

# XSL Formatting Objects

Sebastian Rahtz  
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# Core principles of XSL FO

- ➡ Conceptual compatibility with DSSSL
- ➡ Compatibility with CSS properties
- ➡ Screen properties as well as print
- ➡ No compromises on internationalization
- ➡ Closely linked to XSLT transformation language

It provides an *abstract formatting language* to describe pages.



# The FO output tree

The input is transformed into an output tree consisting of:

- ➡ **page masters**, which define named styles of page layout; and
- ➡ **page sequences**, which reference a named page layout and contain a **flow** of text. Within that **flow**, text is assigned to one of five (rectangular) **regions** (the page body, areas at the top, bottom, left and right)

We also have allowance for floating objects (at the top of the page), and footnotes (at the bottom), and the model covers writing in left/right and/or top/bottom modes.



# Inside regions and blocks

Within a region of text, we find one or more

➡ **blocks**

➡ **tables**

➡ **lists** and

➡ **floats**

and within a block, we find

➡ **inline sequences**

➡ **characters**

➡ **links**

➡ **footnotes** and

➡ **graphics**



# Object properties

- ➡ aural properties
- ➡ borders, spacing and padding
- ➡ breaking
- ➡ colors
- ➡ font properties (family, size, shape, weight etc)
- ➡ hyphenation
- ➡ positioning
- ➡ special table properties
- ➡ special list properties

**BUT** supporting all of them is not mandatory.



# Simple example

Take this bit of TEI input

```
<p>The <gi>corr</gi> element marks  
<corr sic="a mistake">correction</corr></p>
```

and transform it, as an interpretation of what the `<corr>` element is supposed to do, with the following XSLT template.



# Sample XSLT template

```
<xsl:template match="corr">
  <xsl:text>[</xsl:text><xsl:apply-templates/>
  <xsl:text>]</xsl:text>
  <fo:footnote>
    <fo:footnote-citation>
      <fo:inline font-size="8pt" vertical-align="super">
        <xsl:number format="a" level="any" count="corr"/>
      </fo:inline>
    </fo:footnote-citation>
    <fo:footnote-body>
      <fo:block>
        <fo:inline font-size="8pt" vertical-align="super">
          <xsl:number format="a" level="any" count="corr"/>
        </fo:inline>
        <fo:inline font-family="Helvetica" font-size="10pt">
          <xsl:value-of select="@sic"/>
        </fo:inline>
      </fo:block>
    </fo:footnote-body>
  </fo:footnote>
</xsl:template>
```



# Sample FO output

```
<fo:block font-size="12pt" text-align="justify"
  text-indent="1em" space-before="0pt">
The <fo:inline color="green" font-family="Courier">corr
</fo:inline> element marks [correction]
<fo:footnote>
<fo:inline font-size="8pt"
  vertical-align="super">a</fo:inline>
<fo:footnote-body>
<fo:block>
<fo:inline font-size="8pt"
  vertical-align="super">a</fo:inline>
<fo:inline font-family="Helvetica"
  font-size="10pt">a mistake</fo:inline>
</fo:block>
</fo:footnote-body>
</fo:footnote></fo:block>
```





