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ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

**“German-language business novel after 2000 - its main trends and
representatives”**

**prepared under the supervision of
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At the intersection of literature and economics there is the business novel, known in German as *Wirtschaftsroman*, which has gained popularity as a literary genre in German-speaking countries since the year 2000. The increased interest in the business novel among German-speaking authors is, besides other things, the result of the success of this genre in the United States in the 1990s, which was directly connected to the groundbreaking processes and trends taking place in the global economy at that time. These processes included, above all, the dynamic development of IT, biotechnology and telecommunications companies and, consequently, the intensive growth of the knowledge-based economy, as well as the progressive globalization or the internationalization of companies. These trends are reflected in the novel known as the *Wirtschaftsroman*.

The business novel is an epic genre characterized by the organization of the plot around specific economic processes or phenomena. Authors of business novels show the nuances of economic life, explain the rules, present economic theories, and phenomena as well as selected economic issues. Moreover, they provide the reader with knowledge of the economy, present their views and opinions, express criticism with regard to the existing socio-economic circumstances, provide a wide audience with arguments in public discourse. Introducing the reader into the space of economic issues, the business novel, in a way, “transports” knowledge in this field, becoming a kind of tool for understanding often complicated economic processes. In this way, the business novel plays an educational role, as it presents theoretical economic knowledge in a way that is understandable to the reader, thus fulfilling a didactic function, which to a large extent contributes to the understanding of the plot and at the same time to the learning of the basic mechanisms of the business world.

The authors of German-language business novels are not only writers, but also active participants in business life, i.e. managers, business owners, and even

economic academics who, by including modules of theoretical knowledge such as finance, management or marketing in the plot, i.e. all the areas that are fundamental to the functioning of any business, provide the reader who does not come from a business background with a great deal of valuable information, enabling them to acquire basic economic competence.

The business novel as a literary genre is a research area insufficiently scientifically developed not only in Poland, but also in German-speaking countries, and existing publications are selective and fragmented. Meanwhile, the novel can be a genre of great interest to Germanists not only because of its syncretism, but above all because of the extremely important subject matter and the language it uses. The aim of the dissertation was to attempt to define the business novel and to identify its constitutive features. Furthermore, the dissertation answers the question to what extent the contents of the business novel reflect the personal and professional situation of the authors and current economic issues after the year 2000 and how these influence the plot. It also analyses the educational value of the business novel and its dominant trends in the period under study.

The first part of the thesis analyses the connections between literature and economics and presents selected perspectives of literary research on the connections between literature, language and economics. It then presents the concepts which have been formulated so far and the state of research on the business novel in the German-speaking countries. In this part of the dissertation an attempt is made to define the concept of the business novel and to present the dominant motifs in the business novel in the period under study. In the second part of the thesis, a selection of business novels published in the first two decades of the 2000s is analysed to define the business novel as a genre. In particular, novels whose plots focused on the following economic issues were analysed: globalization, division of labor, relocation of companies to developing countries, surveillance capitalism, mechanisms of labor and financial markets, liquidation of cash and introduction of digital money only, succession in family businesses, or greenwashing in business. The concluding part contains a catalogue of constitutive features of a business novel, i.e. a specific set of qualities, which, according to the author of the thesis, characterize the contemporary business novel.