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A Comparison of Australian and German Literary Journalism

Christine Boven

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

March 2013

School of Communication & Arts

Faculty of Education & Arts

Edith Cowan University

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate and compare the traditions shaping the development of literary journalism in Australia and Germany. Tracing the different historical developments of the form in the two countries provides the contextual basis for an in-depth comparative analysis, which concentrates on the concepts of credibility and authenticity. The thesis explores whether different attitudes to news and opinion in journalism in the two countries influence these notions that are central to literary journalism. However, in the comparative analysis other significant factors become apparent. In four case studies, two from each country, consisting of book-length examples of literary journalism, distinct journalistic and literary criteria are applied to gain insights of how credibility and authenticity are achieved and to what extent this influences the perception of these works. One key finding is that in Germany the main instrument to achieve authenticity and credibility is eyewitness reporting in the strict sense of the word, that is, the writer experienced what he or she writes about first-hand. Australia, on the other hand, allows more room and greater emphasis for narrative techniques combined with well-researched and verifiable facts. This difference in understanding of authenticity is also supported by the other key finding that diverging media laws and regulations, above all the laws protecting privacy and personality, greatly influence the production and reception of literary journalism in the two countries. For Germany, this means that the scope for the form is far narrower than in the Anglo-American world, to which Australia belongs.

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Signed

Dated

11/3/2013

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1 Introduction

Some time before I embarked on the project of this thesis, I co-authored a paper examining the practice of public obituaries in Australia and Germany, focussing on the differences and the question of what is permissible in each country and what not (Josephi, Müller & Friske, 2006). The comparative study revealed distinct variations between the journalistic practices in Australia and Germany, partly due to media laws and partly due to culture. These findings sparked my interest to pursue this further and this time to explore the field of literary journalism.

At this point, it needs to be mentioned that the form of literary journalism has numerous names. It has been called literary nonfiction, creative nonfiction, or narrative nonfiction, to list but a few. The general idea is clear – it is a form which includes both literary elements and nonfiction or journalistic components. The profusion of names goes along with the absence of one generally accepted definition of it. As the Australian journalist and journalism educator Matthew Ricketson said in an interview on ABC National Radio, “it is actually easier to recognise literary journalism than it is to define it” (May, 2005). His remark underlines the difficulty in grasping the phenomenon of literary journalism – unlike the more uniformly accepted forms of news journalism. Like its component parts, literature and journalism, literary journalism is a construct shaped by differing traditions and expectations.

Most of the research on the practice of literary journalism focuses on the Anglo-American region, where American scholars such as John C. Hartsock and Norman Sims have greatly contributed to its understanding. In Australia, literary journalism is practised, but the form is not nearly as comprehensively researched as in the United States. While the term “literary journalism” is known and used, in Germany the form as such has not been the subject of any in-depth investigation, making the country something of a blank spot on the literary journalism map. Those few German scholars who write about literary journalism mainly derive their definition from American New Journalism and their research concentrates on short-form texts such as feuilletons or reportages in newspapers or magazines. This is also partly in response to the fact that long-form literary journalism does not feature in Germany to the extent that it does in most English-speaking countries.

In my thesis I propose to conduct a comparative analysis of literary journalism, as it is practised in Australia and Germany. Key points are the concepts of credibility, authenticity and verifiability, which are major issues literary journalism has had to

contend with from the very beginning. The question of how truth and credibility, fact and fiction are defined and understood in the two cultures will be investigated in detail.

In Chapter 2 “Literature Review” I will present, compare and contrast the literature and the state of research on literary journalism in the United States, Germany and Australia. In this chapter the different approaches to the topic are examined.

Chapter 3 “Methodology” is focused on giving explanation and theoretical background to the comparative approach chosen for this thesis. Furthermore, my choice of case studies will be explained as well as the set of criteria against which these case studies are to be checked.

In order to trace the different traditions of literary journalism in Australia and Germany, in Chapter 4 “The History of Literary Journalism in Germany”, the historical development of the form will be examined and in Chapter 5 I will look at “The History of Literary Journalism in Australia”. Based on these traditions, definitions of the form in the two countries will be developed and similarities and differences identified.

For Chapters 6 to 9 I will turn to four case studies consisting of two long-form, that is, book-length examples from each country. The Australian works I have selected are Anna Funder’s *Stasiland* (2002) and Helen Garner’s *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* (2004). *Stasiland*, an award-winning book (for example BBC 4 Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction 2004), is set in the former East Germany and based on a series of interviews. It tells the story of ordinary citizens who were caught up in the web of East Germany’s state security, *Staatssicherheit*, known colloquially as the Stasi. *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* is about a murder case and centres on the trial of Joe Cinque’s girlfriend Anu Singh who killed him in 1997.

The German examples are *Aktenkundig* (1992), and Günter Wallraff’s *Der Aufmacher* [Lead Story] (1977). *Aktenkundig* is a collection of reminiscences by prominent GDR dissidents about their dealings and sufferings under the former East German state security, the Stasi. The book has been edited by Hans-Joachim Schädlich, himself a prominent victim of the Stasi. Günter Wallraff is one of Germany’s best-known investigative reporters and *Der Aufmacher* is the account of his undercover investigation of Germany’s most widely read tabloid *Bild*, whose editors and journalists tend to sacrifice truth to sensationalism.

These books will be examined according to the set of criteria outlined in Chapter 3, which help to identify and highlight the differences of understanding of the form in the two countries. In my “Conclusion” in Chapter 10 I will try to explain the reasons for these divergences so as to arrive at clearer definitions of the concepts of literary

journalism in Australia and Germany. The findings can not only further an understanding of the cultural differences between the two countries but also result in a set of parameters that can add to, enrich or even alter the discussion about the characteristics of literary journalism.

2 Literature Review

The following chapter gives a review of the literature and the state of research into literary journalism in the United States, Germany and Australia. The division into three parts was chosen to underline the differences in approach by Anglo-American and Australian scholars compared to their German counterparts.

2.1 USA

It is impossible to investigate and compare the definitions, traditions of and differences in literary journalism in Germany and Australia without considering the groundbreaking work done by American scholars in the field, such as John Hartsock, Norman Sims and others. The most acknowledged form of literary journalism, “New Journalism”, originates from the USA, and the same can be said for research into the roots and the history of literary journalism. However, studies into literary journalism are by no means purely an American phenomenon. None the less compared to Germany and Australia, where the history of the form of literary journalism has so far been investigated only to a limited degree, the American scholarly research offers a wider range of approaches to be drawn from.

John C. Hartsock’s *A History of American Literary Journalism. The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (2000) explores the historical development of literary journalism in the USA, and wants to show that “the roots of literary journalism extend back at least to the classical period in the Western tradition” (Hartsock, 2000, p. x). He has chosen a theoretical approach to the subject because, as he claims, “history is highly theoretical and subjective” (Hartsock, 2000, p. ix). Thus, he approaches the topic from what he calls the “old” New Criticism angle as well as from a post-structural and postmodern critical point of view (Hartsock, 2000, p. x).

There are three main steps, which are important in Hartsock’s analysis. First of all, he tries to come to grips with the terminology, that is, whether to call literary journalism form or genre. Hartsock decides for the former. In this, he is in agreement with Thomas B. Connery, who by using “form” instead of “genre” acknowledges that the understanding as to what literary journalism is, is “still very much emerging” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 1; Connery, 1990, p. 3). Hartsock proceeds to analyse the different approaches, definitions, and terminologies, and explains his own choice to call the form

“narrative literary journalism”. This clear definition is important for the second issue Hartsock takes on, that is, differentiating literary journalism from other nonfiction forms and defining the periods when the form was most prominent. In this context, I would like to point out that I am following Hartsock and thus the term form will be used in this thesis except where ‘genre’ is used in direct quotes. The third issue Hartsock critically evaluates at length is what he calls the “critical marginalization of American literary journalism” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 204) and in doing so, he reviews the limited scholarship on the historical roots of the form.

It is important to note that, unlike many other literary journalism scholars, Hartsock looks at texts rather than authors. This approach presumably stems from Hartsock’s belief that “the [fact that] New Criticism sought the meaning of a literary work in itself ... could not bode well for a discourse like narrative literary journalism, which openly acknowledged its phenomenological origins, or its means of production” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 187). At the same time, looking at texts rather than authors also facilitates the distinction of narrative literary journalism from other nonfiction forms, as there are, for example, the “discursive essay, muckraking, and sensational journalism” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 2). As a result, Hartsock comes very much closer to presenting a clear and, above all, differentiated definition of the form than most of his fellow researchers.

There are many terms for what is most widely known as literary journalism. Hartsock lists “literary nonfiction, art-journalism, nonfiction novel, essay-fiction, factual fiction, journalist ... journalistic nonfiction ... nonfiction reportage, ... [and] New Journalism” (Weber cited in Hartsock, 2000, p. 4). The list is based on Ronald Weber’s book *The Literature of Fact: Literary Nonfiction in American Writing*, published in 1980. This plethora of terms shows that it is difficult to place the form, which combines fiction and fact.

To make his viewpoint and choice of terminology clear, Hartsock embarks on a discussion that shows, as the list above indicates, that research on the topic is greatly fragmented. To make matters easier, however, Hartsock selects the two most widely used terms, “literary journalism” and “literary nonfiction” for his analysis. The logical distinction he arrives at is that the former is adopted and used by journalism scholars such as Thomas B. Connery and Norman Sims, and that the latter is chosen by scholars engaged in literary studies.

Another point Hartsock makes is that the journalistic approach is far more limited than the literary one. He once again mentions Connery, who has presented a

narrow view on who actually practices literary journalism, and which kinds of texts are to be considered literary journalism (Hartsock, 2000, p. 9). The inclusion criterion for Connery, and also for Hartsock, is the professional practice of journalism (ibid.).

Literary scholars tend to include far more writings, such as personal essays and nature meditation (ibid.). As far as Hartsock is concerned, the undefined state of the form has greatly contributed to the fact that it “has received so little acknowledgement by the academy” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 10).

He himself, as mentioned above, has chosen the term “narrative literary journalism.” The form, he argues, is narrative and not discursive (“narrative”), uses techniques common in realistic novels and short stories (“literary”), and is practised by writers who were or are professional journalists (“journalism”) (Hartsock, 2000, p. 12).

Historically, Hartsock places the “coming of age” of literary journalism in the 1890s, the post-Civil-War period (Hartsock, 2000, p. 23). Here, he largely draws on Thomas B. Connery. According to Hartsock, Connery’s chapter ‘A Third Way to Tell the Story: American Literary Journalism at the Turn of the Century’, “establishes much of the origins of literary journalism as a modern practice in the United States (Sims, 1990b, p. ix). For Connery the writer Stephen Crane, the journalist Hutchins Hapgood, and the newspaper editor Lincoln Steffens, all attempted what he calls “producing this third way of ordering reality” (Connery, 1990, pp. 6-7).

Hartsock contends that the convergence of three factors contributed to the development of the form: the adoption of techniques also used in realistic fiction writing, such as dialogue, scene construction, concrete detail, and showing activity; a new critical awareness that the form could be literary; and, last but not least, the fact that the form was practised by writers who had been working as professional journalist writing for newspapers and magazines (Hartsock, 2000, p. 23). One crucial point in this context, according to Hartsock, was that “narrative literary journalists sought more honest interpretations of the phenomenal world that challenged safe critical assumptions” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 42).

He goes on to state that the main ambition of narrative literary journalism has been to “narrow the gulf between object and subject, not to widen it” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 59). He takes this as an explanation for the fact that “the form has been associated with Populist and Progressive causes” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 78). Hartsock makes the important point that narrative literary journalism did not develop in a historical vacuum, but that in the three periods he identifies as the major ones for literary journalism, that is, the 1890s, the 1930s, and the 1960s when the New Journalism emerged, the form

“developed in response to significant social and cultural transformation and crisis” (Hartsock, 2000, pp. 191-192). Hartsock sees this in stark contrast to mainstream journalism, which “objectifying in nature, failed to adequately account for and make meaning out of the transformations and crises” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 193). According to Hartsock, New Journalism offered nothing new, but was “part of a form long practiced” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 202). The “common thread” that connected New Journalism to earlier forms of narrative literary journalism was the “writers’ subjectivity and the motivation to narrow the distance between subject and object” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 198). Thus the New Journalism is a continuation of an existing form. Hartsock concedes that “scholars would begin to take the New Journalism seriously when Gay Talese, Truman Capote, Joan Didion and a host of others appeared in the 1960s” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 202). This attention, however, did not extend to narrative literary journalism as a form, which had been “marginalized as a literature and a journalism” for a long time (Hartsock, 2000, p. 203).

One other important point in Hartsock’s analysis, which needs to be looked at in more detail, is what he has called the “critical condescension to narrative literary journalism” and a “privileging [of] the traditional fictional novel over the new journalism” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 204). One might be led to believe that this is due to the seeming superiority literature claims over journalism, but Hartsock claims that both the literary and the journalism communities have been “ambivalent or hostile toward the form” (ibid.). He argues that the aims of the two “factions” have been similar in that they both seek to “construct a critical hegemony that had the effect of excluding a narrative literary journalism as a discourse to be taken seriously” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 205).

There was a shift in literary studies from ordinary to “high literature”, which would exclude literary journalism and what Hartsock describes as a “new consciousness after the Civil War as to what could be considered ‘literature’” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 244). This, in combination with other factors, led to a “marginalization” of journalism in general, be it the “objectified version or the narrative literary version” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 207). At the same time, journalism became more and more objectivity-oriented and rejected the narrative form.

As Hartsock describes it, this attitude was revised to some extent in the 1930s when Edwin H. Ford claimed everyday journalistic work could “result in a narrative literary journalism” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 241). In connection to the issue of journalistic subjectivity, Ford uses the term “reportage” when he notes that the literary journalist’s

job “is to make people ... feel through their senses ... in his attempt to create an emotional tone. ... Reportage, then, may be defined as the presentation of a particular fact or facts, a specific event, a setting that aids the reader to experience those facts or that event. Reportage becomes literary journalism when a John Dos Passos writes ‘Anacostia Flats’” (Ford cited in Hartsock, 2000, p. 242).

The last part of this quote once again points to the significance the literary abilities of authors play in creating narrative journalism pieces. It is therefore not surprising that many scholars of literary journalism, such as Doug Underwood, base their discussions of the subject matter on a choice of well-known writers who worked in both journalism and literature to argue the point that through these writers journalism has made great contributions to literature (see Underwood, 2008).

In summary, Hartsock contends that there has been a long tradition of “narrative literary journalism” as a form, which emerged in the post-Civil-War period and gained recognition by the 1890s. Hartsock suggests that American narrative literary journalism was a response to the alienation felt by readers. Literary journalism “attempted to engage readers’ subjectivities by means of the journalist’s own subjectivity” by narrowing “the gulf between subjectivity and the object” (Hartsock, 2000, pp. 246-247).

According to Hartsock, historical research of this form ended in the 1960s with the advent of the New Journalism, partly because “it is more difficult to assess what is ‘literary’ among contemporary writers” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 246). The lack of research and consideration of literary journalism is largely due to what Hartsock calls “the critical straitjackets donned by practitioners and academicians in both camps” (Hartsock, 2000, p. 249).

Norman Sims edited two books on literary journalism, *Literary Journalism - A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (1995) and *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* (1990). In the latter volume, the focus is not on defining the form or discussing objectivity and reality, but on how literary journalism presents itself. As Sims states, “in this book, we tend to examine authors and their work rather than attempting to settle the matter of definition” (Sims, 1990b, p. xvii). His contribution to the collection is on Joseph Mitchell and *The New Yorker* Nonfiction Writers (Sims, 1990c, pp. 82-109).

In the introduction to *Literary Journalism - A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (1995) he gives his definition of literary journalism: “immersion reporting, narrative techniques that free the voice of the writer, and high standards of

accuracy” (Sims, 1995, p. 3). Since the book is a collection of nonfiction, the topic is approached from the textual level. In the introduction, Sims uses articles in the book as well as the authors to structure his text. The collection covers the works of several generations of literary journalists. There are samples from the 1950s (Joseph Mitchell), 1960s (John McPhee, Jane Kramer), 1970s and 80s (Tracy Kidder, Mark Singer, Mark Kramer, Joseph Nocera), and what Sims, writing in the 90s, calls “new arrivals” (Ted Conover, Susan Orlean, Richard Preston, Brent Staples, David Quammen, Adrien Nicole LeBlanc). As far as Sims is concerned, these contemporary writers “continue to develop a form of writing that reaches back not just four or five generations, but all the way to Daniel Defoe’s writing in the early 1700s” (Sims, 1995, p. 4).

One way to compare journalism and literary journalism is to look at their topics. Sims concedes that while journalism “seems preoccupied with celebrities”, the latter is focused on “everyday events that bring out the hidden patterns of community life as tellingly as the spectacular stories that make the newspaper headlines” (Sims, 1995, p. 3).

He wants to show that all those writers’ works, as different as their perspectives, styles and “voices” may be, share some of the same elements. Here Sims differentiates between “outward characteristics of literary journalism”, as there are “immersion reporting, accuracy, symbolic representation, complicated structures, and voice”, and the authors’ “inner processes of creativity” (Sims, 1995, p. 5).

According to Sims, in 1984 the practitioners of literary journalism added some characteristics to Tom Wolfe’s 1970s criteria vital to New Journalism, that is, scene-by-scene construction, saturation reporting, third-person point of view, and a detailing of the status lives of the subjects (Sims, 1995, p. 9), and included “immersion reporting, accuracy, voice, structure, responsibility, and symbolic representation” (ibid.). Since literary journalism, as Sims sees it, is a form that is still developing, more and more criteria are added on an ongoing basis, for example “personal involvement with their material, and an artistic creativity not often associated with nonfiction” (ibid.).

To underpin this argument, he quotes Richard Todd who claimed that “voice and story are the only tools”, and goes on to explain that “*Story* includes all the narrative techniques, as well as the intellectual substance of a tale. *Voice*, a distinguishing literary mark, advances the feeling of something created, sculpted, authored by a particular spirit” (ibid.). This means that while literary journalists use the journalistic tools of research strategy, features such as “voice, characterization, and symbolic representation, reflect their creativity” (ibid.).

Sims's collection shows that there are many fields and topics covered by literary journalism, some of which would not seem to lend themselves to the present purpose, such as business and natural science. The difference from journalism is that the authors use techniques similar to those of fiction writers, without, however, inventing anything. In both fiction and nonfiction, Sims contends, writers have "problems in portraying characters and revealing inner experiences" and there is a big controversy when it comes to the "overlapping characteristics between the two forms [journalism and literary journalism]" (Sims, 1995, p. 11). Sims argues, however, that the overlapping characteristics do not necessarily have to be negative and as examples he lists the "the shared methods of history writing and literary journalism [which] can be seen in the Pulitzer Prize-winning books" such as the "overlap between memoir and literary journalism ... in Annie Dillard's *An American Life*" (Sims, 1995, p. 12). Some use memoir, some write a nonfiction piece, which has parallels in the novel, some overlap with science writing, or biography. Some others share ethnographic research techniques, others border on travel writing. The latter lends itself to narrative techniques or as Ted Conover put it "invites narrative, everyday interactions, and the voice of a guide" (Sims, 1995, p. 14). When it comes to topics covered by literary journalists, Sims states that they "share a goal of bearing witness, and a certainty that there is more to common life than just politics" (Sims, 1995, p.13). To sum up this section, Sims quotes Mark Kramer, who stated that "The point of literary journalism is to cross fields, to marry, to rejoin our compartmentalized modern experience" (Sims, 1995, pp. 11-12).

Another important feature of literary journalism mentioned by Sims is the concept of "participant observation." Ted Conover, quoted by Sims, calls it the anthropological method,

which is the way I [Conover] prefer to pursue journalism. It means a reliance not on the interview so much as on the shared experience with somebody ... the idea that I could learn about different people and different aspects of the world by placing myself in situations, and thereby see more than you ever could by just doing an interview. (Sims, 1995, p. 13)

According to John McPhee, who wrote for the *New Yorker*, "participation is a way of finding a narrative ... something more interesting to report than a *Playboy* interview" (Sims, 1995, p. 13). He "recognized the power and the possibilities in nonfiction for narrative, dialogue, character sketching, metaphor. He learned to take trips with his subjects, rather than interviewing them, while seeking the matrix of a narrative" (Sims, 1995, p. 17).

While Sims stresses the importance of narrative in literary journalism, he concedes that the form “requires a difficult and tedious method of reporting” (Sims, 1995, p. 18) since literary journalists cannot “alter the raw material as a novelist might” (Sims, 1995, p. 17). To him it is the combination of “personal engagement with perspectives from sociology and anthropology, memoir writing, fiction, history and standard reporting” (Sims, 1995, p. 19) that accounts for the liveliness of the form and which places it very close to fiction.

In summary, Sims sees literary journalists as “boundary crossers in search of a deeper perspective on our lives and times” (Sims, 1995, p. 19). In German research into the form, the term *Grenzgänger*¹ [boundary crosser] is widely used when it comes to describing literary journalists. However, unlike Sims, the German researchers mean authors who have worked in both literature and journalism. It seems that Sims’s definition comes much closer to the nature of what literary journalists try to do.

In his introduction to the book *Literary Journalism - A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction*, which he co-edited with Norman Sims, Mark Kramer looks at literary journalism from a practitioner’s point of view. He titles this introduction ‘Breakable Rules for Literary Journalist’ and starts with a short discussion of the term “literary journalism”. To him literary journalism is the current term to describe what used to be the New Journalism, and the type of text this label is given to is “extended digressive narrative nonfiction” (Kramer, 1995, p. 21). He goes on to say that the term is “dull” and “roughly accurate”, because “the paired words cancel each other’s voices and describe the sort of nonfiction in which arts of style and narrative construction long associated with fiction help pierce to the quick of what’s happening – the essence of journalism” (ibid.). He mentions Daniel Defoe as the first to have written this kind of text, and lists Mark Twain, Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe, and Joan Didion, among others, as writers who have been part of the “movement” and who helped literary journalism’s development into a form (ibid.).

Kramer’s main objective is to come closer to a definition of the form, which he calls “a-know-it-when-you-see-it form” (Kramer, 1995, p. 22), and which has many “cousins”, such as travel writing, memoir, ethnographic and historical essays (ibid.).

¹ All translations of the German are mine except in cases where established translations of, for example, offices or institutions already exist in English.

The result of his studies is a list of “defining traits” which “reflect authors’ common practices” (ibid.). Kramer’s rules are the following:

1. Literary journalists immerse themselves in subjects’ worlds and in background research.
2. Literary journalists work out explicit covenants about accuracy and candour with readers and sources.
3. Literary journalists write mostly about routine events.
4. Literary journalists write in an “intimate voice,” informal, frank, human, and ironic.
5. Style counts and tends to be plain and spare.
6. Literary journalists write from a disengaged and mobile stance, from which they tell stories and also turn and address readers directly.
7. Structure counts, mixing primary narrative with tales and digression to amplify and reframe events.
8. Literary journalists develop meaning by building upon the readers’ sequential reactions.

For Kramer, immersion serves the purpose of comprehending “subjects at a level that Henry James termed ‘felt life’” (Kramer, 1995, p. 23). This process takes time, but he maintains it contributes to the text’s actuality and accuracy.

The second rule is an important one in Kramer’s argument as it deals with ethical concerns, or more precisely, with the writer’s relationship to readers and sources. Kramer compares what he calls “sinful” acts, committed by writers like George Orwell and Truman Capote, to the rules literary journalists try to follow today (Kramer, 1995, pp. 23-24). Orwell and Capote combined or improved scenes, refurbished quotations and used composite characters (Kramer, 1995, p. 23). To Kramer this would not be permissible today, but he concedes that the two authors did not intend to deceive their readers; they were merely experimenting with a new form of writing. Nonetheless, he finds their approach “distracting”, as the reader cannot differentiate between what is real and what is not (Kramer, 1995, p. 24). Since literary journalism has developed into a recognized form, the expectations of readers are different and writers have “come to share a stodgier tacit understanding with readers” (Kramer, 1995, pp. 24-25). For Kramer this means that the writers try “to get reality as straight as they can manage” and

not to “tweak” it for the sake of clearer meaning or better flow of a scene (Kramer, 1995, p. 25). The rules involved in this process are:

No composite scenes, no misstated chronology, no falsification of the discernible drift or proportion of events, no invention of quotes, no attribution of thoughts to sources unless the sources have said they’d had those thoughts, and no unacknowledged deals with subjects involving payment or editorial control. (Kramer, 1995, p. 25)

These rules are rather strict, and have been, for example, challenged by James L. Aucoin. Kramer, however, makes a couple of concessions by allowing chronology to be rearranged, as long as the reader is aware of it, and quoting comments “made elsewhere, or embed secondary scenes or personal memories” (Kramer, 1995, p. 25). If the writer explains what he/she does to the reader, credibility is not in danger and the results are “trustworthy, in-the-know texts” (Kramer, 1995, p. 25).

As one distinct difference of literary journalism from daily news reporting, Kramer has identified the voice and the personality of the writer. He elaborates on this in the fourth rule (see above). According to Kramer, the very features which are deemed “unprofessional and unobjective” by news reporters (Kramer, 1995, p. 28), are the form’s power. He goes on to state that “in most literary journalism, an informal, competent, reflective voice emerges, a voice speaking with knowledgeable assurance about topics, issues, personal subjects ...” (Kramer, 1995, p. 29). It has been argued that this “voice” can undermine reality and that language has to be formal in order to protect “official truths” (ibid.). For Kramer, however, the voice and personality of a writer is a key characteristic of literary journalism and helps “disclose how people and institutions *really* are” (Kramer, 1995, p. 30 – italics in the original).

As far as style and construction are concerned, Kramer concedes in rules five and seven that “clean, lucid, personal language” which is a characteristic of literary journalism, “draws the readers toward experiencing the immediacy of scenes, and the force of ideas” (Kramer, 1995, p. 31). Kramer clearly, while trying to shore up the credibility and verifiability of literary journalism, has to make some concessions towards literary licence.

In his book *Journalism and the Novel - Truth and Fiction, 1700-2000*, Doug Underwood (2008) offers a historical appreciation of literary journalism. He has chosen the most common methodological approach, which is dealing with the subject by examining the work of well-known writers who also wrote as journalists, focusing on the writers and not on their texts. As indicated in the title of his book, his work spans

several centuries, from Daniel Defoe to Joan Didion. It should be noted here that Underwood himself comes from the field of journalism and thus looks at the topic from the journalistic point of view.

Underwood's point of departure is the eighteenth century, a time when "the practitioners of the literary and journalistic forms recognized little distinction between the two" (Underwood, 2008, pp. 2-3). He compares two prominent writers of those times, Daniel Defoe and Henry Fielding to "New Journalist" Tom Wolfe in that all three used journalistic research methods and the narrative techniques of the novel in their works.

In his opinion, too little attention has been paid in research to the "amount of journalistic preparation" done by those who have been operating "on the margins of fact and fiction" (Underwood, 2008, p. 4). Instead the focus in literary studies has been on "writing style, textual interpretation, and aesthetic theories and techniques" (ibid.).

Underwood coins a new expression for writers who have written both journalistic pieces and fiction: he calls them "journalist-literary figures" (Underwood, 2008, p. 13).

Underwood also decides to call the form that is widely known as literary journalism, "journalistic literature", and explains that he chose this term among other things "to avoid definitional disputes" (ibid.). His new terminology includes "writers whose literary vision was influenced by their experiences in journalism and journalistically oriented writing that encompassed fictional novels, fictional short stories, poetry, drama, or forms that blended fictional writing techniques with non-fiction writing" (ibid.).

One of his main arguments in this context is that writers who had journalistic experience have been significantly involved in "a movement that has repeatedly returned to journalistic methodology as the basis for developing realistic plots" (Underwood, 2008, p. 2). The "movement" he is talking about is the English novel.

The question Underwood tries to answer is why journalism has been getting so little credit for "its contribution to the field of literature" (Underwood, 2008, p. 5). Part of his answer is that "conventional" journalism has been too restrictive "with its pretensions to a tell-it-like-it-is view of the world" for those writers who wanted to express his/her "truths" about life (ibid.). This, Underwood proposes, is easier in fiction writing, but another important point he makes in this context is that the prestige and status of a novelist is above that of a journalist, however professional and good s/he may be. The conclusion Underwood draws from this is that being accepted and successful as a writer of fiction seems to be a prerequisite for being taken seriously as a

writer of literary journalism. In this context he also puts forward the notion that journalism is inferior to literature needs to be re-examined.

In order to prove his argument that “journalism has had a significant impact on the literary and fictional tradition” (Underwood, 2008, p. 7), Underwood has selected more than 300 writers – many of whom are only mentioned in the appendix – and in his book focuses on a core group who have worked for newspapers, magazines and periodicals.

For the selection of the authors who in Underwood’s opinion were/are important “journalist-literary figures”, he set up the following list of criteria by which he could classify the historical as well as the contemporary figures:

- writing with a popular audience in mind for some kind of publication or periodical
- writing on general topics, as well as trying to make narrow or specialized issues understandable to regular readers
- writing to a deadline
- dealing with the need for compression, clear communication, and building audience rapport
- editing or owning a publication, or working under editors as a reporter, essayist, columnist or periodical contributor, generally at close hand
- identifying professionally with journalism and thinking of oneself as a journalist or participant in the periodical world
- experiencing the life of a journalist, working in journalists’ company, and imbibing the profession’s values and attitudes
- identifying with the missions of journalism, including the mission of the journalist as a watchdog of institutions, and the role that journalism plays in a democratic society
- wrestling with the writing formulas and/or the demands that journalism in a commercial marketplace imposes on the writer
- working within a network of journalists and journalist-literary figures who influence each other’s work, support and/or feud with each other, share friendships and/or enmities, and share similar values when it comes to writing and their approach to journalism and artistry. (Underwood, 2008, p. 22)

The writers Underwood selects for discussion fit one or more of these criteria. His main focus is on those writing for newspapers, but he also includes “people who wrote principally for magazines in recent times” (Underwood, 2008, p. 22-23). Some of the writers he selected had “newspaper experience, others didn’t, although some spent significant periods as employees or members of a staff of paid writers for magazines or worked as freelance contributors for extensive periods” (ibid.). This is the point where the selection criteria become slightly confusing because many writers fulfil at least one or two of them. Underwood makes it the main inclusion criterion that their work “involved nitty-gritty participation in editorial tasks and exposed them in vivid ways to the culture of journalism” (Underwood, 2008, p. 23). This of course is not the same thing as actually being a journalist, and is far too general, and points more towards a tendency to include as many names as possible instead of selecting the most suitable ones.

One of the challenges Underwood subsequently faces is to determine “when to include a writing figure under the spreading umbrella of the terms “journalism”, “literature”, and “the novel”” (Underwood, 2008, pp. 21-22). While he admits that his research was not “exhaustive” (Underwood, 2008, p. 22), he tries to include as diverse a selection of writers as possible and this leads to a multitude of inclusion criteria. In most cases Underwood uses the consensus of what he calls “the critical community” (Underwood, 2008, p. 23) to evaluate what made a writer’s work worth including. This means that he looks at how literary critics or “the literary establishment” (Underwood, 2008, p. 24) and the public evaluate “what made a writer’s work memorable and qualified it to be seen as a lasting contribution to the culture’s literary heritage” (ibid.). This also includes sales figures, or as Underwood puts it, “the popular marketplace” (ibid.).

This way, Underwood can add to the list crime writers such as Raymond Chandler and Tony Hillerman, the essayists H.L. Mencken and A. J. Liebling, writers of humorous texts, such as Mark Twain, Dorothy Parker, and Evelyn Waugh, as well as reform and radical writers, for example Upton Sinclair and J.B. Priestley, or African-American writers like Richard Wright and Maya Angelou, and feminist writers like Angela Carter and Gloria Steinem. He concedes that this highly inclusive list is there to support his argument “that journalism has had a significant impact upon the literary and fictional tradition” (Underwood, 2008, p. 7). The fact that this “impact” is expressed in numbers, that is, quantitatively rather than qualitatively, has to be seen critically.

The issue of the imprecision of Underwood's selection criteria has been taken up by Frank Harbers (2009) who, in his review of Underwood's book, points out that while his approach has "led to an interesting group of journalistic-literary figures ... it is harder to distinguish what the elements of the text are in which the literary merit lies" (Harbers, 2009, pp. 2-3). Harbers goes on to say that "this can endanger a precise analysis of the ways in which journalism has influenced literature" (Harbers, 2009, p. 3).

In summary, Underwood draws three major conclusions. Firstly, he contends that he proves that "journalists and journalistic values have played critically important roles in the creation of the British and American literary canon" (Underwood, 2008, p.14). Secondly, he hopes to have shown that journalism "deserves more recognition for its contribution to the literary tradition". Thirdly, he has examined the reasons why "journalism's influence upon the fictional and literary writing tradition is not better understood" (ibid.).

However, it has to be emphasized again that Underwood does not look at texts, but at writers' lives and careers and the influence journalism had on them. This way Underwood arguably takes a safe approach in defining literary journalism by primarily relying on the established literary canon as far as his choice of authors is concerned, and then looking at the journalistic influence in the works of these writers and/ or journalistic writing of these authors. However, it is the acknowledged literary value of these authors' output that underpins their status as "journalist-literary figures". This somewhat contradicts Underwood's chosen nomenclature of "journalist-literary figures" and leaves his method within the more customary approach to "literary journalism" of putting literature first and journalism second. This contradiction lies not only at the heart of Underwood's study, but many others, such as Mark Kramer and David Conley, who try to bestow higher status to journalism, and point to the unresolved crux of literary journalism.

James L. Aucoin's article, "Epistemic Responsibility and Narrative Theory. The Literary Journalism of Ryszard Kapuscinski" (2001), takes up the long-standing debate about literary journalism and critically evaluates the attempts to "legitimize the craft within journalism" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 5-6). His focus is on narrative theory and epistemic ethics "to judge literary journalism" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 6) Aucoin looks at the topic from the text and the author level, that is, he concentrates on the style and reporting methods of Polish journalist and writer Ryszard Kapuscinski (1932 – 2008). This choice of author seems unusual considering that the topic is American literary

journalism, but Aucoin's main reason for focusing on Kapuscinski's work is that his style and reporting methods lend themselves to make a contribution to the ongoing debate. Aucoin argues that Kapuscinski's later journalism comprised many of "the controversial issues found ... in the work of better-known American literary journalists" (ibid.).

More precisely, Aucoin refers to the following characteristics of Kapuscinski's work, which are contested when it comes to what is permissible in literary journalism:

- Application of fiction-writing techniques to non-fiction subjects
- Strong personal voice
- Subjective evaluations of events and persons
- Composite characters
- Fabricated scenes
- Direct quotes
- Dialogue
- Internal thought and feelings
- Reporting of undocumented facts

None of these characteristics, he contends, suit scholars who look at literary journalism as a "genre of literature" and thus concentrate on literary criteria such as narrative techniques, nor does it suit those who tend to see literary journalism more as a journalistic form and base their assumptions on the criterion of verifiability (Aucoin, 2001, p. 7). This verifiability comes with narrow rules of 'thou shalt not use', such as those proposed by Kramer: "no composite scenes, no misstated chronology, no falsification of the discernible drift or proportion of events, no invention of quotes, no attribution of thoughts to sources" (Kramer cited in Aucoin, 2001, p. 7). Aucoin finds this insistence on verifiability and accuracy problematic because, among other things, it fails to acknowledge that journalism "constructs a truth that is based on culturally accepted conventions, which, in the case of non-literary journalism often contributes to the reification of those in authority and maintenance of the status quo" (ibid.).

Another important point Aucoin makes in this context is that if verifiability and accuracy are the main criteria to judge literary journalism by, narrative theory, which plays a major role here, cannot be accommodated. He argues that "when narrative theory is applied, the criteria for distinguishing between verifiable literary journalism and fictional literary journalism break down" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 8). Needless to say, the

constraints created by frameworks such as Kramer's will also exclude many writers of literary journalism who deal with real events - one of whom is Ryszard Kapuscinski.

Aucoin, drawing on Connery (1992) states that literary journalism is "printed prose dealing with real, current events" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 6) and goes on to say that literary journalists use techniques normally associated with fiction writing. He also contends that literary journalism "differs from traditional book-length journalism in that the former explores an event as 'meaning', whereas the latter explores it simply as an event" (ibid.).

In order to underpin his argument, Aucoin takes a close look at Richard Kapuscinski's work and style and explains in more detail why frameworks such as Kramer's are too narrow when it comes to defining literary journalism. According to Aucoin, Kapuscinski employs literary techniques common to literary journalists, such as "narrative structure, dialogue, irony, and symbolic representation" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 8). Norman Sims calls these techniques "outward characteristics of literary journalism" (Sims, 1995, p. 5). To Aucoin, however, the defining characteristic of Kapuscinski's style is his use of voice, and he gives examples from Kapuscinski's works *Shah of Shahs* and *The Soccer War*, both translated into English in 1992. Here his persona is always present and the reader sees "the world through his eyes, experience[s] events through his subjectivity" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 10). In this, Kapuscinski's work can be compared to that of Joan Didion and Hunter S. Thompson, whose objective it was to use reporting "as a way of joining writer and reader together in the creation of reality" (Sims cited in Aucoin, 2001, p. 11).

To Aucoin, however, a more important function of Kapuscinski's "personal voice" is that through the presence of the author, credibility is established. Essentially, writing literature – an intensely personal act – rather than writing objective, conventional journalism allows Kapuscinski and other literary journalists to know the world in a different, perhaps more profound, way.

To underpin this argument, Aucoin quotes other scholars, such as J. Ullmann and J. Colbert, who in their book *The Reporter's Handbook: An Investigator's Guide to Documents and Techniques*, say the following:

Using personal voice to establish credibility is a device of the literary journalist. It builds upon the journalistic tradition that considers information from 'primary sources' –original documents, data gathered empirically by the reporter, eye-witness reports – to be of greater value than that gathered from secondary sources – information and evidence provided by third parties, including

government officials and police and other investigative agencies. (Ullmann & Colbert, 1991)

For John Carey “eye-witness evidence ... makes for authenticity. ... Eye-witness accounts have the feel of truth because they are quick, subjective and incomplete, unlike ‘objective’ and reconstituted history” (Carey, 1987, p. xxix). Aucoin contends that Kapuscinski builds and achieves credibility not by accuracy but by showing “readers his reporting process, the difficulties he has gone through to obtain information” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 13). He also “provides clear and certain clues to his ground rules, discusses his actions, reactions, and emotions. His techniques and biases are laid bare before the readers, allowing each to judge his credibility” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 15). Writing about his experiences in the present tense, another stylistic means employed by Kapuscinski, further emphasises the “immediacy of events” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 13) and is reminiscent of the work of the great German-speaking reporter Egon Erwin Kisch.

Coming back to the standards set up by Mark Kramer, Aucoin argues that “any attempt to impose on Kapuscinski the standard of actuality and other standards as outlined by Sims and Kramer (1995) would deny him his right to challenge a monolithic depiction of reality” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 14). To show that Kapuscinski’s style has standards Aucoin draws on narrative theory, which offers the criteria of “verisimilitude, probability (Does the story cohere free of contradictions? Is it credible?), and fidelity (Is the story logical and of sound reasoning? Are the reasons given ‘good reasons’? Is it true to its own values?)” (Aucoin, 2001, pp. 14-15). As far as Aucoin is concerned, the writer “is situated as an independent moral agent, responsible for what he writes, and readers, as independent moral agents, must independently decide whether to believe him” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 15). Thus, the focus is not on the concept of truth, but on credibility, which can be achieved by providing “coherence and verisimilitude” (ibid.), or as L. Code, an epistemologist, puts it: “Being true *to* life differs from truth *of* fact; it is more a looser and a more demanding relation” (Code cited in Aucoin, 2001, p. 15).

In order to show the extent of the “analytical power of [the above] strategy” with regard to “verisimilitude, probability, and fidelity” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 16), Aucoin compares the styles of Kapuscinski and J. McGinniss in their respective works *Shah of Shahs* (Kapuscinski 1992) and *The Last Brother: The Rise and Fall of Teddy Kennedy* (McGinniss 1993). While Kapuscinski writes in the first person and “frequently reminds the reader that he is not in the possession of all the facts (hence his version is flawed” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 16), McGinniss writes in the third person, “with an omniscient narrator” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 17). His book is meant to be a “true-to-life telling of events

and motivations in Teddy Kennedy's life" (ibid.). His literary techniques, such as dialogue and scene-by-scene construction, are complemented by the "naming of sources as evidence" and the recording of "minute details" which all give the "impression of eye-witness accuracy" (ibid.). McGinniss attributes thoughts to Kennedy and tells events through his eyes (ibid.), yet he has never interviewed Kennedy. He justifies this approach by saying that "he had 'immersed' himself in the politician's life – he has the right to leap inside Teddy Kennedy's head" (ibid.). Aucoin suggests that this might lead readers to distrust McGinniss's account.

Kapuscinski, on the other hand, is a "witness who has defied death to find the truth, but ... acknowledges his version is necessarily flawed and incomplete, as any single attempt to establish the truth will be", and uses imaginary scene and dialogue as well as his intuition (Aucoin, 2001, p. 16). To Aucoin, it is not strict adherence to the 'truth', but the distinctiveness of Kapuscinski's voice, which becomes "his badge of authenticity" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 17).

Aucoin's conclusion is that the "narrative and epistemic responsibility theories offer realistic standards" when judging the work of a journalist-cum-writer such as Kapuscinski in that these theories focus on the interaction between writer and reader "as a means for holding journalists responsible for their reports" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 18).

2.2 Australia

In Australia, journalism and literature are seen as closely intertwined, though Australia did not have the wave of New Journalism that credits Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe, and Hunter S. Thompson as the inventors of the new genre (Connery, 1992; Haas, 2004). It also needs to be remembered that the American "New Journalism" was called new to indicate its difference, or even opposition, to the American dictum that journalism needs to be objective (Schudson, 2001). In Australia, ever since Helen Garner published *The First Stone* in 1995, her controversial account of a sexual harassment scandal at Ormond College, literary journalism has gained the public recognition it has in the US (Joseph & Müller, 2007/2008). All the same, literary journalism has so far only intermittently been an area of research. Matthew Ricketson, for example, stated that "The act of re-orienting the critical debate about this area of journalism practice stems from my engagement with the American rather than the Australian scholarly and professional literatures as the latter is considerably less developed than the former" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 64).

Matthew Ricketson is one of the leading researchers of literary journalism in Australia. The fact that he is both a long-standing practitioner of journalism and a scholar and teacher of journalism makes his research, findings, and insights especially valuable. He looks at the form from the journalism perspective and checks “book-length journalism” (Ricketson, 2010a) against the rules of journalistic writing and, most importantly, critically evaluates literary techniques such as narrative voice and interior monologue. His objective is to investigate to what extent using techniques like the above mentioned might create ethical problems for writers.

In his article, “The Vibrant State of Book-length Journalism in Australia”, Matthew Ricketson (2010b) focuses on the “practice of journalistic work at book length” with an emphasis on ethical problems that can arise in works of book-length narrative journalism (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 67). He draws largely on his doctoral thesis titled *Ethical Issues in the Practice of Book-Length Journalism* (Ricketson, 2010a) Ricketson first explains the term “book-length journalism” and why he chose it and, like the US-American scholars John Hartsock and Norman Sims, looks at the different names the form has been given, that is, “literary journalism”, “narrative journalism”, “creative non-fiction” or “reportage”. To Ricketson it is important to state that while there has been extensive research on literary journalism, the “extent to which such journalism is practiced at book-length” has not yet been sufficiently researched (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 68). As far as he is concerned, there is the danger that book-length journalism is too easily “subsumed into ‘non-fiction’, a category that unhelpfully is defined by ‘what it is not’” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 71). The term non-fiction is rather elastic in that it can include books on “cooking and gardening” or “politics, ... true crime ... travel, history and biography” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 71). This categorisation does not always consider journalistic issues such as accuracy and verifiability.

He argues that the two concepts, book-length and journalism seem to exclude each other at first sight, but goes on to say that the practice of journalism need not be limited to newspaper articles and magazine features (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 67). His purpose is not to “set up a new genre” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 68), but to “draw attention to the extent to which this area of writing is practiced in books rather than in newspapers or magazines” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 67). In his opinion, the terminology used by other scholars of the field is too restrictive, as it excludes three key issues: first the extent to which journalism today in Australia and the United States is practised at book length; the ethical issues that arise in this area of practice; and third, the conflation of a narrative approach with notions of literary merit. (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 68)

Using the term “book-length journalism”, Ricketson wants to draw attention to “what the practitioner does rather than have our interpretation limited to their job title” (ibid.). In other words, he focuses on journalistic and especially ethical practice. By distinguishing book-length journalism from “journalism written for newspapers, [and] journalism written for magazines” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 69), Ricketson sees the opportunity to find the similarities and differences between the forms (ibid.).

He proposes a framework of “six main elements of book-length journalism as a way of clarifying the nature and range of a field that straddles the print news media and book publishing” (ibid.). His main purpose is to find criteria by which to investigate the form of book-length journalism and to put it in the context of the approaches offered by other scholars, such as John Hartsock, Norman Sims and Tom Connery. His six elements of book-length journalism are

- the fact that it is about actual events and people living in the world, and that it concerns the issues of the day,
- the extensive research involved in its production,
- the narrative approach that is adopted,
- the range of authorial voices that can be employed,
- the fact that it explores the underlying meaning of an event or issue,
- the impact of book-length journalism on readers (Ricketson, 2010b, pp. 69-70).

A comparison of book-length journalism with newspaper and magazine journalism yields the insight that “the three areas of print media operate along a continuum” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 70). They share the same subject matter and research methods. When it comes to form, Ricketson maintains that the differences are clear. Book-length journalism uses narrative while newspaper and magazine articles are “in expository form” (ibid.). The same goes for the purpose of the two forms; newspaper articles have the function to inform without going into too much depth, while book-length journalism “must be grounded in an overarching argument or a compelling narrative mode, or a blend of the two” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 71). Looking at it more closely, Ricketson sees magazines as “a bridge between the other two forms” (ibid.).

This, as far as Ricketson is concerned, calls for a comparison of book-length journalism with other forms of non-fiction. The result is that even if the subject matter is the same, the focus and the audience are different. As an example, Ricketson compares the journalist to the historian – the former is interested in the “issues of the

day” and writes for a broad audience, the latter’s interest is in “the past” and writes for a “specialist audience” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 72).

Another important purpose of listing the six elements above is to apply them when comparing book-length journalism with daily journalism and non-fiction writing. It clears conceptual space by “enabling scholars to begin identifying the range and impact of book-length journalism over time” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 73).

In this context writing awards also play a role, as Ricketson argues. He mentions the (former) Queensland Premier’s Literary awards for “advancing public debate”, and the Walkley Awards, Australia’s most prestigious journalism prizes. The two awards have regularly been won by journalists, who produced book-length works, and to underline this point, he quotes Mary Cotter of the Walkley Foundation saying that there was “a major growth in demand for non-fiction that coincides with an increasing number of titles that bore the names of Australian journalists” (Cotter cited in Ricketson, 2010b, p. 74). This is supported by the fact that “between 2002 and 2008 inclusive there were 19 works of book-length journalism by Australians” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 73).

Ricketson also uses the example of the list of the *Best American Journalism of the 20th Century* to draw up a similar list for Australian writing and comes up with an impressive list of works on a large variety of topics. His findings are in stark contrast to the attention the form has received to date. Ricketson concludes that “Individual works are among some of the best known non-fiction books in Australian literature, but recognition of these works as journalism practice is limited. Even more limited is awareness, let alone analysis of whether there are any issues particular to the practice of journalism at book-length” (Ricketson, 2010b, p. 76).

However, Ricketson’s main attention in his doctoral thesis is on ethical issues, and he investigates the “current practice” of book-length journalism in Australia and critically evaluates the works of Estelle Blackburn, John Bryson, Helen Garner, Malcolm Knox, David Marr, and Margaret Simons. He does this in chronological order so as to offer “at least a sketch of how recent practice has developed in Australia” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 69). Interviews, which he conducted with the authors, give him an insight into their attitude toward journalistic ethics and to what extent they were aware of and considered them in their works. In exploring this point, he creates an awareness of the techniques applied by writers of book-length journalism and the extent to which they knowingly or unintentionally break journalistic rules and blur the differences between fact and fiction.

There is, for instance, a lack of transparency in Bryson's case, partly caused by his "use of an omniscient narrator's voice" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 97) in his book *Evil Angels* (1985) about the famous case of Lindy Chamberlain, who had been convicted of having killed her daughter Azaria. Ricketson points out that Bryson wrote about many situations and incidents he witnessed without letting the reader know that he had been present. As far as Ricketson is concerned, this technique of disguising his identity might lead to "a sense of disquiet that comes from the reader's desire to trust the journalist's account of events" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 73). Of course, "Bryson could argue that he was acting in the public interest on a matter of significance, and that his indirect deception enabled him to provide readers with information essential to understanding the compromised nature of the prosecution" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 71), but to Ricketson, this is an ethical problem. The merit of Bryson's book is not being questioned, as it was "influential in shifting public opinion" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81), and ultimately led to Lindy Chamberlain's release from prison in 1986 and her acquittal in 1988.

In Helen Garner's case, Ricketson focuses on *The First Stone* (1995) and the fact that she disguised the identity of one of the people involved, Jenna Mead, and split her into six or seven people. After being attacked for this, Garner later stated that "she had been obliged to split up Mead by her publisher's lawyer who feared a lawsuit" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 77). She claimed that she "had agreed with the greatest reluctance and regretted her actions because it had given some readers the idea that the book was fictionalised" (ibid.). Ricketson, who when reading the book "was swept up in Garner's superbly crafted prose, acutely observed details and engaging first-person style", states that when he learnt about Garner's treatment of Jenna Mead, he "felt the book's power implode" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 76). As far as journalistic ethics are concerned this was a grave offence and in his eyes, "Garner's choices show that her journalism is primarily driven by her personal response to people, events and issue" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81). The fact that she did not conduct "enough detailed research that characterises successful book-length journalism" (ibid.) points out another flaw of her work when looked at from the journalistic perspective.

As an example of another facet of ethical issues authors of narrative journalism face Ricketson chose Margaret Simons' book *Meeting of the Waters* (2003). In her attempt to balance her "obligations to a wide range of sources with her obligations to readers" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 92), Simons came to realise that "journalists and their sources are human beings, and the boundaries between empathy and independence are always complicated" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 90). As Ricketson points out, when writing

about cultural issues – which Simons did in *Meeting the Waters* – one might not always be able to apply the “commonly agreed journalistic standard” that “anything that had been put on public record could be used” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 91). Simons decided to include “too much detail in order to ensure that the book was defensible against its likely critics” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 93). The very important conclusion Ricketson draws in this context is that the example of Simons illustrates “the extent to which libel laws impinge on the structure and content of book-length journalism” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 94).

As far as Ricketson is concerned, Malcolm Knox’s *Secrets in the Jury Room* (2005) is another example of this dilemma. In his book about his experience as the member of a jury, Knox had to disguise the identities of his fellow jury members, the judges, the defendant, and all other involved persons. This had the effect that it was “not clear what is fact and what is fiction” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 96).

When it comes to Estelle Blackburn’s books *Broken Lives* (1998) and *End of Innocence* (2007), Ricketson highlights the issue of writing interior monologue in book-length journalism and concludes that “to attempt an interior monologue of someone who is not only dead but responsible for horrific crimes ... seems close to impossible to achieve” (Ricketson, 2010a, pp. 84-85). This issue is also the topic of another of Ricketson’s papers on book-length or narrative journalism, “The Perils of Writing Interior Monologues in Narrative Journalism”. In this paper he “examines what it is about the interior monologue that makes it so contentious” (Ricketson, 2010c, p. 1). Since the opinions about whether or not interior monologue in narrative or literary journalism is permissible are divided, Ricketson qualifies his review of the “contemporary practice” as being “suggestive rather than conclusive” (Ricketson, 2010c, p. 1). Drawing on interviews with leading American authors and the interviews he conducted for his PhD thesis with the above mentioned Australian authors as well as the analysis of Estelle Blackburn’s work, Ricketson learnt that “the use of interior monologue in non-fiction is practised today by only a minority of practitioners and by a majority is seen as highly controversial” (Ricketson, 2010c, p. 3). As far as he is concerned, this technique used mainly by novelists is problematic when applied by journalists, as it is difficult to know what another person is thinking and feeling. He goes on to say that in journalism, interior monologue is almost always contested and “attracts intense scrutiny both from the principal sources and from critics” (Ricketson, 2010c, p. 5). While *Broken Lives* is used to highlight the issue of using extensive interior monologues, Ricketson explains Blackburn’s motivation to use this technique

by quoting from *End of Innocence*, in which she recounts her investigations for *Broken Lives* in detail. Blackburn reveals that she was urged by the book's editor to "colour it up" (Blackburn cited in Ricketson, 2010c, p. 6), and this she did with an interior monologue of the serial killer, Eric Cooke. Ricketson eschews outright condemnation of this method but goes as far as stating that this literary or narrative technique is rather too "difficult to [use] successfully" and that for many practitioners it "belongs in the domain of fiction writing" (Ricketson, 2010c, p. 8). While Ricketson does not make a final judgement on interior monologues in narrative journalism, he raises the general question of whether it is permissible or helpful to transfer narrative techniques to journalism, even if it is narrative journalism.

In his PhD thesis Ricketson uses these ethical issues as a basis from which to develop a framework and test it "against the work of numerous practitioners" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 98). As far as he is concerned, "some of the ethical issues are similar to those experienced by practitioners in daily print journalism while others take a particular form in book-length journalism" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 232). This framework consists of three parts: ethical issues arising for practitioners when they are researching, ethical issues arising for practitioners when they are writing, and the question of how practitioners go about establishing a relationship with the reader and, in turn, the reader's expectations of book-length journalism (Ricketson, 2010a).

For a large part of the subsequent analysis, Ricketson focuses on the works of Bob Woodward [and Carl Bernstein], especially on the book *The Final Days* (1976) and Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965), which is often said to be one of the first works of literary journalism and features prominently in numerous works on the form (see Hartsock, 2000; Keeble & Wheeler, 2007; Sims, 2007; Sims 2009; Underwood, 2008). In Woodward's case Ricketson finds the fact that most of his sources were anonymous and he did not use endnotes has led to a lack of veracity. In his opinion, this enabled Woodward to embellish facts or even invent details to help the flow of the story. As far as Ricketson is concerned, the fact that Woodward was writing about "events and people of national importance, makes this all the more problematic" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 159). This, argues Ricketson, also influences and ultimately flaws the relationship of the author to the reader. He sees that there is a potential conflict in the combination of "the book is true" and "it reads like a novel" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 206) if the author does not clarify what is fact and what was made up. Thus, in Woodward's case, Ricketson finds flaws in all three categories: research, writing, and writer-reader relationship (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 217).

In Capote's case, he sees even more ethical issues, not only in the book itself, but also in "his-story-behind-the-story", that is the information Capote gave to the press about the process of researching and writing *In Cold Blood*. Ricketson bases his findings on the work of scholars such as Tompkins (1966) and Plimpton (1998) as well as on his own observations. He comes to the conclusion that "Capote's book is seriously flawed as a work of book-length journalism" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 223).

The conclusions Ricketson draws are the following: to him, the "most distinctive and pressing ethical issues" are the difficulty of remaining independent and to some extent objective even though, due to an often long research time, a close relationship to sources has been established; of representing "actual people, events and issues in a narrative mode"; and of establishing a relationship of "informed trust with the reader" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 232).

Ricketson also argues that "literary merit" should not be a criterion for including a writer's work in studies of literary journalism (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 233). In other words, being a skilled writer does not automatically mean that one should get away with fabricated scenes and other such breaches of journalistic ethics. The narrative approach, if chosen, has to be above criticism in terms of veracity and accuracy.

Despite presenting a large number of works, which in his opinion are flawed ethically, Ricketson acknowledges the fact that "leading practitioners in Australia and especially the USA through a continuing commitment to reflect on their practice and to act on these reflections, have made substantial advances in resolving ethical issues that arose in the work of Capote, Woodward" and others (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 234). To him book-length journalism "fulfils a valuable social role – it is situated between newspaper and magazine journalism and specialist academic study" and as such it has to comply with the ethics rules set up in journalism (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 235).

In another paper, "Not Muddying, Clarifying: Towards Understanding the Boundaries between Fiction and Nonfiction", Ricketson explores the relationship between fiction and nonfiction, and looks at the topic from the perspective of journalism history. He specifies again what he means by book-length journalism and explains which kinds of journalistic research methods should be applied, that is, "the finding of documents ..., interviewing people and first-hand observation" (Ricketson, 2010d, n. p.). The starting point of his investigation is his experience as a teacher of literary journalism and more specifically the fact that students often tend to confuse literary journalism with novels.

In his study, he compares literary journalism with news journalism and raises the question “if a work of book-length journalism *reads* like a novel, is it likely to be read *as* a novel?” (Ricketson, 2010d, n. p., italics in the original). In this context Ricketson claims that the wording of scholars, in particular the expression “application of fictional techniques” when writing or talking about literary journalism, is misleading. In his opinion this expresses a far too stark contrast between journalism and literary journalism, all the more so since in early journalism practice – “before the rise of the hard news report” – editorial commentaries “written from an ‘engaged and partisan stance’” were quite common (Schudson cited in Ricketson, 2010d, n. p.).

Ricketson moves on to an analysis of the approaches, among others, by Hayden White and Lubomir Dolezel. White (1978) equates history and fiction, a position Dolezel (1999) refutes, or at least qualifies to the extent that he states that “the boundary between fiction and history is open” and that what results from this could be called “factual narrative” (Dolezel cited in Ricketson, 2010d, n. p.).

In his subsequent writings Ricketson remains on the theoretical level developed in his PhD thesis, but elaborates how diverse viewpoints and lines of argumentation with regard to literary journalism are. One of his major points remains the search for fictional techniques in literary journalism: “the use of the word fiction in the term ‘fictional techniques’ to describe book-length journalism and literary nonfiction sends a misleading message to practitioners, critics and readers alike” (Ricketson, 2010d, n. p.). This once again underlines his demand for more research on literary journalism in general and more precise rules in particular.

In summary, it can be said that Matthew Ricketson’s contributions to the topic of literary journalism are very valuable, especially his framework on ethical issues, which helps to define and differentiate the form more clearly. By including major Australian works of literary journalism or to use his term, book-length journalism, and analysing them with regard to ethical flaws, he has clearly furthered research into the form in Australia.

Journalism scholar David Conley has contributed three articles on the topic: “Birth of a Novelist, Death of a Journalist” (1998), “Marcus Clarke: The Romance of Reality” (2000), and “The Magic of Journalism in George Johnston’s Fiction” (2001 - 02). In addition his doctoral thesis, *A Telling Story: Five Journalists-Novelist and Australia's Writing Culture* (2003), also touches upon the subject of literary journalism, but his focus is on the connection between the practitioners’ roles as journalists and novelists. Conley’s approach can best be compared to that of American scholar Doug

Underwood, who also wants to emphasise the role journalism plays in literature. Conley looks at authors who started their careers as journalists, notably Marcus Clarke, George Johnston and Robert Drewe, or had parallel careers as journalists and authors. One main difference, however, between Conley and Underwood is that the latter wants to explicitly upgrade journalism, while the former wants to highlight the influence of journalistic writing and technique on literature.

In the first of his three articles on the topic, *Birth of a Novelist, Death of a Journalist*, Conley examines “journalism-fiction connections” (Conley, 1998, p. 46). In the introduction he states that the “history of newspaper and novel parallel each other in many ways, yet links between journalism and fiction are often overlooked by The Academy” (ibid.). Conley’s objective is to scrutinize the connection between journalism and literature as well as to look at the “links between fiction and feature writing” (ibid.). According to Conley, despite the many examples in England and Australia of writers who worked in both fields, there has been little research into this connection (Conley, 1998, p. 47-48). As others before him, he attributes this apparent lack of interest in the matter to the unwillingness of “The Academy” to acknowledge the importance of journalistic work for literature. He, too, notes the “slighting references” to the journalism experiences of Australian novelists who worked as reporters”, pointing as a main reason to Patrick White’s much quoted remark about Australian novels that are “the dreary dun-coloured off-shoots of journalistic realism” (ibid.).

This treatment of journalism’s role in the development of literature, however, is not limited to Australia. In this context, Conley quotes Shelley Fisher Fishkin, whose research shows that “the list of America’s most imaginative writers is crowded with novelists who served journalistic apprenticeships” (Fishkin cited in Conley, 1998, p. 48).

In the first article, Conley focuses on the works of Robert Drewe because, on the one hand, Drewe has a journalistic background, and on the other hand, he “in particular has drawn on his journalistic experience in his novels and short stories” (ibid.). Looking at the title of the article, however, it becomes clear that he does not intend to investigate literary journalism, the form where journalism and literature overlap. Quite the opposite, the title implies that in order to become a novelist, one has to leave journalism behind, or that one can ever be only one of the two.

