

German Culture News

Cornell University Institute for German Cultural Studies

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Archive, Architecture, and Media after Walter Benjamin

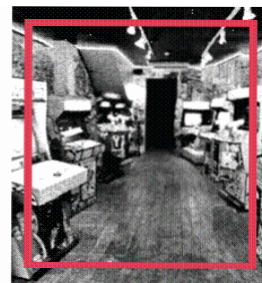
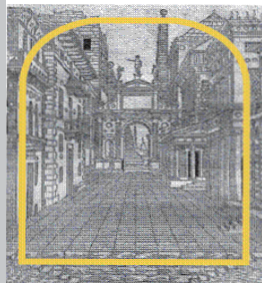


image credit: Mark Linder and Bryan Scheib

November 1-2, 2012

Organized in cooperation between **Peter Gilgen** (Cornell) and Karl Solibakke, Mark Linder, and Francisco Sanin (Syracuse University), the two-day conference on "Archive, Architecture, and Media after Walter Benjamin" opened with a talk by **Bernd Witte** (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf). In his contribution, entitled "Writing and Reading in the Age of Electronic Reproducibility," Witte set out to apply Benjamin's

media theory to the age of the Internet. Taking Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility" (1936) as his starting point—and, in particular, its insight that the content of any medium directly depends on its technical formation—Witte's talk investigated the ways the Internet has changed our thinking, including our understanding of cultural memory.

Witte distinguished three key moments in the history of media: the invention of the alphabet, early book printing,

and the birth of the Internet. He interpreted Benjamin's later texts as having anticipated the leap from a culture of books to the computer age: in "Vereidigter Bücherrevisor," for example, one of the texts in *Einbahnstrasse* (1928), Benjamin coins the term "dictatorial vertical," referring to writing on billboards; Witte then applied Benjamin's thoughts apropos commercial billboards to the verticals of today's laptop screens. He also made it clear that electronic reproducibility brings into circulation

Newsletter summaries of Institute-sponsored events are generously provided by graduate students in various stages of doctoral study in the interdisciplinary field of German Studies at Cornell University. These summaries are customarily written by students with a general audience in mind and highlight selected aspects of complex presentations by specialists.

more texts than any single human being can read in a lifetime, thus differentiating contemporary from earlier learned societies, which were organized around a few canonical works like the Torah or the Bible.

Witte concluded his talk by introducing the concept of “transcriptivity” as media studies’ approach to the question of cultural memory, connecting Benjamin’s last text with his essay on the “Task of the Translator” (1923): if the task of the writer is to transcribe existing texts into new ones, then writers, together with their readers, establish a chain of commentary and meaning, whose confluence forms the framework of cultural memory. In literature, then, truth and meaning, according to Witte’s extrapolation of Benjamin’s media theory, do not appear as the creation of a single genius, but rather as a construct built over time collectively. But in order for that to happen, Witte suggested, “literal societies” would need to survive at least on the periphery of capitalist societies. (Jette Gindner)

In his talk, “Toward the Apokatastatic Will: Media and Eschatology in Benjamin’s Late Work,” **Michael Jennings** (Princeton University) rejected a reading of mysticism in Benjamin’s writings by asserting that although theology – in particular, Protestant negative theology, or Jewish theology mediated through Christian writings – is central to the critic’s late *oeuvre*, religion plays no role.

Jennings first argued that Benjamin’s media theoretical writings, particularly his famous essay “The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological

Reproducibility,” are themselves already eschatological, concerned in particular with the destruction of experience in modernity. Media technologies such as film, equipped with the ability to alter perception, are both responsible for the historically specific conditions of capitalist modernity and able to reveal these conditions themselves.

