

Is Fiction A Lie

*Project submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of*

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in

English and History

by

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Declaration

I, **Sana Abid**, hereby declare that this project entitled *Is Fiction a Lie*, submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English and History, is a research work done by me under the supervision and guidance of, **Mrs. Ansiya T. A**, Assistant Professor, Department of English & History, Christ College (Autonomous), Irinjalakuda.

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Certificate

This is to certify that this project entitled **Is Fiction a Lie** is a record of research work carried out by **Miss Sana Abid** under my supervision and guidance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English and History submitted to the University of Calicut.

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Introduction

As every falsehood is in the wake of a sham, every fiction is in the wake of a propaganda. What actually make-up does to ladies' face is what surprisingly fiction does to cover truth. When truth is troublesome and hard to accept, it requires cosmetics that brings out a beautiful fake face that world like to see. Often it does plastic surgery on facts and lies. Typically, raw truth is complex, rigid and unyielding. As the so-called aesthetic surgery expose ready-made human appearance, the fiction unwraps cooked narrative, often delicious to tongue nonetheless hard to digest.

In a world where loaded language and made ups reinforce special mindsets and fix attitudes to issues, create issues, thus foster issues. The certitude that there are underlying intentions and motives behind made ups cannot be simply denied or disregarded as a mere conviction. False stuffs are most likely thousand times welcomed as truth. Apparently, untruth is more appropriate to world circumstances than truth. Most often fraudulent story earn applause and win the minds of the public. Predominantly lies are popular truths and truths are popular lies. Falsehood is something interestingly carried and perceived easily out of curiosity, thus spreads and escalates. Apparently lies are more doubtless and truth is more doubtful.

As far as literature is concerned, it needs fabrications to exist in this world. Literature envelopes and encloses its darling fiction and feed the milk of prestige and recognition. Nurture, raise and fortifies. Safeguard and harbor agendas, the underlying intentions or motives. No fiction is produced on earth without grounds and reason. Do these motives have anything behind? Is something wrong in fiction being a floor for advocacy and endorsement, through which to declare one's support or public approval

to a particular issue? Is fiction a lie? If it is, then does it lead or mislead? Does it be misused to promote a particular point of view or political interest? Does public ignorance being a better soil for preaching and propaganda? Where does public incomprehension paving way for? This project, however, an academic work nevertheless a legacy as a product of research aftermath upended systematic investigation on behind the scene of fiction left to Department Of Double Main: English Literature and History.

Often fiction suggests taking out logic and wisdom from the mind, wrap it and put it inside a suitcase, so to empty the space for emotions. Inaccuracies in fiction: when reshaping fact appropriate? Stories have the power to take us to other worlds, and no genre more so than science fiction and fantasy. But even the wildest fantasy novel has to have some basis in reality; otherwise, most readers become discouraged. Authors of historical fiction have no obligation to be accurate in their writing unfortunately after all it is a fiction. Naturally, historical fiction is different from history books. Often, the victim of falsehood is not aware that they are being duped. The difference between fiction and falsehood is in the intent. In fiction, it is a form of art where everyone understands that the persons and events described are imaginary. It could be based on real persons and events. The bottom line is that the consumer of fiction may come away feeling entertained or inspired in the full knowledge that the fiction is not factual — it is an art form pure and simple. Great novels and great short stories are often single-minded, deliberately blinkered narrow-narrow-narrow representations. Like in a family argument you may only get one side of the story, the side the author wants you to hear (certainly not the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth). Even when the author appears to present both sides, it is a sham.

The statement “Fiction is telling lies to illustrate the truth” came under fire, this was just a crude commercial fiction how-to sort of remark. Real writers, serious, literary writers did not lie, they merely presented elegantly. Salman Rushdie writes, when reality itself seems everywhere under attack, Falstaff’s duplicitous notion of the truth seems to be shared by many powerful leaders. The truth is that truth has always been a contested idea. However, the defenders of the real, attempting to dam the torrent of disinformation flooding over us all, often make the mistake of yearning for a golden age when truth was uncontested and universally accepted, and of arguing that what we need is to return to that blissful consensus.

