"The Writer Within Did It!"

Metafiction and Ulf Miehe's *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin*

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

As one of the first scholarly studies of Ulf Miehe's *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin*, this thesis undertakes a close reading of the novel, thereby providing a basis for further research. According to Linda Hutcheon's typology of metafiction as outlined in her book titled *Narcisstic Narrative* Miehe's novel displays the characteristics that fall under her category of overt metafiction, as opposed to covert metafiction. Overt metafiction self-consciously thematizes narrative, stating outright that a parallel theme to the narrative is the discussion of the narrative. Following mainly Hutcheon's defining characteristics of overt metafiction, I have separated my narrative analysis of Miehe's novel into three sections: pastiche, intertextuality, and narrative layering. The first two sections are concerned namely with how the novel engages with the discourses of the hard-boiled genre and the theoretical and social considerations of the artist, while the last section explores how the form and content expresses this self-conscious disruption of the narrative.

The argument unfolds by first discussing Fredric Jameson's concept of pastiche in place of Linda Hutcheon's parody, as indicative of a shift from modernism to post-modernism. Benjamin's narrative (the main character) as a performance projects his pastiche of the hard-boiled genre onto Berlin, recording the gap between the world he experiences and the image he projects onto the world, indicating that it is to be read as imitation. Benjamin documents the inauthenticity of the hard-boiled genre's realism through his projection and indicates the possibility of many versions through Anna's countering version.

In the second section, intertextuality is discussed through Hutcheon's link to T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition in literature. Miehe's intertextual references engage with the artistic, theoretical and social considerations of the tradition, including realism of the hard-

boiled genre, influence anxiety, originality, inspiration, and race relations. When Miehe includes references to the hard-boiled genre in literature and film, and to himself, his novel questions the necessity and accuracy of the hard-boiled genre's claim to realism, but also expresses part of that questioning to be a comparison and search for inspiration for original work. This involves the recognition of the past texts as not the one and only authentic version or form, but that innovation requires a recreating of past texts.

The last and third section concerns narrative layering as a means to thematize narrative within a narrative. Through the devices of *mise en abyme*, storytelling, narrative thematizing, and narrative framing, the text shows itself to be self-aware of its function as narrative, while creating that narrative. These devices attempt to engage the reader as an active participant as the text questions its own conceptualization of reality, the diegetic world, hopefully leading the reader to question the perception of reality presented in all texts.

The occurrences of metafictional devices in Miehe's novel develop the text as what Patricia Waugh describes as the site of communication between the reader and the writer. The writer has dismantled the codes that would usually cause a passive reader. Instead, the reader is encouraged to recreate the narrative through disruptive clues. In this active role, detecting the authentic text becomes the investigation of the many texts.

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Preface

In the middle of Mannheim stands a book store called Kober Books with its large yellow sign attracting book lovers from the passing streetcars. It was there that I came upon Ulf Miehe's *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin* (1973). Having earlier decided to buy only books originally written in German in Germany in a misguided effort to ban English from my thoughts, I searched through the pile of 4.50€ crime novels for just one bonafide German *Krimi.* Between the Agatha Christie tomes and James Cain cases I met Ulf Miehe and brought him home to become better acquainted. Delightfully, his work did not read like a third-year English student's ambitious summer project set in a suburb called Buttonbush, repeating "is" seven times in one paragraph. Instead, walking through Miehe's text had rather the ease and comfort of the 10 year old T-shirt from a university that has never been seen and the style and intentional parody of a Dior retro look. After one chapter, I revelled in my awareness of the comfortable prose. After a couple of nights, I saw hints of knowledge behind details known to me only in name and foreign as fashion. After the last page, I saw *Süddeutsche Kriminalbibliothek*'s reasoned choice. Miehe wrote in between the lines his familiarity of the crime genre, specifically the hard-boiled genre, and the international formal innovations of the novel that occurred in the 1970s. Accidentally, I had come across a novel investigating the crime genre in Germany through metafictional ponderings.

1. Introduction

This study will complete a first look at Ulf Miehe's novel, *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin* in an academic setting. Ulf Miehe (1940-1989), a German writer and film director, has been largely ignored by German studies in favour of other German language crime writers such as –ky (the pseudonym of Horst Bosetzky), Ingrid Noll, Wolf Haas, and Friedrich Dürrenmatt, to name just a few. This is despite the fact that his first novel, *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin* (1973), demonstrates Ulf Miehe to be one of just a few non-conventional crime genre writers from Germany during the 1970s. His two other crime novels as well as his work in film and television confirm his grasp of the genre and his storytelling ability.

Ulf Miehe, German writer, screenwriter and director was born in Wusterhausen in Dosse (Mark Brandenburg), Germany on May 11th, 1940, and died in Munich, Bavaria, West Germany on July 13th, 1989. Educated as a bookseller and publishing editor in Bielefeld from 1958-61, he later worked as an intern in a publishing house and eventually as an editor in Gütersloh, publishing his poems and translations of Bob Dylan. From 1965 to 1969, he worked in Berlin as writer, translator, assistant director, and dubbing artist.   During this time he published a collection of short stories, *Die Zeit in W und anderswo – Erzählungen* (1968), and collaborated on two science fiction novels with Clark Dalton under the pseudonym Robert Artner: *Am Ende der Furcht* (1966), and *Leben aus der Asche* (1968). After moving to Munich in 1969, Miehe worked successfully as an author, screenwriter and director. There he wrote his first of three crime novels, *Ich hab noch einen Toten in Berlin* (1973), later translated into 11 languages, which won the *Literaturförderpreis der Bayerischen Akademie für Künste*, and was filmed under the title *Output* (1974) directed by Michael Fengler. He intended his second

crime novel, *Puma* (1976), to be realized in film as well, but this adaptation remained incomplete at his death. *Lilli Berlin* (1981) completed his dalliance in the crime novel genre.

Miehe, however, accompanied his career as a crime novel author with screenwriting and directing. He co-wrote with Volker Vogeler the screenplays *Jaider – Der einsame Jäger* (1970-71), and *Verflucht dies Amerika* (1973). With Klaus Richter, Ulf Miehe wrote for TV crime series such as *Tatort* and *Der Fahnder*, even directing a few episodes in addition to the documentary film *Nichts Neues unter der Sonne* (1980). He directed his first feature film *John Glückstadt* (1974), adapted from Theodor Storm's novella, *Ein Doppelgänger* by himself and Walter Fritsche, and won a *Bundesfilmpreis* (1975) for best upcoming director. In 1979, he directed his first TV film *So hat jeder seine Freiheit* (1979), followed by the later *Der Unsichtbare* (1986-87). Knowledgeable in literature, Miehe could write poems, short stories and translations. Knowledgeable in the crime genre, Miehe could adapt his storytelling abilities to three mediums, finding acclaim as both a novelist and a director (Helt 13).

The novel begins on a film set as production is just wrapping up and where we are introduced to Benjamin, the screenwriter, and Alexander Gorski, the director. The two head next to West Berlin, where they will research Berlin's crime underworld for their next film project. Benjamin's friend, Horst Sparta, a Russian gangster in Berlin, has promised to tell them about an enticing but unachievable heist, robbing a military convoy laden with cash for the American soldiers' pay cheques. Under the guise of research aimed at telling an authentic crime story, Benjamin and Gorski rehearse the robbery route, obtain illegal firearms, fake passports, steal a car, binoculars, and both have an affair with Anna, the seductive *femme fatale* and employee of Sparta's. Even though Sparta warns against the coup, saying that it cannot be done, they complete their research, rob the Americans, and take off for a presumably warm

country. Their story is framed by Benjamin's friend Günter Quitt, whose introduction and afterward explains that this text is authentic and was sent to him from Benjamin.

While the novel offers opportunity for many interpretative approaches, the one that attracted my attention was a narrative analysis. Analyzing the novel from the standpoint of form becomes immediately obvious from the first page as the novel starts in *medias res* on a film set of three men robbing a bank, revealed in the next moment as an imbedded story, which is then framed by Günter Quitt's introduction. This framing device is announced as a dominant literary device from the story's beginning, leading to an analysis of narrative elements as the logical first step. Starting with a textual analysis of the novel will also provide fodder for further studies which may explore other prevalent themes in the novel.

Specifically, this thesis will examine narrative elements which mark the text as metafictional. Metafictional elements reveal the novel to be aware of its own fiction, inscribing the writing process or process of its own creation on its narrative structure. Linda Hutcheon (1980) outlines two types of metafictional elements: overt and covert. Overt elements have been thematized in the narrative's structure, but not actualized (as with covert elements): "...overt diegetic narcissism seems to involve the thematizing within the story of its storytelling concerns – parody, narrative conventions, creative process" (Hutcheon 53). Metafictional overt elements appear in Miehe's novel on several levels of the narrative – from form to framing device to intertextual elements. The methodology employed in this thesis will be outlined in chapter two. Chapter three will analyze the novel according to Hutcheon's method and chapter four will conclude with a summation of this interpretative analysis.

Through the lens of metafiction, Miehe's text is viewed in discussion with its mode of being, that is largely defined by the crime genre, and the offshoot, hard-boiled genre. The

development of the hard-boiled genre and its mode of being are crucial to the ontological discussion in which Miehe's novel engages as a parody of that genre. A brief history of crime fiction introduces hard-boiled fiction and introduces the trends or conventions to which it responds[1]. Since "crime in literature" could apply to and include a vast library of texts, both "crime" and "literature" being obviously broad terms, choosing boundaries for a brief summary of crime literature is difficult. Some literary critics, playing out their fantasy roles of literary detectives, have chosen to trace back to the Bible and Aristotle the first detective stories. Yet the first appearance of detective fiction has been most commonly attributed to Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders of Rue Morgue" (1841). Detective fiction has its roots in 18th-century fiction and Gothic novels. Early crime fiction recorded cases and biographies of criminals; some of the more famous accounts include three editions of *Pitaval* (1735-70) by Gargot de Pitaval, *The Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of the Most Notorious Highwaymen* (1714) by Captain Alexander Smith and the *Newgate Calendar* (1764-1810). The Gothic novel's influence on the crime genre can be seen in early detective fiction through its frightening scenery, mysterious crimes, rising suspense, and ending through a rational explanation.

Even though Poe's short stories in the mid-19th century are often cited as the first definitive appearance of the detective, elements of the detective novel can be traced to earlier work. William Godwin's *Caleb William* (1794), explores the interrogator's subtle question and answer technique in the first half, demonstrating a narrative technique of detective fiction. The second half follows the thriller form with Caleb being pursued as the accused killer. Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Pelham* (1828) falls under the typical criminal adventure with action

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[1] See the list of Works Cited for fairly similar accounts of the history of the crime novel history by these authors: Hans-Otto Hügel; Edgar Marsch; Peter Nusser; LeRoy Lad Panek; John Scaggs.

focussed on pursuit rather than detection. James Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Pathfinder* (1840) embed in the main characters a quick perception of danger and tracking techniques resembling those employed by Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Eugene F. Vidocq's *Memoirs* (1828) influenced following thrillers with his vivid description of his own ability to use disguises and surprise the criminal. His autobiographical character also influenced Poe's and Doyle's detectives insofar as all three represented the ideal detective as confident and eternally successful.

Edgar Allan Poe's amateur detective, Andre Dupin, solves mysteries using his art of detection named ratiocination. An outsider to the crime, this detective peers into the most inexplicable riddle and sees a rational explanation, bringing the chaos of the unexpected back into order. Poe emphasizes reason and power of an extraordinary intellect over the chaos represented by the crime. Arthur Conan Doyle, writing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, further develops this detective model through his character Sherlock Holmes. Holmes is famous for his exceptional ability to observe and interpret the clues in order to provide a rational explanation while remaining outside the law and outside of conventional society. Both characters also show influences from English Romanticism, preferring to work alone, exhibiting the genius of detecting, and possessing eccentricities; in the case of Dupin, he holes himself up in his mansion while Holmes prefers cocaine stupors and intense violin practice. Poe and especially Conan Doyle preferred not to experiment extensively with plot, which results in rather formulaic stories of mystery, detection, and then explanation.

From these early detective stories developed two schools, the American and British. The British school wrote the narrative in the form of a riddle that an acute detective without the exceptional powers of Dupin or Holmes solves at a distance from the crime itself, bringing the

world back into reassuring order. These novels focussed on the detective's rationality, distance from the crime and ability to explain the apparently unexplainable. A prolific and popular example is Agatha Christie (published 1920-70) with her detectives (Jane Marple and Hercule Poirot) possessing sharp observation skills. While the British school maintained a detective type and plot similar to Poe's first clue in the detective genre, the American school, otherwise known as hard-boiled or noir, developed the thriller aspects of Doyle's Holmes short stories, involving the detective closely in the criminal world. As a result the detective or private eye has rather ambiguous moral values, using questionable actions and criminal alliances to hunt down a particularly nasty criminal or chosen target. Often hampered by physical ailments and using the rough language of the street, this detective represents a new kind of law: he is neither an outsider from society nor necessarily possessing particularly unusual detective skills. Instead of the rather sanitized world of the British school, these novels, set in seedier parts of the city, often portrayed crime and punishment in graphic detail. Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and James Cain are three examples of this genre. While hard-boiled was popular during the 1930s and immediately after World War II into the 1960s, when its popularity began to wane, it did not reach Germany until the 1970s.

American hard-boiled genre became popular in France immediately after World War II both in literature and cinema. America's influence on French literature and film is marked by Marcel Duhamel's publication of American detective stories in the *Série Noire*, starting in 1945. Five years later, the French film industry began successfully producing imitations of popular American cinema, known as *polars* and *série noire*, continuing their popularity well into the present (Forbes 48). French noir cinema later branched out into *nouvelle vague*, the political thriller, and the postmodern thriller. In the 1950s and early 1960s, French cinema

exhibited an ambivalent relationship to the influence of American cinema, shaped by America's postwar economic dominance and the subsequent prosperous years in France (Forbes 47). As to the influence of American cinema in France, Jill Forbes concludes: "That the virtue of the American *film noir*, at least in the eyes of French critics, was that it posited an organic relationship between the individual and an urban rather than rural setting, suggesting how the city affected the behaviour and emotions of those who lived in it" (75). American cinema redefined how French cinema portrayed the relationship of city-dwellers to their surroundings.

Germany has its own tradition of the crime novel, often dominated by and in response to the international scene, and was similarly influenced by narrativized accounts of actual cases and from the Gothic novel genre. In terms of fictionalized real-life crime, August Gottfried Meißer (1753-1807) is considered in German literature as one of the founders of the crime story (Schönert 322). Writing for an interested and educated audience, he reworked singular cases and published them as stories in the magazine *Skizzen* (1778-96). Other similar anecdotal crime stories surfaced at the same time, such as those by August Friedrich Ernst Langbein (1757-1835) published in the collection *Feierabende* (1794), those from Karl Müchler in the collection *Merkwürdige Kriminalgeschichten* (1812) and *Kriminalgeschichten; Ein Beitrag zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde* (3 volumes, 1828-30) (Hügel 89), and the magazine founded by Karl Phillipp Moritz, *Magazin zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde* (1783-1793) (Schönert 323). Their focus on the criminal's decline partially separates the stories from Pitaval's early, basic form of the later fully realized detective stories (Hügel 89). Yet the connection between the German stories and the Pitaval collection is clear from the example of Friedrich Schiller. Influenced in his work by real-life accounts of crime cases, he also wrote an introduction to

Pitaval's work, recommending it to the German public (Schönert 322). Schiller's *Der Verbrecher aus verlorener Ehre - eine wahre Geschichte* (1792), is often cited as the first appearance of a crime story in Germany, and like the anecdotal crime stories focuses on the criminal. According to Schönert, at the end of the 18th century there were three types of German crime stories with different functions as: "sensationell-unterhaltenden, erbaulich-moralisierenden und räsonierend-informativen" (326).

