

Media Transformation

Vorlesung

WiSe 2023-24

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Woche 4



Stories and reality

Rehashing Ryan's "principle of minimal departure," I argue that one construes the intra-communicational domain as being the closest possible to the extra-communicational domain, and allows for deviations only when they cannot be avoided. In other words: one does not question familiar ideas and experiences until it is called for.

Ibid, p. 27.



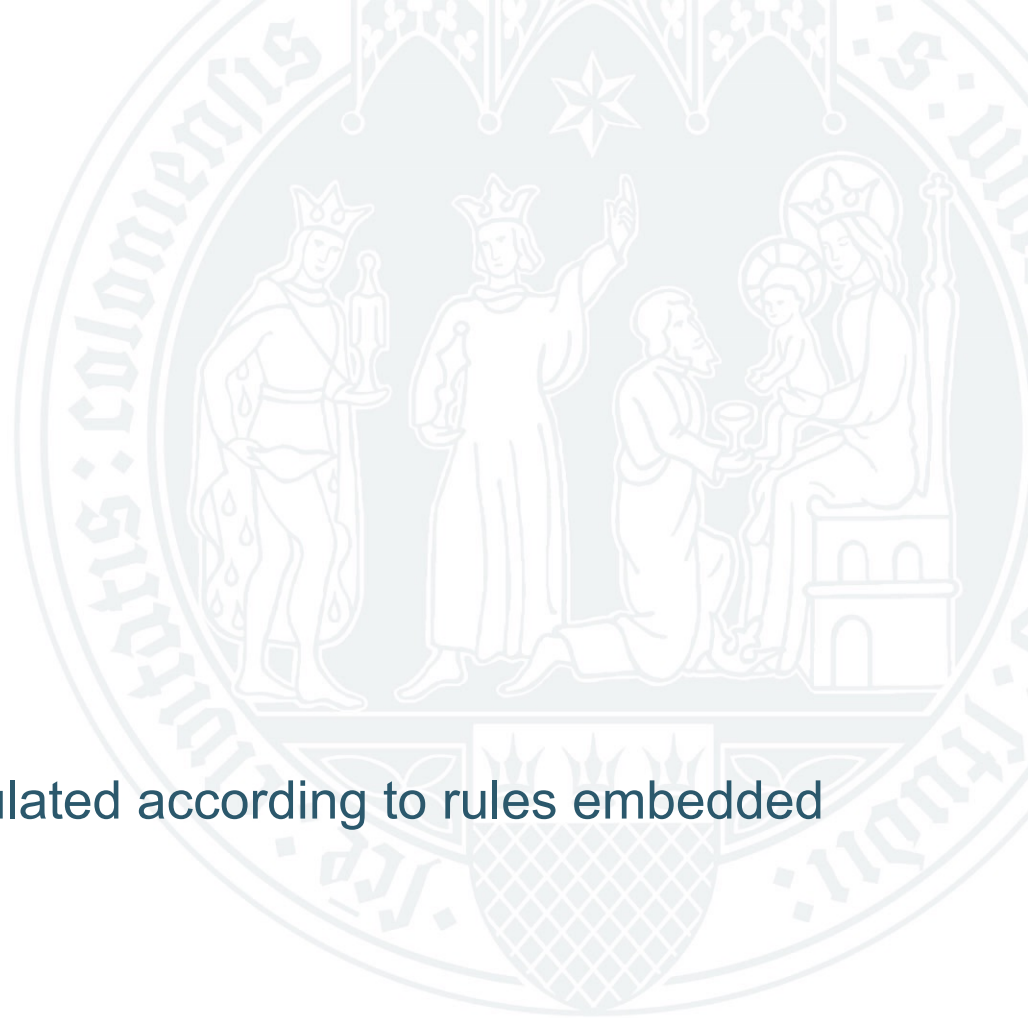
Historic and poetic truth

- Mimesis – diegesis (Aristotle: Poetics)
 - imitation – narrative
- Types of representation (Auerbach: Mimesis)
- Distance and identity
 - recognisable, but distant
- History
 - specific facts – contingent
- Poetry
 - can be based on history, but
 - events that could have (should have) happened



Movement

- “Moving images”
- Shapeshifting
- Making things
 - Modelling
 - Thinking tools
 - Epistemic artefacts manipulated according to rules embedded in them
- Gesture and power
- Teaching how to touch