Why Do We Remember False Information? This phenomenon could explain why myths like “vaccines cause autism” and “fat in food is bad” stick around. Even if we used to know the truth, our brains can start repeating false information that contradicts the facts. Our brains are wired to believe information automatically—even if it’s false—because it helps us learn efficiently. “We’re not learning inaccurate information because we’re poor learners or dumb or not working hard,” says David Rapp, PhD, a psychology and education professor at North-western University. “In many instances, it’s a useful skill for us to accept what people tell us, because often what people tell us is true.” When we hear new information, those fresh facts do not override what we already knew before. Instead, both the new and old information live together in our minds. A few factors determine which one we will draw on when the situation comes up. Oftentimes, we will quote the information you heard most recently—even if it’s wrong. Because they are fresher in our minds, short-term memories are easier for our brains to access than facts we heard long ago. We’d have to think back further to remember previous knowledge, so people will often ignore those facts in favour of new inaccurate information, says Rapp, who published an

article on recalling inaccurate information in the journal *Current Directions in Popular Science*. “It’s what we’re currently thinking about or has been recently presented to us,” he says. “Prior knowledge isn’t difficult to retrieve, but it isn’t as readily available.”

Things get even trickier when the information is a mix of true and false. Our brains can keep track of what is true or false in those situations by compartmentalizing what we hear or read as total fiction, or mentally tagging individual facts as either true or false. The problem is, sorting all that information takes time. “The mind is good at encoding, but it takes more time to compartmentalize and tag,” says Rapp.

We are also inclined to buy into the facts that seem more plausible. Often, this means they fit better with what we want to believe, which could explain why people quote such different facts in political debates. “Both candidates said something that was objectively true or not, but people would ignore that information and go with their hopes, wishes, biases, preferences, or gut responses because it aligns with what they hope to be true,” says Rapp. People are especially unlikely to bother critically thinking about information when people are reading for pleasure, like with a novel, because your brain is in the mindset of relaxing, not keeping an eye out for falsehood, says Rapp.

Lies are concealed truth and fictions are open lies. Anyone who dare to disclose, can disclose, they have space on earth. Damn coward reader also has space on earth. The first chapter opens up a survey on whether the fiction is a hundred percentage precise. Gathers information from existing source as a result of standardize fact test how far John Milton's *Paradise Lost* is dissimilar from biblical account? How

far Shakespeare's Macbeth different from real Macbeth and history of Scotland?

Should it be abandoned? Why couldn't made-ups be accurate? How does the veracity of fiction matters? Should it be forsaken? Et cetera will be dealt in second chapter.

The way the fiction being equipment for various propaganda is reviewed in the final chapter. The research work for the moment ends up by putting forth a weaponry approach to fiction to the conclusion, paving way for further study.

Chapter 1

Veracity in Distrust

How well jewellery turns women rich, how well fine suit turns men executive, is that admiring fiction turns facts. They create blockbusters ‘It was a dazzling, cool day in April, and the timepiece stood striking thirteen...’, they bring metaphors ‘Whole world is a stage, and all the guys and girls are simply players’, they frame sarcasm and irony ‘Cool, breezy and raining? I like Dutch climate!’. In all of these cases, it is clear-cut that they are not actually presenting the truth, rather just a closely relatable idea. Often there are huge dissimilarity between the occurrence and narration. However, when some represent ethically unpleasant action, others are associated with artwork and poetry. (Emar Maier)

How historically accurate is Shakespeare’s story? For centuries, the clans had been waging war on each other. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, written nearly 400 years ago, is widely accepted as one of his great tragedies and rated alongside *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Julius Caesar*. But how historically correct is it?

It is generally accepted that Shakespeare wrote the play *Macbeth* sometime between 1604 and 1606, when there was a new king on the throne, King James I and VI of Scotland. Shakespeare would have gained approval for a Scottish play from the new King. Especially one with witches in it, for it was well known that the King was interested in witches, witchcraft and the supernatural (in 1597 James had written a book on spirits and witchcraft called *Daemonologie*).

Shakespeare appears to deliberately mix fact and fiction in the play. Apparently using Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1587) as his source, Shakespeare sets the battle between Duncan and Macbeth in 1040 at

Birnam Hill in Perthshire, rather than near Elgin where it actually took place. In the play, Macbeth dies at Dunsinane whereas in reality, it was at Lumphanan where he was defeated and killed in 1057.