For Jennings, three figures – the Jewish philosopher Erich Unger, the Lutheran theologian Adolf von Harnack, and the Protestant negative theologian Karl Barth – form the theological archive informing this late amalgam of theology and Marxian-influenced media criticism. Jennings draws on this archive to reject a reading of Benjamin’s late work centered on the term “messianism,”



Bernd Witte

which views the thinker as being concerned with an anarchic destruction of the current historical order. Focusing instead on the term “apokatastasis,” he reads Benjamin’s late project as an investment in, to use Unger’s phrase, “a reformation of the sensorium” through media. Once

such a reformation occurred, the revelation of real existing historical conditions would make revolution inevitable. But mediating a properly *religious* experience – one that would be *coincident* with the messianic destruction of the current historical order – is not, in Jennings’s reading, what Benjamin is here concerned with. Such experience, lost in capitalist modernity, would become available only after such an order comes to an end.

Jennings concluded by stressing the need to understand three figures associated with the revelation of the current historical conditions in Benjamin’s late work: Charles Baudelaire, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Louis-Auguste Blanqui. These figures exist at the nexus of historical determination and its dissolution for Benjamin. A product of crisis, their work nonetheless reveals the unstable productions of capitalist modernity that contain the possibility of modernity’s own undoing. (Matteo Calla)

In her paper titled “Halacha and Hagada in Benjamin and Scholem,” **Vivian Liska** (University of Antwerp) examined the relationship between Jewish law, i.e., Halacha, and the narrative or story-telling impulse of the Hagada as articulated by Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem in their discussions about Franz Kafka’s work.

Liska began by outlining several readings of Kafka’s famous parable “Before the Law,” an excerpt from the novel *The Trial* (1925) in which a man waits in front of the gate to the Law where a doorkeeper tells him he may not enter. Readings of the parable

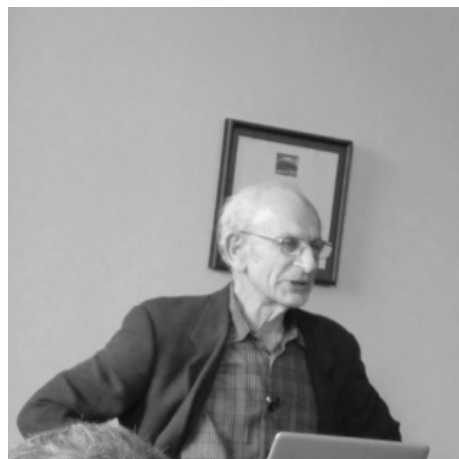
generally address what happens when narrative, understood as something living, confronts the generic, codified, impersonal and yet highly effective structures of the law. For Giorgio Agamben, “Before the Law” describes a condition of petrified messianism; Jacques Derrida reads it as the state of exception being brought into the state of freedom; and Scholem sees a picture of life in deferral and delay. To elucidate Benjamin’s reading of the law in Kafka’s work, Liska turned to epistolary exchanges between Scholem and Benjamin that took place between 1925 and 1938. Noting marked differences in how each thinker understands the role of theology, law and the Halacha in Kafka’s work, Liska contrasted Benjamin’s emphasis on the political or human dimension of life as expressed in the letters with Scholem’s emphasis on the divine. Focusing on a quotation from a 1938 letter from Benjamin to Scholem (published as “Some Reflections on Kafka” in *Illuminations*), Liska then showed how Scholem reads his own skepticism of the Halacha into Benjamin’s description of Kafka’s parables, which “do not modestly lie at the feet of the doctrine, as the Haggadah lies at the feet of the Halakah. Though apparently reduced to submission, they unexpectedly raise a mighty paw against it.”

Whereas for Scholem, Benjamin’s assessment echoes the Paulinian argument in which Jewish law must be abrogated because it cannot be lived up to, Liska argued that Benjamin’s image suggests, rather, a structure of dynamic interaction between Halacha and Hagada. For

Benjamin, narrative is the basis for law; Kafka’s stories can thus be read as a transition to legal knowledge, which furthermore point to the law’s substantive limitations. In the image described above, Liska concluded, the paw does not crush the Halacha, but stops short of encountering it, thus suggesting that the limit of the law is dictated by creaturely life. (Katrina Nousek)

Alexander Gelley (University of California, Irvine) examined the relationship between Walter Benjamin and Eugène Atget in his paper, “Benjamin and Atget.” Gelley began by laying out the five possible contexts in which he could address the figure of Atget: as a person, as an oeuvre, through Benjamin’s comments on him, through Benjamin’s comments on his works, and through Atget’s images themselves.

