum suggested here. There are links that join the realistic to the modern and the modern to the postmodern. All, after all, are trying to be realistic in their own way. Modernists and postmodernists reacted against conventions that were there in realistic fiction, but these conventions were not naively there and the narratives themselves self-consciously contested their own traditions.

Before winding up this section, the work of Roland Barthes should be considered. Although his ideas were
specifically addressed to examples of French realism, they do have some validity as regards what is being discussed here.

Barthes' structuralist views deal largely with the ways in which we encode experience and we can state that the conventions used by realists were sometimes naively adopted in the belief that they were really reflecting reality. Barthes shows that French realists did actually believe that this was the case in his book *Writing Degree Zero* (1967), and then goes on to prove that realism is simply *écriture* or a way of writing. Moreover, this way of writing is not a unique formula for describing the real world, as *écriture* is something which is always dependent on place and time. It is not simply a question of following the correct rules in order to reflect reality. On the contrary, Barthes shows that realism, far from being innocent, shaped reality in order to reflect the established bourgeois scheme of things.

When the bourgeois lifestyle broke down in France, so too did its *écriture*: a particular way of seeing the world gave way to another which was, in turn, reflected in a new kind of *écriture*. However, that new way of writing, as it must always do, also encoded a particular ideology. Although it at first appeared to be the abandonment of style, or no style (consider the example of Ernest Hemingway here), it involved, in fact, the embodiment of a new style or way of writing, all in an attempt to be more realistic.

This fits into the pattern we have been suggesting
already with one idea of realism being replaced by another. Moreover, we could further suggest that the novel, by its very nature, individual and contemporary, tends to be at the forefront of such changes in literature. The fact that there tends to be a delay in the acceptance of such changes and the fact that many writers simply ignore them, would in part account for Barthes terms **writerly** and **readerly**, and we should not forget that, once more, any such changes tend to be of degree. Certainly, the novels which we usually consider important, those which are more in touch with change, and for that reason more innovative, do embody these reactions against a passive acceptance of a given reality. But even those **writerly** texts should be considered as the inheritors of a tradition and we should remember that the changes or innovations we find there have to be, and usually are, considered in terms of existing conventions. Even Hemingway’s **white writing** is innovative only as a response or reaction to existing conventions or an attempt to negate them. Therefore, the gaps and other devices that put an end to our passive acceptance of reality in **writerly** texts can only be appreciated in terms of what we have come to expect, the conventions of **readerly** texts. Curiously, this process we have described as being that which took place in the change from realism to modernism is of the same kind as that which took place in the shift towards what is called postmodernism.

Recalling the kind of changes that David Daiches pointed out in an earlier section, we could say that
they too took place for similar reasons. The realisation that realism is a fallacy, however, was not universal or absolute and, once more, we have to think in terms of degree. One possible way of considering this, and this will be developed later, would be to take into account the changing emphasis as regards areas of significance, or what is related, Barthes' codes. We begin to find that some novels mean in new and different ways and that different forms of signification are experimented with. The modern writer's awareness of epistemological problems (something that many Victorians were also aware of) has to do with the appreciation of the break in the relation between language and its referent as well as putting an end to the absolutist kind of writing which presupposed a shared world and values. The consequences of this are that points of view become more limited, presentation becomes more indirect, significance is more elusive and is less referential, the author disappears and the reader of these new writerly texts experiences, very often, a sense of incompleteness, disappointment, even a sense of the rules having been broken. Moreover, he is left asking questions, all of which makes him much more aware of the nature of what he is reading. In discussing narratology and categories of discourse we will find how many of these changes are brought about.

There is one further point worth mentioning here, which is that with the disappearance of the author in the reaction against traditional realism described by Barthes, the kind of writerly texts that were produced have been seen to deny the reader the possibility of a
final authoritative interpretation. It is curious that this lack of authority will also be seen to be a facet of some postmodernist narratives although, in their case, this ironically coincides with the return of the authorial voice in yet another reaction which involves a further development in attitudes towards realism.

All in all, what Levine, Barthes and others have said up to now about realism and attitudes towards it is clearly related to what is called an oppositional theory of the novel, which leads us to further discussion of this idea.
1.6. The Novel as Oppositional Discourse

We said that the theory of the novel as oppositional discourse was an alternative to other theories and that, basically, it sees the novel as opposing itself to the rules of other genres and poetics, so that, at the onset of codification, novelists set themselves in opposition to their form through parody, the incorporation and mixing, or invention of forms. This tendency to see the novel in terms of generic rules and poetics is echoed by Victor Shklovsky when he says that all aspects of narrative are formal elements (in Lemon and Reis 1965 5-24 and Martin 47). He states further that the history of narrative is the history of a continual making strange. This is certainly not a new idea since Dr Johnson described poetry as making strange things familiar and familiar things strange, but Shklovsky’s formalist leanings lead him to view the novel as the “history of the elaboration, complication, simplification and reversal of a few basic laws of literary structure” (in Martin 47). For this reason, the novel lends itself and tends towards parody, parody which is the first stage in this making strange, by exposing literary conventions. Everything in the novel for him is a question of form or technique and defamiliarisation takes place also in plot (plausible, implausible), character (up or down the scale) and in the use of non-fictional modes (memoirs, biography, and so on). Moreover, it is this process of defamiliarisation that brings about the constant renewal
in the novel, although this view tends to ignore the social and cultural changes we have previously mentioned.

Bakhtin is of a similar opinion but sees narrative as, rather than defamiliarising the world, defamiliarising different ways of talking about the world, and calls attention to how different kinds of non-fictional writing are absorbed into fictional narrative. He writes:

The novel parodies other genres (precisely in their role as genres); it exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language; it squeezes out some genres and incorporates others into its own peculiar structure, reformulating and re-accentuating them. ("Epic and Novel" 1981 5)

This would explain the indeterminate nature of the novel and its openedendedness and he goes on to account for this in terms of the novel's relation to epic. Whereas the epic and the world of epic is of tradition, absolute past, heroization and hierarchy (which is a similar assertion to that of Arnold Kettle as regards romance), the novel describes events on the same time and value plane as ourselves; it comes from personal experience or is a personal evaluation of things. It is inevitably contemporary and for our contemporaries. Heroic distance is completely lacking, language is further from the rhetoric of other literary forms and closer to everyday modes of expression. The novel tends toward parody and is closely related to low-literature in avoiding the
heroic or extraordinary or just making heroes look ordinary. Formally, the author is in an area of contact with the world he is depicting (28), whereas in the epic, the absolute past is dealt with in its completeness and wholeness, meaning that, as it is a known past, there is no need for an ending. The epic view is externalised and complete with no development, and audience, author and characters all coincide in their view. This is not so in the novel, where the need for an ending, the impulse to continue and find out what happens next is always there.

Bakhtin sums up his findings as follows:

The present in all its openendedness, taken as a starting point and center for artistic and ideological orientation is an enormous revolution in the creative consciousness of man. (38)

He then states that this reorientation is generically expressed in the changes that took place between classical antiquity and Hellenism and later between the late middle ages and the Renaissance. In this latter aspect he once more coincides with Arnold Kettle. By this time all the basic elements of the novel were in existence and the existing genres were complete and even old fashioned, embodying an ancient hierarchy. However, the novel's origins ultimately lie in folklore and, from the very beginning, developed as a genre that had at its core a new way of conceptualizing time. The absolute past tradition, hierarchical distance played no
role in the formation of the novel as a genre
(such spatiotemporal categories did play a
role, though insignificant, in certain periods
of the novel's development, when it was
slightly influenced by the epic---for example
in the Baroque novel). The novel took shape
precisely at the point when epic distance was
disintegrating, when both the world and man
were assuming a comic familiarity, when the
object of artistic representation was being
degraded to the level of a contemporary
reality that was inconclusive and fluid. (38)

According to Bakhtin, it is this direct contact with
present day reality and the lack of any notion of
absolute past that makes the novel the novel. This leads
to a sense of inconclusiveness in a form that gives
itself up to personal experience and the freedom of the
creative imagination. Because of its contemporary
nature, then, it was essentially different from
completed genres and no rules existed to govern its
interrelation with them. Because of the influence of the
novel the novelization of the rest of literature is also
taking place, which curiously might be another way of
seeing the effect of postmodernism on literature. In the
end,

The novel, after all, has no canon of its own.
It is, by its very nature, not canonic. It is
plasticity itself. It is a genre that is ever
questing, ever examining itself and subjecting
its established forms to review. Such, indeed,
is the only possibility open to a genre that structures itself in a zone of contact with developing reality. (39)

Openended, anti-hierarchical, contemporary, anti-traditional, personal, inconclusive, imaginative, anti-canonic, auto-critical, self-aware, self-parodic, anti-conventional: these are all terms that sum up to a large extent much of what has been said about the novel as oppositional discourse, even in its realistic phase. It is a form which exists in opposition to other genres as well as to itself; it is self-consciously preoccupied with reality/ies and ways of representing them, or it manifests its inability to do so. Its contemporary nature makes it particularly subject to ideological changes and its close contact and preoccupation with reality (either in its desire for referentiality or a denial of it) means that it typically makes use of modes of expression from other areas of culture or, in the latter case, parodies them to highlight their limitations.

Curiously, this throws an interesting light on the question of tradition and innovation in the novel which ought to be mentioned here. That is, if the novel is constantly renewing itself, in what do its innovations consist? It seems that the novel, in setting itself up in opposition to or contesting existing tradition, simply becomes a genre that can be described as tending to breach or parody existing conventions rather than inventing new ones. Its originality then, at least formally, depends on its awareness of convention and an
appropriate breach or parody of it. In this sense, modernism and postmodernism once more can be seen as part of a developing continuum, although we ought to mention that the range of the novel has been extended by becoming more inclusive in terms of the modes it incorporates or parodies.

Curiously, some writers who we consider postmodern have been aware of just how lacking in originality the novel is. Paradoxically, the originality of some of these authors depends precisely on an exploration of the limitations of the novel. In "The Literature of Exhaustion," by John Barth, (in Bradbury 1977 79-81) the title itself gives us an insight into his view of the state of the novel, that it has all been done before. However, he is not pessimistic about this situation and sees the task of the novel consisting in, as he says Jorge Luis Borges puts it, annotating existing literature. Flann O'Brien's narrator in At Swim-Two-Birds is of a similar opinion:

In reply to an enquiry, it was explained that a satisfactory novel should be a self-evident sham to which the reader could regulate at will the degree of his credulity. . . . Characters should be interchangeable as between one book and another. The entire corpus of existing literature should be regarded as a limbo from which discerning authors could draw their characters as required, creating only when they failed to find a suitable existing puppet. The modern
novel should be largely a work of reference. Most authors spend their time saying what has been said before - usually said much better.

(1967 25)

Once again, that it has all been said before comes through and the idea that the novel should be a work of reference drawing on existing literature is very postmodern. Here, innovation consists only in drawing attention to fictionality and playing with suspension of disbelief, which we have already identified as features that can occur in realistic novels. Of course, this oversimplifies things and the development of the postmodernist novel will be discussed later in terms of these remarks, but what stands out is simply the link between innovation and tradition, with innovation being to some extent simply the putting of existing forms and conventions to new use, or placing them in new relationships, which in turn emphasises the fictionality of the work. In a sense, this is what happens throughout the history of the novel, not only in its development since postmodernism. The novel, as we have said, is oppositional discourse. Even Alain Robbe-Grillet, one of the founders of the nouveau roman is aware to what extent the innovative novel is dependent on tradition. He has this to say about it:

The minds best disposed to the idea of a necessary transformation, those most willing to countenance and even to welcome the values of experiment, remain, nonetheless, the heirs of a tradition. A new form will always seem
more or less an absence of any form at all, since it is unconsciously judged by reference to the consecrated forms. (1989 17)

And he goes on to state that "[i]t is impossible for him [the writer] to escape altogether from this tradition of which he is the product"(18). This once again shows the contradictory nature of the novel, in its antitraditionalness, in its nature as oppositional discourse, reacting against supposed conventionality but still markedly the product of a tradition. The realistic novel, modernism and postmodernism are all part of this ongoing trend.

B.S. Johnson, while advocating the need for innovation in the novel, also suggests that the tendency is to make use of existing materials, albeit in new ways. In Aren't You Rather Young to be Writing Your Memoirs, he makes his position regarding the novel clear although he partly contradicts himself. He believed that the nineteenth century novel was an exhausted form and rather criticised it for its fictionality. His great desire was for truth but felt that telling stories is telling lies. He wrote:

The novelist cannot legitimately or successfully embody present-day reality in exhausted forms. If he is serious, he will be making a statement which attempts to change society towards a condition that he considers to be better, and he will be making at least implicitly a statement of faith in the evolution of the form in which he is working.
Both these aspects of making are radical; this is inescapable unless he chooses escapism. Present day reality is changing rapidly, it always has done, but for each generation it appears to be speeding up. Novelists must evolve (by inventing, borrowing, stealing or cobbling from other media) forms which will more or less satisfactorily contain an everchanging reality. (1973 16-17)

This coincides with what has been said earlier and while it intends to describe what the new novel should do, it really explains the nature of the novel as it has always been: inventing, borrowing, stealing, cobbling and, of course, evolving. The novel is clearly part of and dependent upon its tradition, even when that tradition is antitraditional, and while it opposes or contests previous forms, it makes use of them and other media in order to evolve.
1.7. The Nature of Narrative: Fiction v Fact

Up to now, our rather broad definition of the novel has stuck to the basic idea of it being a fictional prose narrative. However, as we have already seen, David Lodge explained the recent tendencies of the novel towards non-fiction, fabulation or a mixture of the two. This would seem to invalidate the idea of the novel as essentially a work of fiction. However, we ought to consider B.S. Johnson’s idea that telling stories is telling lies. This would seem to suggest that in spite of the existence of faction and in spite of Johnson’s personal desire for the truth, stated simply, all narrative is, or has necessarily to be, fiction. In his *Elements of Fiction*, Robert Scholes refers to this fact and states that irrespective the number of corroborable facts, any narrative must fictionalise the events that it recounts. He explains that fact is a thing done and that fiction is a thing made and that any narrative of events must necessarily become a story or a fiction in order to survive or continue to exist (1968 1-4). Moreover, the major points of reference that he emphasises in the spectrum of narrative: history, realism, romance and fantasy; suggest once again the question of the degree to which narratives attempt to be faithful to referential truth or fact or that which is true in terms of ideas (1968 6-9).

Johnson deals with the problem of fact and fiction in the same essay we quoted above when he refers to the need for selection, omission, a beginning, an ending and
so on. In fiction, all these elements tend to be taken for granted, but it may not be quite so clear when we refer to other forms of narrative, like history, which, as we said already, resembles the novel precisely in its having a beginning, an ending, selecting material relevent to a particular theme, character and so on. The point we are trying to make here is that if it is the tendency of man to narrativise reality in his attempt to represent it, then he must necessarily fictionalise it too. It has been said already that Johnson realised this, and he incorporates these ideas within the structure of *See the Old Lady Decently*, as well as elsewhere, when he juxtaposes factual accounts, fictional inventions and historical statement in order to emphasise their essentially narrative, conventional and, therefore, fictional nature. The fact that the novel *borrows* and *cobbles* from other media, or can do, must lead us to suppose that descriptions of experience in non-literary texts (historical, biographical, even scientific), in spite of their desire to represent reality, due to the imposssibility of avoiding conventionality, among other things, are essentially fictitious.

To fully understand the nature of the novel and to clarify these comments about fiction and narrative, it will be useful to think in terms of speech act theory. Basically, speech act theory shifts attention from what is true and real to how utterances mean and what conventions are involved. Essentially, it is believed that fictional utterances mean in the same way ordinary
utterances do but are not real but pretended assertions, this difference depending on the intention or attitude of the speaker or writer. But while fictional discourse fails to observe the rules of assertive utterances in other kinds of discourse and is not committed to truth, there is no intention to deceive. At the same time, we find that fiction makes use of utterances taken from other kinds of discourse. This is related to the fact that there are many genuine and corroborable statements in a fiction and it is often impossible to distinguish genuinely referential material from pretended utterances. From this point of view, then, there is no intrinsically fictional discourse (although certain allowable utterances in fiction like Now, it was midnight cannot exist in other kinds of discourse).

Novels, then, are narratives where non-fictive writing acts, like history and biography, are imitated and the non-existence or falsity of what is described is irrelevant. Curiously, by a kind of mutual consent between reader and writer, language is allowed to mean what it usually means. This itself is dependent upon convention and is not quite the same as lying. In fact, fiction is more sophisticated because it does not intend to deceive. So, the novel is a narrativised description of different varieties of experience in which speech acts/writing acts, genuine or pretended are used. Essentially, no real difference should be attributed to these utterances whether they appear in a factual or a fictional work. Their existence within a narrative system results in a temporally organised world which
must always be essentially fictional. This would account for the problems that many authors, like B.S. Johnson, have encountered in their desire to be truthful. In Johnson's work, we find a certain pessimism, and even desperation, at not being able to overcome the barrier which is the medium in which he works. This results in his rejection of persuasion in favour of what is, at times, an admission of defeat or the impossibility of being factual.

What is being suggested here, then, is that the kind of writing acts that we find in fiction, non-fiction and fabulation are essentially the same, although how they are used and juxtaposed, and the degree to which parody and so on are involved often draw attention to their fictionality (or not) to a lesser or greater extent. That is, that all narratives are fictions, although they may be true, and that, in the development of the novel, both fabulation and faction make use of the same kind of speech acts. What distinguishes them is how these writing acts are used, combined and juxtaposed, which will draw attention to, or minimise, the fact v fiction problem. What is available to the authors of different kinds of narrative is the same: they all make use of the speech or writing acts that belong to already existing forms of expression, both literary, if there is such a thing as literary language, and non-literary.

We could say that some contemporary or postmodern novels in fact investigate the relation between factual and fictional utterances, where metafictional narratives
find themselves compelled to state explicitly or implicitly that the narrative is make believe due to the essential sameness of factual and fictional utterances.

To account for the difference between factual and fictional utterances some theorists have spoken of appropriateness conditions, non-referentiality or non-predication theories (that is, there is no world beyond the utterance and only the context created by the language), or that when naming fictional characters it is different from referring to existing persons (that is, the illocutionary force changes). However, metafiction shows that the circumstances of context, referentiality or the existence of a predicate require explicit explanation due to the essential lack of difference between any factual and fictional utterances.

What is clear up to now is the complexity of the novel form: its preoccupation with reality and ways of talking about reality; its antitraditional nature; that it allows itself to make use of diverse kinds of utterance; that it is always contemporary and, hence, particularly susceptible to ideological change, continually adopting, adapting and rejecting conventions and techniques from other media, both literary and non-literary. However, what is even more curious about the novel is that throughout its development, and in the present, it continues to make use of already existing available forms and material. The realistic novel attempted to imitate reality, or at least represent it, but what it actually does, after the fashion that Lodge explains (1977 25), is imitate already existing speech
or writing acts taken from diverse modes of expression. The same is true of the novel as such, although some novels play with this fact and even draw attention to the limitations of the mode they adopt. However, more will be said about that later.
2. Narratology and the Elements of the Novel: Introductory Remarks

Earlier we mentioned that each novel could be considered as a unique set of variables. This is an opinion with which we coincide, but Bradbury does not specify what these variables are, nor does he mention if there are any constant factors or to what extent there may be variety (1973 280). In this section, some time will be dedicated to this problem in order to clarify precisely what the elements of the novel are; which are constant, which are variable, and so on. What will become clear is that the ideological shifts that have already been apparent in the previous section have an effect on the variables that authors make use of and on how they do so.

When we look through existing criticism, it is curious to find that most critics more or less coincide as regards what makes a novel, although the elements they mention could often be associated with other kinds of discourse and the particular uses that typify the novel are not often made clear. This takes us back to the oversimplified definitions that were mentioned earlier which gave a first insight into what we might find. That the novel is a fictional prose narrative relevant to life and experience, representing character and embodying some organising principle is a good starting point, but, as we have seen, it is a definition that could be attributed equally to other kinds of narrative like biography and history and tells us very
little about the nature of the novel as such (remember
histories and biographies are also made and are
therefore fictions).

It is worth mentioning here that narratology also
involves the isolation of elements of the novel and, in
deed, there is a distinct overlap in terms of the
concepts dealt with in more traditional theories of
narrative. That is because it is possible to describe
the variables of the novel in many different terms,
which suggests that it is necessary to see it from
different perspectives in order to fully appreciate the
variety and complexity of the form.

Getting back to the point, it needs to be said that
a list of elements of the novel would be to a certain
extent arbitrary and involve what some may consider to
be omissions. However, the point here is to make it
clear that those variables that Bradbury mentions are
not really variables at all, but that they are
constants which, to one degree or another are emphasised
or not; determined, overdetermined, underdetermined or
non-determined in any given text. That is, that the
variety does not depend on the elements that can be
found there, but on the way in which and the degree to
which the author takes advantage of available
alternatives.

We have already seen that there are many kinds of
narrative and many kinds of novel and that the novel has
more or less made use of just about every mode of
narrative expression we can think of. Let us say, then,
that that is one variable in the novel, but one that has
already been considered, although in very broad terms, and to which we will return later. Variables could also be considered as being, let us use Frye's terminology, the tendency to work within the distinct areas of novel, confession, anatomy or romance (1971 33-67). But that brings us back to more or less the same territory, in that the novel is seen as existing in close contact with different modes of narrative expression and can make use of them virtually as it pleases. However, there are certain aspects of the novel which are generally considered to be omnipresent, or one might say common denominators, although the degree to which any given author might take advantage of them varies, and this is what we will go into shortly.

To this end it might seem necessary to become rather arbitrary, although the existing body of criticism tends to coincide with the elements that we will later mention. Having established that the novel is (always) a fictional narrative, although not necessarily in prose, many more distinguishing features ought to be mentioned. These can be described in many different ways, which should not be confused with stylistic devices or the games that authors play. This aspect of the novel will occupy us later. However, there are easily identifiable attitudes towards this question which we hope to synthesise in this section.

As we have said it is all too easy to begin to subdivide the novel in an arbitrary form and consider each part of the structure in terms of its relationship to plot, description, character, point of view,
verisimilitude, suspension of disbelief, organising principle and so on, but we will find that the categories and terminology used here, although they may not refer explicitly to any given item in this list, are inclusive. Effectually, the Barthesian theory of codes is an extension of this form of looking at narrative, and to consider the referential, proaeretic, semic, hermeneutic and symbolic codes as covering all possible aspects of a novel is legitimate. Recent theories in narratology go much further in creating schemes that allow us to describe any narrative in terms of the same terminology. The importance of this aspect of criticism rests mainly in the fact that it allows us to pinpoint the areas, or zones, of emphasis in any given work, albeit on a primary level. Curiously, the tendency is then to look at the nature of the narrative structure in terms of what is considered allowable or not. As a particular frame, scheme or structure has to be created in any given narrative, the extent to which the text follows its own rules or not is of interest. It is in this area that we often find the significant alterations, exceptions or transgressions in what has become known as the postmodernist novel. In fact, the novel usually makes choices that allow us to consider it as a single structure, and even implies that there are no alternatives, that these choices are inevitable. To break the frame suggests choices that go beyond the single structure, drawing attention to the process involved, the existence of alternatives and sometimes even denying the possibility for a definitive or
authoritative narrative.

Prior to going on to talk of the existence or not of rules and conventions in literary narratives, it is worthwhile remembering the Barthesian idea that there are no innocent forms of writing and that écritures are ways of encoding experience according to a particular ideology or way of seeing reality. We will talk about codes and the degree to which they are determined later as being indicative of these ways of seeing, but here, suffice it to say that terms like the frame or predispositions of the text are closely related to the idea that we do encode experience and that conventions and rules are required in order to do so.

As we have suggested, there is a great deal of criticism dealing with this area of study and many different theories as regards the nature of narrative. Prior to establishing the nature of the alternatives that are always available within the limits of rhetoric and, of course anti-rhetoric, it would be worthwhile summarising just in what ways we can talk about narrative. We might briefly suggest that most critics tend to see narrative in terms of communicative functions, categories of discourse (like mood, time and voice), narrative situations, narrative levels, elements of story (existents and events), narrative schema, rhetorical rules, rhetorical distance, codes, modes and so on. To elaborate on any or all of them would require a great deal of space, because of which it is necessary to isolate their commonalities and suggest a model, or combination of models, for analysis that would provide
an acceptable synthesis of them all or at least allow us to cover all the relevant data. Let us now briefly outline some of the most relevant points.

An influential model is Jakobson's six communicative functions: referential, emotive, phatic, conative, metalinguual and poetic; which we will find are incorporated into the model we will suggest. It should be made clear that as well as being possible in any communicative act, any of these are also possible in any given narrative act. That is to say that the orientation or the emphasis of the addressee, or narrator, towards the context, himself, contact, his addressee, the communicative code or his message, or any combination of them is optional and any alternative chosen is a legitimate possibility (Jakobson 1960). We find that the same kind of thing is true of the Barthesian codes in that the narrative act may equally relate to or emphasise, action, referentiality, meaning, time the symbolic code or any permutation of them (Barthes S/Z 1974). That which is considered significant in the text, however, is very often related to a tendency to make use of a particular function or refer to a particular code with greater frequency, or, on the other hand, fail to do so with the expected frequency, the notion of expectation being one that we will go into a little later. Christine Brooke-Rose discusses this aspect of the novel in A Rhetoric of the Unreal: Studies in Narrative and Structure, especially of the fantastic, where the terms she uses refer to the determination, over-determination, under-determination, or non-
determination of a particular code or function (1981). This underlines what we have just said, which is that reference to any given area within the narrative is a question of alternatives and degree, where reader expectation plays a large part, and where any given emphasis or lack of emphasis might be considered as a breach of rhetoric or the accepted rules for a narrative text. Significantly, Brooke-Rose considers the refusal to follow the rules as something very old and relates it to the anti-style or anti-rhetoric known as the Baroque, which she later attributes to the nouveau roman, according to Robbe-Grillet, as typical (1981 Ch. 12). Perhaps we could consider these breaches of the rules as dependent on an already existing tacit agreement or consensus as regards etiquette or proportion (see Boulton 1975 163-64), although it should be made clear that such breaches have, as Brooke-Rose points out, always existed. In due course we will find that our model takes most of these points into consideration. However, one further point should be made.

We mentioned Jakobson's six functions a moment ago, and later we will find that they are all virtually included within Genette's narrative functions as well as being considered, more or less, in Barthes' codes. However, there is one point in which a difference of opinion could be suggested. The poetic function of language is not really a function at all, but an effect which is the result of particular uses of language in any of the other given functions. A poetic effect can be achieved not only within the functions that Jakobson
mentions, but also through any of the functions that exist within narrative. It is curious that Genette’s narrative functions do not include a poetic or literary function, and it ought to be suggested that particular uses of language within any given area of significance (or Barthesian code), or within the bounds of any particular narrative function achieve these poetic effects. That is why this aspect of narrative will be dealt with within a section dealing with particularly literary activities such as the games authors play. But before that we should return to the idea of there being rules of rhetoric and so on in narrative.
2.1. The Rules of the Game

As we said, a little more could be said here about this idea of there being rules. The fact is that it is possible to think of narrative, or any communicative act as a kind of game governed by particular rules. That is not to say that we should think solely in terms of the games authors play but in terms of the extent to which the author follows convention (which allows communication in the first place). Convention largely determines the expectations of the reader, but at the same time the author himself lays down his own rules in his work by adopting a particular point of view, using a particular tense and so on. In a sense, these things implicitly establish limits for the narrative structure because of which the refusal to remain within these limits or breaking the frame could be expected to produce a variety of effects. What this brings about could be seen simply in terms of disappointment of expectations, anti-climax or the short-circuit which David Lodge describes in his *The Modes of Modern Writing* (1979 220-45). This kind of short circuit has metafictional implications in that it draws attention to the frame as such as well as making us aware of the fiction as fabrication or construct, and the point that should be made here is that the overall effect of this kind of infringement of the rules in a narrative can begin to take on thematic significance.

At this point it is necessary to consider the nature of the game, if there is one, and its
significance, as well as considering just what its rules are, prior to finally isolating the elements of the novel in a working narratological model. It ought to be reiterated that all writers are the inheritors of a tradition of which the most innovative writers are most aware. In fact, it would not be too much of a paradox to suggest just that: that an awareness of tradition is necessary for innovation. On consideration, it becomes clear that innovation and experimentation can only exist when considered in terms of that which it is not. That is, innovation and experimentation may take us beyond or negate the conventions or the rules, but at the same time they imply the existence of the rule they undermine. The effect is that we are aware of the rule as we are of its contravention. We must assert, therefore, that rules, or conventions, in narrative are constants where variety consists in the contravention of them, or simply playing with the possibilities of foregrounding, or not, alternatives which are always available.

Without going into any depth as regards the rules for narrative structure, Peter Hutchinson considers the problem. He doubts whether it is possible to consider the existence of rules in literary games, but does say that "[t]here are certainly traditions that are commonly adhered to, but the flouting of tradition has been well established in literature since Sterne's Tristram Shandy. Of all games known to man, those in literature would seem to rely on rules the least" (1983 5). But this itself implies that there are some kind of rules
for narrative as the flouting of tradition suggests that the tradition, that is, rules and conventions, exist. Moreover, the breaking of rules has always been possible in literature and, from what we have said about the novel's history and ideology, it seems to be virtually the norm. In fact the essence of literature is this idea of play, not only as regards literary games, like pun, metaphor or parody, but we can see narrative as if it were, like other games, "the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles" (Bernard Suits The Grasshopper. Games, Life and Utopia 1978 41). This would encompass the implicit acceptance of suspense, the desire to find out what happens next and so on without turning to the final page. Hutchinson speaks of the "techniques by which authors manipulate material in order to surprise, confound or delight and, above all, to defeat reader expectations" (1983 10): it is in this that the reading of literature in general and the novel in particular constitutes a kind of game. One simple point to support this assertion would be to consider this idea of defeating or disappointing reader expectations. This firstly implies the existence of these expectations, which presupposes the existence of the expected, which has to be governed by conventions or, more simply, rules.

We have mentioned two concepts here: play and game; and it is necessary to distinguish the two. The idea of play in the novel is usually considered as something arbitrary where the very absence of rules allows its possibilities. However, if the tendency is to see the
novel in terms of its tradition and conventions, then it is in this that the rules of the game consist. That is, that the novel as a game has its rules (conventions and tradition), but the possibility for play is available. One kind of play is when rules are not observed, or contravened, another is simply when the author plays with language, which will be dealt with in the corresponding section. Hutchinson puts it this way:

A 'game' traditionally suggests 'rules' or 'conventions'; such concepts are indeed recognizable in certain literary games, but 'play' does not imply such conventions. In broad historical terms, 'play' is clearly the precursor of all games. (1983 14)

Throughout the development of the novel, what we perceive is a tendency towards play which, once these tendencies have been accepted into the canon, become a regular part of the game. This might be the case of some conventions that we find in the novel. However, as the dialogic imagination of the novelist, or his tendency to maintain some kind of dialectic with tradition within his narrative tends to be the norm, what we might say is that play, in the form of travesty, if not a rule of the game itself, is a ploy that is considered legitimate. Basically, what we find again is that, at least this kind of play depends on the author's awareness of existing rules or conventions. But there is more to be said about their nature.

While convention plays a large part in any narrative text, there are other predispositions which
are laid down by the text itself. The adoption of a particular mode of discourse, narrator, chronology and so on, within, or not, the expected conventional norms of realistic writing creates a series of expectations in the reader, the disappointment of which can be considered as a part of play. Wolfgang Iser has written of this implied reader who embodies “all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect – predispositions laid down, not by an empirical outside reality, but by the text itself” (The Act of Reading 1978 34). Hutchinson states that this means that “[t]he game element ... breaks away from the norm of realistic writing already established in a text (or, if all elements of that text are playful, then the text as a whole breaks with the norm of realistic discourse)” (13). It seems, therefore, that the conventions of realism are those that constitute the rules for the game, which confirms what we have already said about the kind of play involving that which is not the norm at the level of narrative. Moreover, it seems that game and play ought to be considered in terms of the changing attitudes towards realism with what might have been considered as playful for one generation having been assimilated by tradition for another.

Roland Barthes considers the idea of playfulness when he speaks of readerly and writerly texts (S/Z 1974). The former is traditional precisely because of its lack of playfulness: it follows the rules of the game by not drawing attention to them. It is in this way that we ought to consider games at the level of
narrative structure. When the writer plays at this level, it is done in order to draw attention to the narrative structure itself. This is basically metafictional in its effect and is a tendency among some modern and most postmodernist writers. That is, that kind of play takes on thematic significance.

Hutchinson clarifies the nature of the literary game further when he writes that it may be seen as any playful, self-conscious and extended means by which an author stimulates his reader to deduce or to speculate, by which he encourages him to see a relationship between different parts of the text, or between the text and something extraneous to it. A narrower form of game is represented by the more precise modes in which the author can stimulate reader reaction, by allusions, puns, quotations, etc. which present a specific form of challenge to the intellect. (14-15)

In a sense, it is the former, the kind of game which encourages the reader to become aware of something extraneous to the text (convention and tradition) or allows him to notice the relation between the different parts of the text (the defeating of expectations according to the predispositions laid down within the text) that constitute the narratological ploys that interest us here. The latter can be considered rather as linguistic devices or literary games that will be discussed later. However, it should be clear now that narrative does depend to a great extent on there being
rules and it is how to describe these rules that will occupy us. The limits that are imposed on an author and the limits that he imposes on himself exist and it is when the author transgresses these limits or undermines them in any way that we effectively become aware of them. Moreover, this is something that can happen not only in postmodernist fiction but in any narrative, although it tends to be more frequent in the former.

Conventions and forms, then, are important in literary texts and various effects can be produced by conforming to or deviating from them. At the same time we find that works of literature often make use of discourse types that depend on recognisable word and phrase types. This brings us to another point which Roland Barthes touches upon in his essay "From Work to Text" where we find that the distinctions he draws between work and text are related to those we have drawn between game and play (Harari 1980 74-76). While at the level of text, Barthes points out that the reader and writer both play with the reader interpreting, actively collaborating, filling gaps and so on; and the text has its relations, associations and patterns which the reader then has to identify; at the level of work other forces come into play. The work is that which means whereas the text is simply a methodological field, experienced only in activity. It is the work that embodies the conventions that govern the game, with its influences, traditions and so on. While the games played at the level of text can take on thematic significance, the same can be said of the use an author makes of
influence and convention. While game or play at either level is likely to have little relevance as regards plot or action, it can have an effect on attributes or qualities in any given situation. Play at both levels can be essential to thematic development and significance where formal expectations play a large part and where the existence of these expectations is significant in itself (see Jonathan Culler “Defining Narrative Units” 1975 127-139). So play exists at two distinct levels in any narrative and that which interests us now is that which takes place at the level of the work or game.
2.2. The Frame and Narratology

At one point the expression frame has been used here. In fact the use of conventions in a text, which we have already said involves the idea of game, is related to the concept of the frame. Let us see why. In her book *Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self Conscious Fiction*, Patricia Waugh discusses this idea. She makes it clear that “both the historical world and works of art are organized and perceived through such structures or ‘frames’” (1984 28), and goes on to show that there is no distinction between the framed or the unframed simply because everything is. She refers to J. Ortega y Gasset in this respect, who has pointed out that “not many people are capable of adjusting their perceptive apparatus to the pane and transparency that is the work of art. Instead they look right through it and revel in the human reality with which the work deals” (1948 31). Whereas metafiction foregrounds the pane and transparency, or framing as a problem, drawing attention to the conventions being used; the traditional novel, by passively accepting convention, facilitates the reader’s being able to look right through them. The use of an accepted frame enables the reader to become involved in a narrative situation and the analysis of the frame is essentially the analysis of the formal conventional organisation of the novel. Patricia Waugh makes it clear that “[Frames] become more perceptible as one moves from realist to modernist modes and are explicitly laid bare in metafiction” (1984 30), which suggests that
metafiction itself is an exploration of fictional rules which clearly exist. It is at this point where these rules of the game or conventions for framing will be made clear.
2.3. Towards a Narratological Model

In the section on ideology, the conventional nature of realism was referred to, while at the same time it was suggested that this conventionality has never been naive. However, in order to explore the extent to which modern and postmodernist novels are innovative or traditional, the conventions that are implicitly there in the realistic novel must also be analysed in terms of frame, game and narratology. We have shown already that there are many ways in which to analyse narrative structure. But as there are many anomalies and even conflicting opinions as regards certain aspects, it would be insufficient to adopt only one model, meaning it is necessary to combine several of these, thus covering all the pertinent points. Essentially, as a kind of backbone, we will follow the models which have been suggested by Gerard Genette and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan on the one hand, while at the same time complementing these with aspects taken from many more including Seymour Chatman and Dorrit Cohn, among others, particularly as regards the questions of point of view and the narratee, on the other. However, to have a more complete vision of narrative it will be worthwhile to consider some more and some less traditional concepts as well as Roland Barthes and Christine Brooke-Rose as regards the determination of codes. Throughout, several traditional narratives from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries will be referred to just to see what kind of frames these authors adopted, what rules had
become conventional as well as the gradual changes that occurred. These authors must need be representative and we will refer particularly to Laurence Sterne, Henry Fielding, William Thackeray, Charles Dickens, Joseph Conrad and Virginia Woolf. Through brief references to works by these authors during the elaboration of the model we should be able to isolate particular tendencies and emphases which will clarify how the novel has developed and show just what novels have in common, their constants and variables. It may also suggest just what it was some postmodernists were ostensibly reacting against and allow us to explain if, and to what extent, they have done so.

First of all, let us consider the specific areas that interest us. While narratology involves the analysis of story in terms of character and events, and while there is a clear interdependence between story and other aspects of narrative, for the purposes of this discussion, our interest is centered, though not exclusively, on text and narration as they are understood in Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan’s Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics (1983 43-116). To a large extent, her model for analysing narrative draws on Gerard Genette, whom we shall also discuss in detail (1972). What becomes clear when reading these authors is that their terminology attempts to deal with concepts about narratology in a more scientific manner, but that these very concepts tend to be reminiscent of more traditional theories about narrative, dealing with point of view, time or chronological organisation, character,
the representation of speech and thought, and so on. Story will be dealt with in this model and we will find that Barthes' proaeeretic code is also related here. However, much of what we can call variable in the novel is more dependent on what authors do within given categories of discourse and this is what will occupy us in a first instance. The first basic distinction to be considered, however, sees narrative in terms of the categories of Time, Mode and Voice.
2.3.1. Time and Chronology

In her discussion of the narrative text Rimmon-Kenan begins by considering the question of time. She follows Genette very closely, who had pointed out the existence of three basic elements: order, duration and frequency. (Genette 1972 77-182; Rimmon-Kenan 1983 46-58). We can explain briefly what this division involves as follows. As regards order, we can distinguish between that which is told in the order in which the events took place, that is the order of the story, which may coincide with the order of the text, and discordances in the order of the text which have been traditionally called flashback and anticipation. Genette calls these anachronies and distinguishes between analepsis and prolepsis, the former being a discordance in the order of the events which goes back to the past, and the latter being a discordance in the order which looks forward to the future or anticipates an event or events (1972 78-121). However, there are many different kinds of anachronies which can be described as external (the anachrony looks forward or back to periods which either precede the beginning of the first narrative or go beyond the end of it), internal (as the name suggests, is an anachrony which looks forward to a period prior to the end of the first narrative but posterior to the point to which the narrative has arrived, or looks back to a period which is after the beginning of the first narrative), mixed (there is a combination of information both internal and external to the first narrative),
partial (the anachrony does not involve a full account about the character, event or story line), complete (the anachrony does involve a full account), completive (the anachrony completes our information about any aspect of the narrative) and repetitive (the anachrony is repeated on more than one occasion. Anachronies can also be homodiegetic or heterodiegetic. That is to say, they can have something to do with a character, event or story-line that has already been mentioned (homodiegetic), or they can relate to one that has not. Combinations of these are, of course, possible, like, for example, internal analepsis that is homodiegetic, which would be a flashback to a time after the start of the first story about something or someone that had already been mentioned. Theoretically any combination of homodiegetic or heterodiegetic with external, external or mixed, as well as the other variations mentioned, is possible in analepses and prolepses. However, "prolepses are much less frequent than analepses" (Rimmon-Kenan 48) and certain types of narrative lend themselves to the use of particular uses of prolepsis and analepsis. Moreover, it has been suggested that, for example, heterodiegetic analepsis is a mark of the traditional novel, whereas marked prolepsis is not typical of the nouveau roman (Brooke-Rose 1981 314-15). This means that particular changes is the story order within the text of a particular kind of narrative can be considered more conventional, or are more readily accepted and expected than others. Moreover, as the word anachrony suggests, these are alterations to the expected order of events
which may have a specific thematic or other significance, particularly when these alterations to the expected order, which we can associate with the story order take place with a frequency that draws our attention to them. That is, a great deal depends on the extent to which they are over-determined.

In Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, for example, we find a novel that is a series of continual anachronies which are digressions from the story line and are often heterodiegetic and external. At the same time he continually reminds us of what he is going to narrate (his life), but never does. Basically, in Sterne these combinations of anachronies are overdetermined in order to give them thematic significance, as he hopes to draw attention to the art of storytelling as such, although he never really manages to tell the story he sets out to (which may be significant about his attitude towards the novel in itself — a kind of playground).

While Thackery certainly tells his stories in *Vanity Fair*, he too follows in this tendency towards digression and often provides anachronies which look back to the pasts of many characters (particularly Becky Sharp, George Osborne and Dobbin at the beginning) in external analepses and, like Sterne, he hopes to fill in gaps in our understanding. But, unlike Sterne, Thackeray’s anachronies do further the telling of the story rather than impeding it as is the case with Sterne. There are prolepses in this novel too where Thackeray anticipates what will take place later in a partial manner in order to create expectation. So, it
seems that in this period, to make use of alternatives almost excessively is a common tendency, although this becomes less so a little later in its history. That is, a particular idea of the novel and its possibilities is suggested in the 18th century, where the tendency is to take advantage of the possible alternatives, while imposing and transgressing its own rules. However, as we move forward in what becomes the Victorian Age, narratives tend to respect more the order in which events take place, although it is possible to find parallel narratives like those in Dickens' Bleak House, where Esther Summerson's narrative involves, in fact, a complete completive analepsis which complements the first narrative of the arguably omniscient narrator. In Dickens' novel the question of changing perspective and the limitations of point of view, with their thematic significance, is also involved. But once more the final end of Esther's analepses is to further our understanding of the narrative, while at the same time adding to its suspense.

It is curious to note that there seems to be a decreasing tendency towards prolepsis in the novel as, in order for there to be prolepsis the narrator has to be omniscient, which is more typical of earlier traditional novels. For example, although in Conrad's Heart of Darkness anticipation of Kurtz's appearance and the nature of Marlow's story is suggested, the story itself is really an external analepsis in terms of the frame created by the first narrator --a story within a story-- although here there are few digressions from the
story line, once it is begun, and, at the intradiegetic level, Marlow rarely interrupts the flow. However, the importance of the past is certainly given significance through what, at first, seems a digresive analepsis.

In a more modern work like Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, we find how time has really begun to take on greater significance, and this novel is a series of external analepses whose thematic significance is suggested simply by their frequency. The novel is based on the experiences of several characters on one day, but what is clear is that the past of these characters is continually present, and the technique of using external analepses allows us to appreciate this.

It is clear then that anachronies are frequent in the novel and that their thematic significance sometimes differs. However, it does seem that the nature of their use has gradually changed during the development of the novel from Sterne to Woolf. In this, historical and ideological changes have been influential too in determining to what extent the already existing alternatives were made use of. What is clear is that anachronies are commonplace in the novel but the extent to which they are used and their significance vary. Now, let us continue with our discussion of time in narrative.

The next point that has to be dealt with is duration. Rimmon-Kenan, Genette and Brooke Rose all coincide in their treatment with this aspect of narrative, where the idea of pace or speed as regards the text and its relation to story time is discussed.
Basically, as Rimmon-Kenan puts it, some idea of a norm is necessary, which would coincide with some "[c]onstancy of pace in narrative" and would correspond with "the unchanged ratio between story duration and textual length, e.g. when each year in the life of a character is treated in one page throughout the text" (1983 52). It follows from this that pace can be modified by speeding it up or slowing it down, which would suggest a change in the relationship between story time and narrative time in terms of the norm that we have mentioned. Genette describes four main categories of duration where relative acceleration and deceleration take place. These are: descriptive pause, scene, summary and ellipsis, where the gradation involved is from minimum to maximum pace (1972 122-144). A descriptive pause would be those moments in a narrative where there is a pause in the story and the story time is zero but where the narrative continues. Scene essentially corresponds to dramatic showing, where the story time is equal to the narrative time. A dialogue in a narrative would correspond to what Genette calls scene. A narrative accelerates further when summary is involved. This means what it usually does and involves the compression of a scene so that narrative time becomes less than story time. Pace speeds up to a maximum when no narrative time is dedicated to story time and events are omitted. This clearly corresponds to ellipsis.

From one extreme to the other an infinite range of possibilities for pace is possible as well as it being possible for variations and combinations to be found in
a narrative. What should be made clear once more at this point, however, is that particular tendencies towards the use of one category of duration or another may take on thematic significance or may suggest a tendency that we can consider typical of one kind of novel or another. It has been suggested that descriptive pauses and slowed down scenes, where narrative time is greater than story time, are typical of the nouveau roman, metafiction and the postmodernist novel in general (Brooke-Rose 1981 315), whereas we might suggest that scene and summary are more typical of traditional narratives. Certainly, the repeated use of pause in narrative, which are usually digressions, might suggest the story is being underdetermined, with the emphasis lying elsewhere, in the narrative itself as text, and so on.

However, to suggest that pause is only a trait of recent narratives would be untrue. It has already been implied that Tristram Shandy by Sterne is full of digressions but not only in terms of anachronies. There are also a great many examples of pause where the narrative stops and the narrator dedicates time to other communicative, ideological and metanarrative functions. In Fielding’s Tom Jones, introductions or Bills of Fare for each chapter perform similar functions, very often presenting rules for the writing of narrative. This is also true of Vanity Fair, where the omniscient narrator, like the all-knowing Tristram, continually pauses to address the reader (who represents his public), and even the characters, or expounds on the nature of story telling. Of course, there is a good deal of scene and
summary in both, particularly in the latter, which provides us with a very interesting plot. But it is curious to note a tendency towards ellipsis in Thackeray where the deliberate omission of information further emphasises the presence of the narrator and the nature of the narrative, which is the basic point of their inclusion in both narratives.

Curiously, in the three remaining novels that have been used more frequently up to now as useful examples, the tendency is towards scene and summary. In Bleak House there are pauses where didactic or ideological aspects of the novel are emphasised both in Esther's and the first narrator's narratives, and particularly as regards the nature of justice and so on. But they tend to blend in with the narrative more readily and rarely have a metanarrative import (although the very beginning of Esther's narrative clearly does serve such a purpose). Pauses in Marlow's narrative in Heart of Darkness tend towards thematically significant digressions regarding work, personal identity, civilisation, colonisation and so on. Curiously, in this novel it is the first narrator who introduces Marlow's narrative who uses a digresion with a metanarrative function to speak of the nature of Marlow's storytelling. In Mrs Dalloway, we are rarely aware of pauses as the narrative, as we have seen, tends to consist of the reveries of the characters. These could arguably be described as pauses themselves as the story time essentially stops (there is no sense of furthering the plot) but this is not really so when one considered
that what is being narrated throughout is how the characters assimilate and react to what is going on around them. Where we do have a clear pause in the narrative is when even the voice and style seems to change and the author pauses to denounce "proportion" and, more particularly, Sir William Bradshaw who represents it.

Once more, the available possibilities are taken advantage of to varying degrees in these novels and, although we cannot make sweeping generalisations having considered so few (although representative) examples, we find that at least here the tendency towards pause decreases as we move towards modernism and the disappearance of the author. Sterne and Thackeray would seem to be much more playful and tongue in cheek in their works and allow themselves much more time to pause, and while they often instruct and warn the reader, they also tend to draw attention to the nature of the narrative, clearly showing that this is not the exclusive territory of the experimental novel. We will find later that this tendency, apparently reacted against and finally lost in some modern novels reappears with postmodernism and the metafictional novel.

The next point to be considered is frequency. Genette describes three basic categories which are easily defined. These are: singulative, repetitive and iterative. A singulative narrative would involve the telling once of what happens once or telling $n$ times what happens $n$ times. A repetitive text would involve the telling $n$ times of what happens once and an
iterative text would mean telling once what had happened \( n \) times. Once more a tendency to make use of a particular frequency in a narrative can have specific effects or be considered as typical of a particular kind of narrative. Christine Brooke-Rose points out that singulative narratives are \textit{normal}, whereas a repetitive narrative would produce special effects (1981 318). These effects usually have something to do with emphasis or coherence, or may suggest the overdetermination of a particular code. The iterative mode of narrative is typical of the beginning of traditional novels, where that which is typical or habitual is often described. However, the overdetermination of the iterative mode could have very particular effects. Christine Brooke-Rose suggests that \textit{"[t]heoretically, then, a narrative wholly in the iterative is impossible, since nothing specific and punctual happens, but only the usual, habitual things which by definition cannot make a story"} (1981 318). This kind of writing would then involve an apparent transgression of the accepted conventions for writing stories and does occur in some postmodernist works and is typical of the \textit{nouveau roman}. Brooke-Rose mentions specifically Samuel Beckett's \textit{The Lost Ones} as an example as it is written totally in the iterative present (318).

In the examples discussed up to now, we find a tendency towards singulative narrative in every case as the events narrated are special. However, there are examples of iterative narrative, particularly in the more traditional works by Thackeray and Dickens, even
Conrad. However, when Thackeray and Dickens make use of this they are often describing customs or states of affairs which they intend to criticise, whether they be the vanities of Vanity Fair, the injustices of Chancery, the decadence of Chesney Wold, or the immorality of the colonisation of Africa. Most of the novels have their repetitive elements too. All of the narrators reiterate certain features and we could isolate a few like the nature of the narrative and reader expectation in Sterne, this same kind of thing and the vanities again in Thackeray, Esther Summerson's plainness, the impenetrability of the jungle in Heart of Darkness, or the references to the drowned sailor or Shakespeare in Mrs Dalloway. The effect in each is always one of emphasis and occasionally one of irony. They usually carry some thematic significance and may even carry some metaphorical or symbolic weight. So it seems that specific effects are behind the use of particular alternatives in this area with the norm tending towards the use of singulative narrative.

What is clear here is that there is a clearly defined set of theoretical possibilities as regards time in narrative. What is also clear is that the use of certain categories is more expected or conventional in given narrative situations. It is precisely in doing the unexpected which typifies many so-called postmodernist novels which thus draw attention to the nature of these conventions as such. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan sums up this point in the following way:

It has often been suggested that one of the
characteristics of modern narratives is the subversive treatment of the various categories of time. While this seems to me basically true (with many exceptions, of course), it does not invalidate the categories presented here. On the contrary, subversion can only be conceived of against the background of (or even within) a network of possibilities . . . . Moreover, while this treatment of time may undergo various changes, time itself is indispensable to both story and text. (1983 58)

This is precisely the point we have been trying to make and we will discover that this is also true of the other categories of mode and voice in narrative texts. The theoretical possibilities are constant. Moreover, specific uses of particular categories are determined by convention. Even this "subversive treatment" of time categories, as Rimmon-Kenan puts it, is dependent upon an awareness of existing conventions. That is, certain rules or conventions exist which govern the use of a constant range of theoretically possible categories within narrative discourse; but even the transgression of these rules remains within the theoretical possibilities of narrative. This means that, if we go back to our distinction between game and play, we might say that there is a constant set of possibilities which tend to be used according to tacitly accepted conventions (the rules of the game), the contravention of which may be considered as subversive, but which is allowed, as play is part of that constant set of
possibilities itself. At least as regards time, we have seen that any specific ploy, which could involve alterations and transgressions can be considered simply as one more existing possibility.
2.3.2. Mode

The next point which Rimmon-Kenan deals with is characterisation in the text. However, we will deal with that aspect of narrative separately as what interests us now is what Gérard Genette calls *mode*. The basic distinction which is made by Genette is that between distance and perspective (1972 183-224). Rimmon-Kenan also covers these points, although she deals with them separately, but making use of virtually the same terminology as Genette, with a few interesting additions (1983 71-85 and 106-116). At the same time we should be wary of terminology here, as at a later stage it will be necessary to deal with the idea of *mode*, not as it is described by Genette, but in terms of the use of a kind of discourse which is not necessarily literary, like biography, history and so on; or the use of a mode specifically associated with some literary genre or sub-genre: detective story, gothic novel, etc. But, as we have said, that will be dealt with later.

In very general terms, what we have to discuss here is whether the narrator is distant from or close to the events that are narrated which has to do with the questions of objectivity, subjectivity, value judgement or, in more simple terms, the degree of involvement of the narrator. Moreover, this also involves the question of the point of view of the narrator and whether the perspective adopted is one from within or without the events that are narrated.

As regards distance, Genette distinguishes between
the narration of events and the narration of speech which is a distinction that Rimmon-Kenan follows very closely. As far as the narration of events is concerned there are two modes that can be followed: mimesis and diegesis. This can be associated with the distinction between showing and telling or scene and summary which is more common in traditional criticism. Briefly, we could say that mimesis means the minimum of involvement of the narrator, who will allow the reader to draw his own conclusions about a scene with a minimum of mediation and an attempt to present or show what takes place in the most direct form possible. The contrary is to tell, comment, participate and sum up what takes place with a greater degree of narrator involvement. To emphasise the dichotomy, Rimmon-Kenan uses the following example: "Compare 'John was angry with his wife' with 'John looked at his wife, his eyebrows pursed, his lips contracted, his fists clenched. Then he got up, banged the door and left the house'" (1983 108). The first is diegesis and the second tends more towards mimesis, although the terms summary and scene could also have been used. Obviously, the question of degree comes in here as the amount of involvement of the narrator and the amount of commentary and so on that we find may be more or less. In fact, these questions tend to lead us to another area of discussion as regards mode, which has more to do with duration and focalisation: that is, how much time and from what point of view does the narrator tell the story. Moreover, as Genette (1972 185-6) and Rimmon-Kenan (1983 108) point out, the question of
mimesis as regards the narration of events is totally illusory, as there is always a mediator, which, as the latter rightly says, is also true of the presentation of speech, to which she dedicates a good deal more time. Basically, then, what we can say about distance as regards the narration of events is that it tends to be dependent on other factors which will be dealt with in due course. Moreover, perhaps it would be better to refer to the idea of distance in the narration of events (and of speech) as an effect rather than as a mode of presentation.

If we consider, what we have just said, it would be possible to make easy generalisations about most novels: that they tend towards mimesis or towards diegesis. However, tendency is the operative word and what has taken place in the novel over the last two centuries has involved several movements towards and away from both mimesis and diegesis. What we might say is that novelists now tend towards diegesis, but that should not be seen as either new or innovative as it was precisely this tendency against which Henry James reacted more than a century ago.

In the examples discussed up to now we can find both tendencies. Sterne and Thackeray clearly tend towards diegesis as they are highly aware of their audience and highly involved in commenting on and summing up what takes place in their narratives, although we do find a good deal of mimesis in the dramatic presentation of scenes. With Dickens in Bleak House, the tendency remains but the first narrator is
much less of a character there and seems to be less involved in the transmission of the text. This tendency towards showing rather than telling continues as we move towards modernism and is clearest in Mrs. Dalloway where Woolf tries to recreate the impressions of her characters with the minimum of commentary. So, as we said, the alternatives are clear as are the tendencies towards one or other of them, although the question of degree comes in, with the modernist disappearance of the author having some bearing in what we find in more recent times.

Let us now consider the question of narration of speech. Genette discusses three main forms for this which are narrativised discourse, transposed discourse and reported discourse, although this distinction is rather basic (1972 189-193). Genette also distinguishes between pronounced speech and interior monologue (191), all of which can be recounted from a greater or lesser distance in the same way as the narration of events involves a gradation from diegesis to mimesis. Moreover, the narration of speech is that which allows the only real possibility for mimesis which can take place when the narrator literally reproduces the words of the speaker (192). Narrativised discourse is clearly the most distant and most reductive. This can be either pronounced or interior and would in fact involve a kind of summary of what a character, or characters, had said or thought, while transposed discourse, which may be indirect or free indirect, is more mimetic, and the words of the character are transposed into subordinate
propositions which become a part of the narrator’s own discourse. As we said, the most mimetic form is what Genette calls reported discourse. This can be equated with dramatic showing, or scene, and involves the literal reproduction of the words (exterior or pronounced) or thoughts (interior) of a character or characters. The involvement of the narrator and, therefore, distance is least with this kind of presentation of speech or thought. Rimmon-Kenan’s discussion of speech presentation provides a much broader range of categories which she has adopted from Brian McHale’s essay on the subject (Rimmon-Kenan 1983 109-116, McHale 1978 258-259). The terminology is virtually self-explanatory and involves a gradation from the purely digetic to the purely mimetic. They are as follows: diegetic summary, summary, less purely diegetic, indirect content paraphrase (or indirect discourse), indirect discourse mimetic to some degree, free indirect discourse and free direct discourse. This gradation basically involves a movement from a simple account that a speech act has taken place without stating what was said or how, to the quotation of a monologue or dialogue with all the different degrees in between. These categories coincide with Genette’s version except that they are more detailed. Diegetic and less purely diegetic summary are examples of narrativised discourse; indirect discourse, indirect discourse mimetic to some degree and free indirect discourse correspond to transposed discourse; while direct discourse and free direct discourse are examples
of Genette's reported discourse. The use of any or all of these is theoretically possible and in fact there is usually a mixture of some of them in most narratives. We could, however, talk of certain tendencies within the novel's development, which has moved from the more traditional use of dialogue in a dramatic, mimetic manner, to recent examples in contemporary fiction of minimalist diegesis. But that would be too sweeping a generalisation about the nature of narrative and we will see from particular examples that any changes have been of degree and that innovation has had more to do with the mixing of modes of presentation of speech and thought as well as of events. In his book, Genette, talks about alterations in perspective, which can be considered as isolated infractions of the code which governs the text without putting that code in question. This can also be applied to the question of narration of speech and thought. In some more recent narratives, what we find is that the continual mixing of different modes of presentation can lead to the kind of framebreaking that we mentioned earlier which puts in question the rules of the game. Therefore, one generalisation we might make is that some narratives make use of polymodality in the presentation of speech and it could be suggested that some innovations have taken place in order to facilitate the mixing of these modes.

This kind of innovation is more noticeable in the presentation of thought where, in an example like the modernist work Mrs. Dalloway, there is a clear tendency to mix modes as well as perspectives, which was
certainly unusual at the time. Moreover, we can talk about the innovative nature of stream of consciousness, which, rather than a technique, ought to be discussed as an effect of particular uses of modes for presenting thought. What has to be emphasised here is that the business of presenting thought is analogous to that of presenting speech, which is simply interior monologue after all and that the categories we have already discussed coincide with those mentioned by Dorrit Cohn. Cohn initially divides the kinds of narration of thought into three categories and explains them as follows:

three types of presentation of consciousness can be identified in the context of third person narration. . . . In capsule formulation: 1. psycho-narration: the narrator’s discourse about a character’s consciousness; 2. quoted monologue: a character’s mental discourse; 3. narrated monologue: a character’s mental discourse in the guise of the narrator’s discourse. (1978 14)

It is easy to see that these divisions are analogous to Genette’s and that each corresponds to narrativised, reported and transposed discourse, with Rimmon-Kenan’s modifications being equally pertinent to thought presentation. Cohn goes on to explain that the same analogous categories also correspond to first person narratives, although she substitutes the terms self-narration, self-quoted and self-narrated monologue. She
further explains that the difference between first person and third person involves many implications, but these will be discussed when we deal with the question of person. What might be suggested having said that, is that it is precisely in this analogous area of thought presentation, with developments like stream of consciousness, that we might be able to detect the major changes in narrative. Some such changes that we might consider are how the tendency was once to avoid psycho-narration in traditional third person narratives, while as regards speech, in the same kind of novel, there was often a profusion of dramatic, quoted conversation. This is clearly the case in Thackeray’s Vanity Fair and in most of Dickens’ work, where, particularly Thackeray emphatically avoids psycho narration. For example: “How Miss Sharp lay awake, thinking, Will he come or not tomorrow? need not be told here” (1968 74). However, that does not mean that he does not provide us with a good deal of psychological insight. On the other hand, he continually provides us with dramatic scenes where the conversation is quoted in full, although we should not exaggerate about Thackeray as he equally tends towards diegetic summary or ellipsis depending on the occasion.

Changes have also had much to do with the presence or absence of an authorial narrative voice which tended to avoid giving an inside view, something which began to change with author’s like James, Flaubert and later Conrad, Joyce and the moderns, who brought about the disappearance of the author and dedicated more time to
the creation of fictitious consciousnesses (see Cohn 1978 Chapter 1). Dickens was one of those who equally avoided giving an inside view of the kind we are used to in the modern novel and, in his tendency towards caricature, usually sums up character traits rather than involving himself in psycho-narration. But Sterne did attempt to give the inside view and we find a good deal of narrated interior monologue and psycho-narration. But, as we said, it is in the modern novel that with the disappearance of the author that quoted interior monologue becomes frequent. This is sometimes the case in *Mrs Dalloway*, but this novel is clearly a case of polymodality where narrated interior monologue, quoted interior monologue and indirect interior monologue are alternated and interwoven. Woolf had difficulties which she overcame admirably in the novel by clearly marking and identifying the place, time and characters in order to enter into their thoughts and move from one to the other. The continual use of one, among other devices, allowing her to shift almost imperceptibly from narrated to quoted, to indirect and free indirect interior monologue, all in order to create the impression of the stream of consciousness. These examples have shown that it is possible to identify certain tendencies in the development of narrative as regards mode and we will later discover what these are in more contemporary fiction. What is clear is that tendencies to alternate or towards polymodality are not suggestive of transgressions in these texts but seem to become like some kind of norm or convention.
Another possibility worth considering as regards mode is that some critics begin to look upon authors like James, Conrad and Lawrence as tending towards an indirect style in the presentation of speech and events, with free indirect style coming to the forefront, something which could be considered as a modern development in narrative. This could account for the prevalence of critical works regarding free indirect style in recent times. However, there are examples of this even in early novels like those of Thackeray, where the diegetic summary of speech shifts into free indirect style mingled with indirect and direct discourse. In fact, it seems that early novelists tended to make use of every type of speech presentation available to them. To some extent it even takes place in the presentation of thought, although the reader's awareness of the narrator always means that such presentations are appreciated as part of the narrator's diegesis. What we can say simply is that the use of the several modes for presenting speech and thought are common and have tended not to undermine the organising principles of narrative until recently.

Prior to continuing with our model a brief mention ought to be made as regards certain other aspects involved in the presentation of speech and thought. Norman Page has considered this area of narrative fully in his *Speech in the English Novel* (1973). There he discusses the many identifiable features involved in the presentation of speech like the use of slang, colloquialisms and other manifestations of dialect,
idiolect, which are common features in most novels. However, this could be better dealt with in terms of speech being a non-literary mode of discourse, which the author uses and for that reason would be more rightly dealt with as an aspect of style rather than of narrative structure.

One point that is relevant here is the nature of the conventions and formulae used for the presentation of speech. Of course there is no direct relation between written dialogue and spontaneous speech and therefore authors tended to observe that set of conventions for the sake of verisimilitude. Usually an utterance is accompanied by an attribution to the speaker to avoid confusion: that is, it is introduced by a phrase indicating who the speaker is, or the utterance is immediately followed by such a phrase, or it would appear in a natural break in the utterance. Forms of naming characters in these attributions (first name, surname, title, etc.) are indicative of the attitude towards the speaker and the expressions used often describe the way in which the utterance is expressed (cried, exclaimed, suggested and so on). Moreover, generally accepted rules of punctuation are involved and things like the inversion of noun/pronoun - verb after an utterance are usually considered conventional. In this respect, we can say that the following of these conventions is what gave realism to the traditional, realistic novel. However, there has been a breakdown of these conventions in more recent times, or we can find the adopting or establishing of idiosyncratic rules for
speech presentation by writers like Joyce among others. Moreover, a much more anarchic placing of the phrases that identify the speaker or explain the nature of the utterance becomes more frequent. This is so in B.S. Johnson’s *Christie Malry’s Own Double-Entry*, where Johnson’s narrator continually interrupts utterances in mid-sentence, placing them at points where they would not usually be found.

This may be one area where we find novels developing and moving away from traditional rules and conventions and becoming innovative, although such changes ought to be seen in terms of the conventions they react against and often remind us of them. In fact, their thematic significance may be simply to draw attention to what has been the naturalised or conventionalised presentation of speech and defamiliarise it.

Let us now go on to look at the next point in our model for narratological analysis which is perspective. It should be made clear here that there is a clear overlap between the mode of narration of speech and events and the perspective adopted, as the question of distance is once again involved. At the same time, *time* is also related to this, especially as regards the duration of a narrative act, which depends on the degree of involvement of the narrator. This suggests that the time and mode adopted are interdependent and are related to the code that governs the text, as is the perspective.

Genette’s model involves certain anomalies which
will be discussed in a moment but his basic distinctions are reasonable and are worth considering as a first step. Moreover, the greatest breakthrough involved in his theory was to distinguish between mode and voice, or between who sees and who speaks. That is, a narrator may not be a character or observe the events and situations of the narrative from within but at the same time be able to narrate the events from a point of view which is not his own. In simple terms, there is a difference between perspective and person, the former belonging to mode and the latter to voice, or the point of view adopted need not necessarily coincide with that of the narrator. The three basic possibilities that he mentions are non focalisation or zero focalisation, external focalisation and internal focalisation. Zero focalisation means that the point of view is from behind the character and the narrator knows more than he does. External focalisation means that the point of view is from outside the character and the narrator consequently knows less than he does. Internal focalisation means that the narrator’s point of view coincides with that of the character and the narrator therefore knows the same as he does. Moreover, Genette specifies that this kind of internal focalisation may be fixed, variable or multiple, these terms being self-explanatory (1972 203-224). Genette’s model is also useful in that it points out the existence of alterations in perspective. As we mentioned earlier, these are isolated changes in focalisation which bring about a brief infraction of the rules that appear to govern the text, without putting
into question the governing mode. However, frequent infractions would suggest the use of polymodality in the narrative, which we might consider as typical of some recent fiction. Genette calls these alterations paralepsis and paralipsis, where the former is the result of a shift in focalisation which brings about the narration of more information than ought to be given. Such a shift would be from internal to zero focalisation. Paralipsis involves the elision of information that we would reasonably expect to be given, when a narrator with zero focalisation refuses to tell us something about a character, or limits his perspective (see Genette 1972 206-10). As we said, however, Genette's explanation allows for several anomalies and does not account for the question of the relation between the focaliser and the focalised, which is a distinction, among many others, that Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan does make.

As we said, the great breakthrough made by Genette was to distinguish between who sees and who speaks, that is the focaliser and the narrator, which may be different. The centre of consciousness is the focaliser, which in many third person narratives does not coincide with the narrator. Indeed this is also the case of first person retrospective narratives as in both the focalisation involved is that of a character involved within the fiction represented with the only difference being the identity of the narrator, where of course, focalisation and narration are combined in the case of the first person retrospective narrative where the
focaliser is the narrator.

The distinction between focaliser and focalised should also be mentioned. Rimmon-Kenan calls the focaliser the agent of perception while the focalised is the object of perception. Genette ignores this point which results in the possible confusion as regards zero focalisation and external focalisation, the nature of which are dependent on the position of the perceived object and which both come within the category of external focalisation. Basically, external focalisation is felt to be close to the narrating agent and its vehicle is called the narrator focaliser (1983 74). Examples of this would be Tom Jones and Vanity Fair. This kind of focalisation is also possible in first person narratives depending on the distance in time or psychological distance between the narrator and his past self. In other words, this happens when “the perception through which the story is rendered is that of the narrating self rather than the experiencing self” (Rimmon-Kenan 74). Such a case would be that of the older Pip who tells of his youthful experiences in Great Expectations. As regards the perception of internal focalisation, that is localised within the events that take place. This means that a character would have to be the focaliser or that the narrator had adopted a point of view from within the story. Examples of internal focalisation would be Heart of Darkness, where Marlow, a character within the story is the focaliser and also narrator (internal, narrator focaliser), or Mrs Dalloway, where the heterodiegetic
narrator continually makes use of different characters within the story as focalisers, although there is an alteration and a shift to external focalisation during a long digression on proportion.

In the same way as we can discuss the internal or external focaliser of events, this is also true of the focalised, which can be seen from within or without. This is basically the point that Genette failed to consider and explains the essential difference between his zero focalisation and external focalisation. In simple terms an external focaliser can view things from within or without, which means that it can either penetrate the feelings and thoughts of a character or simply represent external actions and appearances (Rimmon-Kenan 75-76). Of course, the question of focalisation is one that can vary in a narrative and Genette’s distinctions of fixed, variable and multiple focalisation apply to both focaliser and focalised. There are other considerations which Genette does not take into account in his model which are worth considering here which Rimmon-Kenan calls the facets of focalisation (1983 77). The perceptual facet is one and this involves the questions of space and time. The dichotomy external-internal in this case means the difference between a possible panoramic and simultaneous view of characters and events and a limited perspective. The first is impossible when the focaliser is a character or observer in the narrative, meaning that the point of view must be limited rather than omniscient. The distinction is similar as regards time, where
external focalisation means that the narrator can work within all the possible dimensions of time, whereas to adopt internal focalisation (even if the narrator in a retrospective narrative is aware of what happens later) means that the narrator limits himself to the present of the characters and events (Rimmon-Kenan 77-79).

In Thackeray’s Vanity Fair, the external perceptual facet allows the narrator to have this panoramic view, as also happens in Dickens’ Bleak House with the first narrator. However, on occasions Thackeray pleads ignorance and in Bleak House we continually shift to Esther Summerson’s internal perception, which are clear examples of alternations in perspective. In the novels by Conrad and Woolf that we have been considering here, we tend not to find these alterations due to a greater consistency regarding the kind of mode/perspective adopted.

We must also consider the psychological facet of focalisation which involves a cognitive and emotive component. Very simply, as regards the former, external focalisation would mean unrestricted knowledge while internal focalisation restricts the knowledge of the narrator. In Tristram Shandy, Tom Jones, Vanity Fair and with Dickens’ first narrator in Bleak House, there are no restrictions except for those imposed by the narrators themselves. They are typical omniscient narrators although alterations as regards this facet of perspective do occur. With the development of the English novel and due to ideological changes and the importance of epistemological questions, perspective in
the modern novel tends to become more limited, and internal focalisation in the cognitive facet is what we find in Conrad and Woolf.

With the emotive component, external and internal are related to objectivity and subjectivity respectively, with variability being possible as regards both components. Curiously, any semblance of objectivity in the novels we have mentioned up to now depends either on the all-knowing infallibility of the narrator (the works mentioned here by Sterne, Thackeray, Fielding and Dickens), that is, it could be confused with external focalisation, or the presentation of a variety of points of view with little or no authorial commentary (Woolf). As D.H. Lawrence would have it, the traditional novelists tended to tip the scale and embody or propound a specific ideology in a more obvious fashion. This ties up with the presence or lack of pauses in the narrative, this tendency in the English novel clearly meaning that authors, while pretending objectivity, put forward a very specific vision of reality.

This brings us to the final point to discuss as regards perspective which is the ideological facet of focalisation. The ideological facet means the dominant perspective in a narrative which suggests the ideology or normative codes of a text. The dominant perspective is usually that of a narrator focaliser with any additional ideologies being subordinate to this higher authority. However, it is possible for there to be a variety of ideologies in a narrative without there being
any clear hierarchy. This would lead to a plural reading of the text (Rimmon-Kenan 79-82).

The narrator focalisers of Sterne, Fielding, Thackeray and Dickens clearly provide the dominant ideology and their narrators tend to remind the reader of their sharing it. Good and bad characters are recognised by their conforming to or deviating from their norm. The same would be true of Conrad’s narrator focaliser, Marlow, although in a limited sense due to the existence of another narrator at an extradiegetic level as well as others at the hypodiegetic level within Marlow’s narrative. This all leads to the existence of irony and ambiguity in the work. While Woolf’s Mrs Dalloway provides a variety of ideologies without the help of a narrator focaliser, the predominance of Clarissa’s thoughts, the symbolic nature of the work (an element found in Conrad too) and the heavily emphasised digression in the voice of the narrator half way through the novel, make the dominant ideology finally clear.

All of these facets are interrelated and may or may not concur as regards the dominant mode. As we suggested earlier it is possible for there to be alterations and even polymodality as regards perspective and distance and what has to be understood is that this can lead to ambiguity and blurring in the text. The overall effect of such alterations, if they are frequent, is to make the reader feel as if there had been a transgression of the rules implicit in the narrative. That is, in traditional narratives there is usually a dominant mode adopted by the narrator as regards both distance and
perspective. To alter either is to undermine the dominance of that mode if this occurs frequently. As we have suggested, this is not usually the case in traditional narratives, where the whole question of convention comes in. That is, to follow convention is to avoid the transgression of the norms either laid down by tradition itself or implicit in the governing principles or codes of the text, which in conventional narratives tend towards the acceptance of a dominant mode. What we can suggest here is that this is not the case in less conventional narratives where polymodality and transgressions are more frequent. But at the same time it should be emphasised that such transgressions are and have always been theoretically possible and can be found in many narratives and not only recent ones. This brings us back to what we have previously called frame breaking and play in the text, which are not only acceptable but intrinsic to literary narrative. Clearly, the question of degree comes in here and there are infractions of the rules that do not undermine the overall governing principles of the text, but, all in all, what we find is that this kind of alteration or transgression of mode in narrative is not exclusive to the modern or postmodernist novel. What could be said is that the postmodernist novel attempts to make use of new ways of combining the different elements in narrative, but this is not really the case. It would be more correct to suggest that there is an overdetermination of the combinations that break the frame or transgress the rules in this kind of narrative, which as we have
already said, presupposes the acceptance of convention and so on. Moreover, what the description of a model for narratological analysis confirms is that there clearly are constants in narrative and that variety is dependent on the existence of a finite number of variables.

In the specific instances we have been considering, we find alterations in perspective in practically every example. However, that is not to say that there is no dominant mode in these texts, and it would not be untrue to say that there is little or no sense of that dominant mode each novel follows as being undermined. So, once more it becomes clear that the idea of convention is not simply one of following rules that are laid down, but is more a question of keeping within the bounds of the predispositions that each author lays down for himself; although on occasions we find that the author may transgress these rules, usually with a particular object in mind. The most striking example discussed up to now has been Mrs Dalloway, where the distinct change in mode is an attempt to emphasise a particular point of view.
2.3.3. **Voice**

There are five basic areas involved in what Genette calls voice, which will be elaborated upon in the course of this section. These are: time of narration, narrative levels, person, the functions of the narrator and the narratee (1972 225–267).

As regards time of narration there are four types, which can be described as ulterior, anterior, simultaneous and interwoven. The first is to tell a story retrospectively using past tenses and is the mark of the traditional novel. The second is a story told theoretically in the future like a prophesy, although, as this could take the form of a dream, it could also be told in the present or past. Clearly, however, this kind of narrative is not very common. Simultaneous narration, as its name suggests, would be told in the simultaneous present and is typical of many digressions in the traditional novel, although in more recent times we can find narratives written almost entirely or entirely in the present, where the digressions take the form of flashbacks to the past. Examples of this would be Beckett's *Malone Dies* or B.S. Johnson's *Trawl*. What should be pointed out here is that the latter is what might be called a self-begetting novel, which can be considered as a kind of metafiction, where the theme of the narrative is its own creation. Not only that, but we can also say that the use of simultaneous narration in digressions is also a sign of a metafictional tendency as this often draws attention to the process of
narration, which is so in novels like *Tristram Shandy*, *Tom Jones*, *Vanity Fair* and so on. Therefore the degree to which simultaneous narration is made use of may be an indication of certain metafictional tendencies in narrative, but at the same time it is not in itself innovative. Interwoven narration would involve the use of more than one time of narration and, as has been suggested, is quite a common tendency in novels, where the most common is a mixture of ulterior and simultaneous, although the interweaving of all three is theoretically possible. Interwoven narration if translated more literally from Genette's French could be called "intercalated" and can be described, according to Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, as "[w]hen telling and acting are not simultaneous but follow each other in alternation" (1983 90). Both Rimmon-Kenan and Genette (1972 229-30) use the epistolary novel as a typical example where letters in the present are interwoven with the retrospective action. Clearly, any tendency towards the interweaving of times of narration would draw attention to this aspect of voice in the narrative, which could be interpreted as metafictional.

As we said, the digressions of Tristram and Thackeray, and the Bills of Fare of Fielding are examples of simultaneous narration and, in each case, as well as pointing out morals, the narrators show their self-consciousness about the nature of their narrative. The question of emphasis is involved here too as, while there may be no real sense of going against the norms laid down by the text itself, alterations or changes in
the time of narration do draw attention to themselves, the final effect of which is to make the reader more aware of the process of telling the story or make more immediate and emphatic what is being told. The latter is often the case in the pointing of morals by Sterne, Fielding, Thackeray and Dickens, where these changes in time are regularly interwoven in the text, and is also true of Woolf in her clearly didactic digressions in *Mrs Dalloway*. Esther Summerson's narrative has moments of simultaneous narration which are sometimes metafictional, particularly at the beginning of her narrative, when she is, and the reader is made well aware of the nature of it. Simultaneous narration in *Heart of Darkness* gives a sense of immediacy to Marlow's story without drawing much attention to itself due to its oral nature.

Here, then, what we find is that some authors make a habit of interweaving times of narration (Sterne, Fielding and Thackeray), while others do so less frequently for emphasis. As yet, there is little sense in these narratives of transgression, although we are certainly aware of the alteration and mixing of modes. It is when we consider more recent, postmodernist narrative that we will appreciate further developments.