Shakespeare's play takes place over a year whereas in reality, Macbeth ruled for 17 years. As for the personalities of the two main characters, Duncan and Macbeth, again Shakespeare's portrayal is not historically correct. In the play, Duncan is portrayed as a strong, wise and elderly king whereas in reality he was a young, weak and ineffective ruler. Shakespeare's Macbeth has virtually no legitimate claim to the throne whereas the real Macbeth had a respectable claim through his mother's side — indeed both Macbeth and his wife were descended from Kenneth MacAlpin. Shakespeare also gives Macbeth the title 'Thane of Glamis' but in fact Glamis was not known as a thanage in the 11th century. In Shakespeare's play, Macbeth's friend Banquo is shown as a noble and loyal man, resisting evil, a contrast to the character of Macbeth. In Holinshed's *Chronicles* however, Banquo is shown as exactly the opposite: he is an accomplice in Macbeth's murder of Duncan. The new king, James I and VI of Scotland, claimed ancestry from Banquo through the Stewart line of kings. To have shown Banquo as a murderer of kings would not have pleased James! Indeed, there is debate as to whether or not Banquo actually existed at all in history.

All in all, the confusing mix of fact and fiction which runs through the play is bewildering. (Ben Johnson)

A poem is no longer solely for a rebuke, a story is no longer only for a heated discussion, the job of poems and stories on a person is no longer with the useful aid of logic, wisdom, but with the aid of the way of their capability to delight, to provoke, to

captivate, to attract, perhaps so means Philip Pullman in his introduction to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Paradise Lost is an epic poem in blank verse by the 17th-century English poet John Milton (1608–1674). Although John Milton's epic stays one of the celebrated prominent retelling of the Christian story, how far this work that has mesmerized writers through the generations different from actual biblical account. Milton's poem tells the story of the Fall; of Satan's banishment from heaven for leading an insurrection towards God and of his revenge in corrupting Adam and Eve, then consequently all humans, by way of tempting them to consume the fruit of the tree of understanding of good and evil.

Unlike the Biblical account of the fall in the *Book of Genesis*, with his epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, John Milton adds a lot of detail about the complete story of Man, the beginning of Satan, his rise and Man's Fall. Although the ideas for *Paradise Lost* came from a few pages in the *Book of Genesis*, Milton's account kept readers wondering what was going to happen next. Because he was going against the church already with *Paradise Lost*, it was more intriguing for him to take the same ideas in the Bible and extend them into more detail, making Satan look like the Hero.

Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* to prove the techniques of god to men. However, the superstar of the work is unfortunately not the God but Satan, the extremist and spiteful, yet heroic in a most disastrous fashion, as Blake placed Milton, he is of the devils' team without knowing it. Milton used to be of the devil's gang because he was pushed by a dark suspicion of illegitimate power, he helped the parliamentarians in opposition to Charles I and supported the king's execution for which he was imprisoned and detained following the restoration in 1660. Milton's inborn propensity

for insurgency led him additionally to champion freedom of moral sense and speech.

'Give me the freedom to realize, to voice and to argue in liberty accordance to person's moral sense of right and wrong, viewed as acting as a guide to one's behavior', he wrote in *Areopagitica* one of the great polemics towards censorship. (Kenan Malik: From Milton to Pullman, the quest for truth is riddled with ambiguity)

God created the Son, the angels, Man, Heaven, Earth and everything else. Milton faced a difficult task with creating tension about what would happen since God already knew. In *Paradise Lost*, God is almost emotionless or aloof; he embodies pure reason and pure justice, and every response he gives seems to be cold. In *Genesis*, God is wise and known as the creator and is more the narrator of what is happening than in Milton's epic. Also, He is referred to as Lord God, instead of God, like Milton refers to Him. So, in close to the start and fall of Man to summarize the creation and reason for human nature is "God gave Man free will, from Man's free will, sin and death came into the world."