Another important point to make here is that the methodology of Conley’s approach remains unclear. He concentrates on Robert Drewe to highlight the importance of his journalistic background for his work as a novelist, yet his discussion implies the

inferior standing of journalism compared to literature. Here Conley draws on Bennett who stated that there is some kind of hierarchy in which journalism is placed beneath literature (Bennett cited in Conley, 1998, p. 59), and examines the connection between feature writing and fiction, that is journalism and fiction. He concedes that “in terms of technique feature writing has more in common with short fiction than news reporting” (Conley, 1998, p. 57) and draws largely on Tom Wolfe when it comes to describing New Journalism’s role as the “bridge between fact and fiction” (Conley, 1998, p. 58). He states that “New Journalism was supplanted by the Literary Journalists, whose broadened strategies include ‘immersion’ reporting, accuracy, structure and responsibility” (ibid.). As the common feature of the two forms, Conley identifies narrative forms. The point Conley makes is that “the best feature writing ... can be described as “high journalism” (ibid.), and that thus it can “rank with the best short fiction” (Conley, 1998, p. 59). These arguments are no doubt valid in the research of the form of literary journalism, but they do not seem to fit with Conley’s intention to highlight and validate the influence of journalism on literature.

The close look at Drewe’s work serves Conley’s purpose to show that journalism has had a great influence on his novels and “made him a better, and certainly a different novelist than he otherwise would have been” (Conley, 1998, p. 49). According to Conley, Robert Drewe “is Australia’s most prominent journalist-novelist in that he has won awards for reportage and fiction” (ibid.), and thus serves as a very suitable example.

Conley examines four of Drewe’s novels whose plots all have journalistic elements or protagonists since Drewe draws from his experience and writing as a journalist. When looking at the reception of Drewe’s novels by journalists and literary critics, Conley argues that there has been some reluctance of “The Academy” to acknowledge the literary quality of works written by journalists on the one hand, and equally as little enthusiasm from journalists on the other hand. To Conley this clearly indicates that, although there is an overlapping of journalism and literature, there is little acceptance for the journalist in literature and the novelist in journalism. In Drewe’s case this leads to the fact that his literary work is always examined in the light of his journalistic achievements and that “some critics appear to focus more on the presumed journalistic qualities of Drewe’s fiction than its poetic energy” (Conley, 1998, pp. 50-51). Conley later also uses this line of argumentation in his analysis of the works of George Johnston and Marcus Clarke.

To go even further, the connection between “reporting fact and writing fiction” (Conley, 1998, p. 59) is not acknowledged, and realism as it is present in journalism is deemed not to belong in literature (ibid). In his opinion, limiting a writer to his/her journalistic background and thereby to fact-based writing is the wrong approach (Conley, 1998, p. 60).

In the appendix to his 1998 article, David Conley gives a list of 174 names of “Australian novelists/ journalists” (Conley, 1998, pp. 70-73). Understandably, not all of these would be labelled prominent writers and not all brought their journalism to bear on their books. But among those who are stars on the Australian literary firmament, and who used journalistic technique in their books are Marcus Clarke, Miles Franklin, Katherine Susannah Prichard, George Johnston, Olga Masters, Robert Drewe and Helen Garner.

As impressive as this list may be, it is also misleading when it comes to defining the form of literary journalism. The fact that the listed authors have published both literary and journalistic works – and this is not even the case with all of them – does not necessarily mean that this work qualifies as literary journalism. It is the ‘end product’ that is or is not literary journalism, and not the fact that its author has journalistic and/or literary roots. By the same token, this does not mean that mastering certain techniques, be they literary or journalistic, may not help the creation of literary journalism.

In his second article, “Marcus Clarke: The Romance of Reality (2000), Conley argues that for Marcus Clarke, who “regarded himself primarily as a journalist, albeit a literary one” (Conley, 2000, p. 51) journalism and fiction were “companions in language, information gathering and truth telling” (Conley, 2000, p. 51). He goes on to say that Clarke used his journalistic skills, such as “observation and fact finding” as tools for his literary work, which shows strong similarities to classic reportage. As in his articles about Robert Drewe and George Johnston, Conley wants to examine the “interdependence between journalism and fiction” (Conley, 2000, p. 52) and he reiterates that journalism’s impact on fiction “has not been adequately addressed in Australia” (ibid).

In the sub-chapter titled, “Journalist or Novelist?” Conley embarks on a lengthy debate about the quality of Clarke’s journalistic and fictional writing and whether any of it can be called literature or not. One of the conclusions Conley draws is that journalism helped Clarke to “build a reputation and refine his writing” (Conley, 2000, p. 53). The question whether Clarke is to be classified as a literary journalist or a novelist remains unanswered.

A far more important point is that, as Conley concedes, Clarke applied his journalistic skills, such as collecting information, to his fictional works, most notably to *His Natural Life* (1874). Conley argues that the “massive incorporation of journalism and documentary report” (Wilding cited in Conley, 2000, p. 56) as well as the journalistic tools of “information gathering skills, [and] documentation” and the large amount of “factual detail” contributed to the realism of *His Natural Life* (ibid.). To develop this argument further, Conley draws on John Maddocks who wrote that “Clarke’s journalism exemplifies the fusion of direct observation and use of literary sources” (Maddocks cited in Conley, 2000, p. 57). Clarke’s example was Honoré de Balzac, whom he described as the “‘apostle of realism’ and the ‘founder of the realistic school’” (ibid.). This “new, realistic literature that relied on direct observation” (Conley, 2000, p. 57) was what Clarke wanted to write. As Conley puts it, with his “Lower Bohemia” series of articles depicting Melbourne’s lower classes, Clarke “sought to achieve for Melbourne and Australia what Dickens had for London and England and Balzac for Paris and France” (Conley, 2000, p. 59).

In order to come back to the connection between journalism and literature, Conley draws up a list of elements that are characteristic of both forms of writing. The elements are the following:

- reader interest or sense of audience;
- point of view or voice;
- tone;
- theme or content;
- impact, or consequence;
- information gathering, or sourcing;
- quotation or dialogue;
- accuracy; and
- deadlines (Conley, 2000, p. 60)

Some of these characteristics are in line with those identified by other scholars, such as Aucoin and Kramer.

This list is part of a sub-chapter with the title *Journalism in service of fiction*, and thus once again clarifies Conley’s point of departure: the influence of journalistic techniques on literature, with journalism always being the handmaiden to literature.

When Conley examines Clarke's work a little more closely, one point seems of great interest. While Clarke took on the role of "the disembodied, objective observer" when writing fiction, his journalism was characterized by sensationalism, polemics and satire (Conley, 2000, p. 61). Conley explains this "difference in tone between Clarke's journalism and fiction" as springing from his "sense of audience and point of view in both genres" and not least from "his commitment to realism" (Conley, 2000, p. 63). Clarke himself "saw his journalism and fiction as truth-telling partners" (Conley, 2000, p. 64). He used the journalistic tools at his disposal to make his fiction as real and as documentary-like as possible.

In the conclusion to his article Conley maintains that "realism calls on the practitioner to convert fact to fiction in service of literature" and as already claimed in his article about the works of Robert Drewe, he is of the opinion that "a journalist-turned-novelist is more likely than a non-journalist to exploit current events and recent history for fictional advantage" (Conley, 2000, p. 70).

Conley's third article on literary journalism also takes a prominent journalist/writer as its central point of investigation, "The Magic of Journalism in George Johnston's Fiction" (2001 - 02). The main purpose of Conley's article is to promote a "new interdisciplinary partnership between scholars in literature and journalism so that the journalistic in so many novels can be more comprehensively examined" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 115). This, according to Conley, has not yet occurred, and literary journalism, unlike in the USA, has been "all but ignored" (ibid.). To overcome this shortcoming in Australian literary scholarship, he wants to focus on the significance George Johnston's work has had for the readers and scholars.

To Conley, Johnston was not the "typical journalist", but he argues that "journalism made Johnston a better writer, and certainly a different one, than he otherwise would have been" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 108). This assessment of Johnston is reminiscent of Conley's earlier statement about Drewe. As in Drewe's literary works, "journalism is embedded in Johnston's fiction" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 108). His journalistic background enabled him to "animate his novels", but this "has neither been understood nor adequately examined by Australia's literary scholars" (ibid).

Considering the importance Conley places on Johnston's role of "experiencing and interpreting Australia", and the fact that his *My Brother Jack* was named one of the 12 most influential Australian books of the 20th century in 1995 (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 110), the critical recognition he received is relatively small. Conley puts this down to the fact that Johnston's fiction was considered too popular to be considered as literature

(Conley, 2001 - 02, pp. 109-110). Critics have tended to assess Johnston's novels with his journalistic background in mind and have found them lacking in literary quality. Conley illustrates this by quoting several scholars, such as Patrick Morgan (1974), Peter Sekules (1998), and Susan McKernan (1989). Here Conley shows the difficulties when it comes to drawing the line between literature and journalism or defining and assessing the genre in which the two overlap.

Conley states that while journalism, or working as journalists has shaped or "flavoured" the literary works of authors such as Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell, Robert Drewe, George Johnston, Marcus Clarke and others, it is impossible to precisely "identify, isolate and measure the journalistic impacts in relation to other influences on their fiction" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 117).

In order to examine this point further, especially looking at the "fact-fiction elements" in *My Brother Jack*, Conley examines how the novel was received. Here he focuses on the "discussion whether autobiographical approaches to fiction represent failed imagination, a commitment to realism or a combination of both" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 120). As far as Conley is concerned, "Johnston found himself trapped by the journalistic presumption of fidelity to 'facts' and 'truth' without the countervailing license to pursue fiction's 'higher truths'" (ibid.). He goes on to say that "journalism is not a faultless vehicle for fiction, but it is a vehicle". Elizabeth Riddell, herself a well-known journalist, highlights the difficulties in combining the two forms of expression:

In Australia, if you start out in newspapers it is very hard to stop being a journalist and become a "writer". There is a fine line there, and many people cross and recross it several times. George [Johnston] was one of these, and aware of it. But nobody struggled harder, in his last years, to keep the writing cool and faithful to the subject and the aim. (Riddell cited in Conley 2001 - 02, p. 122)

In order to scrutinize the topic further, Conley proposes a "multi-disciplinary approach to examine Australia's journalism and fiction synergies" and he draws up a theoretical framework to analyse the work of "journalist-novelists and novelists without journalistic experience" (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 127). The parameters/criteria should be the following:

- The historical backdrop in forms of writing for journalism and fiction.
- The functions, values and purposes of newspapers and novels and their level of authority and influence.

- Narrative and story-telling strategies and information-gathering techniques in fiction and journalism.
- The relationships between journalists and readers and novelists and readers.
- Voice, tone, point of view, dialogue, settings, themes, truth-telling, creativity, symbolism, characterisation, description, and notions of objectivity and subjectivity in the two forms of writing.
- An examination of the training, education and practice of journalists and how they might privilege forms of composition.
- A survey of novelists, journalists and publishers to ascertain how various forms of writing and types of occupational and life experiences might inform fiction and journalism. (Conley, 2001 - 02, pp. 127-128)

When it comes to the journalism side of things, the form best suited to this kind of analysis, according to Conley, is feature writing, as it “often employs literary techniques and is more closely associated with the journalist-to-novelist transition than any other journalistic form” (Conley, 2001 - 02, p. 128).

In summary, Conley uses the examples of Robert Drewe, Marcus Clarke, and George Johnston’s novels to emphasise the influence of journalism influence on fiction, the question to what extent truth and facts play a role in this context, and finally the apparent lack of research in Australia when it comes to literary journalism. Though not explicitly stated, Conley applies in his articles an approach often chosen by his American counterparts in focussing on authors who worked both as journalists and writers. While he also looks at texts, he favours authors and thus limits himself when it comes to an in-depth analysis and to applying the criteria or tools he identified as being important connections between journalism and fiction/literature. He comes to the overall conclusion that there is a clear influence of journalism on the fictional works of former journalists who wrote novels or, as in Marcus Clarke’s case, what could be called reportages. While he acknowledges that there are interdependencies of the two forms, he does not investigate them to the extent that they may have resulted in a third form: literary journalism.

In their collection of non-fiction, *The Writer’s Reader - Understanding Journalism and Non-fiction* (2007), Susie Eisenhuth and Willa McDonald intended to “put the focus squarely on the importance of reading other writers” (Eisenhuth & McDonald, 2007, p. ix). Thus, their book is more a manual for writers than an

examination of literary journalism. It is important to note at this point that the topic is not literary journalism but non-fiction, and that when they were working on the collection, the authors became aware of “how much the various non-fiction categories overlap” (Eisenhuth & McDonald, 2007, p. x). Their focus is on exploring what they call “a continuum where fine writing skills come together in the art of storytelling” (ibid.), regardless of whether the stories came from news writing, or essay or memoir.

This categorisation brings to mind a figure developed by Molly Blair in her contribution in the *Asia Pacific Media Educator*. In her article, “Uncovering the Place of Creative Non-fiction in Australian Journalism Departments”, Blair draws up a typology which distinguishes between “genre, techniques and publishing styles” (Blair, 2007, p. 18). Here the form is creative non-fiction and the different publication styles are memoir, biography, feature articles, literary essay, literary journalism, personal essay, and narrative non-fiction. The techniques are divided into two groups, fiction writing techniques and structure, with creative and narrative being part of both categories (Blair, 2007, Fig. 1, p. 19). Blair chose the term creative non-fiction because she considered it “more inclusive than other terms” (Blair, 2007, p. 18).

In their book Eisenhuth and McDonald also look at different forms of non-fiction writing, such as profiles, investigations, essays, memoirs, and travel writing, to name the most important ones. The authors whose work they include in their book are mostly Australian, but there are also texts from and interviews with writers from the USA and other countries.

In those texts, they identify skills that reporters/journalists and essayists/non-fiction writers have in common, and concede that the border between journalism and non-fiction or literature is blurred: “Who is to say where journalism ends and writing begins. Or when writing ascends into the rarefied realms of literature?” (Eisenhuth & McDonald, 2007, p. xi).

In chapter 2 of the book, titled “New Journalism and its legacy”, Susie Eisenhuth looks briefly at literary journalism, which she equates with feature writing (Eisenhuth, 2007, p. 41). The chapter’s title shows that Eisenhuth tends to see literary journalism as the successor of the New Journalism and she underlines this by quoting Barry Siegel, who has referred to “the New Journalists as early literary journalists” (Eisenhuth, 2007, p. 42). She states that “at its best literary journalism is about storytelling that re-creates a compelling narrative, celebrates detail, explores the perspective of the characters and taps into themes that are universal and thereby endure” (Eisenhuth, 2007, p. 41). She goes on to say that literary journalism is “gaining acceptance even in university English

departments, which have traditionally disdained the reporting milieu“ (ibid.). The Australian writers she names in this context are Robert Drewe and the Pulitzer Prize winning Geraldine Brooks. When it comes to defining literary journalism, Eisenhuth merely says that one needs to distinguish between this form and “creative non-fiction” (ibid.), without, however, offering any criteria by which to compare or to distinguish the two.

In her contribution to the edited volume *Literary Journalism Across the Globe*, Willa McDonald examines “professional and ethical challenges [a writer] of reportage with the eye of a novelist” is faced with in Australia (McDonald, 2011, p. 260). In her chapter, titled “Creditable or Reprehensible? The Literary Journalism of Helen Garner” McDonald examines Helen Garner’s books *The First Stone* (1995), *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* (2004) and *The Spare Room* (2008). McDonald looks at the harsh criticism *The First Stone* received, the mixed reception of *Joe Cinque’s Consolation*, and the debate whether *The Spare Room*, which Garner “chose to call ... a novel” (McDonald, 2011, p. 262) is a work of fiction or autobiography.

In several of the sub-chapters, McDonald concentrates on some of the ethical issues, already raised by Matthew Ricketson. In the sub-chapter ‘Transgression-Conventions and Contracts’ (McDonald, 2011, pp. 262-265) McDonald addresses the breach of the reader-writer contract and the issue of Garner having split the person of Jenna Mead into several personalities in *The First Stone*. Then she analyses Garner’s way of “privileging the emotions” (McDonald, 2011, p. 265) in *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* which had raised considerable criticism and, last but not least, McDonald deals with Garner “challenging the notions of subjectivity and objectivity” (McDonald, 2011, p. 270).

While many of the facts and critical arguments McDonald presents are known, she not only questions the appropriateness of some of the criticism Garner’s work has received (McDonald, 2011, p. 269), but also adds a new facet to the discussion about literary journalism in claiming that “a closer engagement with Garner’s nonfiction by academic critics could be a fruitful contribution to the field of literary journalism” (McDonald, 2011, p. 260). Unlike Ricketson, whose standpoint is a strictly journalistic, and whose opinion on Garner’s journalistic mistakes in *The First Stone* she shares, McDonald’s approach is more interdisciplinary. Looking at the critical evaluations of the three books mentioned above, McDonald shows that whatever Garner’s approach, she always seems to do the ‘wrong’ thing. While *The First Stone* attracted criticism from both journalists and academics, the former were finding faults in her research and

the latter disapproved of her writing methods, *Joe Cinque's Consolation* “attracted criticism [only] from within the academy ... [and] focused largely on its style” (McDonald, 2011, p. 266).

As far as McDonald is concerned, some of Garner's critics fail to realise that her storytelling techniques, which they do not approve of, are her great strength. McDonald points out that Garner uses “anecdotes that bond with the reader, advance the narrative, and evince the broader points she wants to make” (ibid.). That academic reviewers show a negative reaction to what they call “manoeuvring her audience to her point of view through her use of subjective reflection [and] her appeal to emotions” (McDonald, 2011, p. 267) reflects in McDonald's eyes “a deep distrust within the Australian academy – and within part of the profession of journalism – of creative nonfiction in general” (McDonald, 2011, p. 269).

When it comes to subjectivity and objectivity McDonald points out that Garner's style of research and writing challenges the traditional notions of subjectivity and objectivity (McDonald, 2011, p. 270). By reducing her work to either her journalistic blunders or alleged shortcomings of her literary style, both journalism and literary scholars miss the opportunity to better understand “the practice of nonfiction in general, and in particular the challenges faced in its production in a localized environment such as Australia” (McDonald, 2011, p. 273). McDonald's approach suggests that Garner who, as she puts it “worked to find a form that allows her to express both factuality and the emotional reality of her world” (McDonald, 2011, p. 271), should be seen as a unique and important form of nonfiction or literary journalism writer. In this McDonald calls for a process of rethinking traditional journalistic and literary approaches to literary journalism, and advocates to a certain extent to move away from the us-versus-them, that is, literature-versus-journalism approach. Instead more attention should be given to the various styles and ways of expression for which Garner is a prime example and which can only enrich the form and contribute to its development.

As mentioned at the outset, scholarly attention on literary journalism in Australia has been scant. Australian academics so far have not developed any of the detailed methodological approaches that have been drawn up by their American counterparts. However, their discussions of literary journalism highlight the same difficulties of defining the form as can be found in the writings of other researchers.

2.3 Germany

Not nearly as much scholarly attention has been devoted to the subject of literary journalism in German-speaking countries as has been in the Anglo-American world, particularly in the United States. The main focus is on the borders and differences between literature and journalism, and the relationship of fact and fiction. Most studies in German also deal with the American phenomenon of New Journalism by using it as the cornerstone of their investigation. This approach will be discussed in more detail later.

In 2003, Bernd Blöbaum and Stefan Neuhaus edited a book titled *Literatur und Journalismus. Theorie, Kontexte, Fallstudien* [Literature and Journalism. Theory, Contexts, Case Studies.], in which the concepts of journalism and literature are compared, but where the connection between the two is not investigated in depth. This already becomes clear by looking at the chapter titles: “Literatur und Journalismus als Systeme” [Literature and Journalism as Systems], “Literarische und journalistische Organisationen” [Literary and Journalistic Organisations], “Literarische und journalistische Rollen” [Literary and Journalistic Roles], “Literarische und journalistische Programme” [Literary and Journalistic Programmes] (Blöbaum & Neuhaus, 2003).

The whole approach is much influenced by Niklas Luhmann’s *Systemtheorie* [systems theory]. Although Blöbaum and Neuhaus’ book acknowledges that there are research topics, such as the relation of facts and fiction, where literature and journalism overlap, for example in the reportage and the essay, this is treated as peripheral in both journalistic/communications studies and literary studies. This also opens up a variety of methodological approaches. As Blöbaum says, “The forms, processes, judgements and motives of the authors or ‘players’ in this ‘border zone’ could be analysed by means of content analysis and quantitative as well as qualitative interviews” (Blöbaum, 2003, p. 48). Putting the sentence in the subjunctive shows that this analysis is something that should but has not yet occurred.

This means that creative non-fiction or literary journalism has not been seen and been treated as a form in its own right, but is perceived as a kind of mixture which seems to be a difficult research topic on the fringes of literature or journalism studies. Blöbaum and Neuhaus’s indecisive, if not indifferent, approach to the relationship between literature and journalism is indicative and symptomatic of the fact that this field is still under-researched in Germany.

The title of Oliver Meier's article (2004) is especially revealing and underlines what has been said about the approach of Blöbaum and Neuhaus above: "Literatur und Journalismus. Ein Geschwisterstreit geht ins 21. Jahrhundert" [Literature and Journalism. A dispute of siblings enters the 21st Century]. Meier looks at literary journalism from the journalistic perspective and in the summary of his article he points out that the separation of literature and journalism is a "project of the 19th century" (Meier, 2004, p. 1). He goes on to say that since then criteria such as information and factuality have been basic principles of journalistic work and that these criteria differentiate journalism from literature. In his opinion the idea of a "literary journalism" is an unpopular one for journalists because there is a fear that the borders between literature and journalism might be disintegrating or even collapsing. Meier's description of his article as "a field trip into a grey area" is equally as revealing as titling it "a dispute of siblings" (ibid.). It signifies that a close relationship of literature and journalism exists but that the concept of "literary journalism" is disputed.

Another striking point Meier makes is the concept of the hierarchical order of literature and journalism, which can be encountered in many scholarly texts. One can find many examples in literary studies that categorise especially well-written journalistic pieces as literature rather than journalism, thus aiming to raise their value to a higher level (Haas & Wallisch, 1991). David Conley (Australia) and Doug Underwood (United States) are just two examples. In the introduction to his book, *Journalism and the Novel - Truth and Fiction, 1700-2000*, Underwood, for example, writes about the "the decision to elevate a piece of writing or a body of writing to the category of literature" (Underwood, 2008, p. 21), thus acknowledging that literature and journalism are valued differently.

Although there is ample proof that German journalism has literary roots (Baumert 1928; Haas & Wallisch, 1991), this topic is mostly investigated by looking at authors rather than examining texts. German scholarly studies mostly look at writers who also worked as journalists, such as for example Heinrich Heine, Erich Kästner, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, or journalists who become literary writers like Egon Erwin Kisch or Alexander Osang.

The most extensive recent volume on literary journalism in German-speaking countries is the 2004 study *Grenzgänger. Formen des New Journalism* [Border-crossers. Forms of New Journalism], a series of articles edited by Joan Kristin Bleicher and Bernhard Pörksen (Bleicher & Pörksen, 2004). The volume looks at the American New Journalism and its possible counterparts in Germany. The term *Grenzgänger*

[people who cross borders, also literally between countries] is mainly used to characterise authors who play a role in literature as well as journalism (Blöbaum, 2003, p. 48). One major error that seems to have been made by researchers of the subject is to equate the terms *Grenzgänger* and literary journalist, or at least not make the difference clear enough. This oversight is equally misleading as Conley's list of 174 names of "Australian novelists/journalists" (Conley, 1998, pp. 70-73).

The term *Grenzgänger* can also imply that literary journalism or creative non-fiction is not seen as a form of its own, but as something 'in-between', something that tends towards either literature or journalism. One could go even further and contend that in choosing the term *Grenzgänger*, the authors seem to deliberately avoid any precise definition of literary journalism.

Joan Kristin Bleicher's contribution to *Grenzgänger. Formen des New Journalism*, titled "Intermedialität von Journalismus und Literatur. New Journalism aus literaturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive" [Intermediacy of journalism and literature. New Journalism from a literary studies' perspective], investigates what she calls "the intermediacy of journalism and literature" (Bleicher, 2004, p. 29). She looks at the issue from the literary point of view, which is important to note, and her starting point is the American New Journalism. Bleicher claims that New Journalism can be seen as an interesting phenomenon of the reciprocal influence of literary and journalistic writing (ibid). Her approach seems problematic to the extent that literary journalism has existed before the emergence of New Journalism. John C. Hartsock, for example, has demonstrated in detail the history of the form in his book *A History of American Literary Journalism. The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form*.

Identifying the New Journalism as the most notable historical expression of literary journalism is, no doubt, correct, but to use it as the 'yardstick' for researching German literary journalism oversimplifies the matter. In most of the German research, New Journalism is treated as if this was the first time that literature and journalism influenced each other. According to Hartsock (2000), however, it is the manifestation of literary journalism in the 1960s, which, unlike works from other periods, gained distinction due to its prominent practitioners, Tom Wolfe, Truman Capote and Gay Talese.

Bleicher's use of the New Journalism as a point of departure to compare the American and German traditions, for instance, completely neglects the journalistic genre of the reportage, which was prominent in the 1920s and 1930s in Central and Eastern Europe. In his article "Literary Reportage: The 'Other' Literary Journalism",

John C. Hartsock (2009) claims that “‘literary reportage’ of European origin is a much more ‘elastic’ form than that of American literary journalism” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 113). He goes on to say that “one central strand of the history of that genre derives from Germany and in no small part from the efforts of Egon Erwin Kisch” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 117). He describes Kisch’s work of the time “before he became a committed leftist at the end of World War I” as “literary reportage” (ibid.). This should therefore also be considered by German researchers and scholars. Bleicher disregards the history of reportage and focuses on authors who, as far as she is concerned, produced a literature with journalistic elements.

The novel as a literary form was developed in the 18th century, Bleicher argues, as a vehicle for realism. In its closeness to reality, the novel made various crossings into journalism possible. The integration of realistic or real news made fiction more authentic. The same effect is achieved when the fictional action or plot is embedded in a clearly recognisable historic context (Bleicher, 2004, p. 30). The form she is writing about here, however, is literature which ‘benefits’ from the integration of journalistic features, but is not necessarily literary journalism. The examples she uses to underpin her argument are from contemporary German authors or novelists, such as Hanns-Josef Ortheil who, for example, integrated contemporary historical events into the plot of his novel *Schwerenöter* [Lady Killer] (Ortheil, 1987) and thus connects the story of his protagonist’s life with German history (Bleicher, 2004, p. 31).

In this context it is also implied that ‘borders’ are needed in order to define literature and journalism, although this amounts to a tautology. Therefore, characteristics of either form are important, and there is an ongoing discussion in the field of journalism as to what extent objectivity and truth are still valid and important concepts. While the “integration of real news as particles of realism makes narrated fiction appear more authentic” (ibid), the question whether journalistic writing can still be viewed as authentic if it is written in a narrative style or is part of a work of fiction has not yet been addressed.

Elisabeth Klaus’s article in the volume, “Jenseits der Grenzen: Die problematische Unterscheidung zwischen Fakt und Fiktion” [Beyond the borders: The problematic differentiation of fact and fiction] (Klaus, 2004), looks at fact and fiction, credibility and truth. Her starting point is, as is the case with most of the German publications on literary journalism, the American New Journalism. Her article is divided into five chapters, dealing with facts in connection with the concepts of truth, knowledge, reality, fictions, and how they influence imagination.

Klaus argues that when it comes to facts and truth, “obviously fictions belong to journalism as facts belong to prose” (Klaus, 2004, p. 102). Using a statement of the German writer Christa Wolf, “There is a truth beyond the important facts of the world” (Wolf cited in Klaus, 2004, p. 101), Klaus goes on to say that the questions of “contexts, connections and understanding and thus, the difference between literature and journalism cannot be explained by the dualism of fact and fiction” (Klaus, 2004, p. 102). According to Christa Wolf, truth does not reside in facts alone, but has to be sought beyond them, which is a chance as well as a task for modern literature. To her, “prose ... serves as a storing place of experience ... supports the human being in becoming a subject ... and is [at once] revolutionary and realistic” (Wolf cited in Klaus, 2004, p. 102).

Klaus argues that literature and journalism should not be seen as understanding the world in two completely different ways. To her the dissociation seems to be more of a strategic one, created so that two different and independent scholarly systems could develop (Klaus, 2004, pp. 102-103). She states that by emphasising its reporting and editing achievements, journalism wants to set itself apart from literary writing. In her view, contemporary studies, such as Scholl and Weischenberg’s 1992 survey of journalists, whose main finding was that journalists in Germany still want to “inform as neutrally and precisely as possible” and want “to depict reality as it is”, merely promotes the myth that journalism is the “objective transmitter of information” (Scholl & Weischenberg, 1992).

In her opinion, there has always been a connection between literature and journalism, and New Journalism is a major example of this connection (Klaus, 2004, p. 103.). Klaus uses the criticism made by one of New Journalism’s prominent proponents, Tom Wolfe, as an introduction to the matter. Wolfe wrote that New Journalism has been accused of being “superficial, immoral, dishonest, demagogic, pure entertainment, trivial” (Wolfe cited in Klaus, 2004, p. 100). Klaus points out that the same criticism has been made of the realistic novels of the 19th century. This, to her, indicates a continuing overlapping of the literary and journalistic view of the world (ibid.). She interprets Wolfe’s statement that “writing was in a crisis which could only be overcome by introducing a journalistic realism”, made in his book *The New Journalism* in 1973, as an attack on literature rather than an attempt to change established journalism and make it more literary. Klaus, however, disagrees with Wolfe and finds that “New Journalism’s claim to change, reform, and expand ‘Old journalism’, was more important, if not decisive” (Klaus, 2004, p. 104). Klaus is more in agreement with one

of the critics of New Journalism, Michael J. Arlen, in that, although New Journalism offered its readers “a more lively, maybe even ‘truer’ description or interpretation of the world, it did not include an extensive insight into the events” (Klaus, 2004, p. 105). This, in her opinion, raises the question of the relationship between facts and knowledge.

In the next section of her chapter, titled “Fakten und Wissen” [Facts and Knowledge], Klaus focuses on the work of American radio reporter and author Studs Terkel, who looked critically at the increasing number of facts made available to people by technological progress (Klaus, 2004, p. 105). Terkel, for one, wanted to go beyond the “naked facts/truths”. To Klaus, Terkel’s *Oral Histories* bear a certain similarity to Egon Erwin Kisch’s reportages, who “wrote down what he saw during his participating observations” (Klaus, 2004, p. 109). Both Terkel and Kisch attempted to spread the truth with élan and were united in their criticism of “merely listing and gathering ‘naked’ facts” (Klaus, 2004, p. 115). In other words, by experiencing the events they describe, by knowing not only the facts, but having felt the situation, these authors have described the world’s events in a more lively way and thus more precisely and appropriately (Klaus, 2004, p. 116). The technique of immersion, in combination with a personal narrative style, sets Terkel’s and Kisch’s work apart from traditional news journalism.

The section titled ‘Facts and reality’ deals with the function of facts in journalism. Klaus claims that “facts are the raw material that needs to be arranged or designed by journalists so that the knowledge people have of the world they live in is increased” (Klaus, 2004, p. 110). This means that “without context, journalistic output could be compared to an encyclopaedia with facts next to each other without a connecting meaning” (ibid.).

In this section, Klaus looks at the different interpretations of the objectivity norm and comes to the conclusion that the attempt of journalists “to depict reality exactly the way it is” is naïve, because the choice of facts already implies a selection, which decides which events, dates, and persons are important and which are not (Klaus, 2004, p. 111).

Depending on which facts journalism collects and how these facts are then put together, it creates, or supports different constructions of reality (Klaus, 2004, p. 110). According to Klaus,

The objectivity debate leads to the understanding that the objectivity claim is no protection against selective perception, but on the contrary, contributes to the

misconception that facts are meaningful and thus promotes the smuggling in of the journalists' opinions by the back door. (Klaus, 2004, p. 113)

She goes on to say that whether or not it is clear to journalism, "facts are always embedded in contexts and have the function of being evidence for the constructions of reality made by journalists" (ibid.). This means that there are "as many realities as there are journalistically active individuals" (ibid.). Klaus agrees with the historian Richard J. Evans, whom she cites:

We know, of course, that we will be guided in selecting materials for the stories we tell, and in the way we put these materials together and interpret them, by literary models, by social science theories, by moral and political beliefs. (Evans cited in Klaus, 2004, p. 114)

Klaus introduces the section "Fakten und Fiktionen" [Facts and Fiction] with a quote from an earlier study of her own: "Journalism selects and presents facts which entertain and it supplies fictions which create realities" (Klaus & Lünenborg cited in Klaus, 2004, p. 114). In this section Klaus argues that it is fiction that turns facts into a journalistic product, since "facts in themselves are always without meaning" (Klaus, 2004, p. 115). To develop her argument, she looks at the original meaning of the word "fictio", which is formation and design. This is what Klaus sees as the task of journalism: "to use 'fictio' to give facts a form" (Klaus 2004, p. 116). In her opinion, journalism should not only convey knowledge, but also "create a basic, common cultural consensus with narrative means" (ibid.). Traditional news journalism is embedded in narrations of the world, but it does not use narrative styles. However, Klaus emphasizes, narrative forms and techniques are part of journalism and 'fictio' in the sense of "a shaping of the presented facts is part of the everyday journalistic business, but is bound to the presentation of what exists or is happening. Journalism tells us what has happened, not what might have happened" (Klaus, 2004, p. 118). The keyword Klaus introduces here is "intertextuality". According to her, "the proof journalists give for their theses and statements need supplementation by other approaches to truth of the relevant society, which is not connected to the criterion of correctness and truth" (ibid.).

Klaus claims that facts as well as imagination [Fantasie] are the keys to the journalistic depiction of the world. She contends that in order not only to inform but also to entertain and help shape opinions journalism needs to stimulate the imagination of the reader. This is best done by an "original and sophisticated as well as surprising (in the sense of unexpected) choice of language" (Klaus, 2004, p. 120). This is what happened in New Journalism. But the example Klaus gives is the work of Egon Erwin

Kisch, who connected realism and imagination in a unique way. The term Klaus uses to describe Kisch's technique is "logical imagination" (ibid.). This is more like a detective's powers of deduction or reasoning than the faculty of fanciful thought. One contemporary journalist who, in Klaus's opinion, fits this description is Günter Wallraff. For him reportage is a means of looking for hidden truths. In order to do so, he becomes an active participant and puts himself into the situations he wants to describe, experience, and investigate. In being a participant the author also becomes an advocate [parteilicher Journalismus]. In conclusion, Klaus claims that the best representatives of this type of empathetic journalism, like Terkel and Kisch, are the ones who also qualify as great writers (Klaus, 2004, p. 122).

2.4 Conclusion

First of all it must be said that, while most researchers agree that the topic of literary journalism should be examined in a more detailed and differentiated way, relatively little has been written about literary journalism.

US-American scholars, such as John Hartsock and Norman Sims, investigate the roots of literary journalism, and give their definition of the form. In this context it needs to be noted that the terminology is not uniform – Hartsock calls the form "narrative literary journalism", others call it "extended digressive narrative nonfiction" (Mark Kramer), or "journalistic literature" (Doug Underwood). The expression used depends largely on the approach that is chosen. While Hartsock wants to differentiate literary journalism from other non-fiction writing, Sims compares journalism and literary journalism, and he is not as strict as Hartsock when it comes to what to include in the form. All US-American scholars look at literary journalism from the journalistic point of view and they examine both authors and texts. Mark Kramer sets up a list of what is permissible in literary journalism, which is criticised by Aucoin, whose point of departure is the works of the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski. He identifies the reportage as the expression of literary journalism. Like Kramer he is interested in the concepts of truth, credibility and verifiability, but comes to a different conclusion. Doug Underwood is the only American researcher who considers only authors in his investigation. He wants to show to what extent journalism has influenced literature, but he does not offer a definition or description of literary journalism.

Relatively little has been written on the subject by Australian scholars. They all agree that Australia followed the British tradition, which began with Daniel Defoe.

There is no disputing the fact that literary journalism exists, and various authors, such as Marcus Clarke, George Johnston, and Robert Drewe, are examined by Conley. Like Underwood, Conley looks at the influence of journalistic techniques in the work of these authors and, like Underwood, he defines the form by authors rather than texts. Matthew Ricketson is the only one to attempt a more theoretical approach. However, his emphasis is on book-length literary journalism, and he is mostly concerned to give justification for having chosen book-length projects for his study. Coming, like the other scholars, from the journalistic side, Ricketson is mainly interested in the creative process, which then shows where the author's working methods are akin to those of journalists.

In Germany, literary journalism is clearly under-researched, which reflects the rarity of this form in the German speaking literature. Most approaches use the American phenomenon of New Journalism as their starting point and yardstick in their appreciation of the form. Here, it should be noted that the term "literary journalism" is used, but it is neither defined nor explained in detail. It is seen as the field where journalism and literature overlap, but not where the two elements create something new. All authors cited in the review work in the area of journalism studies, and largely look at the topic from the author-level. Only Elisabeth Klaus investigates the concepts of truth, verifiability and credibility similarly to Aucoin, and offers an insight into the reportage tradition in Germany. Egon Erwin Kisch is shown as the most prominent and Günter Wallraff as the best-known contemporary writer of what could be called literary journalism.

Unlike their English-speaking counterparts, the German scholarly approach comes explicitly from the journalistic field, and does not try to prove the importance of journalistic technique in the success of various authors. This difference of approach mirrors the difference in standing of the form in the English and German speaking world. This thesis will further investigate and highlight this disparity.

3 Methodology

In studying literary journalism, the researcher encounters from the very beginning the difficulties inherent in this area of inquiry. Already choosing the term ‘literary journalism’ is a decisive act in itself as literary journalism has many names, such as literary nonfiction, narrative non-fiction, creative non-fiction, factual fiction, journalistic nonfiction, and reportage, to note but a few.

This plethora of terms shows that it is difficult to situate a genre that combines fact and fiction. Furthermore, it indicates that research on the topic is greatly fragmented. In this context John Hartsock’s decision to select the two most widely used terms, literary journalism and literary non-fiction, and to assign them to journalism research (literary journalism) and literary research (literary non-fiction) (Hartsock, 2000, p. 9) is useful. It is also important to note that research stemming from the literary field tends to classify far more texts as literary journalism than those from journalism research. Terms such as ‘narrative’ or ‘creative’ in combination with nonfiction, for example, leave room for writings such as personal essays. As Matthew Ricketson states, the use of the term nonfiction, which is rather elastic, leads to the inclusion of books on “cooking and gardening” [or] “politics, ... true crime, travel, history and biography” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 71).

Another question to consider is whether literary journalism should be seen as a ‘form’ or a ‘genre’. Hartsock and Connery tend to choose ‘form’ in order to acknowledge that the understanding of what literary journalism is “is still very much emerging” (Connery, 1990, p. 3; Hartsock, 2000, p. 1). As far as the state of the matter in Germany is concerned, it is also more appropriate to use ‘form’ as there is no clear definition of literary journalism. Often the term *Grenzgänger* [border crosser] is used for the practitioners of literary journalism, implying that it is not seen as a developed genre but as something in between the fields of journalism and literature (Bleicher & Pörksen, 2004). In Australia, the term “literary journalism” is used alongside creative nonfiction or literary nonfiction. Matthew Ricketson uses “book-length journalism” (Ricketson, 2010a) to describe literary journalism that goes beyond a reportage or essay.

In this thesis, the term “literary journalism” will be used. First of all, this term is the most widely used by scholars world-wide. Secondly, and more importantly, it depicts best where the form comes from and what its components are: literature and journalism. As the research for this thesis is based on journalism studies, terms such as literary non-fiction are not suitable as they do not represent the specific journalistic

traits of the form. Furthermore, in accordance with the overwhelming majority of studies on literary journalism, it is seen as part of journalism rather than literature. The methodological approach thus taken in this thesis comes from journalism rather than literary studies.

Comparative approach

Using a comparative approach is not merely an accidental choice, born out of the fact that I am familiar with both German and Australian cultures. A comparative approach is credited with clarifying interpretations, and highlighting how much certain developments belong to very specific contexts. In its simplest definition, comparative research has been deemed “a study that compares two or more nations with respect to some common activity” (Edelstein cited in Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012, p. 4). It can, as Esser and Hanitzsch (2012, p. 4) have pointed out, help to “calibrate the scope” of the inquiry and prevent the findings of one country being “taken for granted as ‘normal’”.

In the case of literary journalism, much of the discourse has been set by the United States. Although this thesis concentrates on the study of two countries, the presence of a third, namely the United States, will be felt as a touchstone for the development in Australia and Germany. Yet this study also helps to limit the overgeneralization of the American form of literary journalism as being viewed as the only developmental path and expression of literary journalism.

The comparative approach also forces attention to areas that at first may seem peripheral to the study of literary journalism, such as libel laws and privacy regulations. In order to explain the differences between two rather different traditions, these can assume considerable significance.

Historical approach

The historical context has played a major role in the development of literary journalism in Germany and Australia. Understanding how the genre developed greatly helps to explain the similarities and, more importantly, the differences in how literary journalism is defined, practised and received in Germany and Australia. This is why I have chosen to present not only four case studies but also introduce these case studies with a chapter on the German and Australian literary journalism tradition, so as to contextualise the case studies.

I accept Aucoin’s dictum that literary journalism, like its parents, literature and journalism, is a social and cultural construct (Aucoin, 2001, p. 7). I will also contend

that literary journalism is based on culturally and socially accepted conventions. The differences in German and Australian literary journalism will show that literary journalism is shaped by different expectations and histories. Therefore, the historical approach, that is, tracing the development of journalistic forms that combine both journalism and literature, is vital in order to understand the present state of the matter.

Case studies

First and foremost I have chosen to study full-length books only when looking at literary journalism, and not newspaper or magazine articles, in order to ensure better comparability of the material. “Book-length” literary journalism offers greater scope for analysis, especially when it comes to literary criteria such as narrative methods. Matthew Ricketson uses the term “book-length journalism” to describe literary journalism and defines it in this way: “where practitioners use journalistic methods to research and write independently about contemporary people, events, and issues at book-length in a timely manner for a broad audience they are engaged in book-length journalism” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 2).

The first criterion according to which the books for the case study chapters were chosen is that they should be written by prominent proponents of journalism or literary journalism in each country. A second criterion, which is desirable, but has been fulfilled only to a certain extent, is thematic comparability as it facilitates the analysis and explanation of similarities and differences in the approaches of the respective authors.

The case studies chosen for this thesis are the German books *Aktenkundig* (1993), edited by Hans-Joachim Schädlich and *Der Aufmacher* [Lead Story] (1977) by Günter Wallraff and the Australian books *Stasiland* (2002) by Anna Funder and *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* (2004) by Helen Garner. While the Australian examples seem obvious choices as Anna Funder and especially Helen Garner are well-known proponents of literary journalism in Australia, the German books, at least at first sight, appear to be unlikely matches for the Australian ones.

However, by sharing the topic of the Stasi, which is the abbreviated name for *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* [Ministry for State Security] and a synonym for surveillance, spying, and dictatorship in the times of the former GDR, *Stasiland* and *Aktenkundig* are highly suitable for a comparison of literary journalism in Australia and Germany. Given the thematic closeness, it is possible to directly compare and contrast the different approaches to the topic and, more importantly, to examine the limits of what is seen as permissible in literary journalism in the two countries.

Published in 2002, *Stasiland* is set in the former East Germany and is based on a series of interviews. It was not a book driven by the author's actual involvement in the events depicted, but by a sense of exploration of a reality that, as far as Anna Funder was concerned, had not yet been sufficiently told. The topic of the Stasi is an unusual one to be taken up by someone who has no connection to East Germany. Anna Funder was no eyewitness to the Stasi regime and did not suffer from the oppressive political system. She wrote from the position of an outsider, a fact which was seen critically in Germany, mainly in the eastern part, but was not deemed contentious in Australia and Great Britain, where *Stasiland* received good to excellent reviews and was awarded prizes.

In contrast to *Stasiland*, *Aktenkundig* is a collection of eyewitness reports of authors all of who had been spied upon by the Stasi. The majority of them were not allowed to publish their works in the GDR. Some were sent to prison, others were deported to West Germany or else West German authorities either paid the GDR government for their release or exchanged them for imprisoned GDR spies. Reading the authors' short biographies on the back cover of *Aktenkundig*, one difference to the protagonists of Anna Funder's book becomes immediately evident: all of the East German contributors were more or less well-known intellectuals in the GDR. Some were supported by West German colleagues, or protected and supported by the West German authorities. In that respect they have not much in common with Anna Funder's 'unsung heroes'. However, these writers' and intellectuals' stories and, above all, their feelings when they read through their Stasi files and were confronted with the truth about which of their relatives and friends collaborated with the Stasi, are very similar to what the protagonists in *Stasiland* experienced.

Unlike the above two books, the topics of Günter Wallraff's *Der Aufmacher* and Helen Garner's *Joe Cinque's Consolation* have nothing in common. Both Wallraff and Garner are well-known in their respective countries and while in Australia Garner is always mentioned when it comes to literary journalism, in Germany Wallraff is famous for his critical reportages and is most probably its best-known investigative journalist. Apart from their fame, these two writers also have a certain degree of notoriety in common and this makes them an interesting pair when it comes to their literary journalism.

Günter Wallraff's *Der Aufmacher* [Lead Story] is about the author's experience as an undercover journalist at Germany's only tabloid *Bild Zeitung*. It is also a document of the political climate of Germany in the 1970s with a high degree of

topicality for the time. Upon its publication in 1977, Wallraff found himself the victim of what can be called a witch-hunt by the publisher of *Bild*, Axel Springer and conservative politicians. There were several law suits against him, going as far as the German Constitutional Court. The focus of these lawsuits was his undercover reporting, that is, his covert information gathering and the alleged breach of privacy laws connected with these methods. These points, in addition to Wallraff's obvious biases, make *Der Aufmacher* a good book for the case study analysis.

When it comes to Helen Garner, one can state that she is probably the best known, but also the most controversial, author of literary journalism in Australia. Although *Joe Cinque's Consolation* created less of a critical storm than did *The First Stone*, Garner was accused of having only presented one side of the story. Published some time after the actual event *Joe Cinque's Consolation* centres on the trial of Joe Cinque's girl friend Anu Singh who murdered Joe in 1997, and the suffering of his family after this event. Similar to Wallraff, one of the points that has been at the centre of criticism of Garner's work is her subjectivity and openly presented bias.

Criteria for analysis

Scholarly research into literary journalism is theoretically most advanced in the United States. It is here that the clearest criteria for analysis can be found. The American debate about literary journalism, as carried out by journalism scholars, centres on the notions of accuracy, verifiability, and authenticity. Those scholars who have tried to "legitimize literary journalism as a genre of *journalism* ... have hinged their classification scheme on the criterion of verifiability" (Aucoin, 2001, p. 7). This verifiability comes with narrow rules of 'thou shalt not use', such as those proposed by Mark Kramer: "no composite scenes, no misstated chronology, no falsification of the discernible drift or proportion of events, no invention of quotes, no attribution of thoughts to sources" (Kramer, 1995, p. 25).

However, this strict rule is borne out of the American journalistic ideal of objective reporting, which is not necessarily shared by other countries and which is increasingly questioned (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Bennett, 2003; Schudson, 2001; 2003). Importantly, it was already called into question by the American New Journalism which, after all, was a rejection of what had been called much earlier "more or less well-balanced sentences, capable of grammatical construction, conflicting with no social conventionality or party prejudice" (Stead cited in Cavanagh, 2007, p. 13). If the directive of "no composite scenes, no misstated chronology, no falsification of the

discernible drift or proportion of events, no invention of quotes, no attribution of thoughts to sources” (ibid.) is to be taken seriously, then many writers in English and other languages, such as the late Polish writer Ryszard Kapuscinski or Australian writers Helen Garner and Anna Funder fall short of it. I am following Aucoin in rejecting the strict demands placed on literary journalism by journalism scholars such as Kramer on the well-established evidence that journalism, too, “constructs a truth that is based on culturally accepted conventions” (Aucoin, *ibid.*; Gans, 1979; Schudson, 2003; Tuchman, 1978).

To achieve a high degree of commensurability I have chosen to select distinct criteria by which to assess the case studies. Since the subject of investigation is literary journalism the criteria come from both journalism and literature. Some of the criteria are contentious since they either go against the journalistic notion of what is permissible, or do not suit literary scholars who merely look at narrative quality (see Aucoin, 2001, p. 7).

As journalistic criteria, topicality, research, transparency, objectivity, and clarity were selected. The literary criteria are originality, immersion, strong personal voice, internal thoughts and feelings, subjective evaluation of events and persons, and narrative techniques.

These criteria are partly derived from the works of the German journalism scholar Stephan Ruß-Mohl (2003), and from the American journalism and literary journalism scholars James L. Aucoin (2001) and Norman Sims (1995). Also incorporated are views by the Australian journalism scholar and practitioner Matthew Ricketson (2010a).

In order to create awareness for the need to increase journalistic quality Stephan Ruß-Mohl asked journalists to set up a catalogue of criteria by which they would determine quality of journalism. From their answers he developed a so-called “magic polygon” (Ruß-Mohl, 2003, p. 266), which includes most of the journalistic criteria used in this analysis. Unlike Ruß-Mohl, Aucoin looks at literary journalism and thus includes both journalistic and literary criteria. The same goes for Norman Sims. In his doctoral thesis Matthew Ricketson presented six elements of literary journalism, some of which are also considered in this context (Ricketson, 2010a, pp. 69-70). Aucoin, by establishing his criteria not solely on American authors but by studying the Polish writer Ryszard Kapuscinski, holds a comparative approach which is apposite for my own work. In the following each criterion is described briefly and the reasons for choosing it

are explained. A number of the criteria presented below either need to be fulfilled or must not be fulfilled to make for a work of literary journalism.

Journalistic Criteria

The first criterion, topicality, is listed as one of the quality criteria for journalism by Ruß-Mohl. To him the topic of a journalistic text should have a connection to the time in which it is written as well as being of interest to the reader (Ruß-Mohl, 2003, p. 265). This is in line with Aucoin, who maintains that “literary journalism is printed prose dealing with real current events” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 6). Other aspects are to what extent the topic is relevant for the audience or for society in general and whether events of the day or a topic of political interest is presented. Topicality is a criterion which has to be fulfilled.

It is a given that research should be included in the list of criteria for the evaluation of literary journalism. Matthew Ricketson even insists on “extensive research” (Ricketson, 2010a, pp. 69-70). The questions how information was acquired and how research was conducted are vital in journalism and play an equally prominent role in literary journalism. In order to qualify as a work of literary journalism, journalistic research methods such as conducting interviews or studying files should be applied. Furthermore, the writer should have access to first-hand information and where possible be an involved observer. An element that is especially important in Germany is being an eyewitness, used as a means of gathering information, and achieving authenticity and credibility.

The next criterion, transparency, is connected to research in that it implies the disclosure of research methods, that is, the reporting process is shown to the reader. According to Aucoin transparency builds credibility and he uses the example of Ryszard Kapuscinski to underline this. Kapuscinski was known and often criticised for his unconventional way of obtaining information. In literary journalism, transparency also includes that the author discloses his or her ‘ground rules’, that is, informs the reader of the techniques which were applied as well as the biases to be expected. According to Aucoin, it is then left to the reader to judge the writer’s credibility (Aucoin, 2001, p. 15). To some extent one could state that in literary journalism transparency is of greater importance than accuracy, a criterion which insists on verifiability in literary journalism (see Kramer, 1995). As far as Aucoin is concerned, the focus on accuracy “fails to reflect the voluminous evidence that journalism constructs truth that is based on culturally accepted conventions” (Gans cited in Aucoin,

2001). Demanding nothing but complete factuality would confine literary journalism to a very narrow field and exclude many writers, such as Kapuscinski, Garner, Wallraff, and others.

At first sight objectivity, which is clearly a journalistic criterion, seems to be difficult to fulfil in literary journalism and the question is whether this criterion should feature prominently in a form where there is the personal involvement of the writer. This involvement can lead to a lack or complete absence of objectivity, in the sense that the piece is not balanced and there is no diversity of perspectives. Helen Garner's work is a fitting example of the problems writers of literary journalism face when it comes to objectivity. As Willa McDonald states, Garner's concentration is on "the subjectivity of the narrator" (McDonald, 2011, p. 260) and she "never presumes objectivity" (McDonald, 2011, p. 263). McDonald goes on to maintain that Garner's "self-appointed role is to investigate her own subjectivity in the hope that her honesty will resonate with the readers" (McDonald, 2011, p. 269). One can say that storytelling techniques such as Garner's, which include an emotional focus, and which are an important element of literary journalism, all but cancel out objectivity, or balanced reporting in the journalistic sense.

It has to be noted here that the concept of objectivity is a contested value in journalism, in so far as the act of selecting material for a report already tends to imply a certain degree of subjectivity. Thus, if the account rendered is true to the facts and news and opinion are separated, a certain degree of objectivity can be achieved, but it should not be a mandatory criterion. In this context it is transparency, which is part of the reader-writer contract that helps to establish credibility and trustworthiness.

In the context of this thesis, the criterion of clarity is applied in the sense of comprehensibility. As Ruß-Mohl states, a journalistic text should be written in clear language, true to facts, and it should supply the necessary contextual information (Ruß-Mohl, 2003, p. 265). This is in line with Kramer's opinion that in literary journalism "style counts, and tends to be plain and spare" (Kramer, 1995, p. 30). He does, however, add another, literary, element by stating that "clear, lucid, personal language draws readers toward experiencing the immediacy of scenes, and the force of ideas", which points more to a narrative technique than a journalistic one.

The criterion of originality covers the points of reading incentive [*Leseanreiz*], as well as the research undertaken by the author. This can be interviews, visiting certain locations or, as in the case of Garner, attending court trials. In the case of Günter Wallraff it means working undercover. Ruß-Mohl calls the latter point "exclusivity"

(Ruß-Mohl, 2003, p. 265), and is to some extent connected to topicality. The reader should be presented with a topic or a special aspect thereof offering new perspectives that are exclusively revealed by the author.

Literary Criteria

As a literary criterion, originality includes stylistic means such as immersion, voice, subjectivity, structure and the usage of dramatic technique (Sims, 1995). To Norman Sims, immersion (reporting) is a defining criterion of literary journalism: “immersion reporting, narrative techniques that free the voice of the writer and high standards of accuracy” (Sims, 1995, p. 3). Furthermore, it serves the purpose of comprehending subjects in-depth. According to Kramer it might also contribute to accuracy in that, unlike in news journalism, there is more time to “second-guess and rethink first reactions” (Kramer, 1995, p. 23). Immersion reporting is a feature of most works of literary journalism.

Strong personal voice is a defining characteristic of literary journalism, for instance, in Kapuscinski’s work (Sims cited in Aucoin, 2001, p. 11). The strong personal voice also indicates the presence of the author, which serves to establish credibility (Aucoin, 2001, p. 12; Sims, 1995, p. 9). The criterion, however, also has journalistic roots and according to Ullmann and Colbert (1991),

It is built upon the journalistic tradition that considers information from ‘primary sources’ –original documents, data gathered empirically by the reporter, eye-witness reports – to be of greater value than that gathered from secondary sources – information and evidence provided by third parties, including government officials and police and other investigative agencies. (Ullmann & Colbert cited in Aucoin, 2001, p. 12)

The criterion of internal thoughts and feelings can be seen as a complement to strong personal voice. It is similar to what Mark Kramer calls “intimate voice” which he defines as “the voice ... of someone who has illuminated experience with private reflection, but who has not transcended crankiness, wryness, doubtfulness ...” (Kramer, 1995, p. 29). To him, “the genre’s power is the strength of this voice” (ibid.).

When it comes to subjective evaluation of events and persons, Aucoin points out Kapuscinski’s personal observations: “His persona is always present; we see the world through his eyes, experience events through his subjectivity” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 10). Subjectivity is a feature that can be found in many works of literary journalism, as in the four case studies presented in this thesis. This criterion is a contentious one. As

Matthew Ricketson points out it is problematic when, as in Helen Garner's case, "journalism is primarily driven by ... personal response to people, events and issue" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81). As discussed earlier, subjectivity can be a problem in journalism. However, in literary journalism it is common and to a certain extent permissible. Of course, the writer has to ensure transparency as to his or her standpoint and clearly point out biases and subjective responses to the events that are described. Ricketson's statement disregards the literary element of the form.

As far as narrative techniques are concerned most scholars agree that they are essential characteristics of literary journalism and thus common to literary journalists (Sims, 1995, p. 5; Ricketson, 2010a, p. 69-70; Aucoin, 2001, p. 8). The narrative element clearly differentiates literary journalism from news journalism. John Hartsock's term "narrative literary journalism" for the form is also a clear indication as to the importance of narrative techniques. He argues that the form is narrative and not discursive and uses techniques common to realistic novels and short stories (Hartsock, 2000, p. 12). Techniques such as dialogue and scene construction, to name but a few, are essential ingredients of works of literary journalism. The fact that narrative techniques can also include composite scenes and characters and a changed chronology makes them contentious at least as far as journalism scholars are concerned. In *The First Stone* Helen Garner, for instance, splits one person, Jenna Mead, into several people. When this was disclosed, Garner's credibility suffered a great deal and readers were led to believe that the book was a work of fiction. This also implied that the so-called reader-writer contract was broken (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 78).

Changing the chronology of events is also to be seen as critical in literary journalism. If it is done for effect, as was the case in Anna Funder's *Stasiland*, it can undermine the credibility of the author and decrease the degree of authenticity. The same can be said for using interior monologue (see Ricketson, 2010a, 2010c). Thus, the preferred narrative techniques applied in literary journalism should be dialogue as a multi-weave narrative device, direct quotes, and first-person narration.

The above discussion indicates that not all journalistic criteria can be rigorously fulfilled in literary journalism, which depends upon a flexible and varying interplay of journalistic and literary criteria. Nonetheless I will apply all these criteria to the case studies to establish their position within this complex form.

4 The history of literary journalism in Germany

Germany does not have a tradition of literary journalism comparable to the United States, Great Britain or Australia, and not a lot of scholarly attention has been devoted to the genre. The focus of research in Germany is more on the differences between literature and journalism than on the overlapping of the two, and the point of departure is mostly the American ‘New Journalism’. In this chapter the German form of literary journalism – the reportage – is going to be analysed so as to trace the history of literary journalism in this country. A detailed description of the reportage genre and its various forms, for example, travel reportage and social reportage, is followed by a presentation of the main practitioners of the genre.

4.1 Where journalism and literature overlap: the reportage

There are numerous definitions of reportage, some of which I would like to present as an introduction to this chapter.

Michael Haller offers the following definition: “It is a form of presentation related to and spread by modern journalism, whose core is the eyewitness report” (Haller, 1997, p. 17). However, this only covers the journalistic aspects of the reportage. Seen as a form of communication, Haller concedes, reportage stands for “the ancient literary genre of narrating” and thus, “the history of the literary form of reportage is closely linked to the development of the journalistic form of the reportage” (ibid.). Reportage also overcomes “social distances and institutional barriers in order to look behind the facade” (Haller, 1997, p. 33).

Hannes Haas, who investigated the links between literature, journalism and social sciences in the late nineteen eighties concedes that “[t]here are historical, developmental connections between literary, socio-scientific, and journalistic ways of seeing reality as well as the methodological approaches, that is, the study of complex reality” (Haas, 1987, p. 279). Haas puts forward that this development started with travel reports with their close reference to ethnology and politics (Johann Gottfried Seume and Georg Forster), then turned to the correspondent reports and feuilleton (Heinrich Heine), and social reports (Georg Weerth). These early forms were united for the first time by the literary social reportage of Max Winter at the turn of the 20th century and Egon Erwin Kisch in the 1920s and they brought considerable

methodological progress as far as the approach to foreign realities was concerned (Haas, 1987, p. 279).

Kurt Reumann, on the other hand, looking at the same question fifteen years later, differentiates only two basic forms of reportage: “the colourful report ... about an eventful occurrence and the milieu study, which is made more interesting in a suspenseful manner by the description of actions” (Reumann, 2003, p. 139). He goes on to state that “every good travel report is a milieu study in this sense” and that “reportage can [cover] topics from all areas, and where the reporter either reports from his own eye-witness experience ... or uses the information given by eyewitnesses as the raw material” (Reumann, 2003, p. 139).

While Haas provides an in-depth study, his opinions, strongly coloured by his background as a sociologist, help to clarify the historical development. However, unlike Reumann, who approaches the topic from the journalistic perspective, Haas tends to neglect these other aspects of the genre.

In his article “Literary Reportage: The ‘Other’ Literary Journalism”, John Hartsock states that “[O]ne central strand of that genre derives from Germany and in no small part from the efforts of Egon Erwin Kisch” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 117). He cites Siegfried Kracauer (1889-1966) who said that “[F]or a number of years now, the reportage has enjoyed in Germany the highest favour of representation, since it alone is said to be able to capture life unposed” (Kracauer cited in Hartsock, 2009, p. 117). It is important to note here that this reportage genre

is not that of conventional journalism practice as understood in the United States ... Unlike the concept of journalistic “objectivity” as it took shape in the United States at the same time, the German version emphasized first-person witness as the only kind that could make a claim to epistemological integrity. (Hartsock, 2009, p. 117).

