

# MEMORISATION

Einblicke in die Digital Humanities  
Fokus Game Studies in der Schweiz

## Abstract for the 16.10.23

UNIL team's approach is focusing on the emergence of videogames in the French-speaking Switzerland. We will first draw some general context and then focus on three specific case studies. Pierre-Yves Hurel will present his ongoing research on the "Computer" trade fair held in Lausanne from 1978 to the early 2000s. This will provide an overview of the computerisation of the region, some of the political issues at stake in Switzerland as a specific context, an understanding of the intermediary role played by such a fair, and a glance at the place of video games within this whole. Sophie Bémelmans will then present her research project on the Vaud microcomputers 'Smaky' (introduced in 1974). She will explain her methodology, at the crossroads of grounded theory and local history, which enables her to understand how the actors of the time experienced these platforms in the specific regional context of French speaking Switzerland. She will talk about the first results of her research, for which she focused on analyzing the context of emergence of the first models, notably a playful technical culture. Finally, Yannick Rochat will discuss the Blupi games (1988–), a franchise from Romandie initially available for Smaky computers. He will first show how the source code of such historical games can be approached in order to grasp a better understanding of the era under study. Then he will expose how the game franchise is the object of a preservation initiative and what the stakes of such an approach are.

References:

- Javet David et Matthieu Pellet (2021), Switzerland. Mark J. P. Wolf (dir.), *Encyclopedia of Video Games: The Culture, Technology, and Art of Gaming* 2nd Edition [3 Volumes], ABC-CLIO, LLC, p. 1020-1022.
- Mader Stéphanie, Rochat Yannick and Goudjil Romaine (2020), The Swiss Pong: Bong, Submission accepted on 17 February 2020 for the Game Historiography workshop organised atDiGRA 2020, Tampere, Finland (canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic). [https://serval.unil.ch/fr/notice/serval:BIB\\_AABAA1BBA0C3](https://serval.unil.ch/fr/notice/serval:BIB_AABAA1BBA0C3)
- Hurel Pierre-Yves (2023) *The "Computer" exhibition of Lausanne. Part 1 : A first overview*, Blog post. URL: <https://chludens.hypotheses.org/544>

## Abstract for the 06.11.23:

This lecture delves into the multifaceted field of game design, with a particular focus on game studies and game design practice. The Game Design course of the Zurich University of the Arts is presented with an emphasis on the institute's holistic approach to game design education. The lecture explores the ZHdK's approach to

game studies, highlighting its innovative programs and methodologies that combine theoretical knowledge with practical application. Additionally, an overview of ZHdK's GameLab research projects is presented. Furthermore, the lecture gives an insight into game design theory, covering fundamental game design concepts such as the distinction between play and game, game mechanics, immersion, target audiences and frameworks, among other things. The session will, in a hands-on-mode, also introduce the essential skill of prototyping and explore top-down and bottom-up design approaches, as well as the MDA Framework. This lecture provides a holistic and interactive exploration of game design, blending theory with practical experience to foster a deeper appreciation for the art and science of game design.