Paradise Lost was about Adam and Eve, how they came to be created, the fall of Satan and his journey to get back at God by corrupting Adam and Eve. The main plot of this took place in God's creation called the Garden of Eden. *Paradise Lost* is similar to the *Book of Genesis* because its story comes from the main pages of Genesis, chapters one through four. It is considered to be Milton's major work, and it helped solidify his reputation as one of the greatest English poets of his time. Most of all the poetry written by Milton contains his point of view of his faith. The reason that a lot of Milton's poetry contained his faith may have been influenced from his father. According to Jonathan Rosen, while a child, Milton's family was kicked out of the church due to Milton's father rejecting the Catholic faith in return for the acceptance of Protestantism (Rosen, 4). This taught Milton that if he believed something that he

should tell everyone. This was unlike anyone during the time, since people of the time were punished for their beliefs, but Milton wanted to let everyone know how he felt about his faith. According to Myron Taylor, Milton was one of the first poets or writers to start expressing his freedom of speech and religion in the early days, when this type of freedom was unheard of (Taylor, 2). Milton felt so strong about his faith that he thought that it was worth every bit of his life to let everyone know how he felt. Milton was not too lazy to make his long poem rhyme: this was an artistic choice and even a political statement. The publisher was confused why he did not use rhyme, so Milton wrote an introduction saying that good poetry doesn't have to, since rhyme is nothing 'but the invention of a barbarous age'.

Paradise Lost begins with a prologue by Milton which states his purpose and an epic description of Satan who is depicted on his back with the other rebellious angels chained to the lake of fire. *Genesis* starts out saying "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, And God said, Let there be light and there was light and God separated the light from the dark" (*Genesis*).

About the birth of Man and Woman, the *Book of Genesis* says, "Then Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living creature. And the Lord God planted a Garden of Eden, in the east and there he had put the man he had formed, the tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." (*Genesis*) Milton's version of the birth of Adam in *Paradise Lost* is somewhat similar to the *Book of Genesis*, "The first human created by God from the dust of earth, who was created by God after the angels who rebelled were defeated." Similar in birth but *Genesis* did not mention much about the war between God and the angel nor a timeline of when the first man came to be. It was kind of like there was earth and now

there is man in Genesis. In *Paradise Lost* it gave the back story of the war in Heaven and why God created man.

As for the second birth, examine the birth of Eve in the two books and the birth of Sin. It is an interesting fact that these are two women— one full human being and the other half human – half serpent. In the *Book of Genesis*, God caused sleep to fall upon man, and while sleeping, he took one of Adam’s ribs and made it into a woman and brought her to man, who later named her Eve. Her name is Eve because she was the mother of all ‘living’. In *Paradise Lost*, Eve is created from Adam’s rib as his helper to maintain the Garden of Eden. Before the Fall, Eve was created to serve man. But Sin was created to help destroy man. Eve was presented as submissive to Adam and to an extent dependent on him. Their births are both from the body of who they are serving and yet both books go into depth about only one of how they came to be; Eve from the *Book of Genesis* and Sin from *Paradise Lost*—light vs dark. Milton adds a lot of imagery to the relationship between Sin and Satan, which ultimately ends with the incestuous birth of Death. But Adam and Eve offspring, Cain and Abel, do not come until after the Fall of man and they are barely mentioned in *Paradise Lost*.

Chapter 2

A Yes or No Test

No fiction can ever be a hundred percentage precise, if it could, that would have been exasperating fact-book, then the aesthetes, art-lovers, bibliomaniacs, art-vultures who would die for romance, ones with uncontrollable passion and extreme obsession of poesy would throw the paperbacks away. Bards, verse-makers, rhymesters, ballad-mongers, lyricist would go jobless on earth. Gayle Forman states every fiction has its base in fact and Stephen King views fiction is a truth inside a lie, Albert Camus says fiction is a lie through which we tell a truth. Why covering the nakedness of truth by the rich clothes of falsehood? Perhaps it is more welcomed by the world, less criticized, great deal, wonderful space in the galaxy of literature.

In *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective*, Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen defend a no-truth theory of Literature and argue that the concepts of truth, knowledge and all insight play an ineliminable role in accounting of literature value. It is Chinese Novelist, Nobel laureate Gao Xingjian a coward writer who needs a face-mask and need to be disguised to tell the truth that he states “It is literature that true life can be found. It's under the mask of fiction that you can tell truth”? Because “Fiction is lies. There is the Great Lie, the simple fact that the story is a story and not reportage. Fiction writers, therefore, are liars -- and they have to be good ones.” (George Scithers & Darrel Schweitzer, 1988).