At this point we must go on to discuss narrative levels, which Genette divides into three categories and which mark distance in the relations of the various participants with the narrative. At the same time, the question of levels should be considered as closely linked to that of person, which we will discuss in
relation to it. The levels described by Genette are: extradiegetic, diegetic or intradiegetic, and metadiegetic. These levels form a hierarchy where the highest level is the extradiegetic level which is that immediately superior to the first narrative or where the narrator is above or superior to the single or first narrative in the text. The other narrative levels are in a subordinate position to this level in the following manner. An intradiegetic or diegetic narrative is one where the narrator is also a diegetic character in the narrative told by the extradiegetic narrator. He is thus a narrator of second degree; or, to put it another way, the events are recounted within the first level. The events recounted by a narrator below this level, or within this second degree discourse are on the metadiegetic level. Therefore, we can speak not only of different narrative levels but of narrators at different levels within the narrative. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan describes these levels which are below another level of diegesis as hypodiegetic narratives (1983 92). Moreover, she states that "the diegetic level is narrated by an extradiegetic narrator, the hypodiegetic level by a diagnostic (intradiegetic) one" (92). She goes on to explain that these narratives can have a variety of functions which she calls actional (that is the narrative advances the action simply by being told), explicative (the narrative explains the diegetic level or how the narrative has reached the stage it has) and thematic (by analogy, similarity or contrast, the narrative makes us aware of some thematic significance
by making us aware of an analogous relationship between the diegetic and hypodiegetic level). Usually, any transition from one level to another is marked by an act or narration which explains the movement from one level to another without there being any intrusion of a character belonging to a particular diegetic level into another. If the transition is not marked or there is such an intrusion of a being belonging to one diegesis into a level he does not belong to then this is known as a transgression. According to Genette, such transgressions are called metalepses (1972 243-246).

This idea of transgression is reminiscent of what we said earlier about the transgression of the rules of the game and framebreaking. Certainly, this involves a movement beyond the limits of a single structure within the categories of discourse. Any movement, or frequent movement from one level to another is felt as an infraction of the rules or conventions and the same would be true of similar changes in person, which, as we said, is closely linked to the question of level. As much recent narrative is concerned with the nature of narrative or fiction itself, that is, metafictional, these transgressions or changes of level and person are more frequent as they draw attention to the narrative process. This is an area, then, where we might be able to notice developments in the nature of narrative. Rimmon-Kenan puts it this way:

Modern self-conscious texts often play with narrative levels in order to question the borderline between reality and fiction or to
suggest that there may be no reality apart from its narration. Christine Brooke-Rose’s *Thru* is an extreme example of the interchangeability of narrative levels. The novel repeatedly reverses the hierarchy, transforming a narrated object into a narrating agent and vice versa. The very distinction between outside and inside, container and contained, narrating subject and narrating object, higher and lower level collapses, resulting in a paradox which the text itself puts in a nutshell: ‘Whoever you invented invented you too.’ (1983 94)

As Rimmon-Kenan says, Brooke-Rose’s novel is an extreme example which should make it clear that once more we should speak of tendencies and degree and that such transgressions are part and parcel of narrative as such. If we discuss particular examples this should become clear and once more we can say that innovation may not be so much a question of invention but of the degree to which authors make use of available ploys and just how self-conscious they are about that use.

As we mentioned earlier, *Tristram Shandy* is often described as the type of the novel, and we have already seen that there are continual alterations in chronology through digressions, a great deal of diegesis mingled with the dramatic presentation of events as well as there being alterations in perspective. As regards narrative level, it also provides us with a great many interesting features. In the first place, Tristram acts
as an extradiegetic narrator who tells of the events leading up to his birth. But there are many other levels within his narrative when other characters like his father or Uncle Toby recount events. They are intradiegetic narrators at a hypodiegetic level as Rimmon-Kenan would have it. However, there are narratives within narratives within narratives here so that we also find narrators at a yet deeper level. There is another problem in this novel too, which is that Tristram becomes a character in his own story when he tells of his birth, which could be looked upon as a transgression as he appears at both the extra and intradiegetic levels. Even so, it should be remembered that all narrators are essentially extradiegetic, even when they do tell of their own experiences.

Stories within stories are quite common in literature and are frequent in the examples we have been discussing, although most of the digressions and histories of other characters in the novels by Fielding and Thackeray are told by a narrator who remains on the same narrative level (the appearance of letters being an exception in both authors). *Bleak House* is a curious novel in that it has two narrators who share the narration, and it is curious too that both remain at the same level as regards their respective narratives. The case is in fact rather problematic. Should we consider Esther's story as a story within that of the first narrator; or are they two independent but interweaving accounts. At the outset, Esther is clearly aware of her part in the overall design and thus her narrative is
that of an intradiegetic narrator at a hypodiegetic level. But the relative independence of her narrative could allow us to consider it as that of a character belonging to the story, but who, because of her relative distance from events which she recounts a posteriori, is at the same relative level as the first narrator. This kind of narrative or narratives, with two narrators recounting their portion of the story, while each is aware of the existence of the other (a point critics have tended not to consider) provides us with a curious anomaly which breaks with the idea of hierarchy as stated previously. However, if we recur to Wayne Booth's model of the narrative act and consider the difference between the implicit narrator and the two narrators involved here, we could place both at an equal but inferior level to the implied narrator. Certainly, the novel creates predispositions which it follows and in general terms the reader is unaware of a transgression of levels, but I would suggest that Esther's awareness of her role as narrator at the same level as the first narrator, when her narrative is ostensibly a story within a story can be considered as a transgression of levels, something more usually attributed to postmodern metafiction.

The problem of levels, as we have just seen, sometimes leads to ambiguity and confusion, and when it does so, as in Tristram Shandy and Bleak House, it draws attention to the nature of the narrative and is therefore metafictional. This would not be so of Heart of Darkness. We do have a story within a story here, and
Marlow is at an intradiegetic level, but there is no sense of transgression and the effect of this in the novel is rather to emphasise the limitations of his perspective as much as anything else.

From these examples, we find that there is a great deal of variety when it comes to the exploitation of different narrative levels. Moreover, it is here where we seem to be discovering a greater sense of alteration and transgression, at least up to now, and this may be significant. However, that this kind of thing is part and parcel of the novel itself, and not the exclusive territory of innovative or experimental works should already have been made clear.

The next point to discuss in our model is person, which is closely related to narrative level. Basically, there are two types of narrator according to Genette (1972 251-259). These are: homodiegetic and heterodiegetic. Therefore we can distinguish between absent narrators who tell stories about others (heterodiegetic), and narrators who are participating characters in the text (homodiegetic). Basically, any manifestation of the self is a sign that the narrator is homodiegetic, that he belongs to or is part of the story. However, if a homodiegetic narrator is his own hero he can be called autodiegetic, the diegesis is about himself.

There may be a problem, though, when an absent narrator suddenly becomes a participating character, which is like the case of Tristram Shandy, could be said of Thackeray in his role as manager of the booth in
Vanity Fair and also occurs with the narrators of Tom Jones and, more recently, The French Lieutenant's Woman, when the narrator accompanies the protagonist on a journey. It may then be said that such terminology is inadequate, however, it is sufficient for our purposes as, once more, any kind of anomaly of this kind can be considered as a transgression, the going beyond the bounds of the norm, or simply as unconventional.

As regards person, we can talk of the narrative level, degree of participation, perceptibility and reliability. Homodiegetic and heterodiegetic really refer to the degree of participation of the narrator in the story. We can then identify the level of narrative and the degree of participation by combining the terminology we have already used up to now which would provide us with a four-fold typology: an extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator, who is in a position above the first narrative but is also a character in it, like Pip in Great Expectations or Esther in Bleak House at one level; an extradiegetic-heterodiegetic narrator, who is also in a position above the first narrative but is not a participant in the diegesis, like "Fielding" in Tom Jones or Thackeray in Vanity Fair (although there could be a problem with these as we mentioned); an intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator, who is at a narrative level below that of the first narrative and is a character in the diegesis, like Marlow in Heart of Darkness; and an intradiegetic-heterodiegetic narrator, who is also at a diegetic level inferior to the first narrator, but, while being within the story tells
stories about others, like Sheherezade’s stories in the *Arabian Nights*. Of course, we could also add to this list by taking into account further levels of diegesis (hypodiegetic), but they would be essentially of the same type as those already mentioned. Moreover, it should be made clear that while this typology makes clear the kind of participation (or lack of it) that we find in a story, the degree of participation varies from one narrative to another. Hence the term autodiegetic for the narrator who is the hero of his own story, while other homodiegetic narrators’ involvement is less.

We should also consider that in many narratives there are several persons who recount events and make comments and the tendency to make use of more than one person (alterations) can take on thematic significance itself. As we said, if this person appears at different narrative levels, then it is usually considered a transgression as well as often being of a metafictional nature. In the novels we have looked at there are several examples of alteration in person, although these narrators tend to narrate within the narrative of a narrator at a superior level of diegesis. However, transgressions and anomalies do occur as we have seen and are not exclusive to experimental fiction. But questions like is Thackeray, Fielding or Tristram homo or heterodiegetic are difficult to answer. In one respect they are heterodiegetic narrators as they tell stories about others, but in another they are self-conscious narrators who spend a great deal of time talking about themselves and the narrative they are
writing. So, the kind of building into the text of the problems the writer faces, which Lodge too readily refers to as contemporary, is clearly a feature of the novel from its beginnings.

Another question, that of degree of perceptibility is partly accounted for in the typology we have just described, where the ideas of covertness or overtness can be partly explained in terms of the narrator being a participating character or not. However, as we have seen there are certain anomalies as regards just whether a narrator is a participant or not and, at this point, between the narrator as character or as characterised. This involves the particular role of the narrator, a little more of which will be said later. What is clear is that although the narrators of *Tristram Shandy*, *Tom Jones* and *Vanity Fair* should not be considered as characters in the strict sense, they are definitely overt which leads us onto the next point.

As Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan points out, there are six different areas in which the overtness or covertness of the narrator can be identified. These are related to the description of setting, the identification of characters, temporal summary, definition of character, reports of what characters did not think or say, and commentary. In all these areas, prior knowledge, the narrator's assumptions as regards the reader's ignorance about facts, the tendency to account for what, when, why and how something has happened, explanations about the nature of the consciousness or unconsciousness of characters as regards certain events, the desire to sum
up, to generalise, to interpret and make judgements and so on, are indicative of the presence of the narrator (see Rimmon-Kenan 96-100). All of these can be accounted for in terms of tendencies towards certain narrative functions or the narrator's relation with the narratee and need not be developed here. However, tendencies towards description or commentary as regards setting, character, speech, thought and so on, are significant in narrative as they involve choice, and while the overt existence of the narratorial presence at these moments need not be metafictional or even selfconscious, the reader does become aware of certain preferences on the part of the author. In any novel, this can be related to a tendency towards diegetic or mimetic presentation, and, in that section, we found that the disappearance of the author in modernist texts leads to narrative which attempts to be more highly mimetic, while the amount of diegesis in Sterne, Fielding, Thackeray, Dickens and other Victorian novelists, with their continual comments and digressions, is overdetermined and, in fact, becomes the norm for those particular texts. This idea leads us back to what we have said earlier about the existence of a limited series of categories, or constant set of variables: although permutation within them is possible, we can appreciate the existence of clearly recognisable possibilities.

At this point, perhaps a parenthesis is called for in order to remind ourselves of the point of what we are saying. It has been suggested that the ideas of play and game are applicable to narrative and that, consequently,
certain rules are involved. This should not be interpreted as a suggestion that there is any kind of rigidity involved in the application of rules in narrative. What we hope to show here is that, while literary texts are more playful and even disrespectful as regards convention or tradition, these same texts embody conventional codes which are in turn governed by existing categories of discourse. Moreover, their use of particular alternatives can be looked upon as indicative of a particular kind of trend, and, without generalising too much, this seems to be so in the texts we have been perusing. Having said that, let us pursue the matter by continuing with our model for narratological analysis.

We had been discussing the question of the person of the narrator, his degree of participation and perceptibility, which leads us to the question of his reliability. As Rimmon-Kenan points out, it is much easier to explain unreliability and she sums up the signs of it as follows: the limited knowledge of the narrator, personal involvement and a problematic value scheme, where distortion through subjectivity, differing from the implied author's view, characters' viewpoints clashing with the narrator's, mistakes, contradictions, contrasts and incongruities as regards information and language, and so on, all lead to the reader's awareness of unreliability (1983 100-103). Again, we find that all these possibilities are available to the author and that all of these features are common in narrative, easily recognisable and, once analysed, indicative of tendencies within the narrative.
Curiously, the reliability of the narrator in the traditional novel is rarely put in question, and certainly not in those where an extradiegetic, heterodiegetic omniscient narrator like Fielding or Thackeray is involved. Once more, it is later in the development of the novel, where not the resolution of epistemological questions, but the exposition of them becomes typical, that unreliability begins to become a theme in itself. Henry James plays with this continually in novels like The Aspern Papers and The Turn of the Screw, and the emphasis of the limitations of the narrator in a framed narrative like the latter bears comparison with Heart of Darkness, where the reader becomes aware of a good deal of irony directed against Marlow. Once again, it is noticeable that ideological shifts seem to account for this kind of change in the novel.
2.3.4. The role of the narrator.

For Genette and Rimmon-Kenan, the points discussed up to now offer a fairly complete picture of those features which are relevant in the analysis of point of view, although we still have to discuss the functions of the narrator and the question of the narratee. However, prior to discussing narrative functions, which further clarifies the nature of the narrator in the text, I believe it would be worthwhile to consider the role of the narrator in any given text. Clearly, this is related to the function involved, the distance and perspective adopted and so on, but, our idea of the narrator would be much more complete if we were to consider this idea of the narrator’s role. Here some of the ideas suggested by Wayne C. Booth, who has clearly influenced many of the concepts discussed already will be of help.

Booth distinguishes between dramatised and undramatised narrators, between observers and narrator agents, between third person centres of consciousness and camera eyes or reflectors all of which are implicit in most of what has been said already (Booth 1961 151-153). He also mentions the self-conscious and self-effacing narrator, which at a primary level depends on overtness and covertness, as we have already seen, as well as function. However, while some of these points have been dealt with, a comment made by Booth opens up slightly different territory. He states, in discussing scene and summary, that the efficacy of a particular kind of narrative depends on the kind of narrator who
provides it (1961 154-55). Moreover, he goes on later to suggest that it is not enough to speak of narrative function, but that the characterisation of the narrator is related to the effect that is achieved (Booth 211-212). Throughout, Booth discusses the nature of the narrator in terms that go beyond the narrative function, and what we want to emphasise here is that the role given to or adopted by the narrator, whatever the function of the narrator at any given moment, determines many significant choices as regards categories of discourse not to mention style.

Curiously, Booth often discusses narrators, particularly those of Fielding's Tom Jones and Sterne's Tristram Shandy, as characters that the reader begins to consider as old friends (see particularly Booth 216). This clearly brings in the question of identification and so on, but what is more significant is that at this stage we find that the critic begins to speak in terms of analogues (213,217). To speak of analogues as regards form, function and so on is common, and Booth does so when he refers to the "comic analogue of fear" in his essay (217). However, analogues exist at every level of narrative and we will refer further to them at a later stage of this work. But the point to be made here is that the role of the narrator is something that we usually consider to be analogous to others that exist in and out of literature, even to the extent of identifying with the character, as we already mentioned. Let us develop this.

At a glance, it is without difficulty that the
reader can begin to identify gossips, entertainers, friends, companions, clowns and even authors as the narrators of a given novel. This clearly involves the dramatisation of the narrator and might be considered as existing only when the narrator is a character. However, as we have seen, this is not so, and the nature of the narrator’s role is not solely linked to his being analogous to a particular character type. All narrators are dramatised to some degree and in the same way as they have particular functions they also have particular roles: remember that there is a difference. The functions described by Genette, which we will discuss shortly, clearly do not depend on whether the narrator is dramatised or characterised in the text and the same can be said of his role. However, whereas the narrator’s function, in Genette’s terms, is independent of the literary or non-literary mode or medium adopted by the author at any given moment, this is not the case with the narrator’s role. In simple terms we can say that there is a correlation between narrative mode and the narrator’s role, which can have its repercussions as regards style, structure, mood and so on.

Earlier, we mentioned briefly the kind of role that a narrator may have in a text and the fact is that the list could extend a great deal further. However, if we avoid terms which simply suggest the nature of the narrator as character we will find that the relation between mode and role becomes clearer. For instance, in his book, *The Comic Art of Laurence Sterne. Convention and Innovation in Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental*
Journey, John M Stedmond talks of how Sterne adapts the old conventions, including those of rhetoric, to the new medium of the novel (1967 10). There he also mentions how this work involves the burlesque and travesty of digressive narrative methods. We could go further and say that Sterne is travestying certain traditional roles given to narrators in literature and that among these he mentions those of satirist, clown, pedant, editor, virtuoso, rhetor, comic hero, anatomist and so on (1967 Chapter 1). Bearing in mind the previous list of roles, we could further add those of historian, letter writer, biographer, essayist and so the list goes on. All of these roles can be those of dramatised characters in a narrative but this is not necessarily so. The question of overtness or covertedness comes in here as well as the degree to which a narrator is dramatised, but the point to be made is that even a heterodiegetic narrator at an extradiegetic level can adopt any of these roles which do not interfere with his various functions as narrator throughout the text. Hence, when we speak of the narrator’s voice, we should also consider the role that he adopts, which like his function, may vary, although it is in adopting a particular role, rather than using a particular function, where we find how the narrator’s voice is linked to the literary or non-literary mode adopted, an aspect of narrative which will be developed later and which will be discussed using terms related to those used to describe that role. At the same time, the role adopted by the narrator can have some effect on the nature of the narratee, which will be looked into in
due course.

Besides the roles assigned to Sterne's narrator, we could also mention Thackeray, the Manager of the
Performance, moralist, apologist and even actor, or Fielding, the biographer, historian, critic and so on.
This kind of role-playing involves a clear dramatisation
and characterisation of the narrator, which emphasises
aspects like degree of participation, reliability and
overtness, while implying that a similar treatment of
the narratee will occur. This point will be dealt with
in due course.
2.3.5. Narrative Function

As we said the next point to be discussed according to Genette's model is the function of the narrator. Rather than describe six functions after the fashion of Jackobson, Genette limits himself to five narrative functions, which cover Jackobson's and are the following: narrative, metanarrative, communicative, testimonial and ideological. Remember that the idea of there being a specifically poetic function of referring to the message for its own sake has been questioned, mainly because such an activity may have thematic significance, as well as for the reason suggested earlier, that there is not so much a poetic function as specific effects achieved through particular uses of language within specific functions and recognisable categories of discourse. In fact, when we speak of narrative, the tendency is to draw attention to the nature of the narrative in contemporary texts, so that we could say that the way in which language and technique draws attention to itself forms part of the metanarrative function. As we said, the narrative functions are independent of the narrator's role, and in the same way constitute a determined, and limited series of possibilities for the author (Genette 1972 261-265).

The narrative function, as its name suggests, operates where the discourse concerns the story and its development. The metanarrative function takes the narrative text itself as its subject and involves the marking of internal organisation, relations and
connections. This is essentially self-reflexive and can be related to the metafictional aspect of narrative which will be dealt with in detail in due course. As we have suggested, this is the function that most closely resembles Jakobson's poetic function, but which has a thematic significance which goes beyond a simple poetic effect. The communicative function has to do with the narrative situation as such as well as the relation between narrator and narratee; thus it involves both the phatic and conative linguistic functions named by Jackobson (contact and identification, basically). The testimonial function comes into play when the orientation of the narrative is towards the narrator himself, and while it involves Jakobson's emotive function, Genette feels it also has to do with moral and intellectual comments by the narrator, as well as details about sources for his information, the precision of this and his feelings about it. Finally, the ideological function operates when the nature of the narrative becomes didactic and the reader is provided with authorised commentary, explanation and justification. Genette relates this function to the realism of Balzac where this kind of commentary is frequent, as it is in Sterne, Fielding, Thackeray, Dickens and other traditional realists. Of course, we can look back to what we said earlier about the nature of realism and see this tendency as forming a part of the need to persuade the reader precisely in order to achieve this sense of realism (Genette 1972 263). Remember that the realistic novel is in this sense, as
Bradbury pointed out in *Possibilities*, a "species of persuasion" (1973 289). Curiously, in the same way as this function enables the narrator to persuade us, a particular use of it may do the opposite and draw attention to the text's fictionality. This is an area, then, where we may find differences in experimental or postmodernist works as well as in their uses of the metanarrative function, which may be less of an innovation considering the time dedicated to this by most of the early novelists mentioned up to now.

It should be remembered that these narrative functions, like addressing the reader and so on, are also related to extra-narrative functions which have to do with the ideological nature of the narrative. But it should be emphasised that ideological and other aspects of the text are not wholly dependent on these narrative functions, which can be attested to by considering what we said about the emotive and cognitive aspects of point of view as well as simply pondering on the reliability of the narrator as such. For this reason, as Genette says, the narrative functions should not be considered as wholly monopolising the text, a further reminder not to confuse him with the implied author, as it would be with little difficulty that we could find a narrator whose didactic utterances are at variance with contemporary ideology (1972 263-64).

Once more we can see how there is a constant set of variables available to the author as regards even narrative function and it is up to him to what extent he wishes to make use of them, to over, under or non-
determine a particular aspect as Christine Brooke-Rose would put it (1981). The same can be said of the next point to be discussed in our model, which deals with the question of the narratee.
2.3.6. The Narratee

For a long time little attention was paid to the narratee, at least by the literary critic if not by the author. This really came with Genette in 1972 (265-67), although several critics like Prince (1973) and Chatman (1978) have also devoted time to the subject. Very simply we can say that narratees can be personified or not, that is they can become characters within the narrative or not. The most comfortable way of classifying them is to make use of the terminology already used to classify narrative levels, so that narratees can be either extradiegetic or intradiegetic. An extradiegetic narratee would be like that of Mrs. Dalloway, who is not characterised within the novel and who remains at the same level as the extradiegetic narrator. An intradiegetic narratee would be like those on board the "Nellie" who listen to Marlow's story in Heart of Darkness, personified characters who, once more, are on the same level as the narrator. It is curious that this is usually the case, as the choice of narrator usually means the existence of a determined type of narratee. But it should be made clear that the existence of narratees at both levels is possible and that the characterisation of a narratee at a level other than that already established may draw attention to the nature of the narrative up to that point, breaking with reader expectation, going against the rules, breaking the frame.

As we have just said, a narrative can contain
narratees belonging to both levels although the norm is that the narratee belongs to the same level as the narrator. Moreover, other aspects which are relevant to the nature of the narrator also have to do with his counterpart. For example, we should consider participation, overt or covertness, reliability or unreliability. Clearly, these terms, bearing in mind what has been said about the narrator in the same regard, are self explanatory, but a few more words of clarification would be helpful.

The narratee in any given text may participate or not in the story. This seems like a fairly innocuous fact, but the existence of a narratee as a participant in the story may allow for some kind of parallel to be set up between interlocutors which may have thematic significance or be simply a metafictional element in the narrative drawing attention to its communicative, conative and phatic functions. This would be the case of Heart of Darkness, where significant parallels are drawn between Kurtz and Marlow, Marlow and the crew on board the Nellie, and finally, the first narrator and the reader. The nature of the communicative act, the need to communicate, the elusiveness of meaning and so on, are themes which we are aware of because of this choice of narratee.

Of course, conversely, the narratee may not be a participant in the story and be totally uncharacterised. The effect of this is to make the narratee implicit, or even suggest that the reader, or the implied reader as Booth (1961) and Iser (1978) would have it, is the
interlocutor. However, there are many implications involved here, which, in a sense, are also related to the idea of the overtness or covertness of the narratee. Let us say a few words about that before we go on.

An overt narratee is clearly found when, as a participant in the story, that participation takes the form of clear and direct responses to the narrator who is telling the story, interruptions, commentary and so on. However, the overt narratee need not be a participant in the story and might simply take the form of the dramatised reader who would act in a similar way. One such case is Sterne's madam in Tristram Shandy, who is characterised but does not participate in the story except to interrupt and make comments, the effect of which is often metafictional, drawing attention to the implied reader's expectations, convention and so on. However, even a participating character in the story can be covert, simply by not giving a possible response in a given situation.

Of course, both participation and overtness and covertness involve the question of degree and some narratees may participate more or less at a given moment or be more or less overt or covert. However, there is more to be considered. Earlier we spoke of the role of the narrator and the effect that this can have on the nature of the narrative. The same can be said of the role of the narratee. One simple distinction would be that between the narratee as listener and that of the narratee as reader, which can involve the question of participation and overtness too. However, narratees can
also be described as those who overhear a conversation, observers, eavesdroppers, spectators, audience, congregation and the list could probably go on. The choice of any particular kind of narratee or narratees in a narrative would thus have clear repercussions as regards the degree of formality with which he is addressed, the mode of discourse and register adopted and so on. Indeed, we might say that the role of the narratee is dependent on the role adopted by the narrator, which is something that we posited earlier.

There is a further possibility that ought to be considered at this point. Wolfgang Iser has explained the existence and the nature of the implied reader (1974), but while we accept this, we should take into account the possibility of there being no narratee at all in a given narrative situation. Let us clarify this point. When we say that there is a narratee in a text, either explicit or implicit, this presupposes that the narrator is addressing someone, whether that someone is the reader or another character does not concern us here. However, there are many narratives which are not written for some other person, a diary for example, although here it could be said that the narratee is the narrator himself who will read the narrative at some point in the future and, consequently, the narratee is explicit in spite of the fact that another person is not involved in the narrative situation. We could say that this kind of narrative is solipsistic and we might add that this solipsistic element is common in much recent narrative. But we can go further than this to suggest
that there are narratives of a distinct nature where even this kind of narratee does not appear. Perhaps the best way to explain this is by considering some examples from the work of Samuel Beckett, who has also had his imitators, among them B.S.Johnson.

In *Malone Dies*, for example, the narrator tells stories to himself in order to pass the time. Later in *The Unnameable*, Beckett creates a voice which the reader overhears as it were. The ideas of solipsism and alienation are involved here and it seems that the author has created narrative situations where the need for the narratee has been dispensed with. Once again, in simple terms we could say that the narrator is talking to himself, but in a way which is distinct from the kind of self communing we find in a diary. So, as with the narrator, there are different degrees of narratee involvement, stretching from an overt reader narratee to a covert narratee, an example of which, according to Seymour Chatman, would be *L’Étranger* by Albert Camus (1978 253–62). In a framed narrative, the narratee has to be a character or characters like the listeners on Board the "Nellie" in *Heart of Darkness*.

Let us get back now to what we said about similarities between narrators and narratees. In the same way as a narrator can be reliable or unreliable, the same can be said of the narratee. When the narratee is at the same level as an extradiegetic narrator, there is usually a sense of both sharing the same point of view and ideology and the narratee is thus reliable. However, in the case of *Tristram Shandy’s “madam”, we*
have a clearly unreliable narratee although she is at the same level as the narrator. This effect is achieved simply because at the moments when this narratee is characterised we find that she becomes the butt of Tristram’s irony due to her failure to understand or accept what the narrator is doing. Thus, a narratee who fails to understand, or who makes inaccurate statements or comments if he is dramatised, and so on would be unreliable.

In Fielding’s Tom Jones, we have another case where irony is directed against an unreliable narratee who is clearly distinguished from the implied reader: “love probably may, in your opinion, very greatly resemble a dish of soup or a sirloin of roast beef” (in Chatman 1978 260), and ironised by both narrator and implied reader. Similar ironies occur in Thackeray and Dickens.

Getting back to the role of the narratee, in fact, there may be several different audiences for the narrator which he may treat in different ways. Chatman, in his book, includes an interesting quotation from Tristram Shandy, which sums up what amounts to an explanation of plurality in the roleplaying of the narrator as well as implying the possibility of rolegiving to the narratee:

He [Tristram’s father] ... placed his arguments in all lights; argued the matter with her like a Christian, like a heathen, like a husband, like a father, like a patriot, like a man. My mother answered everything only like a woman, which was a little hard upon
her, for, as she could not assume and fight it out behind such a variety of characters, 'twas no fair match: 'twas seven to one.

(Chatman 1978 262)

Chatman states, however, that this kind of plurality in narratives is not very common due to what he calls the need for "intimacy and specific focus of an actually named or indicated narrator" (262).

So, to sum up, we can say that choices as regards the role of the narrator imply similar choices as regards the narratee and that these choices also have an effect on or are influenced by the mode or kind of discourse used in the narrative, with the corresponding degrees of overtness/coverture, reliability and unreliability and so on.

Up to now, our model has shown that narrative involves clearly defined categories of discourse and that choices made in one category tend to affect the others. Moreover, questions of appropriateness and conventionality come into this in that tendencies suggested by consistency in the choices made may be undermined by the appearance of alterations or transgressions of what begin to be considered the predispositions or rules of the text (generated by the text itself). Of course, alterations are common if not essential and can be considered as part of the literary playfulness of the text without undermining the coherence of the whole. But they do tend to draw attention to themselves and usually have thematic significance.

When discussing the history and ideology of the novel, one possible definition suggested the need for some kind of governing principle for the novel to be a novel. In one respect, we could consider this in the light of what we know about mode as literary or non-literary kind, and suggest that those governing principles which determine the external structure, organisation, setting and even the plot and kind of discourse adopted are related to if not dependent on the mode chosen. That is not to say that it is the only principle involved in determining the nature of the work, but what we will find is that this idea of mode is closely linked to the idea of analogy: that is, the work of fiction is analogous to some other literary or non-literary kind. Suffice it to say that such considerations can help us to explain existing types of novel, which while it is a developing form, often does so by its use, mixing or parodying of existing modes and analogues. Analogy will be dealt with in more detail a little later but what will become clear is that a governing principle is a constant in narrative and that it is related to mode and others kinds of analogy, just one more of the developing set of variables of the novel.
3.1. Mode: Literary and Non-Literary Kinds of Discourse

At this point we must once again consider the question of mode as regards its relation to kind and genre; something dealt with earlier in more general terms prior to discussing the novel's history and ideology. Then, we found that Alastair Fowler's *Kinds of Literature* was helpful, particularly the suggestion that there are distinct kinds of novel dependent on choice of mode among other things. Mode, in one sense, involves a selection of features from a particular (literary or non-literary) kind and the novel may then be epic, tragic, comic, historical, romance, biographical, mythological and so on. Curiously, Fowler sees novel as being capable of having defining characteristics and as being essentially the kind of narrative that is typical of Fielding and Thackeray, their repertoire including verisimilar, naturalistic and often unnecessary detail (1982 Ch. 7). Moreover, he believes that the novel has its own corresponding mode and calls a narrative poem like *The Ring and the Book*, by Browning, novelistic (1982 120).

However, beyond that he does not really define novel as such, which ought to suggest that it is always determined by mode, a suggestion which is more than valid. In fact we could say that novel is not unlike satire, as Fowler describes it. It is stated that although fixed satiric kinds existed in antiquity, diversity of form was the paradoxically fixed form of
the satire (1982 110). In the same way, this could be seen as characteristic of the novel too, as it also has a diversity of forms which depend on choice of mode.

Returning to the basic point, novel is then dependent on mode and, moreover, other subdivisions can be made in the novel according to choices as regards subject matter, a choice which determines to which sub-genre the work belongs. The apparent all-inclusiveness of the novel is what accounts for the great variety of modes and subgenres within the kind. Moreover, it is possible to extend that variety as the novel (and perhaps every other kind) is in constant development and new choices as regards mode, subject matter, or an original mixing of modes and matters, and so on, would bring this about.

More traditional novels tend to follow one particular mode, for the most part, and have a particular setting, subject matter and plot. If not, then, the alterations within them as regards these modes and matters would be fairly consistent. Setting might change from an urban to a rustic scene (Bleak House), school to university or factory; the plot or mythos may be that of an adventure, but it would not be incoherent to envisage such a novel becoming political (Heart of Darkness). But, in general terms, in the traditional novel there certainly seems to be some kind of generic coherence involved. In Heart of Darkness, for example, what appears to be a seaman's yarn (an adventure) takes on a very different shape and the quest (another element of its mythos) becomes spiritual, like a kind of
Pilgrim's Progress. While expectations are being played with somewhat and the novel, as we have said, has its political element too, we find that there is still coherence within an orally recounted adventure story. Changes of setting are involved in the novel too, but this takes place for the sake of contrast and comparison between civilisation and the wilderness, and the movement is coherent within the chosen form. Perhaps coherence here is also related to the symbology of the novel closely related to such changes and also to thematic significance.

What could be suggested at this point is that inconsistency or incoherence in changing and mixing mode, subject matter or mythos is not typical of the traditional novel but is more so in more recent narrative, particularly in what we call postmodern fiction. One good example to illustrate this might be The Infernal Desire Machines of Dr. Hoffman by Angela Carter, where the narrative explicitly draws our attention to the mixing of modes, where setting abruptly, sometimes incoherently and fantastically changes, and where inappropriately changes as regards the mode/setting/story/mythos relation are found: "You must not expect a love story or a murder story. Expect a tale of picaresque adventure or even of heroic adventure . . . (1982 14). This is a clearly metafictional statement and this novel is largely of this kind, drawing attention to the fact that how we frame reality changes the nature of it. Another example of polymodality in this specific sense is Flann O'Brien's At Swim-Two-
Birds, where we find many postmodern features. O’Brien parodies several literary and non-literary modes and juxtaposes them in such a way that he draws attention to their conventional nature. Autobiographical reminiscences, extracts from the local press as well as other fictional works are mixed with more clearly fictional or literary modes of expression such as parodies of epic Irish poetry, the fairy story, the "portrait of the artist" novel and even natural poetry and Dublin public house conversation. All of this shows just how conventional most forms of expression are, and O’Brien, whom we quoted earlier, does this in an attempt to show that there is nothing new, that authors simply make use of readily available, existing material. So this novel is largely a work of reference, as O’Brien would have it, and shows how even innovation in the novel is dependent on existing conventions. This suggests another aspect which has not yet been gone into, which is intertextuality, although, specific allusions to other works is not referred to here. But we could think perhaps in terms of choice of mode as being a kind of generic intertextuality. However, as this section hopes to deal with mode and kind in more general terms, their relation with postmodernism will be discussed later.

As we said, novel would appear not to be an entirely independent or distinct form and is always dependent on mode. The choice of mode, which has its relation to subject matter, setting and mythos, as it often takes its name from them, involves a series of
predispositions as regards form, structure and even as regards the kind of discourse adopted. The mixing of modes means that a variety of predispositions are involved and the mingling of them, if it is lacking in coherence, or involves inappropriateness, can take on thematic significance. Moreover, these predispositions are dependent on, or rather create our expectations, which equally depend on convention and tradition, as regards appropriateness, coherence and consistency. In simple terms, we could say that the choice of mode presupposes several other choices as regards form and even style, which can be related to what stylisticians call dimensions of situational constraint, that determine what is appropriate in given circumstances. This is not the place to go into stylistic analysis, but it should be made clear what these circumstances are.

Crystal and Davy in their Investigating English Style (1969), suggest that there are eight dimensions of three types. The first type involves individual idiosyncracy, regional or class dialects and the period the utterance belongs to. The second has to do with the medium of the discourse (speech or writing) and the question of participation (the presence or absence of an interlocutor, etc.). The third type deals with the province of the language or its extra-linguistic context, which can be related to the occupation or role of the language user (legal, journalistic, scientific, religious language). Status also comes in here and would determine formality, politeness, deference, intimacy and so on. Modality is mentioned in this respect too, but as
regards the suitability of form to subject matter; and finally singularity, another way of looking at idiosyncracy, comes in.

Moreover, there are other dimensions, and these could be related to the several categories already dealt with in our narratological model (voice, time, mood), which, in this light, could also be considered as dimensions of situational constraint. By determining the frame of the work, they lay down the predispositions we have mentioned. Crystal and Davy make an interesting remark as regards this aspect in literature:

[There is] a high proportion of singularity features, variability of modality, high frequency of overt indications of attitude, the possibility of introducing any kind of linguistic convention without it being necessarily inappropriate, features from any other variety can be made use of in a literary context (or a humorous one) for a particular effect. Literature can be mimetic of the whole range of human experience -- and this includes linguistic as well as non-linguistic experience. In a poem or novel, one may find pieces of religious or legal English, or any other, which have to be understood in their own right before one can go on to assess their function in terms of the literary work as a whole. (1969 79-80)

So the rules and conventions that govern the modes and varieties used in a literary work become part of the
predispositions laid down in that work. All of this clearly supports what we have been saying, that the question of constraint does affect narrative, in that particular choices, not only as regards subject matter, setting and mythos, but particularly as regards mode (and this in turn involves the use of particular literary or non-literary kinds of writing), mean that particular constraints are placed on the narrative, governed by conventions that are not always literary. These choices are what lay down the predispositions of the work and make the reader aware of the questions of appropriateness, convention and tradition, of what is expected and even acceptable. The narrative situation and the mode adopted will also have further repercussions on the roles and functions of the narrator and narratee, time, distance, perspective and so on.

At this point it should be considered that there are various types of interrelationship between different categories of discourse or kinds of situational constraint related to what we have been saying. Crystal and Davy call them mutual dependence, probable co-occurrence, possible co-occurrence, and highly improbable co-occurrence. The first would involve legal language being formal, the second would suggest the informality of a conversation, the third would allow informality in religious language, and the last would see as improbable, and we could say inappropriate, the co-occurrence of legal and colloquial language (1969). In simple terms, it becomes clear that specific choices on one level have specific repercussions at other levels
of discourse. In traditional narrative, it is not usual to find examples of highly improbable co-occurrence, but as Crystal and Davy’s earlier comments point out, literature tends much more to use a variety of conventions without them being necessarily inappropriate.

To sum up a little, what we can say is that whatever the novel, it will be analogous to some other literary or non-literary mode or modes and that the choice of mode presupposes dimensions of situational constraint, which in turn involve a series of predispositions which convention and tradition entitle the reader to expect to be followed. Indeed, many writers do follow them. Because of the interrelationship between different categories in narrative discourse, this means that some choices may be considered as more or less appropriate or conventional in terms of the mode, or any other category, selected.

If we look again at Heart of Darkness as an example, we see how the choice of mode, setting and mythos determine the choices as regards other categories of discourse. The oral nature of the tale allows for much colloquial, informal language, with many phatic and conative expressions. As the role of the narrator has to be that of a seaman, then his language is full of sea-going terminology, as well as the odd expletive. The setting also determines a great deal, with continual references to landscape and so on, and as it is told like a tale, there are many paralepses that look forward to what will happen next. However, the story Marlow
tells, as we are told, is not typical and his language is not always like that of the sea. As the story turns into a spiritual pilgrimage, then the register changes and colloquial expressions are substituted by complex symbols and metaphors, which sometimes correspond to changes in setting. Suffice it to say, then, that a choice of mode (like the seaman’s yarn) and setting, determine the narrator’s role (sailor) as well as the nature of the involvement of the narratees (listeners) as well as the nature of the varieties of language used (seaman’s jargon and so on). Even the choice of plot depends on, or we might say determines much of this.

So, the novelist makes specific choices as regards mode which determine the nature of the novel, as every novel involves such a choice or choices of mode. This choice is dependent on the recognition of a particular analogy between the fictional narrative and some other literary or non-literary kind of expression. So there are novels which adopt a literary mode like satirical, picaresque, heroic, romance, gothic and so on; and there are those which adopt a non-literary mode: historical, biographical, epistolary, diary, travelogue, etc. Moreover, the modes of the novel can be extended and for that reason we can now find accountings and even journalistic novels. Of course, as we have seen, this choice of literary or non-literary mode also determines the use of other categories of discourse and even the regional and functional varieties of language to be used: from the use of a particular dialect on the one hand, to the use of a particular kind of expression or
discourse, which may involve the use of conventional, technical or formulaic expressions only found in that kind of discourse (Dear Sir, Once upon a time, Dearly Beloved, Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury and so on).