# Sample rendition

The `corr` element marks [correction]<sup>a</sup>

---

<sup>a</sup> a mistake



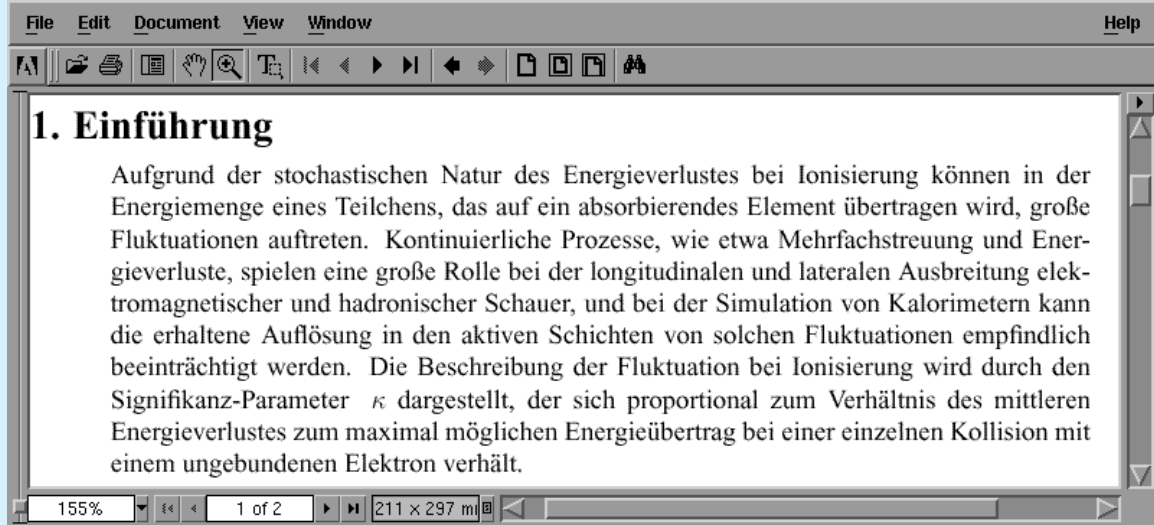
# FO implementations

There are six XSLFO implementations to consider:

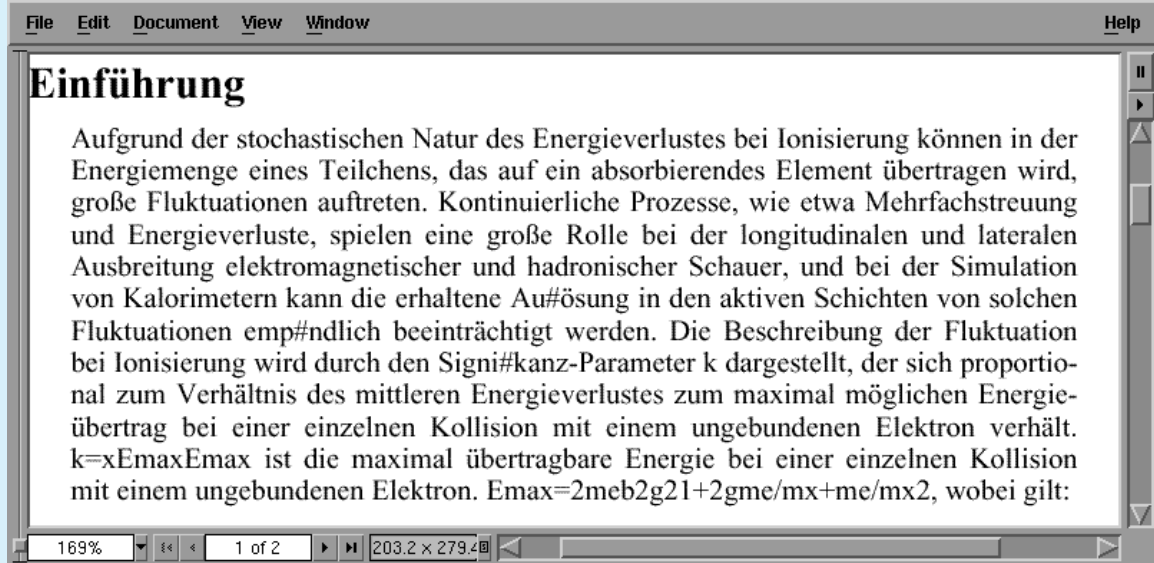
1. RenderX's *XEP*, probably the most complete and reliable
2. Apache's *FOP* open source Java, creating PDF or AWT, with a large amount of the XSLFO specification implemented.
3. Antenna House's *XSL Formatter* is different in that it formats for the screen, using Windows GDI calls. It has good coverage of the specification (albeit not complete), and is robust.
4. Sebastian Rahtz' *PassiveTeX*, a library of TeX macros which interpret XSLFO;
5. Sun's *xmlroff*, which implements only a subset of XSL FO so far, but is under active open-source development
6. Arbortext's *Epic* is not yet in widespread use and its coverage of the specification is unknown