During the 19th century, the German language crime story sprang from Gothic-influenced crime stories into detective-centric models. Early crime authors such as Heinrich von Kleist (*Der Zweikampf* [1811]), E.T.A. Hoffmann (*Das Fräulein von Scuderi* [originated 1817/1819]) and Clemens Brentano (*Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und dem schönen Annerl* [1817]), emphasized crime as a theme rather than detection, yet still began to form the detective story structure. For example, Kleist's work explicates the typical construction of the crime story: murder, search for explanation and then the solution (Freund 22). The narrative structure of *Der krystallene Dolch* (1820) by Laurids Kruse (1778-1839) represents a meeting of the Gothic novel and the detective novel (Hügel 118). Just eight years after Kruse, Adolph Müllner published *Der Kaliber: Aus den Papieren eines Kriminalbeamten* (1828), displaying a clear detective narrative (Hügel 125). Up until Jodocus Donatus Hubertus Temme (1798-1881), the detective narratives were shaped by the question: is the suspect guilty? With Temme the question shifted: who is the guilty one? (Hügel 206). In the second half of the 19th century, Temme is considered as a major contributor, having published 34 stories between 1855 and 1868 in the *Gartenlaube* from perspective of a judge (Hügel 151). The success of the newspapers (*Berliner Gerichts-Zeitung* and *Tribüne*), *Romanfeuilletons,* and the *Familieblättern* in the late 1850s and early 1860s accounted for the distribution of some of the

most influential detective narrative authors (163). These authors, published in magazines and also in serials, laid the framework for the detective narrative pattern with which later authors would toy.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the distribution of cheap serials grew starkly, allowing the crime-themed sensation stories to reach a large population, including those by Auguste Groner, Balduin Groller, Ferdinand Runkel, Paul Rosenhayn and Frank F. Braun (Hügel 206-07). Friedrich Glauser (1896-1938) was one of the earlier German language crime authors, whose talent caused a German language literary prize to be named after him. He wrote six novels, many short stories and numerous articles and essays, which have been adapted into film, comics and radio plays. The years after the Second World War created a break in the German detective tradition, as for the most part only English stories were being received by the German public, while German productions were left unnoticed (207). Later German language authors, such as Friedrich Dürrenmatt, who wrote *Der Richter und sein Henker* (1950), *Der Verdacht* (1951), and *Das Versprechen* (1958), experimented with form. However popular, his successful crime novels were not to be accompanied by a surge in German language crime writers until the 1980s. Ulf Miehe novel's shows the influence of Dürrenmatt's narrative experimentation as Dürrenmatt himself wrote self-aware novels. During the 1970s Horst Bosetzky (alias -ky) published *Einer von uns beiden* (1972), Miehe published his three *Krimis* and Jörg Fauser started his writing career. The latter two *Krimi* authors were strong examples of the influence of the hard-boiled genre on German letters 30 years after its original popularity in America. At the moment critical writing on the crime genre was gaining momentum, the crime novel in Germany was finding popularity among writers as a serious endeavour. In the 1980s and up to the present, crime novels proliferated,

and a vibrant German language crime writer community developed including authors such as Ingrid Noll.

Moving from an international focus the crime novel genre to a German language perspective leads to texts which focus on the German language history of the genre. An article by Jorg Schönert (1983), "Kriminalgeschichten in der deutschen Literatur zwischen 1770 und 1890: Zur Entwicklung des Genres in sozialgeschichtlicher Perspektive," lays out the early history of the crime genre in Germany with a focus on the cultural connection. He writes a thematic history of the crime genre. Winfried Freund's work, *Die deutsche Kriminalnovelle von Schiller bis Hauptmann: Einzelanalysen unter sozialgeschichtlichen und didaktischen Aspekten* (1980), also outlines a history of the *Krimi*, but highlights certain texts instead of providing an overview. Their limitations lie in the fact that their accounts end in the early 1900s, while most crime fiction, including Miehe's text, has been written during the 20th century. Dorothy Bollmann's "Deutschsprachige Kriminalliteratur im *Wandel der Zeit*" (1999) article considers four contemporary authors as the major crime authors, but in a simplistic fashion, first providing a brief overview of their contribution, and then a plot and stylistic summary of their major work.

Richard Alewyn has written one of the most influential studies in Germany on the crime genre poetic, "Anatomie des Detektivromans" (1968-1971). Although his work is more applicable to the crime fiction written at his time and before, many later critics have built on his work. Alewyn focuses on the effect the text has on the reader, suggesting that the reader relates to the detective character through their shared placement outside the reconstruction of the crime. Alewyn also observes the *Verfremdung* element of crime fiction which reveals that everything is not as it seems. The illusion of reality is thrown into question: "Das Fragen ist

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dann mehr als nur ein Denkspiel in einem abstrakten Raum. Es ist provoziert durch eine Realität oder besser noch: einen Zustand der Realität, für den nicht die Aussage, sondern allein die Frage den adäquaten Zugang bildet, einen Zustand der frag-würdig ist" (67). Later crime fiction, especially post-modern metafictional texts, further develops the theme of questioning the illusion of reality within the text identified by Alewyn.

Other works on the poetics of crime fiction also are important, such as Tzvetan Todorov's, "Typologie des Kriminalromans" (1966). He focuses on the structure of the crime narrative, noting that there are two levels of the narrative according to the Russian formalists, *sujet* and *fable*, which approximate the English terms "story" and "narration." Todorov states that the plot in crime fiction is as clear as possible to relay the story that ends with the plot's beginning. In the words of Todorov the style of the plot casts a shadow on the story, but with a neutral style (211). Hard-boiled crime fiction, on the other hand, fuses together the two levels filling the plot with life, creating a particular style or viewpoint. Todorov moves away from a strict typology of the crime genre to a description of the genre's narrative structure. He recognizes that the genre, like other genres, constantly recodifies its inventions: "Man könnte sagen, daß der Kriminalroman von einem bestimmten Moment an die Regeln, die eine Gattung definieren, als seine schwere Last empfindet und sich von ihnen befreit, um einen neuen Code zu begründen" (215).

Elisabeth Schulze-Witzenrath writes in "Die Geschichten des Detektivromans: Zur Struktur und Rezeptionsweise seiner klassischen Form" (1979), on the mobilization of the readers' ability within the structure and as a sign of the modern (230), building on both Alewyn's and Todorov's structural concepts. Hühn in "Der Detektiv als Leser" (1987) elaborates further on Todorov, labelling the hard-boiled genre as a hermeneutic, in which the

detective acts as representative for the reader within the text (247). These theories move toward the metafictional interpretation, which sees within the text the process of reading and writing made evident.

Miehe's text plays with crime genre and narrative conventions. One anthology edited by Jochen Vogt, *Experimente mit dem Kriminalroman* (1993), discusses specifically the narrative innovations of the crime genre. Friedrich Dürrenmatt, a forerunner of Miehe's and a crime genre experimenter, is the focus of an article by Jochen Richter, "'Um ehrlich zu sein, ich habe nie viel von Kriminalromanen gehalten.' Über die Detektivromane von Friedrich Dürrenmatt." Richter points out the specific self-reflexive elements that appear within Dürrenmatt's work, which Miehe also engages in his own work.

Since the crime genre is an internationally popular genre, influences come from outside Germany. Miehe recreates the hard-boiled style from America, made popular by Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett. Raymond Chandler wrote an essay "The Simple Art of Murder" on the hard-boiled style from the viewpoint of an author, outlining the aims of this innovation in America: to create a realistic crime narrative style containing street language, characters from the underworld, and a detective of sometimes dubious morals who involves himself more or less in the crime world. Several books also discuss the particular style elements of hard-boiled fiction. Wolfgang Kemmer writes in *Hammet – Chandler – Fauser: Produktive Rezeption der amerikanischen hard-boiled school im deutschen Kriminalroman* (2001) of the connection between the hard-boiled school and the German crime novel, showing the influence of American crime fiction on German writers. Although Fauser wrote crime novels after Ulf Miehe, Wolfgang Kemmer's study demonstrates the existences of a tradition of the hard-boiled school in Germany. Two other useful books which focus specifically on the

genre are Richard Schwarz's, *Nice and Noir: Contemporary American Crime Fiction* (2002), which traces the development of the hard-boiled genre in America, and the *Noir Thriller* (2001) by Lee Horsley, which outlines the typology of the genre.

Crime fiction has been easy fodder for a metafictional approach to the study of literature, since many of the metafictionists base their structure on the detective form. As Linda Hutcheon in her book *Narcisstic Narrative* (1980) observes, detective fiction is a covert form of metafiction, actualizing the self-reflexive elements within the form (73). Instead of discussing the covert form of metafiction, I will focus on the overt forms of self-reflexivity within Miehe's novel. Linda Hutcheon defines the overt forms as "present in texts in which the self-consciousness and self-reflection are clearly evident, usually explicitly thematized or even allegorized within the 'fiction'" (23). These overt forms are what point explicitly to the re-codification of the crime fiction genre.

Ulf Miehe's novel belongs to the literary movement, crime fiction that stretches across continents and into a past that includes both fictional and non-fictional texts. His text also belongs to an introspective trend in the novel form, which reflects on how meaning is constructed in the novel, and how those constructions exist both in reality and in fiction. Using this self-reflexive form as a site of communication between the reader and the writer, metafiction, Miehe's novel examines how hard-boiled genre constructs meaning and assumptions behind those constructions, while paradoxically using those constructions to write a narrative. Connected in this way to post-modernist texts, his text pays tribute to past contributions to crime fiction and challenges their authority to define the rules governing the genre.

2. Metafictional Approach

In the 1950s and 1960s, there appeared to be a new trend in literature, exemplified by the *nouveau roman* in France, and characterized by a self-reflexivity that foregrounded processes of creation - a trend known now as metafiction. Some texts that are now frequently discussed from the perspective of metafiction include those by Argentinean Jorges Borges, Englishman John Fowles, Austrian Peter Handke, and Frenchman Alain Robbe-Grillet.[2] This apparently new trend of metafictional writing generated its critics, who lamented the death of the novel genre, and its defenders, who heralded this new development as innovation (Hutcheon 2). While insisting on its literary worth, the defenders developed typologies in order to define and categorize metafiction. Some major theorists include Linda Hutcheon, Patricia Waugh, and Stephano Tani, of whom the latter wrote specifically on detective fiction. Their texts attempt to delineate that definition of metafiction to both explain its value in literature and interpret metafictional writings.

As a term, metafiction seems to have first appeared in a 1970 essay by William H. Gass, "Fiction and the Figures of Life" to denote a trend of self-reflexive writing, which marked the beginning of a deluge in critical texts concerned with self-reflexive writing (Waugh 2). A few years earlier in North America, Robert Scholes' *The Fabulators* (1967) anticipated the discourse using the term fabulator, however, it was years later that the theorists really began to confront the "critical implications" of self-reflexive fiction as seen in Robert Alter's essay "Partial Magic: The Novel as a Self-Conscious Genre" (1975) (Hutcheon 4). Linda Hutcheon later revises and expands on Scholes' and Ricardou's typologies in her book *Narcissistic Narrative* (1980). Their typologies and the ones that followed increased the

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[2] Many of these authors also often explored the detective genre as self-reflexive, showing its flexibility and capacity to encompass more than the superficial and frequently assigned pop-culture status. Of these authors, others moved mostly in the detective genre, such as Robbe-Grillet, who stretched the genre to its limits.

sensitivity of the terminology to account for the variety of metafictional writings that ranged from slight hints to radical brush strokes. This resulted in a range of sub-genres under metafiction, including fabulation, self-begetting, anti-novel, irrealism, narcissistic fiction, and surfiction.

During the 1970s the surge in critical texts on self-conscious works seems to suggest criticism's reaction to a shift in literary trends. A connection between the creative world and theory is easily seen in the critical text of Jean Ricardou, "Le Nouveau Roman" (1973), which were generated by the *nouveau roman* of the 1950s and 1960s (Hutcheon 4). In view of Patricia Waugh's assessment of the movement toward self-reflexive writing, the critic's reaction appears to be a microcosm of a larger reaction within the literary community to a shifting societal perspective. She notes that

> contemporary metafictional writing is both a response and a contribution to an even
> more thoroughgoing sense that reality or history are provisional: no longer a world of
> eternal verities, but a series of constructions, artifices, impermanent structures. The
> materialist, positivist and empiricist world-view on which realistic fiction is premised
> no longer exists. (7)

Her idea that metafiction responds to a reality lacking ordering principles stems from Michel Foucault's recognition of a new skepticism in art that can replace the missing order (Hutcheon 19). Understandably, this societal insecurity becomes thematized in the fiction produced in this context, as a boom in self-reflexive writings and then the corresponding critical fascination.

Yet, when defending metafiction to its attackers, this shift in perspective, which sees reality as provisional, is accompanied by tracing metafiction as far back as *Tristram Shandy*

(1759) by Laurence Sterne. In German Letters, Johann Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (1774) also exhibits traces of metafictional tendencies through narrative framing, and the partial inclusion of James Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry cycles. By tracing back metafictional tendencies to the earliest appearance of the novel, the argument which declares the novel's death is effectively countered, but it also introduces an unresolved contradiction into the definition - new yet old, consequently creating resistance against categorizing works with metafictional tendencies as a genre. Under these terms, the definition opens its boundaries, admitting vagueness and diluting its power. Yet in the face of blatant metafiction, these typologies prove a useful tool for uncovering the narrative's engine bowls and following its machinations. These self-reflexive tendencies, whether just a whiff or a powerful scent, appear to form a part of the novel's constitution, or in the words of Patricia Waugh: "By studying metafiction, one is, in effect, studying that which gives the novel its identity" (5).

A metafictional approach is concerned with discussing self-reflexivity in the novel. Hutcheon outlines this drive toward self-reflexivity as a three-step process, as a "new need, first to create fictions, then to admit their fictiveness, and then to examine critically such impulses" (19). This identifies the presence of both "art" and "life" in fictional works as the need to reflect on the processes of creation and its resulting mimetic properties. Waugh also sees an opposition in metafiction, noting:

> The lowest common denominator of metafiction is simultaneously to create a fiction and to make a statement about the creation of that fiction. The two processes are held together in a formal tension which breaks down the distinctions between "creation" and "criticism" and merges them into the concepts of "interpretation" and "deconstruction." (6)

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Waugh and Hutcheon both note the "sustained opposition," which builds the fictional illusion and uncovers that illusion (Waugh 6). This opposition allows traditional realism of the novel and its conventions to be set against the dynamism of plural perspectives, breaking down traditional values as they crash against the possibility of many truths.

In her book *Metafiction* (1984), Waugh outlines a typology, identifying three categories of metafiction. The first concerns itself with, "particular conventions of the novel, to display the process of their construction." Metafiction may also, "in the form of parody, comment on a specific work or fictional mode." Fiction that displays some "'meta' features . . . attempt to create alternative linguistic structures of fictions which merely *imply* the old forms by encouraging the reader to draw on his or her knowledge of traditional literary conventions when struggling to construct a meaning for the new text." Whether it be a "particular convention," "parody" or only a slight hint of metafiction, these types, "offer both innovation *and* familiarity though the individual reworking and undermining of familiar conventions" (12).

According to Hutcheon, the interpretative focus of metafiction asks for the reader's participation as an ordering principle: "What narcissistic narrative does do in flaunting, in baring its fictional and linguistic systems to the reader's view, is to transform the process of making, of *poiesis*, into part of the shared pleasure of reading" (20). Metafictional texts transfer interpretative activity to the reader, transforming a normally passive participation into an active one. The text's reliance on the reader to produce meaning shows an awareness of the instable fictive world and creates relative meaning. The exposed writing mechanics move the narrative forward, but also force the reader to constantly reorganize past material.

Linda Hutcheon classes metafiction as a two-pronged tree. The two direct offspring of metafiction are overt and covert narcissisms. The overt form, mirroring nicely its adjective, states outright that it is metafictional, while the covert form hides the metafictional tendencies within its structure. Hutcheon defines the terms:

> Overt forms of narcissism are present in texts in which the self-consciousness and self-reflection are clearly evident, usually explicitly thematized or even allegorized within the "fiction." In its covert form, however, this process would be structuralized, internalized, actualized. Such a text would, in fact, be self-reflective, but not necessarily self-conscious. (23)

Overt forms are easily recognized and often intrude on or break through the reality presented in the text, while covert forms may be concealed in the structure and not draw the attention of the reader. Hutcheon splits these two categories into the levels of language and story or, as she states it, linguistic and diegetic, leading in both cases to the freedom of reader (overt) and reading (covert) (154).

Unlike covert elements which actualize metafiction within the text and can or cannot be read as self-aware, overt elements thematize the text's status as a text and explicitly comment on metafictional themes. Through these narrative devices, the text states its value outright: I am a text; I have been written; and I am being read. In the words of Hutcheon: "Overtly narcissistic novels place fictionality, structure, or language at their content's core. They play with different ways of ordering, and allow (or force) the reader to learn how he makes sense of this literary world (if not his own real one). Such texts are not outside the mimetic code" (29). The text can do this in a rather obvious manner by inserting the author as a character into the novel, which says, "hello, hello, you are reading something that has been

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written. It is pleasure to meet you," or in a more subtle manner by embedding narratives into the fictional world that comment on the fictionality of the text. These elements break the dominant novelistic form of realism through a ready destruction of or intrusion into the created fictional world, placing the text as a site of communication between the reader and the writer.

Hutcheon further splits her overt form into two further branches: diegetic and linguistic. Simply stated, overt diegetic form is concerned with the power of storytelling to create worlds, while the linguistic form explores the powers and limits of fictive language (154). Some typical diegetic devices are parody, intertextuality, *mise en abyme* and allegory. The linguistic form exposes the duplicitous nature of language – its ability to create worlds, but also the limits of the fictive worlds. "In the linguistic mode, however, the text would actually show its building blocks – the very language whose referents serve to construct that imaginative world" (29). Often this exposure of language appears in the form of decrying the inability of the writer to express the world in words or just the opposite, flaunting the language's ability to represent the world in hyperrealist terms. It thematizes the discussion of language's powers to mimic or enhance reality. In its diegetic and linguistic forms, the examination of the world as it constructed displays its own workings to be read easily.

