# Draft Synopsis – Software studies – reflecting on input and output

**Keywords:**

- input/output (I/O), API, request, response, distance, time, execution, precariousness, transparency, black-boxing, unpredictability, surprise.

I want to engage in an analysis of the computational concept of input and output (I/O). by critical thinking and reflection, I want to open up for new insights into the aesthetics of the concept, and try to illuminate cultural, social and political phenomena's occurring with the contemporary practice of the concept. To do this, I want to clarify what the notion of both input and output is (requiring a research of the concepts clear definitions). In what shape can both input and output take form? (figures, numbers, text, content) How is the connection between an input and an output defined (is there always an output in case of an input)? And where do we especially engage in a collaboration relying on input and output between the human and the machine? (particular instances of submitting inputs in order to receive a wanted output). I want to look into the unpredictability and surprise that may occur in the machines return of an output.

 I want to bring forth and illuminate my idea of a precariousness that is experienced while the machine is executing code with a human submitted input, waiting for it to return an output. You are rarely in control of what is being done with the input that you have submitted, numerous events can take place, so what happens during the execution? what links are there in the chain of events occurring after submitting an input? what is exposed to you and what is hidden from your sight and knowledge? With this, I want to discuss the grade of transparency and black-boxing in connection with input and output. With this in mind, I might also work with framing what happens in between an input and the return of output as a "distance" between the two, a

measuring with the amount of time and executions taking place. Here I might look for inspiration In Software Studies \ a lexicon by Matthew Fuller in the chapter "Button" written by Søren Pold and in Winnie Soon's final PhD – Executing Liveness the chapter of "Executing Unpredictable Queries" (pp. 117-139).

Further I want to relate to application programming interfaces (API's) and the use of request and response, two factors that can both be related to input and output. A request works by submitting an input defining the guidelines to which form you want the response take (inclusions, factors, ), the response takes form as an output, answering to the request that has been made. API's are a good example of the notions of precariousness, while using these services you are particularly dependent on circumstances created by the will of another, thus making you lose control of the situation. Once you have made an API request everything is beyond one's control, leaving it up to the API owner what happens next, what is exposed and what is hidden. For this part I seek inspiration from Taina Buchers text "Objects of intense feeling: The case of the Twitter API", in *Computational Culture: a journal of software studies*. 2013. 27 Nov. 2013. [http://computationalculture.net/article/objects-of-intense-feeling-the-case-of-the-twitter-api]