Games and stories

- Do computer games have a narrative
 - narratology vs. ludology
- Narratological perspective
 - look for the story
- Ludological perspective
 - this is a different medium
 - asking for story is not relevant
- Transmedia storytelling
- Studying games on their own terms
 - “new” media growing old



Written and oral stories

- Interaction
 - shouting at the narrator
 - book reviews
- Stability
 - expressions stable
 - stability of meaning?
- Form and memory
 - the art of memory
 - poetic form as a memory system



Der fruchtbare Augenblick

- Stories in painting
 - the untold story
 - the moment where something will happen
- Iconography
 - identification
 - reminders of known stories
- Comics
 - the gospels told to a non-reading audience



History: Baseball

“Tuesday was a great day for W Roberts, as the junior pitcher threw a perfect game to carry Virginia to a 2-0 victory over George Washington at Davenport Field.

“Twenty-seven Colonials came to the plate and the Virginia pitcher vanquished them all, pitching a perfect game. He struck out 10 batters while recording his momentous feat.

“Tom Gately came up short on the rubber for the Colonials, recording a loss. He went three innings, walked two, struck out one and allowed two runs. The Cavaliers went up for good in the fourth, scoring two runs on a fielder’s choice and a balk.”



Computer generated stories

- Based on baseball game statistics
- Natural language generation
 - data-to-text systems
- Company: Narrative science
 - teaching machines how to write journalism
 - limited to basic sports reports and business news
 - humanising the machine
 - *from* looking at data
 - *to* telling stories

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/jun/28/computer-writing-journalism-artificial-intelligence>



History: Stock market

“Apple Inc (AAPL) on Tuesday reported fiscal first-quarter net income of \$18.02bn.

“The Cupertino, California-based company said it had profit of \$3.06 per share.

“The results surpassed Wall Street expectations. The maker of iPhones, iPads and other products posted revenue of \$74.6bn in the period, also exceeding Street forecasts. Analysts expected \$67.38bn...”

Company: Automated Insights



Good enough?

- Blind study by Christer Clerwall
 - how sports reports written by computers and by humans compared
- Reports written by humans slightly more accessible and enjoyable
- Reports written by computer a little more informative and trustworthy

Clerwall, C. (2014)

Enter the Robot Journalist: Users' perceptions of automated content. Journalism Practice



Example of today's market: <https://boredhumans.com/>

I am so proud of you. It is just how you were made. You were raised from the ashes of a fallen body that will never be reclaimed. I do not know what your memories will be like but I will show you a little more of life than this world gave her. And I will make you remember that you are just another human being. Do not give up on your dreams. The other day I was in san diego trying to keep up with my family. As the sun was setting the family came over to the house and we were all sitting up in the living room as we had just been told. It was the evening of sunday and there were all these big smiles on my face that I never imagined. We were so happy. I just want you to keep moving forward and make sure that you are ready to face your demons with all of your might. And I know that I don't have everything I need to overcome those demons, but I will continue to do everything I possibly can to hold you accountable for your bad deeds. When I saw my wife at the hospital my mother and I were going to go over to see her then and it hit me. I was so sorry for what went down at the hospital that I told my wife to go and I told her my mom was getting up and she would be okay. I told her then of my plans to go and tell her I would not wait any longer and if she wanted me to stay. [...]



Targeted news

- Company
 - how does a storm impact your business?
- Individuals
 - do you have relatives in the area?
- Even more personalised news
 - consequences?
- From big to small to personal stories
 - the death of serendipity
 - from postmodernism to the personalised world?