In more general terms, choice of mode determines the categories of discourse used, and choice of setting and character can often determine the regional and functional varieties of the language used (as can mode). Previously, we mentioned the presentation of speech in our model and referred to Norman Page’s Speech in the English Novel (1973). It is often in the speech of characters where we find a proliferation of features related to regional and functional varieties, which are obviously made use of as a fundamental part of characterisation, particularly in realistic fiction. Page makes use of the terms dialect and idiolect to refer to those features belonging to a particular region, profession, or class and to those that are simply idiosyncratic. Suffice it to say, that narrative, particularly realistic narrative, often strives to reproduce spoken English in a realistic manner and, to this end, the author has to resort to the use of existing modes and varieties (often indicating a particular dialect or accent by deviant spelling), depending on the nature of the character.

Prior to concluding this section it would be curious to note that if we were to list the many different kinds of novels in existence, we would begin to appreciate distinctive tendencies which could be summed up in the following way. We would identify the
categories dependent on setting and mythos on the one hand, and those dependent on literary or non-literary mode on the other. As regards mode, we might then discover two branches suggested by literary and non-literary. We could then state that the realistic novel, in general terms, tends towards the use of modes that are not strictly literary, like history, biography, journal or letter, while unrealistic fiction, like romance or satire, tends towards the adoption of existing literary modes as these two examples suggest. If we bear in mind what has already been said about fiction, faction and problem novels by David Lodge in an earlier section, perhaps we could relate them to the use of non-literary, literary and mixing of modes respectively.

All in all, it is clear that the novelist is able to make a series of choices, but only within a constantly developing set of variables. Moreover, that choices have to be made in this area or within this particular category is a constant in narrative. The fact that novel makes use of and is analagous to other literary and non-literary modes of expression means that particular choices of mode presuppose specific dimensions of situational constraint, or simply imply degrees of appropriateness as regards other categories of discourse. Finally, the mixing of modes and unexpected, inconsistent or inappropriate uses of language which do not adhere to the predispositions laid down by a given choice or choices of mode, would seem to be an area in which the novel has been developing in
recent times in attempts to move beyond or make new uses of tradition and convention.
3.2. The Governing Analogy

What has been said up to now about modes, or kinds of literary and non-literary discourse has brought up the question of analogy and we have stated that the discourse of narrative fiction is analogous to other kinds of discourse. However, we can go beyond this to find that analogy can be discussed at different levels and in different ways. Now, analogy will be referred to in a more traditional sense, but we will find that its effects are wide-ranging from structure to style, and it can be considered as yet another category of discourse where authors may make choices.

When we spoke of mode earlier, it might have been more appropriate to use the expression mode of writing, which is a function distinct from language and style, as Roland Barthes would have it (Writing Degree Zero 1967). As we have just seen, the modes of writing made use of in the traditional novel tended to be rather limited and were usually analogous to much used non-literary forms like history, biography a journal, travelogue and so on. We could call these analogies conventional and they clearly form part of the governing principle of the work. Clearly, analogy is an intrinsic part of our way of seeing things and goes beyond a simple consideration of imagery as a stylistic feature. For example, Roman Jakobson has pointed out that "[f]ollowing the pattern of contiguous relationships the realistic author metonymically digresses from plot to the atmosphere and from the characters to the setting in space and time. He
is fond of synecdochic details (1956 78). In simple terms, authors look for analogies between these several categories in the novel and also at various levels. We could say that this is true of many good novels and is part of what makes them valuable to us. A good example of this kind of writing is Hard Times, by Charles Dickens. This, like most of Dickens' novels, is full of synecdochic detail and the same semantic features are related to different structural elements like person and place. These semes tend to be related to things like geometric regularity, hardness, mechanism, repetition, monotony, darkness, lack of contact and emotion, all of which have thematic significance in the novel as a whole:

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a schoolroom, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasised his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellargae in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry, and dictatorial. (1974 1)

As we can see, it is not just a question of speaking metaphorically, but even syntax, among other things, is governed by the analogies Dickens sees. Later,
Gradgrind's home is described with a geometric regularity similar to his own, and the language and behaviour of many of the characters tend to be seen in terms of mechanism and inflexibility. However, even the structure of *Hard Times* is dependent on the awareness of analogy, related to the division of the novel into three books: *Sowing*, *Reaping* and * Garnering*, which is suggestive of an opposition between Nature and Mechanism, which is indeed a fundamental conflict on several levels with great thematic significance in the novel. Therefore, we could say that the mythos or plot of the novel is seen as being analogous to these rural activities, indicative of change and of the cycles of the season among other things.

At this point we could generalise and say, not too controversially, that traditional novels, or some of them, tend to be governed by the author's awareness of conventional analogies determined by current ideological trends and tendencies, which often depend on, or are related to natural or common practices or processes, or established literary types. However, this is yet another area in which the novel can be seen as developing, as a governing analogy, or analogies, which can be seen as always forming a part of the set of variables that constitute the novel, can be of different kinds, so that developments in this area would be related to more contemporary ways of seeing.

In the modern novel, for example, we find the establishment of the use of stream of consciousness techniques, where the term itself clearly indicates an
analogy. As times change, the vision of writers changes which leads them to search for more appropriate analogies in order to reflect the nature of their times, in the same way as we can find that the settings for novels and the modes of discourse they make use of change with time. It is through analogy, essentially, that the vision of the author manifests itself, and this often determines certain aspects of narrative technique and style, as well as telling us a great deal about the nature of that vision. The semes related to such an analogy may permeate the work so as to influence structure, style and even mode.

If we briefly consider B.S. Johnson, as an example, we will find that his work is a case in point and that the nature of his novels is often dependent on a particular analogy or analogies. This will be dealt with later in greater detail, so, suffice it to say that in a novel like Trawl, we find how the nature of the novel is governed by Johnson’s awareness of the analogous natures of trawling, remembering and writing. This necessitates the continuous movement in the narrative structure from present to past and the setting involved for the use of such an analogy determines much of the lexis and imagery, as well as a range of semes that overlap at many levels. However, more will be said about that later.

One final point ought to be considered prior to ending this section, which at first glance may not appear relevant. Some critics consider that mise en abyme becomes more common in the so-called postmodernist
novel (see Linda Hutcheon 1984). This figure can be described as a part of the narrative which parallels or symbolises that narrative. This is probably true and would support what we have said about the nature of the governing analogy being an area in which the novel tends to develop. This is so because some contemporary authors look for analogies which thematise the process of writing the fiction. Going back to Trawl, we could say that trawling itself is a mise en abyme of the fiction making process in what is clearly a self-begetting novel. So this is another area in which we find the use of analogy at work.

All in all, it should be clear that the governing principles of any narrative are determined by the author's awareness of analogy and that this, in turn, determines mode and many other aspects of the narrative.
4. The Determination of Codes

When we first began discussing the possibilities for a narratological model, we mentioned communicative functions (within which we decided that the poetic function should not be considered as a function but as an effect), narrative functions and categories of discourse, which have already been dealt with. However, the idea of discussing narrative in terms of the Barthesian codes was also considered. While the categories and functions discussed up to now could be considered as encompassing these (although the symbolic code could be considered as a special case), it is still worthwhile to think of Barthes' codes as complementing the model we have developed up to this point. In particular, the degree of determination of these codes is helpful in coming to a decision about the nature of any given narrative. This is particularly so when we remember that, to a large extent, what we have been saying up to now is that the tendency is for changes and developments in narrative to be precisely of degree. However, to begin with, the nature of the codes themselves and the consequences of such an idea of narrative should be explained (Writing Degree Zero 1967 and S/Z 1975).

We should remember that Barthes' codes are associated with the idea of encoding experience, and that ways of writing change and are dependent on place and time. Reality does not exist independently in narratives but is shaped according to the dominant mode
or ideology of the time (McHale 1987). When that dominant changes under the effect of new ideologies or disillusionment with the existing one, writers abandon the old style in search for new ones. What we will find is that it is possible to describe these new styles in terms of the degree to which and the way in which particular codes are determined.

Codes, in general terms, are the voices out of which narrative is woven (Prince 1988). They are the voices that authors use to encode reality and refer the reader to particular areas of significance in the narrative. The reader reads texts in terms of these codes and is led through the narrative and understands it depending on the degree to which and the way in which certain codes are emphasised. In general terms, the reader is able to understand, follow or interpret the text in terms of these codes or voices which function within the areas of significance Barthes mentions: hermeneutic, referential, proaeretic, semic, and symbolic. That means that when we read a text the focus may shift and we may be led to understand it in terms of the resolution of a problem or solving of a mystery; what it tells us about our surroundings or culture; in terms of what happens next, what or who is good or bad and so on. Of course, it is not only the text that emphasises any given area of significance. The reader is also involved, interpreting and anticipating according to the codes he finds as regards questions like good and bad characters, solved and unsolved mysteries or cause and effect. However, a trail is laid down and much
depends on the attention we pay to the various codes as well as our appreciation of coherence, or a lack of it in any given voice.

Now let us explain the codes. The hermeneutic code has to do with the way in which narrative is significantly structured in terms of what happens next, the formulation of questions and their resolutions, and allusions to the past and future, as well as involving the ideas of suspense, mystery and disclosure. Essentially time and the ordering of events is part of this code.

The semic code is the area in which a reader becomes aware of the connotations or hints of meaning as regards character and setting. Essentially, it is here where the reader is made aware of the semantic features which make up character and setting and these allow him to make even moral judgements about who or what is good or bad.

The symbolic code has to do with the structuring of a narrative in terms of groupings, contiguities, repetitions, cross-references and associations that create figurative meanings. This has to do with our recognition of imagery and our awareness of its thematic significance.

The referential or cultural code has to do with the manner of significantly structuring narrative in terms of the verisimilar or an agreed upon, verifiable cultural background. Of course, what is referred to and how it is done may be indicative of a shared ideology, class or values.
The proaeretic code is that which structures the narrative in terms of actional sequence and can be related to cause and effect. Through this code we are able to summarise plots and recognise significant changes of state or thematically significant actions. All of this would include introductions, modifications and conclusions as well as references to cause and effect relationships. We could say that this code has to do with story as such, and that emphasis in this area of significance would lead us to read the text in terms of its story. The nature of story and changes in this area of significance will be dealt with in more detail in another section.

In any text, our interpretation is dependent on how we are led to appreciate these codes which allow us to understand and judge character and setting, interpret imagery, resolve questions, follow reasoning and even share ideological values. However, in order to arrive at any firm conclusion about a text, some degree of coherence is required, not only as regards what areas of significance are emphasised, but as regards consistency and completeness within them. To use Barthes’ own terms, we could say that readerly texts facilitate the reading and interpretative process by providing us with this kind of coherence, while writerly texts do not. That is, the facilities for interpretation, following, judgement and sharing are not all there and the reader is left with gaps to fill and unresolved enigmas. This could be considered as breaking with or simply not following convention. But Christine Brooke-Rose, in her book A
Rhetoric of the Unreal, suggests the use of the terms determination, over-determination, under-determination and non-determination in order to describe the kind of thing that happens here.

Before going on, let us first clarify what these terms mean. In fact, the idea of determination is quite straightforward and can be explained as being those parts of a narrative where the narrative discourse signifies, or provides information according to a particular voice or code. Of course, over-determination occurs when this goes beyond the bounds of informational need, is too clear, over-emphasised or simply exaggerated. Under-determination takes place when information is lacking, where the reader might expect or require more information, where the reader is led to believe that something is unimportant or pays little attention to it, or where there is a lack of emphasis. Non-determination would coincide with the idea of ellipsis, when there is no signification or information as regards a given code, and also when there is incoherence, vagueness or ambiguity about information or significance in a given area (Brooke-Rose 1981). The effects that can be achieved in this area are several, including that of being indicative of generic or sub-generic qualities as well as simply determining the nature of the significance of the work or what its areas of significance are. Tendencies towards signifying in particular codes or areas are often indicative of movements and developments in the novel and to a certain extent account for many of the changes that have taken
place in this genre. However, this idea of emphasising particular codes in narrative will be dealt with in greater detail a little later in this section.

In general terms, then, we could say that to speak of codes is an impressionistic form of labelling what we find within the several categories we have already mentioned and is, moreover, a form of viewing narrative which closely links story and discourse, but with its focus tending towards how we appreciate meaning. Choices within categories of discourse may, in fact, and often are independent of the narrative function as they are also of the code, voice or area of significance that is determined at any given time. Of course, we could say that specific choices as regards time tend to have relevance within the hermeneutic code, that distance and person may be significant as regards the semic code, that narrative distance, levels and functions have to do with the proaeretic code or that frequency plays a large part in the symbolic code. However, as we have seen, even Genette separates these categories of discourse from the functions of the narrator and we should think along the same lines as regards Barthes' codes.

So, codes refer to areas of experience and significance, and, while the choices made within categories of discourse, alterations and transgressions may be thematically significant, this is not necessarily so. It is true, however, that certain activities within categories of discourse can have repercussions on the determination of codes and it is this question of determination that we will deal with in greater detail
In a sense, the question of determination can be associated with the idea of emphasis. What it means is that the use of particular techniques may emphasise a particular area of significance. Moreover, it is the emphasis of particular areas of significance or aspects of the novel which are to a large extent indicative of changes or development in the genre. For example, Christine Brooke-Rose would have it that realistic or traditional fiction tends to over-determine the referential and semic codes and might under-determine the proaeretic, hermeneutic and/or symbolic codes. Of course, the question of degree does come in here, but what appears to be the case is that the majority of realistic novels do this: they emphasise the verifiable historical and geographical background for the sake of verisimilitude (which was, after all, a criterion for evaluating the novel), thus over-determining the referential code, as well as clearly making apparently shared value-judgements as regards characters and setting (typical during the Victorian Age of fictitious consensus), thus over-determining the semic code (Brooke-Rose 1981 106). Of course, that is not to say that there is no suspense, and hence, over-determination of the hermeneutic code, in novels like Bleak House or Tom Jones, or even of the symbolic code in the former, with its continual allusions to fog and confusion among other things. But let us accept that, to a certain degree, the tendency is to emphasise referentiality and verisimilitude as well as commonly accepted values and
conventions of what is good, bad, ugly, beautiful and so on.

In something like a detective novel, the emphasis would have to be on the hermeneutic code, as the solving of an enigma, delay and suspense are essential ingredients. At the same that does not mean that referentiality and verisimilitude are not there, but what we may find is that there is a certain ambiguity or uncertainty about who is good or bad, involving a degree of indeterminacy as regards the semic code, which would be the case of the kind of novel which provides us with a series of red herrings or false suspects.

In a fantastic or science-fiction narrative, there would be a clear under-determination of the referential code and the idea of enigma may be over-determined in the same kind of story. This would also be true of some folk tales, where the proaeretic code would also be overdetermined, and the same kind of thing could be said of Gothic romances and even, to some degree, of novels like those of the Brontes.

Brooke-Rose also speaks of the determination or encoding of the reader, and, this, once again, can lead us to think of generic and other differences within the novel as being related to varying degrees of emphasis as regards, not only codes, but the rest of the categories of discourse we have mentioned up to now. For example, we could say that over-determination can be achieved by drawing attention to areas of significance through alterations or transgressions within certain categories of discourse. A lack of this kind of activity would
suggest under-determination, and inconsistency or incoherence, would create ambiguity or non-determination in a given code. However, this is probably an over-simplification and, as we said, all of this depends a great deal on degree. The effects of determination and its relation to developments in the novel will be more easily appreciated if we consider a few specific examples. But it should be remembered that any novel can be read in terms of all or any one of these codes. Our interpretation may be guided by the text itself, but it depends, not only on the emphasis the text gives to certain codes or areas of significance, but on the expectations of the reader and the emphases he appreciates.

Let us reconsider some of the novels we have mentioned earlier. In *Tristram Shandy*, we have what some call the type of the novel, but ironically it is usually considered to be atypical. The reasons for this can be associated with the degree of determination of particular areas of significance. For example, we can call *Tristram Shandy* a digressive novel, which suggests, in itself, that the proaeretic or action code is underdetermined. This draws our attention away from the story as being the area where significance lies. We could also say that the hermeneutic code is overdetermined in order to create a series of expectations in the reader, the main one being that he will find out something about the life of the narrator. The disappointment of expectations in this area is due to a degree of inconsistency in this respect. That is,
the answers to a series of questions that the reader posits himself are not provided. We could say that that in itself is thematically significant and that Sterne is drawing our attention to part of the nature of narrative, by going precisely against the trend which was, conventionally, to resolve the enigma or provide the answer. Essentially the novel falls within the range of what we consider to be the realistic novel, but it is also filled with caricatures and types, which suggests that we are being referred to a world that is not referentially verisimilar. However, the values that are expressed there do tend to suggest coherence in the semic code although the term Shandyean would lead us to believe that in spite of consistency, the world that is depicted is fictional.

Other emphases in the novel, like the overlaying of different levels of narrative and the apparent transgression of narrative levels that is involved when the narrator becomes at the end of the novel, the narrator of his own birth is indicative the kind of over-determination which suggests significance on a more symbolic level. That is, we tend to associate this novel with being about the nature of narrative and the process of writing itself: this is something brought about through the continually digressive nature of the novel, with its multiple narrators and embedded narratives. The reader is able to associate these with one another only within what Barthes would call the symbolic code. So, this apparently traditional novel is not what it would appear and signifies in a way most realistic novels do
Another point that could be dealt with is the idea of determination of the reader, but that, along with the emphases of narrators at different levels could be considered as having been dealt with earlier in our model in their respective sections. However, this aspect of the novel is also related to its tendency towards signification in terms of its symbolic code, and the relationships that are created at different levels between narrators and narratees take on significance, in one sense at least, as regards what they tell us about the nature of and the processes of narrative. The fact that Brooke-Rose draws attention to this in her book, is further indicative of what we have been saying, that particular activities within specific areas of discourse draw attention to themselves thus leading to our awareness of varying degrees of determination of codes.

_Tom Jones_ is much more typically realistic in the sense that the novel provides us with a good deal of action or story as well as emphasising the referential and semic codes. In its digressions, the novel is really imposing a system of values that we are supposed to share as well as relying heavily on a common cultural background. However, there is a good deal of overdetermination of the hermeneutic code as our appreciation of the novel is largely dependent on resolving the question of Tom’s true background. We often find that the wrong clues are emphasised (who his mother is, for example), but that the basic point of the novel, aside from its lessons as regards novel writing,
rests heavily on the question what happens next. Moreover, in this novel we find that there is little significance in terms of the symbolic code, simply due to the emphasis on other areas.

*Vanity Fair* is not unlike *Tom Jones* in that it too relies heavily on what happens next: will Dobbin and Amelia marry; what will become of Becky Sharp? There is a good deal of historical background too, so that the referential code is emphasised. Much also depends on the action and how events are related, and the values we share with the narrator are clearly determined, something that is clear even if we only consider the title. Again, this realistic novel tends not to rely too heavily on its symbolic code for significance.

*Bleak House* shares many of the features of the last two novels as well, as referentiality (London, Chancery and so on), hermeneutics (the true origins of Esther, the outcome of Jarndyce v. Jarndyce), the semic code (*Summer*–son and *Bleak*) and the definitive arrangement of the parallel narratives are all emphasised to lead us to read the novel in terms of its verisimilitude and what happened next. However, this novel by Dickens also relies on symbolism and association a good deal for its significance and the symbolic code is, therefore, another significant factor.

As we can see, a novel can be read in terms of any or all of its codes. This could be related to there being different levels of interpretation in any given work, and the reader can give emphasis to a particular area of significance if this is not clearly under-
determined in the text. It is curious also to note that the novels we have considered up to now tend to signify in terms of the same kind of codes (if we exclude Sterne from this generalisation) and rely heavily on what happens next and referentiality. However, it has already been suggested that during its development, the novel begins to signify in different ways, which can be related to a different kind of emphasis on codes. Significance, in fact, is often elusive in modern novels and, if we now consider a couple of examples, how these changes take place will become clear.

Heart of Darkness is a good example of a novel which means in a different way. It is an example of what Barthes calls a writerly text, to a large extent because it resists interpretation and eludes significance. The first narrator in the novel makes this clear when he tells us that Marlow’s stories are not typical and that their significance does not lie within the story, like the kernel of a nut, which is something that could probably be said for the novels we have just considered. Because of inconsistencies and ambiguities in the presentation of the semic code, the reader is led to question what we could call accepted values. Civilisation is a whitened sepulchre while the natives in the jungle have a primordial vitality. The pilgrims are disorderly and savage while the cannibals work quietly and efficiently and throughout the novel we find similar inconsistencies in the semic code. The referential code, we could say, is under-determined, because, in spite of references to Brussels, London and the Congo, there are
too many abstractions and Marlow continually refers to a reality which is *impenetrable* or *unfathomable*. There is some degree of emphasis on the action, but perhaps it is the hermeneutic code which tends to be over-determined here. Certainly, Kurtz is presented as a kind of enigma, but we find that there is really, in the end, a kind of non-determination of this area of significance as the enigma remains an enigma, and the meeting with Kurtz is strangely anticlimactic and inconclusive. As we see, the novel tends towards ambiguity and elusiveness, and it seems that its significance does not depend on referentiality or what happens next as in the other novels. *Heart of Darkness*, signifies in terms of its symbolic code, as it is our awareness of oppositions, similarities, contiguities and associations that allow us to read it not only as a literal journey, but as a spiritual pilgrimage, a psychological journey or even a journey back to the origins of man. It is the emphasis on the symbolic code which ensures that its significance does not rest within the story itself. Due to a lack of emphasis or coherence in the other codes we have to resort to the symbolic code in order to unravel, actively, some kind of significance about man, civilisation, personal identity and so on.

As we see, *Heart of Darkness* is a very different kind of novel from those we mentioned earlier, in spite of the fact that it draws on many realistic conventions like the use of the seaman's yarn. *Mrs. Dalloway* is another writerly text where significance is dependent on something other than referentiality, although it is
clear that Virginia Woolf did indeed attempt to achieve verisimilitude in her descriptions of what the mind receives on any day.

In Woolf's novel, the proaeretic code is clearly underdetermined as the novel has very little significant plot. While there is a good deal of referentiality, with realistic references to common knowledge, particularly about London and Westminster, it becomes clear to the reader that significance does not lie there either. The semic code is relatively clear as regards background and character and there is no sense of ambiguity about it, and there is little we can say about the hermeneutic code except to say that we know there is going to be a party from the very beginning and there is little sense of any enigma to be resolved. Moreover, the novel does not leave any untied ends. Once again, this leads us to the symbolic code as being the bearer of significance in this novel. This is so because Woolf relies heavily on association to achieve significance in this novel. The association of words, ideas, places, characters and so on is achieved through a complex web of associations, contiguities, similarities and oppositions, whose overall purpose is to show the reader that everything is connected, not only in the novel but in life itself. This involves the use of imagery, of course, as well as the repetition of several leitmotives throughout the novel. The overall effect is to over-determine the symbolic code, which is, once more where the significance of the novel lies.

It becomes clear through this brief summing up of
tendencies in some more and less traditional novels that differing degrees of emphasis in terms of areas of significance or codes can have far-reaching effects in narrative. It shows that developments in the novel, and the movement from readerly to writerly texts during the transition towards modernism have depended largely on a break with the idea of referentiality, the relation between language and its referent. Novelists have begun to search for meaning elsewhere, as a result of asking the epistemological question: how can I articulate my world? We will find that changes in postmodern texts also depend on changing degrees of emphasis in these areas of significance. But once again, we should remember that changes in the novel are always of degree, that they are dependent on and take place as a result of particular attitudes towards convention and tradition, and that these changes take place in areas which are constants in the novel: categories, codes, and functions; it is simply that different kinds and degrees of activity begin to take place, usually as a result of shifts in the dominant ideology of the time. We will see how this affects the postmodernist novel later.
5. Story

It was stated at the outset that story would be given less emphasis in this study, as it seems clear that the tendency has been for developments in the novel to be related to the use of categories of discourse. However, story cannot just be forgotten as its elements are related to and have a good deal of bearing on what has been discussed up to now. Particular degrees of emphasis, the question of appropriateness and even proportion in the following of or deviation from convention as regards story can have far-reaching effects, and many of the significant features of modern and postmodern narratives can be described in these terms and involve story.

In simple terms, story can be described as the content plane of narrative as opposed to its discourse which we have been discussing up to now: discourse, as we have seen, is how the content is transmitted as opposed to what. However, the what of the story is made up of several elements which, in turn, involve a variety of features that are significant as regards changes and developments in narrative. Once again, we will discover that much of this has to do with attitudes towards trends and conventions.

Story or content is made up of existents and events. The former can be divided into character and setting and the latter involves changes of state; that is, acts (by some agent) or happenings (without an agent), that take place in the story (see Prince 1988
and Chatman 1978). We could briefly sum up the kinds of actions and happenings in a narrative by referring to Seymour Chatman, who speaks of non-verbal physical acts, speeches, thoughts and feelings in the former, and those things that happen to an existent, thus making the existent the object of what takes place (1978 45). However, the categories of discourse we have mentioned already cover how these events are transmitted and it is other aspects of story which should occupy us here. Briefly, the areas in which we find a greater influence on the nature and development of narratives are as regards what Chatman calls sequence, contingency, and causality; verisimilitude and motivation; kernels and satellites; stories and antistories; suspense and surprise; time and plot; and plot typology (1978 45-84). However, not all of these will interest us equally here.

For example, the question of time and plot as he deals with it has already been covered in sufficient detail within our categories of discourse, as he tends to limit himself to making use of Genette’s terminology. In another respect, Chatman himself virtually dismisses the value of creating a plot typology as all plots cannot be grouped according to accepted formulae, something which would be clearly reductive (1978 95). But a little more should be said about this as the structures used within a given form can also have thematic significance.
5.1. Plot Typology

Up to now, some critics have shown that commonalities exist between folk tales and the like, and we can envisage perhaps that plot types will be categorised in the future (Propp 1958). About this, Chatman says the following:

In short, the characterization of plot into macro-structures and typologies depends upon an understanding of cultural codes and their interplay with literary and artistic codes and codes of ordinary life. It relies heavily on verisimilitude. Until we can begin to formulate all the cultural codes, our deliberations must remain impressionistic compared to studies like Propp’s and Todorov’s. (1988 95)

He goes on to speak of the fact that any such typology relies heavily on convention and, moreover, alludes to an area which we have already discussed, which is that of genre. Suffice it to say here that, depending on the mode adopted or the nature of the narrative sub-genre in question, we could begin to discuss the possibility of isolating particular macrostructural characteristics in narrative, something which we have already, although briefly, alluded to in our section on mode. Such a task would merit a study all to itself, but, in general terms, it could be stated simply that mode, genre, the desire for verisimilitude and convention do play an important part in the formulation of narratives and that
studies like those referred to by Chatman might be possible for other kinds of narrative in future. In our discussion of ideology and mode, many of the elements of narrative, its sources and influences have already been made clear, but some more information is necessary.

First of all, it may be necessary to distinguish form from structure. In simple terms form can be described as the external shape of the text or narrative. In terms of mode, it would correspond to what the narrative looks like: a series of letters, an autobiography, a history and so on. So form is clearly modal, although the choice of mode can have repercussions in other respects.

Structure, on the other hand, is not only dependent on cause and effect relationships within the narrative but involves the appreciation of other recognisable patterns. Critics like Propp (1958) and Todorov (1969) have already sought such patterns, but in general terms we could say that the structures that the structuralists discover tend to be analogous to patterns that exist at least in life, literature and mythology. Once more, we return to the idea of analogy and it can be stated quite simply that the structures we find in the novel tend to be analogous to structures borrowed from life, art and mythology.

We have already noted that the novel makes use of a wide variety of genres, patterns and traditions and in one respect it could be suggested that the realistic tendencies in the novel towards biography and history have influenced the novel towards structuring itself in
terms of a sequence of causally related events. However, within such a broad outline, the existence of other patterns is possible and it has already been suggested that to some extent that these are dependent on choice of mode. Hence we can speak in terms of the bildungsroman, kunstlerroman and so on, which suggest a particular structuring of events. Structure may also be dependent on the comic, tragic or tragi-comic nature of the work, the need to withhold information from the reader in a detective story as well as many other mode-dependent possibilities. The novel of manners would structure itself very often around the obstacles that impede a marriage which will eventually take place, and other kinds of novel rely largely on specific kinds of conflict and resolution. In order to illustrate the kinds of possibilities that exist in the novel as regards its structure it would be worthwhile to refer to a novel which has borrowed heavily from other genres, from nature and from mythology. A detailed study of this novel would take time, but a few general remarks about Wuthering Heights ought to be enlightening.

A great part of the English literary tradition can be found reflected in the structures which this novel incorporates. If Richard Chase writes that "[t]he English novel . . . follows the tendency of tragic and Christian art, which characteristically moves through contradictions to forms of harmony, reconciliation, catharsis and transfiguration" (1957 2), then this novel is typical in that its structure does just that. What makes this novel even more characteristic is the fact
that it does make use of available structures taken from nature, literature and mythology. Its structure is dependent on and analogous to the cycles of the seasons; it is also highly linked to the cycles of birth, death and regeneration; marriage as a hinge in the structure is also important; medieval ideas regarding the cycles of history and the harmony of the spheres also influence the structure which can be summed up as a movement from conflict and disruption to harmony, reconciliation and regeneration; the terms dionysiac and apollonian are applicable to the form of constructing the conflict in this novel which suggests a relationship with classical tragedy, which also influences the structure, and so we could go on. There is even a fairy tale element in Wuthering Heights which could allow us to interpret the structure in terms of Propp (1958) as well as there being a possibility of interpreting the structure in terms of some of Levi-Strauss' mythemes, the basic structural elements of classical mythology (1977 206-31).

There are further structural elements in this novel which could be elaborated into or form part of a typology, but suffice it to say that the elements are there and are recognisable and that many authors do make use of such structural elements within a given form. We could say, moreover, that this is another area in which the novel can be seen as developing or changing. Tendencies change towards taking advantage of or ignoring elements of tradition at times and, while many modern authors made use of literary tradition and
mythology in order to structure their works, others find their ideas for doing so in much more contemporary analogies. We have already seen that this is the case of B.S. Johnson with his novel *Christie Malry's Own Double-Entry*, which not only makes use of the mode of double-entry bookkeeping, but structures the novel partly around this analogy.
5.2. Kernels and Satellites

Another area worth considering is Chatman’s use of the terms kernels and satellites. They refer to that which is more or less important in the narrative, the major or minor plot events, those events that cannot be dispensed with, and those that just fill in gaps, all of which the reader appreciates in retrospect. This can be associated with Jonathan Culler’s idea of how the reader recognises thematically significant action in narrative, which can also be associated with the ability to summarise plot (Culler 1975 136). This kind of recognition of what is important in the text, the major and minor events, appears to be at first a subsidiary area of study as far as we are concerned as it seems not to be intrinsic to the nature of narrative. However, we might suggest the existence of tendencies towards the elaborate use of satellites in realistic or verisimilar novels, where non-essential detail and the need for plausible information as regards cause and effect and what happens elsewhere is commonplace on the one hand; or tendencies towards the omission of such satellites in some modern and postmodernist narratives on the other. Clearly, writers like Beckett who move towards minimalism tend to omit all that is not essential and this is a trend that is recognisable in much postmodernist fiction. We could also envisage narratives which do not distinguish between major and minor occurrences, which would be rather unconventional and thus cause problems for the reader as regards
interpretation. This kind of treatment of satellites and kernels can take on thematic significance as just how novelists construct their narratives in these terms can tell us a good deal about attitudes towards how we frame reality and the manner in which we give importance to events. In fact, this brings us back to a question we have mentioned before. It seems that much of our attitude towards kernels and satellites has to do with a sense of proportion and it is curious that Marjorie Boulton brings this up when she mentions authors of the *nouveau roman* (1975 163). Essentially, an appreciation of there being too much or too little of something in the novel is governed by a conventionalised sense of proportion, and it is proportion, or playing with proportion, which tends to have a significant or defamiliarising effect as regards story in the novel. To sum up briefly, what seems to come out of what we have said is that the the significance of the presence, proliferation or absence of satellites tend to depend on convention and attitudes towards verisimilitude and proportion and, although we have not emphasised this aspect of story, yet again we should remember that it is an area of variability in the novel, which can take on thematic significance, precisely in that it may question our ideas of what is appropriate and what is not.
5.3. Sequence, Contingency and Causality

At this point we should move on to what may be of greater interest to us as regards story and the nature of narrative. We could say that story takes place where events are interconnected in such a way that the reader recognises sequence, contingency or causality. These are largely responsible for our appreciation of suspense or surprise and comprise an area where we find a great degree of variety and significance. The whole idea of the interconnectedness of events is, in turn, related to attitudes towards verisimilitude and motivation, something which, as we have already seen, is a question of convention, and also has to do with what Chatman calls stories and anti-stories. We will find that it is in these closely related areas that the novel has tended to develop and change.

Although we have already mentioned verisimilitude earlier, it is worth recalling one or two points, which Chatman also mentions in his study (1978 48-53). The idea of that which is verisimilar is clearly dependent on the question of probability rather than some existing, actual reality. Although the use of non-essential detail, or the exclusion of things that go without saying are also part and parcel of verisimilitude, the tendency is towards the providing of an explanation that is plausible. On many occasions we have cited Bradbury’s idea of the novel as persuasion, and that is precisely what the idea of verisimilitude boils down to: the point is to persuade the reader of
the plausibility of the action, the existence of some relation between cause and effect, consensus as regards what has been left unsaid, security in the world of unnecessary details that is depicted, and forgetfulness of the many conventions that have been assimilated. From what we have said, verisimilitude is then related to the questions of sequence, contingency and causality. Chatman makes an interesting point in this regard: "The working out of plot . . . is a process of declining or narrowing possibility. The choices become more limited, and the final choice seems not a choice at all, but an inevitability" (1978 46). What tends to be the case is that sequence and causality are related, that in order to persuade the reader of verisimilitude, events are constructed in such a way that relations of cause and effect are imposed to show how a series of events lead from an initial state of affairs to a final state of affairs, the existence of a beginning or an ending being possible only in the world of story.

Now, it is worth recalling what we have mentioned about proportion, but this time as regards causality and contingency. Curiously, the desire for verisimilitude requires the existence of logical possibility for a particular cause to bring about a particular effect. Melodrama is often considered as such because it fails in this respect. That is, an audience or reader is aware of improbability due to the disproportionate nature of the consequences brought about by an apparent cause. This suggests, and it will be shown later with respect to some recent postmodernist fiction, that the whole
question of verisimilitude and suspension of disbelief can be undermined by playing with the reader's sense of proportion, obviously based not only on the outside world but on literary convention. In realistic fiction, a disregard of implicit conventions as regards proportion may result in the reader's awareness of an unreliable narrator, the existence of a lie and so on. In postmodernist fiction, this lack of proportion is often deliberate in order to draw the reader's attention to the fictional nature of the work.
5.4. Surprise and Suspense

Sequence, contingency and causality are also related to the questions of surprise and suspense. These two elements are clearly related to what we have previously called the hermeneutic code, and both are clearly related to reader expectation, or the predispositions of the text. Surprise clearly involves a violation of the reader’s expectations and is typical of melodrama, where the plot tends to involve unlikely events and last minute rescues. Again, the question of proportion is involved. Suspense occurs when the reader is aware of the facts of the case but is anxious about what will be the outcome. In both cases, the resolution of the suspense or the occurrence of the surprise can produce favourable effects, but only if the surprise is grounded in cause and effect, and only if the suspense is provided with adequate foreshadowing of what is to come. Basically, cause and effect and the conventional desire for verisimilitude is at the heart of this, but the author can clearly play with expectation by seeking disproportionate effects through surprise or failing to provide sufficient motives for suspense.
5.5. Further Considerations of Story

Of course, the comments that we have made up to now have tended to deal mainly with tendencies in the realistic novel. It is when we come to some more modern novels that we find that this desire to persuade the reader of the verisimilar nature of the story begins to break down. We have suggested how the misuse of surprise in melodrama can interfere with the reader’s suspension of disbelief. This brings us to mention the idea of contingency, which is essentially the absence of causality. The idea of contingency suggest that things depend on factors which are uncertain, and in many more recent narratives we find precisely this kind of thing in an attempt to draw attention to the idea of process in the novel, rather than the idea of the story as a product. This can also be said of the relatively recent appearance of anti-stories, as Chatman calls them. Whereas traditional narratives suggest inevitability by making choices, which lead to other choices and finally to the inevitable ending, stories which allow for contingency, or even arbitrariness, allow for the possibility of more than one choice or even of all possible choices. The logic of traditional narratives is thus undermined and the nature of the process involved in creating narratives is emphasised. The same is true as regards the question of proportion which has been mentioned already. Too many satellites and a lack of kernels might undermine our sense of the importance of things, and to play with cause and effect, in terms of
our sense of proportion, would certainly draw our attention to the fictional nature of the work. This is obviously the kind of defamiliarising effect sought for by many postmodernist authors, but there are many earlier novels which have played similarly. Let us consider a few examples and notice how particular variations in these areas affect the development of the novel.

In Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, one curious feature is that the novel is rather difficult to summarise. This is due to the fact that there is not a great deal of thematically significant action, although there is a continual tendency to fill in gaps and provide extra information in the many digressions that make up the novel. This, in other words means that there are too many satellites compared to the number of kernels: the narrator is continually filling in gaps but without advancing the story. This suggests what is in fact true of this novel, that Sterne plays with our expectations in this way, apparently providing the reader with necessary information in order to understand events in his life, a life which he never gets around to narrating. This is related to the hermeneutic code and the idea of suspense and surprise. Sterne, as we see, plays with our expectations by foreshadowing events that are never told. A series of questions are suggested but are never answered, thus surprising the reader and disappointing his expectations, although the surprise is probably prepared for due to the digressive nature of what is, in the end, a self-begetting novel. Apart from
that, in terms of story, the novel is essentially conventional and realistic, in that it provides a sequence of interconnected events which are related by cause and effect. Moreover, the story is plausible and the narrator provides explanations and motives for characters. There is a good deal of naturalistic and unnecessary detail, which provides us with a verisimilar story. However, one of the features that most marks this novel is that there is a sense of it lacking in proportion, precisely because it digresses to such an overwhelming extent. This draws attention to the peculiar nature of the novel as a novel because it leads even to the curious dialogues that the narrator has with his reader, whom he expects will be becoming impatient.

As we move on in the development of the novel we find that it continues in the realm of realistic stories. Tom Jones and Vanity Fair are two examples of realistic novels with plots that are readily summarised; there is a series of kernels which are filled out by many satellite stories. Events are linked by cause and effect and the stories are verisimilar in terms of their use of detail and naturalised conventions. Answers are provided to questions, our expectations are not seriously disappointed or interfered with and the beginnings and endings of the stories are linked by a causal sequence of events.

