

Notes

Call for Papers

Site-Specific: From Aachen to Zwölfkinder
Pynchon:Germany

An International Conference

Centered around the many German contexts into which Pynchon's work is—and, so rumor has it, will be once more—incribed.

Hosted by the University of Cologne
Organized by Hanjo Berressem and John M. Krafft

Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon, June 14–16, 2002

It is symptomatic of the German connections in Pynchon's work that the *Pynchon Notes* index to *Gravity's Rainbow*—which lists terms ranging from the real "Aachen" to the imaginary "Zwölfkinder"—is framed by two German references. Its connotations ranging from dark spectre of the Western soul to Deleuzian Zone, Germany has been continually and relentlessly coded and overcoded in Pynchon's work. The German landscape has been a text to decipher and redecipher, a glyph to read and reread, a discursive as well as a real space to walk, drive or ride through, to fly across, to dissect and to traverse from the height of the Brocken to the depth of the Mittelwerke.

Germany has spawned filmmakers such as der Springer, witches such as Geli Tripping, victims such as Bianca, engineers such as Kurt Mondaugen, impresarios such as Thanatz and G. M. B. Haftung, and Verbindungsmenschen such as Wimpe. German references span Wagner to Weber, Rilke to Rathenau, Spengler to Engels, Euler to Einstein, IG Farben to Ufa, Grimm to Grimmelshausen, Thurn and Taxis to Radio Cologne, and Bavaria to Peenemünde. Even one of the best jokes in *Gravity's Rainbow* (the one about the woman congenitally unable to pronounce umlauts, so that "Hübsch Räuber" comes out "Hubschrauber"), steeped as it is in a German context, indicates the depths of Pynchon's interest in and knowledge of Germany.

Some of these German connections have been investigated (in the summer of 2000, a dozen Pynchon scholars even visited several German sites featured in *Gravity's Rainbow*), but an effort is long overdue to provide a general context for these references.

For this purpose, we invite scholars—from Germany and elsewhere—to contribute to a mapping of Germany onto any of Pynchon’s texts and v.v. These contributions can be micro- as well as macromappings. Possible subjects include German allusions and references in the texts (historical, political, philosophical, cultural, artistic), German references brought to the texts (reader-response theory, systems theory, the theory of *Aufschreibsysteme*, German philosophy, etc.), the reception of the texts in Germany, the translations into German, among many others.

Each speaker will be allotted 30 minutes for a presentation or a presentation plus Q and A. All papers will be presented in plenary session.

Selected proceedings of the conference will be published as a special issue of *Pynchon Notes: Pynchon:Germany*.

Deadline for submission of 300–500–word abstracts, November 15, 2001. Decisions by January 1, 2002.

E-mail abstracts to either

Hanjo Berressem, Universität zu Köln,
hanjo.berressem@uni-koeln.de, or

John M. Krafft, Miami University–Hamilton,
krafftjm@muohio.edu.

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American Mourning: An Interdisciplinary Conference
May 11–12, 2001
Keele University, School of American Studies

Cultural memory has attracted increasing and varied academic attention across disciplines in recent years. The cultural attempts to remember events that seem to defy representation or comprehension have been a matter of particular scrutiny. In this light, memory studies has raised the following questions: In what ways is mourning (or melancholia) a response to memories that cannot be captured or explained or worked through? In what ways is mourning a part of remembering? How does the representation of memory function as mourning? In what ways is the representation of memory the residue of what cannot be mourned or what cannot even be remembered?

While we hope to maintain the diversity of memories studied and of approaches to them, this conference will seek to provide a focus for interdisciplinary memory studies in terms of mourning on a North American cultural scene, the significance of what is mourned there and

how it is mourned. This American focus suggests a rich resource for paper topics, from the inception of mourning as part of the cultural fabric of the nation in the face of its foundational, genocidal events, to the current obsession with memory in a supposedly amnesiac culture.

Although the deadline for paper proposals has passed, inquiries for further information about the conference may be addressed to either Richard Crownshaw or Monica Pearl, School of American Studies, Keele University, Keele, Staffs ST5 5BG, UK.

Tel. (Crownshaw) 01782 583019 or (Pearl) 01782 583018

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The Narrated Gravity's Rainbow

The final presentation at the Antwerp conference during International Pynchon Week in June 1998 was *The Narrated Gravity's Rainbow*—a critical reading/performance of Pynchon's novel by Project Vox Libris. Their reading of the novel centers on the ideas of Europe as a Zone of conflicting human and technological forces, the transformation of power in the ever-changing shapes of entertainment, and the evolution of technology from V-2 missiles to space dreams and computer mirages. Spanning several orthodox categories, *The Narrated Gravity's Rainbow* integrates criticism with animated digital collage (using the work of Canadian artist Larry Daw), theatre and contemporary music into a compelling aural and visual performance, transforming Pynchon's postmodern fiction into Performance Art. The entire presentation is now available on CD-ROM or PAL-format VHS video for \$12.00 (U.S.) plus postage. An order form is available on the *Pynchon Notes* website at <<http://www.ham.muohio.edu/~krafftjm/voxLibris.html>>.

Project Vox Libris are Massimiliano Aloisi—computer programming, visual arts, bass, guitar, samples, voice; Mattia Carratello—sound editing, movie production, guitar, keyboard, voice; Doc Rossi—computer programming, digital effects, text preparation, guitar, cittern, lead voices.

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Websites of Special Interest

The *Pynchon Notes* website: <<http://www.ham.muohio.edu/~krafftjm/pynchon.html>>

The Pomona Pynchon page: <<http://www.pynchon.pomona.edu>>

Tim Ware's web-guides to Pynchon's fiction: <<http://www.hyperarts.com/pynchon/>>

Otto Sell's *Gravity's Rainbow* site: <<http://WWW.itap.de/homes/otto/pynchon/episode.htm>>

Don Larsson's *Companion's Companion*: <<http://www.english.mankato.msus.edu/larsson/grnotes.html>>

Jorn Barger's Pynchon Portal: <<http://www.robotwisdom.com/jorn/tpportal.html>>

Pynchon Reading Group, c/o Niran Abbas, Birkbeck College: <<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/Departments/English/pynchon/>>

Stuart Moulthrop's *Hyperbola* stack: <<http://raven.ubalt.edu/staff/moulthrop/hypertexts/hyperbola.html>>

Larry Daw's Spermatikos Logos: <<http://www.themodernword.com/pynchon/>>

Soniferous Aether: Thomas Pynchon, Sound, Music, and Information: <<http://www.netspace.org/crudites/spaces/pynchon/>>

Susan Argus's Pynchon links: <<http://www.city-net.com/~argus/pynchon.html>>

Richard Lane's Pynchon Files: <<http://www.pynchonfiles.com>>

The American Pynchon e-mail list: <<http://www.waste.org/pynchon-l>>

The German Pynchon e-mail list: <<http://sophie7.culture.hu-berlin.de/aesthetic/liste.htm>>