Hutcheon includes the traditional, overt characteristic, parody, as a part of her typology on metafiction. Parody directly comments on an aesthetic that has become a normative and numb routine, when it reveals the constructs of a genre, questioning its tired aesthetic values, and foregrounding the once unassuming background conventions. Based on a formalist formulation, Hutcheon discusses parody as a relationship between two conflicting motivations: "Parody . . . is a result of a conflict between realistic motivation and an aesthetic motivation which has become weak and has been made obvious. The consequence is the unmasking of the

system or of creative process whose function has given way to mechanical convention" (24). Texts with metafictional tendencies use parody as a method to uncover realism's illusion as just that by laying bare its constructs.

Although parody has traditionally been seen as characteristic in writings on metafiction, more recent writings see the similar idea of pastiche as more suitable. Fredric Jameson's text, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), assesses cultural artifacts as a production of economic forces accompanied by the dissipation of the individual style. The resulting terrain is devoid of a norm or dominant code. In his words: "If the ideas of a ruling class were once the dominant (or hegemonic) ideology of bourgeois society, the advanced capitalist countries today are now a field of stylistic and discursive heterogeneity without a norm" (27). According to Jameson, this shift is marked as distinguishing modernism from postmodernism. After, "parody found a fertile area in the idiosyncracies of the moderns and their 'inimitable' styles," this proliferation of styles deconstructed the norm, and heralded the advent of pastiche as the blank imitation of a multitude of styles (26-27).

Jumping for a moment to John Melling's overview of parody and pastiche in crime fiction offers a clear comparison leading up to Jameson's definition of pastiche and his rejection of parody. When attempting to distinguish the two forms of imitation, parody and pastiche, Melling outlines some of the more simplistic comparisons, such as young man - old man, bitterness - affection, and distortion - faithfulness. Melling rejects the simple descriptors as limited in favour of the following definition, which he apparently quotes from Ellery Queen: "A parody is burlesque imitating some serious work; a pastiche is usually a serious imitation in the exact manner of the original author" (1). In other words, parody exhibits elements of a

comic nature, evident in its synonyms, spoof and caricature, while pastiche lacks the critiquing humour. Fredric Jameson provides a more indicting definition of pastiche, noting:

> Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language. But it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter and of any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality still exists. (27)

Jameson's unhealthy pastiche expands the idea of serious imitation, noted by Queen, to suggest the text is role-playing when it imitates or wears a mask, but without being aware that the mask is a facade. He diagnoses pastiche as a "norm" of no norms, yet normative of artistic creation that unconcerned, freed from doubts of artistic integrity, borrows from the past. Jameson's pastiche engages in the remorseless "random cannibalization of all the styles of the past". And so doing has become a product of the "postliteracy of the late capitalist world" (27).

Returning to Linda Hutcheon's typology, she connects intertextuality to parody, which can also be applied to pastiche; she interprets intertextuality as an extension of the parodic role of metafiction: "Indeed, the techniques of the 'littérature citationnelle' can be seen as both parodic and generative. Quotations from one text, when inserted in the context of another, are the same and yet new and different, a microcosmic version of T. S. Eliot's concept of 'tradition' in literature" (24). Hutcheon's interpretation of intertextuality recognizes that no work or artist produces meaning in a vacuum, and sets up that connection to past artists. In the words of T.S. Eliot, "no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead"

(Eliot 4). Intertextuality sets up the context of the work within it, creating an interpretative framework within the narrative that immediately places artist "among the dead."

Linda Hutcheon's third category under overt diegetic metafiction, *mise en abyme*, presents the narrative form as that which can recede infinitely into and out of itself. *Mise en abyme* is a French term describing the reflection of the larger narrative as a smaller embedded narrative. André Gide first suggest the term, when he noted in a diary entry the coat of arms (escutcheon) on a shield presents a version of the whole within the whole, or a smaller reflection of itself within itself (Ron 418). Moshe Ron defines Gide's discovery: "Any diegetic segment which resembles the work where it occurs, is said to be placed *en abyme*" (436). He tacks on two provisos, stating the segment must be considerably smaller and must not be located on a higher diegetic level than the "pertinent and continuous aspect of the work it resembles" (437). Defining *mise en abyme* as resemblance draws vague borders, since arguably every text segment could resemble itself. Ron solves this difficulty by adding every resemblance must be able to be proved (437). Although Shakespeare's "Mousetrap" in *Hamlet* does not exactly mirror the play, the smaller reflection still exemplifies this device, since it can be proved that it *resembles* its container. *Mise en abyme* applies to the story of the story within the story, or narrating the narrative as it occurs. This mirroring effect belongs to metafictional texts because of its reflective characteristic and consequent thematizing of the narrative act. Beyond the overt diegetic categories laid out here of *mise en abyme*, intertextuality and pastiche, there are other clear signs of an overt metafictional text such as violating the third wall, and presenting and discussing the works of a fictional character.

One of the categories that Hutcheon introduces as an actualized form of covert narcissism is the detective novel. The drive of a detective story is to piece together the story

behind the crime which will then lead to the murderer. This is solved through fitting together traces of the past to form a logical whole. Traditionally the detective story announces to the reader that it reconstructs the story of detecting. Hutcheon identifies a quality particular to the detective novel: "To begin with, the detective story is almost by definition intensely self-aware. Often this will take the form of a writer of detective stories within the novel itself" (72). This trope is seen in many crime writers, one of whom is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Watson character, who recorded Holmes's investigations, while also aiding in the investigation. The narrative device of a story within a story is intrinsic to the detective novel, but the device itself does not cause a novel to be self-aware. When the narrative is formed from the structure of a detective novel, the possibility of self-awareness is placed within the novel, yet it only becomes a metafictional work through the manipulation of crime genre conventions. These manipulations rework the genre to create new codes and revivify old codes, thereby highlighting its own self-reflexivity. Linda Hutcheon explains this process:

> The strong conventions of order and logic in detective fiction which Harriet Vane knows are to be obeyed because the *reader* expects them and needs them in order to read the work, in order to participate in the case. It is this very store of infinitely reworkable conventions that is acknowledged and exploited, "re-contextualized," by metafictionalists such as Robbe-Grillet and Borges. (72)

The reader has come to expect a particular type of logic from this genre and chronology of events. Calling attention to the events, the self awareness resets this framework, on which the readers base their understanding of the text. The resetting of the text calls itself one thing, a crime novel, while introducing a new view of an old method, causing the reader to become an active producer of meaning – synthesizing the old with the new.

Similar to Hutcheon's assessment of the metafictional detective novel as a reworkable genre, Stephano Tani in his book *The Doomed Detective* (1984) observes in his introduction "how recent serious writers take advantage of detective fiction conventions to write something quite different from detective fiction" (xiii). After first discussing, what he labels the "innovative" and the "deconstructive anti-detective" novels, he then delves into the "metafictional anti-detective novel" as intellectualizing the detective game to the point where it becomes a "sophisticated ritualization of the timeless game between the writer and reader" (147). Appearing as the "'assassination of texts' and 'hide and seek' between the writer and reader," the game unfolds as the text which is killed by the writer," the reader, "'brings back to life' by solving the mystery . . . or by making sense of the distortion imposed upon it" (146; 147).[3] Using the examples of Vladmir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962), and Italo Calvino's *Se una notte di'nverno un viaggiatore* (1979), Tani shows how the anti-detective,[4] not the detective, through his literary job complicates the mystery, instead of clarifying - distorting the truth, as does Kinbote, the editor in *Pale Fire*, or forging and corrupting texts, as does the translator, Marana, in Calvino's text (146). Called into activity by the continual reminders of the text's fictionality, the reader attempts to read through the distortion, forgery, and corruption to the story's reality beneath. The dead text is only a means of communication between the writer and reader, the former who lays out his filtered perceptions and rearrangements of reality, and the latter who in turn rearranges reality in a personal reaction to the creation (133-34). Metafictional anti-detective fiction expresses this communication through characteristic

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[3] Tani connects the creativity of the writer, and the re-creativity of the reader to the creative and resolvent side of Edgar Allan Poe's detective M. Dupin, noting how the genre has shifted this duality from the detective to a "polarization of the relation between writer and reader, between the fiction-maker and his active recipient" (147).

[4] In short, the anti-detective chooses not to choose a solution to the mystery as the means of remaining free from the chains of repetition. Discovering the solution to the mystery dooms the detective to repetitive detection as the past is full of unsolved mysteries, exemplified in Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, whose repeated detection only ended with his own death.

devices of parody, intertextuality, circular and mirroring narrative and the violation of the third wall, but also through structural deviation such as placing the murder at the end.

Metafiction has often been associated with postmodernism as a characterizing feature of the texts, as seen in the discussion of Jameson's definition of pastiche. Hutcheon avoids the connection to postmodernism, stating: "I have deliberately not used this label," because of the limited nature of the word, the surrounding discussions concerned with philosophical, ideological, and social causes, and her desire to focus on the text and not the author (12-13). Other theorists of metafiction such as Waugh, Tani, and Jameson engage fully with the idea that metafiction is a postmodernist phenomenon, first differentiating modernism from postmodernism. Waugh introduces the division between modernism and postmodernism as such:

> The mind is not a perfect aestheticizing instrument. It is not free, and it is as much constructed out of, as constructed with, language. The substitution of a purely metaphysical system (as in the case of Proust) or mythical analogy (as with Joyce and Eliot) cannot be accepted by the metafictionist as final structures of authority and meaning. Contemporary reflexivity implies an awareness both of language *and* metalanguage, of consciousness *and* writing. (243)

Here, Waugh also notes the added layer of self-awareness written into metafictional texts; not only are the texts aware that they speak a consciousness, but that the consciousness is being written. The awareness of the way consciousness is constructed in novels develops into recognition of how the world is classified by frames and separates fiction from reality.

According to Brian McHale's analysis, modernist texts dominantly explore epistemological questions, asking what do we know and how do we know it (10), whereas

postmodernist text foreground ontological questions: "That is, postmodernist fiction deploys strategies which engage and foreground questions like the ones Dick Higgins calls 'post-cognitive': 'Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?'." (10) As epistomological questions are closely connected with ontological questions, the distinction between modernism and postmodernism seems to rest on the question which begs to be asked first.

Beyond possible connection to postmodernism, metafiction clearly concerns questions stretching beyond the text, when as a self-conscious phenomenon the text becomes a site of communication between the reader and the writer. The reader, urged into action by the narrative's bare inner workings, begins to sort through the embedded interpretation as signposts. As seen in Linda Hutcheon's typology, these signposts consist of two types, thematized (overt) and actualized (covert), of which detective fiction fits into the latter. Thematized metafiction demonstrates a measure of self-consciousness, while actualized metafiction may not necessarily demonstrate this. This self-consciousness indicates the text's awareness of itself and its preoccupation with this reality. When recognizing the constructedness of its own reality, this fiction begins to question this reality's rules and conventions - its borders, allowing these to shift. Metafiction questions the truth of a monolithic norm under the face of much evidence as to a plurality of realities and perceptions of these realities.

3. Narrative Analysis

A narrative analysis of Miehe's novel from the standpoint of metafiction is a choice, which encounters the least resistance from the text (if we can allow the text a voice or agency). Resistance means there are few if any elements which contradict or do not fit within the conclusions drawn from an analysis through a metafictional lens. A metafictional analysis, then, explains the purpose of self-aware narrative moments present in Miehe's text as a critique. This paradox of critiquing and producing a narrative characterizes metafictional texts. They critique how a narrative is structured and consequently the portrayal of reality in fictional texts, which engages in discussion regarding the border between reality and fiction. Since these novels thematize the elasticity and vulnerability of that border, narrative reality becomes unreliable and disrupted as the external world thrusts into the narrative. As a result, fiction steps into the world outside the novel (reality), when the constructed nature of our perceived reality becomes obvious.

Miehe's novel engages in two discourses, crime fiction and metafiction, as seen through the typology developed by Hutcheon defining overt metafiction, but replacing her category of parody with Jameson's concept of pastiche. Tani's development of the concept anti-detective shows how Benjamin projects a pastiche of the hard-boiled genre, creating the text as a site of communication between the reader and the writer. The intertextual references as defined by Hutcheon mention fictional crime stories as well as real life crime writers of the hard-boiled school, which connects the text directly to other crime texts. In this case, narrative layering does not directly engage crime fiction, but refers to it through the confession framework and the themes of the embedded stories. Metafictional tendencies are present in all three areas of the text, but the self-awareness, which allows the text to critique narrative rules

and conventions, is most prominent in the narrative layering. Examining the novel's relationship to crime fiction in these three areas and how this relationship is developed shows this novel to be a text moving in two directions: involved in creating a crime fiction narrative, and also investigating narrative conventions of crime fiction through metafictional elements.

The fact that Miehe's novel produces a narrative, understood as such, comes not into question here. Instead, does this novel produce a critique of narrative conventions through pastiche, intertextuality and narrative layering? The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* republished it as a crime novel, assigning it fictional and narrative qualities; it was reviewed as a fictional narrative; and it is read as a fictional narrative. Due to its accessibility, this publication is used for this thesis. Grounded in Linda Hutcheon's discussion on self-reflective narratives, the following chapter will discuss in three parts how Miehe's novel tackles its own existence as a crime fiction and how this self-reflexivity discusses what it means to be an artist. The first section outlines the pastiche of hard-boiled genre through a comparison of typical hard-boiled characteristics and the novel's development of these characterizations. The second section focuses on the intertextual references, showing how these references shape the picture of the artist through many mediums. The last section thematizes writing through plainly self-aware device, narrative layering.

3.1. Pastiche

Miehe's novel is not the first time an author has intentionally or unwittingly written an imitation of a crime fiction style, as is apparent from John Melling's extensive overview of crime fiction parodies and pastiches. According to Melling, out of the authors he contacted, few were willingly to admit that their work may be a parody or pastiche (25). Their unwillingness to admit to imitation indicates their own unease, when confronted with their own

borrowings from other works. This brings forward the issues of originality and authorial influence, which Miehe addresses partially through his pastiche of the hard-boiled style and the author, but also through intertextuality, discussed in a later section. In his first novel, Miehe uses pastiche to directly address creative doubts of originality and the authority of influential writers on the present with a degree of comfort. His use of language, the detective figure, urban setting, its corrupt police and the *femme fatale* reveal the text to be concerned with hard-boiled fiction's representations of reality. His own ease with the hard-boiled conventions and open development of them through a 1970's lens show his acceptance and recognition of past great hard-boiled writers. His lens also allows him to foreground metafictional concerns, already present in hard-boiled fiction, which problematizes the identification of the real. Commenting on the difficulty of creating whether it be stylistic or practical concerns within the novel allows the pastiche to take on a metafictional slant, as the writer writes into the text the processes of creation.

The instances of pastiche in Miehe's novel come to a similar conclusion as the cultural analysis provided by Fredric Jameson. According to Jameson, pastiche is an effect of the consumer's desire, "for a world transformed into sheer images of itself and for pseudoevents and 'spectacles'" (28). When Benjamin projects a pastiche of the hard-boiled genre onto his world, he not only performs the imitation as a character of his own making, but in turn reveals the facade of the performance as a reflection of his larger speech act, the narrative. In other words, he writes a character of himself, who is creating his own characters of the detective and writer through the course of the narrative. In its self-reflexivity, the narrative becomes "sheer images of itself."

3.1.1. Introduction to Hard-boiled Fiction

Early hard-boiled fiction, written by authors such as Raymond Chandler (1888-1959) and Dashiell Hammett (1894-1961), depicts a decaying world, lacking centering and ordering principles of wisdom and justice, as seen in the habitually corrupt police, the hostile urban environment, violence and the duplicitous appearance of the *femme fatale*. A detective ventures into this world, often responding to a distrusted client's request to search for a missing object or person. He encounters violence, duplicity, and a multiplicity of murders on his way to the truth, while narrating his quest from the first person. The detective's perspective moves the story along at a fast pace, leaving little room for authorial interpretation and much time for similes and wisecracks (Panek 16). At the end of his account the, "murderer may be identified, but truth is not wholly revealed" (Malmgren 97). Truth or even a motive for the crimes eludes the detective and consequently the reader, who is left unable to satisfactorily link cause and effect in a world missing a centering, rational order.

The centrality of the detective and the resulting foregrounding of the individual has led to connections between the hard-boiled genre, the Western, romance, and Romanticism. According to Scaggs, the tough, wisecracking detective and the hostile urban center is linked to the cowboy of the Western genre, and the wildness in frontier towns through the common Californian setting (50). This setting promises in both genres money, a new start and the individual as the lawmaker. Through parallels to the Western, Scaggs notes hard-boiled fiction as particularly American and distinguishes the detective's investigations (direct questioning and moving from place to place) from the British detective traditions (59), which tend to remain in a relatively small area. While in form hard-boiled fiction resembles the Western, the center or ordering principle determining truth is indistinct. Instead, Malmgren notes that the

quest takes the form of an inverted romance, since the truth behind the missing object or person will usually remain frustrated, only partially uncovered, because the truth itself has been destabilized (93). Truth in hard-boiled fiction has been destabilized through what both Scaggs and Malmgren recognize as a gap between appearance and actuality, inside and outside, and the word and the deed, present most notably in the characters (Malmgren 75, 82). Repeatedly uncovering what was true as fiction undermines any attempt by the characters to claim that they possess truth, and preempts ordering principles by thematizing the relationship between reality and fiction.

