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**Pop, Literatur und Autorschaft.
Literarische Strategien und Inszenierungen bei
Wolfgang Welt, Rocko Schamoni und Rafael Horzon**

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Abstract

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This thesis explores the resonance of German so-called ‘pop literature’ after the turn of the millennium, both theoretically and in three literary analyses. Despite the proclaimed ‘end of pop literature’ that was discussed a few years back, it is here argued that after a period of intense debate, key topics associated with ‘pop’ have become largely accepted features in the cultural sphere. In this fashion, they have also found their way into recent literary texts, where they are historicized and problematized, but also rearranged and reinterpreted.

In the first part of the thesis, the use of the terms ‘pop’ and ‘pop literature’ are traced in recent intellectual discourse. While ‘pop literature’ in this perspective appears to be a rather narrow yet highly disputed label, mainly coined in German literary criticism by the end of the 1990’s, the idea of ‘pop’ is all but limited to this context, stretching back to the 1960’s and a recognizable and well-established cultural concept even today. Fluctuating between notions of ‘mass production’ and ‘individualized appropriation’, pop, in this context, is seen as a strategy of artists, journalists and writers to position themselves to cultural discourse and to develop ambivalent forms of distinction e.g. by referring to pop cultures’ artefacts in a highly specialized manner.

The main focus of the second part of the study is to examine how some of the features associated with pop are applied and discussed in the works of authors such as Wolfgang Welt, Rocko Schamoni, and Rafael Horzon. Three exemplary topics, each associated with one of the examined authorships, will be emphasized, firstly, the notion of everyday life and ultra-realism, secondly, the notion of subcultural discourse and commodification of lifestyles, and thirdly the notion of creativity and originality, all referring to different registers of pop discussions.

The aspect of self-fashioning of authorship is stressed in the analyses. Not only do all works discussed show a preoccupation with questions of authorship and writing but they also show a tendency of employing autofictional characters in their narratives. In doing so, the authors – all coming from popcultural backgrounds as journalists, club owners or musicians – intentionally blur the lines between the public person, the fictional character and the private person, evoking an uncertainty between ‘fact’ and ‘fiction’ and presenting both the public personas and the authorships as self-invented. The creative play with the public role of the author may then be seen as an additional feature that places the narrations within a framework of pop.

Key words: Pop, pop literature, pop culture, German literature, authorship, creative industries, autofiction, Wolfgang Welt, Rocko Schamoni, Rafael Horzon