

FROM MACHINES TO SCREENS: THE FLATTENING EFFECT IN CHRISTIAN
KRACHT'S *FASERLAND*

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ABSTRACT

TOBIAS MAG: From Machines to Screens: The Flattening Effect in Christian Kracht's
Faserland
(Under the direction of Dr. Richard Langston)

In this thesis, I argue that Christian Kracht's novel *Faserland* is a paradigmatic representation of the quandary of postmodernity facing Germany. I discuss the transition from modernity to postmodernity as it is manifested in this novel as a flattening or homogenization of the vertically-oriented, individuating concept of a Marcusean critical modernity. The transition is marked by a semiotic paradigm shift from the Marcusean construct of the Machine to what I refer to as the "Blue-Screen." The central problem underlying this change is how Germany as a society is to adapt to postmodernity and its eradication of identity, individuality, and, perhaps above all else, history itself. While the behavior of the novel's protagonist offers a potential coping mechanism in line with Félix Guattari's concept of "Machinic Doping," it is a solution that Germany is unable to utilize, as the postmodern implication of severing ties to the past is something that the nation both will not and cannot accept.

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