However, these novels and Dickens Bleak House, as a further example, do tend to play somewhat with the hermeneutic code. We are pleasantly surprised to discover the true heritage of Tom Jones, as this
surprise is well grounded in what we have been told previously. This is similar to what happens in Dickens' novel, when we find out who Esther Summerson's mother is. This novel is yet another example of a realistic novel where there are plenty of satellite stories which fill out the main narrative sequence of kernels (perhaps due to its involving two parallel narratives), and, once again, we are provided with a cause and effect sequence which leads us realistically to the conclusion. In other words, in these more traditional novels our sense of proportion does not seem to be interfered with quite so much.

When we move on to consider the modern novel, it is curious to find that, at least in terms of story, a novel like *Heart of Darkness* is still a realistic sequence of events linked causally. However, as we have seen, this novel means in a different way from the others in that the emphasis is not on the story for its own sake, but relies heavily on its symbolic code. The same could be said of *Mrs Dalloway*, which includes many satellites which fill out a very simple plot and lead to a fairly obvious conclusion. The novel is also verisimilar in spite of its innovative techniques, as the conventions for presenting character are used consistently throughout. Like *Heart of Darkness*, it also means in a different way, as association and symbolism are more significant than story and referentiality.

It is when we come to some more recent novels that we begin to find more obvious differences in the nature of story. The tendency is to leave choices open, to
provide more than one ending, to intervene within the narrative in order to show the arbitrary nature of the choices that are made and so on. This is the case of a novel like *The French Lieutenant's Woman* by John Fowles, which provides us with, on the surface, a conventionally verisimilar story, but it also includes its own anti-narrative by doing all of the things we have just mentioned. Cause and effect within the story is undermined and we are made aware of contingency and even arbitrariness as regards the choices that are made. All of this undermines the reader's suspension of disbelief by going against the naturalisation of conventions which have been used virtually throughout the novel. This metafictionally draws attention to the narrative process and turns the novel into a fictional narrative. This kind of thing occurs frequently in contemporary fiction and is typical of the postmodernist novel. The author interferes with the reader's idea of the expected and his sense of proportion again in order to achieve the effect of defamiliarisation. We will find that it also happens in some of the work by B.S. Johnson.
5.6. Setting

Let us move on now to consider the existents of story, which are character and setting. We will deal with setting first as Chatman says relatively little about it and, as novels do tend to deal more with character, this is understandable (Chatman 1978 138-145 and Prince 1988). In general, setting may be more or less prominent, more or less consistent, continually or intermittently present and, although characters or groups of characters that are not specifically named or characterised may form a part of the setting, it usually refers to the physical and spatial background of the narrative. Setting can function as an obstacle that has to be overcome or an enigma that has to be resolved and Chatman refers to the possibility of using it to put characters in jeopardy or cause them other kinds of problems. Certainly, setting is made manifest in a text usually through description and tendencies within the novel vary as to the degree of importance that is given to it. It may, however, be personified and thus become a protagonist in the text, but that would suggest that the setting becomes an actor and would therefore cease to be considered as setting as such.

One point that should be made here is that, as we have already seen in the section on analogy, setting may be analogous to the characters in the narrative. That is, semantic features that are associated with one are often used to describe the other. In fact, we could say that, to some degree, setting can be described like
character in terms of paradigms of semantic features or traits. Roger Fowler speaks of there being (and he probably means this of good novels) a semantic interdependence of person and place as well as there being tendencies in literature to make use of semes that reflect and compose the myths of society. He refers in particular to ideas of wasteland and the living dead which permeate a great deal of modern literature (Linguistics and the Novel 38-39). In fact we could say that, particularly as regards landscape, the novel does tend to develop in terms of the traits or semes that it makes use of in its description. Briefly, we could say that from an idea of protective natural surroundings in many 18th and 19th century novels, we move towards natural landscapes which are threatened by industry and mechanism. Lawrence’s settings are like this but also exude sexuality. Other modern authors provide us with an urban landscape, which can vary from a wasteland of living dead which we have mentioned, to the idea of a concrete jungle. Emphases may vary as regards the importance of home, school, university or factory, and to some extent we could say that much here depends on a modal choice of the kind we mentioned in the corresponding section. This too then is an area of development and perhaps that is why some more contemporary novels provide us with settings that are very much of the present day in offices, banks and factories. Suffice it to say here though that settings are made up of a configuration of features or traits in a manner not unlike that of character and traits from
either may be used in the other in order to suggest associations similarities or some other kind of thematic significance.

From what we have said earlier, it seems that even something like setting can be related to the question of governing analogies. That is not to say that authors depend on analogies in choosing their settings, but the degree to which they describe them, and the way in which they do so must be related to their way of looking at reality. A lack of geographical description may tell us a good deal about the priorities of the author, as perhaps being more interested in the psyche or personal themes, and whatever the landscape, whatever it is analogous to will suggest a great deal about his ideology as Fowler's comments on wasteland suggest.

As regards setting it may also be possible to consider the question of proportion. As we have seen already, proportion seems to influence the nature of story greatly, and, in the same way as inconsistencies and alterations in categories of discourse can produce effects of great significance, a disproportionate emphasis on setting or a complete absence of any kind of description of it might be significant. This, at least in one respect, is suggestive of postmodernist tendencies towards minimalism and excess, two sides of the same coin, which, by failing to describe, or by describing unto the most insignificant detail, question the viability of description at all and cast doubt upon the relation between language and its referent. Now, at this point let us go on to speak of character, which is
related to and will illuminate much of what we have said about setting.
5.7. Character

In very general terms it is possible to think of characters as being major, minor, dynamic, static, consistent or inconsistent, flat or round. These terms are basically dependent on an a posteriori appreciation of the character by the reader and as such are qualities that we become aware of through their treatment within specific categories of discourse. Characters can also be put into classes in terms of the roles that they play or the acts that they perform (Propp 1958) or in terms of their words or appearance. However, as we have seen as regards setting, it is possible to consider characters and discuss them in terms of a paradigm of traits or semantic features which ought to include the elements of character already mentioned (Chatman 1978 107-138, Prince 1988 and Fowler 1975).

As we said, characters can be classified in terms of their roles and Fowler refers to characters as if they were nouns which perform the roles of agent, patient, beneficiary, intermediary, goal and so on. Similarly their actions within the story can be described in terms of pursuit, quest, etc. But it should be made clear, as we have already done in speaking of a typology of plot, that this tends to be reductive and it is often difficult to make value judgements about characters if we consider them only in these terms (1975 Ch. 2). Conventions play a great part in our appreciation of character and the idea of the type is important here. We could go further and say that
characters are constructs which depend not only on semantic features that are attributed to them but on the conventions of fiction, that, moreover, characters tend to be built out of conventional semantic materials.

When a character is considered solely in terms of his role, then he does not exist as an individual or distinct entity. Moreover, he would exist only as part of the narrative structure and not as an individual. That is why some critics, like Chatman and Fowler, propose a manner of describing character which is called componential analysis, or the analysis of character in terms of traits, semantic features, distinctive features or semes (Fowler 1975 Ch. 2).

Much of our appreciation of narrative texts depends on our awareness and appreciation of character which is only possible when we realise the nature of semantic differences and similarities in the construction of these characters. The semantic possibilities of language as such and our appreciation of them are dependent on a system of semes which determine how the meanings of words are constructed as well as determining how they are related, contrasted and understood. Much of this depends on accepted conventions and readers rely a great deal on a stock of psychological and other attributes in order to identify and classify fictional characters.

Fowler mentions that the semantic features that make up a character tend to reflect, clichés or stereotypes of society, which is clearly a way of manifesting a particular way of looking at the world. This is particularly noticeable in realistic novels
which often tended towards caricature. He lists qualities like aggression, materialism, possessiveness, piety, innocence ambition, sensitivity, strength, femininity, elegance, wit among others and sees any given character as being a construct made up of these semes. That is, the language to describe the character will reflect these traits or qualities. Moreover, incident and phrase develop and dramatise these qualities in the course of the narrative. Summing up, Fowler draws our attention to the following: a character is, in the first place, an actant who performs a role or roles within the structure of the argument; he is also a construct made up of the kind of traits we have mentioned; at the same time he is a proper name which is developed by the first two, which are conventional rather than individualistic ways of seeing the character. The final point to mention is that the representation of the speech and thought of the character in terms of its content and the functional and regional varieties employed. These elements are also largely dependent on convention as we have already seen in the corresponding section.

Curiously, the individuality of a character often depends on the use of ideosyncratic phrases, repetitions, the exaggeration of a particular trait, physical or otherwise, tendencies towards vagueness, precision and so on. This kind of thing is typical of many 19th century novels and is the basis of what is called caricature. But it is the overlapping or similarity of such features with those of other
characters or the setting; or their being in some way in opposition to other characters or the setting, that allows to in many ways classify them and become aware of different levels of thematic significance.

In general, realistic novels have tended to be consistent in their presentation of setting and character, and we have seen in our section on the governing analogy that even writers like Dickens made use of the technique of overlapping and opposing certain semantic features of setting and character. This is a common feature and occurs in most of the novel we have dealt with up to now, including *Heart of Darkness* and *Mrs Dalloway*. However, in the former, the unconventional and sometimes inconsistent attribution of semantic features to wilderness and civilisation leads to a degree of ambiguity which makes the reader question what had been previously accepted ideas of society. The same kind of thing applies to Kurtz, who, at the end, remains a bit of an enigma for Marlow. Moreover, to speak of Marlow as a kind of Buddha in this novel could be considered as a source of irony, as some readers may feel that the traits that we associate with him of enlightenment and so on, are not the most appropriate for the narrator of the story. In *Mrs Dalloway*, characterisation is all important and we find that there is great consistency throughout. Moreover, in this novel we also find a sense of overlapping features between, particularly, Septimus Warren Smith and Clarissa. This is deliberate in the novel, as are the other similarities associations and oppositions that we find.
The point is, after all, to show just to what extent everyone and everything is related.

Suffice it to say that as regards character and setting, there are varying degrees to which they are described and varying lengths to which authors go to faithfully reproduce their thought and speech in terms of realistic thought or speech patterns. We can notice these variations readily and a gradual development towards an emphasis on the thought processes when considering the changes that have taken place from Sterne to Woolf. Still generally, we can say that the possibilities for characterisation and the description of setting have been summed more or less by terms like flat or round, more or less emphatic or consistent and so on. Let us say that these are areas in which all novels can vary. This is also true of tendencies to point analogies or contrasts between characters and settings and we have found that much has to do with the particular way of seeing of the author, although, equally, a great deal has to do with convention.

One thing that becomes clear, however, is that as the novel has developed there have been distinct reactions against certain conventional approaches towards the description of character in particular, the kind of thing that Virginia Woolf suggested in her essay “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown.” Many realistic authors focussed on the surroundings or the clothes that a character might wear. Others might emphasise a peculiar tic or quirk in their language. Still others would try to faithfully reproduce realistic speech, even regional
and class dialects. However, within this broad range of possibilities for novelists, most of what has been done has become a naturalised convention, and even stream of consciousness, a clearly impressionistic form of presenting thought processes, has become virtually an accepted norm. Nowadays, some authors simply refuse to describe either setting or character and we have already mentioned minimalist tendencies in writers like Beckett, something that happens occasionally with B.S. Johnson. Moreover, some writers like Johnson are deliberately inconsistent in their presentation of character or setting and have been known to simply change physical or linguistic traits, or the scene where the action takes place, all in order to draw attention to the fictitious nature of what is being described. So this is perhaps one area in which there are notably developing tendencies, in order to defamiliarise us as regards conventions that we have begun to readily accept. Moreover, the question of proportion, as it has already been seen, plays a large part in any kind of description. Minimalism and excess are forms of questioning the very possibility of describing character, physically or psychically, and it is apparent that this kind of critical use, or abuse, of convention is designed to draw attention to such questions. However, this will become clearer when Johnson is considered in more detail.
6. Style and the Games Authors Play

Up to this point, we have covered most of what concerns the public domain in the novel. The wide range of possibilities that exists in terms of structure, mode, functions, categories of discourse and so on, as well as the constraints imposed on the author by the choices that he makes, make it clear just in what areas and in what ways variety is possible in the novel, and suggest that novelists are always working within a given, although developing, set of variables. We could mention also that the kind of activity we find is related to the existence of an implicit set of rules or conventions which the author may, or may not, follow. However, there is still one area that remains to be dealt with. This is related to the idea of rhetoric, although many aspects of the conventions that govern the novel in this respect have been made clear already. More specifically, it can be related to what Jakobson calls the poetic function of language, an area which has been deliberately left till now for discussion. This function, or effect, produced by a particular use of language brings us to what can be called the games authors play. Although the idea of game has already been under discussion, that has tended to be concerned more with public rules of games governed by conventional uses of discourse within the structures and categories of discourse we have mentioned. However, there are still other kinds of game that require discussion here, which are the kind of thing that many consider to be more
representative of individual or personal style. Our focus, then, is on the kind of games that are often thought to make narrative literary rather than other aspects of individual style.

Although we have spoken in terms of a poetic effect of language rather than a poetic function up to now, it is still worthwhile considering Jakobson’s ideas. When we discuss this, the question of degree is important, as we have to refer to the relative dominance of a given function in any utterance, the idea of foregrounding a particular aspect of the linguistic act. The poetic aspect of language is foregrounded when the communication is oriented towards the message for its own sake, or as Terry Eagleton puts it, “words are not just strung together for the sake of the thoughts they convey, as in ordinary speech, but with an eye to the patterns of similarity, opposition, parallelism and so on created by their sound, meaning, rhythm and connotations” (Eagleton 1983 99; see Jakobson 1960 358). This coincides with what David Lodge considers the literary element of a text, that is, the idea of equivalence, repetitions, parallelisms and symmetry of every kind (1979 xiv). These considerations of Jakobson’s idea are related to some ideas that can be found in the work of Roland Barthes (“From Work to Text” 1980) and which enlighten us further as regards what makes literature literary, and hence, the novel the novel.

The study of stylistics shows that, effectively, writing is all style and that, particularly in literary
texts, the choice of a different form of expression can change the significance of the utterance. That is why Jakobson has to speak in terms of degree: different functions may come into play at any given time and the use of the poetic function may in fact be communicative, conative and so on depending on the situation. This is obvious when we attempt to paraphrase or summarise literary texts and discover that something is lost in doing so: significance also depends, then, on the particular sounds, connotations and meanings that are created through our awareness of different kinds of language relations in the text.

Let us say then that language does not only point outward to referential meaning, but to relations within the text. This is essentially what Jakobson means when he talks about the poetic function, although this should not suggest that these language relations in themselves are not meaningful or that they do not perform some other linguistic function.

In his essay "From Work to Text," Roland Barthes distinguishes the work from the text, perhaps in a manner similar to our distinguishing the public domain from the private. We referred to this briefly previously, but let us recall that this emphasises the nature of the text as a "methodological field," where meaning is secondary and which ought to be considered in terms of the signifier at the exclusion of the signified (1980 74). So, when Barthes thinks in terms of the text, he considers not so much what the work means but how the work means. Moreover, how the work means is itself of
significance and is not necessarily a use of language for some poetic effect. That is, the significance of the literary text depends on something other than its literal meaning. As Barthes puts it: "The logic that governs the text is not comprehensive (seeking to define 'what the work means') but metonymic; and the activity of associations, contiguities, and cross-references coincides with the liberation of symbolic energy" (1980 76). In the end, the distinction he makes is to show that the work does mean, but that the text, while it is involved in meaning tends towards a different kind of effect. He puts it this way: "the signifier's infinitude does not refer to some idea of the ineffable (of an unnamable signified) but to the idea of play" (1980 76). The reader becomes aware of associations and other relations in the text, which often are the source of the existence of different meanings in the same text. While these games are put into the text by the author who plays, the reader also plays, by actively taking part in the text through his need to interpret, fill in gaps, make connections and so on. In the same essay, Barthes uses a music metaphor to suggest that different readers identify different patterns and relations in the text after the fashion of the musician, who may interpret a piece of music differently for the same reason. In the end Barthes goes on to say that the text achieves "the transparency of language relations" which are in turn associated with "a serial movement of dislocations, overlappings and variations" (1980 76). This is remarkably similar to Eagleton's summing up of
Jakobson's poetic function. What we can say here is that in some texts these language relations are more highly foregrounded than in others, often at the expense of referential significance. When that happens the surface of the text is foregrounded and dislocated from referential meaning, foregrounding the gap that exists between the text and reality. In fact, in some contemporary narratives, we find that the playing of games no longer has the traditional function of adorning the narrative in order to help the author to persuade the reader of the verisimilitude of what he is told. In these narratives the kind of games that are played actually belong to the metanarrative function in that they draw attention to the techniques that are employed at the expense of referential meaning.

It is clear that play is an integral part of the literary text at different levels and perhaps we should now try to see how it forms part of style. We have said already that there are two distinct domains in the novel, the public and the private or personal, and now it will become clear in what ways play is possible in both.
6.1. Public and Private Games

Style can be attributed to a particular person, class, region, period of time, profession, or personal idiosyncrasy among other things. It can mean the shared linguistic habits of a particular group, or those of a particular individual or may be that which is characteristic of beautiful or effective speech or writing. So, on the one hand, style may be considered as a verbal reflection of decorum or a normative type, with which we cover the public domain. Or, on the other hand, it may be of an individual type or exist solely for the sake of ornament, which is more clearly an individual or personal question.

It is clear that style can be considered as a public game where the observance, or not, of rhetorical conventions belonging to a particular period, genre or other mode of discourse is involved. The private game is related to the idiosyncratic and personal deployment of the linguistic possibilities within any of these common systems, which may also involve the deviance from the norm, but which we will consider outwith the terms of an effective rendering of subject matter. So, to provide an initial distinction in simple terms, at least for our purposes, style resolves itself into two kinds: conventional rhetoric and individual style. Games may be played in both areas, and that which is stylistically significant can involve play within the norms of a common system of rhetoric or play with the predispositions laid down by the individual writer. What
is implicit in what we have just said, combined with what we have gathered from the comments we made at the beginning of the narratology section, is that play in texts may suggest an element of going against the rules, and while, playing particular games in the text may fall within the norm, other kinds of play may be anti-rhetorical or anti-stylistic. In other words, a further distinction can be made and we can distinguish between playing within the rules and play that involves the breaking of rules. Let us now go into this in greater detail.
6.2. Style and Anti-Style

It has already been made clear that rhetorical conventions are important in narrative texts and that various effects can be created by conforming or deviating from them. From what has been said about mode, it is clear that certain word and phrase types may be imposed by a particular choice in this respect and that to deviate from the expected norm can be associated with the idea of play, albeit that literary texts tend to be playful anyway. The degree to which the text is playful and to which it adheres to the norms associated with a given mode, whether it deviates from them or mixes them with other conventions may be considered as a form of anti-style. In fact, the idea of anti-style or rhetoric goes back a long way and has been associated with the baroque.

Considering what we have said earlier, this in turn could be related to the idea of the writerly text which reacts against or negates common conventions or rules of rhetoric. This is one sign of individuality, but a sign which depends on particular activities within the public domain. In a sense, what happens when one plays this kind of game is that, as inheritors of a tradition and the conventions that it brings with it, the game consists in negating a determined set of rules and conventions, which, curiously implies the existence of the rules. Hence, there has been a tendency in the development of the novel, particularly with the appearance of the modern novel and later the nouveau
roman, to consider their innovations in terms of what they are not. That is, the existence of the convention is implied and we are just as aware of the rule as we are of its contravention. Innovation, then, would seem to be something that, at least in one sense, has to be considered in terms of the already consecrated conventions, and that rules in narrative are a constant, although part of the game in literature consists in breaking these very rules.

Referring to something that has been said earlier, we could say that the effect of this kind of play is defamiliarisation, so that modern and postmodernist novels which have broken away from the norms are really emphasising, but at the same time criticising, the conventions that we have become accustomed to. The reader is shocked out of a passive and complacent reading of the text and the artificial nature of style and technique is emphasised. Later, this kind of activity in postmodern narratives will be discussed more fully.

Of course, it has also been commented that literature tends to rely very little on the existence of rules, and that the novel, from its beginnings has tended to flout convention. But that in itself is suggestive of the existence of the rules we have been talking about and usually involves the effect of making us more aware of their existence. The difference between game and play has already been highlighted and this means that play does not necessarily involve the contravention of the rules of the game, or rhetoric. As
we have seen, that in itself can be considered in terms of what has already been called the difference between the public and private game.

Reader expectation plays a large part in this respect. Predispositions are set down by the text which create these expectations and to a large extent these are determined by convention. Games and play will stand out from the rest of the text precisely because they go against the conventions of realistic writing. This is the case of parody in narrative, which by its very nature involves a peculiar use of conventions. We could even say that parody is a kind of anti-style which draws attention to the artificial nature of the style which it critically makes use of.
6.3. Parody and other Games as Anti-Style

Parody involves an exploration of both difference and similarity and invites the recognition of the rhetorical rules, codes and conventions which it makes use of. But while it uses particular conventions, it also abuses them, exposing the conventionalities of language and form through ridiculous exaggeration and distortion. Essentially, parody is a very public game which can be considered as a kind of anti-style.

Other kinds of public games are also possible, which could be associated with the breaking of accepted rules. Parody and other kinds of travesty are the most obvious, but even the misuse of grammar or unexpected or inconsistent choices within categories of discourse, including alterations and transgressions would constitute public games, which would also be essentially anti-stylistic: they involve the breach of the predispositions that convention and rhetoric lay down. Essentially, our comments about categories of discourse have dealt with this aspect of the game, but to make the point clearer, we could again mention the question of appropriateness. The idea of dimensions of situational constraint, mentioned previously, accounts for the requirements imposed as regards choices of appropriate discourse in determined circumstances. The reader is intuitively aware of appropriateness and incongruity as regards the relation between the mode adopted and the language used, and choices in one category of discourse usually require particular choices in another. The
improbable co-occurrence of a particular kind of language when a specific mode is being used would be incongruous to the reader and would essentially constitute play as would the mixing of modes. In fact, this is largely part of the game played in many recent narratives which do draw attention to these kind of transgressions of the rules for a single structure, simply in order to make the reader aware of their existence as rules.

Another aspect of the public game, which involves a rather simplistic version of rhetorical rules, would be to think in terms of what you should and should not do in a narrative or any other kind of composition. The schoolboy notions of rhetoric involve a series of dos and donts which probably still have some effect on the expectations of ordinary readers. The obvious donts would be to avoid hesitation, repetition, exaggeration, contradiction, digression, evasion, and omission. There are probably others, but it is curious to note that in much recent narrative, and even in earlier narratives that were self-conscious, it is precisely this kind of anti-rhetoric that we find, all of which is a part of the public game we have been talking about. These kinds of texts which indulge in anti-style draw attention to the nature of rhetoric itself and are essentially playful. It is curious to note also that many narratives which do such things seem to be playing the game for its own sake and this is something that could be said even of Sterne.

Still in the realm of public games and anti-
rhetoric, we should remember that the mode of discourse used brings with it a series of conventions that are usually adhered to. Similarly, we have already noted that the presentation of speech has been subject to similar constraints and rules. However, it is in such areas that we often find novels being playful by breaking the rules or interweaving different modes and conventions within the same structure. This is yet another area where playfulness can be encountered. Moreover, the question of proportion could also be mentioned here as part of the public domain, where to play with conventional ideas of proportion, even as regards the degree to which we find transgressions, alterations or anti-rhetorical devices in the text is also relevant.

As we have seen, up to now, most of what has been considered belongs to the public domain, to the question of reader expectation as governed by convention and how authors can play in this area. The public game, in fact, tends to draw attention to conventions precisely in order to make the frame of the narrative more obvious, to thematise the conventional nature of narrative. This involves the mixing of modes, alterations, transgressions and the various kinds of travesty, including parody, which is typical throughout the history of the novel, but perhaps more so when writers react against a particular way of writing. This could be said particularly of the writerly reaction against the realistic écriture, and may also be true of what happens in postmodernism. However, as Robbe-Grillet has pointed
out, even those authors who react against convention and attempt to be innovative are the inheritors of a tradition, and their innovations and unconventional techniques must always be considered in terms of what they are not (1989 17).

Obviously, these public games we have mentioned are a sign of individual idiosyncrasy. The style of the work or its norm may be considered in terms of its being unconventional or anti-rhetorical by playing the games of shifting, altering and transgressing. That is, the text, by doing this kind of thing consistently establishes a norm for itself, it is predisposed towards playfulness. So texts that are full of alterations are playful texts which result in defamiliarisation as regards the conventional nature of realistic rhetoric (it should be emphasised here that the conventions or rhetoric of realism are still widely accepted as the norm). In his book The Comic Art of Laurence Sterne, Convention and Innovation in Tristram Shandy, John M. Stedmond refers to this kind of thing in what has been considered the type of the novel by many critics. Essentially, what he says here sums up what the playing of public games can achieve:

All art is a manipulation of conventions for without such recognised patterns there can be no communication. This is why the idea of tradition in art is so significant --the traditional is the conventional; without it, all art is dumb, it has no medium. Thus the study of what the artist does with the
conventions he inherits—with his tradition—is a study of what he is saying. Convention is . . . its whole context. A study of the many literary contexts of *Tristram Shandy* is one way of coming at the full complexity of its meaning. Sterne deliberately exploits the expectations of his readers, is deliberately unconventional, untraditional on the surface. Yet, like many comic writers, he uses this means to bring fuller awareness of the lasting elements in tradition. (1967 10)

This is how Stedmond describes the type of the novel, but it is curious to note that this, along with what we have been saying previously about the public game in narrative, is a summing up of the nature of the novel as oppositional discourse.

To end these generalisations about public games we can say that it is the publicly playful element in the novel, with its antitraditional use of conventions, that leads critics to speak in terms of oppositional discourse. The idea of anti-rhetoric as a way of being idiosyncratic is not a discovery of the *nouveau roman* but is as old as travesty and satire as well as having been the essence of the *baroque*. Curiously, David Lodge emphasises this kind of rule breaking as typifying the new direction that postmodern narrative fiction has taken (1979 220–45). In fact more than simply breaking rules, postmodernist narratives play with the idea of proportion and appropriateness. We have seen how this can have an effect in story as regards description of
character and setting as well as in the area of cause and effect, where descriptions may be exaggerated or minimalist and where a cause may bring about a disproportionate effect or no effect whatsoever. The same is true as regards other aspects of the novel and when Lodge talks about excess, for example, he refers essentially to the way in which authors play with the reader’s ideas of appropriateness and proportion. More will be said about this when we discuss games in postmodernist texts.
6.4. Further Considerations

At this point it would be worthwhile to introduce a brief parenthesis before going on to discuss private or personal games in narrative. It is possible to distinguish further categories in this respect and relate them to what has already been said. Peter Hutchinson suggests a possible division of games into word games and three kinds of game with the reader: enigma, parallel and narrative devices, which include all of the following more common devices that we are likely to find: adumbration, allegory, allusion, ambiguity, social and sporting games, montage and collage, myth, names, nonsense, paradox, parody, travesty, burlesque, pastiche, hoax, spoof, pictures, prefiguration, puns, quotation, red herrings and symbols. It is clear that some of these have been dealt with directly or indirectly: narrative devices, which Hutchinson divides into reliability, self-consciousness and shifting viewpoints have already been considered, while adumbration, prefiguration and red herrings belong to the hermeneutic code. Public games, which rely on common knowledge and convention would include allusion, games social and sporting, myth, parody, travesty, burlesque, pastiche, hoax and quotation. The private or personal games include all word games, names, nonsense, the parallel, allegory, ambiguity, montage and collage, puns and symbols.

Curiously, what becomes clear is that our definition of types of game can be refined further here
in the light of what Hutchinson says. That is, we can see play, as he suggests, as involving not only the public playing with rules and conventions, but we can also find games with the reader, which involve the question of expectation, and there are the games the author plays with language on many levels, which may be considered as simply personal games for the sake of adornment, but we find that they too can take on thematic significance, particularly in modern writerly texts.
6.5. More Personal Games

So, there are public games which rely on convention, games the author plays with the reader and his expectations, and essentially more personal games with language. As we have already dealt in general terms with the nature of public games in narrative, it is time to do the same as regards private or personal games. First of all, we can state that idiosyncrasy is not wholly dependent on the playing of public games but that the text lays down its predispositions at a more private level too. Writers, basically can have their own personal, idiosyncratic style which is recognisable and depends largely on the existence of some kind of stylistic uniformity or consistency: that is we can arrive at the idea of there being some kind of norm in individual style through the recognition of particular tendencies or traits, that is stylistically significant features.

This is not the time to go into detail about the nature of stylistic analysis. Suffice it to say that in narrative it is possible to become aware of consistency in many respects. But while stylistic analysis is helpful in allowing us to describe narrative texts the emphasis here lies on the game element, that draws attention to the fabric of the work and allows us to see it as a methodological field rather than a referential object. This requires us to consider the more playful aspects of individual style and even the possibility of an individual anti-style. While games played at this
level exist very often for their own sake, as Jakobson has suggested in discussing the poetic function of language, what interests us here is how narratives draw attention to this playful element in the text, looking for similarities, differences, associations and so on, often for its own sake, but often in a thematically significant way.

The kind of private games authors play is one aspect of their idiosyncratic style and once the predispositions of the text have established the norm for the text, play is also possible by breaking with these predispositions or rules that the narrative has set down. While this kind of anti-style is not the same as the public game we mentioned earlier, it also tends to draw attention to the kind of conventions the author is using. Traditional novels, even playful ones in the public sense, like Sterne's, tend not to go against the norms laid down. Remember, Tristram Shandy is predisposed towards playfulness. Even, writerly modernist texts tend to adhere to the predispositions laid down by the text in spite of the innovations we find there: novels like Mrs. Dalloway are consistent, and within particular episodes in Ulysses, Joyce adheres to a particular norm. It is when we come to much more recent fiction that we begin to find authors breaking with the predispositions they themselves have laid down within the text, deliberately breaking off and changing style or direction in the middle of the work, disrupting syntax, creating much more fragmentary and apparently arbitrary texts where to find a norm at all is sometimes
a difficult task.

Curiously, in novels like these it is sometimes possible to find the author at once suggesting the use of a particular stylistic feature, figure or image and then rejecting the possibility, drawing attention to the process involved and installing while at the same time subverting a particular style. It a sense, it is like suggesting the playful possibilities of the text and then refusing to play (see The Unfortunates by B.S. Johnson). These kinds of text are often considered postmodernist and often try to break the frame of the narrative as stylistic uniformity breaks down. Perhaps we could even relate the kind of thing they do to David Lodge’s idea of short circuit, something we will refer to later in discussing postmodernism. Other games referred to by Lodge apart from short circuit are contradiction, permutation, discontinuity, randomness and excess, which can be considered as examples of anti-style (1979 220-45). More will be said about these in due course.

There are also other tendencies towards play that can be considered typical of contemporary and postmodern texts which lie within those we have mentioned. The tendency of all of these is to draw attention to the surface and mechanism of the narrative. Up to now, most of what we have considered as playful has had to do with going against norms or predispositions in the text, but the playful element in narrative involves more than this. In fact, we have to go back to what has already been said about Jakobson’s poetic function, or the
business of referring to the message for its own sake. In narrative this involves drawing attention to the nature of the narrative for its own sake, where games can be considered as self-foregrounding mechanisms. Essentially, what Jakobson refers to is the idea of play and he sees the poetic use of language as depending on the projection of the "principle of equivalence from the axis of selection onto the axis of combination" (1960). As we have said, this is where the game element comes in and the author's personal games involve a series of selections and combinations based on the notion of equivalence, or difference. This may be done for its own sake, but may also have thematic significance in the text. Moreover, the playful element involved in the personal predispositions of narrative, and the kind of tendencies we can find there can be related to Jakobson's ideas as regards different forms of combination in narrative. As he puts it, there is a realistic metonymic mode which relies on contiguity. In realistic texts the signifier foregrounds the signified in order to emphasise its relation with other signifieds. The modernist metaphoric mode involves selection and substitution (see Lodge 1979 xiv).

David Lodge sums up the dichotomy in this way; there are modernist, symbolist, mythopoeic, writerly and metaphoric texts on the one hand and there are antimodernist, realistic, readerly, metonymic texts on the other (1979 220). Basically the distinction is indicative of the shift from readerly to writerly texts, and also shows that tendencies in game playing change as
the novel develops. The shift away from referentiality in the novel means that game playing takes on a much more central role and, in fact, for some modern novelists, like Joyce, the possibilities for the playful element in language are taken to the limit. The kinds of possibilities for combination then change in postmodernist texts to those already mentioned by Lodge which tend to draw attention to the artifice and mechanism involved in the narrative.

We have seen how there are games with the reader and have noted that games may be public or private. They can be considered in terms of particular uses of convention or more personal dispositions of language at the level of individual style. We have seen also that the novel as oppositional discourse has always tended to play the public game as well as there being other games at a more personal level. Let us now consider broadly just what some of the possibilities for play and the kind of games we can talk about are before taking a detailed look at the specific aspects of literary play Hutchinson points out.
6.6. Possibilities

The perusal of any dictionary of literary terms would provide us with an enormous list of tropes, figures and images that are openly available to the author. Up to now we have been talking in terms of games, but we could equally refer to techniques or devices, although all come within the category of games. In her book The Anatomy of the Novel, Marjorie Boulton relates a long list of apparently innovative or experimental techniques which can be found already in Sterne, as well as in many other realistic and traditional novels, what she calls mainstream. For example, she points out the parody, satire and word games in Fielding, the symbolism, allegory, parody, invocations and linguistic peculiarities in Dickens and lists many more techniques that appear throughout the 18th and 19th century novel. Briefly these include: the inclusion of verse, epigraphs, dream sequences (like stream of consciousness), fantasy, satire, mythmaking, riddles, paradoxes, digression, analogies, dislocated time sequences, and the list goes on (1975 150–54). All of these can be considered as playful in either the public or private sense as either public conventions are played with or the text plays in the more individualistic sense, with language, with similarity and difference.

The same is true of the devices she lists as deriving from Sterne which include some of the above but is much more extensive (1975 155–60). Obviously, some of
these devices have been developed in later experimental novels but their use should not be confused with innovation as such. Once again, it is a question of considering available possibilities and then the question of degree comes in too. Let us briefly list the devices Boulton mentions: dislocations of time, dislocation of ideas of proportion, symbolism, parody, extrapolation, typographical and visual devices, digression, analogies, semantic experiments including pun, onomatopoeia, portmanteau words, word games, puzzles, foreign words, words and compounds invented by analogy, variants in grammar, nicknames, tricks of rhyme, association, parallelisms, misspellings, malapropisms, comic long compounds, unusual interjections, etc.; catalogues or lists, imitations of methods of scholarship (footnotes, imitations of lecturing techniques, allusions to books, etc.), allusion, changes in mode, extravagance, profanation, sanctification, retelling a known story, unexpected treatment of point of view. Boulton also mentions the mixing of dramatic and narrative modes of presentation, bilingualism and a series of techniques that can be associated with stream of consciousness. John M. Stedmond has a similar list, again taken from what he finds in Sterne, and among other things he adds intertextuality, aposeopesis, spontaneity, pedantry, playing with cause and effect, non sequiturs, losing the place and incongruities (1967 10).

From all of this it becomes clear that, since its beginnings, the novel has employed a wide variety of
devices that belong to the public and private games of literature. That is, the possibilities for play have always been apparent. In fact, the point to be made is that authors simply take advantage of existing possibilities for play to varying degrees and often with a different end in view. Recently, this has been seen to be done largely for its own sake, but the games authors play often highlight the mechanisms being used in narrative and therefore have a metanarrative or metafictional function. Even innovation can often be seen as finding new ways of playing the same games, or simply taking advantage of previously unavailable typographical possibilities. Moreover, it should be made clear that some games are very complex, and aspects of some of those we have been calling public can be found at a more personal level and vice-versa. Similarity and difference are involved in word games as they are at different levels in parody and myth, and substitution, association and analogy can operate on many different levels too. In fact, many of the devices mentioned up to now involve ways of suggesting equivalence, difference, association or contiguity; or have to do with the hermeneutic code, or the question of the narrator’s reliability. It could be suggested that the games authors play sometimes reflect the desire for new ways to draw attention to such things.
6.7. Games: Concluding Remarks

Developments in the novel can be related to the way in which authors take advantage of the possibilities for play already available to them, or by playing existing games in a new way, or simply refusing to play. Certainly the tendency is for these games to draw attention to themselves as devices and foreground the technique and artifice involved in the novel. Let us say that the end to which contemporary writers do this is to denaturalise game-playing as such, sometimes even by refusing to play. We will see the kind of games B.S. Johnson plays in due course, but a point worth mentioning just now is that when we consider the novel as oppositional discourse a word that crops up is carnivalisation. This is always part of the novel, but in the case of some contemporary writers we find that carnival is more highly foregrounded and a number of tendencies appear which draw attention to ontological problems, the relation between fiction and reality, the nature of convention and the act of writing itself.

As we have seen, the majority of games that have been mentioned fall within the areas described: games with language, hermeneutics, the parallel and narrative devices. All essentially involve games with the reader although some emphasise public conventions and others are simply there for adornment or their own sake. The question of proportion and appropriateness is relevant regarding many of these games, in the sense that it is often tendencies to over-determine, under-determine or
non-determine aspects of the hermeneutic code, narrative devices, parallels and word games that are indicative of development. It is the exaggeration of particular traits that is the essence of parody and any inappropriate allusion, parallel, contrast or comparison may bring about specific effects that we can associate with Lodge's idea of excess.

In the end, it is clear that there is a wide range of possibilities regarding play for the author. Much play is for its own sake, but a great deal in done with a specific purpose. Returning to the idea of the novel as oppositional discourse, we could say that the kinds of games played and tendencies to play can be seen in this light. In its beginnings, the novel tended to react against the use of rhetorical devices. In modernism, we find the increasing importance of play with language, the use of myth and intertextuality. In the postmodernist novel, the same kind of games are played but to different ends, and the game is often undermined through excess or contradiction. Throughout the development, the antitradi tional, parodic element has always been clear, and as we have seen, this perhaps typifies the nature of the novel.

To sum up, it is clear that play is an essential part of narrative and that to play or refuse to play may be thematically significant. Moreover, we have seen that the kinds of games authors play and the extent to which they do so are often indicative of the nature of their work and is usually thematically significant. Another final point worth making is that the possibilities for
play tend to remain the same. However, as far as innovation is concerned in narrative, we might say that it may be possible for some authors to search for new ways to play within these possibilities, although, curiously, one of the basic problems for some contemporary writers is whether there are any further possibilities for the novel, or if these possibilities are being exhausted. This will become clear when we discuss the work of B.S. Johnson in the coming section on postmodernism.

Up to now we have formulated a working model for the analysis of narrative, which considers all of those aspects in which any recognisable development may take place. The possibilities for innovation, or renovation in the novel appear to be closely related to the existence of tradition and convention and tend to work in some kind of relation to them. The importance of the contemporary world view and how it is reflected in narrative has been made clear, and throughout we have seen that the novel, at least when it develops, can always be considered as oppositional discourse. These are the things that we have to bear in mind when we consider postmodernism and especially the postmodernist novel in terms of its history and ideology, narratology and the games that postmodernist authors play.
Part Two
The Postmodernist Novel
1. Postmodernism: Some Preliminary Remarks

In order to have a clear understanding of the nature of postmodern narrative it is first necessary to discuss it in context, in terms similar to those which have been necessary to explain the nature of the novel as such. Only then, will it be possible to distinguish, if at all, the nature of the postmodernist novel. To that end, the steps laid down in the previous sections will serve as a model, which will allow us to observe just to what extent there has been an observance of tradition and convention on the one hand, or invention and innovation in contemporary narrative on the other.