In the introduction to *The Faber Book of Reportage*, John Carey explains why he chose reportages written by eye-witnesses: “one advantage of insisting on eye-witness evidence is that it makes for authenticity. ... eye-witness accounts have the feel of truth because they are quick, subjective and incomplete, unlike ‘objective’ or reconstituted history, which is laborious but dead” (Carey, 1987, p. xxix).

The common element in these scholarly opinions is that the reportage is characterized by its authenticity, which is achieved through eyewitness reporting and turning to primary sources. They all agree that the writing of reportages mostly occurs in times of social and political change, and alerts to and comments on these changes.

In the following, different types of reportage are going to be presented, and it will again become obvious that it is difficult to draw the boundary between journalism and literature. Further, there is also a certain amount of overlap in the various forms of reportage in that there is no clear divide where travel reportage ends and the political reportage begins. Also the line between reportage and *feuilleton* tends to be elastic.

4.2 Travel reportage

The literary tradition is represented by the travel report and the point of departure for Haller is the Latin verb “reportare” in the sense of “gathering” and “bringing back” (Haller 1997, p. 19). He sees the “archetypal pattern” in every reportage since Herodotus: “The narrator had set out from home, had discovered and taken up things in foreign countries, had brought them home – and now he spreads them out in front of the eyes and ears of those who had stayed home” (Haller, 1997, p. 19). The main point in this context is not to tell about the travels themselves, but the “bringing the distant closer”, to inform, and to broaden the readers’ horizons (Haller, 1997, pp. 20-21).

According to Haller, in Germany, the travel reportage as a literary genre surfaced again only after the decline of the “courtly baroque poetry” of the 17th century and in the course of the 18th century it was developed into a “poetic narrative”. During the period of “Sturm und Drang” [Storm and Stress], the travel report was no longer limited by constraints to be authentic and truthful. Travel journals with elements of reasoning and self-reflection, such as Goethe’s recollections of his travels to Italy in the years 1786 and 1788, were popular and at the end of the 18th century, with the transition into early romanticism, the connection to reality was more and more discarded (Haller, 1997, pp. 23-24). Every-day experiences were banned and classified as trivial and below the literary standard. For the first time there was a hierarchical separation of literature and journalism. At the beginning of the 19th century, literature is made a part of art and the medium of the “absolute spirit or intellect, as Hegel called it (Haller, 1997, p. 24). Haller’s proposition to see travel reportage as a journalistic genre at the beginning of the 19th century is thus a convincing one.

Roughly a decade before Haller, Michael Geisler (1982) investigated the reportage genre. In his book *Die literarische Reportage in Deutschland. Möglichkeiten und Grenzen eines operativen Genres* [The literary reportage in Germany. Possibilities and limitations of an operative genre], he attempts to cover many different forms of reportage through the centuries. As the title of the book, which originally was Geisler’s

doctoral thesis, infers, the focus is on the literary aspect of reportage. This is a unique endeavour, as reportage in Germany is mostly investigated from the journalistic point of view. The difficulty, however, to define what “literary reportage” is, becomes evident when Geisler tries to differentiate travel reportage from the travel report. He states that while basically “all reportages can be defined as travel reportage”, the travel report is a different type of text (Geisler, 1982, p. 167).

In his opinion,

[t]he travel reportage wants to present the people in another country in their socio-historical context, not as something exotic, but as people who have similar desires and sorrows as the readers at home - with the only difference that these desires and sorrows have taken on different forms due to different historical conditions. By narrating the actions of people by means of individual examples, it disclosed the background which is essential for understanding the other culture. (Geisler, 1982, p. 169)

In contrast to this, he describes the travel report as being not ordered, partly fragmented, unreflected and unedited (Geisler, 1982, p. 168). In the context of this chapter, Geisler’s differentiation is not considered. It reflects an approach which confuses more than it clarifies, since immediately after having made this distinction Geisler states that it is by no means absolute, and that there are many mixed forms such as travel guides and handbooks on the one hand, and travel novels on the other. In German there are the two terms: *Reisebericht* [travel report] and *Reisereportage* [travel reportage]. The first is part of the literary tradition and the latter of the journalistic tradition. In the following the term reportage is used except in direct quotations which include the term ‘report’. Geisler’s approach is a good example which shows how difficult it was and still is to define a genre, its socio-cultural function as well as its different forms. This difficulty in coming up with a clear definition also illustrates that research in the field is to some extent compartmentalised and there is no true interdisciplinary approach. It is also not quite clear how Geisler identifies or defines the “literary” component of the reportage. Since Geisler, little conclusive research of the literary components of genre reportage has been conducted, which is illustrated by the fact that Michael Haller, whose textbook *Die Reportage. Ein Handbuch für Journalisten*, widely used in journalism courses, is still quoting Geisler, whose book was published almost 30 years ago.

4.2.1 Travel reportage as socio-critical-writing

The hierarchical separation of literature and journalism mentioned above to some extent coincided with new developments regarding the reading habits of people in Germany. More and more people took to reading and the audience became more heterogeneous and less class-specific (Geisler, 1982, p. 144). Thus, at the end of the 18th century, the most important elements which contributed to the development of the new journalistic-literary forms come together: “A somewhat developed bourgeois public (which, however, was still restricted by censorship), a continuously growing readership, becoming more and more interested in current information, and a generation of authors whose economic and journalistic interest made them supply this information” (Geisler, 1982, p. 145). One can thus conclude that the tendency or trend to separate literature and journalism was reversed.

With a growing number of readers and a more differentiated audience, the need for more detailed and extensive reports and analyses arose. Most publishers of those times reacted to this and included reports in their newspapers, mostly about foreign countries as there was still strict censorship of reports from within the country (Geisler, 1982, p. 148). In this context it is important to note that in Germany in the 18th century the freedom of the press was granted as “a princely act of pardon or for practical reasons” (Wilke, 2003, p.473). This freedom could be revoked by a simple law at any time as it was not protected by a constitution (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, Vol. 17, p. 281). At the same time, there was an increase in the number of newspapers and readers, which was very closely connected to the “spreading of the enlightenment movement” (Wilke, 2008, p. 153).

Thus, the travel reportage lent itself as a suitable form of reporting about the social and political conditions of other countries. The German readers could use this information to compare the situation in a foreign country with that at home and critically evaluate it (Geisler, 1982). In this respect, writers like Johann Gottfried Seume and Georg Forster were forerunners who paved the way for Heinrich Heine.

4.2.2 Johann Gottfried Seume's realism

The role Johann Gottfried Seume (1763-1810) played in the development of reportage as a genre is not quite clear. For some, he and his contemporary, Georg Forster (1754-1794), are the “founding fathers of reportage”, while others cautiously place them into the tradition of the travel report. They are, however, seen as some kind of ideological fathers of reportage (Geisler, 1982, p. 155).

To understand the impact of Seume's travel reportages, especially his most famous one, *Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre 1802* [*Walk to Syracuse in the Year 1802*], it is important to note that the development of reportage as a genre is closely related to the political emancipation of the bourgeoisie (Geisler, 1982, p. 154). Another important factor in this context is the author himself. Unlike others who travelled to Italy before him, as for example Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who spent the years from 1776-1778 in Italy, Seume was "a free man", independent of aristocracy, the church, or a family. His choice to walk from Germany to Italy instead of taking a coach has been interpreted as a kind of protest against the "travel privileges of the wealthy traveller to Italy" (Grimm, 2003). This in itself already shows that his journey was not an ordinary one. His intention is not to "see exquisite ... galleries", nor did he want to conduct learned studies (Seume, 2010, p. 97). He wanted to look behind the official picture of Italy, behind the descriptions of Goethe, in which the arts and culture dominated. The conditions he encountered in Italy do not have anything to do with the great past of the Roman Empire. He saw streets which are "not only covered with beggars, but these beggars are really dying there of hunger and misery" (Seume, 2010, p. 217).

The purpose of his reportage was thus not to tell his readers about the arts and ancient Italian monuments, but to present a socio-critical text and to take on the role of a reporter, who seeks comparisons to the current conditions in Germany (Haller, 1997, p. 2). Seume wrote as a

political publicist [journalist] and analysed the social situation in Italy during the Napoleonic rule. And he criticised very clearly the rapid decline of the country, which he [...] blamed on the way the high ecclesiastical dignitaries lived. Thus, Seume's travel reportage stands in great contrast to the other important book about Italy in the 19th century, Goethe's *Italian Journey*. (Beintker, 2010, n. p.)

It is this analysis with its parallels to the conditions in Germany and its socio-critical significance, which made it difficult to have the reportage/book published. After it was first published in Wieland's *Teutschem Merkur* in 1803 (Beintker, 2010, n. p.) it later became what is nowadays called a bestseller, not least due to its political currency (Haller, 1997, p. 26).

According to Siegel, Seume has formulated the basic rules of news and the reportage still valid today (Siegel, 1978, p. 41). The key words of these rules are research, authenticity, that is, the eyewitness element, credibility, and honesty as well as modesty.

Seume held the opinion that a reporter should observe precisely and be able to prove his observations, that is, he should have done some research. Seume wrote: “I stand for everything I have seen myself, as far as I may trust my opinions and insights: and I have not presented anything I have not heard from rather trustworthy men” (Seume, 2010, p. XI). Seume’s opinion has to be seen as a call for authenticity, in that the reports have to be verifiable.

It must be mentioned again at this point that Seume was not the first person to travel to Italy and to write about it. He could draw on numerous works of “travelling writers, whose reports had discovered Sicily for Europe in the last decades of the 18th century” (Scamardi, 1995, p. 58). Scamardi sees this as evidence that Seume may not have “presented anything I have not heard from rather trustworthy and credible men” (Seume, 2010, p. XI). According to Scamardi, readers could well have had the impression that Seume only wrote down things that these “trustworthy men” told him during his journey. While Scamardi’s argument is rather speculative, Albert Meier, who edited Seume’s *Walk to Syracuse*, states that there are numerous factual mistakes and incongruities in Seume’s travel report and that these show that he “wrote very hastily and impulsively and relied on his memory without researching or checking the facts in detail” (Meier, 2010b, p. 305). Meier goes on to say that since Seume’s travel notes and a large part of the letters are lost, “one can only make assumptions as to Seume’s combination technique and factual accuracy,” however, “it is certain that Seume sometimes made things up and rearranged many facts afterwards” (ibid.).

The point raised by Scamardi of whether or not Seume should have quoted from the works he read prior to or during his journey, or the question of whether there are factual mistakes in the reportage as mentioned by Meier, do not automatically disqualify his work as a reportage. These stylistic means or techniques can also be found in Egon Erwin Kisch’s reportages some centuries later. The question is whether Seume’s *Walk to Syracuse* in the year 1802 is travel reportage or social reportage, and whether the different facets of the genre can be differentiated from each other in the way that for instance Geisler does. It can be argued that Seume’s travel reportage can be seen as a forerunner of early social reportage as it addresses social ills as well as social changes.

4.3 The early social reportage

In order to understand the significance of the texts of Georg Weerth and others, one has to consider the social and political conditions in Germany in the time between 1815 (Wiener Kongress) and 1848 (March Revolution). The name for this period, *Vormärz*, stems from the national and liberal forces which brought on the Revolution of (March) 1848. The period was characterized by a “reactionary gagging of all national and liberal movements ... [and] ... a slowly beginning industrialization and, especially since 1830, widespread poverty of the masses” (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, 1983 Vol. 23, p. 269). The demands of the *Vormärz* movement, such as freedom of the press and a constitutional reform, were not fulfilled.

One important characteristic of the writers critical of their times is that they do not want to distinguish themselves with literary style, but want to show their political standpoint. This is why “around the year 1840 in place of the subjective impression, the travel report, the conversational feuilleton ... slowly a literature comes to the fore which completely rests on the principle of agitation” (Hermand, 1976, p. 366). When it comes to the issues which were important, the *Vormärz* writers placed great importance on the social conditions in Germany. While the *Jungdeutschen* [Young Germans] were interested in the freedom of the press, personal freedom and religious tolerance, their issue was social egalitarianism. Thus, in the 1840s industrialism and poverty became important topics. The first writer to make industry a topic in German literature was Georg Weerth (1832 – 1856).

4.3.1 Georg Weerth's social reportages

It was Georg Weerth who also wrote the first social reportages. He was not very well-known in his time, although it can be said today that he contributed greatly to the development of the reportage genre. This lack of interest and neglect of Weerth's work in the former West Germany can be attributed to the fact that he was a close friend of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and little research was devoted to texts that were deemed to have socialist or communist tendencies or content. These were mostly studied by researchers in the former German Democratic Republic (for example Kaiser, 1956/1957; Lange, 1957). Some of Egon Erwin Kisch's reportages experienced a similar fate later (Schlenstedt, 1959; 1985).

Weerth trained as an accountant and in 1843 he moved to Bradford in Yorkshire to work in his profession. After meeting Friedrich Engels, he developed a close

friendship with him. According to Geisler. “[t]he more pronounced the class differences in England bec[a]me in those days” the more Weerth developed from a liberal to an engaged socialist (Geisler, 1982, p. 220). After Engels introduced him to Karl Marx, Weerth moved to Brussels in order to work with Marx and Engels. In a speech given at the Free Trade Conference in Brussels in 1847, he reminded his bourgeois audience of the fact that the workers, too, have power, and that one has to think about free trade in a more different way if one wants social peace (Geisler, 1982). These facts are a clear indication of the political orientation of Georg Weerth, and like Heinrich Heine before him and Egon Erwin Kisch later, he had to leave his native country and live in exile.

In the context of social reportage, the focus is on Georg Weerth’s *Skizzen aus dem sozialen und politischen Leben der Briten* [*Sketches from the social and political life of the Britons*], which were published in the form of letters in the years 1843 and 1844 (Haas, 1987, p. 281) and which were written prior to his engagement for Marx’s newspaper.

Haas places Weerth’s writing into the category of “travel reports and correspondences” with an emphasis on “the socio-reformatory motive” (ibid.). Yet it seems that for Haas, any reports coming from a foreign country are classified ‘travel report’, even if these carry “elements of social reportage, that is, sociological descriptions with economic and historical connections” (ibid.). Haas’s incongruities are yet another indication of how difficult it seems to be to clearly define travel reportage or social reportage.

Geisler, on the other hand, goes as far as saying that Weerth’s sketches are in the “mould of the reportage” (Geisler, 1982, p. 220). He sees a strong resemblance to Egon Erwin Kisch, and from the literary point of view, the tradition of reportage may well have started with Georg Weerth (ibid.). From the stylistic point of view, Geisler describes Weerth’s *Sketches* as being “representational”, “vivid” as well as “descriptive” and draws the conclusion that “someone who writes like this, considers the reader, wants him/her to experience what he himself was overwhelmed by” (Geisler, 1982, p. 223). Among the journalistic techniques Weerth applied were eye-witness reporting, interviewing and role playing.

In one of the *Sketches*, Weerth accompanies a Scottish doctor, called Mac, into a shelter for the homeless. He speaks to the homeless as well as to workers about their situation. This can be described as interviewing. Weerth becomes an eyewitness, and also assumes role play in that he poses as the doctor’s assistant: “Mac taught me to look very solemn or formal and used me as his assistant during a round through at least thirty

workers' dwellings" (Weerth cited in Geisler, 1982, p. 228). According to Haas, this way of working is an "early example of a research technique, which was further developed by Victor Adler, Max Winter, Egon Erwin Kisch, George Orwell and Günter Wallraff and which they turn into an acknowledged instrument/tool for overcoming research obstacles" (Haas, 1987, p. 281).

It can indeed be argued that Weerth combines first-hand knowledge and political beliefs with narrative techniques, and is a reporter who "dares to be human in his text [and] shows the readers who he is" (Bech-Karlson, 2010, p. 5). Since his main topic was social inequality and the situation of the proletarians in Germany and England, one can also state that he wrote social reportages. Even if the times in which he wrote – *Restauration* – were not conducive to social reporting, the social conditions certainly lent themselves to critical reporting.

4.4 The political reportage / feuilleton

Similarly to reportage, there are various definitions of *feuilleton*. It has been described as the "culture section of a newspaper; containing literary and cultural criticism (about theatre, films, concerts, exhibitions, books, etc.); essays, short stories, excerpts from literary works, poems, and often a serialised novel" or as a "small literary form/genre, a contribution to the *feuilleton* section of a newspaper, written in an entertaining style, addressing individual cultural and other issues, whose starting point is often a current event" (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon 1983, Vol. 7, p. 60).

To Georg Jäger, defining *feuilleton* is difficult. There are those who define the *feuilleton* according to where it is placed in the newspaper, while others classify it according to content and style (Jäger, 1988, p. 56). Jäger belongs to those who focus on the stylistic aspects of the *feuilleton*. According to Jäger, the interest of literary studies in the *feuilleton* is largely on three perspectives: its literary significance, its role in cultural policies and as the part of the paper where information on the literary life can be found (Jäger, 1988, p. 67).

Jäger does not consider the journalistic side of *feuilleton*, whereas Gunter Reuss, citing Auburtin (1870-1928), describes *feuilletons* as having "the ability to present a serious matter in an entertaining way and good style, which an ambitious writer and politician should avoid doing at all cost" (Auburtin cited in Reuss, 2003, p. 159). Due to this 'entertaining way', in Germany, the term *feuilleton* is often used as a synonym for "lightweight" and "fickle" (Reuss, 2003, p. 159). The East German journalist, Heinz

Knobloch, who wrote acclaimed feuilletons for the *Berliner Wochenpost*, wrote that “prose poem and newspaper article” merged into feuilleton, in other words, “the reporting of something, done by the journalist combines itself with the reporting about the self of the poet” (Knobloch cited in Reuss, 2003, p. 161).

From the above definitions or attempts thereof, it becomes clear that the *feuilleton*, which is a journalistic genre, combines subjectivity, irony, and satire, and to some extent news reporting, that is, literature and journalism. One of the most prominent exponents of the feuilleton in the 19th century was the renowned poet Heinrich Heine.

4.4.1 Heinrich Heine, journalist or poet?

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) is the prime example of an author who is famous for both his literary and journalistic writing. In Germany, Heine is primarily seen and treated as a poet and writer of travel pieces, songs, and ballads. The focus is on his romantic writing, while the journalistic side of his output has been largely neglected or even ignored. The few articles on Heine, the journalist, reflect the differences between journalism and literature, and the problematic relationship between the two as well as the difficulties of defining the area where the two meet and overlap, that is, the field between the two, which could very well be literary journalism.

When it comes to the genre feuilleton, Heinrich Heine’s contribution is important for modern journalism, as Gunter Reuss concedes. In his article *Ironie als Widerstand* [Irony as a means of resistance], he takes a close look at Heine’s *Briefe aus Berlin* [Letters from Berlin] and talks about what he calls the “very suspicious marriage of poetry and politics” (Reuss, 2003, p. 159). In his opinion, Heine was willing and able to write “courageously and gracefully at the same time,” and in this he was an exception (*ibid.*). In his own time, Heine was criticised harshly by his contemporary Ludwig Börne (1786-1837) and later by Karl Kraus (1874-1936). While Börne was of the opinion that Heine should concentrate on literature and poetry and not write journalistic pieces, which he felt were “a mixture of opinions” (Börne cited in Roß, 2004, p. 91), Kraus accused him of “combining art and life, of poetic and journalistic standards” (Reuss, 2003, p. 160). To Kraus, Heine’s feuilleton style is a sign of his poetic weaknesses. As far as Dieter Roß is concerned, these different kinds of criticism of Heine’s work reflect the difficult relationship of literature and journalism (Roß, 2004, p. 91). To Roß, this historical relationship in Germany is important in addressing the question as to whether there is a strict differentiation of journalism and literature or

whether there is a more gradual merging of the two. According to him, journalism and literature are two distinct and distinguishable areas. While, to his mind, literature is independent of time and current events, journalism publishes current information and opinions and thus depends on the time factor. The rules to be applied are also different, regarding both content and form. He defines journalism as something ‘found’, reflecting reality, while literature is the invented, showing a fictitious reality (Roß, 2004, p. 74).

This approach, however, to a large extent neglects Heine’s background and motivation to write. When in 1831 Heine entered an agreement with the most important and powerful publisher of his time, Johann Friedrich Freiherr Cotta von Cottendorf (1764-1832), he had already published numerous well-received volumes of poetry and travel reportages. Cotta appointed Heine as the Paris correspondent of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* and he was to write about society and culture, excluding any political opinion or commentary (Roß, 2004, p. 76). This proved rather difficult for Heine, who was an ardent supporter of Saint Simon’s criticism of the “parasitic aristocracy”. In Paris he also had contact with Karl Marx and from 1834 he regularly contributed to the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* [German-French Year Books], published by Marx. It goes without saying that this to some extent influenced Heine’s political development. He was convinced of the “ethical task of the artist to recognise the driving forces of social developments and to help in shaping them” (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, 1983, Vol. 9, p. 256).

During the first phase of his stay in Paris, Heine wrote eight extensive reports and reportages, which were later published in book form, titled *Französische Zustände* [French Conditions]. In the second phase (1840-1848), Heine wrote more than 80 articles, later published as a book, *Lutetia*, which according to Roß represent the most important journalistic part of Heine’s work in terms of quality (Roß, 2004, p. 77). For Roß, Heine’s literary and journalistic writing are clearly distinguishable from each other and to him Heine is one of the *Grenzgänger*, who worked in both fields but did not necessarily combine them.

However, for those times, a clear or ‘clean’ border between literature and journalism cannot be drawn for authors, texts or media. In the days of Heinrich Heine, feuilleton consisted of subjective reports about the arts and society. At the same time, political reporting was largely restricted by censorship (Reuss, 2003, p. 161). In the light of this practise of censoring, the feuilleton became a way to express truths “which in other sections of the newspaper no one dares to tell” (Reuss, 2003, p. 163). In his *Briefe aus Berlin* [Letters from Berlin] Heine tries to evade censoring, he wants to

“merely hint, not describe or elaborate” (Reuss, 2003, p. 165). He uses irony and parody, which makes his letters and other pieces of feuilleton so current and modern. As Reuss puts it “In the era of PR-strategists and politically staged realities, irony keeps its sceptical distance and struggles for truth in its own way” (Reuss, 2003, p. 170).

Heine knows how “questionable ... news value can be – not only because of censorship, but also because of the construction of reality, which only fakes objectiveness” (ibid.). Thus, the specific social and communicative achievement of this epoch and of Heinrich Heine does not lie in the separation but in the combination of journalism and literature, of fact and fiction (Lünenborg, 2005, p. 181).

4.4.2 Heinrich Heine's role in the development of the reportage genre

Heinrich Heine's prominent place in the German literary firmament is assured. In the eyes of literary critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki, he is “the most important journalist among the German poets and the most famous poet among the journalists of the whole world” (Reich-Ranicki, cited in Schönfeld, 2006, p. 3). Evelyn Roll, a German journalist writing for the national daily newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, calls Heine the “lightning fast inventor of all journalistic genres” (Roll, 2003). In an article in the weekly magazine *Der Spiegel*, Matthias Matussek claims that “Heinrich Heine invented the modern feuilleton. He mixed everything together, the historical essay, the boulevard stroll, the appeal to the conscience, the review and did not forget the kick below the belt” (Matussek, 2006, p. 112).

Practicing journalists like to emphasise Heinrich Heine's activities as a journalist, whose engagement started at a time when newspaper and magazine publishing established itself as an independent business. Improved printing and distribution facilities together with the political changes before, during and after the French Revolution of 1848 led to fundamental changes of the “political, social, and cultural scenario in Germany” (Roß, 2004, p. 77). According to Jürgen Habermas, this went along with an “Entgrenzung” [delimiting] of the areas of life, that is, politics, society, and culture. “Everything is connected and communicates” (Habermas, 1969, pp. 67-68). It can be claimed that this is the point in time when the transition of functions from fiction and poetry to journalism takes place.

At a time where journalism was only just emerging, Heine “developed and shaped all journalistic genres, which we are still dealing with today (Roll, 2003). Heine wanted to be a journalist, not “merely a travel writer or eyewitness in the tradition of Herodotus and Pliny the Younger, or Daniel Defoe” (Roll, 2003). Matthias Matussek

goes as far as saying that Heinrich Heine “did what was rediscovered by New Journalism and pop literature ... he brings himself into the ‘game’. He meets like-minded companions, he ponders politics and history, he mixes anecdotes and facts, and dreams” (Matussek, 2006, p. 115).

One of the few more detailed analyses of Heinrich Heine’s journalistic development and career is Horst Pöttker’s paper “Modellfall Heinrich Heine. Über das Verhältnis von Journalismus und Schriftstellertum in Deutschland” [The model case Heinrich Heine. About the relationship of Journalism and Writing in Germany], where he explains how at the beginning of the 18th century authors like Daniel Defoe and also Heinrich Heine made way for a professionalisation of journalism with their engagement for the freedom of the press, authorship [Urheberschaft] and the commitment to the truth (Pöttker, 2008, p. 57). “On the one hand, they created the conceptual tools journalism needed to detach itself from literary fiction and poetry, above all the criterion of facticity which can be checked and verified. On the other hand, the two ways to work were still united in one person in these early publicists” (ibid).

By using Heinrich Heine as an example for discussing the relationship between literature and journalism in detail, Pöttker also sheds light on the journalistic culture in the German-speaking world. Like Roll and Matussek, Pöttker concedes that Heine’s journalistic works were characterised by creativeness and that he shaped the genres feuilleton or reportage long before they became professional standards in the popular press in the second half of the 19th century. In his opinion, it is inappropriate that this side of Heine’s work has been neglected for so long.

Evelyn Roll’s explanation for this neglect is the “messed-up reception of Heine’s work, which in this country [Germany] reels between anti-Semitism and philosemitism. First this ‘other’ Heine was blocked by the polemics of Karl Kraus and later by the journalism phobia of the German literary scholars” (Roll, 2003).

As far as Pöttker is concerned, the lack of interest in the journalistic work seems especially inappropriate in Heine’s case. For him working as a journalist it was not an inconvenient diversion from his “proper” literary profession. From today’s point of view, quite the opposite was the case: basically everything published by Heine was journalism, “if this is understood to be the professional endeavour to overcome special, temporal and social communication barriers in order to supply an audience as large and diverse as possible with the most accurate and important information possible” (Pöttker, 2008, p. 59).

Pöttker goes on to explain that for Heine the concepts of public, the public and journalism had a positive and affirmative connotation. *Deutschland. ein Wintermärchen* [Germany. A Winter's Tale], Heine's best-known poem, can also be read as a travel report full of current information and commentaries, in which all locations can easily be identified. Heine reacted very sensitively to any threat to or doubts of his publicist independence.

Heine's contemporaries did not see him as a journalist, but realised that his way of writing was something new, "a beginning or ... even a coup d'état" (Preisendanz, 1968, p. 343). Preisendanz quotes Arnold Ruge, who in 1838 called him a "poet of the newest time", meaning above all Heine's *Reisebilder* [Travel Sketches], which he sees as "an emancipation from the old belief in authority and a new genre" (von Wiese cited in Preisendanz, 1968, p. 343). In 1840, Georg Herwegh describes "the new literature" as a "child of the July Revolution" (von Wiese cited in Preisendanz, 1968, p. 343), and Johannes Scherr states in 1844:

The Paris July Revolution put an end to the period of restoration, but the July Revolution of German literature dates back to the appearance of Heinrich Heine, who with his *Travel Sketches*, whose first volume was published in 1826, drove the Polignacs and Peyronnettes of our literature away from the ministerial desks, and let, if not a new sun, a new red sky rise above the German forest of poets. (Hermand cited in Preisendanz, 1968, p. 343)

The literature on Heine has to be seen as problematic for two reasons: It either neglects to acknowledge the simultaneity of his talents and interests or tends to ascribe an inferior role to his prose writings. Heinrich Heine was a gifted poet as well as a critical and political person, who also used his talents to work journalistically. Apart from the intention to write critically about political issues, Heine, like many other writers throughout history, had to have more than one profession to make ends meet. Either way, it can be argued that Heinrich Heine would not have seen himself as a *Grenzgänger*, but as a writer who tried himself successfully in different genres.

4.5. The development of reportage in the 20th century

At the beginning of World War I (1914-1918), a clear tendency emerged of the arts becoming more political. This intensified further in the Weimar Republic after 1918. In Germany as well as in other European countries, significant social and political changes occurred in the early part of the 20th century which also called for a new approach to

literature and journalism. Writers started to experiment with new structures as the old ones no longer suited the new times. Segel sees it as a “new objectivity”, and optimism that accompanied the economic stabilization achieved in 1924 by the Weimar Republic after the horrendous political and economic turbulence of 1918-23” (Segel, 1997, p.72). The new objectivity had a distinct appeal to writers of leftist persuasion as it gave them the opportunity to present an unvarnished “documentation” of the actual economic and political tensions of the time.

Prominent journalists and writers of this time in Germany were Egon Erwin Kisch, Kurt Tucholsky, Joseph Roth and others, who held strong political views and used their writing to get their point across to their readers, or, in Tucholsky’s case, to warn the readers of the threats to democracy in Germany during the Weimar Republic.

4.5.1 Egon Erwin Kisch

Egon Erwin Kisch (1885-1948) is arguably the most famous and most researched reporter in the German-speaking world. To some, he is the ‘father’ of reportage. Yet this claim has to be refuted since reportages had been written long before Kisch emerged on the journalistic stage, as was shown above, as well as in other European countries. John Hartsock concedes that the “origins of Kisch’s reportage can be traced back at least in part to the feuilleton of French origin in the nineteenth century” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 118). However, according to his contemporary, Bruno Frei, Kisch “opened new perspectives for reportage” (Frei, 1980, p. 13). Unlike others before him, he “discovered that the everyday, the ordinary, can be the greatest sensation, when put into a comprehensive text” (ibid.).

When it comes to the research on Kisch and his reportages, there is a clear difference between German-speaking and US-American scholars, as far as their focus is concerned. Some German researchers, for example Siegel (1973) and Haller (1997), tend to place great importance on the statements Kisch made himself on reportage as a genre and his attitude toward objectivity and truth:

The reporter has no bias, has nothing to justify and has no point of view. He must be an impartial witness and must deliver impartial testimony as reliable as possible; at any rate, such testimony is more important (for clarification) than the clever speech of the district attorney or the defence attorney. (Kisch, 1995, p. 7)

Another approach used by German scholars is to analyse Kisch’s work in a chronological fashion by dividing his writing career into several stages. As early as 1973, Christian E. Siegel suggested looking at Kisch’s reportages by drawing up a

periodical scheme comprising three phases. The first phase, according to Siegel, was between 1918 and 1925 when Kisch promoted the absence of bias and showed a clear affinity to the *Neue Sachlichkeit*. In the second phase, 1926-1933, the focus is on Kisch's political position. Siegel describes him as a communist reporter, who no longer draws a clear distinction between the political pamphlet and the literary reportage (Siegel, 1973, p. 89). The third and final phase is the time between 1933 and 1947, during which Kisch is "disappointed about the weak effect he has in the association of proletarian-revolutionary writers as well as about the positive reaction of the bourgeois faction, which he intends to attack, to his writing" (ibid.). The result, according to Siegel, is resignation as far as the usefulness of the reportage genre is concerned.

More than thirty years later, Michael Haller arrives at a very similar assessment as Siegel, although his terminology is slightly different. He also divides Kisch's working life into three phases and states that toward the end of his career Kisch was "sobered by the effect of the mass propaganda in Nazi Germany and as a consequence said goodbye to the combat form of reportage" (Haller, 1997, p. 46). Haller concedes that in his exile in Mexico, "Kisch once more placed greater importance on truthfulness and honesty" and that he saw the reporter more as a "prosaist of the ballad, who linguistically designs the events and turns them into literary narrations" (ibid.).

Michael Geisler, on the other hand, approaches the matter from a more literary angle. He concedes that, "inspired by Heine's experiments with form, and using some of his materials and theoretical insights, Kisch found a form [the literary reportage], which combined the elements of the newspaper report, the travel report, the short story, and the sketch" (Geisler, 1982, p. 206). He places Kisch's journalistic beginning in the feuilleton and local reportage and unlike Siegel and Haller, Geisler looks more at the literary, journalistic and narrative techniques Kisch uses in his reportages. His conclusion is that Kisch created an "independent form" (Geisler, 1982, p. 252). With his approach, Geisler is much closer to the American scholars than to most German researchers who tend to follow Kisch's life story.

More recent assessments of Kisch's statements on objectivity are varied, and no longer take Kisch's pronouncement at face value. Jakob Augstein, for instance, sees Kisch's declaration more as a parable "for the border between reportage and literature, for the border between invention and reality and for the perception of the audience, which is willing to cross the border from both sides" (Augstein, 2003).

Knowing that Kisch became a member of the Communist Party of Austria in 1919, that he travelled to Russia, the USA and Australia, entering the latter illegally,

that he reported from Spain during the Civil War (1936-1939), that he was arrested by the Nazis after the burning of the Reichstag, fled to Mexico and returned to Prague only after the end of World War II, it is hard to believe that his writing was unbiased and not touched by personal conviction. His reportages surely were designed to do more than merely inform the reader. As early as 1925, Kurt Tucholsky, writing under the pseudonym Peter Panter, stated that there is “no one who does not have an opinion. Kisch has one, too” (Tucholsky [Panter], 1993a, p. 48). Tucholsky goes on to say that “every report, even the most impersonal report initially reveals the writer” (Tucholsky [Panter], 1993a, p. 49). In the light of this statement it is all the more astonishing that scholars like Michael Haller still place such great importance on Kisch’s theoretical pronouncements on the objectivity of journalists.

American scholars Harold B. Segel and John C. Hartsock, on the other hand, focus more on the content and literary features of Kisch’s reportages than on the issue of objectivity, and in this they use a similar approach as Geisler in 1982. Segel puts forward that in his opinion “Kisch never invented anything ... and would have considered it beneath his dignity as a reporter to embellish a story for the mere sake of adding zest to it” (Segel, 1997, pp. 13-14). While he acknowledges the fact that Kisch’s approach to reportage and his chosen topics changed due to both political and personal changes in his life, Segel tends to see this as a natural development. Hartsock also mentions the different stages in Kisch’s life as a reporter, but focuses on the style of his reportages and the changes thereof: “But before he [Kisch] became a committed leftist at the end of WWI, Kisch had engaged in a literary reportage that was fundamentally narrative and descriptive in its modalities without the heavy hand of ideology” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 117). The emphasis needs to be put on “literary reportage” as this is where the German and the American approaches differ fundamentally. Focusing on Kisch’s statement that “reportage ... is the literary sustenance of the future”, Hartsock points out the differences between the German and American characterisation of literary journalism and he deems Kisch’s afore-mentioned statement as being noteworthy “because as a characterization of the genre it is still to some degree elastic. It seems to suggest a relationship between the novel and the reportage, but that relationship is not clearly delineated the way it is by American proponents of a “literary journalism”” (Hartsock, 2009, p. 119).

It becomes clear that limiting Kisch to the statements he himself made about reporters and reportage and analysing his work according to these statements is not only too simplistic, but also neglects the fact that Kisch truly revolutionized the reportage

genre. Looking at his work it is evident that he treats his own definitions or statements rather flexibly. Kisch claims that information has to be authentic and first hand, but at the same time, he is known to have rewritten and rearranged many of his reportages for publication in book form, also taking the liberty to invent narrators, such as ‘Doktor Becker’, and ‘our man’.

The basis for every reportage is facts, but in order to be entertaining, suspenseful, and informative at the same time, the reporter, in this case, Kisch uses his “logical fantasy” to arrange the facts in the manner which is most effective, that is, that will get his message across to the reader, and then chooses a narrative style which further supports this purpose. One could thus say that the “logical fantasy” is the key ingredient, which turns a report into reportage and validates Kisch’s “use of compositional strategies and techniques common to narrative literature” (Segel, 1997, p. 76). This means, the author does not invent anything but, and this is a debatable point, he subjectively arranges the facts he has at his disposal. This also includes reconstructing dialogue and even creating personae, which obviously contradicts the rule to not embellish or invent things. However, as long as he remains true to his facts, and “‘the curve of probability’ drawn by the reporter coincides with the true line of communication of all phases of the event, the writer of reportage is free to order his material and present it in whatever way he deems suitable” (ibid.).

Thus, apart from the objectives of Kisch, that is, to entertain and/or inform his readers, to express a political opinion, and to pinpoint social evils, the techniques he applied to meet his objectives are important in order to understand to what extent his work has been significant for the development of reportage and thus literary journalism in the German-speaking world. For Kisch, for example, having been eyewitness is of great importance, yet according to Hartsock, being eyewitness is not assigned the same position in the definition of the reportage genre in the United States and France (Hartsock, 2009, p. 119). In the following those reportage features will be looked at in more detail.

4.5.2 Kisch’s early reportages and the importance of being eyewitness

One example of Kisch using the eyewitness perspective is an early reportage about World War I when he was actively involved in the fighting. He “was called up for active service on 31 July 1914” and was “sent into action on the Serbian front, which saw some of the most bitter fighting of the war” (Segel, 1997, pp. 17-18). Kisch wrote eyewitness accounts for Prague and Berlin newspapers, but “his most detailed, personal,

and trenchant observations of military life were reserved for the diary he began compiling on 31 July 1914” (Segel, 1997, p, 18). In 1922, the diaries were published in book form as *Soldat im Prager Korps* [Soldier in the Prague Corps] and expanded for a new edition in 1929 under the title *Schreib das auf, Kisch!* [Write it down, Kisch!] (Segel, 1997, p. 18).

Kisch’s account was in stark contrast to the official reporting on the war as he saw the “wide gap between the enlisted men, who bore the brunt of the fighting and dying, and the pampered, arrogant officer class, whose frequent blundering cost many lives” (Segel, 1997, p. 20). One could say that this experience largely contributed to the further development of a social consciousness and more critical writing. Written in the first person, the book is a vivid account of the military action and Kisch’s first-hand experiences. He tells the reader how difficult it was to keep this diary:

How slowly, how laboriously, in what a dangerous situation I write the last three sentences the day before yesterday! It was – and is – as if I had to record the peak of cruel, human experience. Two days have passed from the afternoon of the day before yesterday, when I had to interrupt my writing because of an artillery shell that whistled directly over my head and cut down the branch of a tree behind me. (Segel, 1997, p. 143)

The text reads almost like a film script, with battle scenes recounted in detail and the descriptions of Kisch’s fellow soldiers, the scenery, the noise and the fear. It is by writing as participating observer, as an eye-witness, that Kisch can convey to his readers a realistic and “unvarnished reality of warfare” (Segel, 1997, p. 19). Thus, the function of the eye-witness report to overcome barriers for the readers and to give them access to new and unknown situations is fulfilled.

Another variety of being an eye-witness is the method of undercover role-playing, where the reporter becomes participant observer or even the protagonist, yet remains incognito to all other players involved. The question of whether the deception of people, who voluntarily give information not knowing that they are talking to a journalist who will publish their statements in his reportage, which is inevitably involved in this process, is ethical has been discussed at length (for example Aucoin, 2005; Ettema & Glasser, 1998; Keeble, 2001; Ludwig, 2002; Redelfs, 2003; Schudson, 2003) and will not be elaborated on here.

The method has been largely attributed to Kisch, although it was first used more than 50 years before he wrote his first reportages. The Viennese journalist Max Winter, for example, wrote social reportages as participant observer or eyewitness. In the 1890s,

disguised as a tramp, he spent some time in a prison, in a shelter for the homeless and worked in factories to report about the working conditions. Georg Weerth, whose work was discussed above, applied the same method when he accompanied the Scottish doctor “Mac” to the homeless and assumed the role as the doctor’s assistant. This tradition has been continued by the German journalist Günter Wallraff since the late 1960s.

4.5.3 Kisch’s travel reportages and social engagement

In the years between 1922 and 1946, Kisch travelled extensively and wrote and published countless reportages. His accounts are a mixture of travel report and social reportage and the texts show varieties of the eyewitness element.

In some of his reportages about his journey to the United States (November 1928 to April 1929), published under the title “Paradies Amerika” [Paradise America], Kisch invents an authorial narrator, Dr. Becker (Unger, 2003). Kisch focuses on social conditions and describes the stark contrast between the great economic achievements and the conditions at the lower end of the social spectrum, that is, wealthy factory owners on the one side and workers’ families and the homeless on the other (Unger, 2003, p. 178). His purpose is not merely to describe the conditions, but to criticise them. For Dieter Schlenstedt, using the persona of Dr. Becker, was “a proper literary method, with the imaginative element built into the reportage” and this way, Kisch achieved “such a convincing effect” (Schlenstedt, 1994, p. 304). One could agree with Thorsten Unger’s statement that “Dr. Becker is a means of literalising the reportage” (Unger, 2003, p. 180).

Other reportages from the United States do not feature Dr. Becker. Writing about his visit to the Ford factory, Kisch uses the impersonal pronoun “one”, which as far as Unger is concerned “seems to represent the perspective of the workers in the factory” (Unger, 2003, p. 181). Once again, Kisch intends to criticise and not to report objectively. In his 1930 review of “Paradies Amerika”, Kurt Tucholsky wrote:

Kisch hat in Amerika viel gesehen, und er hat, was er gesehen, gut erzählt, lebendig erzählt, frisch erzählt. Man hat nicht den Eindruck, er sei nun hingegangen, um auf alle Fälle in Amerika alles schlecht zu finden – aber er ist marxistisch geschult und läßt sich nichts vormachen. Nur ein Amerikaner wird beurteilen können, ob er nun auch alles so gesehen hat, wie es wirklich ist Der das Land beherrscht, wird ein andres Bild haben als der, der es erleidet; Kisch ist bei den Leidenden gewesen. (Tucholsky, 1993b, Vol. 8, p. 77)

[Kisch saw a lot in America and what he saw, he narrated well, narrated lively, narrated freshly. One does not get the impression that he only went there to find that everything was bad in America but he is educated in Marxism and he can't be fooled. Only an American will be able to judge whether he saw everything the way it really is The person who rules a country will have a different perspective from those who suffer; Kisch went to see those who suffer.]

Two decades later, writing about his trip to Australia, Kisch uses a different style.

According to Segel, "In 'Journey to the Antipodes', he borrows from the technique of detective fiction by creating another persona, the initially mysterious 'our man', which permits Kisch to write about himself in the third person" (Segel, 1997, p. 75-76).

"Journey to the Antipodes" is mostly written in the present tense and is based on his journey to Australia, which started in Marseille on 13 October 1934. Beside using the omniscient narrator, he "makes extensive use of dialogue, in which he appears in his own voice," however, "he is careful to maintain the literary distance of his narrator, who at the same time is decidedly close to the subject of his narration" (Segel, 1997, p. 52). In Kisch's own words, the narrator becomes a "literary figure" (Kisch cited in Segel, 1997, p. 53).

The decision to write in the third person may also have been due to the fact that Kisch "was not merely a journalist in Australia" (Segel, 1997, p. 52), but he was on his way to Melbourne to give a speech at a congress planned by Australian pacifists (The World Committee against War and Fascism) to "coincide with the elaborate Melbourne centenary celebrations" (ibid.). The Australian authorities wanted to prevent Kisch from landing on the continent and to him this was partly due to the fact that German diplomats in Australia had "presumably threatened to impose economic sanctions" if Kisch were to be let into the country (Segel, 1997, p. 51). Although Kisch was personally involved and felt himself a "victim of fascism" (Segel, 1997, p. 52), in his reportages he is "never strident or confrontational, and the informality and humor of the account make it good reading" (ibid.). No doubt, Kisch managed to bring his points across to the reader, also with the help of extensive background material, such as dialogues, which seem to have taken place the way they were written down, also transcripts of newspaper articles and statements. For example, a speech by the Australian Minister of the Interior Paterson of 18 October 1934 is quoted in full. However, by using a narrator and 'disguising' his person as "our man", Kisch achieves a certain level of objectivity, which would not be there had he chosen to write entirely as the first-person eyewitness.

In conclusion it can be said that Kisch elevated the art of reportage to a new high. The characteristics of this reportage were the emphasis on having been eyewitness, on an engaging narrative and a socially critical angle.

4.5.4 Kurt Tucholsky

Kurt Tucholsky (1890-1953) was one of the most interesting, versatile and controversial writers of his time, although today he is mostly remembered as a satirist. He wrote under several pseudonyms, inventing a different persona and role for each of them. There was the poet Theobald Tiger, the art critic Peter Panter, the political analyst, Ignaz Wrobel, the satirical essayist, Kaspar Hauser, and Kurt Tucholsky, the journalist and author of several novels (Dessauer Nieder, 1976, p. ii). Tucholsky himself once explained the intention behind the pseudonyms as follows: “And it was also useful to be there five times – because, who in Germany believes that a political writer has a sense of humour? The satirist to be serious? The playful to have knowledge about the criminal code, ... Humour discredits” (Tucholsky cited in Raddatz, 1993, p. 17).

As a journalist Tucholsky tried to engage his audience by making them a central topic of his writing. As Anton Austermann concedes, Tucholsky was “a satirist, poet, essayist, writer of cabaret texts, humorist, novelist, political critic – but all of this always in the professional role of the journalist” (Austermann, 1985, p. 9). Reading his texts, it becomes clear that Tucholsky was always writing as an observer as well as a commentator deeply troubled by the political events. His objective was to make “the believing reader of a newspaper to develop himself/herself into a critical participant in democratic communication” (Austermann, 1985, p. 12). Tucholsky the journalist, however, has not been much researched. One of the more recent studies of Tucholsky’s journalism comes from Herbert Riehl-Heyses, a journalist and essayist of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* as part of a series on great German journalists published in 2003.

To fully understand the role of Tucholsky as a writer, journalist, and poet, one has to appreciate the social and political conditions in the Weimar Republic. Harold L. Poor, who in 1968 wrote a biography of Tucholsky, described the Germany of those times as a country where

old patterns reestablished themselves in the midst of frightening innovations. Dissatisfaction, pessimism and foreboding beside complacency, optimism and prosperity. Creativity and chaos, brilliance and stupidity, mania and calm, paradox and contrast – such was Weimar. Such was the world in which Kurt Tucholsky lived. (Poor, 1968, p. 6)

Like his contemporary Egon Erwin Kisch, Tucholsky critically appraises the social and political situation in Germany in the time between the two World Wars. Even before World War I, as early as 1911, Tucholsky published articles in the magazine of the Social-Democratic Party, *Vorwärts*, in which he protested against capital punishment and censorship, and wrote critically of the German Emperor William II (Raddatz, 1993, p. 15). According to Raddatz, Tucholsky was not a political person, an argument which is hard to accept in view of his works and engagement. While it is true that Tucholsky was a member of the SPD (German Social Democratic Party), he never held political ambitions, yet can be described as what we today call a ‘political animal’. Unlike Kisch, however, he never became the defender of an ideology. After his experiences at the eastern front in World War I his “theoretical pacifism grew and he became an irreconcilable opponent of German militarism” (King, 1983, p. 179). At the same time, he criticized the violence coming from the revolutionary left as “outmoded and undemocratic” (ibid.). Tucholsky also saw the class differences and the uninhibited greed of the entrepreneurs in his country, which in the 1920s only slowly recovered from the war, as the most dangerous developments. Early in his career as a journalist and writer, Tucholsky strongly believed in the effect of words to enlighten people and thus change their political understanding. Erich Kästner, another German satirical writer (and author of some of Germany’s best known children’s books), once called him “a little, fat Berliner who wanted to stop the catastrophe with a typewriter” (Kästner, 1946, p. 22). Tucholsky remained sceptical of the Weimar Republic, and seeing little improvement in the political landscape, became more and more depressed. In 1924, he left Germany to live and work in Paris, from which point on German politics were no longer his main topic. He wrote travel descriptions for the *Vossische Zeitung*, however, as Erika Dessauer Nieder puts it, “it must be said that he was never able to be completely neutral” (Dessauer Nieder, 1976, p. 12). Although he wanted to remain distant from his home country, Tucholsky became more and more dogged with regard to German politics. He felt compelled to contribute, to explain, to warn. In 1926 he returned to Berlin immediately after the death of his close friend and mentor Siegfried Jacobsohn (1881-1926), and took over as publisher of the leftist weekly magazine *Die Weltbühne*. Unhappy with his role, he handed his position over to Carl von Ossietzky (who paid for his pacifist conviction with his life and was posthumously awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace) and continued as a writer rather than a publisher. His purpose was to bring about change with his writing, but he was not sure whether his writing

actually helped “to put an end to even one sadistic bureaucrat’s game” (Riehl-Heyse, 2003, n. p.).

Tucholsky was also a prophet, who almost clairvoyantly wrote about the imminent misfortunes of his country. Almost right from the start, he was convinced that the “reputed German love for regimentation, autocracy, and its chauvinistic and racial patriotism combined with the fear of Bolshevism, would eventually drive the German middle class to accept National Socialism” (Dessauer Nieder, 1976, p. 7).

Reading his works, it becomes clear that Tucholsky’s driving force was his sense of justice, both legal and economic, and his fear of what would become of Germany once the Weimar Republic, which he saw very critically, would cease to exist. He used all forms available to him to depict, to criticize and to warn. On 13 May 1930 Tucholsky’s text “Die deutsche Pest” [The German Plague] was published in *Die Weltbühne* (20/718). He writes as Ignaz Wrobel and openly attacks the Weimar Republic for persecuting leftist tendencies yet at the same time giving free rein to the Nazis:

Die Nazis terrorisieren viele kleine und manche Mittelstädte, und zwar tun sie das mit der Miene von Leuten, die ungeheuer viel riskieren; sie machen immer ein Gesicht als seien sie und ihre Umzüge wer weiß wie illegal. Sie sind aber durchaus legal, geduldet, offiziös. Und hier beginnt die Schuld der Republik: eine Blutschuld.

Polizei und Richter dulden diese Burschen ... Es sind ihre Leute. Es sind so sehr ihre Leute, daß die verschiedenartige Behandlung, die Kommunisten und Nationalsozialisten durch Polizei und Rechtsprechung erfahren, geradezu grotesk ist. (Tucholsky, 1993c, Vol. 8, p. 131)

[The Nazis terrorise many small and some medium-sized towns, and they do this with a look on their face as if to say that they risk terribly much; they always look as if they and their parades are goodness knows how illegal. However, they are legal, tolerated, semi-official. And this is where the Republic’s guilt starts: it is a blood guilt.

Police and judges tolerate these guys ... They are their people. They are to such an extent their people that the differences in how Communists and National Socialists are treated by police and the legal system, are absolutely grotesque.]

Poor maintains that Kurt Tucholsky was one of the “most feared of the intellectuals hated by the Nazis” and that “[h]is liberal political convictions coupled with his satiric wit and immense popularity frightened the Nazis and caused them to direct the huge force of their propaganda machine against him” (Poor, 1968, p. 3). He was consistently and openly opposed by the undemocratic forces on the rise in Germany. It is therefore not surprising that his name was put on the first expatriation list, and his books were

burned together with those of Erich Kästner, Heinrich Mann, Egon Erwin Kisch, Sigmund Freud and others on 10 May 1933.

Kurt Tucholsky had stopped writing prior to 1933. With Hitler's rise to power, he did not see sense in rallying against the prevailing political sentiment. His writings had not had the impact he had wished for, and by the early 1930s it was too late. He left Germany for Sweden and boycotted all things German; he even stopped speaking German. As Raddatz puts it, he "who had warned against the abuse of power, terror and dictatorship, was almost helpless against the system of perfect violence" (Raddatz 1993, p. 33). His last great piece of writing, "Für Carl v. Ossietzky" [For Carl v. Ossietzky], was published in *Die Weltbühne* on 17 May 1932 (Tucholsky1993d, Volume 10 pp. 75-78).

One can say that when Kurt Tucholsky committed suicide in Sweden in 1935 critical German journalism and reportage ended. The time between the mid-1930s and the end of World War II in 1945 is characterized by a press commanded by the Nazi party, with all opposition eliminated. Critical reporting had ceased to exist and "everyone of rank and name, with political decency and human dignity" had either left Germany or had been killed (Raddatz, 1993, p. 33). According to Frank Esser, the journalistic profession did not exist anymore and the German press was fully subordinate to the state (Esser, 1998, p. 73).

The examples of Egon Erwin Kisch and Kurt Tucholsky show that in times of political and social change either the need for critical reporting seems to grow, or critical spirits feel the necessity to write about those changes and their effects. In this way, a clear connecting line can be drawn between Gottfried Seume, Heinrich Heine, Georg Weerth, Kisch, and Kurt Tucholsky. All of those writers were committed to truthfulness, but also to their political beliefs. Especially Heine, Kisch, and Tucholsky used several different forms and genres, like feuilleton, reportage, poetry, and novels to express themselves, to take a stand and to inform their audience. They shared the ability to be satirical and funny as well as scathing and angry. It is not surprising that all of the mentioned writers/journalists left Germany to live in exile. As has been mentioned before, the fact that they were participants in or eyewitnesses of what they wrote about greatly contributed to the authenticity and credibility of their reportages and these elements have become important characteristics of the genre.

4.6 Literary Journalism after 1945

The further development of literary journalism after 1945 is quickly told.

After the end of World War II, the Allied Forces (British and American) set to work to establish a German press system according to the Anglo-Saxon model. Since, in their opinion, even before the Nazi times, Germany had not had a completely free and democratic press (Esser, 1998, p. 49), they decided to start from zero. In his paper 'Tendencies in the German Newspaper and Magazine Press since 1945', Rudolf Urbschat describes the situation as follows: "With the capitulation in 1945, broadcasting was completely prohibited, nor were Germans allowed to publish newspapers or magazines. Publishing houses and radio stations were closed" (Urbschat, 1997, p. 2). When Germany was rebuilding, it is important to note that it was divided up between the four allied countries, the USA, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. All four allies had different ideas as to how to handle politics and communication, and there was a very clear difference between the way the western allies and the Soviet Union chose. Thus, after 1945 two different press systems developed, one in West Germany, and one in East Germany, known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The latter will not be considered in the context of this chapter. The task of the allied press officers was a difficult one as they had to bridge the gap between their objective to restore the freedom of speech and press and the reality of censorship practised by them.

A characteristic, which presented particular problems for the Anglo-Saxon press officers, was the fact that German journalism did not have a strict separation of news and commentary, as does the British press. The mixing of news and opinion, the journalism of convictions, to British journalists was a "dangerous mixture of information and tendentious commentary" (Esser, 1998, p. 49). Chalaby has put forward a similar distinction when comparing Anglo-British and French journalism. What is said about French journalism, with its distinct literary roots, can also be applied to German journalism. According to Chalaby, "Information was more factual in Anglo-American newspapers. In contrast, French correspondents and reporters used to comment on the information they provided and mixed facts with personal opinions" (Chalaby, 1996, p. 306). It was this Anglo-American influence that took root in Germany after World War II under the authority of the allied occupation. Accordingly, there was little literary journalism in post-war Germany. Reporting had turned to be strictly fact-based and news-oriented, with little room for literary or narrative elements.

With the emergence of the American phenomenon of New Journalism, the interest in reportage and literary journalistic forms was revived in Germany. However, this did not lead to the development of a German “version” of New Journalism. Most researchers are focused on the US-American genre and there are few examples of German New Journalism to be found. However, Bernhard Pörksen concedes that the statement that New Journalism was an exclusively American phenomenon is not entirely correct. In his opinion there have been German-speaking varieties which fit the category of New Journalism. As an example, he describes the magazine *Tempo*, founded in 1986, which published for ten years (Pörksen, 2004). According to its inventor, Markus Peichl, it was intended as a magazine for “a generation of contradictions” (Pörksen, 2004, p. 310), and it featured most if not all of the central writing techniques identified by the pioneer of New Journalism, Tom Wolfe (Pörksen, 2004, p. 320). There were reportages, essays, feuilletonistic observations, as well as experimental characters, undercover research, and a form most probably coined by Andreas Hentschel, called interventionist journalism (Pörksen, 2004, p. 321). In such cases, the journalist is alerted to a troubling – usually work-related – situation. The journalist, under the pretence of being someone else, gets employed in the firm or organization to experience and ascertain the injustices first hand and report about them (Pörksen, 2004, 323).

Although Pörksen is right in finding New Journalism characteristics in the contributions to *Tempo*, New Journalism has never managed to obtain a firm place in German journalism. It is true that the *Tempo* experience has shaped numerous journalists, some of whom have become successful writers and publishers such as, for instance, Helge Timmerberg, but opposition to the genre is still strong and widespread among journalism scholars. One of the most prominent researchers, Siegfried Weischenberg, concedes that the main focus of New Journalism is its presentation and author-centredness. As a strong proponent of news-centred journalism, Weischenberg to some extent tries to marginalize and trivialize New Journalism (Lünenborg, 2005, p. 185). The fact that one prominent journalist, Tom Kummer, who worked in the New Journalism tradition, handled reality, as it were, flexibly, that is, forged interviews with celebrities, seems to prove Weischenberg right and leads back to the old discussion about truth and the construct of reality in journalism. In an interview in *Die Zeit*, a German weekly newspaper, where he discusses the Kummer ‘affair’ with Markus Peichl, Weischenberg goes as far as saying that German journalists must have misunderstood the American New Journalism. In Weischenberg’s eyes, American

practitioners of New Journalism wanted to “make journalism with literary means, that is, to very consciously not mix anything, but to research properly, to not use second- and third-hand information and to then use specific literary means” (Minkmar, 2000, n. p.). In Germany, however, the form became “en vogue, arbitrary, postmodern apolitical” and at some stage did not “bother about relevance” (ibid.). Peichl, on the other hand, argues that it is wrong to concede, only because Tom Kummer did not stick to truth and reality, that “aesthetic and subjective journalism is basically only lies, invention, and deception” (ibid.). There is a clear division between news-oriented and literary journalism in Germany and little inclination to acknowledge a genre that lies between the two.

This discussion is ongoing and despite the fact that there have been more and more examples of reportages in the tradition of Kisch and others in daily and weekly newspapers, such as *Die Zeit* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and magazines like *Der Spiegel*, one cannot speak of a revival of the reportage genre, geared toward revealing social inequalities or political changes. The only author of note who comes close to the “old” tradition is Günter Wallraff, who since the 1960s has been publishing reportage collections and book-length reportages and who has applied the techniques of undercover role play and participant observer the way Weerth, Kisch and Tucholsky did before him, and he has almost always been an eyewitness to what he has written about.

The fact that most researchers focus on the American New Journalism when the subject of research is literary journalism also speaks for itself. It is acknowledged that something like literary journalism exists, but it is not clearly defined. Thus, one has to concede that reportage is the only example of literary journalism in this country and, as the epilogue to this chapter shows, even this is highly contentious.

4.7 Epilogue

A recent case shows that to the present day being eyewitness is deemed to be the defining element of the genre of reportage in Germany, although this deliberate decision is highly contentious.

The Henri-Nannen Prize, formerly called Egon Erwin Kisch Prize, is given every year to the best reportage in German journalism, and is counted amongst the most prestigious journalistic awards in Germany. In 2010, it was awarded to the journalist René Pfister. Under the title of “Am Stellpult” [*At the Signal Box*] (Pfister, 2010, pp 40-43), Pfister had written a portrait of the minister president [premier] of Bavaria, Horst

Seehofer. Pfister eloquently evokes the significance of a toy train in the basement of the holiday house of Seehofer (Keil, 2011). Due to the vivid description, the readers get the impression from the article that the reporter had seen Horst Seehofer with his toy train:

A couple of times a year Horst Seehofer goes down into the basement of his holiday house in Schamhaupten, ... also now in the summer when he has a few days off. Down there is his toy train, it is Märklin H0 in the scale of 1:87, he has been building it up for years. The toy train is a model of Seehofer's life. ... Seehofer has put together a world according to his wishes, he stands at the signal box and the figures in the trains are set in motion when he gives the order to do so. It is a place where Seehofer's play instinct meets his desire to rule. (Pfister, 2010, p. 41)

During the award ceremony, Pfister told the audience that he had never been to Seehofer's basement, but that "he had written down what Seehofer and others had told him about the basement" (Leyendecker, 2011). As a consequence, the jury decided to divest him of the prize (Keil, 2011). Following this, a great discussion developed about which features allow a journalistic piece to be classified as reportage. The explanation of the jury as to why they divested the author of the prize was that "[for] the credibility of a reportage it is essential that it is recognisable whether descriptions are based on the observations of the author himself, or whether they are based on other sources" (Keil, 2011). Thus, the crucial point in this context seems to be that Pfister should have explained that he had never seen the toy train, but that he had knowledge of its existence and importance for Horst Seehofer. It is important to note here, that he has not been accused of making things up. However, the fact that Pfister had not been an eyewitness to Seehofer playing with his toy train became the crucial factor in the decision to take away the award. The importance of being eyewitness in the German literary journalism tradition could not have been underscored more forcefully.

