



## **SOURCE TEXTS. PROGRAM CODE IN NET LITERATURE FROM AN ARCHIVAL AND TEXT-ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE (in German)**

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Source texts in net literature can only be executed – i.e. become accessible – under certain media-technical conditions. Even if the source texts have been preserved, they might no longer function, or their execution or presentation environment may no longer be available on account of technical obsolescence or the termination of a platform. In our presentation, we analyse various text levels and conditions based on two concrete examples, and then by means of a containerisation strategy, present an archiving concept which takes media-technical dependencies into account – and that not only as a reaction to the loss of source texts and the conditions of their execution.

Based on Kathrin Passig's *Gomringador* and Johannes Auer's *Free Lutz*, we wish to outline several problems that arise due to the specific textual characteristics of net literature (and by extension, computer-aided electronic literature).<sup>1</sup> We focus on the concept of the operative text as developed by Florian Cramer (2011) in reference to Sibylle Krämer (1991), in view of the fundamental aesthetic function of source code in the works in question.<sup>2</sup> Yet we also differentiate between program code and rendered formats (Cayley, 2004) and try to understand code as an operative text whose status can be determined using various examples in relation to other technical, aesthetic and performative aspects.<sup>3</sup>

We must first identify the individual text and media elements which we hope to develop by means of example. We are interested in the status of the operative text – first, with respect to the abstract

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<sup>1</sup> Vgl. Passig, Kathrin: *Gomringador*, 2018 [Link: <https://twitter.com/gomringador>] und Auer, Johannes: *Free Lutz*, 2005, URN: urn:nbn:de:bsz:mar1-dd001-bsz3968932795. [Link: live web: <http://freelutz.netzliteratur.net/>]

<sup>2</sup> Vgl. Cramer, Florian: *Exe.cut[up]able statements: poetische Kalküle und Phantasmen des selbstausführenden Texts*. München: Fink, 2011 und Krämer, Sibylle: *Berechenbare Vernunft. Kalkül und Rationalismus im 17. Jahrhundert..* Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Vgl. Cayley, John. »Der Code ist nicht der Text (es sei denn, er ist der Text)«. In *p0es1s: Ästhetik digitaler Poesie*, hg. v. Friedrich W. Block, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2004, S. 287-306.

algorithms implemented in the programming code, and second, to the rendered object on the screen (along with its technical intermediate stages), and third, to the possibilities of interaction.

Much like our understanding of letter writing requires some knowledge of the historical postal service, so too does the interpretation of net literature require knowledge about the media-historical and technical requirements of a work. In what technical environment can net literature take place? Which dependencies exist on the side of the client, and which on the side of the server? What role do ascertainable aspects of source code play in the realisation of a work from the rendered text to the necessary interactions? What is knowingly lost during archiving, and what might vanish altogether without any recognisable sign that it has been lost?