Eugène Atget, a professional photographer living in Paris, was discovered by Berenice Abbott in 1925, two years before



Alexander Gelley

his death, and introduced more widely to the Parisian art scene when Man Ray published several of his photographs. According

to Benjamin in his essay “Kleine Geschichte der Photographie” (1931), Atget was a virtuoso of photography and a forerunner of the Surrealists. Benjamin’s description of the emancipation of the object from the aura in Atget’s work, Gelley argued, suggests the revolutionary sense Benjamin found in the detritus and obsolescence pictured. For John Szarkowski, director of the MoMA from 1962 to 1991 and one of the first to analyze thoroughly the style and content of Atget’s works, the photos have a “clear and lively” quality. Referencing Benjamin’s description of the photos that “suck the aura out of reality like water from a sinking ship,” Gelley described the function of aura as a differential marker used to situate phenomena according to historical lack. As a critical concept, aura emerges as a result of the appropriation of the singular by way of reproduction in a manner comparable to the veil in Romantic thought. After showing a series of Atget’s photos—boutique window displays, dishes left on a table, a brothel, prostitutes—Gelley noted the catalog of vast scenes that avoid emblematic images and reiterated Benjamin’s observation that the scenes are empty but “not lonely, merely without mood.”

What, then, is the political force of these photographs? Gelley concluded by suggesting that instead of looking to the ending of Benjamin’s essay on Surrealism, which calls for the organization of pessimism to find a space of political possibility, we should focus on finding the punctum in Atget’s work. (Katrina Nousek)

Next, **Kevin Attell** (Cornell) talked about “Mediality and Means” in

Agamben's reading of Benjamin's "Critique of Violence" (1921). Attell began by recounting two key distinctions in Benjamin's essay: that between natural and positive law, and that between law-making and law-preserving violence. While natural and positive law focus on the justness of ends or the legality of means respectively, they converge in treating violence in terms of a means-end relation subordinate to the law. Benjamin hopes to break up this understanding of violence by investigating the second distinction. For both schools of legal thought, violence is either legitimized as law-preserving (the state's monopoly on violence) or law-making (the originary – e.g. revolutionary – violence to which this law owes its foundation). Violence is thus always one or the other, resulting in an eternal ("mythical") cycle of upheaval and re-establishment of the law.

Agamben's reading of the essay places particular emphasis on Benjamin's example of police violence. Police violence is at once law pre-serving (acting in the name of the legal order) and law-making (using extra-legal violence against revolutionary insurrection). This "legal extra-judicial" – which Agamben understands in terms of his critique of the "state of exception" – exposes the fictionality of the equation of law and just violence presupposed by both legal schools. Staging a debate between Benjamin and Schmidt, Agamben argues that while Schmidt's "state of exception" inscribes *anomy* (the outside of the law) within the *nomos* (law), Benjamin seeks to break the cycle of law-making and law-preserving violence by

introducing a form of violence severed from its connection to the law ("divine violence"). Against the legal tradition and its attempt to inscribe violence within legality, Benjamin calls for "violence as pure medium," that is, independent of its ends. Agamben, Attell argued, understands the "purity" of such violence not in terms of absolutes or origins, but as a form of violence "purified" from ends and considered exclusively in terms of its own mediality.

The decisive question thus shifts from justifying violence by its ends to finding a new *kind* of "violence" or a new form of political action. Agamben tries to understand this new mode of action as a playful relation to the law that de-poses (*ent-setzen*) its dominion. Attell concluded by invoking the Benjaminian topos of messianic change: the slight shift from "tool" (violence as means) to "toy" (violence as pure medium) integrally changes the whole. (Johannes Wankhammer)

Brigid Doherty (Princeton University), one of the organizers of the conference, presented twice. On Friday, November 1, she discussed the German artist Rosemarie Trockel (born 1952), who is also the focus of her current book project. Doherty's broader research interests include the interdisciplinary study of modern and contemporary art, literature, and film, with an emphasis on relationships among the visual arts, literature, and aesthetic theory within German modernism.