However, not everyone agreed with the jury's decision. Georg Mascolo, the chief editor of *Der Spiegel*, the magazine for which René Pfister works, defines reportage as follows: "Reportages are always based on what has been experienced, observed, and researched. Good reportages stand out by interweaving scenic elements and facts" (Mascolo, 2011, p.15). Another renowned German journalist, Hans Leyendecker, who received the Henri-Nannen Prize in 2007 for the best investigative research, concedes that the jury seems to have been forgotten that the prize was formerly called Kisch Prize, "after Egon Erwin Kisch, who liked to cross the border between reality and the invented, when it benefited the story" (Leyendecker, 2011, p. 15). Klaus Happlecht even goes as far as saying that "Kisch would hardly have won the

reportage prize which bore his name for decades” (Happrecht, 2006, n. p.). This incident clearly demonstrates that Germany is far away from finding a clear definition of reportage, or literary journalism, and is still coming to terms with the literary elements of this genre.

5 The history of literary journalism in Australia

As Matthew Ricketson rightly maintains, literary journalism is produced and read in Australia; however the historical development of the genre has not been the subject of in-depth research (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 66). There exist a large number of studies on the history of Australian literature, and also a number on the history of Australian journalism. However, the field where the two meet and merge to form the genre of literary journalism has largely been neglected.

Nicola Goc, for example, suggests that “Australia’s literary journalism heritage dates back to the early days of the *Bulletin*, with the journalism of Henry Lawson and A.B. ‘Banjo’ Paterson” (Goc, 2008, p. 285), an argument shared by Willa McDonald (McDonald, 2009, p. 8). While the role of the *Bulletin* should be considered, this approach is too limited as it neglects the contributions of numerous colonial journalists whose work played a significant part not only in the development of Australian journalism, but also in what was to become literary journalism.

Another approach to the topic is to see Australian literary journalism as deriving wholly from the British tradition, as suggested by John Henningham, who stated that “journalism in colonial Australia inherited a fully developed tradition of English literary journalism” (Henningham cited in Conley, 1998, p. 47). While this approach links Australian literary journalism to a tradition reaching back far beyond the 19th century, the focus here will be on the development of literary journalism on Australian shores only. This development is necessarily shorter than the one that took place in Germany, but it yields valuable insights into the dynamics of journalism overlapping with literature. In this context, a closer look at the development of Australian journalism from colonial times until 1945 is taken.

This chapter attempts to draw parallels between the two countries as well as to portray some of the Australian practitioners, many of who were ‘boundary crossers’ or *Grenzgänger* at home in both fields. In particular the works of Marcus Clarke, Katharine Susannah Prichard, George Johnston, Kenneth Slessor, and Robert Drewe are analysed with regard to their significance for the genre of literary journalism. These writers were chosen because they all worked at one time or another in journalism and because realism, except with Kenneth Slessor, is a major characteristic of their work. This entails that different connotations and interpretations of realism are going to feature in this chapter.

While it would go beyond the scope of this chapter to analyse the history of journalism in Australia in detail, an overview of the most important landmarks of its development as well as the portrayal of some of the practitioners is useful in order to understand how closely journalism aligned with literature.

5.1 An overview of journalism in Australia

The history of Australian literature has been extensively researched and documented, but the same cannot be said for the field of journalism. As Henningham maintains, “it is surely surprising that 200 years of Australian history have not produced a comprehensive study of Australian journalism” (Henningham, 1988, p. 49). Denis Cryle differentiates this issue further by stating that “unlike their British and American counterparts, Australian scholars have been reluctant to regard journalism history as a field worthy of special investigation” and that “early researchers subsumed journalism and journalist under literary history” (Cryle, 1997, p.2). He adds that “journalism was practised concurrently with other forms of writing” and that it “remained an open profession, influenced by a range of discourses, historical and scientific as well as literary and philosophical” (Cryle, 1997, p. 3). Cryle’s remark gives an indication of the complexity of journalism, especially in colonial Australia. At the same time it signals the close relationship, if not an overlapping, of journalism and literature in Australia.

Also for Ken Stewart “literary Australia was largely a journalists’ Australia” (Stewart cited in Conley, 1998, p. 47), pointing to the fluid boundaries between literature and journalism from the very beginning of white colonisation of the Australian continent. There are several reasons for this. According to Norbert Platz, the undefined state of Australian writing was partly due to the fact that “[t]he only way to get something published during the early colonial phase was to send it to a newspaper or magazine”, which led to the misconception that the authors of “poems and short-stories ... were nothing more than mere journalists” (Platz, 2000, p. 163). This is supported by Elizabeth Webby who contends that “19th century newspapers and magazines, in disseminating literary culture, proved virtually the only vehicles for local writers when book publication was prohibitively expensive” (Webby cited in Conley, 2003, p. 45). Thus, it is not surprising that the concept of what a journalist was and how his profession differed from that of a writer of fiction was not always clear to readers.

5.1.1 Journalism in colonial Australia

It must be noted that the press centres in the early days were Sydney and Melbourne and that many remote parts of the colony, due to its small population, only played a marginal role. However, there were numerous newspapers in different parts of Australia, rural and urban, of different size and circulation, and with different readerships and political orientations. Between 1788 and 1901, when the six Australian colonies united to become the Commonwealth of Australia, journalism underwent numerous changes and developments. The chronology in Webby's *Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature* highlights the most important dates: 1803 saw the first issue of the *Sydney Gazette*, in 1821 the *Australian Magazine*, the first locally produced periodical came out, ten years later, in 1831, the first issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald* came out, and in the year 1840, the *Port Philip Herald*, later *The Herald*, was first published. *The Age* was established in Melbourne in 1854, and four years later the *South Australian Advertiser* was first published (Webby, 2000b, pp. xi-xiii). Except for the first two publications mentioned, these papers are still published today.

While it is true that the British system and traditions were transplanted to Australia upon the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788, they also had to face very different circumstances. The new environment called for a new vocabulary and descriptions which British journalism - and literature - could not provide. Thus, over time an Australian form of journalism developed, which suited the environment as well as the dynamics of settlement. The important collection of articles, *Disreputable Profession. Journalist and Journalism in Colonial Australia*, edited by Denis Cryle (1997) presents prominent journalists and their publications in order to "address career discontinuity, uncertain status and official stereotyping, while acknowledging the vigour and output of colonial journalism" (Cryle, 1997, p. 1). As John Henningham states in the foreword, "Denis Cryle helps cut through the myth and nostalgia to reveal a form of journalism somewhat more chaotic and functionally confused than some may have expected" (Henningham in Cryle, 1997, p. iv).

For a better understanding of the development of Australian journalism, a brief look at the so-called convict press is useful. In this context, however, it is important to note that the early papers were government gazettes and not independent newspapers. The convict press was the least respected form of 'Australian' journalism and in her contribution to Cryle's collection, Sandy Blair focuses on Edward Smith Hall, who established the *Monitor* newspaper in Sydney in 1826 and maintains that this type of

journalism was “seen as a deliberate attempt to destroy all social order and cohesion in the penal colonies” (Blair, 1997, p. 21). The press as well as literary production were controlled by the English, who chose “what should be published” and determined “its final form”, meaning that “Australian texts were rewritten by English editors” in order to improve them (Bird, 1998, p. 25).

Far more than distributing news, Blair argues, “newspapers were weapons to introduce a new kind of culture destroying the credibility of the old penal order and fostering new forms of association and independent thinking” (Blair, 1997, p. 21). To counteract this development, the English, through the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Ralph Darling, introduced a stamp tax and the registration of newspapers in 1824 (Blair, 1997, p. 25). As far as Darling was concerned “a free press [could] not exist in a convict society” (Blair, 1997, p. 26). All the same, the 1820s and 1830s saw an increase in readers in NSW and other colonies and the audience became more differentiated. According to Blair, also “illiterate and semi-illiterate colonists had some access to newspaper contents” and “the colony was a society in transition” (Blair, 1997, p. 31).

Dealing with journalism in the time between the 1840s and 1890s, Elizabeth Morrison highlights the role of the city of Melbourne as the “largest and wealthiest of the Australasian colonial capitals, and arguably the foremost centre for journalism and newspaper production” (Morrison, 1997, p. 55). Her main focus is on the development of the Melbourne newspaper the *Age* from its modest beginning in 1854 to the 1890s and the journalistic career of James Harrison (1816-1893). By linking the historical developments to the person of James Harrison, Morrison depicts the “defining characteristics of various journalistic roles at particular stages of newspaper and ... general historical development” (Morrison, 1997, p. 75). This includes the changes in reporting as well as technological changes which contributed greatly to the emergence of an Australian journalism which became more and more independent of British journalism.

Having come to Australia to work as a compositor in Sydney in 1837, Scottish-born Harrison moved to Melbourne in 1839 where he found employment with the *Port Philip Patriot*. In 1840 he moved again, this time to Geelong, to establish the first country paper on the Australian mainland for his Melbourne employer (Morrison, 1997, p. 56). At this early stage in Harrison’s career, his versatility was already evident and in his lifetime he was a “journalist, editor, newspaper proprietor, [and] publisher” (ibid.). His career confirms the “relative openness of journalism as a colonial profession” (Morrison, 1997, p.55).

Being “firmly rooted in the British journalistic tradition” (Morrison, 1997, p. 58), Harrison’s paper, the *Geelong Advertiser*, covered topics ranging from the treatment of Aborigines by the authorities and economic progress to the goldfields which brought prosperity to Geelong (Morrison, 1997, pp. 58-59). Harrison was what could be called a critical and outspoken journalist with a keen interest in politics. When in 1854 he was sued and also sentenced for libel – he had written about a judge who was drunk in court – Harrison turned away from journalism and went into politics. It took six years for him to return to journalism and his change of career shows that he was very much part of the community he lived and worked in.

Harrison’s journalistic career was continued when he joined the *Melbourne Age* as editor in 1866. The *Age*, like its rival the *Argus*, took on a political position and was what Morrison calls “a liberal reformist platform” (Morrison, 1997, p. 62). The paper was “advocating policies which challenged the established squattocracy” (Morrison, 1997, p. 63) and Harrison provided articles and editorials “against scandal and corruption in political life” (Morrison, 1997, p. 64).

However, the 1870s were not only important in politics, there was also the new trend to include “serialised fiction in the Saturday issues of some daily papers” and “David Syme’s *Age* led the way in 1872” in order to “win a mass readership” (ibid.). There were very few Australian authors whose works were published this way – the majority of this serial fiction came from Britain or the European Continent – but as Morrison maintains, the important point was that the Australian newspapers helped transmit “literary culture from overseas” and promoted “the production of Australian literature” (Morrison, 1993, p. 65). This can be seen as a point where journalism and literature converge, being published in the same media. However, it did, not as yet lead to a hybrid form.

The third phase of Harrison’s journalistic career began with his move to London in 1873 where he worked as the correspondent for the *Age* and the *Leader*. Once again the direction and the character of newspapers underwent important changes, not least triggered by the introduction of new printing technology (Morrison, 1997, p. 68). This, in due course, also had an impact on the journalists, whose task it was now to “stick to the discipline of writing to a special theme, at a fixed length, to a precise deadline” (Brown cited in Morrison, 1997, p. 74). Harrison’s ability to adapt to this and to yet again change the style and topics of his writing, highlights his versatility and again underlines the earlier cited “openness of journalism” in colonial Australia. Always

having had a keen interest and sound knowledge of engineering and technology, it was relatively easy to turn to scientific columns.

As far as Morrison (1997, p. 75) is concerned, these new developments also constituted the “transformation of the Old journalism into the New journalism”, characterised by a shift toward a middle-class readership. Features such as bigger headlines, shorter paragraphs and a less impersonal style were the outward signs of this change. In this context it is important to note that not only the style of journalism changed, but that there was a growing trend to have books of Australian and other origin reviewed by Australian journalists rather than commission this work from foreign correspondents. Journalism in Australia became more national.

While James Harrison was firmly rooted in the journalistic trade and only practised his engineering and inventing in private, other prominent colonial journalists also had multiple professions which they practised parallel to their journalism. In his article “A Disreputable Elite? Journalists and Journalism in Colonial Australia” about the colonial journalists George Dumore Lang, William Coote, and George E. Loyau, Cryle states that they were classic examples of their time and profession, although this profession had not been clearly defined before the 1890s (Cryle, 1994, p. 131). What Cryle deems to be typical is that all three were extremely mobile, spending “considerable periods of their career in several colonies” and that “there was a substantial literary output of these journalists in the form of newspaper prose, political pamphlets, histories and poetry” (Cryle, 1994, p. 131). While the first characteristic is mainly due to “adversity, both economic and political” which “was also a determining factor in career changes” (Cryle, 1994, p. 132), the second characteristic is of interest with regard to literary journalism.

Despite their similarities, these journalists differed greatly in their ideas of what the functions and duties of a journalist are. Once again one has to note that in colonial times, the journalistic profession did not yet have a clear-cut profile, which led to a variety of definitions and practices. William Coote’s view was that “the public duty of journalists was to pursue an independent course, ‘uninfluenced by approval, by censure, by profit and loss’” (Coote cited in Cryle, 1995, p. 93). To Coote journalism was “a form of public service” (Cryle, 1994, p. 135). In his later life, he also differentiated between “a writer for the press (who) wrote on any side he was paid for” and “a journalist (who) wrote according to his convictions” (Coote cited in Cryle, 1995, p. 96). This view, which today would be dismissed as idealistic in that it promotes the notion of journalism as a profession independent of any form of authority, let alone the concept of

objectivity, is yet another indication of the relative flexibility of journalism practice in colonial Australia. In contrast to Coote, G.E. Loyau's idea of the role and the status of journalists "was influenced from the outset by his romantic and literary pretensions" (Cryle, 1997, p. 152). For him, journalism was mostly a source of income and a vehicle to get his prose and poems published.

The important points stressed by all contributors to Cryle's book are that the status of the 19th century journalist was an "uneasy" one, and that "journalism was practised concurrently with other forms of writing" (Cryle, 1997, p. 3). Journalism in Australia as elsewhere was "influenced by a range of discourses, historical and scientific as well as literary and philosophical" (ibid.). While the journalistic wheel did not have to be reinvented in Australia, its form developed away from the English tradition even more as the colonies turned into independent federal states and the Commonwealth of Australia was formed.

5.1.2 Journalism in the 1920s – Kenneth Slessor

By the 1920s the Australian press had become prolific and diverse, and it is often stated that in those years the modern era of journalism began. At the same time there was also a move toward a stricter separation of literature and journalism, which Richard Nile attributes to changed editorial policies and the professionalization of journalism (Nile, 1998, p. 137). For freelance writers, who according to Nile "had been a rich source of contribution to Australian literature through their contributions to newspapers and magazines" (ibid.) there was no longer a place in the press system. According to Isaacs and Kirkpatrick, in Sydney alone there were "four morning, two afternoon and four Sunday papers" in the 1920s (Isaacs & Kirkpatrick, 2003, p. 14). Technical developments such as photography further advanced the development of the press.

It was in those times that Kenneth Slessor (1901-1971) took up journalism. Instead of giving a more detailed overview of the development of Australian journalism in the 1920s, this part of the chapter is going to focus on the journalistic work of Kenneth Slessor. At first sight this may seem an unusual choice as Slessor does not seem to fit into the group of writers/journalists featuring in this chapter. When it comes to journalism, his career resembles more that of the 19th century journalists with their versatility and a flexible and easy approach to news reporting.

However, Slessor was a poet and a journalist and thus interesting in the context of whether and how literature and journalism can be combined. His two careers were parallel to each other until he ceased writing poetry in 1947, but Slessor is first and

foremost remembered as one of the “most accomplished and influential poets in the whole stream of Australian poetry” (Kinross-Smith, 1978). In this the reception of his work slightly resembles that of the German poet and feuilletonist Heinrich Heine, greatly admired by Slessor and whose journalism, too, is marginalised in comparison to his poetry and prose.

In 1918 Kenneth Slessor joined the *Sun* newspaper in Sydney as a cadet journalist, spent the time from 1924 to 1925 in Melbourne writing for the *Herald* and sub-editing *Punch*, only to return to Sydney and the *Sun* in 1926 (Haskell, 2002). Parallel to this he wrote poetry, with his first book of poetry being published in 1924.

Dennis Haskell, who has researched and written about Kenneth Slessor extensively, maintains that Slessor’s “early journalistic writing was full of brilliant descriptions and poetic flourishes” (Haskell, 2002). At the same time, when writing about political topics, Slessor was a master in “satirizing politicians of all kinds, in this copying one of the writers he most admired, Charles Dickens” (Haskell, 1992, p. 19). Another facet of Slessor’s journalism was what his biographer Geoffrey Dutton described as “full of ... democratising vulgarity which brought the pompous down to size” (Dutton cited in Haskell, 1991b).

In his paper, “Hyperborea vs uninteresting facts: Kenneth Slessor’s journalism in the early 1920s”, Haskell looks closely at some of the early newspaper reports and finds a variety of literary techniques. Writing about homeless people Slessor employs humour and dramatization which, according to Haskell (1992, p. 22), “is a fundamental technique which most distinguishes Slessor’s early journalism from the impersonal reporting of contemporary journalism.” Although Slessor was no doubt a professional and dedicated journalist, Haskell is of the opinion that the fact that “Slessor’s early journalism and poetry involve many of the same techniques” is an indication that “he does not really believe in facts as such (objects or events waiting to be objectively perceived and transparently recorded) but only in interpretations” (Haskell, 1992, p. 26).

As a German equivalent to Slessor, Kurt Tucholsky comes to mind, who in the 1920s and early 1930s wrote poetry, prose, journalistic pieces and novels, all in a distinct style. As has been described in the previous chapter, Tucholsky was first and foremost a journalist who used his literary skills not only to engage his audience but also to describe the political climate in Germany and to warn the German people against the threat of National Socialism. According to Haskell, Slessor also “demonstrated ... scepticism of officialdom and authority” (Haskell, 1992, p. 20), but unlike Tucholsky, he was “never a very political writer” (Haskell, 1992, p. 28).

An important phase of Slessor's journalistic career was his appointment as "official war correspondent by the Commonwealth Government" in 1940 (Haskell, 2002). The appointment was an expression of the status Slessor had already gained as a journalist, but the fact that Slessor resigned from his post in 1944 in "a dispute principally over army censorship and misrepresentation of his activities" (Haskell, 1991a, p. 174) also shows that the concept Slessor had of journalism did not match the authority's.

According to Clement Semmler, "war reporting is a genre of its own" (Semmler in Haskell, 1991a, p. 174), and thus different rules apply when it comes to objectivity and censorship. The focus here is not going to be on war reporting in general and its place and function in the field of journalism, but on the war despatches of Kenneth Slessor. He also kept so-called war diaries in which he recorded his personal version of events.

One example of Slessor's war reporting is *Avenue of Death – Ruin in Desert*, which was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 23 November 1942 and is a description of what he saw on the way from El Alamein to Gambut after the defeat of the German army in the second battle of El Alamein on 11 November 1942. The report opens with: "The road to ruin runs from El Alamein to Gambut and points west. It is a corridor of dusty death lined with ruin, leading to ruin" (Slessor, 1942, p. 4). This is not a factual report. Slessor conveys to the reader that "more than a mess of German steel lies buried here. A dream has been smashed" (ibid.), and the more detailed his description of what he sees becomes, the more the reader gets drawn into the report, which in fact reads like a story. Slessor's language is very descriptive and at times also very poetic. He describes destroyed German trucks, some of which "are just a charred stain on the desert's face", or hastily deserted camps where the "ground is covered with a mess of papers and tins like the remains of a series of demented picnics. ... Everything has been petrified in the middle of activity, like the cabin of the Marie Celeste", and "the gaunt remains of the Junkers and Messerschmitts lie rusting like the bones of prehistoric monsters" (ibid.). The report ends on a very personal note:

What I write can only give a scattered impression of this incredible trail of destruction, along which the 8th Army is advancing. But few of the British troops who pass its dreadful evidence of death and annihilation from the air can feel any pity for the victims. I, too, had seen our men dying in Greek ditches on the bloody road from Thermopylae and felt no pity. (ibid.)

Despite the unmistakable poetic tone in some of Slessor's early journalistic work, especially his war despatches, these texts can be seen as the connecting link to the realist writers, who are going to be presented in the following.

5.2 Realism as the connecting element between journalism and fiction

The salient element connecting journalism and literature is realism, which as Conley puts it, is "both a technique and a movement" and "as a movement it has favoured journalist-novelists [whose] fiction and journalism privilege experience and direct observation" (Conley, 2003, p. 40). In this context, Delys Bird's statement is important that "the earliest literary works produced from the new colony were the First Fleet Annals: official and semi-official accounts of the settlement" and maintains that "realism has been a dominant influence in Australian literature since its beginning" (Bird, 1998, p. 25). At the same time, as Elizabeth Webby points out, "during and after the First Fleet's voyage to Botany Bay, there was much writing of letters and journals" (Webby, 2000c, p. 7). This can be seen as a first point where journalism and literature converge.

However, what needs to be pointed out here is that the term 'realism' in literature in Australia, for a long time, was used in a pejorative sense. This was the case especially after Patrick White's legendary condemning characterisation of Australian literature as "the dreary dun-coloured offshoots of journalistic realism" (White, 1958, p. 37). To some literary scholars, such as Bruce Bennett, the term realism has a negative connotation in exactly the sense of White's statement, while for others like Delys Bird it does not. I would like to point out that in the context of this chapter and this thesis, realism is not seen as a criterion to value or judge literary achievement. On the contrary, it is treated as a mode of writing indicating the closeness of texts to journalistic techniques and, in turn, to literary journalism. The focus is on criteria such as whether the author writes from a position as eyewitness or personal experience.

By the middle of the 19th century, realism in literature had become a central topic in literary discourse in Germany and realistic writing dealt with the relationship between literature and reality. More precisely, realistic literature was to go beyond a mere description of reality. In contrast to romantic literature, realism was to deal seriously with everyday human toils and was to be written in comprehensible prose. All subsequent references to realism are largely based on this concept.

Realism has been a feature shared by most colonial journalists in Australia, and unsurprisingly quite a number of writers who appear in Conley's list of journalists-cum-novelists (Conley, 1998) have made realism the key feature of their work. According to Bruce Bennett, these authors "often with professional interests in journalism ... have renegotiated and revised the social realist tradition in accord with modern concerns" (Bennett, 1989, p. 3). At first sight this sounds very positive, but it is exactly because of their closeness to journalism or being journalist themselves that their works have been largely neglected.

In the following the writings of Marcus Clarke and Katharine Susannah Prichard, both journalistic and literary, will serve as instances of what can be deemed Australian literary journalism.

5.2.1 Marcus Clarke's journalism and realistic fiction

Marcus Clarke (1846-1881) is probably best known for his novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*, which was serialised in the years from 1870 to 1872 before it was first published in book form in 1874. As the subtitle of the novel states, it is the "grim and tragic story of life in an Australian penal colony" (Clarke, 1992). However, he was also a prolific writer of journalism which tends to be neglected by researchers. In the following both Clarke's literary and journalistic output is presented with a focus on the question how and where the two merge.

One of the major questions is whether the general tendency to regard Clarke's journalistic works as "incidental to his more important fictional narratives" (Conley, 2003, p. 195) is justified. In answering this question, Conley maintains that Clarke "treated journalism and literature as companions in language, information gathering, theme and truth telling" (Conley, 2003, p. 51). Clarke's commitment to realism is evident both in his journalism and his literature and he employed observation and fact finding as tools of social protest. An article by Conley (2000) about Marcus Clarke, interestingly titled "Romance of Realism", shows that the concept of realism was already important in Clarke's time. Clarke admired Defoe and was fascinated by factual detail in seeking to edit a "fictional history." Conley therefore deems *His Natural Life* to represent the "fusion between journalism and fiction" (Conley, 2000, p. 56).

While Conley places Clarke on a par with Defoe and Garcia Marquez (Conley, 2003, p. 53), other critics are more divided about the quality of Clarke's journalism. There are those who call it "weak in detail", "sometimes unethical", "sweepingly

general” or “brilliant but shallow”, whereas others praise it as vivid, original, and as “brilliant literary art of a very high order” (Conley, 2003, pp. 54-55).

Vance Palmer’s statement that Clarke “does not have poetic vision” highlights how journalism was perceived in the 20th century. Yet, as Conley counters it, “Marcus Clarke’s journalism is redolent of the 18th century Men-of-Letters tradition when journalism was more readily regarded as part of the literary community than it is today. Boundary crossing was common” (Conley, 2003, p. 5). This ‘boundary crossing’, common in the 19th century, can be seen as equivalent to the German *Grenzgänger*, applied to writers like Heinrich Heine, at home in both literature and journalism, as was shown in Chapter 4.

Laurie Hergenhan’s *A Colonial City High and Low Life. Selected Journalism of Marcus Clarke* (1972a) is one of the few works that present and analyse Clarke’s journalistic work in detail. Clarke, who arrived in Australia in 1863, as a seventeen-year-old, took up journalism in Melbourne in 1867. That time saw a sudden increase in newspapers and magazines and thus “more opportunity for journalists to depict and interpret the manners and customs, the intellectual, sociological and cultural preoccupations of the time so as to capture more than a topical significance” (Hergenhan, 1972b, pp. xxii-xxiii). Furthermore, “[a] writer in Australia in the 1860s and 1870s had to compete for a wide audience with literature and journals of the mother-culture and of America ... Thus, colonial journalism ... offered some scope for a writer to gain a local reputation by treating the local scene” (Hergenhan, 1972b, p. xxiii).

Hergenhan maintains that Clarke’s best work was not written for literary magazines but for the two main Melbourne daily papers, the *Argus* and the *Age*, and more specifically for their respective weekend-magazines, the *Australasian* and the *Leader* (p. xxiv). Clarke’s work was characterised by “a lively interest in social man” and he tended to use “satire, irony and humour as his journalistic weapons for attacking colonial society” (Hergenhan, 1972b, p. xxix). In this he can be compared with Heinrich Heine, who employed the very same stylistic means in his feuilletons. In much of Clarke’s journalistic writing his admiration for the works of Dickens and Balzac is evident, and he strove to describe the city of Melbourne the way those two authors had depicted London and Paris. Hergenhan attributes some of “Dickens’ power of conveying a sense of the busy movement and varied colour of a crowded street” to Clarke’s “Night Scenes of Melbourne” (Hergenhan, 1972b, p. xxxiv), which are part of the “Sketches of Melbourne Low Life”.

According to Hergenhan, the “Lower Bohemia” accounts, which form another part of “Sketches of Melbourne Low Life”, are of a superior quality in that the “vivid detail ... is imbued with a spirit which seeks to understand and pity as well as to record” (Hergenhan, 1992, p. xxxiv). These texts have some similarities with Georg Weerth’s social reportages, which are discussed in the chapter on German literary journalism. Like Weerth, Clarke shows the despicable living condition of the poor in “Cheap Lodging House”, originally published on 31 July 1869 in the *Australasian*. The great strength of the account, which opens with a quote from Victor Hugo, is its descriptiveness. Melbourne’s Little Bourke Street and its low-life inhabitants are presented in an unusual fashion as “low undersized, with the same ‘shy’ air that one sees in mangy dogs or thieves” (Clarke, 1972, p. 165). Towards the end of the text, Clarke switches to first-person narration and indicates how information was gathered: “Men – apparently not by any means scrupulous – have told me that they would rather sleep in the streets than in one of these places, and I believe them” (Clarke, 1972, p. 167). There is a fair amount of dialogue and at the end Clarke addresses the reader with

You say ‘How the fellow exaggerates!’ Well as long as you rely on the reports of the lodging house inspectors and casual observers you will say so. But any poor man you meet will tell you the real state of the case; and if you wish further confirmation before you initiate a charge, go and see for yourself – as I have done. (Clarke, 1972, p. 168)

The last words underline his claim for authenticity by bringing himself in as eyewitness and conveyor of first-hand information.

In “A Night at the Immigrants’ House” (Clarke, 1972, pp. 132-141) whole paragraphs are narrated in first person:

I am going to tell you as plainly as I can how the minority of Melbourne inhabitants live. I will take you into their houses, their lodgings, their taverns. I will show you their pleasures and their pains – I will give you their own histories – taken from their own lips ... The few simple facts which I have been at some trouble to collect, and the misery which I have in some measure experienced, exists here. (Clarke, 1972 p. 134)

Clarke, in this excerpt, which was first published in the *Australasian* on 12 June 1869, again presents himself as eyewitness, but he does not merely want to describe what he sees. He seems to be on a mission to create awareness for the plight of the old, poor, and homeless: “If a few more people would visit the Home, as I did, and see old men of fifty or sixty shivering in the bleak bitter wind ... the coughing and the shivering might be diminished” (Clarke, 1972, p. 141). Clarke’s way of writing, and his intention, is very

similar to those of Georg Weerth, Max Winter and Egon Erwin Kisch in that it is vivid, true to life and, by using the first person, claims authenticity.

Andrew McCann, who classifies the above mentioned texts as “ethnographic sketches of Melbourne’s Bohemian demi-monde and criminal underworld” (McCann, 2002, p. 10), explores in more detail the connection between journalism and literature in Clarke’s journalistic writing. He cites James Smith, who in 1878 wrote that the lack of colonial writing was due to “the shadow of England’s mighty and ever-spreading literature”, which the colonists preferred to locally written literature (McCann, 2002, p. 5). McCann draws the conclusion that the above lack of local writing has led to “a confusion of the fields of journalism and literature”, which in England “were regarded as embodying quite different degrees of cultural distinction” (ibid.). While in England literature is seen as an art and journalism is “a mere merchandise”, the colonies seem to be unable to separate the two and this, at least from the English perspective, turns colonial writing into something that is “mass produced and ephemeral, rather than of enduring cultural value” (ibid.). This further underlined the alleged cultural inferiority of firstly, Australian writing and secondly, journalism.

To McCann, Clarke’s sketches indicate that to some extent he endeavoured to apply “a more deliberately stylised set of literary effects” (McCann, 2002, p. 10). According to McCann, Clarke’s prose in these sketches resembles the style prevalent in “the journalism of the European metropolis”, but they also “adopted the imagery of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*” (McCann, 2002, p. 13). His descriptions of *Lower Bohemia* did not merely give account of that part of Melbourne and its down-and-out inhabitants, but turned it into a “dense and mysterious place” (McCann, 2002, p. 16), which made it interesting, and mirrored the European capitals of London and Paris. This would place Clarke’s journalistic writing more in the literary field, more precisely in “panoramic literature”, which also played a role in “the development of journalism in the nineteenth century” (McCann, 2002, pp. 10-11). Clarke’s admiration for the works of Dickens, Balzac and Hugo has been mentioned earlier and to McCann “the literariness” of the sketches “aspired to the cultural distinction of European writing” (McCann, 2002, p. 16). At first sight this statement seems to be in stark contradiction to the above argument that Clarke’s texts prominently feature realism. Literariness and realism seem to oppose each other. This, however, is not the case. As was pointed out before, realistic writing or literature is not merely meant to reproduce reality, but should also process it. This processing may well be done by means of literary devices. The most renowned exponents of realism in the 19th century, above all Honoré de Balzac, who is regarded as

one of the founders of this genre, are the best examples for this. It is therefore not at all surprising that Marcus Clarke should strive to emulate these writers.

“The most powerful written novel in Australia last century is *For the Term of His Natural Life*” – this is how Cecil Hadgraft describes Marcus Clarke’s major work of fiction (Hadgraft, 1960, p. 45). In Laurie Hergenhan’s opinion, the novel is “one of those unusual works which speak to succeeding generations” (Hergenhan, 1992, p. 5).

However, Clarke’s book is seldom seen as a stand-alone ‘product’ of his creative talent. More often than not it is read and analysed in connection to his journalistic writing. Conley goes as far as describing *For the Term of His Natural Life* as an extension of Clarke’s journalism with “its massive incorporation of journalism and documentary report, steeped in factual detail and strengthened by information gathering skills” (Conley, 2000, p. 56). To Hergenhan it is evident that Clarke’s journalistic sketches exposing the underside of boom-time Melbourne anticipate themes in his book (Hergenhan, 1992, p. 11). Brian Matthews places *For the Term of His Natural Life* at “the intersection of history with fiction and fiction with history” (Matthews, 2009, p. 359), and in Elizabeth Webby’s opinion, *For the Term of His Natural Life* is “historical fiction” (Webby, 2000d, p. 63).

In the preface to the book, Clarke states that “some of the events narrated are doubtless tragic and terrible; but I hold it needful to my purpose to record them, for they are events which have actually occurred” (Clarke, 1992, p. 19). He also makes clear his motive for writing *For the Term of His Natural Life* from the outset. His objective was to “set forth the working and result of an English system of [convict] transportation ... and to illustrate the manner best calculated, as I think, to attract general attention ...” (Clarke, 1992, p. 19).

According to Hergenhan, this makes the novel a social novel, which is “urgently concerned to probe and to arraign social values and institutions” (Hergenhan, 1992, p. 8). To Conley it is important to stress that Clarke’s “fiction and non-fiction were pursued within the same journalistic/artistic milieu with journals and magazines being the central spine joining Clarke’s fiction and non-fiction” (Conley, 2000, p. 55). Thus, he sees *His Natural Life* as the fusion between journalism and fiction with its massive incorporation of journalism and documentary report, steeped in factual detail and strengthened by information gathering skills (Conley, 2000, p. 56).

As Hadgraft points out, the novel “was the result of a stay in Tasmania, where he pored over convict records and gathered facts and figures on which the novel is based” (Hadgraft, 1960, p. 45). He goes on to state that the “picture that Clarke gives of the

convict system in his novel, which is set in a period beginning in 1827, is one of unrelieved brutality” (Hadgraft, 1960, p. 46). Thus, in Hadgraft’s view, *For the Term of His Natural Life* is a detailed and descriptive account in which “Clarke took his stand on actuality – he could point to documents proving that certain things had happened” (Hadgraft, 1960, p. 47). In other words, to all these scholars, Clarke’s closeness to journalistic technique is indisputable.

Clarke’s “positive view of human resilience”, however, was possibly not acceptable or credible to his readers as they did not believe that anyone could get through these horrors unscathed. As a consequence, Clarke was “persuaded to carry out an extensive revision of his novel” and he shortened it considerably for publication as a book. He also changed the ending, “reluctantly killing off the protagonist Rufus Dawes” (Webby, 2000d, p. 63). As far as the critics were concerned, most of them thought that this version was “more unified and more tragic” and as Webby points out, it is also a much more pessimistic work (ibid.).

In conclusion, both Clarke’s journalistic and literary writing is characterised by the element of realism which makes for credibility and authenticity. To a large extent Clarke’s journalistic sketches and his novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*, which in spite of its melodramatic moments has strong links to realism, can be seen as a precursor of literary journalism as we know it today.

5.2.2 Katharine Susannah Prichard’s (socialist) realism

Just as Clarke’s journalism was beneficial to his fiction in that it provided him with the tools to gather information and back up his story by documents and eyewitness accounts, Elizabeth Webby argues that Katharine Susannah Prichard’s writing should be seen similarly in that “her non-fiction complements her fiction” (Webby, 2000d, p. 52).

There is hardly a collection of Australian literature that does not feature Katharine Susannah Prichard. In her lifetime (1883-1969) she published thirteen novels, several collections of short stories, a number of other stories, poetry, plays, an autobiography and, last but not least, journalism. Apart from being a writer, she was also a political activist. In 1920 she became a founding member of the Communist Party of Australia and many critics have focused on the supposedly negative influence of her political beliefs on her creativity. Cath Ellis maintains that “there is a generally accepted understanding that Prichard’s literary career was compromised by her commitment to politics and that her work, especially her later novels, is inherently flawed by a propagandist slant and a didactic tenor” (Ellis, 1997, p. 38). Bruce Bennett also

contends that Prichard's political engagement "limited her creativity in her later work" (Bennett, 2009, p. 174).

Much of Prichard's writing is subsumed under the label 'socialist realism'. As is obvious from the expression, the two elements of socialist realism are "socialism as the ideological and political position and realism as the artistic principle of depicting reality, which not only criticises bourgeois society, but also shows the way to socialism" (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, 1983, Vol. 20, p. 295). The fact that Prichard practised this form of writing in non-socialist Australia might explain some of the criticism she received, as many of her political demands were not shared or provoked unease.

As has already been explained above, realism is treated in the sense of writing from actual experience and observation. Thus, limiting Prichard's writing to the element of social realism is too narrow an approach and does not do justice to her work. This is why Delys Bird's (2000b, p. vii) evaluation that Prichard's "journalism was her earliest literary achievement and had a major effect on her fiction, evident in her stress on writing from personal observation and experience" serves as a more suitable starting point. In 1908 Prichard worked as a journalist for the *Melbourne Herald* in London and Paris, and later "tried freelance writing and journalism in the United States" (Dixon, 2009, p. 233). John Hay puts forward that it was in those times that "she was struck more by the lives of the victims of poverty, oppression and war than by her interviews with the rich and celebrated" (Hay, 1988). Prichard describes this time as follows:

I had gone there [to London] in 1908 ... because I thought Australian writers would not have much standing in their own country until they had proved their ability overseas. My experiences ranged from visits to homes of the aristocracy and wealthy relations to excursions into the worst slums of the great city. I saw the extremes of wealth and poverty in brilliant receptions and children picking up food from rubbish bins. (Prichard, 1956)

Only later, in the years between 1916 and 1918, which Hay calls a "literary and political watershed", was "Prichard discovering socialism, communism and the writings of Marx and Engels" (Hay, 1988.). For Prichard herself, her political engagement was "an important part of her duty as a writer" (Bird, 2000b, p. xxii). She was strongly devoted to causes such as action "for world peace, against racism in Australia, for women's rights, ... and to the country in which she lived" (Bird, 2000b, p. xxiii).

In a text titled *Why I am a Communist*, Prichard explained where her political engagement stemmed from and it becomes clear that her own experiences played an

important role in this context. Long before she read the works of Marx and Engels, poverty and inequality were issues she was confronted with. In her own words:

How was it that some people should have to live in fear and poverty all their days, while others, whether they worked or not, could live easily and pleasantly, squandering riches, and concerned only about their own pleasure and power? These are the questions I asked myself. Perhaps my mind awakened when I was a child to some awareness of a problem in life. (Prichard, 1956, n. p.)

It is therefore not surprising or unusual that this social awareness should feature in most of her writing, which, in turn, cannot automatically be dismissed as mere socialist propaganda as been done by some of her critics. Given her political commitment and engagement, and also the decades in which she published, it is most suitable to compare Prichard to Egon Erwin Kisch, her contemporary and fellow communist. The two must have met in 1934 when Kisch, despite having been denied entry into the country, set foot on the Australian continent. Prichard, as a member of the Movement Against War and Fascism, played a prominent role in the protests against the Australian Government (Bird, 2000a). With regard to their work, it can be said that what was socialist realism for Prichard in Australia, was for Kisch New Objectivity in Germany and factography in the Soviet Union (Segel, 1997, p. 74). While, as Segel argues, Kisch to a large extent “transformed reportage into a literary genre without sacrificing truth and objectivity” (Segel, 1997, p. 70), Prichard wrote realistic fiction which served her political causes.

In his article about the sketch or reportage, *A Dangerous Literary Genre*, Kisch states that it is “hard ... to present the truth accurately, without sacrificing artistic form or vitality” and that “the novelist who reaches his aim [of presenting this] drab and awkward material” in an engaging way is “a true artist” (Kisch in Segel, 1997, p. 92). Kisch goes on to argue that “people and life are supreme” and that “our literature must serve them and their awareness” (Kisch, in Segel, 1997, p. 92). This is in line with Peter Pierce’s assessment of Katharine Susannah Prichard’s novels: They are “dedicated to revealing working Australia to itself” (Pierce, 2009b, p. 153). One difference to Kisch, who was often the protagonist in his reportages, is that Prichard’s “aesthetic was that of a realist with a focus on the subject rather than herself” (Bennett, 2009, p. 173).

Unlike other scholars, Delys Bird does not see realism as impeding literariness. For her, “journalism and non-fiction writing illuminate the fiction, giving insights into the processes that generate the story writing, as well as the literary, social and political concerns that always inform them” (Bird, 2000b, p. vii). For Bird (2000b, p. xvi),

Prichard's "essays and journalism give the stories a writerly social and political context, often explicating their themes and concerns."

A look at the journalistic and literary tools Prichard had at her disposal shows the close alignment of her prose and journalism. Prichard gathered material for her works in true journalistic manner. For instance, prior to writing about Aboriginal life in *Coonardoo* (1928), "she spent more than two months ... at Turee Station in the north west of Western Australia" (Bird, 2000b, xx). Also in *The Pioneers* (1915), *The Black Opal* (1921), and *Working Bullocks* (1926), her commitment to "a realistic representation of the world of work" is obvious (Lindsay, 1961, p. 267).

A closer look at some of Prichard's journalism as well as fiction shows how she combined fiction with her political beliefs. In the journalistic piece *The March from Frankland River*, written in 1938, of which edited extracts were published in 1976, Prichard gives an account of "a march made during the depression by striking workers – who had been sent to a holding camp on the Franklin River in the south-west of Western Australia from which they were to obtain work – to protest their situation" (Bird, 2000c, p. 136). It is written in reportage style, giving dates and times "Sunday, August 11, 1932 at a quarter to nine ... (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 142) and quoting from newspapers, for example "to quote from the *Daily News* (August 23)" (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 143).

An important element of this text is what Bird calls "dramatic renderings from some of their [workers'] stories" (Bird, 2000c, p. 136), which are offset by indentation and italics. The first of these reports goes over two full pages (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, pp. 143-145). Prichard uses direct speech to connect the different reports. The accounts are all written in the first person and to underline their authenticity, Prichard states that "every detail of the above statement has been corroborated and confirmed by the strike committee of the Frankland River men. Experiences described were common to most of the men, although they may have been varied in degree" (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 146). The second sentence of her statement serves to indicate that while the reports are backed up by facts, they are to be treated as examples. To further underline the truthfulness of her report, Prichard quotes from the *Daily News* of 23 August and the *West Australian* of 25 August to inform the readers about how the events unfolded (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, pp. 146-147).

However, at this point, Prichard clearly inserts herself with her own pointed question "What happened when the men from Frankland River – seeking to rouse the interest of citizens of their plight and tell them of their demands for work and wages?"

Her answer is equally subjective: “The Government ‘like a great big bully’ turned out the police force to prevent these hungry and homeless men from demonstrating their needs!” (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 148). Her subsequent reaction to the authorities’ arrest of the men reads like a political speech:

To treat working men seeking employment in such a callous manner – to draft them off, like cattle of no particular value, to jobs in the bush, without proper arrangements for provisioning and maintaining them in health – was to say the least of it, unjustifiable negligence. (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 149)

The text ends with a direct quote of Mr. V. Marshall (Murchison) in the Legislative Assembly and is given a reference (Hansard, No. 4, p. 295). The final sentences are once again aimed at confirming the truthfulness of Prichard’s report: “The facts contained in this pamphlet are 100 per cent true. Every precaution has been taken to verify and substantiate them” (Prichard in Bird, 2000a, p. 150).

Prichard’s text is reminiscent of Egon Erwin Kisch, but also to a certain extent of Georg Weerth’s speech at the Free Trade Conference in Brussels in 1847, reminding employers to treat their workers well in order to maintain social peace (Georg-Weerth-Gesellschaft e.V., 2006, n. p). In content and objectives there are similarities between all three writers. The readers are to experience what is written about and this is done in a vivid, descriptive and engaging manner. The fact that eyewitness reports are included in *The March from Frankland River* greatly contributes to its authenticity.

In Prichard’s fictional writing, her political ideas and her convictions are also present, although in some of her short stories they are not as openly displayed as in her novels. The topics range across Aboriginal life, Australian landscapes, women’s rights, and, of course, poverty and the toils of workers, in both rural and urban Australia, and their families.

In *The Black Opal* (1921), a novel featuring the opal-mining community of “Fallen Star Ridge” Prichard describes the life of the miners and their efforts to remain independent of mining companies. She wrote *The Black Opal* during a stay at Lightning Ridge in Australia’s outback. The book opens with the following description:

A string of vehicles moved slowly out of the New Town, taking the road over the long, slow slope of the Ridge to the plains. Nothing was moving on the wide stretch of the plains or under the fine, clear blue sky of early spring, except this train of shabby, dust-covered vehicles. The road no more than a track of wheels on shingly earth, wound lazily through paper daisies growing in drifts beside it, and through a white coverlet to the dim, circling horizon. The faint, dry

fragrance of paper daisies was in the air; a native cuckoo calling. (Prichard, 1921)

As the story unfolds, there is much dialogue and description of the life of the opal miners and the dynamics of their mining camp. Further into the book, in chapter VIII, which is to large part taken up by detailed and large poetic descriptions of the landscape, the weather, and the seasons, there are also several paragraphs which seem slightly out of place since they are written in the style of political pamphlets. Here Prichard comes to the core topic of the novel: self-determined work at an appropriate pay and with a right to leisure time, all of which should be basic human rights. Notwithstanding the fact that phrases like “conditions of work, which wrung him [the worker] of energy and spirit, deprived him of leisure to enjoy [life]” (Prichard, 1921) tend to break the flow of the narrative, the great strength of *The Black Opal* is Prichard’s in-depth knowledge of the setting and people’s lives as well as her ability to convey this to the reader. There are undoubtedly texts where Prichard’s political beliefs and convictions eclipsed her literary skills. However, it has to be said that Bruce Bennett’s judgement (2009, p. 174), mostly directed at her late novels, that Prichard’s political beliefs had a negative impact on her creativity, is far too focused on Prichard’s devotion to social causes and too little on the poetic strength of her prose. His judgement closely resembles Patrick White’s dismissal of realism quoted above.

As far as literary journalism, which is judged according to different criteria than literature, is concerned, both Marcus Clarke and Katharine Susannah Prichard can be seen as precursors of the genre in that they practised a kind of writing which not only had great stakes in realism, but also incorporated the important characteristics of personal experience and observation as well as to some extent the eyewitness element, all of which lent their fiction a high degree of authenticity. Their writing can also be seen as what Walter Benjamin called “a recasting of literary forms, a melting down in which many of the opposites in which we have been used to think may lose their force” (Benjamin cited in Segel, 1997, p. 70) This dictum was aimed at the work of writers such as Egon Erwin Kisch and can also be attributed to Clarke and Prichard and serves to reconcile the alleged contradiction of literariness and realism.

5.3. Contemporary Australian literary journalism

5.3.1 *George Johnston*

George Johnston (1912 – 1970) started his journalistic career in 1933 when the *Argus* took him on as a cadet reporter, and in 1941 he “was accredited No. 1 Australian war correspondent” (Kinnane, 1996). In this role Johnston wrote and published what Gary Kinnane calls “several quasi documentary books on the war” (Kinnane, 1996). To Conley, this combination of journalism and war was “the greatest influence on Johnston as a novelist” (Conley, 2001-02, p. 107). Conley’s core thesis is that Johnston’s career as a war correspondent “provided the skills, experiences, perspectives and authority that, as a primer for fiction, no other profession could equal” (Conley, 2001-02, p. 107).

Johnston’s writing can roughly be divided into two phases: the journalistic one, which ended in 1954 and the literary one which lasted until the end of his life in 1970. There was a brief overlap of the two, during which he wrote the novels *High Valley* (1949) and *The Big Chariot* (1953), both in cooperation with his second wife Charmian Clift.

As with Clarke and Pritchard, the journalistic influence in Johnston’s writing also manifests itself by firmly basing his work, as Susan Lever states, “in the realist tradition” (Lever, 2009, p. 510). Kinnane similarly places Johnston “in the tradition of journalistic realism” (Kinnane, 1996). However, Kinnane does not use the term in a derisory manner.

5.3.2 *George Johnston’s novel My Brother Jack*

In the collections of works on Australian literature, such as the *Cambridge Companion of Australian Literature* (Webby, 2000a), *The Oxford Literary History of Australia* (Bennett & Strauss, 1998) or *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature* (Pierce, 2009a), to name but a few, Johnston’s novel *My Brother Jack* (1964) features as his outstanding work. For most critics and scholars this importance is content-based, that is, they stress its significance for the evolvment of an Australian identity. According to David Carter, Johnston’s novel *My Brother Jack* was “another key story of Australian reassessment” (Carter, 2009, p. 373). Susan Lever sees it as a possibly “defining statement on the place of war in the post-1950s Australian imagination” as well as “a commitment to suburban middle-class life” (Lever, 2009, pp. 503-504) and Kerry Goldsworthy argues that together with Randolph Stowe’s *The Merry Go-Round in the*

Sea (1965), *My Brother Jack* “provided a literary education for a generation of Australian schoolchildren in the 1960s” (Goldsworthy, 2000, p. 114).

When it comes to deciding which genre or form *My Brother Jack* should be assigned to the matter becomes more complex. In his introduction to the 1990 edition of the book Brian Matthews uses the term “autobiographical novel” (Matthews, 1990, p. v). Other scholars see this definition as contentious. According to David McCooey, a distinction needs to be made between “‘autobiography’ as an intended narrative account and ‘autobiographical’ as an unintended or related product of another form of writing (usually fiction)” (McCooey cited in Whitlock, 2000, p. 244). In Johnston’s case, the content of *My Brother Jack* is so close to his own life that a differentiation is not always easy. For McCooey, who compared Gary Kinnane’s biography of Johnston with the book, the matter is clear: there are “differences between autobiographical and fictional intent. ... [and] the writer of autobiography and biography is accountable to history, and responsible to others, in ways which do not hold for fiction” (Whitlock, 2000, p. 244). Whitlock concludes that this “relegates books such as ... George Johnston’s *My Brother Jack* trilogy into the category of ‘fiction’” (ibid.). For Patrick Morgan, *My Brother Jack* is “straight social reportage [and] most nearly factual” (Morgan cited in Conley, 2003, p. 230).

Geoffrey Thurley even goes as far as stating that “Johnston in *My Brother Jack*, at any rate, takes his place confidentially within the great classical tradition of the novel that leads back through *The Great Gatsby* and *Great Expectations* to *Don Quixote*” (Thurley, 1974, p. 62). He compares the novel to the work of Patrick White and contends that “Australian academics are as contemptuous of Johnston – a vulgar trade-writer – as they are proud of the more intellectually impressive White” (Thurley, 1974, p. 62). This opinion is also reflected in Conley’s statement that Johnston’s achievement of fusing journalism and literature “has neither been understood nor adequately examined by Australia’s literary scholars” (Conley, 2001-02, p. 108).

This leads to the core of the matter that has accompanied this investigation all along: how to view the influence of journalism on literature, and how to assess the resulting new genre. The fact that George Johnston used his journalistic background, first-hand experience, and skills to write *My Brother Jack* was seen as a flaw by some literary scholars at the time, who tended to agree with Patrick White in that a “novel should heighten life, should give one an illuminating experience [and] shouldn’t set out what you know already” (White cited in Lawson, 1994, p. 273). In contrast to this, Thurley emphasises Johnston’s strengths, which are his “journalistic ease” and his

“experience [which] qualified [him] to write the Australian novel of Success” (Thurley, 1974, pp. 64-65). This, to a large extent, refutes Patrick Whites harsh criticism of journalistic realism, which was mentioned earlier, but at the same time shows how contentious the merging of journalism and literature was at the time. Contemporary writers of literary journalism like Helen Garner or Anna Funder do not have to contend with this problem today.

When it comes to the literary style of *My Brother Jack*, one can state that the book offers many different stylistic elements. There are descriptions, which are very literary, bordering on the poetic, parts where Johnston ‘records’ the way people speak, and which read like transcribed recordings, and there are very clear and detailed descriptions of people and places. Johnston’s description of how the depression took hold of Australia can serve as an example for the first element:

It was like a great river flooding or changing its course, the way the Depression came – the insidious creeping movement of dark, strong, unpredictable forces, the flow of hidden currents, a clod falling and dissolving, a slide of earth, the cave-in of an entire bank, a sudden eddy swirling round a snag, tilting it over, sweeping it off into black oblivion. (Johnston, 1990, p. 152)

Johnston describes an abstract development and chooses an example from nature. His depiction of the office building housing the *Morning Post*, the paper his protagonist David Meredith is writing for, is very detailed and reads like the description of an elaborate ant-hill with different levels and hierarchies. There are “pinched Dickensian creatures ... with black celluloid cuffs over their shirt-sleeves, and green celluloid shades over their foreheads, ... anonymous troglodytes ...[and] a secondary group of more-or less weevil-like creatures” (Johnston, 1990, p. 196). Very fitting, in the middle of the building, there is the “real heart ... of the whole of this complex organism ... the literary department” (Johnston, 1990, p. 198) with the editors’ and sub-editors’ offices. The reporters’ room is a “huge high ceilinged chamber furnished with rows of square tables and chairs” (Johnston, 1990, p. 199). Johnston takes the reader on a tour of the building and here his inside knowledge is a valuable element as he is able to supply details in an authentic manner.

In the dialogues, especially between Jack and David Meredith, Johnston uses slang and also dialect, as when he describes the reaction of David Meredith’s German employer to the economic difficulties the firm has to face: “You vill all know ... that der printing industry iss not now in a condition of equitableness. ... It iss not goot.

Nein! ... Ach! The times are of great difficulty. ... We will act *mit* honour” (Johnston, 1990, p. 155, italics in the original).

My Brother Jack is written in the first-person and many of the events in the book are Johnston’s own experiences. Like his protagonist David Meredith he was accredited “No. 1 Australian war correspondent” with postings in New Guinea, Britain, the US, India, China, Burma, and Italy (Kinnane, 1996). In the novel he gives an account of his time in New Guinea.

Johnston returned to Australia in October 1945 and was welcomed as “the golden boy”. At the time he was writing *My Brother Jack*, these times were long over and his position was similar to Curtis Condon, chief-of-staff at the *Morning Post*: “He was a good newspaper man and a frustrated writer – which is a bad combination” (Johnston, 1990, p. 205).

Despite its closeness to Johnston’s life, *My Brother Jack* is a novel, more precisely a semi-autobiographical one. There are notes at the end of the book in which the reader is informed about some of the “differences between the novel and the biographical details of Johnston’s life” (Matthews, 1990). One of the techniques mentioned in this context is the merging of several real persons into one character. In a work of literary journalism this would not be permissible. In this context the splitting of the person of Jenna Mead into multiple characters in Helen Garner’s *The First Stone* and the ensuing storm of criticism comes to mind. In other ways, as for instance, its realistic accounts, some of the historical background, the observations and personal, first-hand experience and information, *My Brother Jack* can be seen as another precursor of works of literary journalism.

5.3.3 Robert Drewe

As was the case for George Johnston, Robert Drewe’s first career was in journalism. He worked as an investigative reporter, literary editor and columnist for various newspapers and magazines, among them the *Age*, the *Australian*, and the *Bulletin* (Bennett, 1989; Bird, 2000d) and still has a column in the Saturday magazine of the *West Australian*. In the decade Drewe was a full-time journalist he was awarded several prizes for his writing, the most prestigious being two Walkley Awards (1976 and 1981), both for works he had written for the *Bulletin* (Bennett, 1989). One of those award-winning texts Drewe later fictionalised as the short story *Sweetlip* in the collection *The Body Surfers* (1983).

At the age of twenty-eight, Drewe decided to dedicate himself to writing fiction and turned away from full-time journalism. In the following the focus will be on his fiction and one work of non-fiction, *The Shark Net – Memories and Murder*, published in the year 2000 and the connection of these works to literary journalism.

Delys Bird calls Robert Drewe a “late twentieth-century realist” (Bird, 2000d, p. 202). This places Drewe firmly in the tradition of George Johnston, Katharine Susannah Prichard and Marcus Clarke. The salient point is not that they all worked as journalists and novelists – looking at Conley’s list (Conley, 1998) these criteria fit many others. It is Drewe’s realistic depiction of the world and people which largely stems from actual observation and experience. All the mentioned writers share a journalistic toolkit and have their view of the world which they apply to their fiction. Bruce Bennett looks at Drewe’s journalistic work from the literary perspective and maintains that Drewe’s literary talent helped in his journalism as his “prize winning pieces of journalism all have a strong narrative line“ (Bennett, 1989, p. 8). In other words, Drewe’s journalism benefitted from his prose writing skills which, in turn, facilitated the move from one field to the other. Bennett’s argument aims at placing literary talent above journalism – as we have seen, in Prichard’s case he deemed her creativity, that is, her literary talent, to be stifled by her realism.

The shedding of the journalism profession in favour of literature was not an easy one, as is evident from Drewe’s own description of the process. His career change was marked “by grudging acceptance” from both literature and journalism (Drewe in Conley, 1998, p. 50). As far as Drewe is concerned, the cool reception from literary scholars was due to “Australia’s tradition that novelists either came from ‘the realist, outback, dingo-trapping background’ or from English Departments” (Drewe in Conley, 1998, p. 50). Part of the problem that literature has with realistic novels is that truth telling – a prominent feature of journalism – should not be an object of fiction (see Bennett, 1989).

The problem of hierarchy, which still places literature above journalism, was also evident in the reaction Drewe received from his former colleagues. Drewe reported that some people “were ‘antagonistic to my books because they were journalists writing about an ex-journalist’ who had got above himself” (Waldren, 1996). All of this reveals, until quite recently in Australia, a lack of acceptance of boundary crossers. Despite the fact that Drewe also received numerous prizes for his novels, most of his fiction has been analysed as to its closeness to journalism. In Conley’s opinion “some critics appear to focus more on the presumed journalistic qualities of Drewe’s fiction than its

poetic energy” (Conley, 1998, p. 50). It has to be noted here that in the context of literary journalism this argumentation is to be neglected. It is not the dominance of literature over journalism or vice versa which needs to be established, but it is the combination of journalistic research techniques and narrative techniques which makes for literary journalism. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that the focus of a number of critics and reviewers should be on the journalistic elements in Drewe’s fiction, as he has drawn extensively on his journalistic background and experience. Those familiar with his journalistic writing and his biography can easily find similarities between his fiction and his journalism. In *A Cry in the Jungle Bar* (1979), a novel set in Asia, for example, one key character is a newspaper columnist. Having had journalistic assignments to complete in Asia himself, Drewe could draw from his first-hand experience not only for some of the characters but also for the setting. In *Fortune* (1986) journalism features even more prominently. As Bruce Bennett states, in that novel, “journalism as a profession and as a mode of representing the world is questioned most intensively” (Bennett, 1989, p. 12). The narrator is an experienced journalist and the protagonist, Don Spargo, is based on an actual person, Alan Robinson, a Western Australian shipwreck finder, whom Drewe knew personally and about whom he had written in the *Bulletin*. The criticism that this evoked neglected the notion that much of what is called fiction is based on observation and experience. The danger of using journalistic fact in fiction, however, is that the two might become indistinguishable.

The Shark Net – Memories and Murder (2000) is one of Drewe’s non-fiction works, a memoir, which “links the author’s childhood with a series of murders in 1950s Perth using elements often comically, of the *Bildungsroman*, the detective story, local history, courtroom drama and horror” (McCooey, 2009, p. 339).

In the context of truth telling and the handling of facts, the author’s note at the very back of the book is important:

This is both a book of memory and my portrait of a place and time. Memory may falter and portraiture is a highly subjective endeavour, but I have tried to tell a truthful story. A handful of names have changed, for the usual reasons. (Drewe, 2000)

In summary, one can say that Robert Drewe’s fiction and non-fiction form a connecting link between the work of Marcus Clarke, who wrote at a time when fact and fiction were not as strictly separated as they are today, George Johnston’s *My Brother Jack*, and the work of Australian literary journalists like Helen Garner, Anna Funder, and others.

5.4 Conclusion

The above analyses have shown that the literary works of Marcus Clarke, Katharine Susannah Prichard, George Johnston, and Robert Drewe (with the possible exception of the memoir *The Shark Net*) cannot be classified as literary journalism. However, the long tradition of realism, be it social, socialist, or journalistic, which can be traced in their writing, has promoted the development of the form in Australia. The fact that over a relatively long period of time journalism was a rather fluid, and thus also an open and creative field in Australia, and that the practitioners were journalists as well as novelists, poets, politicians and scientists, has laid the foundation for the genre of literary journalism. However, the battles within Australian literature, in which Nobel Prize winner Patrick White's condemnation of 'realistic' fiction was highly influential, meant that Australia had to wait for many years before authors such as Helen Garner, John Bryson, and Anna Funder could write works of literary journalism that are highly regarded. Nonetheless, in Australia as in Germany and the USA, the qualitative separation of literature and journalism is still evident. When analysed from a journalistic perspective, literary journalism tends to fall short of ethical and verifiability standards, and when literary criteria are applied the lack of literary quality is brought to the fore.

6 Case Study *Aktenkundig*

Aktenkundig initially was a book of its time: it was an account of the experiences of dissidents in the former German Democratic Republic, and it was meant as a contribution to the discussion whether the Stasi files should be kept and whether they should be available to those who were spied upon.