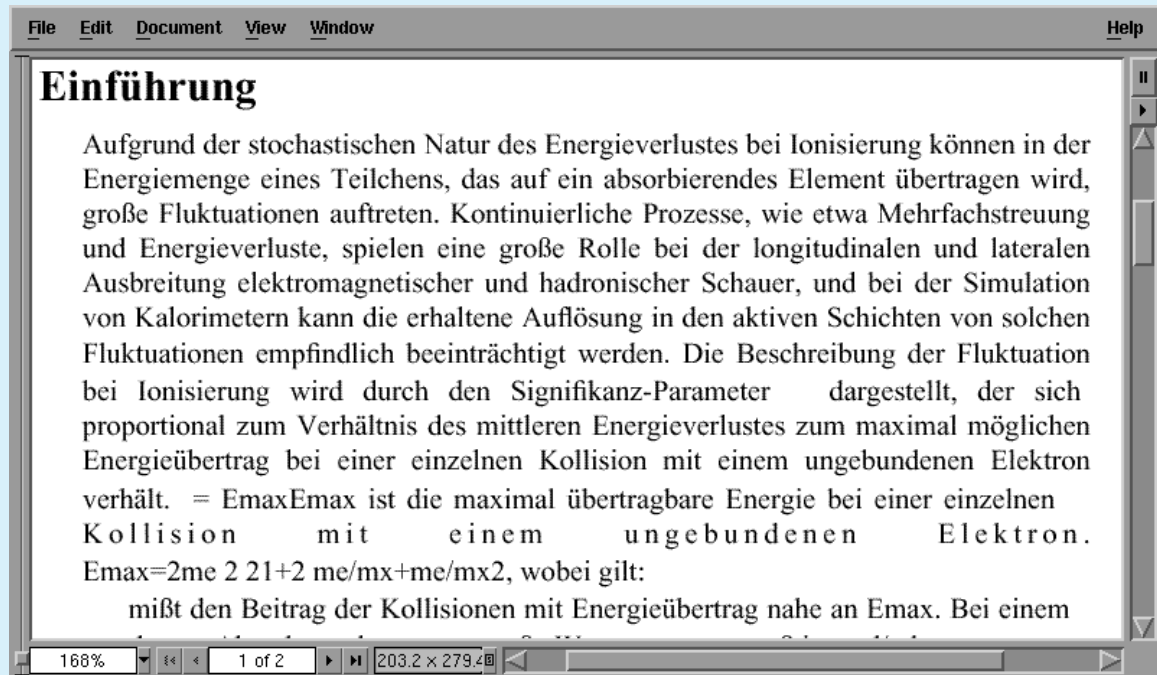
# Sample 1: PassiveTeX



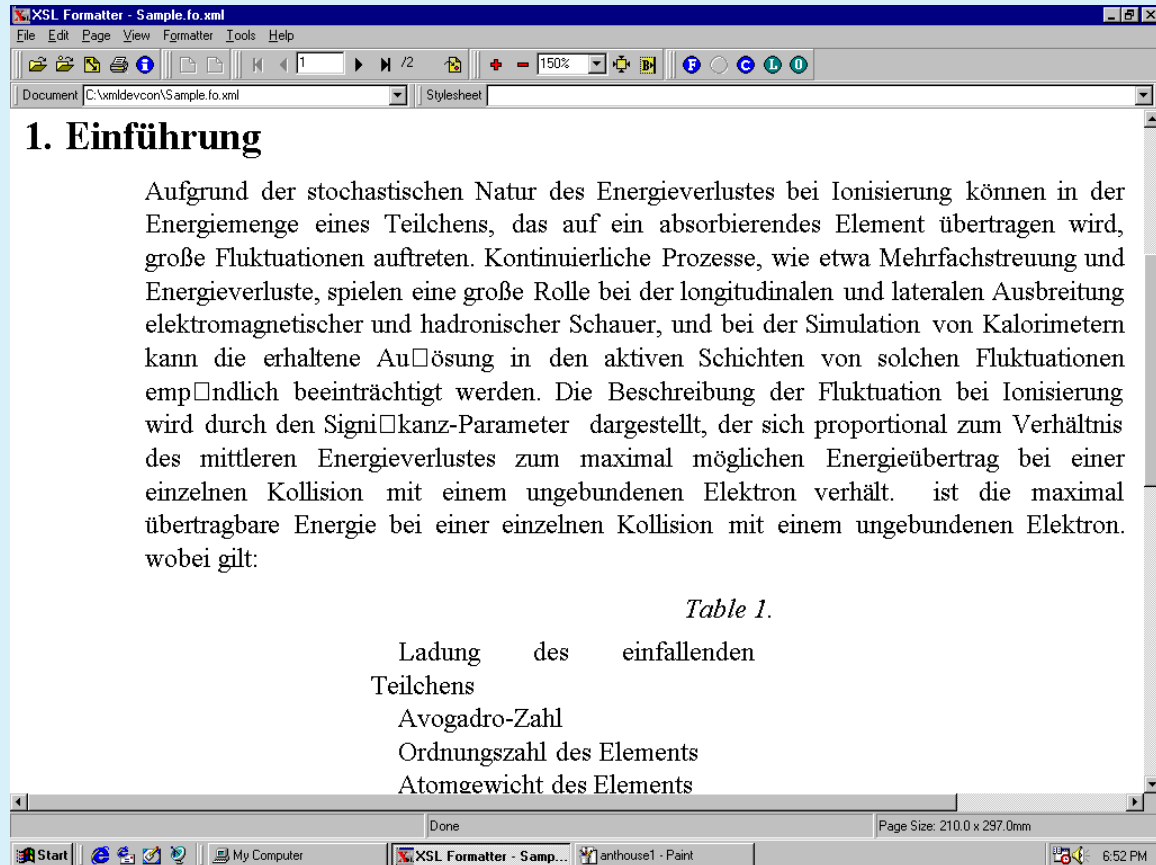
# Sample 1: FOP



# Sample 1: XEP



# Sample 1: Antenna House



The screenshot shows a window titled "XSL Formatter - Sample fo.xml". The menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "Page", "View", "Formatter", "Tools", and "Help". The toolbar contains icons for file operations, navigation, and formatting. The status bar at the bottom shows "Done", "Page Size: 210.0 x 297.0mm", and the system clock "6:52 PM". The taskbar at the very bottom shows the Start button and several open applications: "My Computer", "XSL Formatter - Samp...", and "AntHouse1 - Paint".

## 1. Einführung

Aufgrund der stochastischen Natur des Energieverlustes bei Ionisierung können in der Energiemenge eines Teilchens, das auf ein absorbierendes Element übertragen wird, große Fluktuationen auftreten. Kontinuierliche Prozesse, wie etwa Mehrfachstreuung und Energieverluste, spielen eine große Rolle bei der longitudinalen und lateralen Ausbreitung elektromagnetischer und hadronischer Schauer, und bei der Simulation von Kalorimetern kann die erhaltene Auflösung in den aktiven Schichten von solchen Fluktuationen empfindlich beeinträchtigt werden. Die Beschreibung der Fluktuation bei Ionisierung wird durch den Signifikanz-Parameter dargestellt, der sich proportional zum Verhältnis des mittleren Energieverlustes zum maximal möglichen Energieübertrag bei einer einzelnen Kollision mit einem ungebundenen Elektron verhält. ist die maximal übertragbare Energie bei einer einzelnen Kollision mit einem ungebundenen Elektron. wobei gilt:

*Table 1.*

Ladung des einfallenden Teilchens
Avogadro-Zahl
Ordnungszahl des Elements
Atomgewicht des Elements

