

# KINGDOM COME: DELIVERANCE AND THE PROBLEMATIC CLAIM OF AUTHENTICITY IN DIGITAL GAMES

*Jan Heinemann*

Digital games are one of the most popular media forms. Played by people of all ages and genders, they often stage the past to tell their stories. As interactive media, they have the power to shape their players' reception of the past more decisively than any other type of media. Marketing claims of "authentic", "accurate", and "realistic" depictions of the past foster the authority of whatever is depicted. The case of *Kingdom Come: Deliverance*, set in early fifteenth-century Bohemia exemplifies how these claims become problematic, especially as soon as game designers weave a (hidden) political agenda into their game's narrative und representations. Debates about the political implications and authenticity of how history is written in games are a vivid example of their role for today's memory culture, the formation of (collective) identities, and cultural criticism.