Love and marriage being major substance in *Pride and Prejudice*, it is properly understood that it is book of fabrications establishing a particular idea and perception. Specifically, the work emphasize on the distinctive ways love may grow or disappear, and whether or not society has expanse for romantic love and marriage

to go together. The movie has other differences than just the dialogue. In the movie, Elizabeth keeps secrets from her family and grows apart from her older sister Jane. This is different from the book, while Elizabeth does become frustrated with events related to her family, she never keeps secrets from them. Jane Eyre, the movie starts with the climax of the story and then gives us flashbacks into how she ended up in that position. However, it was a better decision since she relives her entire life for that family when you are 86 percent through the novel. Providing us with flashbacks was a much better way to tell the story. The prime variance between books and motion pictures is the extent of time each has for to tell the story. A movie has a strict time frame of 1.5 to 3 hours whereas the time frame for a book is limitless. An author has to make a strong, one-of-a-kind, powerful book in order for it to have a chance.

The *Harry Potter* books, by controversial author J.K. Rowling, include details that never made it to the movies. Many scenes and characters have been shortened or cut, and there are some moments that were integral to the story that were not shown on screen at all. Here are some details from the *Harry Potter* books that were left out of the movies. Harry's first visit from Hagrid in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, during which he learns that he's a wizard, occurs on his birthday, July 31. In the film, the two make their way to Diagon Alley the next day to buy school supplies before Hagrid takes Harry to King's Cross station to catch the Hogwarts Express. In the book, however, Harry has to go back to the Dursleys for the remainder of the summer. Vernon actually takes him to the station on September 1, which is when the train departs for Hogwarts. Based solely on what we see in the film, Harry gets to Hogwarts a month early. Going forward, in almost every movie the opening chapters of the corresponding book are condensed to get Harry to Hogwarts faster, making his long summers on Privet Drive seem brief.

Researchers who have investigated the public understanding of science have argued that fictional cinema and television has proven to be particularly effective at blurring the distinction between fact and fiction. The rationale for this study lies in the notion that to teach science effectively, educators need to understand how popular culture influences their students' perception and understanding of science. Using naturalistic research methods in a diverse middle school we found that students who watched a popular science fiction film, *The Core*, had a number of misunderstandings of earth science concepts when compared to students who did not watch the movie. We found that a single viewing of a science fiction film can negatively impact student ideas regarding scientific phenomena. Specifically, we found that the film leveraged the scientific authority of the main character, coupled with scientifically correct explanations of some basic earth science, to create a series of plausible, albeit unscientific, ideas that made sense to students.

The science education historian George DeBoer identified nine major goals of science teaching that would advance the development of a scientifically literate citizenry. He noted that one of the major aspects of scientific literacy was the ability to understand reports and discussions of science that appear in the popular media (DeBoer, 2000, p. 592). Unfortunately, as implied in the quote that starts this paper, for the average citizen, it is becoming more and more difficult to distinguish fact from fiction in an increasing visual society. According to the National Science Foundation (2000) the blurring of fact and fiction by visual media has corroded the public's critical thinking skills and has hindered the development of a scientific literate citizenry. This concern was further expounded upon by Helga Nowotny (2005), the chairwoman of the European Research Advisory Board, in which she noted that the past few years has seen an increasing proliferation of images and symbols via hi-tech-

driven media entertainment that is deliberately designed and intended to meet the public imagination about science, but all too often creates misunderstandings regarding the nature of science and leads to a blurring between fact and fiction.

Researchers who have investigated the public understanding of science have argued that fictional cinema and television is particularly effective at blurring the distinction between fact and fiction (*Frank, 2003*). This blurring is especially evident for natural phenomena that have never actually been directly witnessed (e.g., dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park*). For example, *Black (2002)* has argued that film needs to be recognized as a literalist medium whose nature is to make things explicit and present objects or phenomena in ways that are evidentiary based which not only reflect reality but appear to be realistic. What constitutes a realistic image has proven to be one of great debate to film scholars, however, and *Prince (1996)* has suggested that in visual media, there are two standards of reality, referentially real or perceptually real. These two standards can be used to describe any filmed image, and they characterize the audience's relationship to that image.