6.1 Structure of *Aktenkundig*

The basis of this chapter is the paperback edition (1993) of the book, which first came out in hardback in 1992. The German word *Aktenkundig* has two meanings. It can mean being on record, that is, information about something or someone is recorded; and it can also mean knowing the files, being familiar with the files. In the context of the book, both meanings can be applied: those whose lives are ‘on record’ familiarise themselves with their files.

The book has 286 pages, comprising 14 chapters by 14 authors. There is a foreword by the editor of the volume, Hans-Joachim Schädlich, and information on the authors can be found at the end of the book. Most chapters are divided into sub-chapters. Some of the contributions include copies of Stasi reports or notes taken by Stasi spies. The contributions vary in length, the longest being 62 pages and the shortest three pages long. That chapter consists of three poems by the East-German writer and poet Sarah Kirsch.

6.2 Background of the book

In order to understand the impact of *Aktenkundig* it is important to note that before and after the publication of the book, it was widely discussed as to whether the files of the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (*MfS*) [Ministry for State Security]², or Stasi as it has been called, should be disclosed, and whether those about whose lives the information in these files was compiled should have free access to those documents. Jürgen Fuchs, who was imprisoned in the GDR for nine months in the years 1976 and 1977 before he was deported to West Berlin in August 1977, and who worked as a writer and social psychologist, focuses on this issue in his contribution to *Aktenkundig*. He quotes the

² In the following the abbreviation *MfS* (printed in italics) will be used.

newspaper editor Erich Böhme saying that “he would not mind if during the next flood, the river Spree took the embarrassing janitors’ files ... with it” (Schädlich, 1993b, p. 11). The historian Golo Mann and the CDU politician Heiner Geißler wanted to close the Berlin Stasi-File office, and there was “talk about setting the documents on fire, destroying the files, putting them in concrete” (ibid.). Fuchs - and in this he stands for all the other authors and contributors to *Aktenkundig* - had been personally affected and to him it is a matter of respect for the Stasi victims to give them the opportunity to read their files. For him this is “a farewell to the dictatorship. But also a salvation. Also a salvation of oneself. It must not be denied” (Fuchs, 1993, p. 15). It is in this light that the contributions of *Aktenkundig* have to be read and analysed.

Furthermore, it is important to realise that in 1992, when the files were first made available to the victims of the Stasi and *Aktenkundig* was published, most German magazines, daily and weekly newspapers were saturated with articles, reports, and interviews on the topic. Most of what was written had a West German perspective to it, and was also tinged with a great deal of sensationalism, especially when it came to exposing prominent people.

6.3 Analysis of individual contributions

In the following analysis I am focusing on seven of the writers, who are representative of the whole group and whose individual contributions to *Aktenkundig* give a deep insight not only into the many facets of Stasi spying, but also show the different approaches to the topic. All authors – except for the West German Hubertus Knabe – had similar experiences with the East German regime and the Stasi, they were all dissidents and actively fought against the political system, but their ways of expressing their feelings upon reading their files differ greatly. What they have in common is their background – political and intellectual. They are writers, poets, artists, activists, that are very articulate individuals who, unlike most of the other Stasi victims, have ways and means to put their disgust and distress into words.

6.3.1 Bärbel Bohley – Painter and co-founder of the Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte [Initiative for Peace and Human Rights]

Bärbel Bohley (1945 – 2010), who was also called the “Mother of the Peaceful Revolution” (“DDR-Bürgerrechtlerin,” 2010) after the fall of the Berlin wall, had been imprisoned in Hohenschönhausen several times in the 1980s. Hohenschönhausen in

Berlin was the notorious remand prison of the Stasi. Here mainly political prisoners were kept and most were tortured physically as well as psychologically. One of the special features of this prison was that the inmates were kept in isolation and often did not even know where they were. Today the building is a memorial.

After a six-week imprisonment in 1983, she no longer received government orders for her works of art, was forbidden to publicly exhibit her work as well as to travel (“DDR-Bürgerrechtlerin,” 2010). In 1988 she was forced into exile, but returned to the GDR after six months. In an interview she gave in Florence, Italy, prior to her return, she said that she “wanted to go back at all cost”, among other things because she hadn’t “left voluntarily” (“Warum soll ich,” 1988, p. 19). Furthermore, she wanted a “completely changed GDR, in which each citizen finally releases himself/herself into the majority” (“DDR-Bürgerrechtlerin,” 2010).

In the opening paragraph of her text, Bohley describes the dilemma she and many others who read their Stasi files find themselves in: “The pros and cons of inspecting the files will cause a stir for many years to come, because it is Pandora’s box that has been opened. It cannot be closed again” (Bohley, 1993, p. 38). This image of Pandora’s box, which once opened spreads evil and illness, is well chosen. One of the main questions Bohley asks at this early stage of accessing her files is “what is the motivation for inspecting [them]” (ibid.), all the more since she knows that what she is going to find will be distressing. Her answer, which is given immediately, is: “Not in order to condemn, but to clarify, we may not remain silent. What we do not want to see today will be a new insurmountable wall tomorrow” (Bohley, 1993, pp. 38-39). While this is a general concern, Bohley makes it a personal one by describing to the reader that the Stasi has been part of her life, “as long as [she] can think” (Bohley, 1993, p.39). She makes clear from the start that this is a personal text, her very personal reaction to the topic. Bohley mentions her father’s and her brother’s conflicts and experiences with the political system of the GDR and thus underlines her own involvement.

One pattern that can be identified throughout the text is that of posing questions, which are subsequently answered. It is almost like a dialogue with the reader; she asks questions that could also be raised by someone who has had no connection to the GDR and has never been spied upon by the Stasi. For instance: “How could Stasi, despite a lack of acceptance in the population, motivate so many people to collaborate?” (Bohley, 1993, p. 40).

One gets the impression that Bohley develops her thoughts as she reads her files and this creates the feeling that as a reader one participates in the process. Time and again,

paragraphs start with “When I read the files ...” (for example Bohley, 1993, p. 40). Her style is very personal as is the information she finds in the files. Her language is emotional when she describes how as she was reading the files “forgotten events from the past years came alive again. ... All of a sudden I encountered my deep speechlessness on the telephone of those days, which I still need to overcome now. Will I ever succeed in answering with my name? Even today there is still the thought that someone is listening in” (Bohley, 1993, p. 40). The first-person narration and the fact that Bohley keeps a chronology, that is, takes the reader through her reading process, create authenticity. She tells the reader how she applied to inspect her files for the first time in “May 1990” and that in those days she “wanted to finish the State Security chapter [in her life] as quickly as possible” (Bohley, 1993, p. 41). She moves from the past to the present and says that “[A]most two years after this, on the morning of 2nd January 1992, I could – together with others – look into the files in Behrensstrasse in Berlin” (Bohley, 1993, p. 42). During the reading process, she reflects on past events and, for instance, tells the reader that now she understands or realizes the true reasons for the behaviour of some people:

In those days I thought that they [women who turned out to be Stasi spies] were afraid of their own courage to work in an independent women’s group. When I read the reports now I know that that they were afraid to miss something worth reporting (ibid.).

In the paragraph that follows this realisation, Bohley describes the relationship of the supervising officer and the informer and the vocabulary she uses is extremely emotional and descriptive. She mentions the “intimacy of conspirators”, and how this “dubious character of the relationship ... creates deep revulsion“ (ibid.). Words that recur throughout the texts and which describe the character of the Stasi are “mistrust, power, lies, concepts of enemies, destruction” (Bohley, 1993, pp. 42 and 43). At times when describing the Stasi her language becomes almost poetic. She writes about the “evil magic of Stasi” which rewards “betrayal, lies, unfaithfulness, secrecy, pride, arrogance, the desire for power, grovelling, fear, and cowardice” (Bohley, 1993, p.43). At the end of the paragraph, she takes up most of those nouns again and uses them to unmask the system as something twisted and evil: “The Stasi was the great nationally-owned magician and turned injustice into justice, betrayal into love, unfaithfulness into faithfulness, grovelling into collaboration, fear into courage, lies into truth, fraud into responsibility, selfishness into compassion” (ibid.). This statement also underlines Bohley’s argument that the Stasi pervaded every corner of life in the former GDR. What

follows is almost a whole paragraph made up of questions, one leading to the next, the topic being whether one would be better off to “cover everything with the blanket of amnesty” (ibid.).

The fact that Bohley, who is critical of the former regime and of its instrument, the Stasi, and who is a victim of the system, expresses her fears, hopes, and doubts makes clear that this is no balanced, matter-of-fact report. At the same time her emotiveness creates closeness to the reader. For instance, when she asks herself “Why does my file start as late as 1982? What have I done until then?” an East German reader might ask him- or herself the same question, whereas a West German reader may be reminded of the time after 1945 when the question was asked what one had done in the years 1933 to 1945.

Bohley proposes that inspecting the files helps “to pose old questions anew, and maybe to also answer them in a new way” (ibid.), but concedes that the “truth is still missing” (Bohley, 1993, p. 45). Time and again, it becomes clear – at least to me – that it is impossible to fathom the depths or extent of the damage done and the pain inflicted on those who were spied upon. A whole country was involved and affected, and it is this dimension that is incomprehensible to an outsider. Bohley creates an almost intimate atmosphere and lets the reader participate in her experiences. The reader can sympathise and yet, unless he or she has been through a similar experience, will never be able to fully comprehend, let alone make a judgement.

At the end of her text, Bohley comes full circle by saying that “not even the thickest concrete lids can prevent the radiation of the entire material on our social existence / living together. Therefore, the files need to remain open, have to be read quickly” (Bohley, 1993, p. 46). Although hers is a relatively short chapter – it comprises a mere eight and a half pages – the reader is left with a detailed insight into the complexity of effects of the Stasi on the individual and East German society as a whole, as well as on the person Bärbel Bohley.

6.3.2 Lutz Rathenow – Poet and dissident

Lutz Rathenow (*1952), whose works were almost exclusively published in West Germany and who was arrested in 1980 for doing so, titles his contribution to *Aktenkundig* “Teile zu keinem Bild oder das Puzzle von der geheimen Macht” [Parts to no picture or the jigsaw puzzle of secret power]. This title very much sounds like that of a mystery or even fantasy story and, to some extent, the text reveals mysteries and

illustrates how the spies of the *MfS* or Stasi obtained information on citizens who were not in line with the political ideology of the GDR.

Rathenow has divided his text into six parts, into pieces of the puzzle, so to speak. Part II and V bear subtitles and the parts are in chronological order, starting from the day when he begins reading his Stasi file. However, the text is not an ongoing narrative, as the content of each part has a different setting. The reader has to put the puzzle together him or herself.

Part I can be seen as an introduction and a positioning. At the very outset Rathenow tells the reader that his own intention was “to read quietly through the papers. In sequence, with breaks, so that I can determine the rhythm of the past – since I have been at its mercy so often when it was still the present” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 62). His next statement, however, is a clear signal to the reader not to expect a chronological account of what Rathenow finds, because he “catches [himself] in comments, interviews which are to help clear up the most serious stupidities” (ibid.). What he is referring to is the reaction of the public and the press to disclosures from the files.

Thus, instead of a personal account, what follows is a detailed explanation of what, in his opinion, the function of the Stasi files is and which role they play in the reappraisal of GDR history. At the same time Rathenow clarifies what the files cannot offer. To him, the files are but “one key to the GDR history, albeit a significant one.” The files allow precise conclusions “about the way people supplied information and thus contributed to the functioning of the apparatus. ... [And] they record the activities of those people who wanted to be sand instead of oil in the machinery of the state” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 63). This image is one of the few indications as to Rathenow’s background as a poet. Mostly his style is rather factual.

One of his main arguments in this first part is that there are two groups of people who hold up or endanger the process of finding out the truth and creating an awareness as to what the Stasi was and did: those who are afraid that there might be a file on them, exposing them as IM (Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter) [unofficial collaborators]³, and those who would like to have a file, but find out that there is none (Rathenow, 1993, pp. 62, 64). What the reader could conclude from this is that only the dissidents, the ones with the ‘right kind’ of file, have the right to discuss the matter. Already at this early stage

³ In the following the English translation of IM ‘unofficial collaborator/s’ will be used. In direct quotes where IM is part of a name, there will be no translation.

Rathenow's account has the character of an insider's report, where many things which might have to be explained are assumed to be known by the reader.

Part II, titled "Januar 1992" [January 1992], starts with a quote from the file Rathenow is reading at that time. The quote is in smaller print than the rest of the text and the same is done with all other direct quotes from or 'copies' from the files. The first paragraph reads like a journal entry. "It is almost 3 pm. Now the reading room where I have been inspecting the files since 2nd January is about to close ... and as always shortly before the end of disclosure, I discover something special. What did the comrade report?" (Rathenow, 1993, p. 65). What follows is an excerpt from the file, the name "Prof. Dr. **Vogel**" [bold in the original] appears. Rathenow assumes that the reader knows who Dr. Vogel is, but there is no explanation. In fact, Dr. Wolfgang Vogel played a central role in 'buying off' GDR prisoners and in exchanging secret agents. He later admitted to having worked for the Stasi as a secret informer. Rathenow interrupts his reading and asks himself the question: "Well, Vogel also an IM" then reflects and says, "Careful, it is not all that clear from this document" (ibid.). To him, the role of "the doctor of selling people out of humanitarian considerations" is not entirely proven at this point (ibid.). Rathenow analyses the half page he has just read very intensely and the following paragraph is a series of questions and answers, which follow his train of thought, each answer leading to another question. By expressing his doubts in this kind of interior monologue, as short as it may be, Rathenow gives the reader an indication of just how difficult it is to know what is true and what is not. The paragraph is vividly written, with digressions and turns, and thus an atmosphere of immediacy is created. Rathenow tells the reader – first-hand – what he sees, understands, deducts, and questions.

The introductory sentence of Part III provides another glimpse of Rathenow, the poet: "Somewhere between the time of ink and pen and the future of perfect communication systems, the knights of security established their procedures" (Rathenow, 1993, p. 68). What follows is an account of how the *MfS* prevented him from conducting interviews with West German radio stations. The focus is on one particular case, which occurred on 9.10.1986 and Rathenow has included copies of transcripts made by the Stasi spies – again in small print to offset them from the rest of the text. His comment is "the interviews with RIAS or Deutschlandfunk are all there, neatly copied. Here Stasi played Eckermann well" (Rathenow, 1993, p. 69) – the latter being an allusion to the writer Johann Peter Eckermann, who was Goethe's secretary

and followed his master with a notebook, noting down his thoughts and ideas in order to preserve them for posterity.

In the next part, IV, the first-person narration continues with “I have been sitting in front of my files for three weeks now. ... Fifteen folders times 300-400 pages” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 71). Rathenow tells the reader about a newly found piece not yet archived ... new evidence of minor harassment ... and sometimes there is sophisticated nonsense” (ibid.). What he refers to is a detailed report on how he has changed his outward appearance. His comment is both humorous and ironic when he asks the rhetorical question “When will a secret service in this world ever again describe changes to my hairstyle?” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 72).

Following this, Rathenow goes deeper into who spied and reported on him and starts quoting from a character description which reads, “I am prepared to ... confront Lutz with his weak points. His weak points are” Here the quote breaks off and he addresses the reader with “I’m not going to give away everything” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 73). He signals to the reader that he is in control now, he can and indeed does decide what is disclosed and what remains locked away.

Part V titled “Februar 1992, Konflikte” [February 1992, Conflicts]”, is the longest sub-chapter, divided into six sections. It starts off with the story of the poet Frank Wolf Matthies, who was arrested together with Rathenow in 1980 and left the GDR in 1981. The opening paragraph reads like the beginning of a fairy tale: “Once upon a time there was someone who wanted to be a poet. And he wrote in a talented and audacious way. And he lived in the GDR and was put into prison for something political” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 75). Rathenow uses the example of “FWM” [Frank Wolf Matthies], as he calls him, to explain the complex relationships between the spies and their subjects, and the reaction of the spies to their exposure as well as the reasons or excuses they give for their collaboration with the *MfS*.

This is now definitely the point where a lot of background knowledge is needed to be able to follow Rathenow’s account. At the centre of Part V is Alexander ‘Sascha’ Anderson, a GDR poet who betrayed his artist friends, diplomats, and journalists to Stasi for around 15 years. In 1991, Jürgen Fuchs presented heavily incriminating facts and distressing evidence of Anderson’s work as IM under three different code names (Fuchs 1991c, p. 72 and Fuchs, 1991d, p. 101) Rathenow meshes these names into one and calls him, “SaschaDavidFritz AndersonMenzerMüllerPeters” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 77). To Rathenow, Anderson is a prime example of the extent to which the Stasi spies infiltrated the opposition in the former GDR: “The unofficial informer personally forced

his way into circles of artists and friends, misused trust and sowed mistrust, he disoriented, defamed, criminalised, undermined and subverted” (“Maßnahme Totenhaus,” 1991, p. 29). In this context it is important that compared to ‘normal’ unofficial collaborators, IMBs [Unofficial Collaborators for Observation] were “persons who immediately worked on persons who acted hostilely [against the regime] whose trust they had in order to gain knowledge of their plans, measures, means and methods” (Stasiopfer, n.d.).

Rathenow maintains that all those “stories” are “complicated” and draws the conclusion that the files also show the fear of those in power of losing their power. He underlines this with some pages of a Stasi report of 20th November 1980 (Rathenow, 1993, pp. 80-83). In the following he alludes to the heated debate that ensued when Sascha Anderson, who had positioned himself as a GDR ‘underground poet’, was awarded an artist’s fellowship in the Villa Massimo in Rome by the West German government. After the disclosures of Jürgen Fuchs, Anderson was asked to give the scholarship back, for instance by Uwe Kolbe, who wrote an open letter in the national weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* (Kolbe, 1991, n. p.). The crucial point, as Rathenow sees it, is the “GORDIAN KNOT STATE SECURITY” [capitals in the original] and whether “it can be ignored” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 77). His answer is therefore not to try to cut the knot but “to read through it” (Rathenow, 1993, p.78). In this, his attitude is very similar to Bohley’s when he concedes that “we need to go through this, without any illusion of really getting through this” (ibid.). This is reminiscent of the reactions and emotions of crime victims, and it seems to be Rathenow’s intention to make clear to the reader that the Stasi’s actions were criminal and that people like him were and still are victims.

In Part VI Rathenow focuses on the writer Reiner Schedlinski, “who was one of the first to react to the accusation of having been a Stasi spy ... and who admitted some things and gave plausible reasons for a Stasi collaboration under coercion” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 83). There are numerous quotes from Rathenow’s files and reports Schedlinski submitted to the Stasi, followed by Rathenow’s interpretation or explanation of these submissions as to what “really” happened. Reading Schedlinski’s reports, he expresses “surprise” and “apprehension”, and the character description he gives of Schedlinski could not be more negative (Rathenow, 1993, pp. 89-90). One of the main points Rathenow makes here and also in the final part of his text is that the significance and the magnitude of what the Stasi spies, the unofficial collaborators, did should not be forgotten and these people should not be treated as if what happened was not their fault (Rathenow, 1993, pp. 83-84).

Rathenow's emotional involvement is evident, even though his language is mostly calm and even. In describing events and drawing conclusions, he tries to keep things at a factual level, but there are hints for the reader that as he is reading his file, he is shocked, angry, disgusted and, on a certain level, finding it impossible to comprehend. He concedes that "people like Schedlinski and Anderson prolong the existence of the GDR, they bind energies and thus block... a self-critical reappraisal of one's own history" (Rathenow, 1993, p. 89). This statement seems far more important than the excerpts from the files, which are to some extent difficult to understand for outsiders and often need additional information.

Despite the structure Rathenow has given his text (chapters, sub-chapters, sections), the content shows Rathenow's inner conflicts as he reads his files. There are many digressions, there are asides, there is great deal of detail next to generalisation. There is the difficulty of writing about one's own case and at the same time putting it into the larger historical and political context. Some of the connections only become clear to Rathenow as he reads his files. In the end he is still trying to put the jigsaw puzzle together to obtain a complete picture. This proves a somewhat futile endeavour as there are too many levels and angles to consider.

6.3.3 Freya Klier – Writer and theatre director

Comprising 62 pages Freya Klier's text in *Aktenkundig* is the longest. It is titled "Aktion Störenfried" [Campaign Troublemaker], which is the name of the Stasi operation against her and her fellow dissidents. The subtitle specifies this: "Die Januar-Ereignisse von 1988 im Spiegel der Staatssicherheit" [The January 1988 events as seen by the state security service]. The text is written like a journal with introductory remarks, a "manual for use" (Klier, 1993, p. 93), and dated entries which start on Sunday, 17 January 1988 and, with one interruption (Sunday, 24 January), go through to Friday, 5 February 1988. These entries are followed by an epilogue and extensive footnotes of two pages. All in all 19 days are covered. The text is also the most detailed account in *Aktenkundig*.

To understand Klier's text, some background information is needed for a West German reader. She refers to the celebrations planned by the GDR government to honour Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht on 17 January 1988, which were used by a group of dissidents as a forum to voice their protest. In Klier's words, it was to be an "action, which focuses the resistance, stirs up the SED (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands) [state party of the former GDR] leadership, and drags the church out of

its cosy arrangement” (Klier, 1993, p. 91). Thus, one of Klier’s focal points is the GDR church and its officials with regard to their involvement and collaboration with the Stasi. Right at the start she asks four questions the answers to which should, at least to some extent, be found in her files: “Was there any wheeling and dealing between the leaders of the Protestant Church of Berlin and the state powers or not? Did the West have a hand in it – and if so, to what extent? Was there a deal between Manfred Stolpe and [Erich] Honecker, who in the end turned the imprisoned [dissidents] into easily manoeuvrable pawns?” (ibid.) and “to what extent had a democratization of the GDR already been possible in January 1988?” (Klier, 1993, p. 92). She also explains the intent of her chronological account:

The purpose ... is not to search for informers. When studying the documents I am not interested in whether or not Stolpe was ‘Secretary’ [his code name as a Stasi informer] (of which I am personally convinced). For me the more important point is the political dimension of his and the other jurists’ and church leaders’ actions. (ibid.)

In view of the fact that Klier and other dissidents were arrested after the January 1988 events and that their lives were manipulated (most of them were more or less deported from the GDR), this seems an astonishingly unemotional approach. As it turns out, Klier’s text is anything but unemotional or matter-of-fact. She is deeply involved in the events she writes about and after reading her Stasi files, she has had to re-evaluate many of the things that happened. Among other things she has had to face the fact that many of the people she trusted were in fact informers for the Stasi. Such matter, understandably, could not be reported in a detached way.

Klier’s chronological journal style has two benefits: on the one hand the events she recounts can be researched and their factual truth can be established independently, and on the other hand, she can express her personal involvement and feelings, which contributes to the sense of authenticity of the contents. Throughout her account, Klier contrasts what is happening on the political stage and what is happening in her own life. These are frequently dramatic events such as the search of her apartment when “a large part of my book manuscript, which has been worked on clandestinely and under difficult circumstances has been confiscated” (Klier, 1993, p. 97). Her emotional reaction to the search is intense: “I am desperately fighting for every sheet of paper ... I want to scream ... this is the work of one and a half years. I lose control and am running into the children’s room” (ibid.). The use of the present tense in most parts of the text

enhances the feeling of reading a journal, and of experiencing the events with the author.

Apart from herself and her husband at that time, Stephan Krawczyk, and members of the inner circle of dissidents (most of whom contributed to *Aktenkundig*), the main characters in Klier's journal are Wolfgang Schnur, lawyer and Stasi informer and Manfred Stolpe. Stolpe was the head of the Lutheran Church in the GDR, and after reunification became the Premier of Brandenburg and later federal Minister for Infrastructure. They stand for the two forces Klier and her fellow dissidents were up against: the lawyers who pretended to defend their clients, but instead manipulated and betrayed them, and the Lutheran church, some of whose leaders also collaborated with the Stasi.

Since Klier recounts the events in minute detail, and, and among other things, also presents a huge amount of information on the different opposition groups in the GDR, the analysis of her journal concentrates on how she describes the roles Schnur and Stolpe played in the January 1988 events, and how she evaluates these two people after having read her files. Klier exemplarily describes how the Stasi and the informers operated and how it was possible to deceive and betray the dissidents for such a long time and with such great intensity.

The journal begins on Sunday, 17 January 1988 when the first group of "Störenfriede" [trouble makers] is arrested on the way to the official demonstration. Among them are well known dissidents Stephan Krawczyk and Vera Wollenberger. Their arrest triggers more protests and is the beginning of "a week of helplessness of the church" (Klier, 1993, p. 95). As will later be elucidated in the analyses of Vera Wollenberger's and Joachim Gauck's texts, the church played a crucial role in the events, which led to the collapse of the GDR regime, in both a positive and a negative sense. At this point Wolfgang Schnur enters the stage. He is their [Klier and Krawczyk's] "close confidante" and "the most important thing when it comes to a defence lawyer in a dictatorship is a relationship based on trust, and we do not know anyone better suited than Wolfgang Schnur" (Klier, 1993, p. 97). Klier does not try to generate narrative tension and, at this early point, by quoting from her file, she reveals their betrayal by Schnur to whom they were "nothing but 'enemies', 'fanatic opponents', 'who claim that in the GDR socialism does not exist'" (Klier, 1993, p. 98). Placing her description of how much they trusted him, who "already disposed of our entire capital ... and who "almost became a member of our family" (Klier, 1993, p. 97) next to the revelations of the Stasi file, makes what follows even more perfidious. Klier

uses this technique of contrasting her faith in people and the betrayal of this faith throughout her text and thus manages to create an atmosphere of peril and helplessness.

With the entry of Friday, 22 January 1988 (Klier, 1993, pp. 106-108), Klier starts the detailed description of Schnur's double role and the way he manages to manipulate both her and Stephan Krawczyk until he has reached his goal: they leave the GDR. She quotes extensively from the files and the way she develops her account bears great similarity to the complex choreography of a play. There is a master plan, a plot and the actors Schnur and Stolpe play their double roles. In the case of Schnur, one has to highlight that he played multiple roles and as Klier states in the final remarks of her text, "Schnur has at his disposal the highly efficient ability to use his double identity in a way almost bordering on schizophrenia" (Klier, 1993, p. 148). One of Schnur's roles was that of keeping Klier's and Krawczyk's trust. In the evening of Friday, 22 January 1988, he spoke to a group of dissidents in the Auferstehungskirche in Berlin, stating that "Krawczyk [who is in prison] has problems" (Klier, 1993, p. 107). Klier's comment to this is ironic, since by this time she knows the truth: "Krawczyk has problems indeed" (ibid.). She goes on to explain that before Schnur hurried to the church, he had already had a long conversation with Krawczyk behind him, the aim of which was what was called *Zersetzung* [attrition] in the GDR. The prisoner was to be sounded out, disoriented and finally worn down. In the course of the conversation, Krawczyk wrote down some politically delicate things and handed the paper over to his trusted friend Schnur. As Klier puts it, at this moment "in his complete naivety the detainee sharpened the knife meant for his own back" (ibid.). Schnur's next step was to drive to a meeting with his senior Stasi officer, Colonel Wiegand, and then, having turned into the unofficial collaborator 'Torsten' or 'Dr. Schirmer', he handed the document over (ibid.7). The incriminating paper then passed into the possession of the Stasi. Klier manages to capture Schnur's exhaustion and his haste to deliver his information by writing the scene like a film script. The reader can follow Schnur's steps and is given a descriptive example of his betrayal.

On Monday, 25 January 1988, Freya Klier is arrested and the next phase of Schnur's manipulation begins. Now that both Krawczyk and Klier have been arrested, they communicate, or think they communicate, through Schnur, who selects the material he passes on from one to the other as to how well it is suited for reaching his objective: "Schnur's opportunities are extraordinary – he is our only contact with the world outside and to each other" (Klier, 1993, p. 115). He knows their weak spots. In Krawczyk's case the "linden leaf" (ibid.), an allusion to Siegfried in the *Nibelungen*

saga, is the psychological and emotional state of Freya Klier. In Klier's case it is her feeling of guilt, because she thinks that with a public appeal to release Stephan Krawczyk, she was responsible for the second wave of arrests [Bohley, Templin, Wollenberger] (Klier, 1993, p. 120). The whole scenario almost reads like a thriller, where the police question two suspects and tell each of them that the other has confessed to the crime and at the same time has accused the other of having been an accomplice. By giving him a statement in which Klier asks to speak to Krawczyk, he is made to believe that she has already decided to leave the GDR. In order to clarify this, Klier quotes her statement in full: "Due to personal defamation and the developments of the events, I am thinking of renouncing my GDR citizenship and leaving the country. Since this is a serious decision which I cannot take without my husband, I am asking for an appointment to speak to my husband as soon as possible" (Klier, 1993, p. 124). When Krawczyk writes back that they "should wait and first talk to each other, this answer does not fit with anyone's plans – it disappears never to be seen again – into Schnur's bag" (ibid.). In the time that follows, the lawyer pretends not to have any messages for Klier from Krawczyk and vice versa and this way wears them down to the point where they both more or less 'agree' to be deported from the GDR. It is "precision work" and during only one encounter with each of them, the feat has to succeed" (Klier, 1993, p. 130). Klier calls all of this a "play by Schiller" and describes her feelings at that moment: "This leaves me speechless, I burst into tears. I feel deceived, but do not know at which point. The wall which threatened to fall down on me is suddenly supposed to have been only cardboard after all?" (Klier, 1993, p. 132). This is what she felt at the time, but for the reader the greater dimension of these events is clear by now: she has been a pawn on a chessboard, moved by the Stasi and the GDR government.

Klier and Krawczyk were forced to submit an application to leave the GDR and on Tuesday, 2 February, 1988 they were deported to West Germany together with their children and other family members. In the following days and weeks, Schnur applied the same tactics to most of the other dissidents who were still in prison: Ralf Hirsch, the Templins, Vera Wollenberger, and Bärbel Bohley. In all cases he "plays the drum of lies" (Klier, 1993, p. 142).

The second role was the one Schnur played in front of the opposition forces, which gathered in the churches. He was the only connection to the imprisoned dissidents and the only one to supply information about them. When they planned quiet demonstrations, he 'quotes' Stephan Krawczyk as having said that "under no circumstances should quiet demonstrations take place, because they would destroy

everything” (Klier, 1993, p. 105). In turn, to Krawczyk the fact that there did not seem any actions from the opposition was demoralizing. Schnur tended to warn against “spectacular actions” (Klier, 1993, p. 115) and regularly reported from his clients in prison. “Everyone loves Schnur” (Klier, 1993, p. 118), everyone trusted him. Further along in the process, when it fitted his plan, he “expresses the opinion that Klier is the greatest weak point among those arrested, that she could lose her nerve and could have herself deported to the West” (Klier, 1993, p. 125). This served to discredit her and also to divide the opposition, to undermine its morale.

When it comes to Manfred Stolpe’s role Klier is more matter-of-fact. She quotes him as having stated that dissidents like themselves are a “core problem” (Klier, 1993, p. 110) for the Protestant church in the GDR. The problem she and her husband presented to the church, and in particular to its head Manfred Stolpe, was that they could expose the church’s unwillingness to give full support to dissidents. The easiest solution therefore was “to neutralize” them, to deport them to the West and sap the growing dissent of its vigour. In her description of Stolpe’s actions during the January 1988 events she takes a more distant position, which might be due to the fact that she was not as personally involved with him as with Schnur. She often uses his title “Chief Administrator [of the Church]” to make this distance even more obvious. Klier explains how Stolpe presents himself as a mediator between the state and the opposition groups which sought refuge in the GDR churches and how immediately after the events of 17 January 1988 he “promises to discuss with the groups the basis [of their opposition]” (Klier, 1993, p. 107). Nonetheless this plays an important role when it comes to the situation of Klier and Krawczyk. Stolpe makes them an offer that he has negotiated with the government: “a two-year visa for the Federal Republic of Germany” (Klier, 1993, p. 111).

Throughout her account, Klier highlights Stolpe’s manoeuvres, how he acts toward the regime, and his attitude towards dissidents, and in particular herself and Stephan Krawczyk. Klier asserts that for Stolpe “the prisoners are political pawns” (Klier, 1993, p. 118). Yet at the same time Stolpe “did not want anyone to claim later that the Krawczyks were deported to the Federal Republic of Germany due to the manipulations of the church and the lawyers, who acted in the interest of the [GDR] state” (ibid.). On the whole, Klier depicts Stolpe as a calculating person, but in the closing remarks she also acknowledges the fact that in 1986 Stolpe, already then the head of the Lutheran Church in the GDR, made a significant contribution to the opening of the Protestant churches in East Germany towards socio-critic topics – without him, for example, the church performances of Krawczyk and myself would not have been

possible” (Klier, 1993, p. 150). Nonetheless, what remains is an uneasy feeling, especially in view of Manfred Stolpe later having come to high political office in the reunited Germany.

In her closing remarks, Klier comes back to the factual style of the beginning of her text. She returns to the question of a “deal between Stolpe and Honecker” (Klier, 1993, p. 91) and the role of the church in the GDR. Her conclusion is that the “church leaders will have to ask themselves to what extent they really acted as a church in the January 1988 events – and to what extent they ‘play acted’, meaning, lent an open ear to the State Security Service” (Klier, 1993, p. 151). To some extent Klier leaves the ultimate decision and the interpretation of the material she has presented to the reader.

6.3.4 Vera Wollenberger – Philosopher and theologian – organizer of peace workshops

It should be noted that Vera Wollenberger, since the publication of *Aktenkundig*, has reverted to her maiden name and is now called Vera Lengsfeld. Lengsfeld is the name to be used in this analysis.

Lengsfeld played an important role in organizing the human rights group *Kirche von Unten* [Church from Below] and, among other things, protested against the stationing of Soviet nuclear missiles in the former GDR. She was also one of the former GDR dissidents who, as a member of the German Parliament (she was elected in 1990) actively worked on formulating the law dealing with the records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic [Stasiunterlagengesetz], which made possible the opening of the Stasi files and which, among other things, stipulates that “every person who was under the surveillance of the Stasi has the right to inspect his or her files” (Gauck, 1993, p. 259).

Her contribution is titled “Eine zweite Vergewaltigung” [A second rape] and from this title one might expect an emotional, if not dramatic, account. “Rape” is a strong word and knowing that Lengsfeld was spied upon for many years by her own husband, Knud Wollenberger, it seems to make sense.

What becomes apparent from the start, however, is that although this is a personal account and for most of the text a first-person narration, Lengsfeld has chosen a slightly distancing perspective. She recounts past and present impressions, analyses her attitude to the Stasi before and after reading her files, and she compares her feelings before and after reading what the Stasi did to her and others. She also explains why neither she nor her fellow dissidents fought the Stasi more vehemently. “I was not afraid of the Stasi. I was wrong about that, but I only learnt this after the fall of the wall”

(Wollenberger, 1993, p. 155). She feels the nuclear weapons which the former Soviet Union stored in the GDR to be “a threat to her life. Not the Stasi. I was wrong about that, too” (ibid.). The reader learns that she has always been a trusting person, who did not want to “give Stasi power over herself” (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 154). When she mentions her ex-husband, she either calls him “Donald”, which was his code name, or “Donald-Knud”, thus underlining his double personality as husband and spy or informer who was part of the Stasi system, whose practice was the “systematic devaluation and destruction of fundamental social structures and of human existential values” (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 155).

Lengsfeld explains in great detail what the so-called *Operative Maßnahmenpläne* [operational plans] of the Stasi were all about, because in her opinion, they have not been discussed as much as they should be (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 156). She puts forward that these plans “reveal more of the criminal energy and destructiveness of the Stasi than using informers” since their purpose is to “destroy marriages, ... ruin a person’s reputation, and destroy friendships” (Wollenberger ibid.). From this informative level, Lengsfeld then turns to the personal one, describing to the reader that in her particular case, the files show her which of the quarrels she had with her husband were instigated by the Stasi and which were their own doing (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 157). After this, she goes back to an impersonal level and concedes that inspecting the files is a unique opportunity to go through the past and “learn from mistakes, weaknesses, wrong decisions as well as gain new insights” (ibid.). Knowing her story makes this statement all the more cynical.

It is at this point that it becomes clear to the reader again that Lengsfeld and the other writers read about a perfidious and evil system, which was their country, and at the same time they read about themselves and what was done to them. They become ever more aware of the impact of the Stasi on their lives. In Lengsfeld’s case, the West German press played a significant role in disclosing her husband’s spying for the Stasi. She only got proof of Knud Wollenberger’s having been an informer shortly before it was made public (“Deckname Donald,” 1991, p. 17). Given this timing it is no surprise that her attitude to the media is ambivalent and she expresses this very clearly. As with the other issues she raises in her text, through her style she differentiates between her personal experience and what she sees as general criticism of how the West added to the wounds. In particular she attacks the press for giving Stasi collaborators the opportunity to go public:

It is an intolerable situation that every important magazine in Germany pays its supervising [Stasi] officers who, if required, comment on the probability or improbability of a voiced suspicion. People who for many years were busy making other people's lives hell ... should not have this kind of publicity – especially not as advisors and commentators of their deeds - they should be on trial. (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 162)

Lengsfeld also criticises the ignorance of some of the Western journalists as well as the fact that the reporting did not serve the purpose of finding the truth but constituted a short-term sensationalist “exposure” of informers (ibid.). When reading Jürgen Leinemann's article about Vera Lengsfeld (then Wollenberger) in *Der Spiegel* in 1992, her criticism of the media reporting at the time is easy to understand and agree with. It reads like a film plot and is more sensational than informative (Leinemann, 1991). According to Christoph Dieckmann, Lengsfeld in her autobiography *Von nun an ging's bergauf* [From now on things were looking up] recalls “the sparkle in the eyes, the sudden tension in his body, when he leaned forward and asked with a meaningful undertone: ‘Is it possible that your son was an IM?’” (Dieckmann, 2012, n. p.). The thrill with which the contents of the files was treated by journalists can justifiably be seen as, in Lengsfeld's words, “a second rape of the Stasi-victims” (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 164). “Not only did I first learn about the private betrayal which happened to me from the press, but I also had to basically work through it publicly and had to experience how my private life was being politicised” (ibid.). She uses strong words to condemn the press and calls it a “merciless [reporting], a dilettante interpretation of my life story” (ibid.). Like others before her, she stresses the right of the Stasi victims not only to their files but also to the sovereignty of interpretation of what they read and experienced.

At the end of her text, Lengsfeld comes full circle, back to the questions of whether or not it is good to read one's files. She becomes personal and emotional again, using her story, the betrayal by her husband and the pain that this has caused her, to answer the question “Am I in favour of inspecting the files?” (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 165). Her answer “was and remains ‘yes’, because despite the pain that is to be expected, the opportunities given by inspecting the files are worth bearing it” (ibid.).

Having read Lengsfeld's account it becomes clear that it took a lot of courage to confront the past and it is a great achievement of the author that she manages to emphasise the personal and emotional impact and at the same time take a more distant perspective in order to support her argument. This gives the account a high degree of

authenticity and affects the reader more deeply than a purely emotional and exclusively first-person narration could have done.

6.3.5 Hans-Joachim Schädlich – Writer

Hans-Joachim Schädlich (*1935) titles his contribution to *Aktenkundig* ‘Jeder ist klug, der eine vorher, der andere nachher’ [Everyone is wise, some beforehand, some afterwards]. This title could be read as an allusion to the fact, as he found out after the demise of the GDR, that he had been spied upon and betrayed by his own brother, Karl-Heinz, for many years, both while still living in the GDR and also after having settled in West Germany. In his text, *Die Sache mit B* [The thing with B.], Schädlich wrote about this betrayal, which he only became aware of when reading his Stasi files.

Schädlich’s text in *Aktenkundig* begins, “On 21 January 1992 I could look at the files, which the Ministry of State Security of the former GDR had compiled about me, for the first time” (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 166). After this very formal opening, Schädlich explains that his file was given the name “Schädling” [pest], a pun on his last name and a clear indication as to how he was viewed in the eyes of the *MfS*, “a pest which had to be fought against and possibly exterminated” (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 166). In minute detail, Schädlich goes on with definitions, explanations, hierarchies, names and guidelines. He quotes extensively from guideline 1/76, which lists the requirements an informer had to fulfil.

One of the criteria for being suitable as an informer is “inconspicuousness”, which according to Schädlich could best be fulfilled by relatives of a “suspect” (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 167). He explains that informers or spies had code names, which in turn meant that they had knowingly committed themselves to working as spies. He states that “in some cases it is easy to find out the real name of a person hiding behind a code name” (Schädlich, 1993c, p.168). It is at this stage in his text that Schädlich becomes more personal when he says, “I am surprised about my great interest in the identity of the informers” (ibid.). Immediately following this, Schädlich explains that this interest has “psychological and moral reasons”, that is, it is more abstract than personal. He wants to know how someone ticks “who can adequately deceive someone, betray someone, and hand someone over to the suppressive apparatus of a dictatorship” (ibid.). He wants to “take such a spy to task” (ibid.), ask him “why did you do this?” and, more importantly “what do you expect of *me*?” (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 169).

In order to be able to heal the injuries inflicted by the spies, Schädlich needs answers to his questions, otherwise, he concedes, he will remain injured and “it is from the disappointment about the betrayal that rage develops” (ibid.).

He also asks himself questions such as, “How should I behave towards people whom I know have betrayed me ... but who do not make a move to open up?” (ibid.). Schädlich tells the reader that to him the conversations with exposed unofficial collaborators were “among the most awkward and unpleasant conversations I have ever had” (ibid.).

He goes on to quote two conversations in detail with two former unofficial collaborators who claimed that they had not been spies and had not signed any commitment (ibid.). Confronted with the evidence found in Schädlich’s file, they became evasive and said that they could not explain how this evidence made its way into the file. The way Schädlich describes these conversations is very vivid and, one could claim, done with the tools of a novelist. One can virtually see the informers squirm, trying to find excuses, and when in the end it is clear that there is no way out, the “last excuse was [that one had acted] ‘according to orders from the *MfS* officer’” (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 171). The dialogues are interspersed with Schädlich’s comments, and it now becomes clear why he has gone into such detail when describing the Stasi hierarchies and the extent informers with code names committed themselves. He exposes their tactic of always only admitting to what he can prove. When he says “Did H. believe that I did not know how the code names worked?” (ibid.) this has a certain irony. The person Schädlich calls H. gives him an explanation for his excuses and suddenly says: “You can destroy my life when you speak about this to others” (ibid.). To Schädlich, this statement is H.’s confession to having been an informer and he reports to the reader what his reaction to this ‘confession’ was: he was “taken aback” and “it took some time until I realized what this sentence meant. ... H.’s sentence represents a violent reversal of the relationship which existed and still exists between him and me” (ibid.).

It is only at the end that the purpose of all the detailed explanations and definitions given at the beginning becomes clear. In having carefully built this background, Schädlich enables the reader to interpret what follows. It very clearly shows Schädlich’s preoccupation with seeing a great danger in that in many people’s eyes the informers and spies might look harmless, and that they might even be seen as victims of the *MfS*, while the true victims are left alone with their psychological and physical scars. In this, Schädlich’s argumentation is similar to Rathenow’s who at one point wrote that it is dangerous to think that “having been an informer were a

classification into a relatively insignificant, maybe even random, category” (Rathenow, 1993, p. 83).

The great difference from Rathenow is, however, that Schädlich develops his text almost like a plot. The writer, that is, Schädlich, knows something that the spies do not know that he knows it. This way he can set a trap for them to step into.

6.3.6 Hubertus Knabe – West German who works in the Federal Authority for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic

Hubertus Knabe’s inclusion in *Aktenkundig* illustrates that West Germans, too, were victims of the Stasi. The Stasi spied on those West Germans who supported East German dissidents, who were critical of the GDR’s political system and made their criticism public. All of this applies to Knabe.

The chapter “Akteneinsicht eines Westdeutschen” [Inspection of the Records by a West German] consists of eight parts, each bearing a sub-heading. The chapter follows a certain chronology, that is, the process of Knabe reading his files serves as the red thread. However, Knabe uses different techniques and shifts in perspective throughout the text. Extensive quotes from the files are put next to first-person narration and narrative sections, where Knabe tells his story as an omniscient narrator. In the first-person narrations, the reader learns about Knabe’s feelings as he reads the Stasi reports. Through the extensive quotes from the files, the full extent of the spying – also across borders and into other Eastern bloc countries such as Hungary and Czechoslovakia – becomes evident.

What at first seems to be randomly arranged has a very clear and logical order. Knabe opens the chapter with the question, “Who is who?”, a query he describes in a footnote as “the key question which the Ministry of State Security placed at the centre of its activities” (Knabe 1993, p. 229). As an introduction he presents an excerpt of a report, which the *MfS* gave to the Hungarian secret service in 1988 (Knabe 1993, pp. 229-230). It reads like a list of his political activities, all of which made him suspicious to the Stasi, even accorded him the status of ‘enemy of the GDR’.

Knabe then moves on to the next part, “Akteneinsicht” [Viewing the files], and shifts to first-person narration, explaining that he first came to the attention of the *MfS* in June 1979 – when he was a 20-year old student – and was labelled a “hostile person” to the East German authorities (Knabe 1993, p. 230). The reader learns that he finds his files to be “relatively thin and not very significant”, but that from what he sees, one can “imagine to what extent the influence of the *MfS* reached into [his] life, which was for

the most part led outside the GDR” (Knabe 1993, p. 231). At the end of this part, he voices the clear opinion that the whole process of uncovering the truth bit by bit would be a lot easier if the Stasi collaborators “broke their silence” and “put an end to living with lies” (Knabe 1993, p. 232).

What follows is the first narrative part, titled “Mädchen aus Ostberlin” [Girl from East Berlin], and Knabe writes the story of himself and his East German girlfriend. The only name he mentions is that of the Reverend Frank Rudolph, who knows both Knabe and his girlfriend and was the initiator of the East German Bahro-Circle (ibid.). Rudolf Bahro (1935-1997) became the GDR’s “most favourite enemy of the state” (Mayr 1997, pp. 36-37) when excerpts of his book *Die Alternative. Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus* [The Alternative. A Critique of Socialism as it Actually Exists] were published in the weekly magazine in *Spiegel* on 22 August, 1977 (Bahro, 1977). What was special about his book was that Bahro, a convinced Marxist, attacked the East German rulers from a Marxist-Communist perspective, claiming that the Party’s only interest was its power and the consolidation of its position. Bahro was arrested a day after the publication and sentenced to eight years imprisonment. After tremendous international and West German protests, he was released and went to live in West Germany in 1979.

The politically relevant information is that Hubertus Knabe, “the student from West Germany”, tried to stage an appeal to GDR’s head of state, Erich Honecker, based on Rosa Luxemburg’s famous sentence “Freedom is always the freedom of the dissident” (Knabe 1993, p. 233). This slogan was printed on adhesive labels, and smuggled across the border, but they could not be posted. Instead they were given to the reverend for safekeeping, who, when the situation escalated, burnt them (ibid.).

This narrative prepares the reader for the next part, in which Knabe, once again in first-person narration, describes how he reads about operational case ‘Kleber’ [‘Sticker’], which alludes to the adhesive label. It is not easy reading for Knabe: “A queasy feeling in my stomach had accompanied me since I had got up” (Knabe 1993, p. 234). He reads the “excerpt of the meeting report of IM Klaus of 18.06.1979” (ibid.). The following quotes from the file match the previous narrative to the extent that now the events, as seen from other side, become obvious. The actions of IM Klaus are at the centre of this chapter, which is very detailed and has numerous footnotes to give additional explanations and the long versions of the many acronyms used in the file. Rather vividly, Knabe describes how he has been followed and becomes fearful of the consequences of actually distributing the adhesive labels in the GDR.

At the end of part IV operation ‘Kleber’ is completed as the labels “which had been brought into the GDR illegally ... were taken by the unofficial collaborator from Buche (Knabe’s girlfriend) and thus a misuse is eliminated” (Knabe 1993, p. 240). At this stage it is clear to the reader – as it must have been to Knabe at the time he was reading the file – who IM Klaus is. To further corroborate this, Knabe presents another narrative part, “Die Koffergeschichte” [The Suitcase Story], which is about smuggling books into the GDR. “‘We need books, we need books’, says the Reverend” in the opening sentence (Knabe 1993, p. 240) and in a suspenseful way, Knabe describes how the books, worth 1000 German marks, are brought into East Germany, are picked up by Frank Rudolph who takes them to the vicarage, and who is supposed to take them to East Berlin by car. The car is stolen, the books are lost and the ultimate consequence for Knabe is that he receives a refusal of entry the next time he wants to enter the GDR (Knabe 1993, pp. 240-242). The narrative is authenticated by the subsequent quotes from the file Knabe continues to read. In minute detail the whole process is described, with the names Knabe and his girlfriend Buche in bold print throughout this part of the text.

Part VII offers further information from the files and shows that the Stasi activities did not end with Knabe being refused entry. He was also spied upon during his stays in Czechoslovakia and Hungary as well as in West Germany itself. While this adds yet another dimension - after all, the Stasi operation against Knabe lasted until 1988 - part VII has nothing of the suspense and immediacy of the preceding parts. His professional development, his research topics, his academic achievements are recorded in detail, and may serve the purpose to show that Knabe was an important target of the Stasi.

The final part, VIII , “Nachtrag” [Postscript], which can be read as a summary or conclusion, is the most personal part of Knabe’s chapter. Here he writes how in January 1992 he learnt from the files that his “friend of many years, the Reverend Frank Rudolph, was IM Klaus” (Knabe 1993, p. 253) – something already guessed by the reader by then. Knabe very cleverly alternates the narrative parts with the quotes from the files so that, at least as far as IM Klaus was concerned, it was clear that it had to be Rudolph. Knabe lists more people, from both East and West Germany, who had been informers of the Stasi. All of this is written down rather matter-of-fact and it is only when he complains that none of these persons has apologised to him or least had tried to explain himself/herself that the text becomes emotional. He claims that “the silence, the denial, the playing things down of the spies when they are confronted are more painful

than what they are responsible for” (Knabe 1993, p. 254). This is an argument that has been put forward by most of the other writers in *Aktenkundig*. To Knabe, this shirking responsibility also bears the risk of “poisoning the future political culture in Germany” (ibid.). He thus moves away from his personal case and puts the unwillingness of most Stasi spies to admit to their activities into a larger context. This is also the point where Knabe’s position is most clearly that of a West German, and is different from that of the other writers. He concedes that the pattern of denial and moving on in a new system, that is, having former Stasi spies in public positions such as “prime minister, chairman of a political party, rector of a university” is reminiscent of the time after World War II: “for a West German it is as if history has repeated itself” (ibid.). He makes the rather cynical suggestion of re-evaluating the Nazi past by applying the same pattern as for the Stasi. In applying the logic put forward by East Germans implicated in spying, he proposed that “those who have not lived in the Nazi dictatorship (most of mankind) [would] not have the right to pass judgement on the guilt and involvement of those who did” (Knabe 1993, p. 255). This is an aggressive political statement, which most probably could only be made by a West German. In his closing sentences, Knabe compares his feeling of wanting to leave Germany with the relative composure of the “East German file readers” and concludes that this may be due to the fact that “they, having been left to their own resources, are used to fighting against the superior might of lies” (ibid.).

6.3.7 Joachim Gauck – Reverend, the former special federal commissioner for the Stasi Archives, since 18 March 2012 holder of Germany’s highest office, President of the Federal Republic of Germany

Joachim Gauck (*1940) worked as a Protestant clergyman in Rostock until 1989. In that year he joined the group of initiators of the resistance in the church and the public. On 3 October 1990, the then German President, Richard von Weizsäcker, appointed him as the special commissioner of the German Government in charge of the personal files of the former state security service, and from 1991 until 2000 he was the custodian of the Stasi archives. In March 2012, Joachim Gauck was elected German president. Since then, much has been written about his role during the final years of the GDR and there has been the criticism that he joined the resistance against the GDR regime at a very late stage. Nonetheless he has played a vital role in the preservation and handling of the Stasi files. It was his position as the custodian of the Stasi files which qualified him in a special way to contribute to *Aktenkundig*.

What differentiates his text from all the others is that he does not write about reading his files. Gauck's text in the main is an argument for the need to preserve the files for posterity, and it can be seen as a summary or conclusion of the book. The text reads much like a speech. Gauck has a unique way of arranging his speeches, in the sense that he combines the personal, the political as well as the critical elements in a controversial, but nonetheless conciliatory form. Although he has enough reasons to take issue with those uniform approaches to the handling of the files, he chooses to explain, mediate and reconcile.

Gauck starts off by describing his personal development as well as stating why he feels that he has every right to talk and write about the Stasi files. He explains to the reader where his "longing for freedom" (Gauck, 1993, p. 256) comes from. His father was deported to a Soviet gulag "by Stalin's people" when he was a child (ibid.), and ever since a longing for freedom has ruled his life. He mentions further key years in this context: "1953 and 1956", "August 1961", "1968" (ibid.). These dates all signify a further loss of freedom. On 17 June 1953 extensive protests against the GDR government were violently suppressed by Soviet troops; in 1956 a new law was passed regarding passports for GDR citizens to stem the flow of travellers to the western part of the country. In addition, *Republikflucht* [Fleeing the Republic or illegally crossing the GDR border to the West], a GDR expression for illegally crossing the border to West Germany in order to leave the country and not return, was made a crime. In August 1961 the Berlin Wall was built and mines were placed along the border between the two German states. In 1968 the so-called Prague Spring, a movement of the newly elected Czechoslovakian president Alexander Dubcek toward more freedom, made East Germans hope for similar developments in their country. As Stefan Wolle put it, "especially in the summer of 1968, the Golden City of Prague was the Mecca for the GDR citizens. Many of them went there for many reasons, to savour the air of freedom a little" (Wolle, 2008, n.p). The GDR government responded with repressive measures against students and other members of the population who openly demanded more freedom and welfare. In August 1968, East German NVA troops supported the logistics of Soviet troops when these crushed the Prague Spring.

Apart from giving the reader some historical background, Gauck positions himself in the time of the GDR regime and explains his behaviour. In this, there is also a marked difference to most of the other contributors to *Aktenkundig*, who chose open protest and opposition: "I had never rebelled, neither as a student, nor during my time as a minister. I was not cut out to be a martyr" (Gauck, 1993, p. 265). Thus, Gauck was

never barred from his occupation, imprisoned, or deported. On the whole, the first three pages can be read as Gauck's political curriculum vitae and on page 258 he gives a clear answer to the question of why his appointment to become the custodian of the Stasi files was a logical consequence of his life to date, that is, 1992: "Life's reality, yearning and hopes of a 'GDR citizen', religious background and everyday professional life of a Mecklenburg clergyman, the political activities of the revolutionary change ... were inseparably connected with each other" (Gauck, 1993, p. 258).

What follows is detailed information about the law covering the Stasi files. At the core of the law are the stipulations that every person who was under Stasi surveillance has a right to read his or her file, that the files can be used for the purpose of rehabilitating, prosecuting, or checking individuals, that the files can also be used for a political and historical reappraisal, and last but not least that it is the responsibility of the Authority to provide information about the structure of the Ministry for State Security to the public (Gauck, 1993, p. 259). The matter-of-fact, unemotional style serves to underpin Gauck's argument for preserving and using the files.

Gauck's next topic, "Stasi and the Church", is in his opinion at the "centre of public interest" in 1992 (ibid.). He explains, again in great detail, to what extent the regional churches in the GDR all had different and clearly distinguishable attitudes towards the socialist state. This is an important point and it makes it easier to understand the position of Bärbel Bohley, Freya Klier and others who found a 'space' in the church where they could hold meetings and where they thought their dissenting opinions could be voiced freely (Gauck, 1993, p.261). As we know from their contributions to *Aktenkundig*, they were wrong in many instances. One person mentioned by Gauck in this context is Manfred Stolpe, former chief administrator of the Protestant Church in the GDR and former premier of the State of Brandenburg. On 20 January 1992 the political magazine *Spiegel* reported on the conspiratorial Stasi contacts of Stolpe ("Der erste Schritt," 1992, pp. 18-22), and Gauck very clearly voices his opinion: "Today we learn that leading church operations often went beyond limits [that is, they worked for the Stasi]. Individuals today describe Stasi contacts as something necessary; in my understanding of what church is and in my regional church, this view did not exist" (Gauck, 1993, p. 262). However, Gauck concedes that the position of the church was a difficult one in the GDR and that despite many constraints and the fact that there were communities "in which the church leaders cooperated [with the regime] to an extent which from today's perspective has to be criticised" (ibid.), it greatly contributed to the fact that "Socialism is history" (Gauck, 1993, p. 266).

This way of arguing is a key element of Gauck's text. Differentiating and making the differences between the East German reality and the West German perception and the subsequent evaluation of this reality is clearly at the core of his contribution to *Aktenkundig*. Having explained the complex situation of the church in the former GDR, Gauck moves on to the Stasi files and the tasks of the so-called 'Gauck Authority'. He tells the reader what he has learnt from the Stasi files and states that much to his and other people's surprise "roughly 50 per cent of those who apply to have access to their files find out that there is no file about themselves" (ibid.). The conclusion he draws from this fact is that "the Stasi was quite efficient but that their efficiency has been drastically overestimated" (ibid.). Furthermore, he has learnt that there are different kinds of files, some extremely accurate, others only to a certain extent. When it comes to his role as the custodian of the files, he states that "[a] part of the press has resorted to accusing me personally or the Authority of trusting the files" (Gauck, 1993, p. 267). Yet these people, he suggests, have not carried out any proper research. The same goes for those who compare the work of his Authority with the "inquisition". To him, this is inaccurate because the "Authority I am heading does not make any decisions, but is the mediator between the files and the persons applying to gain access to the files" (Gauck, 1993, p. 271). His criticism of the ignorance of journalists and politicians is even harsher when he states that "it is interesting to see how the judgements of those contemporary witnesses who are highly familiar with the material differ from the statements of journalistic or political influencers who do not know this material" (Gauck, 1993, p. 268).

The difficulty of Gauck's task was to push for differentiations in the way the former East Germany should be seen without these differentiations being interpreted as excuses for what West Germans might see as inexcusable behaviour. The reader has to understand that there are many levels and facets to the topic of Stasi and Stasi files, and that the impression that "there was a collective willingness to collaborate with the Stasi which some West Germany want to create" (Gauck, 1993, p. 272) is too one-dimensional, too black and white. He underpins this with facts: "Of 16 million inhabitants, there were fewer than 200,000 unofficial and fewer than 100,000 full-time Stasi employees" (ibid.).

Gauck masters this challenge by remaining matter-of-fact and largely objective, and at the same time getting his points across by using his integrity, his personal standing and his achievements. As was said earlier, his tone his conciliatory, but he

makes clear that he feels to be in a strong position to judge: He is an eyewitness of the GDR past, he is involved, and he has always been on the 'right' side.

He presents one of the crucial arguments of the text when he writes that "it is difficult to reappraise a past, which is only the past of one part of Germany, ... we obviously have to respect that there are areas of life in which the other one does not possess the same authentic experience" (Gauck, 1993, pp. 269-270). Of course, the West Germans should contribute to the discussion about the Stasi files, which after all is a national one. But, as Gauck argues, West Germans should not be the ones who, "far away from the suffering", determine "the decision of how the East should reappraise the past. They should respect that there is a dignity of the oppressed" (Gauck, 1993, p. 269).

In his closing paragraphs, Gauck comes full circle and returns to the concept of freedom, which has dominated his life, his speeches and publications. While at the beginning he mentioned his own personal longing for freedom, he now connects it to the Stasi files which need to be accessible and available to those who were spied upon as well as for research purposes so that a healthy reappraisal of the East German past is possible. He voices the opinion that

using formerly protected material contains an element of freedom and we experience that ... freedom also releases fears. First, freedom evokes joy in the human being and always has fear accompanying it as a shadow. ... It would be salutary to follow the invitations of freedom to meet with one's own past, the shadow of one's own guilt, and to trust one's courage when it comes to creating the present and the future. (Gauck, 1993, p. 275)

In summary one can say that by publishing parts of their personal Stasi files and supplying the necessary background information, the authors who contributed to *Aktenkundig* present many different facets of the Stasi and its impact on people's lives in East Germany. Their texts give the reader an opportunity to better understand the emotional and personal conflicts they had to face and how much energy and strength they needed to read through their files. It becomes clear that it is not merely a question of obtaining knowledge on who was a spy and who was not, but a way to reappraise the East German past.

6.4 *Aktenkundig* as literary journalism

In order to establish whether *Aktenkundig* can be seen as literary journalism the criteria identified in the methodology will be applied to the whole volume as well as to some of the individual chapters.

6.4.1 Journalistic criteria

Topicality

On 1 January 1992, the law dealing with the records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic [Stasiunterlagengesetz] was passed and people gained access to their Stasi files for the first time. After the fall of the wall many Stasi documents had been shredded, and a debate raged as to the benefits of keeping and archiving the Stasi files. Once it was determined that the documents be kept and furthermore that the mountains of shredded files be put together again, the question arose of who should have access to the files and what should be allowed to be made public. Many politicians in both the east and west saw the files as an obstacle to reunification. Many others, mostly in the east, feared exposure as Stasi spies once the contents of the files was disclosed, and indeed, hardly a week went by in the early 1990s without the exposure of yet another prominent informer. In 1991, *Der Spiegel* published a five-part series of articles by Jürgen Fuchs titled “Landschaften der Lüge” [Landscapes of Lies]. In these articles Fuchs wrote in great detail about “Writers in the Net of the Stasi” [Schriftsteller im Netz der Stasi], which extensively quoted from his Stasi files (Fuchs, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1991d, 1991e).