Miehe's novel questions the reliability of reality through a pastiche of language used in hard-boiled fiction. Early hard-boiled fiction used language as much as plot to illustrate the disparity between appearance and actuality, or word and deed. Particular to hard-boiled fiction and to Miehe's novel is the first-person narration, simile, wisecracks, action-oriented language, interrogation style dialogue, and vernacular. LeRoy Panek demonstrates how language functions in hard-boiled fiction through his interpretation of simile, which shows that simile repeats "one of the principle themes of hard-boiled literature: that the world as it is and the world as it should be are two different things that the actions of the hero make equivalent, or at least coexistent" (Panek 50). Although simile appears sparingly in Miehe's novel, he uses other linguistic devices to foreground the arbitrariness of language, which allows the word as it is, to be different from the word as it should be acted out. Miehe builds on the unreliability in language present in hard-boiled fiction, something that Malmgren notes in Hammett's fiction: "Words are becoming arbitrary counters whose real value is unknown. Language, like behavior, begins to reveal its arbitrary nature" (84). When in fiction words reveal their

arbitrary nature, that itself moves toward metafiction as the nature of the reality constructed by words; fiction becomes suspect, and curbs the reliability of the narrator.

3.1.2. Language – Slippery Signifiers

Near the beginning of the novel, when it is revealed that the bank robbery is imaginary and is really occurring on a film set, the reader becomes aware of being tricked through narrative action, but also through language. The trick is partially expressed by the absence of the pronoun "I," in the first three pages, allowing these pages to be read from a third-person perspective. After the bank director has already broken the illusion, the "I" enters and it is revealed that the readers have been observing the bank robbery through the narrator's perspective. The de-settling switch in perspectives plants doubt as to the reliability of the narrator, pointing to his withholding of information key to understanding the present situation. Later, Günter Quitt reveals in his inserted introduction that we are in fact reading Benjamin's, the narrator's written voice, another fact that the narrator has withheld from the reader. Through his missteps, Benjamin smudges one of the qualities Malmgren identifies as a key component of the first person narrator, namely honesty (108). As Benjamin, the writer and narrator, assumes the role of hard-boiled detective, his revealed trickery uncovers the role as a performance.

Benjamin's distortion of the truth matches the anti-detective of metafictional crime fiction as described by Stephano Tani. Like these anti-detectives, Benjamin uses his literary role as a writer to confuse the reader and highlight the text's fictionality. His early trickery awakens readers into accepting the active roles of detection and recreation, as they must readjust to account for a suspicious narrator. This ability of language to obscure reality is further developed in the next example of vernacular confusion.

Miehe uses vernacular to undermine the connection of the signified to the signifier, emphasizing the arbitrariness of language. The vernacular tongue is characteristic for the first-person narration of hard-boiled fiction, full of its short cuts and slang, intended to portray the realism of the novel. Benjamin enters into a tearoom and uses the word *Molle*, Berlin slang for beer, but displays his outsider status when he cannot comprehend the following account told by a young acid user: "Aber wie das so geht. Bis er jeden Tag die Hühner vorm Haus hatte, und da warn die ganzen Lardos Neese. Gestern hat er sogar seine Muschel verscheuert. Mehr ist ihm nicht geblieben" (60). When Benjamin expresses his confusion, the young man translates: "Hühner sagen wir für Polizei, Lardos sind Dollars. Muschel ist sein Wagen" (60). Language is particular to the group, as the young man qualifies his usage: "Ich dachte, du wärst aus der Szene hier" (60). Pointing to a regular practice of slang, the young man's metonymy obscures the meaning of the sentence to such an extent that the words in place of a signifier have as their signified another signifier. The sign distanced from its original referent reflects on the similar distancing in pastiche of the imitation from the original. Similar to pastiche's own origins, generated by a society lacking a singular ordering principle, language becomes for Benjamin an unstable and alternate reality, where police are labelled as chickens.

3.1.3. Benjamin as Anti-detective

Central to most early hard-boiled fiction is the detective figure, in this case imitated by the writer figure, Benjamin. His imitation of the detective is doubled by his performance as a criminal – simultaneously detecting while obscuring truth shows his function as an anti-detective. This doubled role allows him to function for the reader as the model of detection (detective) and the source of mystery, at the core of which is his missing first name. Through his writing, his identity appears flexible with many facades, fostering the mystery. This

characteristic is captured in Günter Quitt's editorial observation, while rejecting the implications. He notes: "*Heute spricht man ja über einen Mann, der durch Mauern gehen kann. Diesen Eindruck machte er mir bei unserer ersten Begegnung durchaus nicht*" (14). Benjamin's role-changing from writer to detective and criminal leaves a legend of insubstantiality behind, pointing to his identity's morphing abilities, its written traces as a self-aware performance, and its narrative qualities. Drawing from that first impression, Quitt also discounts other myths surrounding Benjamin's behaviour, rejecting Benjamin as an actor, yet adding that Benjamin was once (for curiosity's sake) an extra on a film set (15). Differing from Quitt's view, Benjamin's account, itself a performance of his thoughts in the first person, shows the writer being performed as both a detective and a criminal. Benjamin as the detective models the act of detection through his research on the authentic crime story while Benjamin, the criminal, confesses, and the writer builds the tale. Benjamin's contradictory roles are a reflection and expansion of what Scaggs sees as the hard-boiled detective's inner divide. He comments that: "He ... has two voices, and each voice reveals a side to the private eye that is incompatible with the other" (Scaggs 61).

As the writer, Benjamin creates a pastiche of two incompatible voices, the hard-boiled detective and the criminal. Evident through his language as first person narrator (discussed above), his attire, investigative methods and even his poor financial situation, Benjamin imitates the hard-boiled detective, signaling to the reader that he is creating a detection model His day-in and day-out attire of cowboy boots, leather jacket, and tinted glasses point to the roots of hard-boiled detective fiction in the Western (Miehe 14). As Scaggs notes, the frontier setting of hard-boiled novels, "underlines the identification of the private eye as a quickfisted urban cowboy, who, when he speaks at all, speaks in the tough, laconic American vernacular"

35

(57). Beyond reference to the specific literary tradition, the uniform of cowboy boots and leather jacket refer to American culture as an image allowing the character to be imitated and performed. Benjamin's investigative methods continue to refer to the roots of hard-boiled fiction: "[T]he hard-boiled detective's investigations, involving direct questioning and movement from place to place, parallel the sort of tracking down of a quarry that is characteristic of frontier romance and the Western" (Scaggs 59). In action, Benjamin's research methods imitate a detective's, but instead of hunting lost American money by going from place to place, he hunts from place to place in order to find the text. His robbery seems to be just a consequence of his research. Lastly, like the hard-boiled detective, Benjamin is lacking in funds, which causes him to embark on his search for the authentic text. As the model for the reader's detection, Benjamin's hard-boiled detective assigns the reader to the task of finding the authentic story, and clearing out the poisoned sections as the detective tries to clear out the poisoned city.

Benjamin's voice as the hard-boiled detective allows him to also voice his criminal side, however incompatible they may be. Hard-boiled detectives, as they walk down the mean streets of the city, usually end up with a touch of guilty dirt on their clothes through violence or other shady dealings, but usually refrain from joining the criminal element. Through his role as a criminal, revealed at the end, Benjamin has his half of the stolen million dollars as dirt on his clothes, while signaling to the reader that clues to the crime can be read in the narrative. Since his account of the crime serves as a both a detective's explanation and a confession, the effect of the detective's dubious involvement in crime to when he crosses over is enhanced. When he investigates how crime can be committed, he acts as a detective; when he commits the crime, he plays by default the criminal. Malmgren sees the detective's narrative act as an

attempt for redemption from his involvement in the corruption, commenting: "In the end, the detective must look beyond himself for something he can count on; his real redemption might come not from the story he tells but from the fact that he tells it at all" (106). Benjamin's possible redemption for the criminal side to his detective comes from his performance of the roles through writing. But the doubt inserted into the narrative, when its resemblance to reality is questioned, places the narrative act as a possible fraud and disallows an authentic redemption

Benjamin realizes his own fictionality that he has become a character in his own work, when he writes into his account that he is aware, he is only performing a role. When Benjamin cannot find the words, his characteristics, ill-suiting to the hard-boiled genre, attempt to surface, such as an intense fear that soaks the palms of his hands before the robbery. William Marling describes the apparently weaker characteristics the hard-boiled metaphor discards: "To be hard-boiled is to eliminate the soft, the old, the fat, the feminine, and the emotional" (224). He implies that the hard-boiled character is devoid of all weaknesses, which would allow him to be vulnerable in face of the dangerous world he transverses. That Benjamin performs a role is apparent when he and Gorski cross paths with Mac Froehlich shortly before the heist. Benjamin is telling Gorski about a film and using it as an example of what he does not want to happen or to be: "Am Schluß hat sich einer erschossen. Das ärgerte mich. Die Typen waren dämlich. Das will ich nicht sein" (190). Stating what he does not want to be, he sets up himself in the next moment to hide the characteristics he sees as feminine, squabbling and fear. When suddenly Mac Froehlich comes up from behind and asks Benjamin what he actually wants to be, Benjamin feels that "der Schreck zuckte wie ein Schmerz durch meinen Kopf. Ich nahm mich zusammen, drehte mich nicht zu schnell um und sagte: 'Alles, was Sie hassen'"

(190-91). By quoting from the film *Citizen Kane*, Charles Kane's words, "Everything that you hate," Benjamin uses Kane's response to a similar question to suppress his fear, ill-fitting to the role he has taken on, and to repeat another's performance of a role. In other words, he performs an already practised and performed role. His awareness of his performance shows through his deliberate movement when gathering himself together and turning around to face what caused his shock. The divide between his inner reaction to the situation and his external performed reaction, which Benjamin wrote into the narrative, shows that he was aware of his status as a character in his own work. Benjamin's awareness reminds the reader that he is writing about himself as the writer of the novel, who is playing at the detective and criminal. This self-conscious performing uses pastiche to show the familiar image as a communication method, in this case, Benjamin presents himself as the tough man with a ready wisecrack to throw out.

Benjamin's role extends beyond his imitation of the detective and criminal via performance into a pastiche of Ulf Miehe as the crime writer. Benjamin, as a reflection of Miehe, can be easily marked through obvious similarities: job description as writer of fiction and screenplays (often with the same titles); affinity for Bob Dylan; home in Munich but has lived in Berlin; and a Polish partner-filmmaker (real-life, Volker Vogeler, and fictional, Alexander Gorski). But the strongest evidence is seen in Benjamin's and Gorski's difficulties with Prott, their producer. Miehe had originally written this novel as a screenplay to be made into a film. After he and Vogeler experienced financial obstacles when attempting to produce the screenplay, Miehe wrote the novel (Igramhan 458). The writer playing the criminal could be seen simply as a flight of fancy on the part of Miehe, but more likely as a comment on the consequences of the power the writer holds to construct a closed, structured world where in

reality no such ordering power exists. The power Miehe holds to write a new reality into the fabric of his novel he transfers to his main character, Benjamin, who also writes his version of reality. These versions of reality are problematized when seen through the novel's pastiche of hard-boiled fiction. Malmgren interprets the novelist turned criminal in Dashiell Hammett's novel, *The Dain Curse* (1929) as a negative comment on the authorial power to create worlds. He notes:

> The transformation of novelist to criminal suggests that Hammett has a jaundiced view
>
> of authority; the author is someone engaged in a massive cover-up. But making the
>
> villain a novelist is also a brilliant metanarrative stroke. What does a novelist do but
>
> commit a crime of sorts, a kind of literary forgery; he imposes order on a contingent
>
> and chaotic reality, makes sense of a nonsense world, thereby falsifying it. (88)

Benjamin as the writer, author, and criminal repeats the metanarrative stroke, "a kind of literary forgery" to the text itself. Benjamin's account of his crime and the subplot of production problems becomes an ordering of a world that cannot be contained in words. Miehe's insertion into the text through Benjamin's pastiche foregrounds the fictional quality of the entire work as a version of reality.

The relationship of the author to his characters is reflected and confused by Benjamin's pastiche of Miehe. This relationship and the confusion seems to be thematized in a conversation Benjamin has with Anna. She asks him if he were to write a screenplay now, would his film hero talk like him, justifying her question by stating: "Irgendwo muß es ja herkommen. Denkt er wie du?" (48). He answers by saying: "Manchmal vielleicht ein bißchen . . . Da kommt viel zusammen. Ich schreib ja nicht, wie er redet, bevor ich nicht genau weiß, wie er ist" (48). Her questions and his vague answer address the source of artistic inspiration.

He acknowledges on his authority as an author, there will be similarities between the characters and the writer, which acknowledges his similarity to Miehe and himself as a possible side effect of writing. In the case of Benjamin, as a character in his own work, he writes how he is as a detective or as a criminal. His authorship creates a link between his writing and his emergence in the roles of detective and criminal. As a pastiche of Miehe he comments on the similarities between writers and the detective as a researcher who constructs an explanation of the crime, and the criminal whose explanation is a forgery.

3.1.4. The Hostile Urban Setting and Police

The novel's pastiche of the hard-boiled setting, the hostile, urban environment enunciates the difference between Benjamin's awareness of his role as a performance and Gorski's oblivious adoption of his role. Typically a hostile, urban environment sets the tone and atmosphere of hard-boiled fiction, reflecting the morality of modern life. As Raymond Chandler succinctly describes the hard-boiled urban setting in an oft quoted passage from his essay "The Art of Murder": "But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid" (18). For Chandler the streets represent the dark side of the city and the people who inhabit that city. Miehe anchors his pastiche on the *mean* streets of Berlin, and focuses on the harshness of the concrete, leading his main character Benjamin through public places such as train stations, tours, pubs, and hotels where the worst of human nature is presented and prostitutes typically adorn doorways. When in chapter ten Benjamin and Gorski go to the Persian dealer to buy guns, they enter an industrial area full of broken glass, shabby old factories, and rusting chain-link fences, stopping in front of a building with no name and no doorbell (74). A Persian with a smile full of golden teeth opens the door and leads them down dimly lit stairs into the wet basement, where there is a case full of guns,

an overly pregnant woman with stringy blond hair, and a young boy that greets them with "Ich kann dich totschießen" (77). Aware of his role as playing the detective in order to write a realistic crime story, Benjamin demonstrates his grasp of the situation in the following comment:

> Plötzlich kam es mir kindisch vor, was wir machten. Dabei war es mir doch eigentlich sinnvoll erschienen - eine Pistole zu besorgen, um aufschreiben zu können, wie man so was macht, um es authentisch zu haben. Keine Lösung mehr aus der Phantasie - wie der weiße Hase aus dem Hut des Zauberers. Sag, wie es ist; aber wie es war, machte es mir keinen Spaß. (75)

Benjamin rejects his previous method for creating fiction as pure illusion, while recognizing that they are only playing at reality, and such an unpleasant reality at that. In contrast, Gorski enacts the play with a genuine air, as if he were approaching reality as only material for fiction. He states in response to the scene in front of him: "Am liebsten würde ich hier drehen" (76). At the end of the scene, Sparta recognizes Gorski's distance from reality and scolds the two as if they were children. He says to Gorski, "rennst einfach los wie ein Fernsehgangster, Mann" (80). By communicating with Gorski through his fictional framework of film and television, Sparta shows how Gorski has accepted the fictional as real, revealing Gorski's oblivious enactment of the fictional in reality. Gorski plays earnestly at pretend, while Benjamin and Sparta demonstrate their awareness of the false situation - a writer and filmmaker of fictional crime, acting as detectives and as criminals. The hard-boiled toughness of the crime underworld exists as a mean place in this Berlin, but also as a playground for Benjamin and Gorski to enact the narratives of their previous films together, and compare the reality of Berlin's crime world with the fictional crime world of their films. Through this comparison,

reality loses the forcefulness of the graphic violence that originally contributed to its realness in the hard-boiled genre, but retains the fiction of the genre. Or as Sparta states in his scolding: "Die Wirklichkeit ist ganz anders" (81).

Strongly connected to the urban setting, as embodiments of corruption and the associated duplicity and threat, are the recurring brief meetings with police. Like the police in the hard-boiled style, these police are corrupt, incompetent, a nuisance or just drunk, and reinforce Benjamin's role as criminal. Benjamin first encounters the police after he has finished his day on the film set. Driving the car used as set prop for the gangster characters, Benjamin begins his impersonation of the hard-boiled narrator and is promptly stopped by policemen in civilian attire who reek of alcohol and pee on his car. Without a solid reason to stop him except for *smelling* something (18), they outright ask Benjamin: "Gangster sind Sie wohl nicht zufällig, was? Oder Terrorist, was?" (19). They then state: "Verstehe, Wissen Sie, mein Kollege und ich, wir wären auch lieber bei der Kripo, und was machen wir?"(19). Benjamin writes in the police as an imitation of the corrupt police of hard-boiled fiction, who in this case forecast his later aspirations as the hard-boiled narrator. The theme of role-playing spreads to the police, as Benjamin portrays the police pretending to be something they are not, as extras in his hard-boiled reality.