A scene in a film is 'referentially' either real or unreal—that is, it depicts events that actually occur or exist, or ones that are imagined (*Kirby, 2003a*). The same scene is also either 'perceptually' real or unreal, meaning that it appears to be real or appears to be a fantasy (or to lack significant real-world elements). A perceptually realistic image is one that structurally corresponds to the viewer's audio-visual experience of three-dimensional space. Such images display a set of cues that organize the display of light, colour, texture, movement, and sound in ways that correspond with the viewer's own understanding of these phenomena in daily life. Further, the images are also usually supported by reasonable sounding dialogue that attempts to explain the images on the screen. Because of this, unreal images may be

referentially fictional but perceptually realistic. The important point here is that filmmakers design images, even unreal images, to correspond to 'cues' with which viewers normally interact. Familiarity with these cues compels the audience to perceive unreal images as realistic.

Chapter 3

Gospel of Underlying Lies

Self-serving falsehoods are regularly presented as facts, while more reliable information is denigrated as ‘fake news’. The truth is that ‘truth’ has always been a contested idea, corresponds Salman Rushdie to the situation.

What is read more: history or historical fiction? Certainly, historical fiction. What is more thrilling: science or science fiction? Definitely science fiction. When history seems complex, if it appears incomplete and when truth becomes intricate to accept it as truth, concoction takes the ground. Today science fiction is more advance than science often leading to science following scientific fictional minds. American industrial designer Syd Mead called science fiction reality ahead of schedule.

Is fiction a muscular weapon for propaganda? Soviet leader Joseph Stalin once described writers as ‘the engineers of the human soul’. ‘The production of souls is more important than the production of tanks,’ he claimed. Stalin clearly believed that literature was a powerful political tool—and he was willing to execute writers whose works were deemed traitorous to the Soviet Union.

Stalin's sentiments regarding literature may seem like the deranged delusions of a dictator. But consider a similar Cold War-era comment by the CIA’s then-chief of covert action: “Books differ from all other propaganda media primarily because one single book can significantly change the reader’s attitude and action to an extent unmatched by the impact of any other single medium.” He also used a military metaphor for culture, calling books “the most important weapon of strategic propaganda.”

Despite the shared rhetoric, the CIA did not use Soviet tactics to neutralize writers deemed threats. But the American government, and the CIA in particular, has long been keenly interested in using literature to promote American ideologies and undermine communism abroad.

Probably the best case study of the CIA's foray into literary culture is the story of Boris Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*. Some relevant CIA documents were recently declassified and received a good deal of media attention last month, but the subject is more comprehensively treated in Peter Finn and Petra Couvée's fascinating new book *The Zhivago Affair: The Kremlin, the CIA, and the Battle Over a Forbidden Book*. Told in its entirety, the story of how *Doctor Zhivago* helped disrupt the Soviet Union holds some intriguing implications for the present and future of cultural conflict.

Michael Bolan is an Irishman based in Prague who writes historical fiction with a strong fantasy element. He is the author of *The Devil's Bible* series. It is an adventure set in the mid-17th century in Central Europe with a good dash of weirdness derived from the religious and superstitious beliefs of the time. Michael's topic today is propaganda — a topic all of us should consider when reading or writing historical fiction. Here's Michael to tell us all about it.

Historical fantasy recently, or more exactly, alternative history. The way that some authors use a historical framework as the skeleton of their story, but then flesh out the final version with dazzling details that might, or might not, have happened.

Why let the truth get in the way of a good story? Churchill despaired at people's naiveté, and their unquestioning belief in the media's "lies, damn lies, and statistics", but he was being unfair on the masses. After all, when two different, but

equally credible, media tell you that opposing statements are true, how can an average person be expected to make a rational decision? And so, politics is relegated to the realms of reality TV, allowing demagogues to rise to power on the populist vote.

‘Welcome to a world where propaganda is a king’. Propaganda, as an official and recognized tool of brainwashing the masses, had been around for a long time, but mistakenly assumed its birth was in the darkness of the World Wars. It turns out that propaganda, was something that the characters in the *Devil’s Bible* series would already have been familiar with. And it was not created by politicians, or by the ruling houses, but by the Church.