Aktenkundig was published after what can be called the first wave of exposures in order to raise awareness of the significance of the files and the Authority that housed them among West German readers. Those interested in politics were familiar with names such as Biermann, Bohley, Fuchs, Gauck and Wollenberger, to name but a few. Unlike the often sensationalist reporting in tabloid and other newspapers, *Aktenkundig* was to provide a more reflective view of the issue. Telling their stories and at the same time placing them in the general context of the GDR dictatorship and the destructive power of the Ministry for State Security was the great achievement, if not catharsis, for the authors.

It is important to say at this point that the Stasi is still a topic in present day Germany. In 2006 the film *Das Leben der Anderen* [The Lives of Others], set in the

East Berlin of 1984, won an Academy Award. The film tells the story of a Stasi agent who spies on a writer and his lover, with the inevitable tragic consequences.

In 2012 the current head of the Authority is journalist and former dissident Roland Jahn (*1953). According to Jahn, “every month thousands are still applying for gaining access to their files” (Finger, 2012). Jahn sees the archival material as vital to the present: “The better we understand dictatorship, the better we can create democracy. We are a school of democracy” (Finger, 2012). In a similar vein, in an interview Gauck stated that “the dictatorship in the GDR existed for a very long time [and] thus, the saying goodbye will also take a very long time” (Bach. & Lippold, 2011, n. p.). These remarks demonstrate that despite twenty years having passed since *Aktenkundig* was published, the question of dealing with the East German past has lost none of its topicality.

Research and transparency

Most of the information given by the various authors was acquired first-hand. Except for Hubertus Knabe they all had lived in the GDR, and all of them were involved in the events they write about. Furthermore, with the exception of Joachim Gauck, all authors use the files their Stasi files as their source of information. These files, from which some of the authors quote extensively, have multiple functions or significance both for the writers and readers. First, for the authors they are proof of the wrongs that have been committed against them. Second, the information they gather from their files helps them and their readers to clarify events and to assess the impact of the Stasi informers. Based on the files the writers can contrast their own earlier perceptions of reality with something one might call the ‘Stasi reality’. When reading the files, the diverging understandings of what was happening can at last be matched. One example for this is the following paragraph:

Often long reports were submitted by those women who had always been sitting in the corner, unobtrusive and silent. In those days I had thought that they were afraid of their own courage to join an independent women’s group. ... Now, when I read the reports I know that they were afraid to miss something worth reporting [to the Stasi]. (Bohley, 1993, p. 42)

The files prove to be primary research material: They explain to the reader what the Stasi was, what it did and why it is important to disclose the information found in the files. For the reader copies of the documents or verbatim quotes of dialogues and conversations serve as proof that what the authors claim was the truth. When Bohley,

for example, writes, “the ambiguity in the relationship between two people, documented in light blue folders, generates a feeling of deep disgust” (ibid.), the reader evaluates this to be true – why would she invent the colour of those folders?

The chapter which is best researched and documented is Freya Klier’s. She not only quotes from memory and from her files as well as from the journal she kept, she also supplies a total of 52 footnotes, which reference most of her quotes. Hubertus Knabe’s account also includes extensive quotes, and provides footnotes with additional information and a glossary of acronyms for the reader.

As far as transparency is concerned, the authors give detailed information about the context of their chapter: They have obtained legal access to their Stasi files, they read their files and they record their reaction to these, sometimes intensely personal disclosures. Of course, a reader does not have the possibility of checking the respective files in their totality, but has to believe in the credibility of the authors’ selection.

Objectivity, clarity and originality

All authors are victims of a dictatorial system, which in most cases manipulated and to some extent destroyed their lives. This fact could lead to the assumption that their texts are subjective. However, having read and analysed the chapters, it has to be said that this is only true to some extent. As Hans-Joachim Schädlich says in his foreword to *Aktenkundig*, this “is a non-fiction book which deals with the things of the Stasi perpetrators and things of the Stasi victims – subjective, objective, passionate and cool” (Schädlich, 1993b, p. 10).

All contributions are subjective in the sense that the authors write from their perspective only. They cannot provide a balanced account in that they cannot and do not sympathise with the Stasi spies. The authors are deeply shocked and angered by what happened to them, their families and friends. There is also the need to be seen as a victim of the regime and to provide insight into the files, so as to prove this. It would be naive to think that none of the authors had any personal scores to settle, but this is not the main motivation for the texts. Instead, they report events as they actually happened, correct lies that had been spread and highlight much personal misery but also courage. In reading and reporting the files, the authors come closer to an objective truth than they had ever been before.

Looking at the criterion of clarity, it can be said that all texts are carefully worked and show clear lines of argumentation. The sources, that is, the files, are used to highlight the writers’ objectives which are to inform, to clarify, and to emphasise the

importance of studying the files, not just for their personal benefit, but as a basis of further research into the Stasi system. Each writer has his or her unique style of writing, and all contributions show writing of high quality. The interviews and public appearances of the authors, many of whom are still today part of German public life, make it easy to match their personalities with their texts. There is the soft-spoken, but nonetheless determined Bärbel Bohley, the fierce and sometimes uncompromising Freya Klier, the statesman-like Joachim Gauck, the reclusive but strong-minded Hans-Joachim Schädlich, the political poet Lutz Rathenow, and last but not least the hurt and angry, yet forgiving, Vera Lengsfeld. This, too, underpins the authenticity of their texts.

The criterion of originality has been fulfilled in that *Aktenkundig* is a unique combination of non-fiction and narrative elements. There are 14 texts which make up the book and those which have been analysed in this case study present different facets of the Stasi and the way it operated. They complement each other and give the reader the opportunity not only to sympathise with the authors, but also to understand and appreciate the need to investigate this part of the GDR history. *Aktenkundig* is suspenseful and shocking, and it helps close numerous gaps in the reader's knowledge about Germany's recent past. Among other things it is the highly developed style and the sincere attitude of the authors who disclose very personal incidents and emotions, which differ from newspaper or magazine reporting written by journalists not personally affected.

6.4.2 Literary criteria

Immersion, strong personal voice, internal thoughts and feelings, and subjective evaluation of events and persons

In all of the contributions to *Aktenkundig* is a strong personal voice, and all of the authors use first-person narration at some point. All contributions have their own distinctive style. Bärbel Bohley, Lutz Rathenow, and Hubertus Knabe describe the experience of actually reading their files and indicate this to the reader by saying, for instance, "When I read the reports ... " (Bohley, 1993, p. 40). Or, "I have been sitting in front of my files or the remainder thereof for three weeks now" (Rathenow, 1993, p. 71), and "I skim through the table of contents and first turn to the 'excerpt meeting report IM 'Klaus' of 18.06.1979'" (Knabe, 1993, p. 234). Vera Lengsfeld and Hans-Joachim Schädlich use first-person narration when they describe their feelings while reading their files without directly quoting the documents and Freya Klier recounts the events following the January 1988 demonstrations in journal style with herself as the

narrator. Joachim Gauck is the only author who does not mention his files at all, but focuses on the importance of keeping and using the files.

It can be said that the criterion immersion is given for all texts and authors. One might even speak of a 'double-immersion' as there are times when the authors inspect their files, as it were, in present time while reading about their past in the files. On both levels, past and present, they are involved as eye-witness and participant observer. They thus authenticate their texts, and can immerse the reader in their emotions and events.

When it comes to internal thoughts and feelings, these features are present in all of the texts to varying degrees. Freya Klier's text, for example, offers numerous examples of her emotional state and involvement. At an early stage of her text she describes her anger with the words "Already on this evening [18 January 1988] my own temperature exceeds the degree of calmness" (Klier, 1993, p. 96), or later when she reads in the state owned newspaper *Neues Deutschland* that she and other dissidents are being accused of treason, she says "my fuse has blown" (Klier, 1993, p. 117). Some of Vera Lengsfeld's statements are very personal, as for instance when upon reading her files and realising the extent of spying and betrayal, she states that she has asked herself "time and again why I stayed in this country for so long" (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 157). With regard to her husband Knud Wollenberger, she writes

I lost a husband who never was my husband. I feel relieved. When I first felt the horror I thought that I would rather not have learnt anything about Donald. But in hindsight, I know that it was right. In a life with Donald everything would have been wrong, even though I would never have noticed why. (Wollenberger, 1993, p. 164)

The fact that she uses her former husband's code name Donald, indicates to the reader that she has indeed put a distance between herself and Knud Wollenberger and thus the past. It is a very effective way to express her feelings.

In Hans-Joachim Schädlich's case, feelings and internal thoughts are mostly expressed by way of questions. Thus, he writes, for example,

I am looking for answers to the questions: How should I behave toward people who I know betrayed me to the dictatorship, but who do not make a move to open up toward me? Can I excuse their behaviour? (Schädlich, 1993c, p. 169)

As has been explained above, the matter of objectivity is rather complex in *Aktenkundig*. In all of the texts there are subjective evaluations of events and persons, but this has a different quality than in Günter Wallraff's book, which was dominated by

one perspective and a large amount of bias. The exploration of their own experience is, after all, at the centre of these texts. Added to this is the fact that the authors have suffered from oppression and being spied upon, more often than not by people who were very close to them, makes it impossible to take an objective stance. In their texts, in this respect the literary outweighs the journalistic elements.

Narrative techniques

The narrative techniques found in the contributions to *Aktenkundig* are in stark contrast to those used by Günter Wallraff in *Der Aufmacher*. It is obvious to the reader that all of the authors are well versed in writing. Among them are artists, poets, theatre directors, historians, clergymen and –women, and the authors make use of the entire palette of narrative techniques. One prominent technique is that of questions, including rhetorical ones, used in some of the texts analysed in this case study. These questions serve different purposes and have different effects on the reader, depending on the author who uses them. While Bärbel Bohley employs questions as signposts leading through her text as well to express her feelings, such as doubts or fears, Lutz Rathenow uses questions to make the reader look over his shoulder as he reads his files. Thus, most of the questions he asks specifically relate to what he reads and the reader accompanies him until they both reach the answers. Freya Klier, Vera Lengsfeld, Hans-Joachim Schädlich, and Hubertus Knabe use questions sparingly and in Klier's case only in highly emotional situations. The effect Klier achieves is to convey her feeling of exasperation and shock upon learning that she has been accused of treason (Klier, 1993, p. 116-117). Schädlich's questions are part of interior monologues and Knabe uses them exclusively in the last part of his text, the 'post script', to express his opinion.

Hubertus Knabe also uses literary or narrative style, which he alternates with long direct quotes from his file to draw the reader into his text. Those parts have titles like "The Girl from East Berlin" (Knabe, 1993, pp. 232-234) or "The Suitcase Story" (Knabe, 1993, pp. 240-242). In Hans-Joachim Schädlich's text one can find dialogue or direct speech when he describes his conversations with the Stasi informers he has identified and approached. Freya Klier's journal entries read like a play with detailed explanations and in Bärbel Bohley's and Lutz Rathenow's texts there are passages which can be characterised as poetic. Joachim Gauck's text is written like a speech, directly addressing the reader.

While they differ in style, all analysed texts contain elements of personal observation and reflection which in most cases is contrasted but also supported by

quotes and copies from the files. With this combination a high degree of authenticity and credibility is achieved.

However, what must also be noted here is that all of the authors presented in this case study were or still are highly respected figures in the political or literary life in Germany and their prominence as well as their eloquence greatly contribute to the significance of *Aktenkundig*.

6. 5 Conclusion

At first sight, *Aktenkundig* is not the typical example of literary journalism. It is a compilation of texts written by 14 different authors, who apply different styles and techniques. However, since they all write about the same topic, the Stasi and its role in the former GDR, the book can be perceived as a unity. The texts complement each other and since the authors belonged to the same opposition circles in the GDR, there are references to each other in their contributions to *Aktenkundig*. This further enhances this notion of unity. As far as the journalistic and the literary criteria of the methodological matrix are concerned, it has to be said that the indicators of literary journalism have been complied with. As is the case with Günter Wallraff's *Aufmacher*, *Aktenkundig* is a typical German example of literary journalism in that it places great importance on being eyewitness and participating observer as indicators of authenticity and credibility. The inclusion of original material, in this case, copies or excerpts from Stasi files, backs up the journalistic aspect while the narrative techniques support the literary one.

7 Case Study *Der Aufmacher - Der Mann der bei Bild Hans Esser war* [Lead Story]

7.1 Introduction to the writer and his work

Günter Wallraff (* 1.10.1942) is one of the most prominent and, at the same time, one of the most highly controversial German journalists and writers. According to Hans Leyendecker, a well-known German investigative journalist himself, “no German journalist, except for Rudolf Augstein, has changed the post-war society [in Germany] as much as Günter Wallraff” (Leyendecker, 2010). The comparison to Augstein (1923 – 2002) seems exaggerated. After all, “Augstein's fellow German journalists voted him ‘journalist of the century’ in a poll” (Hooper, 2002, n. p.). However, as John Hooper pointed out in his obituary for Augstein in the *Guardian*, the editors and journalists working for his political weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* “can be counted on to remember that the first duty of a journalist is to get the story, especially if it is one the authorities wish to conceal” (Hooper, 2002, n. p.). It is due to the journalistic understanding of Rudolf Augstein that the critical and investigative reporting of *Spiegel* journalists could develop the way it did. To some extent Günter Wallraff can be seen as working in this tradition.

Wallraff is best known for his numerous books of reportage. The topics range from the working conditions in large companies to the practices of the tabloid press in Germany. In 1970, Heinrich Böll (1913-1985), Nobel Prize laureate for Literature in 1972, claimed that one should “create five or six, create a dozen Wallraffs” (Böll cited in Lindner, 1975, p. 11). This quote indicates that Wallraff gained fame quite early in his career. Böll’s urgent call went unheeded, and to date there are no further ‘Wallraffs’ to be found in Germany. Sociologist Oscar Negt conceded that Günter Wallraff can “be called without exaggeration the politically most effective author, who was the author most-read by blue collar workers in West German post-war society” (Negt, 1975, p. 105). After training as a bookseller and working as a freelance journalist, Wallraff wrote ‘workers’ literature’ [Arbeiterliteratur], which was part of a German tradition to provide literature about and for factory workers, miners and others employed in manufacturing and heavy industries. Subsequently Wallraff embarked on a long career of what might loosely be called investigative journalism. Over a number of years Wallraff refined his methods of research and eventually made covert investigations his trademark. This often

included taking on a different identity. As Johannes Ludwig concedes, however, his influence goes much further than merely reporting in detail “about secret worlds of ‘normal employees’ in companies” (Ludwig, 2002, p. 175). With his publications resulting from these researches Wallraff has not only triggered public discussions, but also forced the German High Court to reconsider the boundaries of freedom of expression. According to Ludwig, Wallraff “prompted ... the High Court to face new perspectives of a changing industrial and democratic society” (ibid.).

To understand Wallraff’s motives as well as the impact of his work, it is important to take a look at his personal history as well as the political and social conditions in Germany in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

When Wallraff, a pacifist, was called up for military service like every other young German man in 1963, he refused to be trained in the use of weapons. This led to him being admitted to the psychiatric ward of the military hospital in Koblenz, where he was pronounced to be “unfit for service in times of peace and war” due to his “abnormal personality” (Engelken & Hordych, 2002). The journals he kept during this time were published in the early 1960s in the youth magazine *twen* and in 1970, as the *Bundeswehr Tagebuch* [German Army Diary] in the reportage collection *Von einem, der auszog und das Fürchten lernte* [Of the one who went forth to learn what fear was]. The proposal to publish the army journals came from Heinrich Böll. The response to the publication of Wallraff’s diary showed that “writing could lead to political awareness” (Hahn & Töteberg cited in Braun 2007, p. 19) that in turn can result in societal solidarity and the desire for social changes.

The years from 1966 to 1969 in Germany were characterised by a Great Coalition government, made up by SPD (Social Democratic Party) and CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Union). Increasing unemployment and growing criticism of the economic and social conditions as well as the political system in general led to popular unrest, especially amongst young people, who formed the APO – *Außerparlamentarische Opposition*. APO, literally translated, is ‘extra-parliamentary opposition’, meaning that when Germany’s two big political parties formed a coalition government, the opposition had to come from outside parliament. This was a left-wing opposition movement founded by students and trade unionists in 1966. Together with the 1968 student movement the APO became a politically relevant force. The APO understood itself as an “anti-authoritarian movement” and saw its protest actions as “the only chance to enforce political and social reforms and changes” (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, 1983, Vol. 2, p. 288). The culminating point of the APO’s activities

was reached in 1968 when student leader Rudi Dutschke was attacked and seriously injured. In those heady times, when student revolts swept much of Europe, Günter Wallraff saw it his task to provide “progressive reporting in order to consolidate democracy in Germany” (Braun, 2007, p. 22).

In 1969, a social democratic-liberal democratic alliance replaced the coalition government, and Chancellor Willy Brandt seemed to bear the promise of fairer distribution of public wealth and a more democratic and liberated atmosphere in the country. Intellectuals and writers such as literary Nobel prize winners Heinrich Böll and Günther Grass who, having experienced the totalitarian regime of the Nazis, had become politically active, showed their support for social-democratic ideas in their writing. That same year, Günter Wallraff published his *13 Unerwünschte Reportagen* [*13 Undesirable Reportages*] in the political magazine *konkret* and the satirical magazine *Pardon*. These reportages were about the conditions in psychiatric hospitals, shelters for the homeless and poverty amongst students. In each case, Wallraff posed as an alcoholic, a homeless person, and a student. Wallraff’s role-playing did not end there. He also posed as a catholic manufacturer to interview a catholic priest about whether producing napalm could be reconciled with the catholic faith. He investigated the working conditions in German factories and the practices of employers. A major reason for Wallraff to go undercover was that, after one such reportage based on covert research, a corporate security service had published a “wanted” poster with his photograph which was widely circulated among companies in the Ruhrgebiet [The Ruhr Area] (Braun, 2007, p. 23). Wallraff’s topics became more and more political, and at the same time the more liberal feeling that had prevailed for some years in Germany slowly gave way to an atmosphere of suspicion and extended state surveillance. Dissatisfied with the 1968 movement’s inability to implement radical changes in Germany, a small number of people, headed by Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof formed a terrorist group, which later became notorious as the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF) [Red Army Faction]. While their initial aims were of the social-revolutionary kind, in the years between 1972 and 1977, they were solely trying to free imprisoned members of their group by committing violent terrorist acts. These actions, seen as an attack on the state, triggered the so-called Radikalenerlass, an employment ban for political (leftwing) extremists. These individuals could not become civil servants or teachers. The decree was implemented on 28 January 1972 and stipulated that “well-founded doubts as to the loyalty to the constitution justify the rejection of an applicant for a position in the civil service” (Meyers Grosses Taschenlexikon, 1983, Vol. 18, p. 51). To many politically

engaged people in Germany, this law was deemed to be arbitrary and geared towards keeping critical citizens out of political life. Günter Wallraff was one of the targets as he had published pointed criticism of some of Germany's largest employers, and also had brought to light the links existing between manufacturers, politicians, and parts of the press.

Wallraff's next project in 1977 was the reportage on the practices of the Springer tabloid *Bild Zeitung*, *Der Aufmacher – Der Mann, der bei Bild Hans Esser war* [Lead Story]⁴, which is the case study to be analysed in this chapter. The Axel Springer publishing house - publisher of the influential tabloid *Bild* and the right-wing daily, *Die Welt* - wielded power due to the nation-wide high circulation of its tabloid, *Bild*. The readership of *Bild*, which in the late 1970s sold close to 6 million copies, was largely the same as Wallraff sought with his reportages that is, in the main blue collar workers. Unlike Wallraff, *Bild* held a far more conservative, not to say reactionary, position and jealously guarded its position as a major influence on the nation's opinion. *Bild* was and is the only tabloid in Germany that has such huge market power and capital strength.

Der Aufmacher was first published in 1977, the year when Günter Wallraff conducted his investigation into the practices of *Bild* and the Springer publishing house. On 9 March 1977 Wallraff started working for *Bild* in its Hanover office under the assumed name of Hans Esser. The book is an insider's account from within the *Bild* / Springer system. It caused enormous controversies and set off a number of court cases when published.

7.2 The structure of *Der Aufmacher* [Lead Story]

I would like to draw attention to the fact that I am not working from the first edition but the 1982 edition of the book, which is a "changed and extended" edition. The book is still in print in its 11th edition (2010) and is still on school syllabi in many German states. I, too, first read it at school in Year 12. The book is divided into three parts, altogether comprising 272 pages. There is the main part, made up of 28 chapters, 11 of which are titled after *Bild* headlines. The second part is titled "Danach" [Afterwards], and contains comments on the book and the reactions of the Springer publishing house. The appendix is made up of two parts. There are four more undated examples of *Bild* reporting of which one can assume that they are from the 1970s, followed by comments

⁴ In the following the book is referred to as *Der Aufmacher*.

and an interview on the court rulings in the trials of Springer vs Wallraff in the years 1978 and 1981.

The longest chapter of the book comprises 18 pages, the shortest is only one page long. There are 11 boxes (texts in frames) with excerpts from an analysis of *Bild* published by Springer in 1966, three pages with a small rectangular stamp saying “zensiert” [censored], 13 photographs, and 22 copies of *Bild* articles, some of which were written by Wallraff as Hans Esser. In addition, there are 21 documents of various types: footnotes, copies of manuscripts, an affirmation in lieu of an oath, a letter to the editor, a court order of 6.1.1978, an excerpt from a speech of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) politician Alfred Dregger, a leaflet with advice for suicidal people on how to deal with the press, most probably written by Wallraff, and an excerpt from Wallraff’s journal.

At first sight there is no clear structure to the book, which looks like a hodgepodge of texts and documents seemingly arranged at random. As will become clear in the analysis of *Der Aufmacher*, this is by no means the case as each document, photo, or framed text underlines Wallraff’s statements and greatly contributes to the claim to authenticity and truthfulness of the book.

7.3. Analysis

In the following I am going to analyse the text in detail. First, I will look at Wallraff’s approach to his investigation into *Bild*, and then at various issues addressed by the author such as the connection between *Bild* and German politics, the attitude of the tabloid towards its readers and its staff, as well as the role of Springer as an influence on public opinion.

7.3.1 Setting the Scene

Der Aufmacher is not an ongoing but a cumulative narrative. In other words, there is no clear narrative line. However, the book follows a certain chronology, starting with Wallraff’s first article or the headline thereof, in *Bild* from 9 March 1977 (Wallraff, 1982, p. 12). Wallraff’s last text in *Bild* was published on 14 of June 1977 (Wallraff, 1982, p. 199). The main part of the book ends with the *Bild* report about Wallraff’s exposure on 23 July 1977 (Wallraff, 1982, p.222). *Bild* states that Wallraff was “our colleague for three months” (ibid.), but this is inaccurate. Wallraff worked for *Bild* for a period of about four-and-a-half months. This chronological arrangement permits

insights into the author's emotions and attitudes and, as the story goes on, conveys how he is slowly drawn into the 'Bild system'.

The texts in the appendix are not all dated so that one can only assume that they were written in the year when Wallraff worked as Hans Esser. The texts about the legal proceedings, which ensued in the wake of the first publication are from the years 1978, 1979, and 1981. The excerpts from newspaper articles on the topic do not have any reference to their respective publication dates.

From the start it is clear that *Der Aufmacher* is an activist book and not an objective description of the methods of a German tabloid. By describing the journalistic and editorial practices of *Bild*, Wallraff wants to expose the manipulative character of the tabloid. He wants to show that the tabloid victimises, humiliates, and ridicules, mostly working-class people and thus its readers.

When it comes to the Springer publishing house, Wallraff's endeavour is to show to what extent the company uses its market power to act as an opinion maker, and influence politics and politicians. *Bild* is the 'symbol' for Springer and, as far as Wallraff is concerned, it is reactionary, manipulative, undemocratic, inhuman, both toward its readers, the people featuring in the articles, and its staff. To Wallraff, Springer and *Bild* are the enemy. The introductory remark on page 9, dated 16.09.1977, makes this very clear. Upon his exposure, the Springer press, that is, *Bild*, defamed Wallraff as an "underground communist", which to him is equivalent to being labelled "terrorist". This came at a time when in Germany there prevailed a climate "where democratic criticism is defamed and placed close to terrorism" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 9). This has to be seen against the background of Hanns-Martin Schleyer (President of the German Employers' Association) having just been kidnapped by the RAF and being held hostage. Schleyer's murder on 18 October 1977 was the climax of one of the most serious crises Germany has experienced in its post-war history. Wallraff takes up this theme and goes on to say that *Der Aufmacher* is also "about violence, about a special 'intellectual' violence ... The victims are people, their thoughts, their feelings, their dignity" (ibid.). He uses words such as "crisis committee" [Krisenstab], "manhunt" [Großfahndung], "raid" [Razzia], "surveillance" [Überwachung], "accomplice" [Helfershelfer], "sympathiser" [Sympathisanten], and thus evokes the atmosphere prevailing in those months. The only difference is that Springer and *Bild* are the terrorists, the "hostage-taker[s] of the unconscious" (ibid.). The big problem Wallraff sees, however, is that unlike with ordinary criminals, "there is no way that even with new laws against terror and violence the penal code can punish these deeds" (ibid.).

Right at the beginning of the book Wallraff states that he has changed the names of all the colleagues and chief editors he met and worked with in the *Bild* Hanover office, but goes on to say that nonetheless he did not invent or make up anything. “I have either directly noted down remarks and dialogues or made a note of them in minutes taken from memory after the paper went to press” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 10).

This statement has the effect of an antidote to his emotional and highly biased and political introduction. The reader has the impression that Wallraff is giving himself a carte blanche to express his personal opinion openly and without restriction due to the fact that he was an eyewitness to almost everything he wrote about. In this he extends John Carey’s postulate that “reportage must be written by an eye witness” not least because “eye-witness evidence ... makes for authenticity” (Carey, 1987, xxix) for his purposes. Like Carey he equates eyewitnessing with authenticity, but his notion of being an eyewitness includes a strongly subjective element. He does not merely report what he sees, but interprets it and thus presents a ‘censored’ version of the matter.

7.3.2 Wallraff introduces *Bild*

The first chapter, titled “Berührt – geführt – zensiert ‘Im Namen des Volkes’” [Touched – Moved – Censored – In the Name of the People] will be analysed in greater detail as it clearly shows Wallraff’s position and style as well as giving insight into the ‘*Bild* system’.

Wallraff begins with a detailed account of how he prepared for the role of Hans Esser. He is afraid of taking this role, not least because unlike his other undercover reportage projects, this time he “will have to become an accomplice” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 13). The frightening picture his friend B. paints of *Bild* adds to Wallraff’s unease: “They [*Bild*] squash you to a pulp and crack you so that you won’t know what day it is” (ibid.). In minute detail Wallraff then describes the surroundings of the printing and editorial building in Bemerodstrasse, Hanover, comparing it to a “military area”. There is a security person with the stereotypical German shepherd watchdog, a barrier, an automatic door-blocking system (ibid.). This most probably is standard in large industrial companies, but Wallraff makes it sound like a fortress or a prison. He goes even further than that. “Neutral vans unidentifiable and without logos leave the printing building at dawn. (Similar to rubbish trucks which clandestinely and cost-effectively unload aggressive pollutants and toxic substances on unofficial dumps)” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 15). Again he creates a dark, illegal, criminal atmosphere and implies that Springer must have something to hide.

His first meeting with the chief editor, Schwindmann, is recounted as a dialogue, which makes this part of the chapter very vivid and authentic. To Wallraff, the language Schwindmann uses when he talks about the job, for example “totally devote yourself to our cause”, “really tough” or “fry up” for using information, is “jargon reminiscent of thieves’ argot” in the style of “Let’s do a job together ...” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 23). In his account, the freelance reporters, “die Freien” are turned into “Vogelfreie” [The Outlawed] – this pun only works in German – “who are at the mercy of the chief editor’s capriciousness for better or worse” (ibid.). According to Wallraff, these reporters are exploited and without rights.

On the next pages (pp. 23-26), Wallraff describes the first news conference he takes part in. Once again, this is done in great detail and in dialogue form, which creates a vivid and authentic atmosphere and leaves the readers with the impression that they, too, take part in the news conference. The account reads like a play with comments or stage directions such as “universal laughter” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 24), “signalling his refusal” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 25). In this account, the future colleagues of Wallraff are introduced and the general procedure for selecting the topics to be published is described.

When Wallraff summarises the result of the news conference, that is, the *Bild* issue to be published, he calls it the “daily sticky mixture [of] half-truths, falsification, overt and hidden advertising, mendacious sex and hypocritical crime” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 27). All of these are the ingredients of a tabloid and in Great Britain, for instance, where tabloids already were market power in the 1970s, this would not have raised many eyebrows. In Germany, however, *Bild* is the only nationally distributed tabloid with a huge market share and advertising power and therefore the difference to other daily newspapers in Germany is rather stark.

The chapter ends with Schwindmann inviting Wallraff (Esser) to his home to get to know each other (Wallraff, 1982, p. 30) and at this stage the reader has already got a clear idea of Wallraff’s position. He has marked out the frontline and the me-against-them scenario is in place. As will be shown over and over in the following, Wallraff at no point questions his ideological position. He is entirely convinced of the correctness of his views and, what is more, the necessity of his actions. This also goes for his understanding of authenticity and his concept of truth. Wallraff’s approach of reporting from within the organisation he investigates, that is, his role as a covert but active eyewitness, gives him the opportunity not to merely present his findings, but to shape the events he reports about and ultimately the book as a whole. While for Wallraff being

eyewitness implies authenticity and truthfulness, it can also mean that he does not give the reader the opportunity to form his or her own opinion on the matter. His findings come with an interpretation, Wallraff's interpretation, which includes his political beliefs and his idea of what is right and what is wrong.

To illustrate just how powerful Springer is Wallraff, instead of continuing his account of working for *Bild*, moves forward to the time after he was found out. In the chapter titled "Im Namen des Volkes?" [In the Name of the People?], which is the customary first line of a court judgement, he states that in the first five editions of *Der Aufmacher* the chapter opened with an account of what he experienced in Schwindmann's home. However, on "7 October [1977], the Hamburg district court, ... refused to offer this book as long as it contained claims which included details about Schwindmann's private life" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 31). As far as Wallraff is concerned, this was a successful attempt of the "Springer people and their lawyers to censor my report about *Bild*" (ibid.). Rather polemically Wallraff describes Springer as a power with unlimited financial means, one that coerces politicians to take on certain attitudes, supported by the association of newspaper publishers and the press council (Wallraff, 1982, p. 35).

To underline his assessment, Wallraff presents three excerpts of a *Bild* analysis published by Springer in 1966, and this is a clever move. It is one thing to have Wallraff criticising and attacking *Bild* but the paper's publisher's characterization of its own publication has a far more revealing and, to a point, frightening effect. Placing these excerpts next to his accounts also serves to indicate that he is right. At the same time, the reader, who might be critical of Wallraff's approach, cannot but agree with him upon reading that "Influence and power of the paper, courage and decisiveness, the force and effectiveness which is partly perceived as ruthless and brutal, enable the reader to identify with this superior aggressor" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 36). The keywords "influence", "power", "ruthless", "brutal" do not need any further comment, but Wallraff cannot let them speak for themselves. He has to go further and describes *Bild* as a medium that "breaks into the consciousness of the masses with prejudices and obsessions" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 37).

It is once again obvious that Wallraff is waging war against *Bild*, and one has to concede that his language is every bit as aggressive, polemic and poster-like as *Bild*'s. In the excerpt from the *Bild* analysis on pages 38-39, another important feature of the tabloid is mentioned. "It is a brand with a clearly accentuated image, it is a fascinating paper" (Wallraff, 1982, pp. 38-39), which makes it an ideal medium for advertisers and

which in turn means income for the publisher and thus growing market power. Wallraff vehemently criticizes this aspect throughout the book.

Wallraff proceeds to assemble the picture of *Bild* and Springer as if putting together a jigsaw puzzle. The issues mentioned in the introduction to this chapter are all connected and, in total, constitute what Wallraff at some point describes as the ‘*Bild* system’. By sharing his impressions of and feelings about this system with his readers he evokes the sense of how, as a member of *Bild* staff, the system is gaining influence over him. It is also a way of creating a feeling of compassion for him amongst readers for his at times aggressive, cynical and emotional attacks as they were due to the environment he finds himself in.

The picture Wallraff presents is that of an almighty publishing house, an octopus, a Big Brother straight out of George Orwell’s 1984. With *Bild* as its most powerful and effective tool, Springer conducts politics as well as shapes opinions. *Bild* interferes with people’s lives to the point of destroying them by inventing stories and distorting reality, with the ultimate aim of helping publisher Axel Cäsar Springer to strengthen his position of power. With this objective in sight, the publishing house and the tabloid will go to any lengths and, as is obvious from the start, so will Wallraff in his fight against the tabloid and what in his opinion it stands for.

7.3.3 The ‘*Bild* system’ according to Wallraff

Wallraff’s descriptions of the editorial practices of *Bild*, which are very detailed and supported by copies of published articles, some of which were conceived or ‘written’ by him or at least bear his assumed name Hans Esser, yield few surprises. In a 1995 survey of how credible Germans find various media (electronic and print media), *Bild am Sonntag*, the Sunday edition of *Bild*, was deemed the least credible (Esser, 1998, p. 142). One can assume that the tendency would have been similar in the 1970s. In order to sell as many copies as possible, *Bild* needs superlatives like the “largest, smallest, poorest, richest, fattest” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 40), stories of either extremely good or bad luck as well as some sex and crime (Wallraff, 1982, pp. 62-64). Sensationalism is part of a tabloid’s bread and butter and there is no reason why *Bild* should be any different from British tabloids, for example. Far more disquieting than invented headlines in the style of “Piranha tears out a chunk of museum director’s hand” (Wallraff, 1982, p.151), which Wallraff takes up to compare the Springer people to a school of predatory fish by saying “[t]hey are extremely aggressive, in schools they fall upon atypical species as well as wounded ones, eat up everything that shows weakness” (Wallraff, 1982, p.150),

is, according to Wallraff, the fact that there is a system behind this. He identifies and describes ‘the system’ on two levels: the editorial office in Hanover and the headquarters of the Springer publishing group.

Since he is a part of the former, even though only temporarily, he can give firsthand and to some extent disturbing insights into the editorial practices and the working conditions of the *Bild* reporters. According to Wallraff, the editorial office in Hanover is “a closed circuit unit, which makes any orientation toward other matters fade” ... and “those who have to function, to join in, to go along with it, lose all resistance” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 47). In the chapter titled “Vom ‘Stadtschwein’ und vom ‘Landschwein’” [About the urban and the rural pig], he gives a very detailed and shocking account of what he calls “Absolutism in the year 1977” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 82). The absolute ruler in this case is chief editor Schwindmann, and as Wallraff sees the newsroom layout as an important element, the “process of submission and conformity is the open-plan office” (Wallraff, 1982, p.83). To Wallraff, this work environment means that

... the competitiveness is laid bare on an open stage. One is never alone and unobserved; there are always listeners and witnesses. ... The regulatory forces of the open-plan office bring everyone into line. Everyone controls everyone else and all are controlled by the boss who rules over the open-plan office. (ibid.)

Reading this, one has the impression that Wallraff describes a totalitarian system, and this is precisely his intention. “Upon entering the editorial office of *Bild*, one says goodbye to the individual development process. The person as a social creature does not develop ... one is forced into line by the ‘*Bild* system’” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 86). Open-plan offices and newsrooms have existed in Germany since the mid-1960s and one can say that they were not very popular with employees since they tend to restrict their individuality and are very noisy. However, Wallraff makes it sound as if it were something completely outrageous. His account is so exaggerated that one has the suspicion that if the *Bild* newsroom had consisted of small individual offices, he would have written about solitary confinement instead of surveillance. His wording again expresses his extreme bias. He uses the German term “gleichgeschaltet” which in Nazi Germany was a euphemism for “eliminating all opposition”. To him, Springer is the equivalent of a fascist regime, the Big Brother of George Orwell’s novel *1984*. Much later in the book the Big Brother motif is taken up again:

The atmosphere in the editorial office is determined by intimidation and fear ... pressure and coercion. ... In this atmosphere people do not live but merely function. Like a robot ... You have your program inside and Schwindmann has the code ... and Springer, who invisibly floats somewhere above the clouds and determines the direction by pointing here and there, has the code of Prinz [chief editor at the Hamburg *Bild* headquarters]. (Wallraff, 1982, p. 215)

There are a couple of months between the two statements and Wallraff documents his increasing immersion and the realisation that he has “adjusted in a frightening way in a short time” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 216). His choice of words, “intimidation and fear ... pressure and coercion” indicate that he is increasingly being sucked into the ‘system’. He once again overdraws the situation and creates an eerie atmosphere in order to follow his argumentation that *Bild* is manipulative. His standpoint is that if he, as a relatively stable person, who has been in difficult situations before, feels this way, it must be very bad. He uses himself as the only reference point and what he presents is once again very subjective and biased.

7.3.4 Springer, *Bild* and politics

The connections between Springer and German politicians are a big issue for Wallraff and there are several chapters in *Der Aufmacher*, in which he deals with Springer’s influence on politics and the key role *Bild* plays in this context.

In “*Bild* schafft Lehrstellen” [*Bild* creates apprenticeships], Wallraff quotes chief editor Schwindmann saying that: “We [*Bild*] are a non-partisan paper. You can see this from the fact that our campaign ... is supported by a First Mayor of the SPD [Social Democratic Party] and an Economics Minister of the F.D.P. [Free Democratic Party]... it is a non-political campaign” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 75). Wallraff counters this with “*Bild* politics are CDU [Christian Democratic Party] politics” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 75) and thus creates the following equation: Springer/*Bild* = CDU = conservative and capitalist. This assumption appears rather harmless and matter-of-fact compared to others in *Der Aufmacher*, but it shows very clearly that Wallraff deems his political beliefs, which tend more toward the Social Democratic Party, to be the ‘right’ ones. At the same time his emotional involvement is very obvious and in the foreground.

One of the key chapters in this context is “*Bild* schreibt für Albrecht (CDU) – Schmalstieg (SPD) schreibt für *Bild*” [*Bild* writes for Albrecht (CDU) – Schmalstieg (SPD) writes for *Bild*] (Wallraff, 1982, p. 98). The title already gives a clear indication as to where Wallraff is going to take this. CDU politicians are promoted by *Bild*, while their SPD counterparts play “the puppet for *Bild*” (ibid.). Ernst Albrecht was premier in

Lower Saxony from 1976-1990 and Herbert Schmalstieg became Germany's youngest mayor in the city of Hanover in 1972. He remained in office until 2006, which made him the longest-serving mayor in the country. Each of them wrote a regular column for *Bild*. What Wallraff describes here is standard procedure. Springer is an influential media corporation with a financial interest. Lobbying and supporting political parties and their key members is neither outrageous nor illegal. Of course, one could argue that the press should be objective or at least take no political sides, but even in the 1970s this was a rather naive standpoint. Once again, Wallraff paints a picture in black and white, and by doing so wants to tell the reader what or who, according to him, is good and bad. To Wallraff, the Christian Democratic party is ultra-reactionary and uses the tabloid *Bild* to influence opinion while SPD politicians are servile and only collaborate with *Bild* to "to promote the city's [in this case Hanover's] image" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 99). Wallraff thus uses a concept similar to that of Springer and *Bild*: he simplifies, polarises and he is biased.

In the chapter "Konrad-Adenauer-Preis" [Konrad-Adenauer Prize] Wallraff takes this even further. It seems extremely ironic that it is Wallraff of all people who was sent to report on the award ceremony. The prize is awarded by the "ultra-reactionary 'Deutschland Stiftung'" [Germany Foundation] (Wallraff, 1982, p. 115), a foundation which saw itself as spearhead of the opposition against the Social Democratic – Liberal Democratic government. This and the fact that the list of guest speakers and invitees reads like the Who-is-Who of German conservatives, most of whom share a past in the 1930s, is an anathema to Wallraff. Many of his 'enemies' who stand for different facets of a conservative Germany are present: Alfred Dregger, who in 1976 created the CDU election slogan 'Freedom instead of Socialism' and who the left-wing politicians saw as a representative of the so-called Stahlhelmfraktion [Faction of Steel Helmets] alluding to his military past in Nazi Germany; Kurt Ziesel, a right-wing publicist, co-founder of the Deutschland-Stiftung, and one-time entrenched Nazi whose energy was geared towards fighting the "degenerate [entartet] left which besmirches [besudelt] our people" [in German the terms "entartet" and "besudelt" are typical of the language used in Nazi Germany]; Gerhard Löwenthal, journalist and one of the few Jewish survivors who stayed in Germany after 1945 and who due to his deep aversion to communism and left-wing politics, was often accused of being the epitome of conservative public-service broadcasting; Franz-Josef Strauß, minister in various federal governments, long-standing premier of Bavaria and ideologically on the far-right of the political spectrum. Otto von Habsburg, the last grandson of the last German Emperor

Wilhelm II was also amongst the guests, prompting Wallraff to see himself transported back to “long-gone feudal times” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 115). Wallraff describes the setting in great detail and creates the impression that this is a meeting of a secret or clandestine society. Wallraff does not differentiate; to him this event is a “demonstration of right-wing power” (Wallraff, 1982, p.118) which he finds highly alarming.

At some stage during the speeches, which are about the threat of Euro-Communism, about the fight against socialism in order to consolidate freedom in Germany, and about the student protests which are described as the cause of terrorism, Wallraff finds it more and more difficult to “remain the *Bild* reporter Hans Esser” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 121). He feels that “Sometimes I want to scream and catch myself having the desire to have stink bombs in my pocket” (ibid.). Once again Wallraff becomes polemical and blatantly pushes his own views when he says that

politics have to be made more indirectly, via emotions and prejudices: whipping up public opinion against minorities, stirring up hatred and fear – best done with seemingly apolitical objects (sex offenders, foreign workers): This creates the mood that grows into the collective outcry for capital punishment ... Strauß and Dregger are only the fatty spots on the surface of a soup called popular opinion. The kitchen where it is concocted is the *Bild Zeitung*. (Wallraff, 1982, p. 124)

Wallraff’s words are every bit as inflammatory as those coming from the “ultra-reactionaries” – except that he positions himself at the other, the far left, end of the spectrum. His hatred of and contempt for these politicians is palpable, but he remains professional when it comes to his role as Hans Esser. He even gets the autographs of Ziesel, von Habsburg, Löwenthal and Strauß and calls them the “quadriga of the right wing [of politics]” (ibid.). Two photographs, one showing him with Otto von Habsburg, the other one with Franz-Josef Strauß giving the above-mentioned autographs, are included in this chapter. This could be interpreted as his way of saying ‘See I am right here among you and I know what you are up to’. Of course, they also serve to document that he has not invented anything of it.

Re-reading these diatribes in 2012 one feels like saying ‘so what?’ 35 years after the publication of *Der Aufmacher Bild* is still in the focus of critical journalists and there are research projects such as “A brand and its servants – The *Bild* presentation of the Greek-and Euro-Crisis in 2010” carried out by the Otto-Brenner Foundation. Only recently the tabloid’s reporting has largely contributed to the resignation of Christian Wulff (a Christian Democrat) from his position as German President. This latest event

even gave *Bild* the opportunity to present itself as a serious newspaper, which investigates political scandals and which does not favour any political party.

7.3.5 *Bild* and its readers

Be it a tabloid or a serious newspaper, a paper's most valuable assets are its readers. Thus, it is only logical that Wallraff also takes a close look at the readership of the tabloid. His intention is to make the reader of his book *Der Aufmacher* understand the full extent of *Bild*'s manipulative power. As in other chapters, Wallraff contrasts his view with excerpts from Springer's *Bild* analysis. Wallraff concedes that "as little as *Bild* has anything to do with whatever according to tradition and science is a newspaper, as little is a *Bild* reader a newspaper reader" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 58). This evaluation, if it can be called that, is also largely due to the fact that Germany has no tabloid culture. This was the case in the 1970s and has not changed. As Frank Esser states in his comparative study of British and German journalism "[h]uman touch, personalization and sensational reporting – in a word – tabloid journalism – does not have a similarly strong tradition in German press history as it has in the Anglo-Saxon countries" (Esser, 1998, p. 296). This also explains why it is so easy for Wallraff to work with an 'us [the serious press] versus them [*Bild*]' scenario throughout the book. He depicts *Bild* readers as addicted, brainless individuals "who buy emotions, stimulants, substitute drugs for 35 pfennig" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 58). The Springer slogan "one fights against dependence [on *Bild*] ... [but] one cannot do without this paper – one has to read *Bild*!" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 59), in Wallraff's view, illustrates Springer's plan to make as many people addicted to *Bild* as possible. To create an even more threatening atmosphere, Wallraff quotes from the *Bild* analysis according to which

For the reader one essential function of *Bild Zeitung* is that it indicates which things or events and which topics are significant that day. In this sense *Bild Zeitung* influences public opinion, supplies the stereotypes of conversation and discussion for millions of people. (Wallraff, 1982, p. 61)

By stereotyping *Bild* readers as uncritical and malleable, Wallraff is every bit as manipulative as he alleges the Springer press to be. He uses his typical jargon, which in parts is reminiscent of propaganda texts. Statements like "*Bild* withholds and distorts facts in order to dull the minds of the masses" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 238) read as though taken straight out of a leftist political pamphlet of the 1970s. Another pattern Wallraff uses quite frequently is to allude to the Nazi regime when he describes the practices of Springer. He is likely to have read Heinrich Böll's article in *Der Spiegel* in which the

writer openly attacks *Bild* and Springer for their reporting on the Baader-Meinhof group. He calls *Bild's* reporting “plain fascism” (Böll, 1972, p. 55) and expresses the opinion that “[Axel] Springer himself should be taken to court publicly on the grounds of incitement of the people” (Böll, 1972, p. 57). His statement that *Bild* has a much higher circulation than the Nazi paper *Der Stürmer* speaks for itself (Böll, 1972, p. 56). However, where Böll, whose experience with fascism enables him to make such a statement, is critical and angry, Wallraff applies a rabble-rousing style, which is irritating. As if to support his personal view of the inferior intelligence of *Bild* readers, he cites his colleagues, who call them “primitives” or “sprightly, modern illiterates” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 210).

True to his style, Wallraff cannot leave it at this, but has to take this point further by saying that the readers are “human material, material for the aggressions, the dreams of social advancement and fears of descent of the perpetrators at the *Bild* desk” (ibid.). He now includes the *Bild* reporters in his criticism and once again his wording is very dramatic.

7.3.6 Günter Wallraff and Hans Esser

There are two distinct personalities in the book, Günter Wallraff and Hans Esser, but towards the end of the book they seem to merge into one. At the beginning of *Der Aufmacher*, Wallraff still has a great distance from his alter ego Hans Esser and the ‘*Bild* system’. He describes what he experiences, for instance during the first news conference he participates in, and maintains the position of an observer, an eyewitness, who is not much involved in what is going on. It is clear to the reader that this is Günter Wallraff expressing his opinion of *Bild* and Springer. Not much later he describes the typical *Bild* reporter as “cynical ... without scruples” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 47) and admits to having qualms about what he is doing, that is, distorting facts and bending the truth (Wallraff, 1982, p. 48). To him the fact that he “[a] real *Bild* reporter would not have had an internal justification for wearing somebody else down for *Bild*” seems to indicate that he feels morally superior to his colleagues, who do not have his values and moral strength.

As it turns out, this strength is soon to be tested. In the role of Hans Esser, Wallraff finds himself in situations where he is under pressure to “prove himself” and to “supply a story” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 64), and where he has to act against his beliefs. His language becomes very emotional and remorseful as he describes an incident where he was ordered to obtain the photograph of a child struck dead by lightning. He “feels like

an intruder” asking the parents “still paralysed with shock and grief” for a photograph. With hindsight at the time he was writing the book, Wallraff has to admit that “I do not understand any more how I had something to do with this ... it was a degrading situation ... I cannot comprehend how I could have acted so much against my feelings and could function this way” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 65).

Near the end of his time at *Bild*, Wallraff states that he is becoming a stranger to himself (Wallraff, 1982, p. 211). He “is no longer able to seriously listen to friends”, he is always looking for a story. “Everything is immediately ordered under the aspect of useability for *Bild*. ... Everything in my environment is selected for immediate exploitation by *Bild*. ... I hear myself talk like an experienced and shrewd *Bild* writer” (ibid.). *Bild* has started to creep into his private life and Wallraff’s girlfriend coined the phrase “Typically Esser! If Wallraff could see this now, he would be embarrassed about it” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 215). Wallraff has to admit that he has adjusted to *Bild* at a frightening pace in a very short time (Wallraff, 1982, p. 216). One of Wallraff’s final statements in the book, before he was found out, is:

At the beginning I thought that I would get on top of *Bild*, but more and more often I fear that it will get on top of me... I realize how the apparatus absorbs me ... weakens and turns me around. It is as if I wanted to write a reportage about drug abuse and have – just to know what I am writing about – injected myself. (Wallraff, 1982, p. 219)

Here, Wallraff takes up the characterization of *Bild* as an addictive paper. The above statement sounds as if Wallraff had underestimated *Bild*’s power, but he also uses it to support his opinion that the tabloid is dangerous: If someone as strong as Wallraff can be “turned around” it must be extremely manipulative.

The very emotional and vivid manner in which Wallraff describes changes to his personality serves to illustrate the manipulative power that the Springer publishing house exerts through its tabloid on both its readers and its staff, but it also contributes to the authentic character of his account. His critics argued that unlike his colleagues at *Bild*, whose livelihood depended on their work, Wallraff could get out of his role at any time. This criticism is, no doubt, justified, but while Wallraff writing as Wallraff tends to rant, polemicise, and confront the reader with his political convictions time and again, his alter ego Hans Esser uses an emotional and very personal style to describe to the reader what it is like to be a *Bild* reporter. At the same time, he also describes the dilemma of wanting to disclose the *Bild* practices and having to be part of it, that is, going against his convictions in order to do so. Wallraff needs Hans Esser and his style

to keep the book in a certain balance. It is this gradual merging of the two personalities and the vivid and emotional account of this process, where Hans Esser seems to take over, which make for a high degree of authenticity.

7.3.7 Springer vs Wallraff

Günter Wallraff's time as a *Bild* reporter ended in the afternoon of 22 July 1977, when a friend called him to let him know that a magazine had printed the news that he worked at the Hanover editorial office of *Bild* under the pseudonym Hans Esser. The Springer publishing house had learnt about this and Wallraff had to stop his undercover investigation (Wallraff, 1982, p. 220).

Wallraff's exposure immediately led to a *Bild* article published on 23 July 1977, the day after Wallraff left the editorial office in Hanover. In the article, he is called an "underground communist ... who sometimes liked a glass of whiskey in the morning ... could not look anybody in the eye ... and slept in a commune" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 222). What ensued was a series of David vs Goliath law suits as well as a witch-hunt. Wallraff's publisher, Reinhold Neven du Mont, called it a "disproportion between the mass circulation paper *Bild*, Europe's largest public opinion power ... [and] Günter Wallraff, a non-partisan writer, who can carry his means of production in a holdall" (Neven Du Mont, cited in Wallraff, 1982, p. 223). Non-partisan here is meant in the sense that Günter Wallraff is not a member of any of the German political parties. While this may be correct, Wallraff nonetheless shows throughout the book that his political beliefs tend toward the Social Democratic Party if not further to the left. The magazine *Der Spiegel* wrote that Springer was accusing Wallraff of using methods which "ironically – belong to the repertoire of the *Bild* editorial office, which is now outraged about the intruder" ("System der Gehirnwäsche," 1977, p. 68).

Springer filed numerous injunction suits against Wallraff and the Hamburg Higher Regional Court ruled in favour of Springer in 28 of a total of 35 cases. This meant that Wallraff was no longer allowed to make certain claims about the practices at *Bild* if it involved naming people. In this context his account of a news conference plays a key part. The Hamburg Higher Regional Court prohibited Wallraff from publishing accounts of the news conference, and in its ruling the court argued that printing the minutes of a news conference presented an illegal interference with the key area of the Springer corporation and that the statements made by those who participated in the meeting were not meant to be known by the general public. Accounts of how a

newspaper article was developed were deemed confidential and should be treated as such (“Das Anstößige,” 1981, p. 48).

There are three important points to be considered in this legal matter: First, there is the question to what extent the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression stipulated in the German Constitution could be affected by judgements made by the courts. Second, there is the issue of whether information which was obtained ‘illegally’, that is, covertly, or by assuming a false identity, may be published, and third, there is the question of whether the protection of privacy is deemed more important than the disclosure of information if it is in the public interest.

As to the first issue, Frank J. Heinemann, whose article in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, a left-leaning paper, of 31.3.1978 is part of the appendix in *Der Aufmacher*, saw the ruling to be in conflict with the German Constitution. According to Article 5 of the German Constitution, “Everyone has the right ... to inform himself/herself by means of generally accessible sources” (Heinemann cited in Wallraff, 1982, pp. 260-265) and this is in conflict with the separation of the private and the public sphere.

As to the second point, that is, how information is obtained, the Hamburg Higher Regional Court followed Springer’s claim that work in editorial offices and reporters should be protected by the privacy law. The court decided that Wallraff’s way of obtaining information was illegal. In this context it is interesting to know that in earlier cases, Wallraff, who, while researching for his reportages, had assumed different personalities and had been in the possession of identity papers which were not his own, had not been found guilty of illegal activities.

In January 1981, the Springer vs Wallraff case had gone all the way to the Federal High Court. This court had to rule whether “a predominant public need for information could compensate for the penetration of the confidential sphere” (“Das Anstößige,” 1981, p. 48). In parts the court followed the earlier rulings in that information obtained by sneaking into a system could be deemed illegal and information obtained thus could not be published. In the case at hand, however, the judges “approved of the Wallraff publication of *Der Aufmacher* on the grounds of paramount aspects, that is, that it shows mistakes made by a kind of journalism in the discussion of which the general public had a great deal of interest, because of the marked manipulations of opinion [by the Springer publishing house]” (ibid.). That meant that public interest was judged to be more important than the privacy rights of a company or individuals. Interestingly enough, the main issue was not whether Wallraff’s claims were true or not, but how he had obtained the information.

On 25 January 1984, Springer's constitutional appeal was rejected by the Federal Constitutional Court, which merely reprimanded Wallraff for his account of a news conference. In all other points of Springer's appeal, the court ruled in Wallraff's favour.

These judgments left deep traces in the German press and freedom of expression legislation, as they presented the possibility of the public interest being given precedence over private and personality rights. In a majority of cases these are very different, and the privacy of a person or legal entity is seen as more important and is thus protected rather strictly in Germany. This question was much revisited after Germany's reunification in conjunction with naming former Stasi officers or informants in public. Wallraff's legal battle against Springer did not end in the 1980s – there were numerous cases to follow, but mostly the judges ruled in Wallraff's favour.

7.4. *Der Aufmacher* as literary journalism

As has become clear in the above analysis, *Der Aufmacher* is an activist book and not an unbiased report. The outstanding characteristic of Wallraff's work is that it is based on his personal experience, mostly written after he has covertly become a part of a company. In the following, I am going to look at journalistic criteria, such as research, topicality, transparency, clarity, objectivity, and originality, as well as literary criteria in order to determine whether *Der Aufmacher* can be seen as an example of literary journalism.

7.4.1 Journalistic criteria

Topicality

In the political climate of the 1970s, the Springer publishing house played a major role when it came to polarizing left- and right-wing politics. The accumulation of market and media power as well as the tabloid practices of the Springer press had been criticised by other publishers, intellectuals, and politicians. For example, German literature Nobel Prize winner Heinrich Böll's 1974 novel *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* [The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum], carries the following prologue: "The characters and action in this story are purely fictitious. Should the description of certain journalistic practices result in a resemblance to the practices of *Bild-Zeitung*, such resemblance is neither intentional, nor fortuitous, but unavoidable" (Böll, 1976, p. 5). The 1975 film adaptation by Volker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta contributed further to the

public awareness of the despicable treatment of ordinary people by the tabloid media – in Germany this being only the *Bild Zeitung*. And Wallraff's 1977 investigation showed that the "resemblance" in Böll's fictional account was indeed "unavoidable". One has thus to concede that it was of public interest to know about the practices of the tabloid *Bild*.

Research and transparency

Most of Wallraff's information for *Der Aufmacher* is first-hand and was acquired while he worked in the Hanover office of *Bild*. This includes articles that were published in *Bild* during the time Wallraff worked there, and documents that originate from the same period as well as the time after he was exposed and had to fight his court cases. As Wallraff was not only an eyewitness but also participating observer, a number of documents were procured by him. No exact source is given for the excerpts from the *Qualitative Analyse der Bild Zeitung*, published by Springer itself in 1966, meaning that it must have been publicly available at the time Wallraff wrote *Der Aufmacher*. The excerpts are presented in framed boxes placed next to Wallraff's accounts and serve to corroborate his analyses and arguments.

Once he had successfully gained access to *Bild*, he gathered material by taking notes of conversations and discussions while they happened as well as noting things down from memory after work. As he states in the introduction to *Der Aufmacher*, he changed the names of all colleagues he worked with in the Hanover office as well as of several other persons. He justified this move by saying that he did not want "to denounce the working victims of the *Bild*-system, to present them as individuals and stigmatise them for life" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 10).

Several dialogues and telephone conversations were printed verbatim, and in places where this was not the case, Wallraff indicates this. On page 178, for example, he states that the notes of the telephone conversation were "slightly shortened" and that they contained repetitions. At the same time he explains that he nonetheless includes this conversation because of the "immediate impression of how I noted it down" (Wallraff, 1982, p. 178).

One aspect of transparency is stating what the conditions of reporting are/were, meaning whether information was gathered overtly or covertly. In the case of *Der Aufmacher*, the reader knows from the start and throughout the book that the author Günter Wallraff has assumed another personality and name, Hans Esser, in order to report from the inside of the *Bild* editorial office, that is, his eyewitness status is a

covert one. He describes his working conditions in minute detail and at the same time, his ideological attitude towards *Bild* is also stated clearly from the outset. While Wallraff's method of reporting is unproblematic for the reader, it can, and in fact did, bring along legal problems and the credibility of the author can be compromised.

The texts presented in the appendix – excerpts from newspaper, articles about the lawsuits of Springer vs Wallraff, an interview, and several statements of Wallraff's supporters, that is, his publisher and the chairman of the German Journalist Union - all serve the purpose of underlining the importance and justification of Wallraff's covert actions.

In order to support his account, Wallraff also supplies copies of manuscripts to show to what extent his original texts were edited and changed. The book also includes photographs of him in the role of a *Bild* reporter, either on his own or together with people he wrote about. This can be seen as further pictorial evidence of the authenticity of Wallraff's descriptions.

Objectivity, clarity and originality

When it comes to objectivity one has to say that *Der Aufmacher* is an activist book which, by virtue of its research process, claims to be true. Although true to the facts and events, Wallraff's commentary about his experiences could never be called objective or impartial, but are always one-sided and biased. *Der Aufmacher* is definitely not an objective book. The language used is at times extremely emotional, very political and to some extent aggressive. Throughout the book, there is only one perspective, that is, Wallraff's, and fact and opinion are not at all separated. This is an aspect that needs to be treated critically, but at the same time, one has to concede that the book's emotive engagement greatly contributed to the impact of the book. Wallraff's statement that "nothing was made up and nothing was added afterwards" and that he has "partly noted down statements and dialogues directly or partly put them down in minutes taken from memory" (Wallraff, 1982, page 10) is a clear indication of his understanding of truth and objectivity. In the original 1977 version of the book, there is the addition "in the book they [the statements and dialogues] mostly appear in direct speech, even if they are not always verbatim, in order to immediately illustrate their exemplary character" ("Wallraff Urteil," 1984).

To Wallraff, the truth is his truth, and this is more important to him than objectivity. The fact that he was eyewitness to almost all he wrote about in his view underpins his claim to authenticity and reporting the truth. Objectivity in the sense of

presenting a balance of opinions does not feature in *Der Aufmacher*. Wallraff has included in the later edition of his book a comment by Eckart Spoo, at the time Federal Chairman of the German Journalist Union (DJU). The text is titled *Die Opfer müssen sich wehren* [The victims have to defend themselves], and gives an explanation of Wallraff's intentions and methods:

His [Wallraff's] intention was not to cheat Springer. He wanted to learn how Springer cheats the man in the street. In order to not be exposed, he had to play his role credibly. What he undertook, however, was more than playing the role of a Springer journalist; he had to be a real Springer journalist, had to learn to feel, think and act like his colleagues. Otherwise he could not inform us about it so authentically. The persuasive power of his report would be smaller, if he had limited himself to just describing observations made on colleagues. The evidential value of this book is, however, that Günter Wallraff speaks mainly about himself, about the methods by means of which he himself made a four-month career as a BILD journalist. (Spoo, cited in Wallraff, 1982, p. 229)

As to clarity, the book is in no way artfully written. It is a compilation of documents which at times seems rushed and haphazard, and not a carefully woven narrative. The persuasion lies in its documentary evidence rather than any literary merit.