However, due to the polemical nature of the term postmodernism, it will be necessary to explain just what it means, or in what ways it can mean, as well as describing the extent to which an awareness of such a concept may have exerted an influence on narrative. For that reason, our discussion must begin, not with a discussion of the nature of the postmodernist novel, but with the nature of postmodernism itself.

Earlier, novel was described as oppositional discourse. It was also suggested that this is part of the nature of postmodernism, although that is not to say that all novels are postmodernist. But if the nature of postmodernism is, in part, to be oppositional, it has to be made clear precisely what it is in opposition to, and of what kind of culture and society they are products. Hence the need to speak of the historical, socio-political context of the phenomenon.
Something of the ideas about and attitudes towards modernism or modernisms should also be understood in this respect. While emphasis on and explanations of the etymology of the word postmodern tend to be reductive, postmodernism certainly does bear some kind of relation to modernism. In fact, just what kind of relation some critics believe it has tends to determine the nature of postmodernism for them. This suggests that postmodernism is a product of history and it will become clear that it is not solely a literary or artistic phenomenon, but that its repercussions go beyond culture to influence attitudes towards even history and politics.

From what has been said, a division can be made between what is postmodern, or postmodernism, and the society or age which produces it. Postmodernity is the age in which we live, or do not live, according to our attitude towards it. For many, this is but the continuation of a progresssion, while, for others, a clear reaction against a preceding generation is involved. One might suggest another way of looking at things and state that, in an age which clearly develops from the one that has preceded it, many of its artistic productions, in particular, harbour some kind of reaction against what they have inherited: that is, tradition and convention. However, as this slightly paradoxical assertion seems to imply, both the inheritance and the reaction are to be discovered in these productions.

In spite of the great deal that has been written about postmodernism recently, still the tendency has
been towards debate rather than consensus as regards just what postmodernism is or what postmodernists do. One reason for this is the fact that this is the age of postmodernism and it could be said that critics and theorists do not have an adequate perspective from which to view the phenomenon. Even so, it should be possible to explain just how such a situation came about as well as suggesting the different shades of meaning that the term postmodern has to those who have taken the trouble to write about it. If it means anything, then they should know, which is a significant factor in itself, particularly as there are those who do not believe in its existence. Curiously, each critic, philosopher and author tends to see or construct postmodernism in his or her own way. There are positive and negative values attached to it, with some critics seeing the products of postmodernism as valuable, and others seeing them as pretentious kitsch (and who would deny that there is not now a market for and production of postmodern kitsch).

Theorists like Linda Hutcheon have made clear that from film, theatre and television to photography and architecture, as well as literature and many other forms of representation, we can see postmodernism, in general terms, as involving a critical awareness as regards various aspects of culture (Hutcheon 1989). It has to do with attitudes towards existing traditional and conventional ways of articulating and framing art and reality, and while it shows up the limitations of them, it does not deny them. In a sense, postmodernism is all about the possibilities of renovation and innovation in
an age which seems to have exhausted its possibilities. Curiously, however, this kind of attitude has been symptomatic of previous ages too.

Some critics and philosophers see the postmodern phenomenon as an extension of modernism, others as a reaction against it. In fact, it can be both, and writers sometimes consider themselves in one light or the other. The fact is that historically, perhaps we can consider postmodernism as an extension of modernism, as the products of postmodernism do embody many of the conventions inherited from modernism and earlier, but while they do that, they also embody a clearly subversive element which reacts against these very traditions and conventions.

One way of considering postmodernism is to see it as involving a reaction similar to that which Roland Barthes has described as occurring when modernists reacted against realism. The reaction against the readable readerly texts of bourgeois realism which we described earlier could be likened to the contemporary awareness that there is no innocent way of presenting reality; that all reality is framed, cultural and conventional, perhaps even political. But certainly, the dominant ideology of the time, a particular way of seeing, can result in tendencies towards particular ways of representing reality. For some theorists, postmodernity tends to be seen as the age in which there are political, cultural, and even scientific, tendencies towards a universal, ordered and homogeneous view of reality. Postmodernism sees such a tendency as
artificial and tends to emphasise it. More than this, with postmodernity, it is becoming clear that art and culture is ever more linked to history and politics, which is further bourne out by certain products of postmodernism. So that if the cultural codes of this age, which are influenced, if not dominated by politics and economics, and are clearly linked to historical developments, limit and distort our vision of reality and our values, the products of postmodernism intend to subvert this by drawing attention to and making use of these codes but in a critical and self-conscious manner.

Basically, then, that which is postmodern, even if it is representational art, is aware of its links with history, politics and culture. It often involves a critical reappraisal of the ideology which lies behind it, of the conventions and values of its age. It has become clear that the structures which we use to embody or articulate our experiences do not account for the transience and flux of that experience or the disordered and chaotic nature of reality. There is, then, a distortion of reality and experience when it is embodied in the structures that allow us to know them, and it is this problem that postmodernist texts make manifest.

Although this kind of self-conscious awareness of the gap between experience and our knowledge of it tends to be attributed to modernism, it can be traced back through the ages in the work of critics and philosophers like Thomas Carlyle, David Hume and, essentially, even Plato. So the novelty of what have become postmodern attitudes should not be overestimated, and perhaps even
denied, although it should be remembered that now these attitudes belong to a different stage in the development of Western society and culture, and involve shifts in emphasis and changes of degree. This argument will be developed in due course.

So, in postmodernity, it has once more become clear that our awareness of reality and experience is a construct which relies heavily on values and ideologies derived from history as well as contemporary socio-political influences. Although postmodernism is aware of this and while we belong to this age, we still make use of the modes of representation that have been inherited from the past. What distinguishes postmodernism is the self-conscious manner in which it makes use of these conventions and traditions.

According to Steven Connor, this is basically what characterises the postmodern (1989 3-21). Moreover, he sees cultural and critical activity as beginning to have more in common in that they have both become self-reflexive in our age. The values that we have inherited and those which are imposed by politics and capital are being questioned by authors and critics alike and for many there is agreement that the traditional hierarchies and canons can no longer be accepted. In a sense, it is this questioning of values which typifies postmodernism, and Connor refers to what Jurgen Habermas has called the "legitimation crisis" of our time (1989 8). That is the tendency in the age of mass media to represent society as something uniform with established hierarchies and values is questioned and postmodernism rather suggests
the diversity of society which culture and politics tend to deny.

A few further assertions could be made here about postmodernism in very general terms prior to going into any detail. Suffice it to say that there is some degree of consensus as regards the fact that its products tend to be highly self-conscious, being both aware of and making use of available forms and traditions while at the same time reacting against and undermining them; it is critical and, depending on particular tendencies may reject or install what it has inherited, sometimes only in order to show its limitations, but sometimes to suggest the existence of new possibilities; it contests, subverts or ignores existing traditions; it invents, parodies or remains silent; it runs desperately towards a state of exhausting itself, or it revels in carnivalesque possibilities of renovation. Within what is a clearly paradoxical phenomenon, the degrees to which postmodern texts do such things are countless, and whether they do such things at all is sometimes even questionable. Whether products of postmodernism tend towards innovation, rejection or renovation is yet another variable, and what is more typical of postmodernism remains forever questionable. But what will be insisted upon in this section, and what is clear, draws our attention to a basic connection with the nature of the novel: postmodernist texts and the nature of postmodernism itself are about attitudes towards reality, towards ways of understanding reality, towards whether we can even appreciate any kind of
reality at all, or if all that can be known are the forms, traditions and conventions.

We can assert that the way in which we have considered the development of the novel can been clearly linked to changes in attitudes towards reality and our awareness of it. Postmodernism and the postmodernist novel are yet another step, not entirely unexpected or unannounced, in this respect. If the novel is contemporary and dialogic, then its dialogue now is with postmodernity. Curiously, postmodernity itself suggests some kind of dialogue with the age that has preceded it although it is not at all clear to what extent postmodernists enter into a dialogue with their contemporaries or with their predecessors. However, let us emphasise the paradoxical nature of postmodernist production. Some see it as regression, others as regeneration. Some look upon it as rejection, others as innovation. But like any good paradox, some kind of resolution is possible, and all of these possibilities exist in what is the production of an age that has brought about a certain displacement in terms of the relationships between, among other things, the sign and its referent, culture and the economy, literature/fiction and history, high culture and mass culture, good taste and bad taste, even appearance and reality.

Whether and how this kind of thing has come about and the ensuing effects have been the subject of complex and polemical debate, so rather than continue with what may seem to be rather gnomic statements about the
essentially paradoxical nature of postmodernism, let us explain just how the concept first came to light.
1.1. Postmodernism: History and Ideology

Shortly we will outline the positions of the most influential theorists of postmodernism, but to begin with a few words should be said about how the term first came into use.

Most critics agree that the first to use the term postmodernism was Arnold Toynbee (A Study of History 1946) in order to refer to an age which begins around the mid 1870s, indicating a new cycle in the history of western civilisation which is characterised by a decline into irrationality and relativism. Obviously, others would see this period as presaging the modern age and, perhaps for this reason, many tend to associate postmodernism more with the era following the second world war, as its connotations were first associated with the end of modernity and the brutality of modern, post-war civilisation. However, it is after the war that we begin to find the term coming back into use with broader connotations in the United States with Randall Jarrell in 1946 (Jarrell 1953), referring to Robert Lowell’s poetry in this way and later its use became more widespread. In America, in fact, the term was not used so pessimistically and Charles Olson in the 1950s saw this age in terms of a symbolic “archeology of morning” (in Calinescu 1987 268). Later, at the end of the 50s, Irving Howe and Harry Levin wrote of what they considered to be a lack of impetus and movement away from the modernist movement (Howe 1970 and Levin 1966). Following this kind of attitude, particularly in
America, we find a more enthusiastic attitude towards the term in writers like Leslie Fiedler who came out against the elitism of high modernism in favour of mass culture (1971), and Ihab Hassan saw it as an exploration of new possibilities by undoing what modernism had done (1970).

Meanwhile, in Europe, a great deal of theorising has been going on recently which will provide part of the basis for our comments on the nature of postmodernism, although many critics from many parts of the world have provided useful accounts of the development of postmodernism which will be referred to here (Hutcheon 1989, Calinescu 1990, Connor 1989, Jameson 1988). Before going on to sum up and evaluate what has, for obvious reasons, become the postmodern debate, to begin with we will refer to the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard.

In The Postmodernist Condition, Lyotard laments "the 'loss of meaning' in postmodernity [which] boils down to mourning the fact that knowledge is no longer principally narrative" (1984 26). What Lyotard sees as significant in this age is the way in which we come to understand our knowledge and the procedures by which knowledge can gain legitimacy. He emphasises the scientific nature of the age and the previous comment alludes to the fact that science has tended to suppress narrative forms of legitimation, which gives, ultimately, a false impression of reality: "scientific knowledge does not represent the totality of knowledge; it has always existed in addition to, and in competition
and conflict with, another kind of knowledge, which I will call narrative in the interests of simplicity" (1984 7). In his Foreword to Lyotard's text Frederic Jameson puts it this way:

it is obvious that one of the features that characterizes more 'scientific' periods of history, and most notably capitalism itself, is the relative retreat of the claims of narrative or storytelling knowledge in the face of those of the abstract, denotative, or logical and cognitive procedures generally associated with science or positivism.

(1984 xi)

Let us say then that postmodernity is a "scientific" period of history which has brought with it attempts by scientists to discover universal laws, scientific models to explain and legitimise the totality of experience. However, according to Lyotard, the failure of science to do so has led to the lamentable loss of meaning which we referred to earlier.

In historical terms, Lyotard refers to the tendency of science to suppress narrative forms of legitimation since the Enlightenment although, paradoxically, it has relied upon the narrative form in order to give itself credence, or as a mode of legitimation, at the same time. In fact, science has depended a great deal upon metanarratives, or stories about itself, which have propagated the idea that man has advanced and moved out of slavery because of scientific advances since the Enlightenment and the
French revolution (Connor 1989 29).

However, the power of the scientific metanarrative to legitimise itself breaks down after the Second World War and results in a series of petites histoires which can account only for themselves with no overall or totalising relation to external reality. The effect of this has been that

a revival of the narrative view of 'truth,'
and the vitality of small narrative units at work locally in the present social system, are accompanied by something like a more global or totalising 'crisis' in the narrative function in general, since as we have seen, the older master-narratives of legitimation no longer function in the service of scientific research.

(1984 xi-xii)

Steven Connor sums up this view by saying that "postmodern society encompasses a multitude of different, incompatible language-games, each with its own untransferable principles of self-legitimation" (1989 32). Reality has been broken down into a series of apparently unrelated but self-perpetuating realities, particularly, for Lyotard, in the realm of scientific knowledge, which results in an emphasis on performability (virtually self-perpetuation) as opposed to transmission of knowledge. That is why narrative is again necessary to legitimise knowledge in the face of the failure of the scientific enlightenment. Lyotard puts it this way:
It is not inconceivable that the recourse to narrative is inevitable, at least to the extent that the language game of science desires its statements to be true but does not have the resources to legitimise their truth on its own. (1984 28)

This attitude towards science as a kind of closed circle or dog biting its tail is only one aspect of Lyotard’s theory, but it is this that some other theorists tend to criticise. He has been noted as ignoring the fact that scientists still continue the search for universal legitimising models for their laws and as tending to rebel against all generalising narratives, even Marxism and liberal economic theory (Connor 1989 32-43).

However, there is more to Lyotard’s view of postmodernity and this is only part of its consequences. Like other theorists, he tends to see it in a socio-economic light. While it seems that he tends to see everything in terms of extremes, basically he posits the theory that this age is one of cultural universalism or totalitarianism, in which the true nature of reality is hidden under a fictitious cloak of rules, standards and values determined by capital and political power and made possible by the the mass media. In rather basic terms, Lyotard coincides with other theorists in his appreciation of an age which could be called post-capitalist and which, because of the influence of capital and politics in the mass media has resulted in a kind of consensus which is, in a sense, divorced from reality. That is, postmodernism is reacting against the
fictitious simulacrum of reality which contemporary society has created, where history, politics and culture embody the same attitudes of order, unity, identity, security and so on, as regards the nature of reality and shared values.

Curiously, Lyotard points out in his postscript to *The Postmodern Condition*, “Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?” that those who are against postmodernism desire less experimentation and greater efforts towards consensus and a common way of speaking. There are those who feel that postmodernism is a threat to this comfortable sense of community and unity which is part and parcel of the unreality which is contemporary society. Lyotard writes:

> Capitalism inherently possesses the power to derealize familiar objects, social roles and institutions to such a degree that the so-called realistic representations can no longer evoke reality except as nostalgia or mockery, as an occasion for suffering rather than for satisfaction . . . reality is so destabilized that it offers no occasions for experience but one for ratings and experimentation. (1984 74)

So reality has been derealized and art, particularly cinematographic art, has begun once more to follow rules which are capable of putting an end to doubt by stabilizing the object under scrutiny and giving it recognisable meaning. Lyotard suggests an alternative when he suggests that authors should refuse to lend
themselves to such therapeutic uses of art and begin to doubt and question the rules of narrative that they have inherited from the past. "Rules appear as a means to deceive, seduce, reassure, make it possible to be 'true'" (1984 74). This is curiously reminiscent of comments made earlier about the novel as a kind of persuasion which followed conventions in order to create some kind of semblance of reality. What Lyotard wants to suggest is that the following of such rules has gone beyond these bounds in order that society might be persuaded, as a whole, to believe in the same kind of reality and share the same values. This certainly seems to be one of the major aims of capitalism, and has always been the goal of every politician, where the values that have to be shared are imposed by the powers that be.

Society, in such circumstances, which are not unique to this age at all, has become divided and we find that there are those who tend to pursue mass conformism by following the correct rules which provide or even create reality, while there are others who tend to doubt and question these rules. In the same work Lyotard emphasises society's endemic desire and concern for reality and identity and is conscious of the suspicion and criticism which those who question it arouse. The effect of this, for Lyotard, is that pornography, with the emphasis on gratification and identification, has become the model for the visual and narrative arts, the point being that everyone should know where they stand (1984 75).
It is curious that the terms realism and reality should once more begin to recur in this discussion. In fact, we could say that the basic questions regarding the development of the arts and culture tend always to revolve around this very major concern. Lyotard also takes up the point and has a rather negative view of that which is called realistic. In fact, what characterises postmodernity is the existence of a kind of universal realistic consensus which, as opposed to being the achievement of the dream of the modern age, is, yet again, a fallacy:

Realism, whose only definition is that it intends to avoid the question of reality implicated in that of art, always stands somewhere between academicism and kitsch. When power assumes the name of a party, realism and its neoclassical complement triumph over the experimental avant-garde by slandering and banning it, that is, provided the "correct" images, the "correct" narratives, the "correct" forms which the party requests, selects, propagates can find a public to desire them as the appropriate remedy for the anxiety and depression that public experiences. The demand for reality -- that is, for unity, simplicity, communicability, etc.-- did not have the same intensity nor the same continuity in German society between the two world wars and in Russian society after the revolution: this
provides a basis for a distinction between Nazi and Stalinist realism. (1984 75-76)

Curiously, in such an age, and perhaps in every age, art and culture are seen to be linked to history and politics. In this Lyotard coincides with the majority of postmodernist theorists. The fact is that political power or capital dictates what is good taste and what is art. It goes out of the hands of the artists themselves and just what is art tends to become an unanswerable question, except for politicised academics, or it leads to the anything goes mass production of what is called kitsch. The result, in reality, is confusion, a lack of taste or values, which is made up for by the simulacrum of artistic taste and production through kitsch: the soap opera, the best-seller, pornography. Lyotard writes:

By becoming kitsch, art panders to the confusion which reigns in the “taste” of the patrons. Artists, [etc.]. . . . wallow together in the “anything goes” and the epoch is one of slackening. But this realism of the “anything goes” is in fact that of money; in the absence of aesthetic criteria, it remains possible and useful to assess the value of works of art according to the profits they yield. Such realism accommodates all tendencies, just as capitalism accommodates all “needs,” providing that the tendencies and needs have purchasing power. (76)

From these comments, it seems clear that our idea of
reality is becoming more and more a question which is governed by rules, taste and convention. Once again, as happened with the advent of modernism, we find that it is the artist who is at odds with a particular way of seeing reality, who becomes aware of the falsity of the values and ideology which has determined the nature of artistic production at the time. The nature of postmodernist art and literature is, once again, to draw attention to this fact, to make it clear that reality is not so uniform, that the totalising power of politics and capital has produced and led us to believe in a false metanarrative.

As we have seen, science has also attempted to provide a totalising account of reality which is equally suspect for Lyotard due to its need to resort to a narrative form of legitimation. Basically, he accounts for the dominance of capitalism and science in determining the nature of reality and as a source for consensus as resulting the previous failure of metaphysical, religious and political certainties, probably in the nineteenth century. The change to modernity resulted in a "shattering of belief" and the discovery of the "lack of reality together with the invention of other realities" (77). The new realities, which have to some extent become assimilated into one grand narrative by the mass media could be considered as characterising postmodernity. However, as we have seen, it is clear that the kind of reality presented is false. When we go on to discuss Baudrillard, we will see how he too argues this and describes how reality has been
replaced in the media by a simulacrum of the same.

In postmodernity, if all that is or can be presented to us is a simulacrum then, artists begin to ask what is and how can we conceive of reality: for Lyotard and many others, that is what postmodernism is about. But Lyotard’s conclusion is that we cannot present reality although we should distinguish between the capacity to conceive and the capacity to present. He writes that it is the task of modern art “to make visible that there is something which can be conceived and which can neither be seen nor made visible” (78), which results in two different modes of expression: that which places the emphasis on the powerlessness of the faculty of presentation, bringing about writing which is on the side of melancholia and nostalgia; or it may place the emphasis on the faculty to conceive and the possibilities for invention and innovation (79-83).

The result of this state of affairs is that the postmodern paradoxically puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself. It avoids the comfort that consensus, good taste, convention and tradition or “good forms” (81) provide and invents allusions to reality which cannot be presented. In the end, there is only “the transcendental illusion [that] can hope to totalize [language games] into a unity” (80), when there is no longer any wholistic concept of communicable experience. Frederic Jameson sums up part of Lyotard’s theory thus:

Lyotard is in reality quite unwilling to posit a postmodernist stage radically different from the period of high modernism
and involving a fundamental historical and cultural break with this last. Rather, seeing postmodernism as a discontent with a disintegration of this or that high modernist style—a moment in the perpetual "revolution" and innovation of high modernism, to be succeeded by a fresh burst of formal invention—in a striking formula he has characterized postmodernism, not as that which follows modernism and its particular legitimation crisis, but rather as a cyclical moment that returns before the emergence of ever new modernisms in the stricter sense. (1984 xvi-xvii)

This is a curious notion which is, to say the least, plausible and which would account for there being a sense of similarity in accounts of postmodernism and earlier accounts of periods of transition in culture (I refer in particular here to the cyclical notions of writers like Thomas Carlyle and J.S. Mill at the beginning of the nineteenth century, which were mentioned earlier and to which we will return later). In a sense, what Lyotard looks forward to is the discovery of those "rules and categories [which] the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done" (81). Postmodernity is an age in which the current totalising categories and formalisations have been discovered to be false, which has meant the end of the grand narratives. The petites
histoires of postmodernism bear witness to this. As Lyotard says: "Let us wage war on totality; let us be witness to the unrepresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honour of the name" (81).

There are many objections to and criticisms of Lyotard's theories which tend to see everything in terms of the extremes of absolute totalisation or absolute delegitimation, without considering the possibility of consensus without adherence to absolutes (Richard Rorty 1985). While he argues for absolute diversity in everything, which results either in the fictional grand narratives imposed by political power or capital, which nowadays are propagated by the media; or the breakdown or delegitimation of values which results in diverse petites histoires, which tend towards either pointless performativity or the innovative diversity of paralogy, he fails to consider the possibility of mutual agreement between those who hold opposing ideas through persuasion or adjustment, or the possibility of the discovery of news forms of legitimation through the continuation of what he has called the Enlightenment project. To put it in terms similar to those we have used in our discussion of the novel, Lyotard does not allow for the possibility of consensus as regards some kind of oppositional postmodern theory, which would allow for the co-existence of opposing factors which is typical of this paradoxical age.

The emphasis on political and socio-economic factors as being embodied in the cultural as discussed by Lyotard leads us logically on to a similar emphasis
in the theories of Jameson and Baudrillard. Briefly, Baudrillard's theories on postmodernity hinge on the historical development of the market in which there are three stages, the first of which coincides with feudal society where use value predominated over exchange value due to the lack of surplus. The second stage coincides with industrial production when everything becomes a commodity and exchange value is more important than use. The third stage coincides with the present time when abstract qualities become part of the exchange market and love, goodness, knowledge and so on also become commodities to be bought and sold (in Connor 50–62 and Baudrillard 1975) This third stage in the economic growth of society is related to Marx's era of general corruption. The effect of this is that it is no longer possible to distinguish the area of economic production from that which has to do with ideology and culture. Culture thus belongs to or becomes part of the market place, something which Connor relates to Jameson's idea of culture exploding into the economic sphere (Connor 50–52).

Much of what both Jameson and Baudrillard say develops from the ideas of the French Situationists of the 1960s who describe our society as the society of spectacle where the image has become the most developed form of commodity and more time and money is spent on the distribution and consumption of knowledge. For them, the image has become the mainstay of our present-day economy. In contemporary society the emphasis has been placed on the sign and Baudrillard calls this "the
general operationalization of the signifier” (1975 122).

In this age where technology focusses on new ways to promote, distribute and manipulate signs, Baudrillard says that the sign ceases to have a referential function. This is clearly related to ideas of deconstructionism but basically what he is getting at is that even status symbols no longer have a referential function and "the signified and the referent are now abolished to the sole profit of the play of signifiers, of a generalized formalization in which the code no longer refers back to any subjective, or objective 'reality' but to its own logic” (1975 127). The significance of this is that reality recedes and what we are aware of are only the appearances. Curiously, there is a similarity between these ideas and Thomas Carlyle’s idea of the “Philosophy of Clothes,” or appearances, in Sartor Resartus, which also emphasises the lack of reality in society and the falseness of values which are held to be true. In fact we could say that Carlyle marks a path which embodies some ideas from both Lyotard and Jameson. However, we will not labour this point here but return to it, and the idea that attitudes towards postmodernity are not exclusive to that age, later.

This development of Baudrillard’s ideas leads him to emphasise later that signs no longer have any verifiable contact with the world they are supposed to represent and that what we are presenting now is the age of simulation (1983 10). This has come about through a historical process which more or less corresponds to developments in art and literature from realism through
modernity to postmodernity. However, Baudrillard describes four stages which are as follows: first, the sign is a reflection of reality; then, it masks and perverts reality; after this, the sign masks an absence of a basic reality; and finally, the sign bears no relation to any reality and becomes its own simulacrum (Connor 55-56 and Baudrillard 1983 10).

For Baudrillard, contemporary culture is the age of simulation, although this coincides with the desire for real experiences. Perhaps this ties up with Lyotard's idea that the norm for artistic representation nowadays is pornography, but certainly the realistic tendencies in contemporary film, for example, towards the representation of violence and so on, simply underline the fact that our lived experiences are often second hand. Baudrillard even sees the logic of simulacrum as operating in politics where political antagonists depend on one another for there existence, where it is political models for relationships that function and any antagonistic or subversive act simply consolidates the underlying political code.

It is clear that postmodernist theorists tend to see postmodernity in historical and socio-economic terms, and they also coincide as regards the entering of culture into the economic market place. Moreover, the gap between artistic production and theory in some respects has also lessened markedly. Some of these points also typify the ideas of Frederic Jameson. Basically, he tries to "correlate the emergence of new formal features in culture with the emergence of a new
type of social life and a new economic order" (Connor 43-5 and Jameson 1984 113). He sees postmodernism as the result of the institutionalisation of modernist techniques and the following tendency towards fragmentation in culture where each group speaks its own language. This is a little like Lyotard’s idea of the petite histoire.

According to Jameson, postmodern society is one where through the power of advertising and the mass media, universal standardisation takes place, which finds a reaction in the culture of the time with, in particular, a tendency towards pastiche of styles and so on. Along with this, because of this standardisation, which is possible because of the predominance of the sign and image and the retreat of reality, there is a lack of any sense of history. Postmodern society lives in a perpetual present, where standards and values are continually renewed and man is left with little or no real sense of identity or security, and there is a distinct lack of depth in our existence (Jameson 1984 125 and Connor 45).

Jameson continues to develop his ideas in "Postmodernism: or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" (1984), and in a manner similar to Baudrillard, identifies three stages of capitalist expansion which are in turn linked to cultural change. His first stage corresponds to the period 1700 to 1850 and the growth in national markets, which was followed by monopoly capitalism, the age of imperialism and the development of world markets, which then leads us to
present-day multinational capitalism. Like Baudrillard he suggests that what characterises postmodernity is the economic focus on the production, exchange, marketing and consumption of cultural forms, in which images, styles and representations become major products. Later still, in his essay "Reading without Interpretation: Postmodernism and the Video-Text" (1987), he explains the relation between these stages of capitalism and the different stages in the history of the sign. Simply, the three stages of development correspond to the realistic reification of the sign in the first stage, the modernist breaking down of the relationship between the sign and its referent (although there is still a belief that there is some relation) in the second, which gives way to the "pure and random play of signifiers which we call postmodernism" (1987 222). Like Baudrillard, but unlike Lyotard he tends not to separate culture from everything else and sees the postmodern age as coinciding with the end of the autonomy of modernism and the expansion of the power of capital into the realm of the sign (Connor 47).

Essentially, all three coincide in their description of a society in which taste and values are dictated by the power of capital and politics and propagated by the mass media. The effect is the standardisation of reality, which means, in other words, the dominance of the simulacrum over the real thing. This is what has brought about the present legitimisation crisis. This state of affairs and the awareness of the extremes it has reached combined with the other
developments we have mentioned have brought about the several reactions in culture which we call postmodernism. It is possible to see this as the result of a continual historical development as these three major critics do and we will see that many writers and critics have pointed out similar features during the last two centuries. What is new, according to Jameson, is that now there is a belief that there is a "radical structural difference between . . . consumer society and earlier moments of the capitalism from which it emerged" (1988 373). This is perhaps rather debatable considering the fact that similar states of affairs have been described over a long period, as well as there being present day critics, like Terry Eagleton, who reject Lyotard's idea of innovative postmodernist paralogy by considering it to be but an anarchist version of capitalist performativity:

Whether among discourse theorists or the Institute of Directors, the goal is no longer truth but performativity, not reason but power. The C.B.I. are in this sense spontaneous post-structuralists to a man, utterly disenchanted (did they but know it) with epistemological realism and the correspondence theory of truth.

(1988 387-88)

In this light the basic problem becomes whether we believe that there is a fundamental difference between the postmodern age and those that precede it or not. The same kind of question will later be asked about the
nature of postmodernism and earlier periods of culture and the answer will be the same. Essentially, there are differences, but differences that develop out of the earlier periods. Moreover, differences and changes tend to be of degree and in most respects the historical and economic changes have been gradual. This is also true of cultural changes, although in retrospect there might seem to be radical differences between artistic production today and that which took place before.

For me, the extremity of the present situation is what distinguishes it from previous generations although it may well be that economic theorists can distinguish radical differences between this present consumer society and those that preceded it. Perhaps this extremity is best represented by the clear differences in the present day between cultural manifestations that can still be considered traditional and conventional and those which are considered postmodernist; between the standardised images and values churned out by advertising and the mass media and the rejection of them as false by writers and theorists alike.

As we have said, postmodernity is different (albeit only by degrees) but we can still trace its historical development as marked by writers over the past two hundred years. It may be that the present historical moment leads us to reinterpret the past, which is probably true, but at the same time, there are many similarities between what writers have described in the past and the present day. Moreover, it will become clear that there have been many cultural and artistic
reactions in response to an awareness of similar states of affairs throughout the ages. This will allow us to see postmodernism in a better light, and suggest that it might be considered as a further development rather than a complete break with the past, in spite of what may be considered to be fundamental differences in the kind of society and in the artistic responses produced.

From what we have said, one of the most outstanding aspects of postmodernity in western society is that nowadays we are not in touch with reality, but, as Baudrillard suggests, a simulacrum of it. The mass media provides us with what is really only a standardised point of view of reality, and the image supplants what it is supposed to represent. For Lyotard, not even science can provide us with absolutes, universals or a whole vision of reality. It is what Habermas has called the legitimation crisis of modern society. Simply, man no longer knows what is real, or if that does not sound convincing, he is even less sure of what is true. It is this that would seem to characterise the postmodern age: culture has become just another product for the market place and the image has begun to dominate our consumer society. Moreover, particularly in the mass media and advertising, the substitution of reality by a simulacrum has meant that truth, or versions of the truth, has become just another commodity which can become outmoded or unpopular, which is when it can be replaced, as it is continually replaced by a more suitable image. Modernism and science have failed in their attempts to provide a totalising or absolute vision, but the mass media has
succeeded where they have failed and now trades with false images. Reality recedes and the truth has been replaced by an image, the truth itself becomes virtually another commodity which requires good marketing in order to be convincing. These are the differences that characterise this age and absolute truth, which the enlightened have abandoned has now become the province of the market place. But, although the case has never before been quite so extreme, as we have suggested, such legitimation crises have taken place before, and often.
1.2. Some Precursors of Postmodernist Thought

For centuries man has been conscious of the problem of representing reality and has continually striven to do so or at least to come close to it. What may distinguish postmodernism is that some artists have given up in this attempt or acknowledge the futility of it. But this is not a fundamentally new concept and as good a starting point as any in order to make this clear might be to begin by mentioning Plato. His attitudes towards poetry and the arts are well known and could be explained in terms of his belief in a hierarchy which begins with the forms, ideas or absolutes of which reality is but an imperfect imitation and which the poet or artist can imitate only more imperfectly. The notion that man does not experience reality but only shades or shadows of it is similar to the ideas formulated by the critics we have mentioned up to now, that we experience only an image, a simulacrum, not the reality itself (see Republic Book VII). Our knowledge of the world is like a recollection of these forms or ideas which are true and absolute. In fact, truth only exists ideally and has nothing to do with human matters, man can only aspire towards the light (see Republic and Phaedo). He even excluded the poet from his Republic, considering him as little more than a forger, a liar. Moreover, although to make a distinction between genuine being as something which never appears and the realm of sensible experiences as being unreal is a little too extreme, in
Parmenides he makes it clear that the senses are just an illusion. Of course, what is different about Plato's view is that, while man does not experience reality, he can have some idea of what it is, and the image does bear some kind of relation to it. But the point we are making is that this has always been a preoccupation for man, and it should be obvious that there is a connection with the ideas we have been discussing before.

The point we are making here is that an awareness of a gap between appearances and reality, or our forms of representing reality and their referents is not new, and we will find that it is not solely the concern of philosophers. Literature and philosophy since Plato's time, and before, have often been concerned with the relationship between appearance and reality and, always, with the question of what is truth. During the Enlightenment, many philosophers took up the question of how we appreciate or understand reality, or, what is even more to the point, and here Plato comes in as well, the relation between what we perceive, imagine or understand and reality or truth.

In the middle ages, Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine discussed the problems of the relations between temporal and eternal laws, which was another step towards an understanding of the relative nature of truth. During the Enlightenment, in the same vein, we have Leibnitz suggesting that there is a partial correspondence between the representations the soul produces and the preestablished harmony of the soul created by God (New System Of Nature, 14), while
Descartes once again emphasises the difference between what the senses experience and the absolute ideas of God and soul which exist anyway (A Discourse on Method IV). Descartes argues against those who believe that there is nothing which belongs to the understanding before the senses and believes in the existence of something which for many cannot exist as it is neither imaginable or intelligible. More simply, there are concepts which require an understanding which goes beyond the senses and the imagination. Kant also takes up the same kind of problem when he speaks of the sublime, which is something that Lyotard mentions again two centuries later. The fact that universal laws or truth exist and that it should be beyond the capacity of man to account for it seems to be the common denominator of everything that precedes and Lyotard in the work mentioned earlier talks about the modern aesthetic which attempts to present the unrepresentable in presentation itself. That is, the reason of man exceeds all presentation; man’s imagination and sensibility are not equal to the concepts it would like to represent. In effect, it seems that, the postmodern preoccupation has to do with similar concerns, then, although the emphases change with the passing of time, and, at least for some theorists, the preoccupation with truth has ceased to be a preoccupation due to the impossibility of representing it, or more conservatively, a lack of interest in doing so.

In Britain, three philosophers in particular dealt with this theme and influenced many writers who followed
them. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), John Locke develops his empiricism which states that knowledge derives from sense experience. However, sense experience is not direct knowledge and the ideas that we have are not physical objects themselves. He distinguishes between the primary and secondary qualities of ideas to show that the ideas that we have need not be exact copies of the original. In a sense, this kind of thought derives indirectly from Plato as one of Locke's conclusions is that there is no such thing as factual truth, although he distinguishes this from logical truth which is a possibility.

This kind of idea is further developed by George Berkeley, who in his *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Understanding* (1710), points out that we are aware of nothing but the mind and internal sensations. His famous dictum is *esse est percipi*, "to be is to be perceived," and basically states that the corporeal world can only exist as a set of objects of consciousness. Like Locke before him and Hume after him, he sees that even laws of cause and effect only exist in the mind. David Hume went on in a similar vein in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1758), where his investigations could be summed up by saying that no theory of reality is possible and that all knowledge is impressions or ideas.

From this it is clear that the questions of reality and truth and their nature have continually been a major concern for thinkers. Romantic poets in the 18th and 19th centuries were occupied with the same concerns and
described transcendental or pantheistic leaps from reality to the sublime and much of their thought developed into what became known as, the Philosophy of the Imperfect, which particularly Browning, in the late 19th century, embodied into his work. All struggled with the problem of representing that which was true, perfect, absolute or everlasting, only rarely doubting whether such things did exist at all. Furthermore, it is curious to recall that the same kind of preoccupations have troubled the novelist from the beginning too and the developments in thought we have been considering have in many ways been paralleled by the novel since the 18th century. Let us further consider now how some more recent writers have developed this theme in the past in order to find just to what extent similarities with contemporaray attitudes can be found and to understand whether there is any fundamental difference, as Jameson suggests, between postmodernity and periods that have preceded it.

A writer who we mentioned briefly earlier, and whose work influenced many writers of his time and later is Thomas Carlyle. In positing the problems of his age, he described a situation not unlike that described by postmodernist theorists. Perhaps a good starting point would be to consider his description of contemporary society in an early essay which still has validity today, "Signs of the Times" (1829). Having considered the extent to which society has changed since the Industrial Revolution, he writes:

Were we required to characterise this age
of ours by any single epithet, we should be tempted to call it, not an Heroical, Devotional, Philosophical, or Moral Age, but above all others, the Mechanical Age. It is the Age of Machinery, in every outward and inward sense of that word; the age which, with its whole undivided might, forwards, teaches and practises the great art of adapting means to ends. Nothing is now done directly, or by hand; all is rule and calculated contrivance. (1971 64)

Having enumerated a number of physical examples, he continues

But leaving these matters for the present, let us observe how the mechanical genius of our time has diffused itself into quite other provinces. Not the external and physical alone is now managed by machinery, but the internal and spiritual also. Here too nothing follows its spontaneous course, nothing is left to be accomplished by old natural methods. Thus we have machines for Education . . . . Instruction, that mysterious communing of Wisdom with Ignorance, is no longer an indefinable tentative process, requiring a study of individual aptitudes, and a perpetual variation of means and methods, to attain the same end; but a secure, universal straightforward business, to be conducted in the gross, by proper
mechanism, with such intellect as comes to hand. Then, we have Religious machines, of all imaginable varieties.

These things, which we state lightly enough here, are yet of deep import, and indicate a mighty change in our whole manner of existence. For the same habit regulates not our modes of action alone, but our modes of thought and feeling. Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions, --for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle. Their whole efforts, attachments, opinions, turn on mechanism, and are of a mechanical character.

We may trace this tendency in all the great manifestations of our time; in its intellectual aspect, the studies it most favours and its manner of conducting them; in its practical aspects, its politics, arts, religion, morals; in the whole sources, and throughout the whole currents, of its spiritual, no less than its material activity. (1971 65-67)

I have thought it worthwhile to quote extensively here precisely because of the great similarity between the
way in which Carlyle describes his age and the way in which postmodernist theorists describe ours. The institutionalisation and systemisation of truth and reality are what Carlyle is criticising here. This has led to man’s forgetfulness of any other kind of truth as science has supplanted metaphysics and the moral sciences as the only source of truth. Like Lyotard, Jameson and Baudrillard, Carlyle draws attention to the fact that scientific knowledge, outward physical knowledge and mechanism has led to man’s abandoning of any other means to arrive at the truth as well as a loss of faith in the individual. Curiously, he blames this on philosophers like Locke and Hume, whom we have mentioned, suggesting that this emphasis on fact and the loss of belief in the invisible stems from them.