3.1.5. Anna's Images as Femme Fatale and Subject

Miehe holds up Anna as a decidedly 1970's mirror to the female lead character, often labelled *femme fatale*, of the early hard-boiled fiction, imparting the female struggle in a hard-boiled reality with a definite subjectivity. The 1970's mirror containing the strong, feminist movement allows Miehe to present a strong, main female character, who side-steps some of the major interpretative issues surrounding the concept *femme fatale*, while retaining the

implications of the female character in hard-boiled fiction. In Benjamin's account, his pastiche

of the strong female character can be seen in Anna's possession of what is traditionally

considered to be a *femme fatale*, sexuality, her connection to the crime world, and her power to

engage in the struggle to survive that hostile environment, but yet missing the fatal effect.

Carola Hilmes considers this fatality to be cornerstone of a "Minimaldefinition" of the *femme*

fatale. She notes that the *femme fatale* is:

> "eine meist junge Frau von auffallender Sinnlichkeit, durch die ein zu ihr in Beziehung
>
> geratender Mann zu Schaden oder zu Tode kommt. Die Verführungskünste einer Frau,
>
> denen ein Mann um Opfer fällt, stehen in den Geschichten der Femme fatale im
>
> Zentrum. Oft agiert die Frau in der Funktion eines Racheengels und wird in vielen
>
> Fällen am Ende der Geschichte für ihre Taten mit dem Tode bestraft. (10)

Since Anna repeatedly warns Benjamin and Gorski against the possible deadly outcome of

their criminal intentions, and mourns Sparta's death, she can be read as an inversion of the

femme fatale, lacking the characterizing death drive. This inversion plays out through the

opposing perspectives of Benjamin, who projects the *femme fatale* image onto Anna, and

Anna's own presentation of herself in her *Tonbandprotokolle*.

Characterizing the *femme fatale* as sexual, bad and powerful are pointed out as a

limiting, interpretative habit by Julie Grossman (21). Instead, she sees the *femme fatale*,

existing, "as an effect of problems in the culture, not as a thing in herself" (29). The *femme*

fatale demonstrates the cultural effect as the "hard-boiled reality of female experience, as these

so-called femme fatales struggle to assert a power the male protagonists deny" (23). Miehe's

character, Anna, as an effect of problems in a 1970's culture, exhibits the struggle to assert a

power denied by the men in her life as a black woman, but also side-steps the interpretative

issue, whether to view her as an empowered woman or an image of male desire and anxiety.

An issue, which Elisabeth Bronfen notes, has preserved the *femme fatale* image. She says:

> The femme fatale has resiliently preserved her position within our image repertoire
> precisely because she forces the spectator to decide whether she acts as an empowered
> modern subject or is simply to be understood as the expression of an unconscious death
> drive, indeed, whether we are to conceive of her as an independent figure or merely as a
> figure of projection for masculine anxiety. (Bronfen 13)

Anna avoids this interpretative ambiguity in the *femme fatale* figure by creating a subjectivity through the unquestionable presence of her voice, which defines her relationships to the male characters, participation in the narrative and her exit. Anna's first appearance in the narrative shows the threat she faces as a black woman of becoming objectified as a commodity. As payment for his film idea, Sparta asks Gorski and Benjamin for a role in their film for Anna as lead actress, stating, "Sie ist der Preis" (40). Sparta's words assign her person a monetary value, presenting her as an object being traded between two masters, before she has had a chance to speak. In a moment of insight, Benjamin reveals the truth of the situation, by saying to Gorski, "Geh du Massa" (41). The word "Massa" as a reference to the American slave trade encompasses both a reference to black slaves' word for their enslaving master, and the Master's right to possess people. Anna resists their attempt to commodify her by defining herself and her encounters with Benjamin, Gorski and Sparta through her authority as a narrator of her taped account, appearing in four sections. Her first section occurs immediately after the trade, including her experience in Germany as the result of an affair between a black American solider and white German woman. As an adult, she has dealt with the effects, but as a child she noticed her mother's attempt to compensate for her skin colour through the German

name, Anna, the literal, extra scrubbing of her skin, and the requirement that she must always be dressed particularly nice (47). Anna's account counteracts the small slave narrative and empowers her by giving voice to her identity as a young black girl. The resulting doubled narrative also questions the authority of the narrative and the narrator to determine diegetic reality as the two narratives present contradictory accounts of the same person.

Anna resists becoming simply a written character in a fiction under the control of Benjamin and Gorski through creating a narrative of her affair with Gorski. When discussing the film plot, Benjamin unwittingly describes his own betrayal, saying, "Die Frau verrät nur einen von beiden" (54). In the same moment the fictional version of Anna comes to life, when she enters the room in a metafictional gesture. She immediately proceeds to engage in her betrayal of Benjamin through a silent agreement with Gorski, of which Benjamin takes jealous note. He feels "einen ärgerlichen kleinen Stich, als Gorski sie nach der Begrüßung noch einen Augenblick festhielt" (55). While Benjamin feels the possible betrayal, Gorski attempts to write her out of the story, exerting his authority as director. In answer to Benjamin's later inquiry, if he should include a female character, Gorski responds, "Ohne . . . Ich mag sowieso keine Frauen in solchen Geschichten. Wenn eine Frau auftaucht, weiß man immer gleich Bescheid" (56). Anna's contribution to the narrative ensures her presence as a subject in the story, but also refuses the authority to accept the authority implied between an author and character. She states her independence at the beginning of her second section, justifying her actions, "Schließlich gehörte ich Benjamin nicht, nur weil er mal mit mir geschlafen hat, die Zeiten sind ja wohl endgültig vorbei" (61). Anna's statement insists that she belongs neither to the men in her life nor to Benjamin's narrative through her own voice. At the end of his account, Benjamin recognizes his own limitations in regards to Anna: "Ich wußte nicht, daß sie

es so auffassen würde, aber vielleicht ist sie schon immer ganz anders gewesen, als ich sie mir vorgestellt habe" (213). This insight reveals incongruities between his imagined Anna and her reality as a subject. The first image of Anna is an attempt by Benjamin to recreate her as a character in an imitation of the hard-boiled *femme fatale*, which in stands in contrast to her image of herself as a black woman told through the form of a witness statement. While Benjamin falls into reproducing the idea of the *femme fatale* as dictated by its larger cultural phenomenon, Anna counters this urge by describing her relationships and reclaiming her personal history, inverting the *femme fatale.*

While searching for the authentic text, Benjamin knowingly presents a pastiche of hard-boiled fiction, while indicating that it is to be read as imitation, but one lacking discernable referents, excepting Anna. As an anti-detective Benjamin documents the inauthenticity of hard-boiled genre's realism as seen in his inaccurate projection of that genre onto the world, and the inadequacies of his and his surrounding reality's performance. Jameson interprets pastiche in terms of the historical novel, finding that it "can no longer set out to represent the historical past; it can only 'represent' our ideas and stereotypes about that past" (32). Benjamin's pastiche also finds that the hard-boiled genre as it was in the 1930s can no longer be represented because the proliferation of ideas and images have bracketed the early hard-boiled fiction until the projection of the genre has replaced its actuality. Aware of his crime, Benjamin forges his hard-boiled text to match his idea of its reality.

3.2. Intertextual References

Intertextual references in Miehe's novel insert into the text the discourses concerned with artist identity, and the relationship of art to reality, seen already in the novel's pastiche of hard-boiled fiction. When using direct quotes and allusions instead of imitation, intertextuality

as a writing device expands on the function of pastiche to connect two texts. These references bring one text into another, reflecting the source meaning, while adding new meaning. Linda Hutcheon connects intertextual references to T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition, noting that the references place previous work within the text, embedding the context. References in Miehe's text place his work "among the dead," that is to say the hard-boiled writers and the *noir* filmmakers, and address what it means to be a part of that tradition, including the anxiety of creating under the shadow of past influential contributors to the genre. He uses references to literature, film, and music to reveal his ease with the past and to discuss broader questions concerning artistic innovation of inspiration and genre conventions.

3.2.1. Literary References

In a neat metafictional stroke, Benjamin's appropriation of Miehe's work as his own incites a debate between the characters on the role and form of realism in art. Miehe's intrusion into the narrative through Benjamin inserts an awareness of the text's own insistence of its truth and authenticity. A discussion on realism in art is generated between Gorski, Victoria Kaminsky, the owner of an artists' *Pension*, and Benjamin, when Benjamin provides *Der einsame Jäger* (1966) as an example of his and Gorski's work (Miehe wrote the screenplay and Volker Vogeler directed). Frau Kaminsky comments on the film, critically noting, "der war nicht schlecht...schön bunt, und diese herrliche Landschaft, aber sehr traurig, finden Sie nicht?", to which Gorski responds, "so ist es aber gewesen." Her response indicates her views on realism and its necessity to art: "Ist es denn immer so wichtig, wie es gewesen ist? . . . Als ich noch beim Theater war, da hat man schöne leichte Stücke gespielt, an denen die Menschen noch ihre Freude hatten. Ärger haben sie doch sowieso genug" (89). According to Frau Kaminsky, conventional realism in film and in theatre portrays serious themes such as trouble

and sadness in opposition to her light theatre pieces. She also indicates mimesis in art as unnecessary for its enjoyment. In contrast, Gorski views mimesis in art as compensation or justification for any faults people find in his work. This brief discussion reflects on Gorski and Benjamin's purpose for traveling to Berlin – to produce a new and authentic film from their research in Berlin, and questions the worth of such an endeavor. Miehe uses Benjamin's appropriation of his work to state his novel's place amidst the discourse of realism in hard-boiled fiction as a criticism of that tradition.

Miehe problematizes the concept of mimetic art when Dashiell Hammett's memoirs are mistaken for fiction. Dashiell Hammett is known alongside Raymond Chandler as one of the founding writers of the hard-boiled genre in the 1930s. Hammett drew on his personal experience as a private investigator for Pinkerton to write fiction, and included in his aphoristic *From the Memoirs of a Private Investigator* (1923) the more curious cases or personalities he actually experienced. Sparta, the Russian gangster, finds one of the more famous aphorisms from Hammett's memoirs on a scrap of paper on Benjamin's desk: "'Ich kenne einen Mann, der mal ein Riesenrad stahl'." Because of its absurd claim, Sparta asks Benjamin: "Machst du Gedichte?," but Benjamin corrects him, attributing the line to Hammett (153). Hammett's supposed fact-based account of his life appears as poetry on a scrap of paper on another writer's desk. According to Sparta's act of misattributation, poetry, in contrast to realism, appears to have no rational sense behind the combination of words - how does one steal a Ferris wheel? Yet Hammett's reality is explainable in a fictional reality, where the characters *could* know how to steal a Ferris wheel. This quote also reflects the presentation of reality in Benjamin's narrative as both are asserted as real; it asserts that the more ridiculous or irrational aspects of Benjamin's narrative may be more believable, yet real, and that his reality may be

indecipherable from his fiction.   If reality cannot be defined through possessing rational qualities, the ordering of reality in mimetic fiction cannot be called realism.

3.2.2. American Film – Samuel Fuller

The first of two references to Samuel Fuller (1911-1997) reflect the shape of Benjamin's narrative and the issue of graphic violence as a hard-boiled genre convention to portray reality.   Samuel Fuller was a later noir writer and filmmaker who began researching crime as a newspaper reporter before turning to writing fiction and screenplays and then directing noir films among other genres.   Fuller is most famous for his portrayal of graphic violence in his films, which marks a stark contrast to his words which Benjamin reads to Gorski from a newspaper:

> Es gilt zu gewinnen, nicht nur über die großen Verbrechen, sondern mehr noch über die kleinen, ohne die die großen nicht möglich wären.   Es gilt zu gewinnen, weil sonst unmerklich, aber auf schreckliche Weise der Punkt erreicht wird, wo die Brutalität, die Vernachlässigung und Schändung des Denkens, des Herzens und der Imagination, Feinde alles Menschlichen werden. (53)

Fuller discusses here how smaller crimes line the path to larger indiscretions, reflecting how Benjamin and Gorski's smaller crimes, stealing binoculars and cars, buying illegal guns and passports, lead to their final act, robbing the American military convoy.   Benjamin interprets Fuller's words to mean a psychological crime story without violence, while metafictionally reflecting on their own bloodless robbery.   He says to Gorski: "Stell dir vor: ein Kriminalfilm ohne Leiche.   Die Tat: als Verbrechen lediglich nach dem Strafgesetzbuch definiert.   Ein moralisches Verbrechen meinetwegen" (54).   Benjamin positions the bloodless crime as a new idea in response both to Gorski's previous, "Alles bekannt...alles langweilig" (53) and to

Fuller's bloody films. In a self-reflexive moment, aimed at creating both realistic and original work, Benjamin challenges the hard-boiled convention, which claims violence is realistic, through his words and his later enactment of these words.

Samuel Fuller's second entrance into the narrative creates a self-reflexive moment in the narrative, and marks the American influence on the crime fiction genre, as a defining characteristic. The title music to the *Tatort* television episode, *Tote Taube in der Beethovenstrasse* (1973), directed by Fuller, plays as Gorski and Benjamin enter the bar, where they ask the bartender where they can get illegal firearms (70). The title music marks the beginning of Gorski and Benjamin's introduction to the crime world and the beginning of their research. Samuel Fuller's television episode takes on an American theme as it follows an American private eye to Germany to investigate the death of his partner. In one sense, the music announces that they have shed their virginal robes and will cross over from writing about crime to committing crime, just as the title music announces the beginning of a television episode. This quick reference also points to the American cultural entrance of the hard-boiled genre into Germany, since an American filmmaker directs a film for a particularly German series *Tatort*. Samuel Fuller's presence in Benjamin's narrative indicates an affection for and a challenge of precedents.

3.2.3. French Film Noir – Lino Ventura

References to *film noir* confuse the border between reality and fiction, when the reality of Benjamin and Gorski's diegetic world mimics another fictional world, causing Benjamin to note its fiction-like qualities. In France, the hard-boiled influence is associated with a literature and film movement known as *Serie noir* and *film noir* (Buss 7). Samuel Fuller, as an influential crime genre filmmaker, also achieved recognition in France, winning a

part in Jean-Luc Godard's *Pierrot le fou* (Obsession) (1965) (Biggs 214). Miehe connects his text to *noir* fiction by including a few references to Italian actor Lino Ventura (1919-1987), who acted in many French crime films from the late 1950s to 1980s, including those directed by Jacques Becker (1906-1960) and Jean-Pierre Melville (1917-1973). Ventura's first appearance in Miehe's novel humorously plays on the perception of fiction as it appears in the diegetic world. After Benjamin and Gorski buy the illegal firearm, they have the following exchange, which toys with their concepts of reality and fiction. Gorski pulls out the gun and demonstrates his knowledge of guns by asking Benjamin: "Weißt du überhaupt, was das für eine ist? . . . Das ist eine Luger . . . Das ist die Königin unter den Pistolen.'" Benjamin responds by noting it resembles a gun he saw in a movie: "'Ich kenn sie vom Aussehen'. . . 'Lino Ventura hat im 'Zweiten Atem' so eine Pistol'" (91-92). Recognizing the gun from a film, Benjamin notes the 'real' gun before him as appearing like another fictional work. Benjamin's note on the resemblance of the gun to fiction, repeats the original surfacing of the gun in the narrative as Gorski's drawing on a napkin, followed by a question mark. Benjamin places his narrative into the *noir* genre by replacing the use of the gun as an object with its use in film. In the referenced film world of *Der zweite Atem*, or *Le Deuxième souffle,* a 1966 film directed by Jean-Pierre Melville, Lino Ventura plays a gangster who escapes from jail, who shoots and kills other fictional characters, using that gun. After Benjamin's observation, Gorski stakes a claim of the actuality of their world over that fictional film world: "'Ich weiß . . . Aber die hier schießt wirklich, weißt du?" (92). His emphasis on the real threat that the gun holds reflects its fictionality, and is made comical by the fact that he is unaware that the gun is also fiction. In contrast to Gorski's insistence on the actuality of their reality, Benjamin sees the fiction-like qualities in their world, inhibiting him from fully accepting it as real. Gorski

further emphasizes his view that they have crossed over into reality, when he reads out a newspaper title: "Schriftsteller überfiel Bank" (92). The title reflects their crossover from producing fiction to living in a reality, which reflects fiction. Where the fiction begins and reality ends is questionable, leaving open which one began mimicking the other.