The last criterion, originality, has been fulfilled to a certain extent, in that it does not follow the traditions of either a fiction or non-fiction account. All of the above mentioned features make for an interesting and informative reading experience, although it must be noted that Wallraff's audience – at least in the 1970s and 80s – must have held a similar political opinion to the author to appreciate the book.

7.4.2 Literary criteria

Immersion, strong personal voice, internal thoughts and feelings, and subjective evaluation of events and persons

These first two criteria are definitely fulfilled in *Der Aufmacher*. The book is mostly a first-person narration with a strong emotive engagement of the author. He was directly involved in most of the situations he describes and thus finds it easy also to immerse the reader in the events. The eyewitness reporting and strong personal voice, as mentioned earlier, lends authenticity and credibility to the accounts. This feature of credibility, however, should not be mistaken for objectivity. As I stated earlier, *Der Aufmacher* is not an objective book.

With regard to internal thoughts and feelings, Wallraff notes down many thoughts about his role as Hans Esser, his feelings are described in detail, in particular

the recurring feeling of fear. Fear right at the beginning of his investigation: “Now I am afraid, as afraid as I have only been once before: when I chained myself up in fascist Greece” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 13), and there is also the fear of being “found out” (Wallraff, 1982, p.217). At the beginning of Wallraff’s account, when he is being interviewed for the job, he records his thoughts: “I hear myself speak as if I were standing next to myself, surprised, alarmed, the whole time frightened of being recognised” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 16). A little later, as he is becoming more immersed in the role of Hans Esser, he states that he “begin[s] to feel like [he is] somebody else” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 21) and near the end of his time at *Bild*, when he feels like being locked up in the ‘*Bild* system’ he states: “When I am sent to an appointment on the spot, I feel like a prisoner on day-release” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 219).

When it comes to the subjective evaluation of events and persons, one has to emphasize that Wallraff does this throughout the book. Almost every fact reported is commented on by him. He evaluates people, for example his colleague in the Hanover office Eleonora Treitschke, whom he describes as follows: “a career-conscious, vain person, on the outside progressive-dynamic, in former times probably basically emancipated, by now completely conformist. Only her outfit is progressive these days” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 91). When he reports from the award ceremony of the Konrad-Adenauer-Prize, he uses his own political beliefs as the only reference point.

Narrative techniques

The first thing that needs to be stated is that Wallraff’s is not a polished literary style. In the *Bild* article published the day after he was exposed, it was said that “he has a talent for writing” (Wallraff, 1982, p. 222) but knowing which style is used in the tabloid, this can hardly be taken as a compliment. Wallraff’s style of jumping from topic to topic creates a kind of breathlessness and atmosphere of frantic work. This is both irritating and suspenseful. After all, he works undercover and could be found out any minute; he has to collect as much evidence as possible in the time he has.

He uses dialogue to create a vivid and at the same time authentic atmosphere. As stated earlier, these dialogues and conversations are recounted in great detail and at times have the characteristics of a play. Wallraff also quotes directly and includes excerpts, for instance, from his journal in the book. His sometimes shrill and overdrawn way of writing becomes irritating at times. The fact that he cannot seem to let information speak for itself and instead needs to make ironic or polemic comments is very much the style of the left-wing ideological writing of the 1970s and 80s.

7.5 Conclusion

Looking at the matrix of journalistic and literary features, one can concede that *Der Aufmacher* is indeed a work of literary journalism, however, a very German one, bearing in mind that the role the eyewitness plays in Germany is far more prominent than in Anglo-Saxon culture.

What can definitely be found in *Der Aufmacher* is the combination of investigative approach and personal observation and reflection. This is what makes the book so realistic. The investigative element is highly dominant, given that the book is based on an undercover investigation, and together with Wallraff's personal observations and reflections, the work conveys a high degree of authenticity, credibility and truthfulness. To some extent it is also the personal bias, which is evident throughout, that achieves this effect.

8 Case Study *Stasiland*

8.1 Introduction to the author and her work

Anna Funder (*1966) is an Australian author and documentary filmmaker, who also worked as a journalist and as a lawyer. *Stasiland*, her first book, was a great success in the English-speaking world although at first sight, “it was ... an unlikely book for Funder to write” (Kennan, 2011, n. p.). Coming as an Australian to its contested subject matter was both an advantage and disadvantage, depending on the perspective. Her account of the Stasi machinations and the political climate in the GDR was immensely interesting to those who had not experienced it or any other totalitarian regime. For former citizens of the GDR, with her not having any firsthand experience of what it was like to live in the GDR, it was seen as presumptive to write about it as a ‘foreigner’. Thus, “she was threatened during her publicity tour and ... sued by a group of former Stasi men” (ibid.). Funder recently published her second book, *All That I Am*, a novel mostly set in the 1930s that has Ernst Toller, German writer, politician and revolutionary of Jewish descent, as one of the main characters. This work of fiction won Australia’s highest literary award, the Miles Franklin Award, in 2012.

8.2 The structure of *Stasiland* and background of the book

The book *Stasiland*, which was first published in 2002, consists of 28 chapters all of which carry titles. They vary between eight and twelve pages in length. At the beginning of the book, after the table of contents, are two maps: a map of Germany 1945-1990 (Funder, 2002, p. ix) and a map of the Berlin Wall 1961-1989 (Funder, 2002, p. x). The book closes with four pages of ‘Notes on Sources’ and one and a-half pages of ‘Acknowledgements’. Altogether, the actual text of the book comprises 282 pages. This case study is based on the 2002 Australian edition.

There is a plethora of works on the Stasi, the files and the spies, and the Federal Authority for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic publishes new books every year. Thus, one might say that *Stasiland* is yet another contribution on the topic of the East German State Security Service [Stasi]. However, what is special about *Stasiland* is that it is one of the few books on this topic written by a foreigner. Another prominent example is *The File* by

Timothy Garton Ash, published in 1997, who wrote about his time as a student and journalist in the divided Germany, and his revisiting those days when reading his Stasi file (Garton Ash, 1997). Unlike Garton Ash, Anna Funder had no connection to East Germany other than having lived in West Berlin in the 1980s with the Wall an ever-present symbol of separation. She became fascinated by the Wall and what it meant for and did to the people in the Eastern part of Germany. After the publication of *Stasiland*, which won the BBC Four Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction in 2004 (Samuel Johnson Prize, 2004), Funder talked about her motivation to write the book: “I really became fascinated by this issue of extraordinary courage in so-called ordinary people – you know what it takes to resist that [the Stasi and the regime]” (Exploring *Stasiland*, 2002). Thus, unlike in *Aktenkundig*, one of the German books analysed in this chapter, *Stasiland* is not about well-known dissidents, but tells the stories of “ordinary citizens who got caught up in the web of East Germany’s state security” (Josephi & Müller, 2009, p. 67).

Interestingly, the reactions to *Stasiland* were completely different in the English-speaking world and Germany. Funder received high awards in Great Britain and Australia and the reviews ranged from positive to very enthusiastic. In contrast, the book triggered rather mixed reactions in Germany. “The reviews showed up the old division between east and west” (Josephi & Müller, 2009, p. 73), and the questions raised were, “why does an Australian have to tell us what it was like? [And] how does she arrive at her judgement?” (Grossmann, 2004, n. p.) The West German reviews were much more favourable than those in the former GDR, and it was “the foreign gaze, this looking in from the outside, which makes her book so excellent” (3sat, 2004, n. p.).

8.3 Analysis

In *Stasiland*, Funder does not only tell the stories of Stasi victims, but she also shows the other side in that she includes stories of Stasi employees and/or collaborators. Furthermore, she supplies extensive background information on the political system of the former GDR, presents historical facts and information about individuals to the reader. This information is of particular importance to the Australian and Anglo-American audience for whom the book was originally intended. *Stasiland* can also be read as a personal account of Funder’s journey into the East German past. When she sets out to explore “a country which no longer exists ... its tumbledown houses and

bewildered people” (Funder, 2002, p. 4), she seems a little naive and wide-eyed, at least to a German reader. This impression fades as the stories and plot lines develop.

The following analysis of *Stasiland* does not always go along with the chronology of the book as established by the chapters. Instead the focus will be mainly on Funder’s portrayal of the Stasi victims and the Stasi spies she interviews.

8.3.1 *Setting the scene*

The first chapter of *Stasiland*, titled “Berlin, Winter 1996”, serves as an introduction of the subject matter as well as of the author. It starts off with Funder’s account of a train journey from Berlin to Leipzig. She is hung-over and on the train she reminisces on her past and her relationship to Germany. She thinks about the “feeling she has developed for the former German Democratic Republic” (Funder, 2002, p. 4) and this leads to an account of her visit to Leipzig in 1994.

This is the point where the tense changes from the present to the past. In Leipzig, she had wanted to visit the former Stasi headquarters, the Runde Ecke [Round Corner], by then converted into a Stasi museum, “to see for myself part of the vast apparatus that had been the East German Ministry for State Security” (Funder, 2002, p. 5). Funder interrupts her account to give the reader her definition of the Stasi, “the internal army by which the government kept control. ... It was a bureaucracy metastasised through East German society” (ibid.), and to illustrate the large extent of this control: “Laid out upright and end to end, the files the Stasi kept on their countrymen and women would form a line 180 kilometres long” (ibid.). The Stasi, in other words, is a malignant tumour of huge proportions.

Her description of the Runde Ecke is very detailed and already at this early stage, her documentary filmmaker’s eye is apparent: “The building felt damp and bureaucratic” and the “vast metal-clad double doors with studs on them” make her “shrink like Alice” (Funder, 2002, p. 6).

Funder takes the reader on a tour of the museum, presents explanations about glass jars used to preserve smell samples, shows a document titled “SIGNALS FOR OBSERVATION” [capitals in the original text], and then comes to a crucial encounter. The museum’s director, Frau Hollitzer, tells Funder about Miriam Weber, “whose husband had died in a Stasi remand cell nearby” (Funder, 2002, p. 9). It is this story which triggers her subsequent research and makes her come back to Berlin in 1996. She wants to turn the “strange-second-hand tale of a woman I had never met” into a first-

hand story and thus she “set out about looking for some of the stories from this land gone wrong” (ibid.).

8.3.2 The victims or the unsung heroes

All of the people Funder talks to about their devastating experiences with the East German regime and the Stasi have a double role, so to speak. They have all been spied upon, harassed and to some extent tortured by the Stasi, which makes them victims. However, Miriam Weber, Julia Behrend, Sigrid Paul (1934 – 2011), and to some extent also Klaus Renft (1942 – 2006) not only survived, but showed extraordinary courage in resisting the system, by trying to reassemble their lives after the fall of the Wall, and not least by telling their stories to Funder and thus to the public.

Their stories encompass 13 chapters of the book and most of them run over three consecutive chapters. This gives readers the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the protagonists and leaves room for Funder’s additional explanations as well as her personal thoughts about and reaction to what she is being told.

Miriam

Miriam Weber is the first of the above mentioned group to be interviewed by Funder. According to the author, it is “the kind of lynchpin story of the book” (Lane, 2006, n. p.). Miriam’s story spans the chapters 2 to 4, “Miriam”, “Bornholmer Bridge” and “Charlie” (Funder, 2002, pp. 10-46), and they follow the chronology of events as Miriam tells them.

Funder and Miriam meet at the Leipzig railway station and to Funder it “feels like a blind date” (Funder, 2002, p. 14). The author knows from the beginning that “she [Miriam] has not told her story to a stranger before” (ibid.) and this is an interesting point. A complete stranger, an outsider or foreigner, gets intimately close to a person who has suffered from betrayal and state terrorism, and who, one is inclined to think, would no longer easily trust anyone. But, as will become evident in the course of this analysis, the fact that Funder is not in any way involved in any Stasi dealings is an important asset.

Again Funder first sets the scene and she describes Miriam Weber, “a woman in her mid-forties ... [who] has a surprisingly big nicotine-stained voice. She is so slight that the voice comes from nowhere and everywhere” (Funder, 2002, pp. 14-15). Miriam’s first sentence, “I became, officially, an Enemy of the State at sixteen. At sixteen” [*italics in the original text*] (Funder, 2002, p. 15) and Funder’s comment that “in

her voice is a combination of pride ... and disbelief” (ibid.) is followed by a short paragraph on the events of 1968 – the Prague Spring. Thus, the beginning of Miriam’s plight is pinpointed for the reader and the historical context is clarified – it was an explosive time in the Eastern Bloc countries.

When demonstrations in Leipzig were set off by the demolition of the Old University Church, the regime reacted with water-cans and arrests (ibid.). At this point the tense changes from the present to the past, and a narrator takes over saying, “Miriam and her friend Ursula thought this was not right” (ibid.). Then it is back to Miriam with a statement in direct speech, followed by two sentences from the narrator, a question from Funder and some background information. What looks like a confusing pattern when written down is a very effective stylistic tool Funder uses throughout the book. By summarising the interview parts, that is, turning them into narrative or by creating a narrator, the scenes are enriched and the voice of Miriam, for instance, becomes more pronounced as the direct speech stands out and underpins as well as intensifies the narrated parts. The explanatory passages are embedded in the narrative and thus they do not break the flow of the story, but serve as a complement and verifying element of what has been told. Funder herself tends to fade into the background and when she appears she asks questions or expresses her opinion or astonishment, or tells the reader how she feels. For instance, she thinks that two teenage girls [Miriam and her friend Ursula] expressing their protest with leaflets printed with a children’s rubber stamp set is “harmless” (Funder, 2002, p. 16). In East Germany, however, it was “a crime of sedition” as Miriam points out to her (Funder, 2002, p. 17). The chapter ends with “It was New Year’s Eve, and Miriam Weber was going over the Wall” (Funder, 2002, p. 18) and this serves as an introduction to what follows in the chapter “Bornholmer Bridge”.

The crucial and most suspenseful part of this chapter is the description of Miriam’s attempt to flee to West Germany. It is here that, once again, Funder’s filmmaker’s skills come to the fore, and the setting as well as the atmosphere is described in great detail: “Miriam could see the border installations, the cacophony of wire and cement, asphalt and sand” (Funder, 2002, p. 20). In order to explain to Funder what this looked like, “Miriam takes a piece of paper and draws ... a mess of lines” (ibid.). Miriam continues to talk about her endeavour to scale the Wall and at one point Funder stays in the present tense and reflects on what she is hearing. They both laugh at “the improbability of it, of someone barely more than a child poking around in Beatrix Potter’s garden by the Wall, watching out for Mr McGregor and his blunderbuss”

(Funder, 2002, p. 21). This image is definitely Funder's and not Miriam's and to anyone who has read the adventures of Peter Rabbit, this seems far too harmless a comparison. It does, however, offer a respite from the threatening atmosphere. At this point, Funder also shows her emotional involvement when she says about Miriam, "We both like the girl she was, and I like the woman she has become" (Funder, 2002, p. 22).

In the following, one has the impression of watching a suspenseful film, the action building up as the reader follows Miriam's steps across the various sections of the German-German border. Her thoughts and feelings are not reported by herself, but it is again the narrator, who like a voice off asks questions such as "Why didn't they come for her?" "What were they doing?" "Where were they?" (ibid.). In the end, Miriam stumbles over a trip-wire and is caught. She is taken to the Stasi headquarters in Berlin and then to Leipzig for interrogation. What remains of the chapter is taken up by the interrogations, which include sleep deprivation, and the story Miriam fabricates in order to be left alone and to get some sleep. She invents a story about someone who gave her the tip where to try and climb the wall, and she is "enjoying herself at this point. She looks at me and her face is bright" (Funder, 2002, p. 27). At this point, Funder emerges again and her ignorance of the conditions of the former GDR becomes evident again. To her, the Australian, who has never had to think about whether she could trust her fellow citizens or not, it is not unusual that the Stasi men believed Miriam's story: "What is so improbable about someone offering handy hints on wall jumping? I feel I am about to have something basic explained to me" (Funder, 2002, p. 28). Thus, Miriam explains to her that "relations between people were conditioned to the fact one or other of you could be one of *them*", that is, part of the Stasi (ibid., italics in the original). The chapter ends with Miriam being sentenced to one-and-a-half years in prison and leads straight on to chapter 4, "Charlie".

The chapter starts off with Miriam's account of her time in the women's prison Hoheneck, and what she has to tell touches Funder to the extent that she "can't stay focused on the awfulness of it all", and her mind "wanders, disobediently, to sitcoms ... the old TV series 'Prisoner', set in a women's prison" (Funder, 2002, p. 32). At the end of this part of the story, she is exhausted and tired "as though her bones have gone soft" and she wishes "the benevolent prison governess of TV land to have existed" (Funder, 2002, p. 33).

This chapter also introduces Miriam's husband, Charlie, and the centre of the story is his death in a Stasi prison remand cell and the ensuing mystery about the circumstances. To this day Miriam does not know what happened, how Charlie died and

what the Stasi covered up and why. At the same time, the reader gets a good idea of the means of pressure the Stasi exerted on those the East German citizens who did not conform to the political and social beliefs of the regime. There is far more dialogue between Miriam and Funder, and Miriam and various Stasi men who feature in the story than in the previous two chapters. Furthermore, Funder's presence is more pronounced than in the other chapters.

There is also a shift in Miriam's role. She seems determined to be no longer a victim, but to fight against the system and to find out the truth. She confronts the authorities and their representatives and most of this is presented in direct speech. When a cemetery official tells her that there won't be a "laying-out" of Charlie's body she tells the woman that "if there is no laying-out, there will be no funeral. I will call the whole thing off ... I will make the kind of ruckus you have never seen. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?" (Funder, 2002, p. 40, capitals in the original). Later, when a Stasi official asks her what she wants to do with the coffin, she answers "What do you think I want with the coffin? To take it for a Sunday stroll? I want to do with the coffin what one does with a coffin: I want to bury it" (Funder, 2002, p. 42). She does not even go to the appointments at the Stasi offices anymore. In the end, she still does not find out anything and feels that "they were playing with me like a mouse" (Funder, 2002, p. 43). In May 1980, Miriam Weber is deported from the GDR, "eleven years too late ... and six months too early" (Funder, 2002, p. 44).

The rest of the chapter is mainly dialogue between Funder and Miriam, in the present tense. Funder asks questions and reflects on Miriam's life and future: "For Miriam the past stopped when Charlie died. ... She is brave and strong and broken all at once" (ibid.). The chapter ends on a sad but to some extent positive note in that Miriam is hoping "that the puzzle women in Nuremberg find something about Charlie in all those pieces of files" (ibid.).

Julia

Julia Behrend is Funder's landlady in Berlin and she is introduced in chapter 5, "The Linoleum Place". When Funder comes back from Leipzig, feeling "beyond tired" (Funder, 2002, p. 47) Julia is in the apartment collecting some furniture she needs in her new place. It seems that she would like to talk to Funder about her trip to Leipzig, but it is put off to chapter 9, "Julia Has No Story". It is here and in the next two chapters, 10 and 11, that Julia's story is told.

The title of chapter 9 is chosen cleverly, since, as it turns out, it is more like Julia has chosen not to have a story. When Funder tells her about her ‘project’, Julia’s comment is “I don’t have any story of the Stasi, or anything like that” (Funder, 2002, p. 93). Funder has just found her once again in the apartment, collecting “old love letters” and she invites her to stay for coffee (Funder, 2002, pp. 89-90).

The description Funder renders of Julia is detailed as well as telling and it indicates to the reader that there must be a story, something hidden, covered up about to be told:

I know that under all those layers of black is a wiry body and a sharp mind, but there is something about Julia that breaks my heart. She has an honesty I have started to think of as East German, a transparent fairness with all things that leaves her so open. But it’s not that. She is a hermit crab, all soft-fleshed with friends but ready to whisk back into its shell at the slightest sign of contact. (Funder, 2002, p. 90)

This not only describes Julia, but also her story of which there are several layers to be peeled away over the next three chapters of *Stasiland*. The two women talk about harassment in the streets and drunks and homeless people in the nearby park, and Julia explains that her low tolerance for this kind of behaviour has something to do with her first boyfriend, who “was such a macho ... a *macho autentico* – he was Italian” [italics in the original], (Funder, 2002, p. 92). This, of course, was an unusual occurrence in the GDR. Julia does not elaborate, but starts a kind of crab-walk, sideways, backward, and sideways again, talking cryptically about a Lada, a Polish car brand, and two men watching her family’s home.

Then Funder takes over, talking about Julia, becoming a first-person narrator: “Julia and I were born the same year 1966”. She lets the reader know that she is “curious about her: a single woman in a single room at the top of the block, unable to go forward into her future” (Funder, 2002, pp. 94-95). They may be the same age, but their lives could not be more different. Funder has realised that there is a story, and be it out of interest for Julia or for her project, or both, she wants to know what it is.

What follows is information about Julia’s family, an “ordinary family”, her mother a “practical woman”, her father a teacher and [SED] Party member, albeit a critical one (Funder, 2002, p. 95). The text follows the pattern established in Julia’s story: narration interspersed with direct speech from Julia and explanations and further information supplied by the narrator, that is, Funder. The author’s presence and involvement become evident in statements such as “As I listen I think this [jumble of

memories] is because she has not voiced them before. But there may also be another reason, something that keeps her mind returning to which she veers away from telling” (Funder, 2002, p. 97). This also keeps the reader in suspense and he or she wants to know what happened to Julia as much as Funder does.

The next chapter properly introduces the Italian boyfriend. He is older than Julia, they see each other twice a year and he calls her once a week, “they both imagined they were being overheard” (Funder, 2002, p.99). When they are together, they are being stopped in the street, which terrifies the Italian. There is a lot of detail in this chapter, all of which is important to understand the full dimension of Julia’s story. It is a classic case of how the GDR regime dealt with people who did not conform: they were not allowed to study, they did not get a job, they did not have a future. Funder asks some questions, expresses some thoughts, and is otherwise only present as the hostess who puts candles around the kitchen. It is Julia’s story. At the end of the chapter Julia splits up with her boyfriend and Funder describes her emotional state as “more than internal emigration. It was exile” (Funder, 2002, p. 105).

The Stasi, which was present in a “white car” in chapter 9, comes into the picture rather more forcefully in the next chapter. The scene is unchanged. Julia and Funder are still sitting in the kitchen, which is now dark, except for some candlelight. Funder’s description is like scenery on stage, with the fading light indicating the different acts of the play. Julia talks about her being summoned to the Stasi offices and in detail recounts her ‘conversation’ with Major N, who at some stage starts reading out aloud Julia and her boyfriend’s letters to each other, asking Julia for the meaning of some words. It is at this point that Funder reappears thinking “of the shame I would feel sitting opposite Major So-and-So in his office with these intimate things in his fingers” (Funder, 2002, p. 109). Only a couple of sentences later, she again shares her feelings with the reader: “The hairs on my forearms stand up. ... I am outraged for her [Julia], and vaguely guilty about my relative luck in life” (ibid.). Most of what follows is either direct speech by Julia or narration. At some stage, Major N. asked Julia to become an informer, which she refused.

One point, which is important to Funder, is that this is the first time that Julia has talked about all of this in such detail – it is almost like a therapy session, which leaves both the patient and the psychiatrist exhausted, but enlightened. Julia sums this up with “at this distance I understand for the first time how bad it was what he [Major N.] did in that room” (Funder, 2002, p. 113).

Like Miriam, Julia eventually confronts the Stasi. In her case, her parents tell Major N. that they will file an official complaint about the treatment of their daughter to Erich Honecker, and “it is one of the very rare occasions when the bluff was called and someone ‘won’ against the Firm [Stasi]” (Funder, 2002, p. 117). Shortly after this, Julia gets a job.

Julia’s story is not quite over with the fall of the Wall in October 1989. In chapter 14, *The Worse You Feel*, Funder has “invited her for a meal, but we both know that there is more of her story to tell” (Funder, 2002, p. 140). The scene is described in great detail again, it is like a film set, and then Julia drops the bomb. She tells Funder that she was raped, “that happened to me just after the Wall fell” (Funder, 2002, p. 141). Funder’s reaction to this is strong: “I am cold and sober [they had been drinking beer] and scared of what I am about to hear” (ibid.). Pandora’s box comes to mind – once opened, it cannot be closed again and its contents are not what it was expected to be. The atmosphere of the scene is therapeutic and purging, the two women have become quite close by now, and Funder is increasingly touched emotionally by what she learns. As Julia leaves, she puts into words what the purpose of Funder’s book should be: “For anyone to understand a regime like the GDR, the stories of ordinary people must be told. Not just the activists or famous writers. ... You have to look at how normal people manage with such things in their pasts” (Funder, 2002, p. 144).

Frau Paul

The story of Sigrid Paul (1934-2011) is told in the chapters 21 to 23, “Frau Paul”, “The Deal” and “Hohenschönhausen”. Funder starts off with “I know very little about this woman. The guide at Stasi HQ was so adamant I needed to speak with her that I just called and made a time” (Funder, 2002, p. 204). Frau Paul is introduced by means of a detailed description, the same goes for her living room and the food she offers. In this opening scene the reader is also given the information that the conversation is going to be taped. Frau Paul has “written a short biographical note” so as not to “lose track” (Funder, 2002, p. 205). The title of this note is “The Wall Went Straight through My Heart”, a clear indication of what follows: another sad and disturbing example of how the GDR regime terrorised its citizens.

Then Sigrid Paul takes over as narrator. It is 1961, the Wall has not yet been built and Sigrid Paul gives birth to her first child, Torsten, who needs medical treatment urgently. He is rushed off to a hospital in the western part of Berlin and then later back to East Berlin. When on 13 August 1961 there is suddenly a Wall going through the

city, Sigrid and Hartmut Rührdanz [Frau Paul's married name] are confronted with a great dilemma. The medication their son needs is only available in the west and they are no longer allowed to go there. The East German hospital cannot offer sufficient treatment and thus Torsten is taken back to the hospital in West Berlin (Funder, 2002, pp. 205-208). The couple decides to "attempt illegally to leave the territory of the GDR" (Funder, 2002, p. 208). As this is told, Frau Paul bursts several times into tears. Funder does not 'appear' at all, direct speech comes from Frau Paul only.

Sigrid Paul's characterisation of herself is like a confirmation of what Julia Behrend said: "I am not your classical resistance fighter. ... I was not even in the opposition. To this day I am not a member of a political party. And I am not a criminal" (Funder, 2002, p. 208). Thus, she is yet another ordinary person who suffered from the paranoia of an undemocratic regime. What follows is a long explanation of the dimension of the Wall and the border zone as well as of the possibilities of escaping (Funder, 2002, p. 209). A detailed report of the actual escape plan through a tunnel and the outcome of the undertaking – the Rührdanzes decide to stay in the east – is found on pages 208-217. This, however, is only the beginning of the story, which continues in chapter 22, 'The Deal'.

Sigrid Paul is arrested by the Stasi, interrogated for many hours and then "they offered [her] the deal" (Funder, 2002, p. 218). She will be allowed to see her son if she betrays the son of some acquaintances, Michael Hinze, who lives in West Berlin and is involved in smuggling people out of the GDR (Funder, 2002, p. 219). At this point the hint Funder placed earlier becomes clear and makes sense. On page 208, Frau Paul said: "In the end it was RIAS [Radio im Amerikanischen Sektor / American Sector Radio] that saved me". When put under pressure by the Stasi interrogator, she remembers the West German journalist Karl Wilhelm Fricke, who was anaesthetised by an agent couple in West Berlin on 1 April 1955 and taken to East Berlin. After 15 months in Hohenschönhausen, he spent the years until 1959 in the prison Bautzen II [near the Polish border] in solitary confinement. Fricke's 'crime' was critical reporting about injustices committed in the GDR and most probably also his research into Erich Mielke's involvement in a double murder committed in 1931. Mielke personally signed the arrest warrant for Fricke (Bernhard, 2009, n. p.). Immediately after his release, Fricke reported about what had happened to him in a broadcast on RIAS, and Sigrid Paul must have heard this programme. As soon as she remembers Fricke's case, she knows that she was "to be used as bait in a trap to kidnap Michael" (Funder, 2002, p. 220). What sounds like a spy story invented by John Le Carré seems to have been

common practice in the GDR. Frau Paul refuses to collaborate and, like her husband, is subsequently sentenced to four years of hard labour.

So far Funder has largely kept to the pattern she applied in Miriam's and Julia's stories: direct speech, narration, explanation. Now there is a new element. She speaks to witnesses, to people who were directly involved in Frau Paul's case. There are Werner Coch, a student who was also going to flee through the tunnel (Funder, 2002, p. 210), Michael Hinze, who Frau Paul did not betray, and Torsten, her son. This, for one, serves as a verification of what Frau Paul has told her, but there is another, even more important purpose. While Sigrid Paul "does not picture herself as a hero, or dissident ... but sees herself as a criminal" – after all she broke the law in her country – to Michael Hinze she is a "very courageous woman"; he has "a great deal of respect for her", and "he is grateful to her" (Funder, 2002, pp. 228-229). Her son Torsten goes even further than that when he says: "I have never looked at my parents and thought that they made the wrong decision ... or look at them like the Stasi did, as criminals ... – quite the opposite; I admire them for what they did" (Funder, 2002, pp. 231-232). It is this tragically different and wrong perception Sigrid Paul has of herself, which is heartbreaking, and as Funder says "the sorriest thing; that the picture she has of herself is one that the Stasi made for her" (Funder, 2002, p. 229).

At the same time, it also indicates very clearly that the end of the GDR is not automatically the end of the Stasi, or puts an end to the victims' suffering and traumas. This will also be shown in greater detail in the analysis of the chapters dealing with the former Stasi men Funder interviewed.

8.3.3 The Stasi System

Herr Winz, Herr Christian, Herr Bock, Herr Bohnsack and Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler
After having heard Miriam's story, Funder starts thinking "about Stasi men" (Funder, 2002, p. 53). She is "curious about what it must have been like to be on the inside of the Firm, and then to have that world and your place in it disappear" (Funder, 2002, p. 53). As it is probably easier to find people like Miriam, Julia, and Sigrid Paul than spies, collaborators and officers, Funder places an advertisement in the Potsdam paper. She guarantees "anonymity and discretion" and states that everything is going to be published "in English" (ibid.).

Prior to her first interview with a Stasi man, Funder visits the former Stasi headquarters in Normannenstrasse, Berlin, to get "a sense of the man who ran the place

before meeting some of his underlings face to face” (Funder, 2002, p. 56). Of course, this way, she can also supply the necessary background information to the reader about Erich Mielke, “whose name has now come to mean Stasi” (ibid.) and the apparatus he headed.

Funder provides a long biographical part on Mielke and a shorter one on Erich Honecker. She also describes the museum in great detail and introduces a group of West German visitors, “chatty elderly people” wearing “bright colours and expensive fabrics” who “have come to have a look at what would have happened to them had they been born or stayed further east” (Funder, 2002, pp. 57-58). There is a tour guide and Funder listens to what she tells the group and gives a summary of the events of 1989 when the GDR ceased to exist. She continues her tour in the next chapter 7, “The Smell of Old Men”, and by now “the group of West Germans has become tighter. The quiet jokes between the men, the looks between the wives” (Funder, 2002, p. 68). In the end they leave “not even muttering among themselves anymore” and this way Funder has conveyed to the reader how oppressive the atmosphere of the museum and how terrible the explanations of the guide must have been without having had to describe everything in detail herself. Before she leaves, she has a look at Erich Mielke’s “quarters”, watches a video and chats to a cleaning lady, who is still trying to get rid of the “smell of old men” which pervades the building (Funder, 2002, p. 75).

The first Stasi man Funder meets is Herr Winz, who “wants to play spy games, seven year after the fall of the Wall” by giving her conspiratorial instructions on when and where to meet him (Funder, 2002, p. 81). In her typical style, Funder gives a comprehensive description of the man who “is disguised as a westerner” (ibid.). The encounter is mostly presented as a dialogue, and here and there Funder sprinkles in some memories and thoughts. It turns out that Herr Winz is a member of the *Insiderkomitee*, now called “Society for the Protection of Civil Rights and the Dignity of Man” (Funder, 2002, p. 84). In view of what the Stasi did to people and how little they cared about anyone’s dignity, this name is utterly cynical. According to Winz, this group of former Stasi employees tries “to represent an objective view of history ... to combat the lies and the misrepresentation in the western media” (ibid.). He does not answer Funder’s question about the actions of the committee against “those working to uncover what the Stasi did to people”, actions of which she also gives some drastic examples (ibid.). It is noteworthy that Funder was later sued by a member of the *Insiderkomitee* and her German publisher had to delete these details in several editions of *Stasiland* (Lane, 2006, n. p.).

Funder portrays Herr Winz as an incorrigible Stasi man, who is still enthusiastic about the “masterful work of counter-espionage” he did and who talks about “the beauties of socialist theory” instead of answering Funder’s questions. At some point she realises that the more he talks the clearer it becomes that he is “undercover, waiting for the Second Coming of socialism” (Funder, 2002, p. 86). Knowing that Stasi collaborators and employees are trained in persuasion and deception techniques one could also speculate that Herr Winz is throwing smoke bombs to discourage Funder from digging any deeper.

The next interview partner is Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler (1918-2001), “a one-man institution and the most hated face of the regime” (Funder, 2002, p. 121). Thus, unlike Herr Winz, von Schnitzler is well known to East and West Germans. Again Funder familiarises herself with the background of her ‘target’ and visits the archive of programmes broadcast in the GDR, where she watches tapes of von Schnitzler’s programme “Der Schwarze Kanal” [The Black Channel], whose main objective it was to demonise West German television. It was a “hygiene operation” (Funder, 2002, p. 124), an “antidote for western television” (Funder, 2002, p. 127). Funder is particularly fascinated by a programme about two people who were shot when attempting to flee over the Wall (Funder, 2002, p. 124). Von Schnitzler argued that the GDR had to be protected and that it is thus “humane” to shoot and kill people who cross the border without permission, that is, “he who puts himself in danger will die” (Funder, 2002, p.125). This attitude is anathema to democratic thinking and Funder wants “urgently to meet him and see what he thinks now that the bulwark is down and his world is gone” (ibid.).

When she meets von Schnitzler, she sees “a man with square glasses and a carefully contoured beard” (Funder, 2002, p. 129). He is 79 years old at the time of their meeting. Already at the beginning of the interview, Funder realises that “this is not going to be easy” (Funder, 2002, p. 130). Von Schnitzler may be old, but he is still headstrong and interrupts her straight away to steer the interview into the direction he wants it to go. He “spent his career excerpting and critiquing western television and he will not have his life excerpted by me” (Funder, 2002, p. 131). It becomes clear that he is a skilful demagogue and with his “practised authoritarian speech rhythm with occasional startling emphases” (ibid.) he is seeking to keep control. This works at first, and Funder depicts von Schnitzler as an aggressive, ranting, and somewhat mad person. However, as the interview continues, Funder gains some ground and she proves to be very well-prepared and knowledgeable. She comes back to the programme about the

shootings at the German-German border and quotes von Schnitzler back to himself. Funder is “apprehensive”, a little afraid of his reaction, but his reaction is “so offhand” that she feels her “apprehension being replaced with something more business-like” (Funder, 2002, p. 133), and indicates to the reader that she is not going to be intimidated.

As the interview proceeds Funder depicts it as becoming more and more mad. Von Schnitzler throws tantrums “engineered to frighten [her]” (Funder, 2002, p. 132), he becomes “more and more agitated”, he is “incandescent with rage” when he talks about the West German television (ibid.). The way Funder describes him as the “true believer” (Funder, 2002, p. 135) who is now “living among the enemy” (Funder, 2002, p. 137), von Schnitzler comes across as a ranting old man who does not want to acknowledge that his world has disappeared and that he is no longer calling the shots. Since much of the text is in direct speech, the scenes are vivid and the reader feels Funder’s frustration at von Schnitzler’s evasiveness and refusal to answer her questions. At the same time one hopes that she will find a way to win an argument. She keeps asking questions until at some point “he is puffing and cross, and ... finally stuck” (Funder, 2002, p. 138). This is the end of the interview: “This ... conversation ... is ... now ... over!” (ibid., omissions in the original). The reader is exhausted at the end of the chapter and is left with the insight that von Schnitzler truly believed that the GDR was the better Germany, that socialism was superior to capitalism and that everything that was done was right.

Compared to Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler, Herr Christian, another Stasi man Funder meets and interviews, seems relatively harmless. He is a man in “his mid-forties, with a big crooked smile, small and sparkly eyes” (Funder, 2002, p. 149). He takes her on a tour through Potsdam and is “chatty and at ease” (Funder, 2002, p. 150). Herr Christian is obviously proud of his Stasi work, which he enjoyed. Like many others he “was never very ideological” and has “always had an acute sense of duty to obey the law” Funder, 2002, (p. 150). This is supposed to explain why he “hunted out cars which might have stowaway East Germans in them trying to escape” (Funder, 2002, p. 153): He “thought that what they were doing was wrong” (ibid.). As far as Herr Christian is concerned, Stasi work was fun. He makes it sound like child’s play: “I got to choose a disguise. ... I really liked being a Western tourist because the clothes were much better quality” (Funder, 2002, p. 154). Once again this makes the Stasi men sound like a harmless bunch of people, who like children, liked to disguise themselves. In addition, everything they did was within the law.

When asked what kind of job he is doing now, Herr Christian becomes a little self-conscious. He works as a private detective, that is, he is “pretty much doing the same job as [he] did back then” – thus, Stasi work was detective work and there is nothing wrong with that, is there? At the point where he claims that he “doesn’t do any marriage work” because it is “beneath his dignity” (Funder, 2002, p. 152), one does not know whether to laugh or to cry. This is such a strange and distorted perception of what is right and what is wrong, and what ‘dignity’ means in the context of spying on fellow citizens.

Funder’s next interview partner, Herr Bock, is a theorist. A former “professor at the training academy of the Ministry [for State Security]” he taught “Spezialdisziplin” [Special Discipline], which was the science of recruiting informers (Funder, 2002, p. 195). In his living room, which is “overwhelmingly beige and brown” (Funder, 2002, p. 196), Bock lectures Funder in the structure of the Ministry for State Security and she “takes notes like a student” (Funder, 2002, p. 197). Large parts of the account read like a textbook, there are the different departments in the Ministry and each of them engaged in different working methods. Funder writes it all down. Herr Bock picks out the method “Operational Control of Persons (Surveillance)” (Funder, 2002, p. 198) and Funder asks him what this means so that she can get a detailed list of the “allowable means and methods” (Funder, 2002, p. 199). As with Winz and Christian, for Bock the people under surveillance “were enemies” and Funder comments on this irony: “This was perfect dictator-logic: We investigate you, therefore you are an enemy” (ibid.). As the interview proceeds, Funder’s questions become more specific, she wants to know, for instance, which qualities an informer needed to have. According to Bock, an informer had to be adaptable, have a stable character and, above all, be “honest, faithful, and trustworthy” (Funder, 2002, p. 200). Needless to say that Funder’s reaction as well as the reader’s is one of astonishment. Responding to Funder’s wide eyes, Bock immediately qualifies this to “only toward the ministry, of course ... we weren’t interested if he betrayed anyone else” (ibid.). One important statement, if not the most important one, in this interview is that “every informer knew exactly what he or she was doing” (Funder, 2002, p. 203).

Like Christian and many others, Bock has found a new job in the new Germany and is now working as a “business adviser” mediating between East Germans and West German companies, which provokes Funder to think “Terrific. Here he is once more getting the trust of his people [East Germans] and selling them cheap” (Funder, 2002, p. 202).

The chapter on Herr Bohnsack – chapter 24 – is written like a spy story, and he is “the only Stasi man I have met who outed himself” (Funder, 2002, p. 236). Bohnsack actually did this before he could be outed by others. He told everything to the political weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* and to his former colleagues he is now a traitor. Bohnsack “worked in one of the most secret divisions of the overseas spy service, the *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* [Head Office Reconnaissance] [italics in the original], in Division X, responsible for “disinformation and psychological warfare against the West” (ibid.). He and his division were involved in all major political scandals involving spies in West Germany and thus he held a high rank in the Stasi. As Funder explains, the members of the HVA [Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung] “always saw themselves as a breed apart” (ibid.).

Funder’s great achievement in these meetings is that with hardly any intervention in the form of opinions voiced in front of her interview partners and by well chosen questions, the Stasi men are not all wary and are inclined to give authentic and open statements. There is no great difference between the well-known persons such as von Schnitzler and Bohnsack, and the no-name Stasi officers in that they all try to justify their actions at some point, but what becomes very clear is that they do not seem to have any understanding that what they did was wrong. Their actions were covered by GDR laws and ideology and thus, they did the right thing.

Funder gives the necessary background information and then it is Bohnsack, who takes centre stage. He talks about his Stasi division, his role, and about the events of autumn 1989. When the demonstrations became larger and larger and the end of the GDR approached rapidly, “generals ... were simulating a war situation” and “the highly intelligent specialists ... were all reduced to playing soldiers” (Funder, 2002, p. 239). Bohnsack’s description of the situation is quite dramatic, but the way it is presented in the book, it seems like an act he is putting on. In September 1989 Bohnsack first shredded and then burnt as many files as he could, in order to “stop [them] getting into the wrong hands” (Funder, 2002, p. 241). According to him, his motive was to cover the “western agents he ran”, but it can be assumed that he wanted to destroy all evidence which incriminated him.

After the fall of the Wall he finds himself “fallen between two stools” (Funder, 2002, p. 243): he is insulted by his fellow citizens for having been a Stasi employee and threatened by his former Stasi colleagues for having outed himself. The way Funder describes him, the former Stasi officer who rubbed shoulders with the important people, who is now sitting in his local pub, drinking beer and spirits, illustrates his fall from a

great height. While Funder does not gloat over his fate, she portrays him in a way that the reader does not feel sorry for him. The fact that he does not even feel that what he did was wrong is illustrated in an interview with Bojan Pancevski for *The Telegraph*, where Bohnsack claimed that "We had our people in top places in the West. We did our job just like any other secret service. True, we worked for a totalitarian regime, but we served our country - the only one we had. I worked in foreign espionage and had nothing to do with persecuting people at home" (Pancevski, 2007, n. p).

Hagen Koch – perpetrator cum victim

The fact that there were also people in the former GDR who were Stasi officers and yet victim at the same time, is illustrated by the story of Hagen Koch (*1940). Funder gives him three chapters, which is as many as she generally allocates to victims.

In his own words, Koch defines his role as, "For the Stasi I am a traitor, for the victims a perpetrator, for the Wessis [East German name for the West Germans] a know-all" (Michel, 2001, n.p.). When a colleague points Funder in the direction of Koch (Funder, 2002, p. 120), Koch is already well-known and much has been written about him since. He is famous as the "man who drew the line" and as "Honecker's personal cartographer ... [who] was redrawing the limits of the free world" (Funder, 2002, p. 155). In an article in *The Guardian*, Helen Pidd writes about him: "After the wall fell in 1989, Koch became one of the few Stasi officers to talk openly about his part in creating the hated barrier. He created an archive in his East Berlin flat where he welcomed visitors including the Queen of Sweden and the artist Christo" (Pidd, 2011, n.p.). In chapter 16, the first of three chapters devoted to him, Koch wants to explain to Funder why he joined the Stasi and he starts with his childhood, because "without understanding my childhood, you can't see why anyone would want to join the Stasi" (Funder, 2002, p. 156). So what can be found here is a detailed and lengthy explanation of Koch about the time from the end of World War II and the beginnings of the GDR. Funder is somewhat impatient as her objective is different from Koch's. She wants to know about the "process of dealing with that decision [joining the Stasi] now that it is all over" (Funder, 2002, p. 157). She would like to get to the story of how he drew the line, but she has to bear with him and listen to the detailed account of his childhood and the story of his father Heinz Koch. It soon becomes clear that Koch enjoys being interviewed: He is "more than comfortable with the tiny microphone on my tape recorder" (Funder, 2002, p. 156).

Hagen Koch became the man who drew the line, that is, the course of the Wall, which as Funder states, became his “life’s obsession” (Funder, 2002, p. 172). As far as Koch himself is concerned, “he is the only person alive who can represent, in his documents and photocopies and photographs, the Wall from the eastern side” (ibid.). The story of Hagen Koch, the Stasi victim is told in the next two chapters. His father Heinz finds “his biological father, who lived in Holland” and they meet in East Germany. Hagen the Stasi man is supposed to disclose every detail of his life and when he fails to tell his superiors about his grandfather’s visit, his father loses his job. Hagen hands in his “letter of resignation and” and is arrested shortly afterwards. (Funder, 2002, p. 173). He tells Funder about what happened to him in great detail and her reactions are surprise, and “mild physical shock” (Funder, 2002, p. 174). Koch’s narration takes up most of chapters 16, 17 and 18, but these chapters are also about Funder’s ideas and beliefs. She contrasts her experiences with democracy and freedom with the ideologies of Socialism and Communism. She also gives the reader a great amount of historical background information, which helps to understand and interpret Hagen Koch’s account.

At the end of the chapter, Funder makes a connection to Miriam’s story. She uses “the Stasi diagrams and photographs of the ‘border installations’ at Bornholmer Strasse” (Funder, 2002, p. 181) to retrace Miriam’s steps and to find the spot where she tries to get across the border to West Germany. By comparing Miriam’s sketch with Koch’s documents, she finds the place and tries to put herself into Miriam’s position. Funder is emotionally involved, but at the same time she is a journalist and filmmaker verifying what she has been told, inspecting the location so-to-speak.

8.3.4 Coming full circle

Chapters 25 to 28 can be called the closing chapters of the book. At the end of chapter 24 Funder returns to Australia and in chapter 25 comes back to Berlin. Nearly three years lie between the two events. In this last part of the book, Funder attends to unfinished business and ties up loose ends. She gets her old apartment back and starts contacting some of the people she interviewed. The opening scene is in stark contrast to the beginning of the book when it was winter. Now, “Berlin is green, a perfumed city” and Funder realises that she has “never been here in full spring”. Winter greys and browns have been replaced by “lush light green”. This is also a signal to the reader that what follows is not going to be as horrific and difficult as what was told before. In the first of the closing chapters, “Berlin, Spring 2000” (Funder, 2002, pp. 245-252), Funder

reacquaints herself with the location and finds her position. Some time has passed since she was last in Germany and one of the main topics of conversation is that now everything is better than it was in the past (Funder, 2002, p. 251). This feeling was shared by many East Germans, although many had lost their jobs and had to come to terms with higher prices, rents and medical costs after the reunification.

In chapter 26, “The Wall”, Funder catches up with Frau Paul, by chance meets Hagen Koch in the new museum in Bernauerstrasse, which she calls “a sanitised Disney version; ... history airbrushed for effect”, and thinks about Miriam and Julia. All of these people’s lives were shaped by the Wall, and for Funder crucial questions are whether they will let it go “or will it let them go” (Funder, 2002, p. 257). The Wall has by now become a tourist attraction, small pieces of the concrete “anti-fascist protective measure” (Funder, 2002, p. 171) are sold in plastic bags. This feels disrespectful and in bad taste knowing that so many people suffered and even died because of the Wall. Putting the two things next to each other, Funder achieves a feeling of disgust in the reader.

In chapter 27, “Puzzlers”, Funder goes to Nuremberg, where she wants to visit the women engaged in painstakingly piecing together the shredded Stasi documents. Her thoughts go back to the time when she first started thinking about the book and wondered about the “puzzle women” (Funder, 2002, p. 12). Although she is interested in the work of the “Stasi File Authority – Project Reconstruction”, she ultimately wants to help Miriam find the truth about what happened to Charlie (Funder, 2002, p. 44). For Funder, the place is “the focus of Miriam’s hopes” (Funder, 2002, p. 263) and she would like it to concur with her imaginings:

I want there to be stainless steel benches and people wearing hair nets and white cloth gloves. I want security guards on the entrances and cameras in the workrooms. I want the completed puzzle pages to be scanned into computers, correlated to the files they belong to and for the people they affect to be called up by sensitive, trained personnel and informed about the new links in their lives. I want them to find out what happened to Charlie Weber. (ibid.)

At this point, the reader already knows that none or hardly any of what Funder wants is likely to happen, at least not as quickly as she thinks it should. To express the impossibility of this to become true, she quotes from a memo given to her by the director of the Nuremberg/Zirndorf Stasi File Authority, Herr Raillard. According to his calculations, “to reconstruct everything it would take 40 workers 375 years” (Funder, 2002, p. 268). Funder talks to the workers in the reconstruction department, most of

whom are aware of the importance of their work. Trying to piece the torn files back together “gives those affected an insight into their own lives” (Funder, 2002, p. 266). Funder asks questions, but mostly lets their statements speak for themselves.

The final chapter, titled *Miriam and Charlie* takes Funder back to where it all started. She is on the train to Berlin and spontaneously gets off in Leipzig. Once again, the atmosphere is in stark contrast to the beginning of the book. Then it was snowing, it was cold, and now “it’s morning, the air is still with a silken warmth”. The buildings then were “cold grey” (Funder, 2002, p. 122), “covered in grey sprayed-on concrete”, basically, all of East Germany is grey: “grey buildings, grey earth, grey birds, grey trees” (Funder, 2002, p. 3), but now the facades are painted in “sun-yellow and dusky pink” (Funder, 2002, p. 270).

Funder visits another museum, the Contemporary History Forum Leipzig, which has “terrazzo flooring and expensive fittings”. She does not like the place and is “annoyed that this past can look so tawdry and so safe” (Funder, 2002, p. 271). As far as she is concerned, the shiny and new museum does not do justice to its exhibits, after all, it is not an art museum. When she meets Miriam, she learns that some of the men running the radio station where she works are former Stasi informers, thus “the old cadre is back in power” (Funder, 2002, p. 275). During her time with Miriam she also realised why she disliked the new museum: “Things have been put behind glass, but they are not over yet” (Funder, 2002, p. 276).

This is true for Funder’s book as well. Although she returns to Berlin, arrives back in her apartment after a walk through the park, which is alive with people, “sunbathers loll on the grass ... and children spin on swings and roundabouts” (Funder, 2002, p. 282), it is clear to the reader that the Stasi chapter is not yet finished, that there are many stories still to be told, and, last but not least, that many of the former Stasi employees and collaborators have not been brought to justice yet. In an article in *The Telegraph*, Bojan Pancevski quotes Hubertus Knabe as follows: “They live in a world parallel to ours. They have their own websites, their own publishing house, and their own monthly papers. They devise ways to disseminate their version of history, portraying themselves as decent people who only did their jobs” (Pancevski, 2007, n. p.). The way Funder ends the book, however, leaves some room for optimism.

8.4 *Stasiland* as literary journalism

No doubt, the Anglo-Saxon tradition brings about more works of literary journalism than the German one. Anna Funder's *Stasiland* has been categorised as literary journalism, as non-fiction with a "fresh prose style" (Garner, in Funder, 2002, n. p.), and a "perfect mix of compassion and distance" (Lappin, in Funder, 2002, n. p.). In the following, *Stasiland* is checked against the journalistic and literary criteria, not least so that the differences between Funder's book and *Aktenkundig* and *Der Aufmacher* can be shown.

8.4.1 Journalistic criteria

Topicality

Like *Aktenkundig*, *Stasiland* covers a controversial and painful chapter in German history. Four years before Anna Funder went to East Germany to research her book, the Stasi files had been made available and both victims and perpetrators were out in the open. While *Aktenkundig* dealt with the more prominent and well known dissidents, *Stasiland* offers a different perspective. The victims of the Stasi presented in Funder's book are what she calls "ordinary people" and thus their stories were not published in political magazines or broadcast on television. These people were not trained to write in a style ready for publication, they did not even feel special or heroic in any way. By giving them a voice, Funder could tell a large readership about the abysses of daily life in the former GDR and the machinations of the Stasi. *Stasiland's* topicality is further enhanced by the fact that Anna Funder is Australian, meaning an 'Ausländer', an outsider, who grew up in a free, democratic and egalitarian country. It is her view from the outside which adds valuable elements to the topic. Originally meant for an English-speaking audience, *Stasiland* has been translated into many languages and has, of course, also been published in Germany. The fact that Funder was sued by former Stasi employees for publishing information about their strategies of intimidating people who disclose how they operated and how they destroyed lives, only contributes further to the aspect of topicality. The German media laws are making it "more and more difficult for the media in Germany to report about alleged Stasi contacts with politicians and other individuals in the public eye" and "German courts place privacy and personal rights [*Persönlichkeitsrechte*] above the right of free speech" (Josephi & Müller, 2009, p. 71). In this context it is important to know that the "German press codex, in article eight, erects a far higher protective wall around privacy than is the case in Australia and more

broadly in the Anglo-American world” (Josephi & Müller, 2009, p. 71), which explains why a book like *Stasiland* could be conceived in Australia but not in Germany.

Research and transparency

A lot of the information given by the author is first-hand. Funder travelled through East Germany and, for example, visited the Stasi museums in Berlin and Leipzig. The impressions she shares with the reader are all her own. When, for instance, Frau Paul tells her about a tunnel in one of the basements in Brunnenstrasse, she investigates and describes the street, the surroundings and the building itself in detail (Funder, 2002, pp. 214-215). She looks in vain for the tunnel and later finds out from a Stasi document presented to her by Frau Paul, that “its outlet had been under our feet at Brunnenstrasse, and not in the wall” (Funder, 2002, p. 216). She thus verifies the information given to her. There are transcripts of documents she found in exhibitions (Funder, 2002, p. 7; p. 62). In some cases she quotes verbatim from Stasi files which were made available to her by her interview partners (Funder, 2002, p. 216). Apart from this she conducted extensive research into the history of the GDR and consulted publications, both in English and in German, to corroborate her claims and give the reader – especially the non-German reader – sufficient historical context. She used interviews and personal conversations to obtain information, and it can be assumed that most of these were taped and subsequently transcribed. There are several mentions of this practice in *Stasiland* (Funder, 2002, p. 156; p. 205). She also took extensive notes and in interviews after the publication of her book, Funder gave detailed insights into her working methods: “In terms of the actual interviews, I taped them all. Some people refused to be taped. ... including the second one with Julia ... it started out like a more personal conversation” (Exploring Stasiland, 2002, n. p.). Here Funder took notes and later used her tape recorder.

As far as transparency is concerned, the conditions of reporting are made clear to the reader. The Stasi men Funder interviewed responded to an advertisement she placed in a newspaper, and they voluntarily answered her questions and supplied information. One might say that to some extent they were deceived as to the language their accounts would be published in. Based on Funder’s statement that the book would be written in English, they might have spoken more freely. The risk of exposure simply seemed smaller than in a German publication. The fact that the book was eventually translated into German led to the above-mentioned lawsuit of the *Insiderkomitee*. When it comes to chronology, Funder states that she has changed it – in that her approach is similar to

that of Ryszard Kapuscinski - and explains her rationale for doing so: “they’re in the order they are in the book so that the reader finds out what they need to know at each juncture” and “it’s really of no import to anyone that I spoke with Herr Christian before I spoke with Mr Koch ... whether it was before or after - it’s not important to the point of the book” (Exploring Stasiland, 2002, n. p.). In other words, the changed chronology does not mean a lack of authenticity and does not distort the facts. They are merely placed in a certain order to achieve good readability without “having big chunks of historical information or kind of journalism - straight – in there” (ibid.). This can almost be called common practice in literary journalism. At all times it is clear what Funder’s input is and what comes from the interview partners and the secondary literature.

The technique to put “the parts of [her] life in this book ... purely to move the narrative along or to ... account for things that happened there” (ibid..) seems legitimate in this context. Once one knows this, however, Funder becomes slightly less authentic. The feeling of closeness and solidarity to the author and the willingness to not only accept but to some extent also adapt her opinion about what she reports is diminished.

Objectivity, clarity and originality

The topics of the Stasi and the destructive system of the GDR do not lend themselves to objectivity. Funder very clearly takes sides – her focus is on the victims, whose suffering she describes and it is their voices she wants to be heard in *Stasiland*. By letting the reader know her reactions to what she learns in the interviews from the Stasi men, she takes a position. Thus, she is partial. Looking at her position, however, one can also state that as an outsider or foreigner, she has no scores to settle either way and can thus report freely on what she is being told by both the victims and the perpetrators. While she does not condone what the Stasi spies and employees did to their fellow citizens, she does not judge them the way an East German would. As far as Funder is concerned it is her outsider’s role which makes it possible to “see that sort of everyday heroism, it hits you in the face, you can’t not see it” (Exploring Stasiland, 2002, n. p.).

Looking at the criterion clarity, it can be stated that there is a clear structure to the text. By using different tenses, (present and past), Funder makes it easy for the reader to navigate, that is, to determine whether she is the first-person narrator and/or the interviewer (present tense), or whether the stories of the victims, for example, are retold by a narrating voice (past tense). Since she gives the reader a lot of background information, historical and political, she offers the opportunity to evaluate the contents

of her accounts and to place her ‘findings’ into the general context and, of course, to verify her statements. By including copies or transcripts of parts of Stasi files, for example of Sigrid Paul (Funder, 2002, pp. 216-217), letters (Funder, 2002, pp. 228-230), information leaflets or Spy Instructions (Funder, 2002, p. 7; p. 62), and verbatim quotes from her interviews, Funder achieves authenticity.

The criterion originality has been fulfilled in that *Stasiland* combines non-fiction and narration. As Elena Lappin writes in the sleeve text it is “a masterpiece of investigative analysis, written almost like a novel” (Lappin, in Funder 2002, n. p.). Written ever more suspensefully than *Aktenkundig*, the book presents a unique perspective on a German issue. It is the great strength of *Stasiland* that it was written by an Australian, albeit, an Australian with some background in the language and the history of the country. Being a foreigner greatly contributed to the willingness of her interview partners to open up, and this makes *Stasiland* an honest account.

8.4.2 Literary criteria

Immersion, strong personal voice, internal thoughts and feelings, and subjective evaluation of events and persons

There is a strong personal voice in *Stasiland* carried by a lot of first-person narration. Funder describes her travels and experiences in detail and always lets the reader know when and where she is present in the text. It can be said that the criterion immersion is also fulfilled as Funder gets closer and closer to the Stasi victims she finds and interviews. She moves into the matter deeper and deeper and becomes part of the plot. The parts of the book where she writes about her involvement are as important as the other parts. Funder does a lot to involve the reader, also by sharing her emotions, be it sadness, joy, surprise, or horror with the reader.

Narrative techniques

Similar to *Aktenkundig*, the narrative techniques applied in *Stasiland* are almost the complete opposite of Wallraff’s. At the same time they are far more refined than in *Aktenkundig*. From the beginning, Funder transposes her filmmaker’s experience into descriptions that read like excerpts from a script. Above all, the acting persons are described in detail and in a unique style. There is Miriam, “a woman in her mid-forties with a cute short haircut, the bits on the crown sticking out like a cartoon boy” (Funder, 2002, pp. 14-15); Herr Winz, who is “about sixty, paunchy and jowly like a hound dog” (Funder, 2002, p. 81); or Frau Anderson, who has “shiny skin the consistency of

cheesecake” (Funder, 2002, p. 123). Klaus Renft has “a crumpled face with brown teeth and squinty, smiley eyes” (Funder, 2002, p. 184); Frau Paul has “the tapered plump fingers of a mournful Magdalene” (Funder, 2002, p. 205), and the neck of Herr Bohnsack is “ringed and ridged, the Adam’s apple moving up and down like a mouse on a ladder” (Funder, 2002, p. 241). Where the description of the physiognomy of a person is more sparing, Funder describes the behaviour to show the reader what the person is like. This is especially evident in Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler’s case. He is depicted as a ranting, crazy, and fanatic old man and one can almost see him slaver.

Funder also describes cities, buildings, the weather, rooms, and atmospheres and thus creates a vividness, which again resembles a film. Her use of colours to evoke moods is another literary means. The use of different tenses, as already mentioned, greatly contributes to the smooth flow of the plot or story and the dialogues in direct speech enhance the vivid character of the narrative.

8.5 Conclusion

It can be stated that Anna Funder’s *Stasiland* is indeed a work of literary journalism – in the Anglo-Saxon tradition – which, among other things, treats features such as chronology and personal involvement and voice as a means to deliver a good story. In Funder’s own words: “I wanted it to be as much as I could to be a page turner” (Exploring *Stasiland*, 2002) Judging from the bibliographical sources she presents, one can say that *Stasiland* is journalistically well-researched and sound as far as persons, places and times are concerned. In many instances, Funder verified the statements of her interview partners afterwards by visiting places, which were mentioned or collected background information prior to the interviews.

