Experimental Visualization of Literary Characters in Online Novels

Baumgarten D.

Leuphana University Lüneburg, Centre for Digital Cultures, Lüneburg, Germany
dominik.baumgarten@leuphana.de

Literature has never been designed to be genuinely visible. Recently, technical development such as the creation of e-books and their potential to connect hypertexts digitally broadens the possibilities of contemporary authorship (Breitenbach: 2010).

The double novel Gut gegen Nordwind (2007) and Alle sieben Wellen (2009) by the Austrian Daniel Glattauer reminds of the traditional literary form epistolary novel while at the same time creating the illusion of digitalism and the use of contemporary media as the novel is written as a series of emails sent between the two protagonists. This example demonstrates fictional digitalism, which does not necessarily improve on the visibility of literature (Baumgarten: 2013).

In 2013, German Torsten Rohde first created his fictional character Renate Bergmann on Twitter. Becoming quite popular soon after the release of the account, Rohde built his first novel. This example represents the emerging potential of social media to influence the development of literary fiction and (analogue) publishing.

Cathy’s Book, a sponsoring-based American novel, plays with the readers and immediately incorporates them into the narrative. The work complex e.g. holds accounts on Facebook, MySpace and YouTube as well as other websites. The active presence of a literary entity on social media major contributes to the visibility of the narrative.

The planned talk aims to compare these experimental forms of literary visibility in contact with digital media. Main focus will be put on the reciprocity of the participating media in order to augment the visibility of each other and the new (sub)genres in-between.

Keywords: Image Linguistics, Intermediality, Multi-Modality.