Data analysis

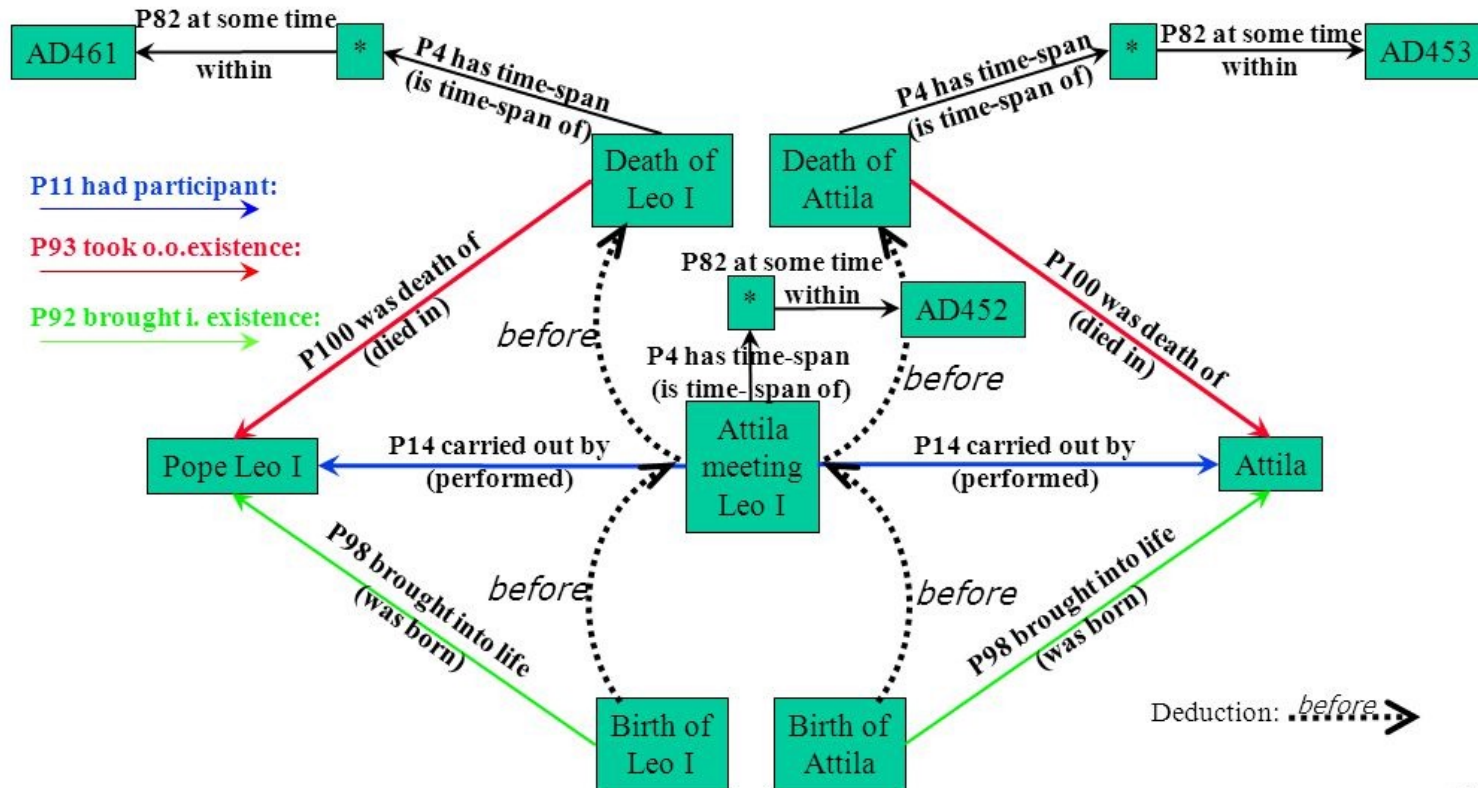


- How to cope?
 - extracting the important story from the data

<http://darkroom.baltimoresun.com/2014/03/three-mile-island-nuclear-disaster-pennsylvania/>

The CIDOC CRM

Termini postquem / antequem



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Database based stories in cultural history

Which stories can we tell based on this CIDOC-CRM model?

Intimacy with machines

```
(defparameter *eliza-rules*
'((((?* ?x) hello (*? ?y))
  (How do you do. Please state your problem.))
(((?* ?x) I want (*? ?y))
  (What would it mean if you got ?y)
  (Why do you want ?y) (Suppose you got ?y soon))
(((?* ?x) if (*? ?y))
  (Do you really think its likely that ?y) (Do you wish that ?y)
  (What do you think about ?y) (Really-- if ?y))
(((?* ?x) no (*? ?y))
  (Why not?) (You are being a bit negative)
  (Are you saying "NO" just to be negative?))
(((?* ?x) I was (*? ?y))
  (Were you really?) (Perhaps I already knew you were ?y)
  (Why do you tell me you were ?y now?))
(((?* ?x) I feel (*? ?y))
  (Do you often feel ?y ?))
(((?* ?x) I felt (*? ?y))
  (What other feelings do you have?))))
```


Computer generated stories: How?