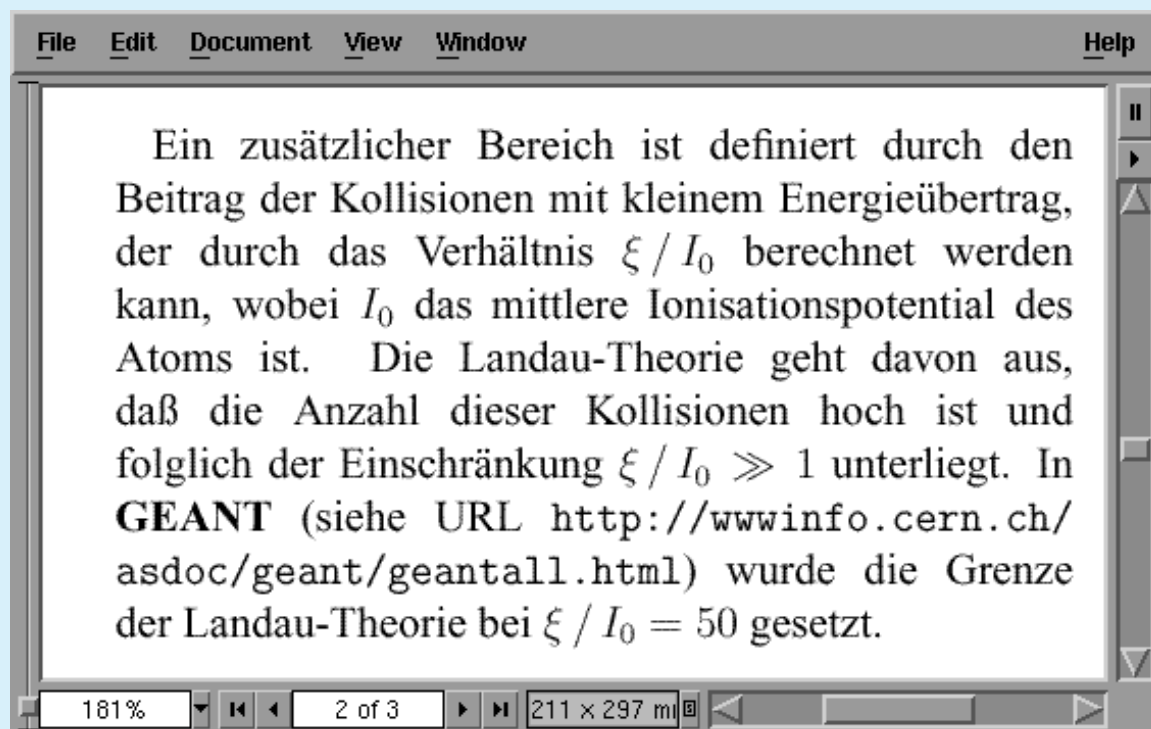


# Discussion 1

The results are within fairly acceptable limits, though XEP's inability to hyphenate shows clearly how vital a good H&J engine is - the word and letter spacing on the 3rd line from the end is clearly unacceptable. Let us now decrease the page width, and look at a harder paragraph.

