

Changing Constellations

New Topoi

The focus on the computer leads to the **rethinking of well-known literary settings** and topics, to the development of variations of classical topoi. An example of such a process can be found in Burkard Spinnen's *Nevena* (2010), a love story taking place in the virtual world of a **MMORPG** (massive multiplayer online role playing game)



New Characters

New themes give rise to new character types linked to the computer, such as the **geek** in Daniel Kehlmann's *Ruhm* (2009). Surprisingly, the computer itself hasn't reached the status of a character yet and is still considered as a **projection** surface for human thoughts (*Die Frau, für die ich den Computer erfand*, F.C. Delius, 2009). These issues also inspire writers: Hermann Kant describes the change of writing through computer **text processing** in *Escape: Ein WORD-Spiel* (1995)

New Genres

Older genres transform to adapt to new communication patterns, for example the **epistolary novel** which now exist in an email-form with Daniel Glattauer's *Gut gegen Nordwind* (2006).

CONSTANTIN GILLIES
EXTRALEBEN

Fully new literary genres appear as well, like Constantin Gillies' **gamer novel** *Extraleben* (2008)

Inventing a New Language

Kill the Poem



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Poetry, as the genre which is always searching for new kinds of relationships between form and content, expresses the **strive for a language** accounting for the digital world. Robert Schindel, for example, depicts in *Endlich Word geöffnet* (2003) the everyday life of a poet of our time, working on the computer: searching on Wikipedia, checking his emails, and composing. Other works take the language issue to another level, that of the programming code: Johannes Auer writes **interactive poems** showing similarities to video games and questioning the poetical essence like *Kill the Poem* (1997)

Naming the New

Internet as a Form

Some works try to fully **imitate** the experience of the computer, the internet, and multimedia world, therefore breaking radically with the form of narrative or poetical prosa. .

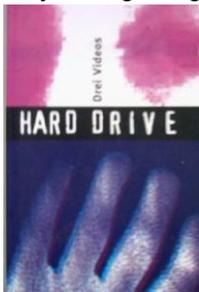
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This results in **unclassifiable** works such as Andreas Neumeister's *Angela Davis löscht ihre Website* (2002)

The Computer in German Literature at the Turn of the Millennium 1990-2015

Bruno Dupont (ULg – Liège Game Lab)

The ideological charge of the literarised computer is expressed among others by the traditional link between the computer and the white, male subject. Ingeborg Harms' *Hard Drive* (1992) challenges this view, depicting a **female protagonist** trying to seduce a staff member in a computer centre, and trying to master the machine at the same time.



Hacker ideology is reflected in Peter Glaser's work: *Die rote Präzision* (1985) and *Raumpflege* (2003) both deal with this topic, though adopting strikingly divergent point of views. They convey a vision of hacking as a mean to different kinds of revolutions. This view is contradicted by René Pollesch's theatrical series *www-slums* (2000), showing the appropriation of new technologies by **consumer capitalism** and their use against the human interests. A middle position is that from Gert Heidenreich's *Die Nacht der Händler* (1995), recognising the **revolutionary potential** of computers but emphasising their misuse by totalitarian regimes.



This thesis uses the theoretical frameworks of traditional literary studies, but also of (new) **media and game studies**. This extension of the analytic arsenal also raises concerns about the **applicability** of these concepts: how can we adapt

- medialisation (Nünning/Rupp)
 - gamification (Pelling)
 - the distinction game / play (Triclot)
 - hacker ethics (Levy)
- to the study of literary texts?



Influence of the computer :

- on **all the levels** of literature
- to an **extent** never seen in the literary history



It provides evidence of the still ongoing reflection

- on the place of computer technologies in the human society
- but also on the very survival of literature

→ **metareflexive potential**

Preliminary Results

Concepts and Conclusions

Computer and Ideology

Digital Gender Constructs

Computer (and) Politics

Theoretical Issues