The basic difference between Carlyle and postmodern theorists is that, while both describe a kind of legitimation crisis and consider that present systems of legitimation no longer work, the former goes on in Sartor Resartus to posit a kind of transcendentalist theory which goes against materialistic social philosophers, which would probably include the theorists we have mentioned. While present day philosophers either continue with the enlightenment project, seek new legitimising narratives, or simply describe the substitution of reality by a simulacrum in a consumer society, Carlyle proposes his Philosophy of Clothes. This, simply stated, distinguishes between the appearance of things and their reality and encompasses institutions which are only emblems or appearances,
nature, behind which we should look for God, and the body of man, behind which we should look for the soul. Rather like the present day, the machine has taken control of man in a utilitarian society which regards the society and the universe as machines, and man as part of them, an image that has been prevalent in culture ever since. Like the postmodernists, he believes it necessary to repudiate this in order to search for new beliefs, which he finds, not in Christianity, which he sees as outmoded, but in his own interpretation of the German philosophers. It is curious how parts of Carlyle’s version of society’s problems resemble Baudrillard’s account of postmodernity. The idea that the visual emblem, the way in which Carlyle refers to institutions, and which by analogy encompasses the whole of society which worships appearances, has supplanted reality approximates largely to the idea of the simulacrum. Moreover, the statement that traditional values are worn out and require to be replaced is also part of contemporary discussion. However, there is one point in Carlyle’s theories which might give a further insight into, not only his own age, but into the nature of the age of the postmodern. In “The Everlasting No,” “The Centre of Indifference” and “The Everlasting Yea,” in Sartor Resartus, Carlyle, depicts what is really his own development from a state not unlike the existentialist nausea in a world without essence, where everything is appearance, where the Utilitarian philosophy prevails. His Everlasting No, is a rejection of what he discovers to be the false values of profit
and loss philosophy, values which we could say still prevail today. From this point on the positive value of **unbelief** is made clear, finally leading to his transcendentalist assertions in "The Everlastic Yea."

The point is that, if we look for analogies with the present day, we could say that postmodernism represents unbelief in a society which has replaced society with visible emblems but has not yet replaced the old with the new. In fact, we could further say that the differences between some postmodernist theorists depend on whether there is anything to replace it with or not.

Such a detailed account of part of Carlyle’s attitude towards society may seem superfluous, but what we are considering here is precisely the question whether postmodernity and postmodernism are indeed different from the ages that have preceded them. What is clear up to now is that current attitudes do have their predecessors, although society and individuals’ relationships with society have changed somewhat in degree. Moreover, the situation described by Carlyle has become more extreme and the gap that exists between man and reality has increased. Man has lost sight of reality and truth altogether for some theorists and these have been substituted by something else. But let us emphasise here that the kind of society depicted is not so very different and that the attitudes of contemporary thinkers bear comparison with Carlyle’s. Moreover, it ought to have been made clear that his ideas have been illuminating as regards, not only the similarities between this age and others, but by providing an
acceptable definition for the Postmodern Age as a Period of Unbelief. Of course, there are differences as we have said, and it should be underlined that what we are dealing with here is not intended to minimise the obvious changes and developments that have taken place in literature.

However, what we are describing is a developing situation which has led to these extremes and at this point a few more examples which bring us up to the present day could be considered. The first of these may seem surprising in a discussion of the precursors of postmodernist thought as he is usually considered the most typical of writers of Victorian realistic fiction: Charles Dickens. In spite of the traditional nature of his novels, Dickens is often described as a social critic. While he rarely offers alternatives to the kind of society he depicts he is well known for criticising the state of the English legal system and British parliamentary democracy. However, the work which most clearly links him to our discussion is the work which he dedicated to Thomas Carlyle and which describes the same kind of society in a similar way. Although, the novel *Hard Times* is far removed from postmodernism, the ideology that it incorporates into what could be called a traditional novel derives from Carlyle and therefore bears comparison with what lies behind postmodernism. Essentially, the novel describes a world governed by utilitarian attitudes and values which Dickens sees as anti-natural and false. Reality and truth have little to do with scientific definitions (the definition of a
horse in the classroom and the sight of a horse at the circus are emphatically not the same in the novel), and life means more than following the utilitarian dictum of adapting means to ends. Basically, Dickens shows the ways in which reality can be distorted by a particular perspective, how truth can be subordinated to facts, how human nature can become mechanised and how society and its institutions have become the visual emblems which substitute facts for reality. In *Hard Times*, the institutionalisation of knowledge leads to the standardisation of truth, a state of affairs which is similar to that depicted by the theorists we have mentioned but against which postmodernists react in a very different way.

A point that could be made very briefly here is that we ought to distinguish between descriptions of and attitudes towards society and what constitutes one of the major differences between the writers we have been mentioning just now and those of the present day, that is, their attitudes and practices as regards ways in which reality can or cannot be represented. Dickens may be a traditional author but the society he describes and his attitude towards it has a good deal in common with what Lyotard, Jameson and Baudrillard have described. Although the point should not be laboured too much, we can further trace the development of current trends in thought in earlier authors.

Just as Dickens owed a good deal to Carlyle in *Hard Times*, when we come to the modern age we can still find his influence, particularly in D.H. Lawrence. With
Lawrence's novels we have a clear opposition suggested between mechanistic society and nature. This opposition and the paralysis that mechanism engenders, something that we find also in Joyce, is symbolically depicted in the paralysis of Clifford Chatterly in *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. The deterioration of the relationship between Clifford and Connie is described by Lawrence in terms of a simulacrum and Clifford becomes more and more cut off from reality, finally becoming cut off completely when he listens to the radio through headphones, dead to the outside world. Here, Lawrence criticises the life of the mind which for Clifford has led to his spiritual death, symbolised by his cutting himself off from the rest of society and accepting the version provided by products of the intellect, his writings and the radio. The link between this description of living at second hand, when reality is replaced by a simulacrum, and the postmodernist versions we have been looking at should be clear. Lawrence is also preoccupied with language and part of his work is dedicated to putting the meaning back into words. Just what the relationship is between language and what it represents becomes a problem, as it did for many modern writers. Indeed, Lawrence anticipates the state of affairs described by George Steiner, which we will mention later, when he shows his awareness of the retreat of the word from reality.

The further forward we move in time, not surprisingly, the more these aspects of modern life are emphasised. Orwell's *Nineteen-eighty-four* depicts a society where the mass media, governed by a totalitarian
system, provide a standardised vision of society, where history and the truth are continually rewritten, where the individual continually lives in the present, at second hand. Double-think and newspeak obviously suggest the retreat of reality from the word, a particular preoccupation of the postmodernists. In fact the developing relationship between reality and the image, as we have seen described by Jameson and Baudrillard finds itself outlined in these few examples we have mentioned here. Later in this century, Harold Pinter depicts relationships which only achieve a simulacrum of communication and language becomes less expressive than silence. Many more examples could probably be discussed but the basic point that is being made is that it is possible to trace the development of postmodernist thought throughout the ages. Although these examples may appear arbitrary, the way in which the societies and relationships they describe resemble aspects of postmodernity ought to be clear.

Before we come to the end of this section, it is worthwhile considering a couple more aspects of contemporary thought, beginning with a word from George Steiner. While the authors we have mentioned depict a growing sense of mechanism and standardisation and the changing nature of relationships in society coupled with their versions of what can be called legitimization crises, Steiner, although he is not usually referred to as postmodernist, depicts a state of affairs that more or less sums up what we have been saying about attitudes towards truth and reality, but particularly in terms of
language. What he describes in his essays published in the early sixties, depicts a situation in society that we can now recognise as postmodernity. In "The Retreat from the Word" (Language and Silence 1970), he describes how science has moved away from language, finding its own notations, in the same way as other areas of thought, have tried to create a precise notation for themselves, like mathematics, and here we could include not only sociology and philosophy, but language and literature as well. For Steiner, the result is a tautology as words do not contain functional operations within themselves. More and more we discover that language is being used to clarify language and that there are, in the end, only approximations. He begins to describe how language is becoming worn by use, how facts are a veil spun by language to shroud reality. Language has lost its precision and in a mass culture like this one, especially in a world of politicians and advertising, words begin, in fact, to evade meaning. The lack of referentiality of language in society suggests that meaning has to be put back into words, which for Steiner, is the job of the poet. Otherwise, as he says in "Silence and the Poet," (Language and Silence 1970) the alternative is silence. In fact, he coincides to a large extent with Jameson in that he describes a society in which language is no longer at the centre of intellectual and emotional life. Obviously, this has been replaced for Jameson by the image and, for Steiner, by other kinds of notations. In fact, Steiner also draws attention to the division and perception of reality into
distinct fields. There is no longer a common language which enables us to overcome this fragmentation.

One final aspect of recent thought should now be considered, as it will suggest how certain formalist views as regards literature can also be seen as precursors of postmodernist thought. In particular, we might refer to Viktor Shklovsky who, in considering the literariness of literature, concluded that the essential function of art was that of defamiliarisation. When considering the novel in particular, he focussed his thought most specifically on the plot where the process of defamiliarisation is made most clear, as it is in the plot that the story is "made strange." We have seen already that this has been considered one of the most typical aspects of the novel as such when it is considered as oppositional discourse, and this is also so in postmodernist narrative. However, Shklovsky's statements were made in much more general terms and his research, which led him to believe that Tristram Shandy is the "most typical novel in world literature" (Lemon and Reis 1965 57), highlighted this defamiliarising process in narrative in terms of literary self-consciousness and self-reference. So if Tristram Shandy is the archetype of the novel, then self-conscious and self-referential novels have been around for a long time. Moreover, it can be seen as a predecessor of contemporary narrative, where Shklovsky recommends that the business of narrative should be its own coming into being and where, aware of the fact that all narratives become fictions, a work only seems to have content
(Hawkes 1977 59-73). As Terence Hawkes writes, "A work of fiction can only speak of its own coming into being against a background of speaking of something else" (1977 67). In general terms, it seems that once again the preoccupation with the ways in which we represent experience was preeminent in Europe prior to the emergence of what we call postmodernism.

While there have been gradual changes in society which have been paralleled by similar changes in attitudes towards language, narrative and fiction, it seems clear that there has always been a preoccupation with the nature of truth and man's limitations in striving for it. Particularly since the industrial revolution, it seems that there have been a succession of legitimation crises which we could say have become more extreme with the development of the mass media and consumer society. Politicians, philosophers and historians alike attempt to provide totalitarian versions of reality from the Utilitarians through Marxism to Capitalism and each believes that their version is right. This desire for models of reality has even extended to the desire for models for language and literature, which, if we see it as Lyotard does, is a further continuation of what he calls the Enlightenment project.

These totalising and essentially totalitarian versions of reality still exist and there is a continuation of attempts to provide such models and a belief that appropriate narratives can be found to describe reality and truth. However, the nature of this
present-day society has some fundamental differences compared to those that have preceded it, particularly as regards the kinds of relationship individuals have with society. While the tendency is still to institutionalise and standardise these relationships, in this, the age in which telephone chat-lines, call-in T.V. and radio shows, market research surveys and even democratic referendums the individual is made to feel that he is a participating character in society, even that he has a say in matters. However, rather curiously, in current western society the individual still believes that it is possible to be subversive, when in fact the system allows for and has assimilated even those groups. This is not a political statement, simply a statement that governments, capital and the media provide a totalitarian way of looking at things in the face of what is obvious fragmentation and in order to do so, they have had to replace reality with the image, the truth by simply their version/s of the truth.

To sum up briefly then, we could say that postmodernity is the cultural condition of advanced capitalist societies in the twentieth century, a condition which becomes recognisable after the Second World War, more or less from the sixties onwards. Totalising narratives become displaced by fragmentary and replaceable truths and the traditional qualities of meaning, depth, authenticity, and coherence are lost. The modernist tendency to search for significance in spite of chaos and fragmentation has been given up in favour of "fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia,"
disposable simulacra and promiscuous superficiality" (Balick 1990 174). What is characteristic of the age is the great abundance of fragmentary images and styles particularly those propagated by the media, television, advertising and so on. However, the totalising narratives remain, and the irony of contemporary society is that, in spite of the apparent fragmentation, which ought to be indicative of a movement away from or rejection of any sense of consensus, it has, in fact, been possible because of it. Even so, serious writers continue to draw attention to the fictitious nature of these totalitarian narratives as well as their alternatives.

What all of the writers and philosophers we have mentioned have in common is that they have drawn attention to the fictional nature of the worlds which we inhabit. This is therefore not the difference which Jameson mentions. However, what appears to have changed is that postmodernist society seems to have finally lost sight of the truth and reality and the process of development we have been describing has become complete. Now there are only fictions. Now one reality can be replaced readily with another. Truth has become plural and in fact versions of the truth often compete with one another, each claiming its validity in the face of the others. Perhaps this awareness of the falseness of all narratives, in spite or even because of our ability to conceive of reality and truth, could be likened to an earlier process described by Roland Barthes which has already been referred to in a different context. In the
same way as modernism arose out of the rejection of the bourgeois ideology of the nineteenth century, which determined the nature of the literature of the time, postmodernism does the same as regards the dominant ideology of its time.

Curiously, we can relate what Barthes has said about the rejection of bourgeois ideology in the nineteenth century and its consequences to Lyotard’s claim that postmodernism is modernism in its nascent state. Accordingly, we could make some tentative assertions about postmodernism as being a reaction against a particular way or ways of seeing, a particular ideology or ideologies, which has brought about an awareness of the disintegration of particular ways of writing. Curiously, now, this does not only involve an abandonment of existing styles, which has occurred with certain authors, but a critical reappraisal or revisiting of past styles in order to show their limitations and fictionality. In this sense, postmodernism is subversive in its attitudes towards modernism or more particularly high modernism, but might be considered modern itself in that it remains suspicious of those conventions that modernism reacted against. Postmodernism is modern in its use of defamiliarising techniques and in its mood of alienation and solipsism, but has seen through the modern attempts to reach meaning through myth, symbol and formal innovation. There is no attempt to overcome the absurd and meaningless confusion of contemporary life in the depthless worlds of postmodernist fiction, rather it is
highlighted and welcomed. To paraphrase T.S. Eliot, the fragments do not shore up the ruins, but are the ruins themselves.

Lyotard's view of postmodernism as preceding modernism is also valid in this sense as what is significant about this period is its air of rejection and questioning prior to the formulation of new more legitimate narratives. Curiously, Frederic Jameson has been described as criticising postmodernism for having lost the subversiveness of modernism. In fact, he has been interpreted as seeing it as reinforcing the logic of capitalism by being anti-aesthetic, although this is surely not the case, as even he is rather ambivalent about this point believing that some postmodernism actually resists the capitalist ethic (Calinescu 1987 265-312).

In spite of its use of existing modes and conventions postmodernism does so critically. Rather than exploiting the possibilities of conventions it very often shows up their limitations, but only as regards their ability to represent reality or organise the chaos, not in terms of a future for the novel form, although that has been part of the postmodern debate. Suffice it to say, that the postmodern legitimation crisis signifies the initiation of an age of unbelief in which postmodernism is essentially critical of those narratives with which it is contemporary and which precede it. In other words, postmodernism, or postmodernist narratives are oppositional discourse in an age of unbelief.
1.3. Postmodernism: The Oppositional Discourse of Unbelief

In order to understand the nature of postmodernity, it ought to be made apparent that it is, as its name suggests, a post-culture and therefore, in some respects, depends on previous culture in order to define itself. While some have seen it as suggestive of failure or exhaustion, others look at its positive side, a kind of waking up from the past (Connor 1989 65). For this reason, among others, postmodernism, as oppositional discourse, has to be seen in its relation to other aspects of culture which precede it, and, as its name suggests, particularly as regards modernism. This point will be dealt with shortly, but first we should recall just what it is we mean by oppositional discourse, and in what ways, if the novel can also be described in these terms, postmodernism can be considered as such.

The novel as oppositional discourse was described in terms of its setting itself up in opposition to other genres and to poetics in general. Whenever the novel has become codified, it has progressed by setting itself in opposition to the form itself particularly through parody, the incorporation, mixing or invention of new forms.

The history of narrative, for critics like Shklovsky and Bakhtin has been one of making strange, of defamiliarisation, in which the novel has simply, or not so simply, progressed through the elaboration, complication, simplification and reversal of a few basic
laws of literary structure. The novel in this sense is not canonic, lends itself to parody, exposes literary conventions and is, fundamentally, antitraditional. We will see how it is the nature of postmodernism to act in a similar antitraditional fashion. It may in fact be that as both novel and postmodernism can be considered as oppositional the latter phenomenon tends to manifest itself in the narrative form.

The fundamental difference we have described between postmodernism and what precedes it seems to consist in postmodernism having emphasised the fallacious nature of all legitimising narratives as well as denying the link between artistic representations and reality. There is no longer an attempt to wrest meaning and coherence from the fragments, only superficial fragmentation. This change can be described in the terms used by Brian McHale, when he says that the dominant of postmodernism is no longer epistemological, as it was in modernism, but is now ontological (1987 25). From the tendency to emphasise the problems involved in interpreting the world in order to discover significance and coherence, there has been a shift towards the foregrounding of fragmentation, the plural nature of reality, and the fictional nature of the worlds we project. Curiously, these tendencies have to be seen in terms of the cultures that precede postmodernism and many postmodernist writers can be seen as engaging in some kind of dialogue with the past.

The postmodernist writer foregrounds the limitations of forms of representation and tends to see
all art as fictional in that it represents only a particular way of looking at things. We have linked this previously to the kind of reaction described by Barthes when the modern novel rejects the écríture and ideology of realism. In a sense, postmodernism does the same but by engaging in a dialogue with the ideology and écríture of modernism as well as what precedes it. The desire to be innovative exists, but the postmodernist writer is also wary of the avant-garde and the possibility that it might lead to exhaustion. In fact, one way of seeing postmodernism is as avoiding the kind of break with the past that certain aspects of modernism implied, and involving renewal rather than rejection, revisiting rather than invention. Whereas the avant-garde tends to search for new modes and new forms, postmodernism seeks novelty in existing modes, very often achieving it through new combinations or the use of modes not usually found within a particular form. This is how postmodernism seeks to be innovative and it thus involves a further degree of defamiliarisation not reached in modernism. It is wary also of how aspects of modernism have also become naturalised and once more seeks the denaturalisation of such conventions.

For the above reasons, as well as others that will soon become apparent, postmodernism can be considered as oppositional, dialogical, not innocent, ironic, critical and writerly. It questions existing conventions and undermines not only the fictions of the past but even its own.

Many critics have developed this debate in terms of
the modernism-postmodernism opposition and it is necessary to clarify the positions in this respect. In fact, the nature of modernism and postmodernism, as similar or distinct is less clear as regards literature than in other arts. As regards modernism, some critics viewed it as essentially involving the kind of defamiliarisation we have been talking about, especially the formalists, who emphasised the modernist refusal to allow the reader to believe he is reading about the real world, something which led to the kind of playing with language typified by Joyce. However, others have seen it as typified by subjective relativism where the tendency is to represent the world as knowable only through the individual consciousness. However, Stephen Connor sums up the nature of modernism as being complete in itself, providing formal integrity, wholeness and so on. Meaning is created out of the aesthetic integrity of the work of art which knows no other rules than its own, where the artist is like Joyce's god-like author and the fragmentation and chaos of the world are transformed into a coherent whole in purely aesthetic terms (1989 107).

Postmodernism can no longer accept such an ideology and therefore involves some kind of regression from or progression beyond the self-contained, self-sufficient work of art. The Angry Young Men of the fifties and sixties clearly rejected part of the elitist notions of high modernist culture although they tended not to become involved with the dialogue with form that we now consider to be postmodernism. However, Leslie Fiedler
has written that it is the task of new writers to challenge those ideas of generic integrity as authors like Vonnegut and Barth had begun to do (1971 461-85). In the light of what has been said, Connor sees one side of postmodernism as involving a movement of merging, a deliberate complication of the modernist idea of generic integrity (108-109). While this is considered a breakthrough for some, Connor points out that for others it is only a "selective intensification of certain tendencies within modernism itself" (109).

A highly considered figure in this ongoing debate is Ihab Hassan who tends to see postmodernism in terms of its relationship with modernism. In The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Towards a Postmodern Literature he sees postmodernism as a continuation of the modernist "will to unmaking" (in Connor 1989 110) and believes that the spirit of postmodernism lies within modernism itself. Connor sums up his ideas when he says that postmodernism is "a kind of Dionysiac virus within modernism, tempting it to the extremes of madness and self dissolution and partly as the secret inner principle of modernism" (1989 111). This destructive or deconstructive element, however, is something that he sees as preceding a possible movement towards the redemption of art.

Curiously, once again, a sense of opposition or dialogue with existing forms and cultures is implicit in Hassan's attitude towards postmodernism. Indeed it is this aspect of opposition which he later goes on to develop at length in his work as well as attempting to
isolate some of the defining features of postmodernist fiction. In his essay, "The Culture of Postmodernism," he recalls past tendencies to see postmodernism in its relation to modernism, as a minor reaction to modernism latent within it, as a falling off from the modernist movement, as a challenge to high modernist elitism or, as Hassan himself sees it, an exploration of the impulse of self-unmaking which is part of the literary tradition of silence (1986 304-307).

Prior to listing several schematic differences or oppositions between modernism and postmodernism, he approaches the fundamental problems that have given rise to it. This, he says, is an age of immanence and indeterminacy where semantic instability has led to a lack of consensus among scholars as regards what the term postmodernism means: modernism itself, avant-gardism or neo-avant-gardism. This itself is due to historical instability and the openness to change of literary concepts, where elements of the past can usually be found in the present. The double view of postmodernism adds to this problem as it broaches the problems of sameness and difference, because of which we often find ourself rediscovering affinities of present authors with those of the past. The doubleness of postmodernism leads it to be not only anti-formal and anarchic, but allows it to contain a desire for unity in spite of the fragmentation. This is related to its aspects of innovation, renovation or just novation (1986 308-311).

This suggestion of a desire for unity in
postmodernism is arguable and is not typical of all postmodernist productions but more or less corresponds to Lyotard’s concept of nostalgia and the sublime in that the unpresentable or unrepresentable is that which is lacking from the postmodernist narrative. For Hassan, the tendency in postmodernism is playful, paratactical and deconstructionist, but is only one tendency among several which include the avant-garde and the modernist (1982 311). However, he centres on the schematic differences which he appreciates between modernism and postmodernism, which further underlines one aspect of the view of postmodernism as oppositional discourse. The best way in which this duality can be represented is in the same tabloid form that Hassan uses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modernist</th>
<th>Postmodernist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romanticism/Symbolism</td>
<td>Pataphysics/Dadaism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form (conjunctive, closed)</td>
<td>Antiform (disjunctive, open)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td>Anarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery/Logos</td>
<td>Exhaustion/Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Object/FinishedWork</td>
<td>Process/Performance/Happening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation/Totalising/</td>
<td>Decreation/Deconstruction/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>Antithesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>Absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centering</td>
<td>Dispersal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre/Boundary</td>
<td>Text/Intertext</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantics</td>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradigm</td>
<td>Syntagm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At this point it is worthwhile bearing in mind what Robbe-Grillet has said about the novel in that it is always the inheritor of a tradition. Hassan seems to be bearing this out with his obviously schematic, but nonetheless worthwhile, version of the modern-postmodern dichotomy. Essentially, it underlines what will become increasingly apparent: the postmodernist novel is, to all intents and purposes, a dialogue with form. As Robbe-Grillet says, "It is impossible for him [the writer] to escape altogether from this tradition of which he is the
product" (1989 18). That is, "A new form will always seem more or less an absence of any form at all, since it is unconsciously judged by reference to the consecrated forms" (1989 17). It is not surprising then that Hassan’s dichotomies, for all of their tentativeness can be seen as being negations of one another, antonyms that are suggestive of the very dialogue with form we have been suggesting.

Hassan’s descriptions of postmodernism usually tend towards long lists of features which negate previous tendencies in the novel, particularly those of modernism. In the essay we have been discussing he finally sums up his findings in this fashion, at the same time dividing the features of postmodernism into two basic areas. The dual tendency of postmodernism is towards indeterminacies and immanences. The former include openness, heterodoxy, pluralism, eclecticism, randomness, revolt and deformation which includes decreation, difference, discontinuity, disjunction, disappearance, decomposition, dedefinition, demystification, detotalisation and delegitimation as well as chiasmus, lapsus, schism, hiatus, and so on. It is clear that these features, which could be classed as the kind of games that postmodernist authors play (and more will be said about that later), constitute a reaction against the single, closed and meaningful totalising structures produced by modernism. This is, in fact, the case. Hassan simply underlines the fact that postmodernism is the oppositional discourse of unbelief.

The latter tendency, immanence, is summed up as the
"capacity of mind to generalise itself into the world, to act upon both self and world" (1986 316). The way in which this is incorporated into the postmodernist text is through dispersal, diffusion, dissemination, diffraction, integration, ecumenism, communication, interplay, interdependence, and interpenetration.

What sums up the postmodernist situation for Hassan is to see it as involving a tension between the one and the many, totalitarianism and terror. For the postmodernist, the point is not to choose between them but to allow the possibility of some kind of movement or dialogue between them. Once again the idea of dialogue comes in here, and one point we might add to what Hassan suggests is to see this kind of dialectic as avoiding finality or closure. As we have already said, postmodernism is precisely an oppositional discourse of unbelief.

Elsewhere, Hassan has gone on in a similar vein in his attempts to arrive at a definition of postmodernism. In "Pluralism in Postmodern Perspective" (Calinescu and Fokkema 1987) he provides a list of features not unlike the lists above, adding the proviso that his is not a definite definition for a phenomenon which is so equivocal. The features are: indeterminacy; fragmentation; decanonicalization; self-less-ness, depth-less-ness; the unrepresentable, unrepresentable; irony; hybridization; carnivalization; performance, participation; constructionism; and immanence. There are obvious similarities with what has gone before and we could more or less sum up what these defining features
signify in the following manner. The postmodernist text abhors totalisation and therefore produces fragmentary, fictional constructs without any sense of depth or significance, which is supplanted by an indeterminate sense of, sometimes ambiguity, sometimes ignorance. The postmodernist text tends to be subversive in that it rejects authoritative conventions and manifests itself in hybrid forms, often subverting itself by pointing out its limitations, its inability to represent anything. However, the feature which most strikes me here is that which Hassan calls carnivalization. This is a term which he borrows from Mikhail Bakhtin, whom, significantly, we have previously mentioned in connection with the novel as oppositional discourse. Hassan describes this as "[embracing] indeterminacy, fragmentation, decanonization, selflessness, irony, [and] hybridization" (Calinescu & Fokkema 1987 21). In fact it seems to cover most of the defining features of postmodernism for Hassan. He says, "[it] conveys the comic or absurdist ethos of postmodernism, anticipated in the heteroglossia of Rabelais and Sterne." And he goes on,

Indeed, what Bakhtin calls novel or carnival --that is, anti-system-- might stand for postmodernism itself, or at least for its ludic and subversive elements, which promise renewal. For in carnival, "the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change and renewal," human beings, then as now, discover "the peculiar logic of the 'inside out' (a

(1987 21)

Both Hassan and Bakhtin here describe postmodernism as being oppositional discourse, the turning inside out or upside down of the system. Here we have, summed up, the nature of postmodernism as intensifying certain aspects of the novel itself, particularly those which the novel has always foregrounded in its attempts to renew itself. When we view postmodernism in this light, then, we find that it makes use of those aspects of the novel which characterise it as oppositional discourse, although perhaps to a different degree.

While the postmodernist novel is oppositional discourse, and while up to now we have emphasised those aspects which allow us to consider it so, perhaps we should pause to consider something that Malcolm Bradbury has said. In “Modernisms/Postmodernisms” he writes, “In the end, the study of Modernism can only be the study of Modernisms” (Hassan & Hassan 1983 327), something which is also true of postmodernisms and which we hope to bear out now by considering some more of the variety of lights in which critics have considered postmodernism.
1.4. Postmodernisms: the Debate Continues

Another significant figure in the postmodernism debate is Matei Calinescu, who has collaborated on several of the more important recent studies on the subject. In *Five Faces of Modernity*, an updating of a previous work, he considers the positions of some of the leading participants in the debate and finally puts forward a version of postmodernism which fits in with our view of it as oppositional discourse (1987 265-312).

Calinescu draws attention to a change in attitudes towards postmodernism after the "optimistic apocalyptic" idea of it held in America in the sixties. He speaks of there being, in the following decades, an idea of counterculture, anarchism and antinomianism, particularly in the use we find of the term in architectural criticism, and he delimits two specific areas, the philosophical and cultural as giving grounds for debate.

Like other critics before him, he stresses what he calls the crisis of determinism and the place of chance and disorder in natural processes. Behind all this lies a questioning of the legitimacy of scientific procedures which is basically what we have already seen referred to by Lyotard. Now, the modern tendency to seek the eternal laws that govern the universe has been questioned in favour of a need to reassess, discuss and criticise scientific theories. This is one light in which we can already begin to see that Calinescu is describing a period of unbelief which leads to oppositional discourse. For him, postmodernism is both modern and
anti-modern: the former for its innovativeness and rejection of authority and tradition; the latter because of its rejection of the idea of progress and its awareness of the dissolution of the great integrative paradigm, the fragmentation of the metanarratives that had sought to create a unity.

This kind of attitude seems to start with Nietzsche's idea that facts are only interpretations and Calinescu sees it as finally leading to an opposition between modernist and postmodernist thought which he describes in terms of a dichotomy between strong thought and weak thought. Strong thought is universalising and homogeneous, while weak thought requires rethinking and is the thought of convalescence and resignation. This is clearly not the attitude that lies behind Lyotard's idea of dissent for its own sake, which we outlined earlier, an attitude much criticised by Jurgen Habermas' assertion that modernity is an unfinished project which ought to reject postmodernism (1981 14), which is suggestive of yet another stance in the postmodernist debate. So, it is clear that there are a number of different attitudes towards postmodernism, although what is implicit here is not so much a question of what is postmodernism, but whether it is worthwhile or just to what extent is it possible to be positive about it.

Calinescu himself emphasises that postmodernism is not so much a question of innovation but of renovation, of revisiting the past, and here he alludes to Umberto Eco here who considers the avant-garde as moving ultimately towards silence with their innovativeness (in
Calinescu & Fokkema 1987 5). Postmodernism is oppositional discourse, it is a reconstructive dialogue with the past. Eco writes "The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past, since it cannot really be destroyed, because its destruction leads to silence, must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently" (1984 67). In fact, Calinescu himself points out in another essay that "postmodernism claims to be the selfconsciousness of the cultural present" (1987 7), yet again emphasising its oppositional nature.

Playfulness, irony and self-parodic nostalgia become integral elements of postmodernism and it is its nature to be impure. Whereas modernism can be seen as striving for purity Guy Scarpetta describes postmodernism as allowing just the opposite:

The question is to create within the horizon of this death [of art], within the hypothesis that this death is possible --to create even from this death (we find the idea already in Adorno): "The notion of a culture resuscitated after Auschwitz is a pitfall and an absurdity," which would mean that the only possible culture today is postapocalyptic. All naïveté, all innocence in this regard would be totally anachronistic.

(1985 42 in Calinescu 1987 277-78)

This idea of impurity, which brings with it the connotations of a lack of innocence, the desire for convalescence and a need for rethinking that have been mentioned before may seem rather extreme stated in these
terms, but it is precisely the awareness of the fallacious nature of attempts towards modernist purity that characterises much postmodernist fiction. The desire to demystify, to destroy the sense of comfort of the reader in an explicit dialogue with the past is what we find. Therefore, postmodernism is a departure from rather than an extension of the avant-garde, which finally leads to exhaustion and provides a point of view from which the author is able to question the nature of modernism or modernisms.

In architecture, Calinescu sees the oppositional nature of the postmodern as involving a revisiting of the past following the geometrical and functional purity of modernism which had broken with the past. And we could say that the same is true in literature. The attitude of architects and writers tends to be dialogic in that it avoids the kind of selection involved in either/or choices by providing the plural reality of both/and. A deconstruction and reconstruction of the past takes place in that following its fragmentation it is reconstructed in pluralistic reinterpretations which often involve ironic nostalgia, irreverence, play, mixing of modes and so on.

Towards the end of his essay, Calinescu tries to sum up the nature of literary postmodernism and he does so by emphasising certain aspects of it that should already have become clear. Postmodernism follows a poetics of indeterminacy and undecidability of meaning, in which sense it is a continuation of modernism. However, it emphasises its questioning of the
possibilities of referentiality and the difference between the construction of reality and the construction of possibility. In this sense he refers to Borges' idea of the garden of forking paths as being representative of the postmodernist turn of mind, with its pluralistic attitude providing alternative pasts and futures, labyrinths of possibilities and parallel times and situations. Beckett is considered in this light too and the necessary failure of the artist and the impotence of the word are highlighted.

But the most striking feature of postmodernism seems to be that its nature is antitraditional in that it makes use of counter conventions and the ironic and parodic doubling of them. Like the novel when it is oppositional discourse, postmodernism exposes conventionality. However, it is done in a much more explicit manner as each device it makes use of is exposed as a contrivance and it shows that everything else is also a contrivance as there is literally no escape from it. This is what leads Calinescu to go on and cite the following techniques as being typical of postmodernist fiction as their end is just that, to emphasise the contrived and conventional nature of the devices used, to defamiliarise us as to what we had rather comfortably become accustomed to. He refers particularly to those techniques which put an end to the conventional idea of the novel as a single structure, complete in itself by drawing attention to the process of creation as well as the distinct possibilities that exist within the work and the refusal to choose between
them. Some of these are: a new ontological use of narrative perspectivism, the duplication and multiplication of beginnings, endings and actions, the ironic parodic thematisation of the author, the thematisation of the reader, the equal status of fact and fiction, reality and myth, truth and lying, original and imitation, self-referentiality and metafiction, as well as the unusual use of traditional and convention tropes like anachronism, tautology, palinode and retraction and refutation (1987 303–304).

Curiously, it is these aspects of palinode, the taking back of what one has said, and refutation that typify postmodernism and sum up its oppositional nature. The convention is implied or used in order to be discredited, shown to be a contrivance or refuted. The convention is installed and contested within the same work thus bringing about the dialogue with form we have mentioned, both within the work itself and with the form of narrative fiction on a much broader level. In much more general terms, however, we find a reference to Douwe Fokkema who sees all this as involving a reaction against the modernist device of hypothesis. In other words, while the modern novel intended to be plausible and possible, and persuade the reader of its reality, the postmodernist novel works from impossibility, rejecting such attempts at persuasion showing the contrivance at the heart of convention (Calinescu 1987 305).

While those remarks by Calinescu and others sum up the nature of postmodernism as oppositional discourse,
there are other writers who have taken a different stance in the debate by placing the emphasis elsewhere. The work of Alan Wilde is just one example. He sees the movement from modernism to postmodernism as involving different attitudes towards irony (Connor 1989 115-117). While modernism encompassed disorder within the principle of irony, which allowed it to maintain opposing attitudes, postmodernism does not do this. Rather than make use of a disjunctive irony which formally controls alternatives, postmodernism is typified by suspensive irony, which Wilde sees as allowing the disorder to come to the surface. The chaos is recognised and intensified as it cannot be contained within the artistic form. This resolves itself into yet another clear dichotomy between modernism and postmodernism, where modernism is associated with the ideas of depth, detachment and seeing beneath appearances while postmodernism sees truth as being inherent in the visible with no opportunity for detachment in a world organised in temporary and local structures (Connor 1989 116-17).

All in all, the novel begins to emphasise its nature as an autonomous world, with no real referential element. It exposes its own fictionality and even the fictionality of history itself, which is where Linda Hutcheon, another outstanding critic tends to place the emphasis. In her The Politics of Postmodernism, she sums up a great deal of what she has written elsewhere. Postmodernism is a knowing and ironic mode which is self-conscious, self-contradictory and self-undermining
as, while it installs and highlights the conventions and presuppositions of narrative it also undermines and subverts them. It involves a challenge against the dominant features of our ideology by making use of and contesting the conventions that are a product of it, by de-naturalising them or defamiliarising us towards them (1989 1-2). For her, the basic ideology underlying postmodernism involves an awareness that entities that have previously been experienced as natural are in fact cultural, a point of view which is reminiscent once more of Barthes’ description of the movement from realism to modernism. However, with postmodernism the way in which this is highlighted is rather different.

For Hutcheon, there is a tendency to juxtapose the narcissistic, self-aware, self-reflexive and inwardly directed with the real, historically based and outwardly directed. While these tendencies had seemed to be incompatible in modernism, which tended towards the former, at least to some extent, and towards the latter in so-called realism, we find the two interwoven in some kinds of postmodernist narrative, which is the aspect of postmodernism that is emphasised here. The effect of this juxtaposition is to create a tension between apparently opposite and paradoxical forms.

The emphasis is placed here on the ideological and hence political basis of cultural forms of representation, and postmodernist narrative is seen as making use of these forms in order to contest them, thereby challenging the ideology which lies behind them. What is emphasised here is the way in which narratives
are structures; forms through which we construct notions of ourselves in the present and in the past. What is questioned initially is the realistic fallacy of the transparency of referentiality (obviously something which had already taken place previously), which is done through the foregrounding of the documentary and historical, while at the same time confronting it with the postmodern tendencies towards self-reflexivity and parody (1989 3-7).

This particular tendency in postmodernism is called historiographic metafiction. It is both self-reflexive and historical, working within, but tending to foreground the limitations of, available systems and conventions. Both history and fiction are seen as human constructs and this kind of postmodernist writing involves a rethinking and reworking of the forms and contents of the past (1988 5). Here the idea of a dialogue with the past, or of a dialogue with the forms inherited from the past is once more suggested. Without mentioning it explicitly, Hutcheon, too, is describing postmodernism, even, or perhaps particularly, as it manifests itself as historiographic metafiction, as oppositional discourse. The qualities that Shklovsky and Bakhtin find as typical of the novel are foregrounded here in historiographic metafiction in order to demystify, de-doxify or simply denaturalise existing forms of cultural representation and, perhaps more particularly, their ideological and political significance. Curiously, Hutcheon points out the wide range of dominant cultural forms that are de-naturalised
by postmodernism as it inscribes and subverts realism, modernism, kitsch and even itself (1989 11-13). Here she coincides largely with Frederic Jameson who has written, more specifically of architectural postmodernism that it is itself no unified or monolithic period style but spans a whole gamut of allusions to styles of the past, such that within it can be distinguished a baroque postmodernism, ... a rococo postmodernism, ... a classical and a neoclassical postmodernism ..., and perhaps even a Romantic variety, not to speak of a High Modernist postmodernism itself. This play of historical allusion and stylistic pastiche (termed historicism in the architectural literature) is a central feature of postmodernism more generally. (1988 375)

So postmodernism makes use of but at the same time questions past and present forms of representation largely through the use of parodic strategies. It is for this reason that Hutcheon speaks of postmodernism as being a "critical reworking, never a nostalgic return. Herein lies the governing role of irony in postmodernism" (1988 4). For Hutcheon, the novel has always been inherently ambivalent, both fictional and worldly, and historiographic metafiction simply foregrounds this through the use of techniques like modernist self-referentiality, irony, ambiguity and parody as well as its exploration of language and its challenge of realism. At the same time it contests other modernist trends, like artistic autonomy, individual

Once again, we can see how a critic tends to see postmodernism as oppositional discourse, and in this case we see that it is considered to be in opposition to existing codes and conventions in society in order to show that they are social and political representations, that they are relative and provisional, rather than absolute and total: there is no reality, but only ways of representing it. So once again we see postmodernism, like the novel throughout its development, as involving the question of realism and attitudes towards it.