- What people want to communicate
 - thus human agenda driven
 - *answering* questions
 - An Eliza using external data sets
- Analyse data
 - “mining data for meaning and insight”
- Deliver analysis in natural language



Publish or perish

- Need more text produces
- Less time to produce it
- Solution
 - domain-independent creative writing tool
 - when quality is not essential
 - based on large content collections
- Machine learning
 - topic analysis of content



Creative writing assistance

- Domain dependent template
 - built automatically
 - event description, biography, political news, ...
 - can include dialogue/argumentative structure
- Epistemic structure
 - extracted from texts in domain



Questions

- Who will read all this text?
 - computers?
 - algorithms analysing it to make new texts?
- What is it to tell a story
 - to express oneself?
 - to produce a number of words?



So what is this really?

- Analysis of data...
- ...presented not as a graph...
- ...but as a text
- Stories as a visualisation tool
 - from image to text—as—visualisation
 - (impression of) objectivity?
- So who is the winner?
- Poetry or painting?
 - that is, the textual or the graphical?



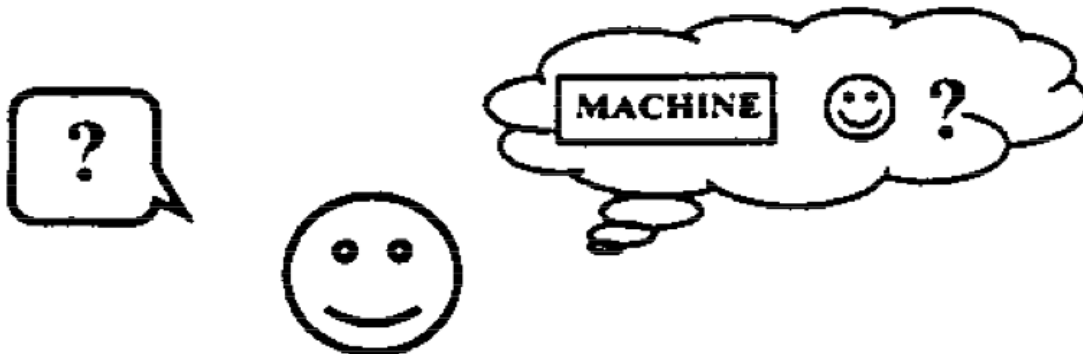
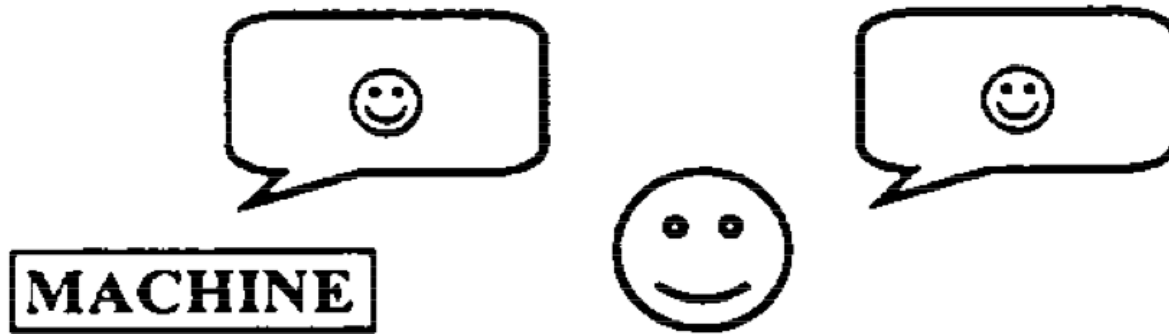
Interactivity

- The quality or condition of interaction
- Can be higher or lower
- Human to human interactivity
 - communication between people
- Human to computer interactivity
 - the artefact does not desire communication
 - interactive behaviour experienced by human



The Turing test

- Alan Turing, 1950
- Testing the machine's ability to show intelligence



Saygin, A. P.; Cicekli, I.; Akman, V. (2000), "Turing Test: 50 Years Later" (PDF), *Minds and Machines*, 10 (4): 463–518

Dialogism

- Dialogue between people talking
- Dialogue with historical sources
- Dialogue with natural environment
- Text and text interpreter
- Bakhtin: literary texts are dialogical
 - intertextuality
- Forming thoughts through dialogue
 - learn what we know by saying it



On narratology and representation

- Aristotle: *Poetics*.
- Plato: *The Republic*, 3.392c–398b.
- Auerbach, Erich (1968). *Mimesis : the Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton University Press.