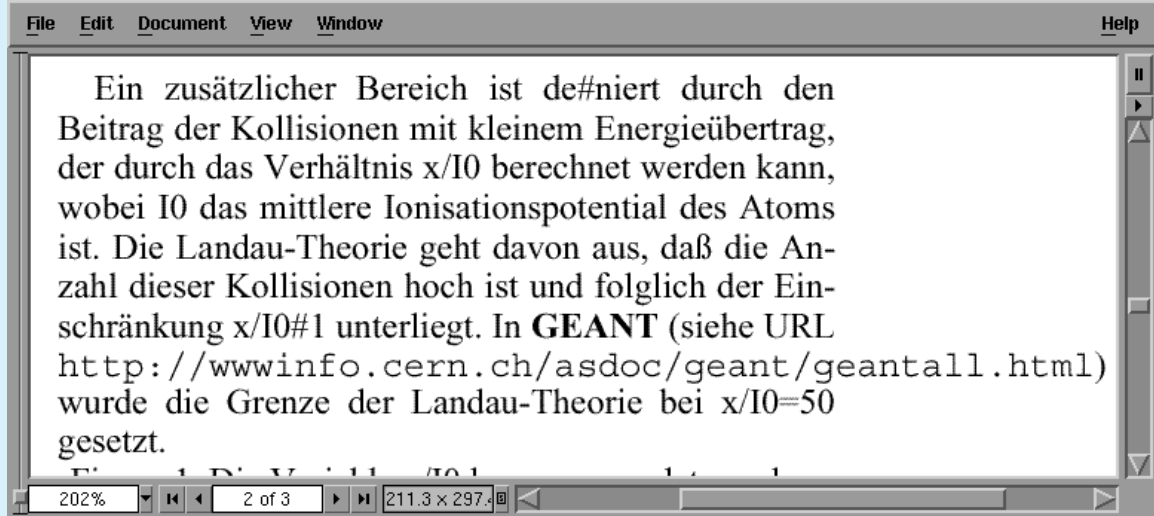


## Sample 2: PassiveTeX

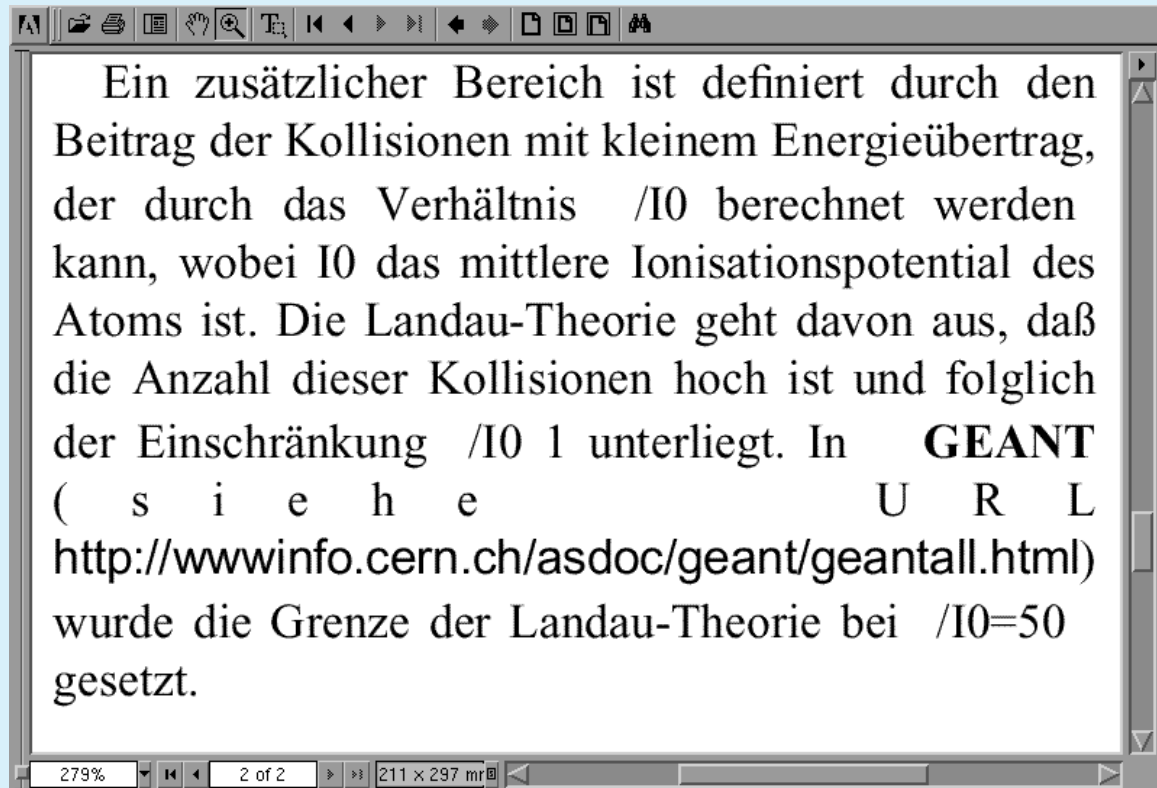




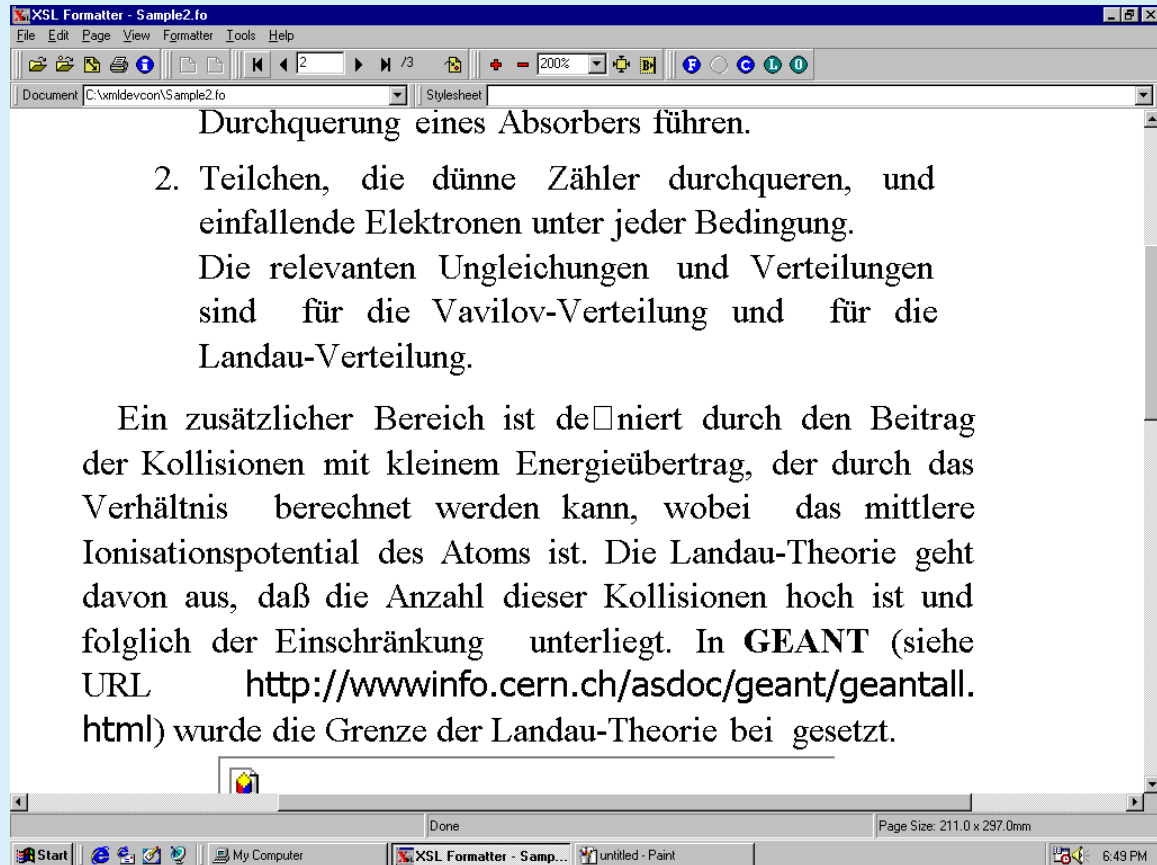
# Sample 2: FOP



## Sample 2: XEP



# Sample 2: Antenna House



## Discussion 2

The results show two rather different formatting decisions taking place in FOP and XEP. The former opts to abandon sensible line breaking, and let the URL stick out into the margin, but XEP forces itself to extreme lengths to justify with letter spacing, while Antenna House makes an arbitrary break.