For the same reason, and Hutcheon mentions this too, postmodernism is about frames and structures, the totalising processes required to create coherent, continuous unified structures, only it tends to be suspicious of such structures while at the same time making use of them, although in a deliberately overt manner, thus drawing attention to the fact that distortion is inevitable in all narratives (1989 62–64). What is involved, and this has been suggested by others, is a rethinking or reevaluation rather than a rejection of the forms which we use to represent and understand our world (Hutcheon 1989 67). At the same time the very nature of the present processes that we go through in order to recount the past and the relation between the two is often emphasised. As Hutcheon says, postmodernism often places emphasis on:

the pastness (and absence) of the past and the presentness (and presence) of the present, and
on the other, between the actual events of the past and the historian's act of processing them into facts. (73)

There is no question of the histories we write being objective records: they are constructs which always involve interpretation and, therefore, distortion. All narratives are fictions, therefore, and it is this kind of relation between history and fiction, between the past and our processes of recording and remembering which are foregrounded in historiographic metafiction. Rather curiously, we will discover how the same kinds of problems are broached in narratives which do not quite fit this label so readily, but which remain postmodernist, which is the case of the work of B.S. Johnson.

It is with this kind of situation that it becomes possible to cross the gaps from one genre or mode to another, and conventions that were once considered inappropriate for the novel begin to be found there. Moreover, the genres and modes mingle and appear simultaneously in one form or another, thus undermining the idea of the single unique structure. In extreme cases there is a suggestion of the factual/historical and the fictional/fantastic coming into contact, overlapping and even colliding, which can be true within many categories of discourse from narrative levels to the personae of narrators, characters and authors. In a sense, this is just one way of emphasising the idea that all narratives are fictions, but particularly recalls some remarks made by Brian McHale.
McHale considers the defining features of postmodernism, some of which we have mentioned above, but believes them to be the result of what he calls a change in dominant, in the movement from modernism to postmodernism. In his preface to Postmodernist Fiction, he makes it clear that the whole work deals with just one issue, which he takes up from where Robert Alter left it in Partial Magic. He writes: "postmodernist fiction differs from modernist fiction just as poetics dominated by ontological issues differs from one dominated by epistemological issues" (1987 xii). The basic idea, taken from Jakobson is that the dominant is the focussing compound of the work of art thus determining and transforming the remaining components (1971 105-10). The relative importance of the devices used changes in such an instance and we find that from foregrounding questions about how to interpret the world and our place in it, in modernism, fiction moves on in postmodernism to emphasise how we project our world, or worlds, "the unconstrained projection of worlds in the plural" (McHale 1987 25). The ontological issues of the relation between the text and reality are therefore emphasised, leading to our awareness of the otherness of these fictional worlds. In the same way as Bakhtin emphasises the idea of heteroglossia in the novel as such, McHale speaks of heterocosm, the otherness of fictional worlds and the possible interpenetration in these worlds of distinct ontological realities. What he emphasises as being typical of postmodernism is the ontological foregrounding of unreality, the possible
overlapping of these zones, and the different ways in which these spaces are created. The techniques themselves will be discussed shortly in terms of the games that postmodernist authors play.

At this point it may be necessary to clarify one particular aspect of postmodernism, which is that which is referred to as metafiction, a term that has been used on a number of occasions, but without further discussion. Russian formalism began the suggestion that every novel is about the nature of its own coming into being, and if metafiction is, etymologically speaking, fiction about fiction, then there would seem to be nothing new. As with the novel during its development, metafiction tends to defamiliarise us as to the conventions and techniques that are used in fiction. However, we ought to suggest that the question of the degree to which this is emphasised and the ways in which it is done change. Hence, a few words about metafiction are not out of place.
1.5. Metafiction

As the specific techniques which are employed in postmodernist and metafictional texts will be discussed later it is sufficient here to clarify its significance. In simple terms, it is fiction about fiction. If we remember the metanarrative function according to Genette, then in these narratives, the fiction or the fiction making process becomes a theme in itself. For this reason alone, metafiction can be considered another form of oppositional discourse as it implies a kind of dialogue with itself, where the conventions, techniques and traditions made use of are to varying degrees laid bare or denaturalised.

Linda Hutcheon writes: "Metafiction ... is fiction about fiction -- that is fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative and/or linguistic identity" (1980 1), and for this reason, it is narcissistic. The fictional nature of language and the world is made clear and therefore involves a curious paradox: the self-reflexive text is also oriented towards the reader (Hutcheon 6). For Patricia Waugh, metafiction depends on the idea that "For the smallest building blocks of matter, every process of observation causes a major disturbance" and it is therefore impossible to describe the world objectively without changing the observed (1984 3). Metafiction simply draws attention to this fact by emphasising the difference between signifier and signified, by making clear that all that can be represented in narrative are the
discourses available to us.

To varying degrees, the literary devices are laid bare and the fiction-making process becomes a theme in itself in metafiction, something which is not in itself innovative, as, since Sterne and Fielding, this kind of narcissistic writing which at the same time makes the reader aware of what is going on, has existed. Basically, the writer is emphasising that the only certain reality is the writer's own discourse because of which the metafictional novel "exults over its own fictitiousness." In this regard, Brooke-Rose goes on to say that "[t]he informing matrix of metafiction is ... that asymptomatic zone where literature appears to destroy itself as a language object without destroying itself as a metalanguage" (1981 39-40). The way in which this is done is to make use of counter-techniques which highlight the fictitiousness of the work, but rather than detail these here, we could suggest in a broader fashion just what kinds of metafiction we can find.

Metafiction may concern itself, then, with particular conventions of the novel, to display the process of their construction (for example, John Fowles' use of the 'omniscient author' convention in The French Lieutenant's Woman (1969). It may, often in the form of parody, comment on a specific work or fictional mode (for example, John Gardner's Grendel (1971), which retells and thus comments on, the Beowulf story from the point of view of the monster; or John Hawkes's The
Lime Twig (1961) which constitutes both an example and a critique of the popular thriller. . . . [Other] novels attempt to create alternative linguistic structures or fictions which merely imply the old forms by encouraging the reader to draw on his or her knowledge of traditional conventions when struggling to construct a meaning for the new text. (Waugh 1984 4)

From the above it should be clear that many of the features attributed to metafiction here are those which we have previously attributed to postmodernism. Postmodernism involves a good deal more but what is clear is that metafiction or metafictional techniques are a fundamental aspect of it. Curiously, what Waugh draws attention to is the almost puritanical, if not paranoical fear of some writers about telling lies or being misunderstood in their fictions. At least for some, it is this motive which leads them, among others to emphasise the fictional nature through such techniques to such an extent. This, at least, appears to be the case of B.S. Johnson.

As oppositional discourse, we can think of metafiction in these terms. Waugh states that postmodernism or metafiction (note that both are referred to here as being virtually the same) is not only a social opponent of Modernism but sets up an opposition not to ostensibly ‘objective’ facts in the real world, but to the language of the realistic novel which has
sustained and endorsed such a view of reality. 

(1984 11)

This suggests a particular emphasis which we have already referred to previously and which will be returned to later, that the oppositional nature of postmodernism involves attitudes towards realism as well as to particular literary trends.

Referring back to a parenthetical remark made a moment ago, it should be emphasised that metafiction is not postmodernism, but is the general tendency within the postmodernist novel. Metafictional elements can exist in all novels (the intrusive Victorian narrator and so on). In postmodernist fiction, it is simply that this tendency is much more extreme and, more importantly, is made use of, not to help suspension of disbelief or persuade the reader, as is the case when it occurs in Sterne, Fielding or Thackeray, but to destroy that suspension of disbelief by drawing attention to the nature of the narrative as fiction. Patricia Waugh sees it this way too and remarks that metafiction is not a distinct sub-genre but a tendency within fiction itself. She writes: "It operates through an exaggeration of the tensions and oppositions inherent in all novels: of frame and frame-break, of technique and counter-technique, of construction and deconstruction of illusion" (1984 14). What often happens is that the internalised act of narration is foregrounded, more than the narrator as such, so that his intrusions draw attention to the process which mediates between the reader and the text. In fact, Linda Hutcheon has pointed
out that the parodic self-reflective nature of the novel is paradigmatic as it appears in the works of Fielding, Sterne, Richardson and Defoe. However, she distinguishes them by saying that the first two make use of this kind of writing to provide the "realism of assessment" while the other two have "realism of presentation". The mimesis of process has usurped the mimesis of product and, while the former has been a constant in literature, with characters often telling stories which in turn reflects the overall process of the novel, we find that it begins to take on greater thematic significance. Perhaps the difference with metafiction nowadays resides in the fact that the assessment and the fiction making processes are now more overtly thematised. We can now say then that metafiction is one of the tendencies within the novel which allow us to consider it as oppositional discourse and it is this aspect, among others, which leads us to affirm the same about postmodernism.
1.6. A Pause in the Debate

All of the theories and attitudes considered above vary as regards the degree of difference (if there is any) between postmodernism and what has preceded it, not to mention what it is contemporary with. We have seen that there are those who are optimistic and others who are pessimistic about this real (or imaginary) breakthrough; some welcome this sense of fragmentation as an invitation to play with and rework the old forms, sometimes in the hope of arriving at a new discovery, and others see it as kitsch or as signalling the terrible loss of a sense of reality and the exhaustion of literary forms.

We have seen how, for some, postmodernism is a rejection of modernism, for others an extension or intensification of some aspects of it and others have worked to reconcile these two extremes. However, it should be clear that all of the attitudes towards postmodernism and postmodernist narrative in particular are related to attitudes towards realism, even modernism's new realism, with many emphasising the impossibility of projecting the world, and others relishing the realism of saying so. Some show the impossibility or the fictitiousness of attempts to overcome the chaos and others are happy to reflect it.

In the end, all imply that postmodernist narrative, like the novel itself, deals with realism and that, due to its particular stance, is oppositional discourse. Perhaps the main differences with previous narratives,
at least ideologically, are its lack of belief in the possibility of totalising narratives, and its insistence on the fact that all narratives are fictions. It is for this that we can state that postmodernism is the oppositional discourse of unbelief.

However, as the nature of the novel and that of postmodernist narrative are analogous, it is necessary to see just to what extent novel and postmodernism share the same attributes, before going on to discuss the latter in terms of our model. The point is that narratives (or fictions) make use of existing possibilities (literary and non-literary) and it is necessary to see how postmodernism, as oppositional discourse par excellence, does so, to see to what extent changes are of degree rather than of kind.
2. Postmodernism, the Novel and Narratology

The postmodernist novel is still a novel and our definition of novel admits postmodernist narrative within it. Both are oppositional discourses, contemporary and anti-traditional and always bear some kind of relation to realism. Clearly, the more extreme nature of the present situation as regards the relation between narratives and reality has led to changing attitudes towards the possibilities for the novel or the use of them, but those possibilities remain the same.

It should be remembered that postmodernism is a term most often used in connection with narrative, particularly fiction, which should indicate something about the suitability of the form to embody this new ideology. Hence we should reiterate that what we are discussing is not so much the possibilities for invention, but the way in which those possibilities are exploited, often in innovative or unexpected ways. Questions like propriety, convention, tradition and appropriateness and the way in which narratives are framed, or rather not framed, as single structures predisposed to particular conventional choices within categories of discourse will be dealt with. So let us now see, at first generally, what the tendencies are when postmodernist authors work within the restrictions and possibilities of the novel, but first considering just to what extent postmodernist narrative remains part of the novelistic tradition.
2.1. The Novel and the Postmodernist Novel

Both the novel and postmodernism have generated a good deal of debate, a debate which remains open-ended due to the contemporary nature of both phenomena. The tendency has been to emphasise different aspects as typical in both but the point that we wish to make here is that they are in fact analogous. Both are subject to change and their development is in some way due to a particular kind of response or attitude towards realism and realistic fallacies. Here, we could add that what makes the postmodernist novel different is simply that it appears after modernism and reconsiders, as the novel has always done, the attitudes towards reality, realism and realistic fallacies embedded there.

If we consider the question of mode, kind or genre, then we see how the novel as such has always depended upon and has been defined in terms of the particular mode or modes that it has made use of. It has been shown that the further assimilation and mixing of other kinds of literature and other modes of discourse is already inherent in the novel and from what we have seen, the postmodernist novel simply continues this trend, albeit sometimes in a more self-conscious or innovative manner.

In our description of novel, we saw how from its beginnings it has been associated with the search for an adequate view of life, and has done so by reacting against previously existing ideologies and écritures. This was so with the novel when it reacted against medieval romance and the ideas of the court, it was so
when the modernist novel reacted against bourgeois attitudes and the realistic fallacy, and the same is true of the postmodernist novel, which, while it has been described as developing certain aspects of modernism, questions the forms and conventions it implies: more than that, it questions the forms and conventions of the novel since its beginnings.

The postmodernist novel continues to proccupy itself with the same contemporary and individual concerns of the novel as such, but perhaps we could see it as emphasising not so much these concerns, but the way in which writers have dealt with these concerns. Hence the tendency, which is novelistic anyway, towards parody and the use and even abuse of different literary and non-literary modes of discourse.

The novel, we have seen, has always been experimental, particularly in those moments when it can be considered as developing, and changes that have taken place since the advent of postmodernism could be considered as reflecting an already existing trend, although the tendency is now towards distortion and playing with proportion in terms of forms and conventions that are already there.

It has been suggested that the novel can be considered as a synthesis of already existing traditions and David Lodge's comments about contemporary narrative suggest that the synthesis has broken down, leading the novel to go in different directions. In simple terms, the postmodernist novel represents a further step in the novel's development due to an extreme awareness of the
fallacious nature of the fact-fiction synthesis which had held good for so long. Hence the postmodernist novel, unlike its predecessors, is no longer a form of persuasion, but a self-conscious attempt to draw attention to the falseness of any such attempts to persuade.

Here, it is worthwhile considering the question of realism once more. It is clear that many of the apparent differences suggested above have to do with a change in attitude towards it. But this change has to be seen in perspective. The novel, we have said always exists in some relation to it, and for formalist critics has always involved some kind of defamiliarisation as regards the ways in which we represent reality. This is equally true of the postmodernist novel, which can also be considered antagonistic towards the canon as it remains a kind of outsider model which sets itself up in opposition to tradition. Furthermore, the postmodernist novel can be considered as yet another step in the open-ended series of realisms that the novel represents. As, Holquist and Reed have described the novel, the postmodernist novel is tied to realism whenever realism is conceived as more real than literature, since the novel always acts in reaction to literature [here more particularly the postmodernist novel]. However, all realisms as such are naive. They conceive the view from inside one set of categories as natural . . . . Novels [particularly postmodernist novels] are not
naive in this way. They are always aware of the opacity of cultural categories, which to realists look like windows. (1988 417)

The postmodernist novel, like all novels, involves a kind of dialectic between literature and other existing paradigms in our culture. There is always some kind of interaction between forms of literature and non-literature, a dialogue with form as we have called it. It has always been so with the novel, perhaps it is just that now it is being made more explicit in the postmodernist novel, which opposes itself more clearly to types of literature more traditional than itself. Reed talks of the novel’s strategies for coming to terms with convention and we could say that the postmodernist novel makes use of them in a deliberately overt fashion. They are rejection, vulgarisation, incorporation and transcendence, and while rejection may not be considered typical of the postmodernist novel as it tends to revisit the past, the other three certainly are common. As we have already suggested, the postmodernist novel is typical of the novelistic form in that it demands a renewal of realism in the light of new ideology. What has taken place in this renewal of realism is a more advanced form of what had happened before with the advent of the novel itself, and with its development towards modernism. Perhaps with the new novel, however, the medium of representation is foregrounded to a greater extent than before, but even at that, the postmodernist novel as oppositional discourse must be seen as firmly having its place in the historical
development of the novel. As Holquist and Reed put it:

Ideally conceived ... the history of the novel is the story of a series of narratives which subtend the catalogue of narrative restrictions that successive cultures have imposed on the way a self might be told.

(423)

Postmodernist novels are narratives which do just that.

Some might contend that not all novels are like that and that particularly the realistic novel is rejected by postmodernism in that it propagated the realistic fallacy. It is true to say that the postmodernist novel contests the realistic conventions of the novel, as it does the conventions of all existing modes of representation. However, there is a link between traditional realism and postmodernism if we remember that realism as we know was initially anti-conventional, contesting the ideology and écriture of the romance. Certainly the realistic novel did become conventionalised with its stereotypical characters and settings, its reliance on non-essential detail, particularly as regards historical events and geographical background, conventional plots, the use of realistic, usually non-literary modes of discourse, and conventions like going into the minds of the characters. However, even Victorian realism tended to be self-conscious, just as the postmodernist novel is, and while it relied upon some kind of belief in the relation between the word and its referent, it did not do so naively or innocently and found itself forced to
persuade the reader of its verisimilitude. Essentially the difference with the postmodernist novel resides here. It too makes use of the same conventions when it revisits the past, and it also does so self-consciously, but there is no attempt to persuade the reader of its verisimilitude or plausibility, or to suspend disbelief, rather the contrary, the postmodernist novel self-consciously makes use of these conventions in order to undermine any sense of realism and to emphasise the realistic fallacy.

So the postmodernist novel defamiliarises or denaturalises convention, often through parody or the mixing of modes, but this has been so of the novel since its beginnings, although perhaps not to the same degree. Of the novel we can say that it is heterogeneous, open-ended, anti-hierarchical, contemporary, anti-traditional, personal, inconclusive, autocritical, even self-parodic. The same is true of the postmodernist novel. That the novel has always, in some way or another, attempted to renew itself, should be clear, and it should also be clear that the postmodernist novel is one more attempt at such a renewal. We remember how in the nineteen thirties, Flann O’Brien suggested that the novel should be a self-evident sham and we have seen how the postmodernists have taken him up on his suggestion. But O’Brien and others since also pointed out that the reason for what he was doing was that it had all been done before and implicit in this is that he was aware of his inheritance of a tradition. His novel, At Swim-Two-Birds, revisits all of Ireland’s literary past, and we
find that this has become a significant feature of postmodernism. Even Robbe-Grillet realised that innovation in the novel is always seen in terms of that which it is not. So the postmodernist novel, it should now be clear, in spite of all its seeming differences remains firmly part of a literary, and particularly novelistic, tradition.

As regards the postmodernist discovery that all narratives are fictions, we can only allege that it has always been implicit in the novel, perhaps most particularly, and perhaps surprisingly, in the realistic novel. It was the realistic novel which discovered and relied on the fact that fictive and non-fictive writing acts are the same by making use of non-literary modes of discourse in its narratives. While this formed part of its means of persuasion, the postmodernist novel has found it necessary to exploit the fact in a different way, constantly reminding us that telling stories is telling lies.

Essentially, in an explicit manner, the postmodernist novel draws attention to the fact that the idea of an official or authoritative version of experience is a fallacy, as all narratives involve some degree of fabrication. This in itself, however, should not be considered as completely innovative as, with the disappearance of the author in many modernist narratives, the existence of ambivalence or conflicting points of view was indicative of the same. The interesting point is that in many postmodernist texts the return of the authorial voice does not bring with it
the traditional idea of authority.

From all that has been said it should now be clear that postmodernist novels are a further step in the development of the novel as such and that they share many of the traits of their predecessors. While there are differences, these differences tend to be of degree and should always be considered in terms of the conventions and possibilities that are the inheritance of the novelist. The novel is a form of oppositional discourse, and in the same way as it opposes conventions and traditions to varying degrees, we can say that the postmodernist novel does so in a more extreme manner.
2.2. The Elements of the Postmodernist Novel.

Earlier it was made clear that each novel is a unique set of variables and that the novel works within clearly recognisable categories of discourse. Postmodernist novels are also like this but behave so as to defamiliarise or denaturalise conventions, often in a very intrusive or unexpected manner. Essentially, what happens is that each novel makes a series of choices, sometimes governed by convention or sometimes laid down by its own predispositions, which while they may not follow convention tend to be seen in terms of an existing novelistic tradition. In traditional narratives we find that the tendency is to create a frame which facilitates the passage from text to reality without there being any sense of infringement of the rules or even awareness of the frame. With postmodernism the opposite occurs and we tend to become aware of the rules and the frame itself. In fact, very often we become aware of frame-breaking in postmodernist texts. As Patricia Waugh has pointed out, "[Frames] become more perceptible as one moves from realist to modernist modes and are explicitly laid bare in metafiction" (1984 30). The novel, and in particular the postmodernist novel, is a kind of oppositional discourse. It involves a dialogue with form and contests the conventions and traditions which it is the inheritor of. It revisits the past critically and ironically, making use of but at the same time drawing attention to and often breaking the rules.
it has inherited. Later it will be suggested how postmodernist authors can play games or employ devices which do this (we have spoken already of irony, parody and intertextuality to name but a few), but at this point it is necessary to outline the way in which particular choices and behaviour within the categories suggested in our model can be considered postmodernist. We will see how, the reader's sense of expectation, proportion and appropriateness are sometimes played with in order to draw attention to the frame itself.

In general terms, what interests us here is the kind of activity which draws attention to the nature of the narrative itself. The novel has been and the postmodernist novel is particularly self-conscious about what it is doing and how it does it. Play or playfulness are a constant in all literature as we have seen, but the degree to which this occurs in postmodernist texts has changed, and we ought to bear in mind this tendency towards alterations and transgressions within categories of discourse which can be considered metafictional and therefore postmodernist. However, it should not be forgotten that these are readily available alternatives and depend on the existence of tradition and convention in order to achieve their purpose. What tends to change is the emphasis, but the kind of changes or games that we find in postmodernist novels all exist within the possibilities of the novel form. It should be remembered that the developing tendencies of the novel as an openended form have already been made clear and in simple terms we could say that the postmodernist novel
simply tends towards particular kinds of activity or emphasis in order to draw attention to the form, the medium itself.

We have already described postmodernist ideology, so just in what ways is this reflected within categories of discourse and the games that postmodernist authors play? First of all, we should recall that postmodernist texts tend to contest existing conventions and traditions. This can be done by overtly commenting on the fact, or implicitly, by making use of, or combining existing conventions in a particular way. Let us say then, that in postmodernist narratives, it is often a function other than the narrative function which is emphasised in order to draw attention to the nature of that narrative and that, furthermore, there is usually a tendency towards alterations and transgressions within categories of discourse which, perhaps in a more implicit manner, also thematise the narrative process. Postmodernist novels also tend to be playful, even more playful, which is another feature which draws attention to itself. Broadly speaking, we can say that, within existing categories of discourse, postmodernist narratives look for new forms of combination and tend to emphasise different aspects of the narrative (process). The degree to which particular codes are determined is another relevant factor and, in general terms we can say that postmodernist texts tend towards alterations and transgressions within existing categories of discourse. Unusual choices and combinations often occur with respect to mode and analogy among other things, and
postmodernism’s attitude as regards story is very untraditional. All of this activity tends to foreground ontological questions as well as undermining the nature of the narrative as a single structure. What has to be emphasised here is that postmodernist texts draw attention to questions like proportion, propriety and what is expected in terms of convention and the text’s own predispositions. The tendency is for them to take advantage of the novel’s possibilities but in an exaggerated manner which becomes intrusive so as to draw attention to itself in a self-conscious manner. Let us sum up some of the more obvious possibilities.

We know that alterations in time in narrative are called anachronies and we also know that they have been common since the inception of the novel. As we have seen, the degree to which they occur may often suggest some kind of thematic significance and in the postmodernist novel this is so. Their occurrence tends to be frequent in most of them and in straightforward terms it can be stated that their use or overuse draws attention to the chronological structure of the narrative, which may involve playing with reader expectation by undermining the predispositions of the text, or by simply appearing unconventional. This kind of activity, particularly when it is disproportionate, draws attention to the frame, can lead to imply randomness, one of the features of many postmodernist texts, and may be suggestive of a failure to make the conventional choice by abandoning linearity, even undermining the validity of chronological sequence. In
other words, when this kind of thing happens it becomes intrusive, thus drawing attention to itself. All of this is indicative of the kind of dialogue with form we have been talking about.

In discussing duration earlier, we saw how the tendency in the novel was to avoid pause in the modernist novel, due to the disappearance of the author, but that this tendency has reappeared in the postmodernist novel. The reason for this is that something other than the story is being foregrounded, which is usually the nature of the narrative itself or the role of the narrator. In fact, works that are overtly metafictional tend greatly towards pause, which allows the author to foreground narrative functions other than that of telling the story.

In traditional novels, except for purposes that have already been explained, the frequency of the narrative tends to be singulative. Alterations of any sort or the overdetermination of iterative or repetitive narrative would also draw attention to the nature of the narrative, and may even be considered as subversive. In fact, an extreme tendency towards alterations within any of these categories of time may be considered as subversive, and draws attention to the abuse of or the countering of accepted conventions. While playing with or breaking the rules is always a theoretical possibility, it tends to be more obvious and intrusive in postmodernist narratives and more indicative of a dialogue with form.

This kind of alteration or breaking the rules with
all its subversive connotations occurs within every category of discourse. Briefly, as regards mode, we can say that postmodernist texts also have marked tendencies towards diegesis, as these foreground the narrator and his functions. This is true both in the presentation of events and of speech. However, postmodernist narratives also take advantage of another possibility, which is that of polymodality, the mixing of modes of presentation, which draws attention to the nature of the modes that are being used as modes. This is particularly so in the presentation of speech and thought, although it also occurs in the presentation of events. In general terms, we can say that the mixing of modes is common in diegetically aware postmodernist narratives. This may often be associated with infractions of rules as regards propriety and proportion as well as involving the idea of frame-breaking by undermining any sense of the rules or organising principles of narrative. Moreover, it is particularly in the area of thought and speech presentation that there may be greater possibilities for the infringement of conventions, as convention itself has been of vital importance in order to do this realistically.

Postmodernist narratives also play with perspective, and we can say that they tend to make use of alterations more frequently than traditional and modernist novels. The point is to undermine any sense of there being a dominant mode in the text suggesting that rules are being broken or transgressed thus drawing attention, once more to the nature of the narrative.
Unreliability can be achieved through paralepsis or paralipsis and, by creating alterations of perspective, the postmodernist novel deliberately draws attention to ontological problems, pluralism, the relation between dream and reality and so on.

Alterations and transgressions also occur frequently in the voice of postmodernist narratives. Authors tend to mix different times of narration, provide several layers or levels of narrative, which are often transgressed, a tendency which suggests a movement beyond the bounds of a single structure and the overlapping of distinct ontological worlds. Patricia Waugh has written of the existence of complex, implicit interdependence of levels. . . . The reader is always presented with embedded strata immediately above or below. The fictional content of the story is continually reflected by its formal existence as text, and the existence of that text with a world view in terms of 'textuality'. Brian McHale has suggested that such contradictions are essentially ontological (posing the questions about the nature and existence of reality) and are therefore characteristically postmodernist. (1984 15)

Postmodernist texts also tend to play with the narrator, providing him with different roles, sometimes parodying his role as narrator, or deliberately dramatising him in order to foreground the act of narration. It should be noted that intrusiveness is one
of the most common features of postmodernist narrators who tend to be narcissistic, often drawing attention to themselves in an overt manner. There may be a change from one narrator to another or the text may have him/her appear at distinct ontological levels, all of which emphasises the nature of the narrative, the relation between the fiction and any other reality. Similarly, the role of the narratee may be equally foregrounded or equally intrusive. In such cases the fictional nature of a dialogue with the narrator may be implied, or parody of the narratee’s role may underline the conventional nature of the narrative. The narratee may be more overtly dramatised, may also appear at different levels, or may be non-existent, thus drawing attention to the solipsistic element of postmodernism. In every event, the effect is metafictional.

In every area we find how the way in which postmodernist narrative behaves tends to foreground the medium that it uses, its own process of coming into being. The more overt way in which this is done is to foreground any aspect of the text other than the story itself, so that the tendency is to underdetermine the narrative function in favour of more self-conscious metanarrative, communicative, ideological and testimonial functions.

Postmodernist narratives also play with modes of discourse. The use of an unusual mode or the mixing of modes also takes place in order to draw attention to form and convention. In general, we can say that the fictional or literary and the non-literary tend to
overlap to this effect. The improbable or unlikely uses of modes and even the question of appropriateness or inappropriateness comes in here and will be the kind of thing that we find when we look at specific texts. We could also mention the dimensions of situational constraint here, as it seems that postmodernist narratives tend to break the rules regarding possible and probable co-occurrence of styles, varieties and modes, playing with the question of propriety but at the same time drawing attention to it. The same could be said as regards the kinds of analogies that are drawn in postmodernist texts too, as this is another area in which we find unusual or unexpected comparisons.

As regards determination of codes, we can say that the anti-rhetorical devices which are those of postmodernism often foreground a particular code other than the proaeretic and referential codes (more highly foregrounded in realistic texts) which are usually underdetermined. When codes are overdetermined by being referred to beyond purely informational need, or are made too clear, it becomes intrusive and the reader may become aware of some kind of transgression of literary conventions. In fact, the tendency to transgress narrative levels and to make use of alterations in postmodernist narrative often draws attention to the symbolic code, or simply overdetermines the narrative process itself.

We are generalising a good deal here, but it is important to see any postmodernist author in perspective and, as with categories of discourse, we find that story
is another aspect of narrative within which we can highlight certain areas of importance. In particular, the postmodernist author tends to have a different attitude towards characterisation and setting, sometimes tending towards minimalism and on other occasions towards excess. As regards plot, causality is often superseded by the arbitrary will of the author, and a generalised sense of lack of proportion in terms of the relation between satellites and kernels, suspense and surprise may be evident. In general terms, the tendency is to undermine any conventional treatment of story in postmodernist narratives, often drawing attention to its fictitious nature.
2.3. What are postmodernist novels playing at?

Up to now, most of what has been said has viewed the postmodernist novel in terms of anti-rhetoric or anti-style, as it does contest tradition and convention, a somewhat public game, which is not in itself new, but foregrounds the idea of the postmodernist novel as a dialogue with form. With this, the playful nature of the novel as such should already be clear, but a few words are necessary in order to put this into a more postmodernist perspective.

First of all, the games postmodernist novels play have been an inherent part of the novel since its beginnings, that is, the games played by postmodernist authors have always been available, although the degree to which they have been taken advantage of and their function differ. We have said that all novels are oppositional discourse to some degree and have their element of game playing. We have seen that there are public games which involve alterations within categories of discourse, and that these occur to some extent in most novels, although the tendency is to avoid polymodality and remain within the limits of a single structure. At the same time, game-playing in realistic novels can usually be considered as a kind of adornment or as part of the strategies used in order to persuade the reader of the verisimilitude of the narrative. However, what we find in postmodernist narratives is that games are played to a different end, and can be
considered as part of the metanarrative function, highlighting narrative technique and even foregrounding the fictitious nature of the text.

In passing, many of the kinds of games that postmodernist authors play have been mentioned and it is clear that particularly parody and pastiche are typical in that they tend to install and contest the kind of conventions we have been talking about. These games in themselves are not new, but what becomes apparent is the way in which games tend to be foregrounded due to their intrusiveness or inappropriateness, thus drawing attention to themselves and the nature of the narrative, by being at variance with more conventional uses. So, the first point to be made is that postmodernist narratives tend to be playful and one of their most characteristic features is carnivalisation. This has already been mentioned, but it should be emphasised that this, which includes "indeterminacy, fragmentation, decanonization, selflessness, irony, hybridization . . . " and "conveys the comic or absurdist ethos of postmodernism" (Hassan 1987 21) is what is often most apparent in postmodernist texts. These devices of carnivalisation, hybridisation and irony bring with them the postmodernist tendencies towards allegory and self-reflection, parody, travesty and pastiche, which often involve the deformation, and thus the contesting of existing forms, styles and genres. The postmodernist text thus incorporates and challenges that which it deforms and parodies. The games that are available to any literary texts are also those that are available to
postmodernism, but obviously the postmodernist narrative will foreground those which underline its self-conscious and ironic nature, particularly as a form which contests existing conventions. For this reason, it is the parodic nature of postmodernism, which looks for already existing models in order to contest them, that is often most apparent.

It has been said that in postmodernism art cancels itself, deprecates itself, orders itself loosely and at random and becomes a self-reflexive game (see Brooke-Rose 1981 345). This is related to another point which is that, according to David Lodge, postmodernist narratives look for alternatives to existing principles of composition, and their strategies are those of contradiction, permutation, discontinuity, randomness, excess and the short circuit (Lodge 1979 220-45). That is, postmodernist texts often contradict themselves or take back what they have previously said. They sometimes allow the existence of alternatives within the narrative rather than making definitive choices, thus emphasising the narrative process. Spatial and temporal contiguity may be suspended thus leading to randomness; or by making an exaggerated or excessive use of metaphor, and here we could also say any other device, the gap between the text and the world is made more apparent, as the metaphor or the device is seen to become a substitute for reality. The short circuit is perhaps what stands out most here, as it also has to do with the others. For Lodge, it involves metafiction, the mixing of the factual and the fictional, and the introduction of the
question of authorship, all of which expose the
conventions that are being used, which can be related to
what we have been saying about the existence of
transgressions and alterations within categories of
discourse.

Earlier, we saw that Matei Calinescu also
emphasises the playfulness of postmodernist texts, which
are described as being ironically nostalgic or
humorously irreverent about the past, sometimes piously
remembering, sometimes paying homage to or paradoxically
commenting on it. All of these would obviously involve a
good deal of parody, pastiche and intertextuality. Other
devices that we have mentioned are the duplication and
multiplication of beginnings, endings and actions, the
parodic thematisation of author and reader, the mingling
of fact and fiction, truth and lying, myth and reality
at an equal level, self-referentiality and metafiction,
and so on (1987 303-04). But an even more insightful
observation draws attention to the unusual way in which
postmodernist narratives make use of traditional figures
and devices. In particular he emphasises anachronism,
tautology, palinode and retraction. These devices
intrude into postmodernist narratives, drawing attention
to the conventions that are made use of. They often take
back or refute what they have previously said, and can
be considered as anti-rhetorical devices. In fact the
idea of anti-rhetoric or anti-style typifies many
postmodernist texts, although it is not simply the
tendency to hesitate, exaggerate, repeat or contradict
themselves in the more traditional sense that
constitutes this. We could say that, in this sense, anti-style can be considered to be itself the style of postmodernist texts as they often refuse to do what is conventionally expected of them. Robbe-Grillet has called this baroque, and in traditional rhetoric the refusal to describe, for example, a typical minimalist tendency in some postmodernist narratives, is called occupatio (see Brooke-Rose 1981 289). At this point we should recall what we have previously said about anti-style and reiterate that in postmodernist texts the tendency is not simply to do that which is not conventionally expected of them, but they often go against the predispositions that the text lays down for itself, a somewhat more private game. This also becomes intrusive and draws attention to the nature of the conventions and predispositions that have been contravened.

What we have said here about anti-style can be considered as part of postmodernism’s nature as oppositional discourse. By contravening or undermining accepted conventions and styles, the postmodernist text begins some kind of dialogue with form. This can be done in many ways, often through the kind of contradictions that we have already described, but also by taking novelistic conventions like beginning at the beginning, providing a conflict and a resolution, chapter divisions, time conventions, stylistic uniformity, causality and so on, and parodying or refuting them. In fact, this is the kind of thing which is typical of B.S. Johnson.
Another kind of more subtle refutation that we can find in postmodernist narratives is achieved through what we could call the logic of the absurd or the absurdity of logic. Writers like Borges and Flann O'Brien make use of this mainly to emphasise the realistic fallacy. Fictional characters, if the work they appear in is realistic, logically should then be able to lead autonomous lives, eat, drink, sleep, receive wages and negotiate with their author among other things. Fictional worlds, once created, may become the object of research for historians and receive their appointed reference in encyclopaedias too. This kind of absurd logic draws attention to the author's power to create ontologically distinct worlds and, by placing fiction and reality on the same footing, underlines the fact that all narratives are fictions.

Another typical device of postmodernism is *mise en abyme*, which involves the embedding of some kind of microcosmic replica of the whole within the narrative in order to thematise the story of the text, its narrative or linguistic code or the process of narrative itself. One popular way of doing this, for example, is to write self-begetting novels, or stories within stories which specifically draw attention to the writing act. In more general terms, *mise en abyme* is simply one more popular metafictional device.

These are some of the more obvious games and devices that can be found in postmodernist narratives and there are others, but perhaps it should be emphasised that the kind of games that are played are
designed to draw attention to the text as text, the pane
is made opaque, the medium is foregrounded and the
reader tends to become aware of the surface more than
semantic depth. Robert Martin Adams speaks of a
primarily triple view of surfaces, as things
to be seen, things to be manipulated, and
veils concealing or only vaguely suggesting
what the mind, from inspecting its own
processes, intuits as the essence of things.

(1977 57)

In postmodernist narratives, the reader is made
constantly aware of the nature of the surface, and that
surface becomes the object or the theme of the text
rather than what it supposedly refers to. Furthermore,
it is the games that are played and the devices that are
used that turn the postmodernist text much more
deliberately and obviously into a methodological field
than its predecessors. Adams also writes:

The repertoire of other modernist devices for
making surfaces as such the objects of
deliberate consciousness spreads far beyond
Joyce, and for that matter beyond prose
fiction altogether. It includes (in a brief
summary) such devices as contrasting depths; a
fragment from one context used in another, a
discourse framed to imply, and to require for
its completion, an unstated concept to be
supplied by the reader; highly stylized,
artificial or two-dimensional representations;
a meticulous surface realism surrounding a
single anomaly or absurdity; discontinuity in the texture of the artwork itself—not self-negations; duplicities, like parody and self-parody; diaphanous representations of one order of experience, through which another order is felt; various forms of violence performed on linguistic conventions, especially diction and syntax; simultaneous contradictory points of view, anti-narratives and endo-narratives; objets trouvés, collages, and minimalism; most varieties of trompe-l'oeil; intrusions of the author's authorial concerns, writing about the act of writing, etc.; any constructional technique that involves active, self-conscious complicity on the part of the audience or reader; anti-functional form in general; blanks, silences and non-performances; arbitrary or gratuitous obstacles; and a thousand other devices still awaiting their definitive taxonomist.

(Adams 1977 51)

Richard Todd has written that "[by] general consent a number of specific techniques and kinds are to be found in the international postmodernist novel" (1988 116), and he lists parody, pastiche, the use of earlier literary works, narratives of history, magic realism, and metafiction. These, along with the other games and devices we have mentioned constitute the repertoire of the postmodernist novel, although, what tends to attract the reader's attention is the way in which those which
already existed are exploited in a different manner or to a different degree in order to foreground postmodernist concerns.
UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA

Reunido el Tribunal integrado por los señores firmantes el día de la fecha, para juzgar la Tesis Doctoral de RIAN CREWS


Sólo otorgaré la calificación de apta con laudes por unanimidad.

Sévilla, 2 de marzo 1893

El Vocal, R. de Poo

El Vocal, C. Pérez

El Vocal, A. de Tavera

El Secretario, P. L. Arias

El Doctor, L. Krauss