In 1622, Pope Gregory XV founded a new college to train missionaries who were to be sent, not to the New World, but to Protestant Northern Europe, in an attempt to stem the tide of anti-Catholic sentiment sweeping the continent. It is commonly accepted that the Pope’s intention was simply to spread the word, propaganda fide means propagating the faith and had nothing to do with deceit. Historians often suggest that the term was a neutral one, with no sense of what we nowadays call ‘spin’, that is making rational decisions harder by sharing biased information.

In a world where only a minority could read, and where only a minority of those had access to current information, creating an army of missionaries who would spread the word according to your beliefs would offer almost unlimited power over the will of the masses. It would be like Donald Trump owning and managing all the TV and radio stations in existence. Or like his friend Vladimir Putin, who does in fact control the media in Russia. And power corrupts. So, while Gregory might have simply thought he was spreading the faith, he was in fact doing much more.

The *Devil's Bible Series* is set at the end of the Thirty Years War, a conflict which started because of religion, but finished because of power, and the Church was not immune to the mortal manifestations of political might. Not content with a virtual monopoly on the afterlife, the Catholic Church wanted material wealth and influence, so it used all available tools to ensure its earthly goals.

The war was the first of its kind, insofar as it was a perfect example of media propaganda. Only a few years previously, advances in printing technology had allowed for the production of the world's first newspapers, and the establishment of regular postal services enabled their distribution. While those that could read were still in the minority, their numbers were increasing, and they enjoyed great influence with the common folk. Moreover, copperplate printing allowed for vivid images to be reproduced, a picture tells a thousand words especially for the illiterate. Politicians and religious leaders no longer needed to rely on fellow man to distribute the word. In the first half of the 17th century, most countries went so far as to implement censorship laws to try and prevent unfavourable stories being shared.

So even though he might have had good intentions, Pope Gregory's vehicle was copied, improved So on and used to spread disinformation. The result? Within years, all sides of the war had been rocked by conflicts entirely made up in the press, stories of confidential letters seized on the battlefield, strangely akin to Wikileaks' current revelations. On both sides, the ruling classes began to employ intellectuals to respond to their enemies' propaganda and to create their own. They were aware of the relationship between controlling their populace and being able to act outside their borders, something which remains unchanged over the past four centuries. For the duration of the war, increasingly elaborate stories were traded, and eagerly devoured, with devastating effect. For example, England spent the 1620s arming itself against a

planned invasion which had supposedly been leaked by the Spanish Council of State. The leak was false, but it kept England out of a continental war.

So, when you open your newspaper tomorrow, think of the elaborate lies that were traded four centuries ago during the Thirty Years War, and think about the one aspect of propaganda that has changed. Time was when the creator of the misinformation had to share it somehow, be that via word-of-mouth or via formalized media. Nowadays, people are often like the sheep in *Animal Farm*, they do their masters' bidding when spreading falsehoods willingly, simply because want voices to be heard.

The Stone Bridge: Book III of the Devil's Bible Series by Michael Bolan. The Rapture continues to wreak havoc across Europe in its quest to acquire the elemental Seals, the only thing preventing the Devil's Bible from purging the world in fire. Brought to Prague by the Fianna, the Seals' only protection lies in the secrecy that shrouds them. Reinald, leader of the Rapture, enlists the world's greatest minds freeing the Devil's Bible from the depths of Prague Castle, where it has languished under lock and key for centuries. Meanwhile, the plans of the Four Horsemen unfold, wreaking havoc and misery across the entire continent. Not content with forcing his siblings from their ancestral home, Reinald sends a vast army to harry and persecute them, forcing them to flee ever eastwards. Taking shelter with their friends, Willem, Leo and Isabella commit to one last act of bravery, making a final stand to defend the city of Prague.

As each nation commits its final resources into the conflict, all roads lead to the Stone Bridge that divides Prague, where the Sons of Brabant and their Fianna allies will face the ultimate test of their strength.

In *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, the World State does not hide its use of propaganda and the society leaders do not hide the fact that propaganda is used to condition people to believe they are happy with whatever lot they are dealt in life. How the World State uses propaganda to condition and control the citizens of their society?