Referring a second time to Lino Ventura, Benjamin wrestles with the concept of originality in realistic art, finding his reality to have already occurred before in art. Gorski believes he has found a solution to Sparta's impossible proposition, and begins to test his theory. Listing off the missing yet necessary information, Gorski focuses on the task at hand as a matter of practicality, while Benjamin counters his list, stating:

> Und drittens ist das alles nicht übertrieben originell . . . Ein Überfall auf einen Geldtransport. Ich seh Lino Ventura auf einer hochgewundenen Bergstraße in praller Mittagssonne sitzen und warten, da der Geldtransport die Serpentinen hochkommt, und sein Freund, der ihn reingebracht hat in den Job, sieht zu, wie sich Lino Ventura die naßbeschwitzten Hände mit einem blütenweißen Taschentuch abtrocknet. (99)

Considering the plot device of robbing a transport as unoriginal, Benjamin uses Ventura's film as an example to protest his involvement, and assign Gorski the blame. Benjamin acknowledges past influences on his work, while writing the film plot, but struggles to resolve the conflict between the inevitable similarities (the guns and the transport) and his desire to produce an original and individualistic work. Yet by including past texts he directly approaches his conflict and acknowledges the necessity of past influences.

As in the first example, Gorski avoids the issue of past influence altogether, resting his search for artistic validation in art's resemblance to reality. At this point, he allies his artistic vision with realism, rejecting Benjamin's objections: "interessiert mich deine

cineastische Originalität einen Scheißdreck . . . Wenn nämlich tatsächlich nur ein Jeep mitkommt, sollte sich mein Drehbuchautor bald einfallen lassen, wie der Überfall wirklich läuft" (99). Imposing his concept of realism on Benjamin, Gorski pushes Benjamin into an original development of the two main characters of the film, who are neither "Profis" nor "Desparados," and describes Gorski and Benjamin's relationship to the crime world as neither professional nor desperate. Gorski's devotion to mimetic art changes the artist into his art, pulling in Benjamin after him, revealing his confusion where artifice begins and reality ends, borders of which Benjamin seems to be aware. When Gorski mimics reality in fiction, he begins to mimic fiction in his reality, while Benjamin notes how similar the two seem to be, thereby revealing the narrative drive in reality to be as constructed as in fiction.

3.2.4. Music References – Bob Dylan

Similar to the filmic and literary references, Miehe quotes and refers to musicians to comment on and add to the text, keeping the original meaning and inserting a new interpretation. Unlike the film and literary references, which express a link to crime tradition and their writers and filmmakers, music references expand the debate of art as mimetic to include all types of artists and their identity as artists. Out of all the musicians referenced, including Marlene Dietrich, Burt Bacharach, and Smokey Robinson, Bob Dylan surfaces most often in the text. Dylan's song lyrics appear to serve at least three purposes: as a comment directly on the content of the text; inserting the narrative of Dylan's song writing style and direction; and displaying the accompanying American music scene and those implications. Marlene Dietrich's title allusion speaks of a Berlin and its textual heritage, residing in the past, which allows it to be written.

The epigraph from Dylan, lying as it does outside the narrative as a brief introduction to the text, exerts its authority over the text as key to its interpretation. As a sheer plot reference, Dylan's quoted lines tell the protagonist, Benjamin, to forget Sparta, the only body he left behind: "Forget the dead / They will not follow you" (Miehe 5). The dead also refers to Benjamin's personal history in Berlin, which he has chosen to discontinue. This permanent break with his previous life divides his identity between the future and his time in Berlin, since he must leave his life as author and screenwriter behind to avoid punishment for his robbery. His past identity as Benjamin dies to be replaced by his newly assumed identity, under an unknown alias, which he labels Robert Trantow in his account.[5] Reconnecting the epigraph to its previous context as a song lyric sees Bob Dylan's discussion of authorial influence reflected in the text. The epigraph quotes the song "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" from the album *Bringing it All Back Home* (1965), released a few years before Miehe wrote the novel. Dylan's lyrics introduce the problem of artistic influence, immediately identifying writing under past greats as a concern in Miehe's text. Richard Turley reads "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" as a call by the voice of the lyric away from the constricting, defining influence of "extinct modes of being." Here we can read modes of *poetic* being. "The alternative to taking what you need is to submit to the anxiety of influence, obsessively rehearsing self-deprecation in the ever-presence of the Great Original" (193). This interpretation of Dylan's lyrics shows his anxiety-free relationship with past songwriters. Placing Dylan's quote as an epigraph suggests Benjamin's relationship to the "Great Original" may be viewed as similar to Dylan's, taking what he needs, even Dylan's words.

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[5] The name Robert Trantow appears to refer to Miehe's pseudonym, Robert Artner, and the actress Cordelia Trantow, who appeared in many German crime films and TV episodes, including one directed by Volker Vogeler.

Dylan's words are also robes from another poet, reinforcing Dylan's relationship to the past influences in action and connecting his lyrics to a tradition of poetry that in stretching back to Goethe looks to the past for future artistic growth. Dylan's rhyming version reads as:

Leave your stepping stones behind, something calls for you.

Forget the dead you've left, they will not follow you.

"Stepping stones" are the past great artists, while "something" refers to the act of creation, writing. The quoted text corresponds to Lord Alfred Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, section one, first stanza:

I held it truth, with him who sings

   To one clear harp in divers tones

   That men may rise on stepping-stones

Of their dead selves to higher things (Tennyson 3).

The similarity between Tennyson's and Dylan's words shows that Dylan has reworked an older work, but in so doing has added a reflexive element, not just saying but doing. Adding yet another layer to the textual reference, the editor of Tennyson's poem, Erik Gray, remarks in a footnote that "divers tones" refers to Goethe's diverse styles, an inter-inter-intertextual reference (Gray 6, 3). By including Dylan's quotation, Miehe's novel demonstrates that it is not struggling to overcome past great originals such as Dashiell Hammett or Raymond Chandler, but instead strives to incorporate the past into the present.

Miehe incorporates T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition by following Bob Dylan's understanding that great literary achievements are not born out of the thin air of a creative vacuum, but as a dialogue with the community of writers. Turley reads Dylan's artistic frame as, "uncovering and repeating quotations" (195). He continues: "For precisely what is

'Dylanesque' about Dylan's idiom, that rich, ideolectic, aphoristic, many-voiced mix of styles, syntactic ranges, and verbal textures, is quarried from the Bible, French Symbolist poets, street jive, 1930s novels, blues songs, Tennyson, the folk tradition, and Keats poems" (200-01). In dialogue with his influences, Dylan slides his reinvention into the text and with that slides the tension between the writer and his influences – the writing process. His references include a comparison and contrast within the text, holding the key for its own interpretations in its web of influences, or containing its own traditions. Dylan's layers of creative inspiration translate into a metafictional reference as epigraph, which is talking about referring to other works.

The second quotation of the same song anchors the epigraph's message firmly to the text, and also raises a tension between the artist and his influences. When Anna inserts the Dylan tape in the cassette deck while underway to the *Pension*, his words mirror the transition Benjamin and Gorski experience as they move from an ordinary *Pension* to an artists': "You must leave now take what you need, you think will last" (84). Dylan's words are also symbolic for their transition from creating fictional worlds to living their fictional world or from feeling anxious about originality to creating the original story, a unique moment in time. They can carry the fictional over to create their reality, but leave the anxiety behind.

The reference to Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" shows Benjamin and Gorski's enactment of their story as Benjamin writes it, to be the artist's struggle to find inspiration. After buying the illegal gun, Gorski and Benjamin find themselves drinking a beer in a seedy bar, having just witnessed Sparta's show of power as a Berlin gangster who destroys a shabby strip club. The drunken barmaid from the strip club has made her way to the same bar. She sways unsteadily to The Byrds' version of "Mr. Tambourine Man" on the jukebox and sings "I'm ready to go anywhere." Bob Dylan's words and the woman's pathetic example provoke

Benjamin's response, "Laß uns gehen, Mann" (116).   Dylan's words directly reflect Benjamin's desire to leave the place permeated with habitual drunkenness and sorrow, but also their willingness to go anywhere to find inspiration, including the original hostile streets referred to by hard-boiled fiction. Their search for creative inspiration is mirrored in the lyrics of "Mr. Tambourine Man" as the search for a muse. As Aidan Day eloquently analyzes, calling to the Tambourine Man is a cry to the muse for inspiration. She states: "Specifically, the Tambourine Man is called upon as a figure of the imaginative self or creative soul of the poet speaker. The energy with which he is associated is the inspirational energy of artistic creation" (19). Taking the lyrics under consideration attributes a part of Benjamin's struggle for originality in realism as the search for inspiration's muse. His record of their search ends up as the vehicle of inspiration for his narrative.

During Benjamin's search for inspiration, he risks losing his self in the ensuing creation, when he as a writer begins to play a character in his work. He speaks of this divide with Anna through a cryptic selection from Dylan's lyrics of "The Man in Me," so chosen to hide his feelings for her. Appropriately, Anna herself records on the *Tonbandprotokoll* (a transcribed interview in four sections with the editor Günter Quitt), the quotation most closely connected to Anna's role in the story, recalling how Benjamin drew her out of the house by playing loud music. They end up at a small pub together under an oppressive awkward air, causing Anna to ask him just what is going on. Benjamin answers her using Dylan's words in a riddle of sorts: "The man in me will hide sometimes to keep from being seen. But that's just because he doesn't want to turn into some machine" (176). The completion of Dylan's final stanza reads as "Took a woman like you / to get through to the man in me" (Dylan 294). Through Dylan's words, Benjamin regards Anna as the woman whose reach touches the part of

his self beyond the protecting performances of the detective and criminal, recognizing that their connection stems from their doubled narrator roles. Paying homage to Anna, Benjamin admits he is performing as a character in one of his crime fictions, and will lose his awareness and distance from his creation, becoming a controlled character, if he does not keep up the facade. Benjamin risks losing his autonomy as an artist through the crossover of his fictions into reality, when he no longer writes, but is being written. The lack of control he feels over his own work is captured in the second verse of Dylan's song: "Storm clouds are raging all around my door. / I think to myself I might not take it anymore" (294). As a character in his fictions, Benjamin might succumb to and be subsumed by the creative forces, sketched as storm clouds. Through Dylan's words, Anna unwittingly receives an answer to her question, laden with an ulterior motive, to report back to Sparta whether Gorski and Benjamin will undertake the coup. Benjamin himself is unsure where the inspiration will carry him.

When Benjamin analyzes his love of Dylan's music, he attributes clear vision to the artist. Just as the epigraph signals a method for textual analysis, the plot provides an explanation of Benjamin's preoccupation with Dylan's music. Anna recalls their conversation when Benjamin answers her inquiries on his attachment to Dylan: "Ich mag seine Lieder. Einfache Lieder mit einfachen Wörtern. Er redet von Erfahrungen, erzählt Geschichten, auch wenn sie sich nur in seinem Kopf abgespielt haben. Der guckt durch, der Typ" (177). The reason he loves Dylan is as a fellow writer; he is someone who sees through the chaotic confusion and demands of reality, to the order beneath the surface. The following quotation serves as Benjamin's example of the qualities he sees in Dylan: "But I would not feel so all alone, ev'rybody must get stoned" (177). Benjamin offers this passage from the song "Rainy Day #12 & 35" as Bob Dylan's portrait of American society. The quotation illustrates Dylan's

vision of a society bullied by a constant rain of messages, with the hitting power of stones, captured in the repetitive lyrics. Inescapable and defining, it refuses to relent even past the point of death: "They'll stone you when you are set down in your grave" (Dylan 205). He, Dylan, sees through the tumultuous living to the underlying struggle to shape society with brute force, to construct a certain reality. This sharp vision, piercing the seething facade implies a level of understanding on the part of Dylan, unreachable and desired by most artists. Leaving the agent undefined, Dylan captures the indefinable pressure and consequently undefeatable threat that applies to everyone. The picture of society held in the repetitive lyrics attracts the writer Benjamin, who wishes to write as Dylan sees.

Dylan's song, "Like a Rolling Stone" appears twice in one scene as an illustration of the changeability of perceptions of reality and identity, when the wholeness and completeness of the accepted narrative falls apart. Reference to Dylan captures Benjamin's uncertain trust in a stable reality, seen in the erosion of Benjamin's control over his creation, and his imaginings of this fiction. The quotes in the text correspond to the chorus stanza, which reads as:

How does it feel

How does it feel

To be on your own [To be without a home (first chorus only)]

Like a complete unknown

Like a rolling stone? (Dylan 183)

The chorus asks the subject of the lyrics how it feels to go from throwing dimes to beggars on the street, dressed in the finest clothes and attending the best schools, to searching for meals, pawning the diamond ring and asking the mystery tramp to make a deal. It asks how it feels to see the life you once had from the outside as the other, you used to pretend did not exist. Greil

Marcus reads the cultural assumptions about the defining quality and the wholeness of the truth told in history as having been removed in Dylan's lyrics:

> In a simple song, the singer was retelling the story of all American history, as he and his audience had learned it in the public schools of the postwar 1940s and '50s: the common schools, as they used to be called, where with history textbooks reassuringly worn by your older brothers and sisters, even your parents, the children of the rich and the children of the poor were together initiated into the great narrative that, war by war, had made the country a nation. (19)

The great narrative has been retold as an inversion of the American success story, where the known person becomes the insignificant unknown who no longer has secrets because they have disappeared from the narrative.

The following reference to Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" speaks to the frailty of identity, and the ease with which one can disappear from the narrative. After having bought their plane tickets to an unknown origin under their new aliases, Gorski asks Benjamin:

> 'Wie fühlst du dich sonst?'
>
> *'Like a complete unknown.'*
>
> 'Du sollst nicht amerikanisch reden mit mir.'
>
> 'Vielleicht wirst du das auch bald tun müssen,' sagte ich.
>
> 'Vielleicht?' fragte Gorski mit schmalen Augen. 'Verlaß dich drauf. Aber hör auf mit deinen Sprüchen.' (182)

Gorski unknowingly initiates the reference to Dylan, which Benjamin takes up and completes, commenting that they have chosen to disappear from the great narrative. Their escape also

suggests an alternate narrative not yet defined by the conventions of realism, which would also define Benjamin.

The second appearance in the narrative of "Like a Rolling Stone" illustrates the mutability of the narrative through Herr Clemens, who lost himself in another reality and is forgotten by this one. Later on in the same chapter, when Gorski and Benjamin are sitting at a bar, Benjamin's thoughts are occupied by the story of Herr Clemens, a World War II veteran who had served on the Russian front. Instead of a spoken dialogue between Benjamin and Gorski, the quotation enters the story through a jukebox, to which Herr Clemens sings along: "Er bewegte sich langsam und gleitend zu Bob Dylans Musik und ließ seine blauen, roten und violetten Tücher flattern und summte den Refrain mit, *how does it feel*" (186). The lyrics, to which Herr Clemens dances, reflects his entrance in a reality of his own making, caused by the horrors of war. Dylan, through the mouth of Herr Clemens, incites Benjamin to ask Gorski seven lines later: "Und wie fühlst du dich?" (186). Gorski leaves the question unanswered verbally, but allows the conversation of the two men at a nearby table to speak for him with their rhetoric of friendship:

'Wer hat dafür gesorgt, daß du immer was zu saufen hast?' sagte er.

Der andere bat sich eine Zigarette aus.

'Wer hat die Nasenoperation für deine Frau bezählt?' (186)

These men mirror simultaneously Benjamin and Gorski's friendship, expressed as mutual debt, through unanswered questions. Gorski's answer also assumes responsibility for Benjamin's and his escape from this great narrative with its hostile streets, by asking Benjamin: just who is it that has always taken care of you? The implicit answer is *me*. Their escape also entails a freedom from the need to create narratives – an end to building ordered reality.

The last insertion of Bob Dylan's lyrics appropriately occurs on the last line of Benjamin's account of the weeks leading up to the heist, acting as a finale, while ending the narrative in a metafictional flourish. Gorski writes these last words, asking a question from Dylan's "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again." He states the obvious and asks: "Oh mama, can this realy [sic] be the end?" (213). The last verse seems to be the one that coincides with Benjamin's story of the heist with its questions of future prices and the pictures of blazing market signs in the form of capitalizing madmen:

Now the bricks lay on Grand Street

Where the neon madmen climb.

They all fall there so perfectly,

It all seems so well timed.

An' I sit here so patiently

Waiting to find out what price

You have to pay to get out of

Going through all these things twice. (213)

In order to stop writing the screenplay and to not repeat the story as a film, Benjamin and Gorski commit the burglary as the price they have to pay to escape the narrative. The neon madmen populate a world filled with incongruities. Gorski's last words ask if they will have to live through that fiction again.

Through Dylan's music, the slavery history in the United States is superimposed upon Miehe's narrative. Dylan's transition from folk artist to rock star mirrors the similar development of the 1960s civil rights movement in America, which moved from a pure, pre-

modern middle class white aspiration of an imagined undivided nation along race to the stains of a complex history. According to Barry Shank:

> Instead, loud electric instruments and drums made it impossible for them to hear the musical references to premodern life that had promised to purify Dylan's listeners from the stains of modern commercial interdependence. Acoustic instruments had enabled a connection to an imaginary non-commercial youth of the nation, where the wounds of racism, slavery, Jim Crow, and lynching could be imagined never to have taken place. (117)

By quoting Dylan, Miehe inserts the narrative of the American 1960s civil rights movement into the novel, played out by the presence of Anna and her brother, aptly named Blacky. Anna represents that voice of racial tension in a particularly American form through her black, American father.