Funder’s style can be compared to that of the Polish author Ryszard Kapuscinski, and in this she follows a great literary journalism tradition. According to James Aucoin, key issues in this context are notions of accuracy, verifiability and authenticity. Unlike Norman Sims and Mark Kramer, he deems features such as composite scenes or a changed chronology to be permissible (Aucoin, 2001). Composite scenes can also be found in Wallraff’s *Aufmacher*, for example. As far as being an eye-witness, that vital feature of literary journalism in Germany, is concerned, different levels have to be considered in *Stasiland*. In the interview situations and her trips to cities, museums and authorities, Funder is both an eye-witness and participant observer. However, in many parts of the book she retells the stories that have been told to her. She

achieves authenticity and credibility because she was there and talked to the persons who feature in her book. The fact that she did not live in the GDR, and is an outsider, contributes to the notion of authenticity, because she looks at the subject relatively unbiased. Her subjectivity, which stems from having grown up in a democratic country where she is free to express her opinions and ideas, does not have a negative impact. It makes her the observer she has proven to be, who can see and say things insiders cannot, because they are too involved or prevented by law from disclosing certain past occurrences unless they happened to them personally.

9 Case Study *Joe Cinque's Consolation*

9.1 Introduction to the writer and her work

Helen Garner (* 1942) is well known in Australia for her fiction and non-fiction. So much has been written about her and her books that an introduction seems almost superfluous. Garner's career has been described as the development from an "award winning fiction writer" to Australia's "best-known exponent of creative non-fiction" (Eggins, 2005, n. p.). To some extent this sounds as if one excludes the other, which, in Garner's case is not true. Her first book, *Monkey Grip* (1977) was a great success and, looking at this "semi-autobiographical work of sex, drugs and shared households in the 1970s" (Eggins, 2005, n. p.), one already gets a glimpse of Garner's talent for non-fiction. One can also draw a clear line between the book of short stories, *Postcards from Surfers* (1985) to *True Stories* (1996), a collection of her freelance newspaper articles.

Her first book-length work of non-fiction, *The First Stone* (1995), received extremely critical reviews and according to Matthew Ricketson it "cleaved public opinion and generated impassioned debate" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 74). The main criticism or contentious point was that in many people's opinion Garner had sided with the 'wrong' party. It was her "lenient attitude toward the Master of [Ormond] College, which brought her many attacks from feminist critics" (Joseph & Müller, 2009, p. 72). One of the chapters in *True Stories* is titled "The Fate of the First Stone", and here Garner says that "there are as many versions of *The First Stone* as there are readers of it", and she draws up a list of all the things she did not say, but had been accused of having said or written (Garner, 1996, p. 170). When it comes to a second serious point of criticism, that is, the fact that she split one of the characters, Dr. Jenna Mead, into six different persons and thus committed a breach of the contract with her readers (Ricketson, 2010a, pp. 76-78), Garner admits that she would rather not have done this, but had acted on the legal requirements of her publisher's lawyers in order to "avoid defamation action" (Garner, 1996, p. 178). Garner calls *The First Stone* a book of "reportage" (ibid.), a definition which according to Ricketson seems to stem from her idea that as distinct from literary journalism with the emphasis on journalism, reportage gives an author the freedom to "invent names for the people she writes about" (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 74). In the context of this case study, the intense reactions to *The First Stone* explain Garner's caution and initial hesitation to embark on another non-

fiction book project. *Joe Cinque's Consolation* was first published in 2004, almost ten years after *The First Stone*.

It is noteworthy that while Garner received many prestigious awards for her fiction, her non-fiction work has not. *The Spare Room* (2008), her first work of fiction in 16 years, for instance, received the Victorian Premier's Literary Award, the Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction, and the Queensland Premier's Literary Award in 2008 as well as the Barbara Jeffries Award in 2009. In Germany, Helen Garner shares the fate of many Australian writers, in that she is not very well known to a larger readership. However, *The Spare Room*, translated as *Das Zimmer* in 2009, was a success and triggered the translation and publication of two further works: *The Children's Bach* (1984) [*Das Haus an der Bunker Street*, 2010] and *Honour and Other People's Children* (1980) [*Die Kinder anderer Leute*, 2011] more than 30 years after their original editions came out. While the German edition of *Honour and Other People's Children* did not feature in reviews, *The Children's Bach* and *The Spare Room* received positive reviews in Germany (Abenstein, 2009; Bopp, 2009; "Knoten," 2009; Schulz, 2010).

9.2 The structure of *Joe Cinque's Consolation*

First published in 2004, *Joe Cinque's Consolation* consists of nine untitled parts, which are divided into chapters or paragraphs. These are separated from each other by a vignette. The book has 325 pages and a photograph of Joe Cinque can be found on the last page. There is a short introductory paragraph on page 3 at the end of which Garner describes the book as "the story of how I got to know him [Joe Cinque]" (Garner, 2004a, p. 3).

The book has several protagonists. There are Joe Cinque, the victim, Anu Singh and Madhavi Rao, the killer and the accessory, Joe's parents, who are also victims, Justice Ken Crispin, who heard the trial and pronounced the verdict, and also Helen Garner herself.

Joe Cinque's Consolation received many reviews, and apart from the contents of the book, Garner's style, beliefs, and personality were topics discussed. As with *The First Stone* these were controversial discussions, this time on the issue of lack of objectivity. Immediately parallels to *The First Stone* were drawn, and in fact the reviews invariably compared the two books.

The fact that the author's personality is present and visible throughout the book has been interpreted by Maryanne Dever as "an exercise in shadow boxing as Garner tantalizingly hints to the reader that she has her own story of youthful misdeed, chaos and damage to rival whichever one she is engaged in telling" (Dever, 2004, n. p.). This criticism seems very one-sided and one-dimensional and reduces Garner's work to a therapy session in disguise. Dever, whose criticism of *Joe Cinque's Consolation* came from a feminist perspective, accused Garner once again of siding with the wrong party. While in *The First Stone* it was the Master of Ormond College of the University of Melbourne, in *Joe Cinque's Consolation* it was Joe Cinque and his family, and not the bright and beautiful Anu Singh, Cinque's girlfriend and killer.

In this case study, *Joe Cinque's Consolation* will be treated independently of Garner's other works and of the criticism they received.

The following will look at Garner's approach to the story and the way she forms her opinion. Furthermore, it will be analysed how she makes numerous changes from the writer's to the journalist's position throughout the course of the book.

9.3 Analysis

At the beginning of the book Garner states that this book is going to be about Joe Cinque, who when she first "heard his voice ... in the winter of 1999 ... had already been dead for nearly two years" (Garner, 2004a, p. 3). At the same time it is also the story of how she got to know him, and how she got to write the book. Thus, the reader can expect Garner to be involved and present in the book. This is not to be an objective, matter-of-fact account of a murder victim's life and death.

9.3.1 Garner's approach to the story of Joe Cinque

"Part One" begins rather dramatically with the transcript of the emergency call placed by a "hysterical young woman" whom the reader will later learn was Anu Singh (Garner, 2004a, p. 4), and an account of the last minutes of Joe Cinque's life as well as the subsequent arrests of Singh and Madhavi Rao in October 1997 (Garner, 2004a, pp. 4-11). Garner hears about all this two years later when a "respected senior journalist" calls her and gives her a brief outline of the case (Garner, 2004a, p. 12). It is an interesting story, but Garner is sceptical that it would be hers to write. Immediately she thinks back to the reactions to *The First Stone* and feels that "the parallels between that story and this one were like a bad joke. No way was I going back out there" (Garner,

2004a, p. 13). This could well have been the end of it if not for Garner's curiosity and the need to get some work. Thus, before she eventually meets the contact person whose telephone number she received from the journalist, she looks at the "cuttings file" of the case and learns that "the trial currently in progress was Anu Singh's" (Garner, 2004a, p. 14). From this point onward, Garner lets the reader know about the twists and turns of her mind as she comes to a decision on whether or not to get into the case, to write the story. When she looks at a photograph of Cinque and Singh, her reactions are quite strong: "Anu Singh raised my girl-hackles in a bristle. Joe Cinque provoked a blur of warmth" (Garner, 2004a, p. 18). At this point readers have their hopes up that Garner will get interested enough to continue. A page later, when she says, "there was nothing here for me. I might as well go home", one is inclined to reply "but you cannot just walk away, there is a story to be told" (Garner, 2004a, p. 19). As she reads the transcript of the emergency call given to her by her contact person, Garner pictures Joe Cinque as he is dying. This seems to be another step towards getting involved. She also reads the copy of a letter Singh wrote in prison and it "got under [her] skin, with its panicky tone, its angry shallow clichés" (Garner, 2004a, p. 17). Her harsh reaction and judgement of Anu Singh, who to her "was the figure of what a woman most fears in herself – the damaged infant, vain, frantic, destructive, out of control" (Garner, 2004a, p. 18), triggered a lot of criticism after the publication of the book. The same goes for the response to the photograph. Some reviewers have reduced this reaction to an older woman's prejudice against a beautiful young woman or to plain gender issues (Dever, 2004; Taylor, 2005). But this criticism appears to be picking at only one strand of the book. Yes, there is unquestionably a bias against Singh and sympathy for Joe Cinque, but since Garner clearly describes her feelings as "instinctive responses", which "over the ensuing years ... remained remarkably stable" (Garner, 2004a, p. 19), the author's transparent choices seem legitimate. By letting the reader know about her thoughts and feelings, Garner underlines the fact that she cannot and will not be completely objective, and that if she decides to write about Joe Cinque's murder case, it is going to be on her terms. The reader will have to bear with her presence at every stage of the story.

In "Part Two", which together with the previous part, can be seen as an introduction, Garner becomes even more personal. She explains that she "went to Canberra because the break-up of my marriage left me humiliated and angry. I wanted to look at women who were accused of murder" (Garner, 2004a, p. 25). To take this at face value would, however, not take into account the opinion forming or position-finding process Garner goes through. This process is not solely determined by her "gut

feeling” but to a large extent by observations she makes during the trial, by studying court and police files, and not least by conducting interviews and holding conversations with Joe Cinque’s parents, Anu Singh’s father, Judge Crispin, and numerous witnesses. It is obvious that Garner is wary of repeating the ‘mistakes’ of *The First Stone*. She does not want to lay herself open to the same accusations; but to interpret her detailed description of her feelings and opinions solely as a means to cover her back would not do justice to her writing. By exposing herself, by voicing her doubts and reservations, she also clearly signals to readers what to expect. As Morag Fraser writes in her review of *Joe Cinque’s Consolation*, Garner “is not ‘balanced’ and does not claim to be. The book is the story of Joe Cinque, who is dead” (Fraser, 2004, n. p.). Like everyone else, Garner looks at the case from a certain perspective and at times interweaves this with elements of her own situation. At some point, however, there is a process, which she describes as follows: “A story lies in wait for a writer. It flashes out silent signals. Without knowing she is doing it, the writer receives the message, drops everything, and turns to follow” (Garner, 2004a, p. 25). This is not to be read as some mysterious force, but explains that there is a point where the writerly mind, which sorts the events into a narrative structure, comes to the fore. At this point Garner has already read extensively about the case but this reading and obtaining information seems to be more a writer’s gathering of material for a story than a journalist’s research of a topic. It needs to be stated here that one vital component of the book is what could be called a writer / journalist split. There are various instances where Garner changes from one role to the other and back again, or thinks she does. Right at the start of *Joe Cinque’s Consolation*, the journalist who suggested the story to be Garner’s to write points out where the difference between the two roles is by saying: “I can do history. I can do politics. ... But I can’t do psychology” (Garner, 2004a, p. 13). Thus, what it takes to approach this story is skilful writing and a deep understanding of human behaviour and its deviances. At the same time, however, there has to be some journalistic balance. Garner’s change of roles will be looked at in more detail later in this analysis.

9.3.2 *The court case*

In the next section Garner becomes acquainted with the case and the protagonists and from page 26 onward she keeps to a chronology, starting on 6 April 1999, her first day in the ACT Supreme Court (Garner, 2004a, p. 26). All in all, “Part Two” spans the time between 6 and 23 April 1999. There are detailed descriptions of the courtroom and the defendant, Anu Singh, who in contrast to the “tall, blonde, scraggly-haired security

guard” looks “dainty and prim” (ibid.). A little further on, Garner gives a description of Joe Cinque’s parents: “They looked like Italians. Around their attentive heads glowed an aura of anguish” (Garner, 2004a, p. 27).

On pages 25 to 72, Garner gives detailed accounts of the legal proceedings: There are statements of the four psychiatric expert witnesses, who present exhaustive and to some extent conflicting analyses of Anu Singh’s state of mind, and the Crown prosecutor, Terry Golding, Singh’s counsel, Jack Pappas and also Judge Ken Crispin are introduced. One gets the impression of being in a theatre where one by one the actors enter onstage.

Throughout the book, Garner sticks to a chronology, not unlike a journal or diary. She starts chapters with “On Tuesday, the court was adjourned till the following Monday” (Garner, 2004a, p. 42), “at lunchtime, to clear my head, I went for a walk in the autumn sunshine” (Garner, 2004a, p. 48), “The next morning was fine and sunny” (Garner, 2004a, p. 67), or she gives exact dates or time spans like “On 3 June 1999 I hired a car in Kings Cross” (Garner, 2004a, p. 81), “On that day, 21 June, I flew to Canberra” (Garner, 2004a, p. 109). The journal character is further underlined because Garner comments, contrasts, evaluates and judges what she sees and hears. A large part of *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* is written in the first person and there are numerous instances where Garner describes people in a stereotypical or even biased way. She tends to put people into boxes, divides them into good or bad and often there is not much in-between. Thus, for example, the second psychiatric expert for the defence is depicted as the epitome of the British upper class’s disguise: “he reminded me of a certain minor character in a D.H. Lawrence novel; the upper-middle class educated man who disconcerts the unsophisticated farmer with his ‘courtly, naive manner, so suave, so merry, so innocent’” (Garner, 2004a, p. 47). Michael Diamond, another expert, for the prosecution this time, is portrayed as a “dark and hulking, and self-contained” man, who was “perfectly at ease in the outer chamber of a criminal court” (Garner, 2004a, p. 60).

When it comes to Anu Singh, Garner’s depiction is critical to say the least. At one point she describes the way Singh puts her hair up:

... it was an almost indecently intimate and histrionic display, a series of age-old, deeply feminine gestures. First the raising of both arms and the gathering of the hair in two hands. Then the twisting and rolling and flicking and doubling back of its dark mass ... into a thick club; ... then the patting, the sensitive roaming of the flattened palms against the smooth round curve of her head (Garner, 2004a, p. 46)

This scene was received quite diversely by reviewers. While Emma-Kate Symons was “mesmerized by the ‘intimate domestic detail’” (Symons cited in Ricketson, 2010a, p. 80), Maryanne Dever found the passage “manipulative” (Dever cited in Ricketson, 2010a, p. 80). For Garner, “the description is ... relevant and representative of what she observed of Singh” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 80).

There are a couple of journalists who fill her in on what she has missed so far and she finds that one of them shares her feelings about Anu Singh: “The young journalist spoke of Anu Singh with a complete lack of sympathy, indeed with a rough contempt” (Garner, 2004a, p. 31). Over the course of the trial these two journalists appear from time to time and have the function of confirming Garner’s evaluations of certain people or events. This is as if to show that the negative attitude toward Anu Singh, for example, is not exclusively to be attributed to Garner, but is a shared, more general feeling. It has to be stated here, however, that unlike a writer, a court reporter has to present the facts as they are, and put her personal feelings aside. This is an important divide between journalism and literary journalism.

As could be expected, Garner’s descriptions gave way to some criticism. In her review of *Joe Cinque’s Consolation*, Dever, for instance, compares how Garner writes about the way the Cinques speak – “halting and ungrammatical” and how Dr. Singh, Anu’s father comes across with “his slurring accent”, which “just doesn’t have the same earthy charm” (Dever, 2004, n. p.). For Dever this is a clear indication of Garner’s sympathy for the Cinques and contempt for Dr. Singh. While Dever is correct in pointing to the clear difference in how Garner ‘treats’ the two sets of parents, this claim is based on the assumption that *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* has to be an objective account – which in fact is not its aim. It is not court reporting, but a work of literary journalism, which permits writerly choices. It is a book about how Garner experienced the trial and what she learnt from the documents she read and the interviews she conducted. The conclusions and judgements are Garner’s alone, and she makes this clear from the start. The story needs a writer, someone who ‘can do psychology’ and not a fact-oriented journalist.

While at the start of the book Garner’s presence seems more pronounced and she puts herself into the centre by telling the reader about her emotional state when she started to get acquainted with and then involved in the case, later the case itself is foregrounded, even though it is mostly a first-person narration. Of course, there are still judgements, reactions, some more intense than others as well as emotions, but they are about the murder and its consequences and not so much about Garner herself. When she

states that she was “agitated by the prospect of a solemn judgement on the meaning of a woman’s life” and “hanging out for judgement to be pronounced on *such a woman*” (Garner, 2004a, p. 66), this is probably not all so different from what most people would have felt after watching the trial. When Judge Crispin finds Singh guilty of manslaughter and not murder, this is shocking to Garner: “With my back to the court I crouched against the cold concrete rim of a planter box and howled into my hanky. I didn’t even know who I was crying for” (Garner, 2004a, p. 71). Garner reads the judgement and realises that “*it took practically the whole weekend to kill him [Joe Cinque]*” (Garner, 2004a, p. 75, italics in the original).

9.3.3 *The turning point: writer or journalist?*

The verdict can be seen as a turning point in the book. Had Singh been convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment, the story might have ended here. The demand for justice would have been satisfied. But being left with the strong feeling that justice had not been done for Joe Cinque, the book becomes his memorial, his ‘consolation’, picturing the apple he ate daily on the front cover.

It is with “Part Three” that the story shifts toward the Cinques or rather Mrs. Cinque, whom Garner had met briefly in the Supreme Court toilets and whom she phones to talk to her about the possibility of writing a book. At this point she is still intent on being balanced in her account of the case and says that she “can’t promise to write the book you want Mrs. Cinque” and that she would have to “listen to both sides” (Garner, 2004a, p. 79). She then calls Dr. Singh, who wants her to write a book about his daughter. Garner makes clear that it is an either-or situation, citing the parents’ reactions: “A book *about her*. A book *about my son*.” (Garner, 2004a, p.80, italics in the original). At this point, no clear indication is given as to which way the book will go apart from the fact that more needs to be understood of the events as Garner marvels whether someone could kill, as Judge Crispin wrote in another judgement, out of “simple wickedness” (ibid.).

Helen Garner’s emotional reactions to what she learns about the person and victim Joe Cinque are yet another indication that this is more than a book about a murder and a trial. She becomes involved and one gets the impression that she needs to be touched in order to render a ‘true’ account. In this, she resembles Günter Wallraff. Instead of keeping a safe distance, Garner goes beyond the personal emotional involvement permitted in journalism. It is as if she also has to feel the Cinque’s grief to be able to write about the case in a way that is authentic.

The characterization of Joe Cinque is mostly based on what his parents and friends tell Garner. The only ‘negative’ comment here is that he might have been too naïve (Garner, 2004a, p. 78) and it is said that he “was likeable. He was innocently likeable” (Garner, 2004a, p. 307). Throughout it is obvious that Garner is very aware that her choice of interviewees will influence the book, and this is a distinctly journalistic trait of the book.

She interviews Joe Cinque’s mother, who has been described as “a woman ... who has learnt to ask very little of life” (Garner, 2004a, p. 79). Another feature of Mrs. Cinque is “her voice” which is “forceful, passionate, wild with bitterness and contempt, and heaving with the authority of suffering” (Garner, 2004a, p. 87). The first of these interviews is presented in full. Garner admits that to “call the encounter [7 hours on tape] an interview would be to gild the lily”, and goes on to say: “I was too bewildered by their story, and too shaken by their raging anguish and grief, to do much more than listen” (Garner, 2004a, p. 85).

The account of how she transcribed the cassettes is almost more important than what Mrs. Cinque actually said: “As I copied their story, something inside me seemed to be breaking. Into my thoughts kept seeping fantasies of violent retribution” (Garner, 2004a, p. 87). In this description, Garner’s freedom as a writer is evident, a freedom that goes beyond the boundaries of journalism. Garner’s reaction is understandable, she is thrown into an emotionally charged situation and now that she has stepped into the case, she realizes that in the face of murder and grief, earlier held beliefs go out the window. In this part of the book (“Part Three”), Garner is the listener and by leaving the Cinques’ stories more or less unedited, intensifies the feeling of horror at what happened.

There are parts in the book where Garner writes from the journalist’s perspective, in an almost objective fashion, when, for instance, giving information in “Part Four”, the main topic of which is the sentencing hearing and the subsequent verdict on Anu Singh. However, many accounts leave the reader in no doubt where Garner’s sympathies lie.

When describing some of the *dramatis personae* in detail, Garner is clearly signalling to the reader how they ought to be viewed. Anu Singh, for example, is depicted as a diva entering the stage in “an urgent rush” (Garner, 2004a, p. 110), and her attire is highlighted: “charcoal trouser suit”, toenails with “dark red polish”, “high, strappy black sandals” (*ibid.*). Anu Singh’s mother could have been described as “elegant had she not looked traumatised” (Garner, 2004a, p. 112). The reaction of the

audience and Joe Cinque's family and friends to the verdict is recounted in a vivid manner: "Transfixed by dread and by a strange, breathless need, we listened once more to her [Mrs. Cinque's] jeremiad", the crowd is "frozen", "Maria Cinque, stiff with anguish" (Garner, 2004a, p. 127).

The last sections of "Part Four" are reflective again – Garner is alone, "the weight of the trial hung around me; I couldn't shrug it off" and she muses about the concept of "corruption": "is corruption 'sin'? What is sin?" and she comes to her own judgement about Anu Singh: "Surely, she belonged in prison. Surely, now, she would pay for what she had done" (Garner, 2004a, p. 132).

Sitting through the trial, making the acquaintance of Mrs. Cinque and starting to talk to her to get an idea of and a feeling for Joe Cinque, could be called the orientation phase; a time to make up her mind about whether or not to write about the case. It is like testing the water before jumping into it. Back home in Sydney, Garner realizes that she "had a stubborn attachment to the story. I did not want to put it down", and she even thinks about how to "fictionalize the events, to disguise the characters and their ethnic groups, to break the whole mess of it down into a series of short –" (Garner, 2004a, p.137). At this point she stops herself and comes to the conclusion that "at the end of every argument, every doubt, stood the fundamental fact of the matter. *Joe Cinque is dead*" (ibid.). After pages 52 and 58, this is the third time she writes this as if to get back to the real purpose of her writing whenever she drifts off.

From this point onward, she starts what can be deemed her journalistic research. Among other things, she spends some time in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (Garner, 2004a, p. 138) to read the "typed records of the court proceedings" (p. 139). What she hopes to find is Joe Cinque, but the records are a "mess" (Garner, 2004a, p. 141) and do not yield the "simple chronology of the events that [she] craved" (Garner, 2004a, p. 149). When she comes across some crime scene photos she describes them in detail and very carefully, almost so as to not to disturb the dead young man. To her what she sees and reads are "scenes of a strange drama" and she quotes extensively from a conversation of Madhavi Rao with some fellow students. Describing this research, Garner evokes the atmosphere of a play (Garner, 2004a, pp. 149-152).

She also starts to forge a bond with Joe Cinque by propping up a photo of him, already dead, against a folder where she can see it while she reads and takes notes. It becomes a ritual "contemplating the photo quietly for a while before I started work" (Garner, 2004a, p. 152). Garner claims to search for Joe Cinque in everything she reads

and at the same time she asks herself whether she sides with him because he is dead (Garner, 2004a, p. 178). She finds only Anu Singh in the transcripts. Garner uses the “famous twenty minute 000 call” to describe the relationship of Singh and Cinque. While she is in the foreground “garish, loud, full of obsessive movement” while she “babbles, swears ... invents a name and gives a false address”, Joe is “fading. He blurs. He sinks into the shadows and leaks away, until all that is left of him is his name, and the frozen, saintly lineaments of a victim” (ibid.). With this description she indicates that this is why she writes the book – he did not have a voice when he was killed, and now he cannot speak for himself. Garner asks many questions, but cannot find the answers in the records she works through as she tries to turn him into a person again.

There are pages and pages of direct quotes from the records, witness statements, dialogues, most of which feature Madhavi Rao, who was charged as an accessory to the murder. All those statements, cross-examinations, questionings bring to light that there were plenty of people who might have intervened in the killing of Joe Cinque but did not, most of all Madhavi Rao. Garner, as well as the reader, asks herself how this was possible. In the midst of this, however, she also has some doubts, is afraid that she only identifies with the “helpless, harmless dead” (Garner, 2004a, p. 182). She questions her motivation to pursue her ‘project’.

In August 1999 she has made a decision – yet again – she is “interested in writing the story” (Garner, 2004a, p. 185) and visits the Singhs in their home. According to Garner it is during this visit that she all of a sudden knows very clearly that she wants to “enlarge my imagination to the point where it can encompass truths as widely separated as your version of the events and the Cinques” (Garner, 2004a, p. 188). While she spends time at the Singh’s house, she also realises that Mrs. Singh is as stricken by the murder as Mrs. Cinque. It is obvious that each party wants her to take their side and Garner feels torn, “intimidated” and pressured, especially by Mrs. Cinque’s pain and bitterness (Garner, 2004a, p. 194).

After this very introspective and emotional part, *Part Seven* is mainly about Madhavi Rao’s trial and here Garner once again offers detailed descriptions of the people involved, for example the witnesses and the defendant. She also gives her comment on each of them and their statements. When at some point in the trial, her eyes meet Rao’s, she reads something into them and almost at once becomes emotionally involved. She goes as far as comparing her reaction to Rao to that she had to Anu Singh and concludes that “even without having met them, I was just like everybody else who had come in contact with these two women: one had my hackles go up, while the other

aroused a puzzled, muted compassion, a curiously protective urge” (Garner, 2004a, p. 231).

There is a repeated shift in Garner’s emotions in this part of the book. While she feels “a sort of dizzy dread” (Garner, 2004a, p. 234) at what Rao had or had not done, later when Mrs. Cinque is being sarcastic, she realised “with a jolt that [her] allegiance had shifted” (Garner, 2004a, p. 235). She wants Rao to see her as a “cool, mature journalist” (Garner, 2004a, p. 236). Even though she feels sympathetic toward Rao, she is devastated when she is acquitted (ibid.). To her with this outcome and Anu Singh’s comparatively light sentence, Joe Cinque’s murder is going to be “unavenged” as the public drama that had surrounded his death was over (Garner, 2004a, p. 263). It is clear at this point that once the files are closed, Joe Cinque will soon be forgotten. In order to prevent this, the book has to be written.

While Garner has collected plenty of statements from Joe’s parents and his friends, material from the files and transcripts, she has not heard Anu Singh’s or Madhavi Rao’s side yet – apart from what she heard in court. Therefore, once the trials are over, she contacts Rao and the Singhs. Rao declines to speak to her and there is no answer from Anu Singh. Garner draws the conclusion that “The women won’t speak to me” (Garner, 2004a, p. 269), alluding to what happened with *The First Stone* and feels that she is “back at the same old roadblock. My fantasy of journalistic even-handedness, long buckling under the strain, gave way completely” (Garner, 2004a, p. 269). Interestingly, this statement reveals that when she says “even-handedness” she does not mean it to be a synonym for objectivity, but merely means telling both sides of the story, that is, giving both the Cinques and Anu Singh space in the book. Since the Singhs declined to speak to her, she makes a complete turn again and decides not to write the book, afraid of “another public roasting” (ibid.). To the reader it is clear at this point that it is too late to turn around and leave the story behind only because it would be unbalanced.

9.3.4 In search of justice

Garner then moves from Sydney back to Melbourne and this move is almost symbolic. She puts some distance between herself and the case. Despite her resolve not to touch the story again, she keeps reading about “murder, trial, punishment” for the next couple of years (Garner, 2004a, p. 275) and goes to a Victims of Crime rally to better understand the feelings of victims’ families and thus, how Mrs. Cinque feels. She is still not sure what to do when Anu Singh is released in October 2001 after four years in

prison. To Garner this is terrible news, but at the same time it makes her change her mind one last time. When she again does not receive a reply from Anu Singh she feels free to write the book with Joe Cinque as the protagonist. Instead of getting a statement from the killer, she talks to some of Joe's closest friends and gets an impression of what he must have been like. She finds the person that she had been looking for in vain in the transcripts and statements.

One might argue that all this fretting over the reactions to the book, the fact that she did not give Singh and Rao an opportunity to have a say, the many times Garner decides for and then against writing the book is a means of putting herself into the story. However, it can also be read as an honest account of a writer who has identified a dilemma that stems from the incompatibility of emotions and objectivity. At least for Garner, this seems to be the case. She can either stand back or get involved, and as has been said before, she seems to need the closeness to the object of her writing in order to feel that what she puts down is authentic. At the same time, she has an opinion and wants to express it. This, however, also implies that she can change this opinion when the situation or the facts as she perceives and understands them change. There are several instances in *Joe Cinque's Consolation* where Garner realises that she is too biased and subjective, that she is stereotyping people and that this will be criticised at some point. As Susan Lever points out, there are some critics who read *Joe Cinque's Consolation* "through the prism of *The First Stone* (1995) with a prejudice that seems to disable their engagement with the concerns of the new book" (Lever, 2006, p. 1). It is, however, "Garner's observant subjectivity" which "provides us with a personal response to the people who come before the court" (Lever, 2006, p. 5).

After her release from prison Anu Singh gave several interviews in which she addressed the matter of not having been interviewed by Helen Garner prior to the publication of *Joe Cinque's Consolation*. Speaking to Philip Adams Singh said that she thought it was "unfortunate that there was no greater attempt to speak to [her]" (Adams, 2004, n. p.). Later she goes even further and states that it "was a huge shame on Helen's part not to speak either to me or Madhavi, when she had decided to definitely go ahead with the book" (ibid.). As far as she is concerned, Garner's descriptions of her were "very exaggerated ... because she hasn't spoken to me and she decided on what I was like by a photo" (ibid.). This does not seem to take into account the fact that it took Garner many years to finally write the book and that one reason why she hesitated was "that Singh and her friend Madhavi Rao, ... would not agree to interviews" (Wyndham, 2004, n. p.). In an interview with Susan Wyndham, Singh expresses regret about not

having spoken to Garner when she was contacted by her: “Now she says that if she had known Garner was going ahead with her book she would have been keen to speak to her and answer the questions about remorse, repentance and atonement she raises in print” (ibid.).

9.4 *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* as literary journalism

It is unthinkable to draw up a list of Australian writers who have ventured into the field of literary journalism or creative non-fiction and not have Helen Garner on it. There are numerous articles and papers on her non-fiction writing (for example Eggins, 2005; Fraser, 2004; Haigh, 1996; Lever, 2006; Little, 2010; McDonald, 2011; Ricketson, 1997; Ricketson, 2010a; Simons, 2000) and none of these raise any doubt about *The First Stone* and *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* being examples of literary journalism.

However, Garner is also an author whose books have sparked a lot of criticism and controversy, some of which was aimed at her lack of objectivity. In this context Willa McDonald’s chapter on Helen Garner should be mentioned, as it is the most recent publication on the subject. Together with Matthew Ricketson’s contributions,

McDonald’s chapter is the most important input on Garner as literary journalist.

Another issue has been the alleged breach of the reader-writer contract, which Garner described in *True Stories* (Garner, 2004a, p. 6). In order to assess *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* as literary journalism, a test of the methodologically developed criteria will be applied.

9.4.1 Journalistic Criteria

Topicality

At first sight, *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* does not seem to fulfil the criterion of topicality. The book was published seven years after the murder and five years after the trials of Anu Singh and Madhavi Rao. By that time the extensive news reporting on the case had ceased and Joe Cinque was all but forgotten by the public.

Both *Stasiland* and *Aktenkundig* deal with a topic of historical relevance and importance for the re-unified Germany and Günter Wallraff’s *Der Aufmacher*, is a book which captured the special political climate of the 1970s in Germany. Again, at first sight, Garner’s book does not fit this range. It is about a murder, trials and verdicts, but one could argue that it is an “exceptional case in which women kill a man, rather than the considerably more frequent occurrence where men kill women” (Lever, 2006, p. 4).

This, however, would completely neglect the notion that *Joe Cinque's Consolation* can be read as an evaluation of the Australian legal system, which, for instance, fails to “recognise a general duty of care to intervene, in order to save the life of a person in grave peril” (Garner, 2004a, p. 317). It can also be read as an attempt to fathom the depths of moral obligations, of answering the question whether evil exists and how it manifests itself. Garner questions the main player's motives in the face of what looks like cold-blooded murder and the grief this causes to others. In her paper *Against Forgetting: Anna Funder's Stasiland and Helen Garner's Joe Cinque's Consolation*, Susan Lever argues that the Singh case showed that the “negligent tolerance of suicide and murder among the community of students in Canberra suggests that we [the Australians] have our own weaknesses” and that “the doctrine of ‘get over it’ comes at a moral price” (Lever, 2006, p. 6).

However, the book can rightly be described as an “exercise against forgetting” (Lever, 2006, p. 1). This statement necessitates a more general interpretation of what topicality means: it is not so much the aspect of currency, which creates topicality, but a set of values that is independent of time. In this, the book greatly differs from the topicality vital for news reporting by not being confined to a particular place or time.

Research and transparency

The Australian media extensively reported the trial for the murder of Joe Cinque, not least because it had all the ingredients to make it “the ideal current affairs and feature article proposition” (Little, 2010, p. 4). This is why when it came to research, Garner did not have to start from scratch, but could rely on the reporting available to her at the time she started to take an interest in the case. Thus, what she presents in the book is, to some extent, an account of how she read this material and what impact it had on her. There are, for instance, “phlegmatic daily court reports” (Garner, 2004a, p. 14), a letter of Anu Singh, written while she was held at the Belconnen Remand Centre in Canberra (Garner, 2004a, p. 17), and the “double-page tabloid spread from the *Daily Telegraph's* report of the committal proceedings” (Garner, 2004a, p. 21), which consists of the transcript of the emergency call, presented in full on pages four to eight of the book.

In order to obtain first-hand information to complement these materials, Garner attended the trial against Anu Singh in Canberra, taking extensive notes (Garner, 2004a, p. 59). There are conversations with Dr. Singh, Anu Singh's father (Garner, 2004a, pp. 56-57) quoted in great detail, and Garner's own observations from the court proceedings. She quotes witness and expert statements in great detail, too. When the

judgement is passed, Garner reads and analyses a 45-page copy of the document in order to get further clarification of the matter (Garner, 2004a, p. 45). There are telephone calls to the Singhs and the Cinques, which she reports almost verbatim (Garner, 2004a, pp. 75-79) and then there is the first interview with Joe Cinque's mother, Maria, at the Cinque's home in Newcastle (Garner, 2004a, pp. 81-85). The interview, which Garner taped, lasted seven hours. After transcribing the cassettes (Garner, 2004a, p. 87), she then retells the story in direct speech and in parts in her own words. While at the Cinques, she also watches a video showing Joe at a wedding and this way gets an impression of what he was like (Garner, 2004a, pp. 82-83).

Later, in "the third week of July 1999" she reads the "transcripts of the trials in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions" (Garner, 2004a, pp. 138-144), which are about a thousand pages long. Similarly to what she did with Mrs. Cinque's interview, she subsequently starts to "piece together a narrative of the week that ended with Joe Cinque's death on Sunday, 26 October 1997" (Garner, 2004a, p. 145). In this 'narrative', Garner presents excerpts of witness and expert statements, often in the form of direct speech (for example Garner, 2004a, pp. 153-158).

In order to also get the Singh's perspective on the case, she visits and interviews them (Garner, 2004a, pp. 185-192). From "23 November 1999" onward, Garner attends the trial of Madhavi Rao (Garner, 2004a, p. 199), and presents further detailed witness statements (Garner, 2004a, pp. 215-218, and Garner, 2004a, pp. 224-229). After the trial and Rao's acquittal, she sends her a letter asking for an interview (Garner, 2004a, p. 267), which is rejected months later (Garner, 2004a, pp. 268-269). The same happens when she rings Dr. Singh to obtain his permission to speak to Anu Singh (Garner, 2004a, p. 268).

As there are no more 'official' documents to study and evaluate, Garner seeks information or guidance on how to tackle the book somewhere else. She describes this as follows: "Every morning for the next two years, I sat down to read the papers with the scissors in my hand. Nothing interested me but murder, trial, punishment" (Garner, 2004a, p. 275). She wants to understand how someone like Anu Singh ticks and "ploughs through books on depression, mental illness and suicide", and she reads "true crime" (Garner, 2004a, p. 280).

In 2001, Garner writes to Anu Singh directly to get her version of the case and receives a positive reply in July 2001 (Garner, 2004a, pp. 282-283). The meeting never takes place when Singh is released on parole in October 2001 (Garner, 2004a, p. 283). When in 2002 Garner spends four months in Newcastle on a teaching assignment, she

re-establishes contact with the Cinques and meets some of Joe's old friends as well as his former girlfriend, Rebecca. Their accounts of Joe Cinque are presented in direct speech and dialogue form (Garner, 2004a, pp. 285-291). It is during this time that Garner writes to Anu Singh for the last time in order to make an appointment to meet. When by autumn that year she still has not received a reply she decides to leave it at that and to "content myself with the public record, with the things I had observed in court, and with whatever I could glean from other people's accounts" (Garner, 2004a, p. 297).

To complete her 'research', which included all involved parties, either directly or indirectly, Garner talks to Judge Ken Crispin about the cases and presents him as a sensitive, "tired, serious, decent man" (Garner, 2004a, p. 317). As Crispin explains to her that in his opinion "the real aim of sentencing ... is not retribution" and that while "you've got to take some sort of hard line" you could not "throw humanity out of the window" (Garner, 2004a, p. 318), the complexity of what is law and what is justice becomes evident.

Garner's efforts to obtain as much information and insight as possible were geared toward taking over where the news media's "capacity to tell the story comprehensively, or with sustained analysis of their judicial and moral dimensions" (Little, 2010, p. 4) left off. The author's achievement is not retelling the case on the basis of what was available to the general public, but as Little put it "to sit with the families, the police, the friends, and the court cases for the duration of the formal judicial processes, and the informal aftermath" (ibid.). Thus the concept of research in this case cannot be defined in the strict journalistic sense, which mostly centres on the immediate events.

As far as transparency is concerned, Garner shares with the reader the information she received and also reports how she obtained it. The persons she interviewed were aware of this and she also openly spoke about wanting to write a book. Garner's use of a chronology stating dates and time spans lends coherence to her account, and the readers feel that they can follow the writer's steps as well as understand the logic in the way the material is presented.

Objectivity, clarity and originality

Joe Cinque's Consolation is not an objective book, and this is especially the case when taking a strictly journalistic approach. The different viewpoints, some of which are presented here, also show the difficulty of clearly defining the concepts of objectivity and truth in literary journalism. As Matthew Ricketson stated, Garner's "journalism is

primarily driven by her personal response to people, events and issue” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81). It can be argued here that the objective reports can be found in the newspapers and other media, especially in the court reports and that objective journalism does not sustain a book of 328 pages. Garner herself sides with the journalists, but also knows full well the difference in what is expected of them and what is expected of her. In a murder case there is a victim and a perpetrator and in most cases, people side with the victim. One must, however, admit that Garner tried to some extent to give a balanced account. She presented facts and invited all parties involved to have their say. That some, in this case the perpetrator Anu Singh and her family as well as the accomplice Madhavi Rao, refused to cooperate is not Garner’s fault. It could be argued that without their statements, Garner should not have written the book and she has been criticised rather harshly for siding with Joe Cinque and his family. This kind of criticism, however, fails to acknowledge that Garner’s intent was “to write a lament for Joe Cinque” (Garner, 2004a, p. 281). It must be said that although her emotional stance towards Joe Cinque is clear from the start, Garner time and again thinks how she should write the book, and she is acutely aware of the scrutiny her work will be subjected to (see Dever, 2004; Fraser, 2004; Lever, 2006). After the reaction to *The First Stone*, Garner was wary, and made it clear to both the Singhs and the Cinques that she was “speaking to the other [party]” (Garner, 2004a, p. 77) and that she “would have to listen to both sides” (Garner, 2004a, p. 79). As she puts it herself, she “was scared to go on, to step round the barrier of the women’s silence and face another public roasting” (Garner, 2004a, p. 269). The storm of criticism that arose after the publication of *The First Stone* is something Garner did not want to experience again and she feels that “the parallels between that story and this one were like a bad joke. No way was I going back out there” (Garner, 2004a, p. 13). Thus, at this point she seems to define “journalistic even-handedness” (Garner, 2004a, p. 269) as telling both sides of the story.

Here, opinions are divided. Willa McDonald maintains that Garner used “the absence of interviews with the plaintiffs and their supporters ... to throw the emphasis of the content of the text even more firmly back on her own thought process” (McDonald, 2011, p. 267) which implies that even-handedness was not intended. Janine Little argues that this even-handedness or objective reporting is neither possible nor called for, since “Garner is a participant observer within the narrative, writing of her own subjective responses to the fraught, sometimes volatile, and necessarily irreconcilable moral-ethical dialectic that extends from the material facts” (Little, 2010, p. 9).

Being a participant observer and becoming more and more immersed in the story to a large extent negates the notion of “sustained detachment” (Little, 2010, p. 11), a capacity which is expected of a journalist. Here again the writer / journalist split becomes evident: as a writer, Garner can proceed into territory that is closed to the journalist. She is suited to write Joe Cinque’s ‘lament’, because she ‘can do psychology’ and not because she is the “cool, mature journalist, who with her notebook could go among killers and their cohorts” (Garner, 2004a, p. 236). While she applies journalistic methods, which for Matthew Ricketson are “the finding of documents whether in print or online, interviewing people and first-hand observation”, she also uses “a narrative or storytelling approach to presenting people, events, and issues” (Ricketson, 2010c, n. p.). To Ricketson, the difficulty a writer of literary journalism faces is to “make clear to readers what they are being offered and the terms on which it is offered” and the journalistic criteria should always have precedence over the literary ones (ibid.). Garner’s position, as confusing as it may be at times, can always be determined and there are parts of the book where Garner the journalist emerges and parts where she is the writer and a character in her own book. Ricketson has commented on this saying that the “emotions that readers of Garner’s work feel when reading such closely observed and intimate behaviour is something readers value highly, but it also raises the ethical stakes” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 79), meaning that her style influences readers to take her side, to see things from her perspective. McDonald offers a similar argument in saying that what she calls “privileging of emotions” is criticised by those who “see dangers in the use of emotions to persuade readers, even unintentionally, to a point of view that may not support their own political stance” (McDonald, 2011, pp. 269-270). The contestation about Garner’s non-fiction, however, shows that her ideas and feelings are not shared by everyone.

In her paper *Ethics versus morality: the case of Joe Cinque’s consolation*, Dominique Hecq criticises Garner quite harshly for her approach. An important point in her argument is what she calls the “creative nonfiction writer’s obligation to factual truth rather than mere consistency and coherence in the story line, or one of the many possible versions of the truth” (Hecq, 2011, p. 3). In Hecq’s opinion Garner

unwittingly proves disrespectful towards both material and reader; firstly, because of her motivation in writing the book and the ensuing biased construction of Anu Singh; and secondly, because she identifies with some hypothetical ‘ordinary’ citizen which reflects and informs social stereotypes. (Hecq, 2011, p. 4)

While it is uncontested that there is bias and subjectivity in Garner's account, the claim that Garner "has breached the writer/reader contract 'through repetition [of moral judgements] and emotive appeals to the reader'" (Wilson in Hecq, 2011, p. 4) is not entirely justified. Writing in the first person and revealing to the reader what her emotional state is and how much involved she has become in the case, is a clear signal to the reader that she does not offer an objective piece of news journalism. *Joe Cinque's Consolation* is not a mere report about a murder case, but as Philip Adams said in an interview with the Cinques "trials take the human being out of the story. And of course Joe almost disappears and Helen tries to bring him back" (Adams, 2004, n. p.).

In the context of ethics a statement by Garner herself is both interesting and revealing. In *True Stories* (1996), she wrote:

I thought I'd be ethically in the clear as long as I wrote 'in good faith' – that is, if I laid myself on the line as well, applied to myself the same degree of analysis and revelation that I did to the other people concerned. I still think this attitude is legitimate, as far as it goes – but it's based on the assumption of consciousness in the novelist, which is over-optimistic to the point of being grandiose. (Garner, 2004b, p. 6)

In other words, in Garner's mind, declaring her bias 'clears' her of the necessity to present a balanced account. This attitude stretches the boundaries of literary journalism to its limits, or in the opinion of a few, beyond its limits. It certainly indicates that Garner places the "consciousness of a novelist" above the demands of the journalistic tenets of even-handedness, or as McDonald points out, she "uses her investigations of factual situations as springboards for her subjective reflections" (McDonald, 2011, p. 272). It clearly marks Garner as the most writerly example of the four case studies.

As far as the criterion clarity is concerned, it is chronology that gives the text its structure. The nine parts are divided into 'chapters', which differ in lengths, and the reader can easily distinguish the different time levels featured in the book. There are the years between 1997 and 1999, spanning the murder and the trials, and the years after the trials and the judgements when Garner researched the matter in detail and started writing the book. She gives extensive background information on the Australian legal system and renders vivid description of the city of Canberra and its drug scene. Garner also includes long verbatim quotes of interviews and court hearings, the latter of which can be verified by the transcripts of the proceedings. By giving exact dates, times of day and weather details and adopting a journal style, authenticity and verifiability is achieved.

As is the case with *Stasiland*, the combination of non-fiction and narration results in *Joe Cinque's Consolation* being a book of great originality. Morag Fraser called the book “a writer’s profound response to a tragedy and to questions about human responsibility over time as well as at precise moments, questions about duty of care in a community, about the law and its limits” (Fraser, 2004, n. p.). Susan Lever goes even further than this when she claims that both Funder and Garner “remind us that no state system should be beyond criticism, and that the Australian assumption of freedom of speech needs to be maintained and tested by courageous authors” (Lever, 2006, p. 7).

9.4.2 Literary criteria

Immersion, strong personal voice, internal thoughts and feelings, and subjective evaluation of events and persons

The literary criteria are of great importance in *Joe Cinque's Consolation*. As has been mentioned before, the book was published seven years after the trial of Anu Singh, which was extensively reported in newspapers and the media at large. The same went for the subsequent trial of Madhavi Rao. This meant that the journalistic work had been done and thus Garner’s endeavour had to be to write a book about a case which, although the outcome would be no surprise, had to have an inner tension to hold the reader’s attention.

According to Norman Sims, this involves “immersion reporting for a year or longer, the active presence of the author in the narrative” as well as the use of “tools long associated only with fiction, such as elaborate structures, characterization, and even symbolism, but with the added requirement of accuracy” (Sims, 2012). The criterion of immersion is closely linked with a strong personal voice. Garner develops from a reluctant but highly present onlooker, who is marginally interested in the story into a deeply involved writer, who sees the purpose of her book to get justice for Joe Cinque and to make sure that he is not forgotten. In this she becomes part of the story, similarly to Anna Funder in *Stasiland*.

The element of personal voice is so strong in *Joe Cinque's Consolation* that critics like Maryanne Dever have argued that the book is more about Garner herself than about anyone else (Dever, 2004, n. p.). Matthew Ricketson writes that “her highly personal approach leaves itself open to the charge that she believes her subjective response is more important than the events she is writing about” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81). This statement clearly places journalistic criteria in the fore and neglects to

acknowledge that the persona of the author is always present and the reader “sees the world through his eyes, experiences events through his subjectivity” (Aucoin, 2001, p. 10). Thus, for the reader, this personal voice, this involvement is a vital quality of the book. One could say that by describing and sharing with the reader her emotional turmoils, her exhaustion after a long day in court, her apprehension at the gruesome facts of Joe Cinque’s murder, her helplessness in the face of Mrs. Cinque’s grief and rage, her disbelief and anger when Anu Singh is sentenced for manslaughter and not murder, her conflicting emotions at Madhavi Rao’s acquittal, Garner “seeks to encompass aspects of life and culture that may lie beyond the grasp of other forms of journalism” (Boylan cited in Sims, 1990b, p. xvii).

Narrative techniques

Helen Garner’s origins as a writer are in fiction and in an interview with Margaret Simons she said that “she wasn’t a ‘real’ journalist” (Simons, 2000, n. p.). However, her non-fiction works clearly outnumber her fiction (see Garner, 2004a, p. 7) and her non-fiction books have been mentioned and critically analysed in most, if not all, Australian articles and studies on literary journalism. By being at home in both literature and journalism, Garner has become a *Grenzgänger*, crossing the borders between the two fields. It is, however, above all the great literary quality of her writing, and not the obeying of journalistic rules, which characterises her literary journalism. John J. Pauly’s statement that “literary journalists believe that human experience is revealed most compellingly and authoritatively through artful storytelling, and in the name of that principle they devote themselves wholeheartedly to narrative as an end in itself” (Pauly, 2011, p. 76) is apposite for Helen Garner’s approach to her non-fiction work.

In *Joe Cinque’s Consolation*, she applies a whole range of narrative techniques such as description, dialogue, direct speech and film-like sequences. There are intricate descriptions of the protagonists such as the much quoted and analysed scene where Anu Singh puts her hair up in court (Garner, 2004a, p. 46) and descriptions of her attire and her posture throughout the trial.

Dialogues and direct speech make the account vivid and at the same time enhance authenticity. The sense of authenticity is also achieved by the extensive first-person narrative and the journal/diary style in which a large part of the book is written. The change of scenery – Garner, for example, travels back and forth from Sydney to Canberra – serves to separate the information given about the case and Garner’s own feelings. There are scenes when she is a participant observer in court and scenes when

she is at home by herself, reflecting on what she has heard and seen. As is the case in *Stasiland*, there is a filmic quality about the narration.

One other important element that needs to be mentioned is the sentence “Joe Cinque is dead” which, like a mantra, appears in the book several times. It can be found on pages 52, 58, 137, 144, 229, 251, 296 mostly printed in italics. It appears whenever Garner seems to have doubts about whether or not she should pursue writing the book, or when it is said that people “who had been distressed by the murder trial were ‘over it’ now” (Garner, 2004a, p. 229). It is her main motivation to persevere, to overcome her doubts about whether it is permissible to take sides, to come to terms with her own emotions and those of the Cinques. “At the end of every argument, every doubt, stood the fundamental fact of the matter – *Joe Cinque is dead*” (Garner, 2004a, p. 137, italics in the original).

9.5 Conclusion

Considering the criteria, this analysis places *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* as a work of literary journalism. Yet it is a work that, in order to succeed as a book, draws heavily on literary and narrative technique. This remains a point of contention. While Matthew Ricketson’s acknowledges Garner’s “narrative voice ... combined with her literary talent”, he also points to the, in his opinion, lack of “detailed research that characterizes successful book-length journalism” (Ricketson, 2010a, p. 81). However, given the case, the research performed for *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* can be said to adequately cover the subject matter.

Clearly, *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* is not an objective book, but the same can be said for all the books analysed in this thesis. The topic simply does not lend itself to an objective, news-based account. Like Anna Funder, Helen Garner achieves authenticity by conducting personal interviews and by sharing with the readers her impressions. There is much first-hand reporting from the court sessions, and by sticking to a clear chronology, most of the facts Garner presents are verifiable. She writes from her own perspective and is an eye-witness as well as a participating observer – features she shares with all other writers whose books and essays are analysed. The fact that Garner lets the reader know about her qualms, doubts and changes of opinion can be seen as a literary device for augmenting emotional tension, but it also greatly contributes to the credibility of the book.

There is a strong element of immersion or involvement – Garner sits through the trials and subjects herself to the strong emotions of Maria Cinque, for example – and in the reader this evokes a feeling of being involved in the story. Having clarified that she wanted to hear both sides, but had little response from one party, she went ahead and wrote the story she wanted to write. *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* provoked discussions about ethics, the nature of justice and the legal system in Australia. Importantly, and in keeping with the tradition of literary journalism, Garner gave a voice to those who are normally not heard, in this case the victim and his family.

10 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to find answers to the questions of how the traditions of literary journalism in Australia and Germany developed, to what extent they differ and, most importantly, how truth and credibility, fact and fiction are defined and understood in the two cultures. A set of journalistic and literary criteria applied to four case studies was used to gain in-depth insights.

Even though Australia and Germany are both located within the Western media tradition, the examination of the history of journalism, and hence literary journalism, in the two countries shows that there are more differences than similarities, and that the latter have different origins. In both countries there was a relative closeness of literature and journalism for some time. In Germany this lasted until the end of the 18th century, a time which saw the emergence of early romanticism and which can be seen as the point at which the hierarchical separation of literature and journalism began. In Australia this closeness of the two fields was evident at the start of colonisation, and was mostly due to the fact that journalism was largely undefined as a profession which thus allowed various forms of other writing to be practised in parallel to reporting. Furthermore, 19th century Australian newspapers and magazines played a prominent role in publishing literature. The investigation of the historical development of journalism as well as literary journalism showed that realism has been an important characteristic of Australian literature, a fact that also contributed greatly to the close alignment of literature and journalism. This explains the relatively common practice of ‘border crossing’, that is, writers being active in both journalism and literature.

This phenomenon could also be found in Germany. The so-called *Grenzgänger* were mostly writers of highly developed literary skills, as for example Heinrich Heine, who applied these to reportages and feuilletons.

An important finding in this context is that the German approach of deriving the definition of literary journalism almost solely from the American New Journalism neglects the vital contribution of both reportage and feuilleton to the development of the form, and thus needs to be revised.

It has been shown that, as Australian journalism became more closely aligned with Anglo-American traditions, it moved further away from the German form. The two strands of opinion and fact, which became strictly separated in Anglo-American journalism, for much longer were not treated as separate in the same way in Germany, where precedence was given to opinion. This resulted in a tradition of what could be

called 'independent' journalism, which largely facilitated the development of the reportage and feuilleton genres. Even the press officers of the Allied Forces, who established the news-based journalism in Germany after the end of World War II, could not completely do away with this tradition.

It can be argued that the different attitudes to news and opinion have also greatly influenced the perspective on the key concepts in literary journalism in Australia and Germany: authenticity, credibility and verifiability. While it can be maintained that verifiability has the same importance in the two countries, things diverge considerably when it comes to credibility and, above all, authenticity, the most contested concept in literary journalism.

The case study analyses of this thesis shed a light on the different concepts or instruments for achieving authenticity, one of which is eyewitness reporting. Clearly the readers' understanding of and reaction to the respective works plays an important role in this context. As has been shown, already from the very beginning being eyewitness was a prominent element in German reportage and of key importance for establishing credibility and authenticity. First-hand information and, more importantly, first-hand experience and participating observation are essential elements of reportage. In *Der Aufmacher*, Günter Wallraff writes about his experiences in an editorial office of the tabloid *Bild*. He is eyewitness and participating observer and, for a German reader, this almost automatically denotes that what he is writing is authentic. It must be stated that in Wallraff's case this is even more complex. His claim of 'I was there and therefore what I wrote is true' very much shapes his notion of authenticity. Truth in this context is *his truth*.

The contributors to *Aktenkundig* are also both eyewitnesses and participants. They write about their experiences when reading their Stasi files. The files exist and they quote from the texts they read. One can say that there is even a second level to the eyewitness concept here in that the authors read about themselves in another time. They witnessed and participated in the action and give then, much later, their accounts of what they feel while they read about themselves. Needless to say, *Aktenkundig* has also been accepted as true and authentic by Germany readers. The prominence of the authors and the fact that in the 1990s the media reported extensively about their experiences with the *Stasi* in the former GDR no doubt contributed to this effect.

Of course, it can be argued that this also applies to the Australian examples, *Stasiland* and *Joe Cinque's Consolation*. Both Anna Funder and Helen Garner were, to a certain extent, eyewitnesses to what they wrote about. Funder lived in Germany for a

while and conducted face-to-face interviews with the persons she wrote about, visited places she described and thus gained first-hand experiences. Garner sat through the court hearings and subsequent trials of Anu Singh and Madhavi Rao, and conducted interviews with the Singhs and Maria Cinque, which makes her a participating observer.

However, the case study analyses of the two Australian books have shown that here typical features of literary journalism that is well researched and verifiable facts, are combined with various narrative techniques, with an emphasis on the latter.

Anna Funder's *Stasiland* shows traits of Ryszard Kapucinski's work in that there is a changed chronology, and personal involvement and voice are used as means to deliver a good story. Being an eyewitness in the interviews she conducts and having first-hand knowledge, are not the most important features of *Stasiland*. Funder is looking at her topic from the outside, and in the Australian understanding this is the strength of the book and contributes greatly to its authenticity. Not being personally involved is equal to a freedom to express beliefs and opinions, and not having any scores to settle seems to exclude bias at the outset. On the other hand, the negative and critical reception of *Stasiland* in Germany, especially in the eastern part, illustrates the stark difference in defining and evaluating authenticity and credibility. In the opinion of many German readers and critics, an outsider like Funder cannot and should not write about something she has not experienced first-hand. As far as they are concerned, she has no right to judge former Stasi collaborators, even though they are deemed criminals and traitors by most East Germans. As a consequence of this attitude a book like *Stasiland* could not have been written in Germany as it would have been deemed unacceptable.

It has been argued that the most important strength of *Joe Cinque's Consolation* is Garner's literary skill. She draws heavily on literary and narrative technique. Her personal interviews, the research she has done into the case as well as her presence, which can also be categorized as being an eyewitness, during the court hearings and trials she described underpin the claim for authenticity. Most facts she presents are verifiable and by involving the reader in her thought processes and emotional state, she achieves credibility. Unlike the Australian readers, however, a German audience would have problems with the prominent position the author takes in the book. She makes judgements about events she has not experienced herself and she filters information.

It can be argued that this is exactly what Günter Wallraff does too but, unlike Garner, he has the 'advantage' of being the protagonist of his reportage and thus is allowed to make judgements.

The above finding, that is, the difference in understanding of authenticity and the resulting acceptance or rejection of a work of literary journalism, is also supported by the diverging media laws and regulations of the two countries.

The fact that Anna Funder was sued for defamation by former Stasi officers who had been members of the notorious *Insiderkomitee* [Insider Committee] for quoting one of them who revealed that the *Insiderkomitee* had changed its name to *Gesellschaft zum Schutz von Bürgerrechten und Menschenwürde e.V.* (GBM) [Society for the Protection of Civil Rights and the Dignity of Man] (Funder, 2002, pp. 83-84) is indicative for this. The GBM also took out a temporary injunction against the German publisher of *Stasiland*, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, and the detail about the renaming of their former organisation had to be deleted from several of the German editions of *Stasiland*. One has to point out that in this context the topic is of special interest and significance in Germany. More often than not German courts rule against the press and it is becoming more and more difficult for the media in Germany to report about the Stasi contacts of politicians and other individuals in the public eye. The onus of proof is on the media and the German courts tend to rule in favour of privacy and personal rights. Furthermore, privacy and personal rights are given precedence over the right to free speech. This practice is in line with the German Press Code's regulations set up by the German Press Council, which demand a far higher protective wall around privacy than is erected in Australia. Journalists are not to disclose facts touching the private sphere unless they were personally involved and this also extends to people who are deceased. Günter Wallraff, although writing from the eyewitness perspective, changed all names in *Der Aufmacher* except for those of politicians and public figures. Yet he too was sued by the Springer publishing house for disclosing information he had obtained covertly. In 28 of 35 cases the Hamburg Higher Regional Court ruled in favour of Springer and prohibited Wallraff to make claims about *Bild's* practices if it involved naming people. In January 1981, the Federal High Court, however, generally approved of the publication of *Der Aufmacher* on the grounds that public interest in the machinations of Springer, that is, their marked manipulation of opinion, was more important than the privacy rights of a company or an individual. Springer's constitutional appeal was rejected by the Federal Constitutional Court in January 1984, which meant that there is a possibility to give public interest precedence over private or personality rights. The fact that the legal fight went to the highest German court, however, shows how difficult and controversial this matter is.

In terms of literary journalism in Germany the above legal constraints in combination with the focus on the tradition of participant observer and eyewitness means that the scope for the form is considerably smaller than in the Anglo-American world.

While Australian defamation laws are tighter than in Germany, they are centred on reputation rather than privacy and, importantly, they do not extend to the dead. This has given rise to a, initially British, tradition which permits authors and journalists to write more freely about other people, be this in biographies or other works. This also offers a far wider scope of topics for practitioners of literary journalism. Anna Funder's *Stasiland* reads like a fictional narrative and in Australia the readers and critics have no problem with this. Funder was praised for her achievement and her account was not seen as a falsification of events or an intrusion into the private sphere of others.

The investigations have shown that the differences in literary journalism in Australia and Germany partly originate in the contextual historical development of journalism in the two countries. This is neither surprising nor unusual. Far more interesting a finding is to what extent different regulatory frameworks which, in themselves, are an articulation of societal expectations, influence the way works of literary journalism are produced and subsequently received by the readership.

The other significant finding is that the approaches to the form of literary journalism need to be rethought to some extent. This goes especially for Germany, where the form is largely undefined and insufficiently researched, and where research criteria have been imported from a different and not always suitable tradition. Comparative studies can create awareness as to cultural differences, and they should be applied as a means of creating an international framework that draws from the different backgrounds. For Germany this would be especially valuable as it may show that the scope for literary journalism is far greater than assumed.

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