An entire government office is dedicated to the promotion of propaganda, or marketing of the views of the World State to its citizens. The Bureau of Propaganda shares a building with the College of Emotional Engineering, Synthetic Voice and Music, and all journalism offices, including radio, television, and newspaper. Each caste, except Epsilons who can't read, retains their own newspaper to deliver specific propaganda to its citizens. 'Above were the search laboratories and the padded rooms in which Sound-Track Writers and Synthetic Composers did the delicate work.' Keeping everything together ensures that Propaganda and Advertisement, 'to be precise. By creating his own propaganda and inciting feelings of loneliness, he felt when he wrote it, he was reprimanded and threatened. All propaganda must be approved through the appropriate authority.

Conclusion

If there were an ethical code of conduct in writing, would fiction be abandoned or not? The first principle of the medical doctor's Hippocratic oath is: above all, do no harm. And that applies to the fiction writer, too, presuming his subject is worthy of such caution. In fact, most book contracts from major publishers require a guarantee from the author that the prospective manuscript's contents will not cause injury.

In the preface to *A Moveable Feast* Ernest Hemingway remarks: "If the reader prefers, this book may be regarded as fiction. But there is always the chance that such a book of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact." A note to the text on the following page explains that the book 'concerns the years 1921 to 1926 in Paris', that is, to be more precise, Hemingway's years in Paris. And, indeed, the first-person narrator of the text is Hemingway. However, when we browse through the pages it looks exactly like a novel or a collection of his short stories. So, what is *A Moveable Feast*? An autobiographical text? A fictional text that is invented along the lines of personal memories? Or, to make things more complicated and as Hemingway suggests, a fiction illuminating facts? The ambiguous status of *A Moveable Feast* concerning its genre plunges us right into the debate about the relationship between fiction and autobiography. This debate deals with the questions whether autobiography should be regarded as fiction or nonfiction, whether it is useful to make a distinction between autobiography and fiction and on what grounds such a distinction can be made.

As Timothy Dow Adams points out, autobiography has traditionally been regarded as nonfiction. This categorization has been motivated by and in turn

supported the view that autobiography is not an invention of its author, but a documentary report of his life and his person. According to Alan Collett ‘documentary report’ means that the reader assumes that report sentences in an autobiography ‘possess a truth value’ that they, in other words, relate to a reality outside the text and that this relationship can be verified or falsified. The reader hopes that everything the author writes about his or her life corresponds to the way things really were, that the account is true. In fact, one of the fascinations of reading an autobiography stems from the reader’s desire to learn something about a real life apart from his own and to see the author as he or she really is apart from the fiction he or she creates. Seen from this point of view autobiography becomes a subgenre of biography. It is a biography whose narrator is identical with its subject, which is more or less what the term ‘auto-biography’ means: a life written by a self.

By using the narrative style of fiction, the autobiographical text ceases to be nonfiction. Kazin points out that it only “assumes the mask of sincerity and only pretends to be the absolute truth” since it is actually “just another way of telling a story. . . And it uses facts as a strategy”. Kazin’s point is important not only for the question whether we should understand Hemingway’s “report” of his early years in Paris as fiction or nonfiction, whether he wants us to read his text as factual or not, but also for a more general discussion of the relationship between autobiography and fiction. The point Kazin makes concerning Hemingway has to be seen in the wider context of the question whether any autobiography should be read as nonfiction.

Often fiction is an armament with an intent to inflict damage. Sometimes fiction is an embryonic plant enclosed in a protective outer covering sown on earth as a kernel for mass destruction, does ignorance being a fine soil for these weapons? As Hawking states, although the popular enemy of knowledge is ignorance, is not the

case, the serious threat to knowledge is 'illusion of knowledge.' Should fiction be forsaken? Those fiction could not be abandoned rather not kept in a library but armoury. Weapons first introduced in science fiction have now been made a reality. Other science fiction weapons remain purely fictional and are often beyond the realms of known physical possibility. Weapons of early science fiction novels were generally bigger and higher versions of traditional weapons, effectively extra superior strategies of handing over explosives to a target. No fiction can be fifty out of fifty accurate; yes, though a lie, it cannot be forsaken.

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