The insertion of the lyrics from the "Rolling Stone" further emphasizes the dimension of the black slavery narrative within Miehe's crime novel. The film of black narrative over the crime novel reveals the paradoxes within the narrative of race relations. Shank interprets "Rolling Stone" as a song about becoming aware of the contradictions in the view of history and traumatic occurrence which dictates the moment of awareness: "His voice steadily screams out the painful contradictions of late-modern America, the simultaneous incorporation and denial of blackness that is the minstrelsy of rock, and the impossibility of autonomous authenticity" (121). Dylan's voice reveals that neither side can write the authentic version of race relations and never become the free, isolated individual without historical ties, as the last lines cry out the pain of being without a home, nothing left to lose and invisible (Dylan 184). Dylan's call for the white class Americans to see what their history has left them – a painful

truth: "To be stripped of illusions is to be left pained and empty, with no secrets to conceal and no romantic images left to blur the history of violence and conflict that is the legacy of slavery" (Shank 121). Miehe enters into a dialogue with Dylan's lyrics as he inserts quotations on American cultural influence, the perception of self, and the act of writing.

3.2.6. Music in the Title – Marlene Dietrich

Music defines the novel through Dylan's opening epigraph and reflexive last words, but also through novel's title pun. The title puns the song title "Ich hab' noch einen Koffer in Berlin" imparting the novel with unfilled desire and a nostalgic tone through song's lyrics and Marlene Dietrich's famous performance. Her performance rings true as she has been exiled from her home in Germany and Berlin. The lyrics speak of Berlin in a sentimental, longing mood; the last half of the refrain goes:

Ich hab' noch einen Koffer in Berlin

Deswegen muss ich nächstens wieder hin.

Die Seligkeiten vergang'ner Zeiten

Sind alle noch in meinem kleinen Koffer drin.

The deep longing to return to Berlin, but also to a past Berlin of the 1920s, with the accompanying freedoms, artistic and otherwise, was strongly felt by those Berliners, including Dietrich, who were exiled during the events of World War II, but also by those living within the walls during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s who felt keenly the paradox of living under America's freedom behind the walls of socialism. Like Dietrich, Benjamin must undergo self-exile. After robbing an American military convoy, he will not be able to return. But instead of a suitcase, he leaves Sparta's corpse, mistakenly shot by police who thought he was the third man, while he was actually trying to stop the robbery to protect his old friend. Sparta's spirit

and the spirit of the past in the suitcase are irretrievable, but writable. Like the suitcase, which must be left-behind in order to become the lyric's subject, the text must resemble a corpse, and be a part of the dead past, in order to become a narrative.

Intertextuality as the "microcosm" of T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition inserts into the text a communication between the past artists and Miehe, where past influences are revealed and questioned, in turn altering the view of these influences through Miehe's contribution. Embedding references to other texts not only contextualizes Miehe's work, but creates a picture of the text's understanding and view of its context, consisting of artistic, theoretical and social concerns. Conventions of realism particular to the hard-boiled genre and in general are questioned in terms of their worth as art, and as constructed when the distinction between reality and fiction is shown to be unstable. Even as realism's conventions are questioned, the artist's integrity and ability to create is not what is at stake, but instead the capacity of the artist to be innovative while standing on the backs of the past. From these references to the past the reader is able to view the debates and desires behind the text. Hutcheon's commentary on John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* sees intertextuality as a tool for communication, allowing the text to be a site where it expresses its own development: "He will let him see through the spectacles of books in order to let him see more and see differently" (59).

3.3. Narrative Layering

Narrative layering is a structural device used in metafiction to bring out from backstage the gears, wires, and cables that normally build unseen and unnoticed the illusion of the story world. By revealing the machinery behind the painted set, the story looks at its own processes of production, therefore itself, and expresses self-awareness, but through this introspection realizes the illusion is created, fictional. Miehe's novel uses narrative framing, diegetic stories,

and *mise en abyme* as this disruption in the constructed reality of the story. Often narrative framing is thought of as the borders: the title, the blank pages at the beginning and at the end and the chapter divisions, but here the story of the coup is also framed within the novel and fleshed out through insertions of text from the perspective of Anna Przygodda. *Mise en abyme* is when the larger narrative appears in a smaller form within the text, while storytelling refers to the characters telling stories within the diegetic world. The novel tells a story and that story begins to generate other stories. Framing devices point to the machinery behind the set and frame of the stage, but also to the stage, where the actors are building another set.

3.3.1. Narrative Framing

Narrative framing breaks the illusion that the story has created through narrative conventions. Framing within the narrative disrupts the diegetic world on a structural and on a semantic level, which interrupts physically the story through a changing literary form, and mentally through changing perspectives. Günter Quitt's introduction and afterword break through the story's reality first as they are contained within the story yet speak to the story, but also as a direct address to the reader. Quitt enters the text at two points: the first, introducing Benjamin's story as the collector of materials and editor, and then in an epilogue where he vaguely outlines Benjamin's fate. As the second chapter, Quitt's introduction is distinguished from the first chapter and Benjamin's perspective through italics, introducing a physical break as Quitt's introduces himself, speaking directly to the reader: "*Ich heiße Günter Quitt, aber mein Name tut wenig zur Sache. Was Sie eben gelesen haben, sind die ersten Seiten des Benjamin-Protokolls, das sich in meinen Händen befindet und das ich hiermit der Öffentlichkeit vorlege*" (13). Besides directly addressing the reader, which crosses the border between the diegetic world and the act of reading, he assigns himself the role as the middle

man between the story and the reader. His introduction represents a porous border between reality and fiction, where he presents himself as participant in both worlds - as the accompaniment to the reader and the organizer of fiction.

When assuming that authoritative role, he places himself beside the reader, able to point out what is fiction here and what is real. His attempts to authenticate the text raise a dubious air around his claims. He states outright:

> *Benjamin's Text ist unverändert. Wo er Ereignisse überspringt, die zum Verständnis der Vorgänge wichtig sind, habe ich die Ergebnisse meiner eigenen Ermittlungen in Form von Zeugenaussagen über den jeweils fraglichen Zeitraum eingefügt und sie ausdrücklich als solche gekennzeichnet.* (14)

This need to convince readers of the text's reliability in itself brings the reliability of the text into question. The reader began by believing in the text until Quitt introduced the possibility the text could be fictional. Quitt's motives for publishing and completing this story appear to be a quest for the truth that only he sees, and that the authorities, the police, the justice system, have ignored. He ironically calls the police, the men of truth, when he relates of their apparent willingness to solve the case, but lack of action:

> *Es gelang mir aber doch, die Herren von der Wahrheit zu überzeugen. Vielleicht aber dürfen sie sich von Dienst wegen gar nicht 'überzeugen' lassen; möglicherweise hab ich mich aus ihrer Sicht nur geschickt verteidigt, und die Sache war damals noch längst nicht erledigt für sie. Sie nahmen meine Aussage zu Kenntnis und empfahlen sich.* (13)

Despite his best efforts to convince the police of the truth of this confession, he admits at the same time the incomplete nature of the text, because of the text's inability to contain and explain everything that had happened:

Dieses Protokoll, zum Teil auch mit der Hand in seinem Notizbuch festgehalten, ergibt,

zusammen mit meinen persönlichen Recherchen und gesammelten Zeugenaussagen, die

wohl zutreffende Rekonstruktionen einer Geschichte, die trotz aller polizeilichen und

staatsanwaltlichen Ermittlungen bis heute nicht vollständig aufgeklärt werden konnte.

(13-14)

By stating that this text is a reconstruction, he admits the constructed nature of the truth, of

which he tried to convince the police and the reader. Yet the nature of the truth in this text, its

incompleteness, thematizes the inability of fiction to recreate actual reality, but rather create a

reality. Quitt introduces the reality of the story world while of that world and outside it.

Although Quitt repeats his assertions that the text is genuine, in the last words of the

introduction, he sees the possibility of fiction: "*Das Gerücht, der ganze Bericht sei eine*

Mystifikation von meiner Hand, ist darum besonders töricht. - Aber wo, wie in dieser Affäre,

Wahrheit und Lüge, Traum und Wirklichkeit ineinander werschwimmen, blüht derlei krauser

Unsinn gern" (16). His last words before Benjamin's trip to Berlin actually begins to undercut

the reliability of his narration. Quitt's introduction as a border begins with the side that

touches reality and ends on the side that touches fiction - beginning with his name, the facts

and ending with an admission that within such meetings of reality and fiction blooms curling

absurdity.

Quitt's afterword functions slightly differently than his introduction both structurally

and semantically. Unlike the introduction, his "Nachbemerkung von Günter Quitt" (215) uses

this title instead of italics to distinguish it from the story. His purpose here is not to introduce,

but to continue the story outside of the story frame, as he relates a story Mac Froehlich told

him about chancing upon Benjamin in a warm country. In a moment of textual self-awareness,

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he starts the small afterword by placing the moment he will relate as before the book is finished: "Ich war noch mit der Herausgabe dieses Buches beschäftigt, also ich eines Abends unerwarteten Besuch erhielt" (215). As he writes these words and as they are being read, he places the last section of this novel in the process of being collected. Reverting to the unfinished state of the book he reminds the reader of the fictionality of what was and is being read, but also attempts to reinstate his authoritative status.

Quitt's attempt to reinstate his authoritative status shows in the form he chooses to narrate Mac Froehlich's tale as an interrogation, but also his failure to finish that role. Quitt assumes the role of the questioner and Froehlich, the questioned, which alludes to the question-answer form in many detective novels. Quitt's interrogation however is unable to supply the missing information to conclude the story, as Froehlich is either unable or unwilling to answer the questions:

'Und dann?'...

'Nichts'...

'Das Nummerschild?'

'Vergessen oder zu dunkel, wie sie wollen.'

'Und Gorski?'

'Keine Ahnung. Mehr weiß ich nicht.'

'Aber eines müssen Sie mir noch sagen: in welcher Stadt war das, in welchem Land?'

'Den Teufel werde ich tun', sagte Mac Froehlich, 'guten Abend!' (216)

Froehlich tells Quitt nothing more than he saw him in a warm country, and nothing that would allow Quitt to research conclusively the tale he found in the post. Quitt permits Froehlich to have the last word in the afterword, a farewell, which ends the text in the moment of being

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created, since the reader is left at the time Quitt introduced at the beginning of this section, when he was still busy editing the text. The farewell as the last word of the text also crosses narrative borders, speaking both to Quitt and to the reader. Quitt's afterword and introduction grapple with their grey border existence between the story world and the external world; they are fictional, but through their form as an introduction and afterword they assume the authoritative voice as a commentator on the fictional world, and attempt to sidle up to reality, by claiming a perspective similar to a reader.

Inserting Anna's four *Tonbandprotokolle* into Benjamin's account introduces a third perspective, breaks the diegetic world as portrayed by Benjamin, creates a character of him, and mimics a narrative form of storytelling used by police and interviewers to uncover the truth, the witness account. Her additions interrupt the narrative, while continuing its forward movement and adding to the story, events either not experienced or excluded by Benjamin, which is a comment on the limited nature of the witness account. Benjamin had excluded the love story element which according to him is an inferior form of narrative and is quoted by Anna, "die Love-Story ist ein Scheiß" (42). Anna's first section describes her first day with Benjamin, repeating the lover's game they played during the boat ride, which Benjamin had excluded from his version (44). During her second *Tonbandprotokoll*, she tells of her encounter with Gorski, comparing it with Benjamin: "Mit Gorski war es ganz anders. Erst hab ich ja so ein unangenehmes Gefühl gehabt bei der Sache, so hinter Benjamins Rücken. Aber das verschwand dann. Schließlich gehörte ich Benjamin nicht, nur weil er mal mit mir geschlafen hat" (61). She knew that with Gorski it would be "unsere erste und einzige Begegnung" (63). During her first two additions, she feels attracted to both of them, and engages in a love triangle, but in a temporary manner with the commitment value of a one

night stand. In her third account, Benjamin comes to her house and lures her out for a date with music (175). At first, his secretiveness regarding the coup comes between them (176), but then it slides back into the atmosphere of their first day (177). She admits finally in the last section that "da war mehr mit Benjamin und mir, als ich mir eingestanden hatte" (202). Benjamin as the male protagonist in this story becomes the love interest or Anna his love interest in the love story. The two have met, entered into the lover's discourse, had some minor difficulties, and then gone their separate ways. This love story is played out behind the assigned formal requirements of a witness account to a crime. The love story with its overwhelming weight of literary tradition and with that status as a fictionalized relationship is mediated through the supposed factual account of witnessing. Witness accounts are shown to be as much a constructed version of reality as the love story, when the two meet in Anna's voice.

3.3.2. *Mise en abyme*

Different from narrative framing, but related structurally is a type of story embedding known as *mise en abyme*. *Mise en abyme* is a story within a story, similar to the Russian matryoshka doll, and like the doll also reflects in some way the larger narrative. Linda Hutcheon in her book *Narcissistic Narrative* notes three distinct types of *mise en abyme*: one is a simple reduplication, in which the mirroring fragment has a relation of similitude with the whole that contains it. A second type is a repeated reduplication "in infinitum" in which the above-mentioned mirroring fragment bears within itself another mirroring fragment, and so on. The third type of doubling is labeled "aporistique," and here the fragment is supposed to include the work in which it itself is included (55-56).

Miehe's text demonstrates the first type, the repeating story, in the form of robbery. The world of West Berlin through which Benjamin and Gorski travel is obsessed with theft. Benjamin continually sees newspapers reporting robbery and hears radio shows describing bank hold ups. The two, Benjamin and Gorski, not only spend the entire novel researching how to pull off a major robbery, but also their work as writer and filmmaker are to recreate these heists. These various reoccurrences of robbery in the structure and the setting mirror their eventual own act of thievery. At the end of the first scene on the film set, and just after Gorski tells Benjamin that they are going to Berlin for their next story, Benjamin sees the headline on a newspaper as they pass: "Der Spuk ist vorbei! . . . Die Kölner Bankräuber gefaßt, Vicenik von Polizei niedergeschossen" (12-13). Another example occurs later in the story as Benjamin and Gorski are about to meet with Sparta. Just after one of Sparta's employees turns on the car radio, the music is interrupted for this report:

> Reality comes before entertainment, ladies and gentlemen. That was from the beginning onward, the motto of our station, and also this time there is something to report. The police are asking for your help. At about noon, the Friedenauer-Rheinstrasse branch of the bank for Business and Industry was robbed. Three masked people stole a previously estimated one hundred and fifty thousand marks, and left unrecognized with their loot. (104)

Perhaps as a crime writer for film, Benjamin only notices the reports of crime, especially robbery, but his reporting of what the media says reflects his job in Berlin, the research he is undertaking and his eventual delving into crime. These media reports only reflect a small part of the story, the climatic coup of the American convoy, and not the events leading up to the coup. Perhaps, as in the first example, these reports also reflect Benjamin's projection of fear

that he may die while robbing the convoy. These snippets from the media, a considered factual representation of Benjamin's world repeat the fiction he creates and the crime he will actually undertake. The representation of media within a fictional story also reveals the constructed nature of media reporting; the first example contains only limited information, a bare title, and the second cannot even reveal the identities of the criminals, and the police's own inability to reconstruct the events of the crime.

A further example from the Miehe's text of the partial reflection of the narrative occurs near the end of Benjamin and Gorski's research into the crime underworld. Benjamin finishes the screenplay and quotes himself in the text. His screenplay refers backwards in the narrative to a dry run of the robbery, when Gorski punctured a tire on one of the Jeeps in the convoy. In his screenplay, the military believes the hole in the tire was to test if the Jeeps would continue on without one of the three, and also a sign that the convoy will be robbed in the near future. The military then takes appropriate action to prevent the heist. Benjamin's screenplay also points forward in the text, and relates the events of the heist in detail, instead of simply referring to robbery. His screenplay portrays the perspectives of the potential victims of the crime, the military, whose actions and thoughts can only be imagined by Benjamin through fiction, because the other can be only known through fiction. Because of the screenplay's quality as fiction within the story, Gorski can dismiss it and does; he rips up the screenplay and destroys the ending which predicts their deaths. The screenplay also reflects the constructed nature of the first scene with the film set as a written, earlier version of that act. Reading fiction (the screenplay) within fiction (Benjamin's account of the crime), within a fiction (Miehe's novel) reminds the reader that the story he or she reads and believes is real, is constructed, because each new version of the narrative presents another layer of fiction. As

seen in Gorski's act of tearing up the screenplay, the different versions of robbery presented in the text criticize how reality is presented by writing a new version each time.

All of these examples are either fictional or real reporting in the narrative world of crime, similar to the overall structure of the novel, which is a report on a crime, collected by Günter Quitt, who insists on the authenticity of the text (14), which the police could not put together or did not wish to. These instances of *mise en abyme,* a mirroring of the story within the story, reflect the constructed nature of fictional texts, but also point outward to the constructed nature of our reality, through the inclusion of various media, especially newspaper reports and radio news. The inclusion of fictional stories also questions where reality ends and fiction begins, since the fictional reality begins to produce its own fiction. Seeing the creation of fiction in the text is seeing the writing process, and through that a choice to examine realism's conventions, which dictate that the illusion of the story world should not broken.

3.3.3. Storytelling

Storytelling within metafictional texts thematizes the writing process, since the characters begin producing their own fictionalizations of their world. Storytelling causes a narrative pause and occurs in many fictional works as a way to flesh out a character's past or to fill in gaps in the plot, but as a metafictional element in Miehe's novel, it reflects the larger themes of constructed narrative, reality and fiction. As well, Miehe's text contains numerous examples of storytelling by characters that exert more influence on the thematic concerns of the story rather than simply a plot device. As a smaller narrative within a larger narrative, storytelling resembles *mise en abyme*, yet differs from *mise en abyme* since these smaller narratives do not reflect in content the larger story, but rather extend from a moment within the story framework. Miehe has created a story of writers, who write their own past and the past

of other characters, creating a personal or shared history. These three following examples connect to history either through reference to real events, stories of events in the past, or through oral storytelling, and through these methods of bringing the past into the present connect to the construction of both factual and fictional events.

The story of the dancing Russian, Herr Clemens, connects a reference to actual historical events to a fictional character who no longer recognizes the present. Placing Herr Clemens in a historical context both mystifies and reveals the circumstances around his disconnect from reality or the diegetic world, and its replacement with a fictional world. In a pub Benjamin tells the tale of Herr Clemens, who addressed Gorski using a Russian word for comrade, "Towaritsch," causing Gorski to respond in Russian and extend an invitation for a drink of schnapps (185). Benjamin knew Herr Clemens from an earlier time in Berlin and has heard his tale before. Herr Clemens was Russian and somehow found his way as a boy to a Jesuit cloister where he learned Latin and Greek until Hitler, who "übersah ihn nicht" and sent him to the Russian front as a "Dolmetscher." As he returned to his birthplace in Russia something unknown happened: "Irgend etwas in seinem Kopf klinkte aus und wollte nicht mehr zurückspringen ins Scharnier, und auch nicht als der Krieg aus war und der Herr Clemens wieder in Deutschland" (186). Herr Clemens retreated into himself and into a world his mind had created, most likely in response to a traumatic event, whose actuality broke his connection to reality, and left him in the Russia of his making. Benjamin narrates a biography that contains a clash between the fiction world of Herr Clemens and the diegetic reality (the people at the bar refuse to see him) while pointing to events that occurred outside the story world with definitively similar results. Benjamin, himself a fictional character, tells a story of another fictional character, which rejects this fiction for another fiction, but all this fiction points

outside the novel to a reality which causes people to retreat to fiction, while believing that it is reality. Which world is the real one?

The story of the six sheep belongs to the traditionally oral folk tales, yet is presented as piece of personal history and contains a reference to current events in the non-diegetic world. Anna repeats the story in her second *Tonbandprotokoll* as Gorski told it to her. While making small talk before going to bed with one another, Gorski responds to Anna's inquires about his past through both mysteriously avoiding the question and directly answering it:

‘Keine Spur’, sagte Gorski. ‘Alles mögliche. Testfahrer war ich.’

‘Du sollst mich nicht anlügen, ihr lügt alle beide.’

‘Doch’, sagte Gorski. ‘Ich war Testfahrer für Lastwagen.’

Da mußte ich lachen.

‘Erzähl mir mehr!’ (63)

His immediate mysterious answer introduces doubt into his answer, which is reinforced by the incredibility of his job. When Anna believes he has made it up, he qualifies the answer, which lowers it to believability. When Anna demands more telling, he responds with the story of six sheep with their six herders, who catch a hungry wolf trying to steal a sheep. They catch the wolf and bind him to a post, "wie die Amerikaner einen toten Vietkong" (63). Then they show the sheep their good work, and kill the sheep to celebrate their accomplishment. The Vietnam War was an ongoing event at the time of this novel's publication (1973), which links Gorski's folk tale, which is normally within a non-specified time, to a particular time. Gorski tells the folk tale to avoid answering Anna's question directly, but reveals after the tale that it "ist eine Geschichte aus meiner Heimat . . . da erzählt man sich einen ganzen Haufen von der Sorte" (63). Gorski links his personal history to an oral tradition of creating fiction suggesting both

that his past is a narration and that our link to the past is narration. Yet that narrated past is understood through a qualification in present terms, the Vietnam War. The theme of truth and deceit becomes a moot point when reality and fiction meet through personal history and current events, as reality is understood through narration.

Sparta's name story refers to the distant past, and the creation of his self. Gorski hears this story the first time he is alone with Sparta and later retells Benjamin his version of the tale. The story of Sparta's identity refers to an actual place and time in history, Sparta, and to a fictional cultural artifact of that time, a story. Sparta personalizes this story by placing its discovery within his own childhood and inserting historical inaccuracies, such as in Sparta normally nobody stole. Gaps in Sparta's understanding of the tale first caused him to like the tale. Gorski also reveals that Sparta does not know where the place Sparta is (52). Sparta has created himself from an extinct city of which he knows little more than the fiction that has remained. Sparta repeats that fiction as a story of his own creation, from which no previous identity or name remains and to which the facts matter little, creating his identity from a mystery. His choice of a name containing mystery reflects the mystery of his actual identity. Through basing his identity on a fiction, he fictionalizes himself.

These three examples use external references combined with their fictional content to comment on how identity and its relation to reality is constructed. Through repeatedly narrating smaller stories within the larger narrative framework, the characters are repeating the act of storytelling, while they are in the midst of a story or living that narration. If these three examples provided background for the character to explain a moment in the plot, they could be explained away as narrative devices used to further the plot. They stand instead as narrative pauses through which the characters at once fictionalize their lives and those of others, while

relating a personal history and referring to the external world. Biography through fiction balances on the border between fiction and reality, explaining this border as all forms of expressing the past as a narration or construction.

3.3.4. Thematizing Writing

Probably the easiest form of overt metafiction to notice while reading thematizes writing as a topic and the action of the characters. Linda Hutcheon describes this device as a "more interesting kind of overt diegetic self-consciousness . . . in which the focus is on the process of actually writing the fictional text one is reading at the moment" (53). When Benjamin claims his screenplay from the windowsill, writing as a theme gains a foothold. But it is Günter Quitt's introduction of the text as Benjamin's notes, which cements the writing theme as self-conscious. Benjamin intends his finished product to be a screenplay out of which Gorski will make a film. Yet his notes on their lives and his research are the story we are reading as he writes, inserting a self-reflexive moment.

Benjamin is writing throughout the narrative, which includes an earlier form of the narrative, as notes within the text. Just after their meeting with Sparta, Benjamin starts the first proposal, noting: "Ich machte mich daran, aufzuschreiben, was wir nun an reinen Fakten über den Transport wußten, um möglichst schnell ein Exposé für Dr. Prott fertig zu haben." Benjamin continues to lay out a bare plot for Gorski, involving two men, betrayed by a woman, and shot at the end, to which Gorski expresses a decided lack of interest, suggesting a new plot: "Sie müssen das Ding drehn, unsere Typen . . . und dann abhauen mit dem Geld. Ab. Weg. Aus" (53). Noting down what they have learned, Benjamin is writing backward, the past, and forward, the future. Benjamin's actual writing within the text reflects that he has

written the text, but adds the sense of it happening as it is being read. Gorski's response adds

to that impression by suggesting what was written can be changed.

Throughout the narrative Benjamin writes letters, consisting of small summaries of

plots, to Walter Prott, a producer, in an attempt to sell their film idea. He includes one of these

letters in the narrative, but also notes the act of writing, saying: "Ich machte die Tür zu und

setzte mich wieder hinter die Schreibmaschine. Ich mußte den Brief noch zu Ende bringen.

'Ihren Brief', schrieb ich, 'haben wir gelesen . . . Ihr B.' . . . Als ich den Brief zusammenfaltete

und in den Umschlag steckte, war der Gedanke wieder da . . . Ich zwang mich, den Gang zur

Post zu machen, ohne wieter nachzudenken. Als ich die Einschreibequittung in der Tasche

hatte, verließ ich die Post" (58). Benjamin narrativizes the letter, building a beginning, middle

and end, where the act of writing becomes the narrative itself.

One conversation between Gorski and Benjamin seems to epitomize the narrative's

emphasis on its own production through its circular motion. This type of self-reflection

obviously points to the narrative as a construction. Gorski asks Benjamin:

'Was schreibst du denn da?'

'Notizen.'

'Was steht denn da drin?'

'Was wir so machen,' sagte ich.

Gorski schüttelte den Kopf.

'Laß es wenigstens nicht so herumliegen,' sagte er.

'Das hab ich immer bei mir.' (150-51)

 From Quitt's introduction, we know that we are reading his notes, but are reminded of the fact

through Benjamin's noting that he is writing, and that what he is writing is happening. The

double narrative introduces the story he has written of their story. As such an introduction it encapsulates the narrative theme of writing, while bringing the reader into the fictional world that is being created while being read.

Gorski and Benjamin's last scene together ends the story in the midst of the act of writing. The act of writing is never brought to a close, as Benjamin is never able to write of sending his last notebook. Instead, his letter to Quitt with an embedded story states:

> Jetzt fängt etwas Neues an. Ich nehme die braune Tüte zur Magenerleichterung aus der Sitzbespannung, schreib deine Adresse drauf und stecke auch die Tonbandkassetten hinein. Das letzte Notizheft folgte gleich. Ich hab es noch aufgeschlagen auf den Knien und den Kugelschreiber noch in der Hand, lieber Quitt. Gorski sieht mit zu. Ich halte ihm den Kugelschreiber hin. (213)

Their narrative ends on a self-reflexive moment as they are discussing writing the last words together. As he writes about preparing the letter, he writes the letter. The last paragraphs identify the narrative as a communication between Quitt and Benjamin or as between the text's first reader and the writer. Their first meeting on an aircraft on its way to Berlin, described by Quitt, is mirrored by Benjamin writing to Quitt from an airplane. Benjamin's words also mirror his stated intention near the beginning: "Ich will einen anderen Film machen. Einen Anfang. Eine Hoffnung" (54). Here the narrative meets the beginning as the narrative being written cannot write itself off the screen. In its immediacy the text cannot end where the story ends, because it describes its beginnings in the hands of Quitt as the editor. This description points to the beginning of the text yet also points to new beginning – a time after the narrative, when this too will be sent.

Narrative layering roots the text in metafiction as it exhibits a self-awareness of its existence as a text. In Miehe's text this self-consciousness is revealed as the characters discuss the writing of the story as it is being written; as they generate embedded narratives; through *mise en abyme*; and when narrative framing intrudes on the flow of the story. Waugh sees that "the effect of this, instead of *reinforcing* our sense of a continuous reality, is to split it open, to *expose* the levels of illusion" (33). The purpose of narrative layering is then to expose the constructedness of the concept, reality. Although Waugh later notes that the readers may not lose their belief in the world constructed from "common sense," Waugh recognizes a hope on the part of writers of metafiction, "that each reader does this with a new awareness of how the meanings and values of that world have been constructed and how, therefore, they can be challenged or changed" (34). Benjamin's escape from the text by looping it back to the beginning while he continues on outside of the narrative is emblematic of how the meanings and values of the world can be altered.

4. Conclusion

Examples of metafictional tendencies in Miehe's novel reveal a context, contained in the narrative, as key to understanding the text. This context appears self-conscious, as imitation, and resembles T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition. Under Eliot's concept of tradition, artists who write with the past in view and its influence on the present exhibit a historical sense: "This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his contemporaneity" (Eliot 3). When such a writer tends toward metafiction, he demonstrates not only his awareness of the tradition in which he writes by including intertextual references, but also divulges the novel's history as if in a discussion with this tradition. This inclusion, by consciously revealing the writing process behind the completed text, engages the reader in producing an understanding of the narrative by way of his or her awareness of the text's own meaning-making methods. Aware of the tradition reflected within the text, the reader develops an understanding of the text's place in that tradition, reading the text in terms of its context and through the terms of the context. In Miehe's novel, metafictional leanings encourage this doubled reading by discussing genre conventions, tracing its progression through to the 1970s and to film, and reflecting on the creating process.

Hard-boiled genre conventions surface in the form of a pastiche, which has intensified the genre's thematization of the gap between appearance and actuality, between word and deed. Benjamin as the main narrator performs the role of hard-boiled detective and criminal, demonstrating characteristics similar to that of the anti-detective. He uses his literary role as the producer of meaning to underscore the arbitrariness of language – the easiness of

separating the signifier from the signified. Language is revealed as a tool for deception when Benjamin tricks the reader and as unstable through the dynamism of the vernacular as words easily assume other referents. Benjamin's constructed, hostile, urban setting is a conscious projection of his vision of the hard-boiled world, distinguishing him from those such as Gorski who participate unawares in the fiction, and from Anna who through her own perspective counters his image of her as the *femme fatale* with a personal narrative. This pastiche carries further the destabilization between appearance and actuality thematized in early hard-boiled fiction in order to undermine the validity of the text's claim to authenticity. From this the reader is able to take the understanding that similar to fiction, their perception of reality is constructed and alterable, as it becomes evident that both are built from conventions and assumptions in order to be understandable.

Part of understanding the text involves examining the text as a site of the artist's interaction with his influences and how his contribution alters the view of these influences. In Miehe's novel, intertextual references form an embedded context as they build in the theoretical considerations of art, while indicating the novel's place within the hard-boiled genre and its permutations. The novel places itself in the discourses of the hard-boiled genre, when Miehe intrudes into the text through Benjamin's appropriation of his work. In this reference and in those to other artists stemming from the hard-boiled genre, to Dashiell Hammett, Samuel Fuller, and Lino Ventura, the relation of reality to fiction dominates the discussion. As different qualities of the genre come forward, its tragedy, violence and plot developments, the actuality of its purported resemblance to reality, and the effect it has on reality causes the necessity of such a claim on realism to come into question. The playful resistance of the novel's response to its influences indicates a flexible attitude toward the

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genre's version of realism, while turning away from its gravitation toward the extremes of that vision.

Extending beyond the genre's discourse, the references to Bob Dylan and to the song "Ich hab' noch einen Koffer in Berlin" examine the theoretical and social implications of an artist creating under the terms of the artistic and the general communities. The use of Bob Dylan's lyrics expresses the relation of the artist to his community through the connected concepts of influence anxiety, the search for inspiration and the desire to create original work. By simply including references to other texts, Miehe appears to reflect Dylan's easy relationship with his own influences as seen in his ready use of other writers' material. Benjamin and Gorski's search for originality complicates that relationship, when they judge the worth of each idea by comparing it to past texts. Desiring that originality, their trip to Berlin becomes a metaphor of that call for inspiration as thematized in the inclusion of Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" and in the nostalgic pun of the title. As the left-behind suitcase allows the emotions of the past to be expressed, the dead past allows the narrative to finish being written. Dylan's lyrics also indicate how Miehe's text reflects the artist's connection to society as responsible for dismantling hegemonic narratives. This understanding, stating the constructedness of all texts and not just fictional ones, expresses an intention particular to metafiction of laying bare the workings that present the illusion.

Shifting from the artist's perspective of the text's function to the text's view of itself, the third section reveals the different forms of narrative layering as the most overtly self-conscious aspect. Playing with the flow of narrative through storytelling, narrative framing, and *mise en abyme* thematizes, interrupts, intrudes on and reflects on the narrative as a method to engage the reader in recreating the story. These devices attempt to engage the reader as an

active participant as text questions its own conceptualization of reality in the diegetic world, hopefully leading the reader to question the perception of reality presented in all texts.

In an interview on his second novel *Puma*, Miehe was drawn into a discussion about his first novel. The interviewer stated the view that his work's sometimes objectionable thematic matter was not really culture. Countering this assertion, Miehe described his novel as a site of communication: "*Im 'Toten in Berlin' ging es noch um intellektuelle Auseinandersetzungen, da ging es um das Filmer-Milieu, also um mein eigenes* [author's italics]" (Wieden 450). He speaks of the embedded debates on realism in art, and of T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition that compose the novel's inner workings. These intrusions in narrative invite the reader to peer through these revealing moments and like a detective recreate the narrative from these clues. Just as the strongest justification of a book's existence is reading it, the book can only become a site of communication as it is being read.

Since previous research on this novel is extremely limited, a great deal of this thesis was contextualized the narrative within crime fiction, showing its engagement with this genre. Because of the limited space, many questions have been left unasked. One of these questions involves the main protagonist, Benjamin and his missing first name. Walter Benjamin springs to mind as a possible answer with the confirmation lying in a Benjaminian analysis of the narrative. Since this thesis only broadly dealt with the novel's context, comparing this novel with other German language authors of crime fiction (metafictional and otherwise) would develop a beneficial and deeper understanding of the novel's place in German letters. Viewing this thesis as one of the first scholarly studies of the novel, a parallel can be easily be made between the report of a scouting mission on "discovered soil"; while the information may be telling and accurate, much is left to be uncovered.

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