In "Rosemary Trockel's Spleen," Doherty discussed the artistic strategies Trockel employs to deal and play with the Benjaminian concept of the work of art in the age of mechanical

reproduction. Doherty pointed out that Trockel directly refers to Walter Benjamin in the titles of some of her works, including "Mechanical Reproduction" (1995)



Kevin Attell

and "Kiss my Aura" (2008), while the works she discussed in her presentation dealt more implicitly with the crisis of artistic representation.

The title of Doherty's paper referred to a series of video works that Trockel had produced since 2000 under the title "Manu's Spleen," featuring the artist's friend Manu Burghart. In "Manu's Spleen #3," Burghart is shown at a baby shower, the shape of her belly alternating between being heavily pregnant and flat, her seemingly magical transformation thus representing the woman's "spleen," that is, her eccentricity. Doherty then moved on to Trockel's works "Gossip" (2007) and "Replace me" (2011), both of which contain reproductions of Gustave Courbet's famous painting "L'Origine du Monde" (1866).

Doherty pointed out that Jacques Lacan temporarily owned the painting "Replace me," invoking theories of psychoanalysis by showing how Courbet's painting with a black tarantula replaced the nude's pubic hair. By contrast,

Doherty suggested that the title of the montage “Gossip” refers to the reputation of the painting that was never shown during the lifetime of the artist but was surrounded by rumors. The naked torso of fellow artist Raymond Pettibon combines with the lower body of the nude in the painting, thus connecting the phenomena of sexual and artistic reproduction. (Hannah Müller)

Drawing on Benjamin’s 1937 essay “Edward Fuchs, Collector and Historian” (1937) and selected entries from *The Arcades Project* (1927-1940), **Karl Ivan Solibakke** (Syracuse University) explored in his paper “Archivologie vs. Archeology: Memory Systems in Walter Benjamin’s *Passagenwerk*” the kinds of memory systems that are inherent to the representational spaces of modernity. Solibakke argued that the memory space of the archive can be regarded as a, or perhaps the dialectical image of modernity. In his talk, Solibakke focused primarily on the figure of the collector as well as on the archive as a mnemonic space in an attempt to distill what he referred to as Benjamin’s “archivological paradigm.”

From a Benjaminian perspective, objects entering a collection carry a residue of the exterior world but they also experience a series of transformations under the auspices of the mnemonic spaces of the archive: first they undergo a metamorphosis that legitimizes them as acquisitions, followed by a second transformation in which they relinquish material status and become archetypal. According to Benjamin, what is essential in collecting is that the object is detached from its original function

in order to enter the closest conceivable relation to things of the same kind. The figure of the



Karl Solibakke

collector is just as important: it is his sovereign gesture that motivates what selective criteria determine which objects take what status within the configuration of objects, as well as how the rapport of new objects both to their precursors and partners resynchronize the order and disorder imposed on the constellation of matter. The collection exists within a dialectic of order and disorder: external chaos vs. internal order (the collector holds that the external world is entrenched in chaos, to which he opposes the order of the collection) as well as the constant oscillation between order and disorder that is inherent to the ways in which configurations of objects come about in the collection (the addition of each new object brings about a reordering of the collection). Solibakke argued that the objects become agents of a spatiotemporal modus that receives its stimulus from the interconnections within the collection, demonstrating

how intimately the politics and mnemonics of positionality and presence are galvanized in the memory space.

In the image of the collection, the dialectics of remembering and forgetting are intertwined within the critical constellation of lexical objects. These semantic constructs represent, according to Solibakke, Benjamin’s attempt to come to terms with the phenomenon of cultural memory. (Andreea Mascan)

In their talk “Benjamin’s Tomorrow,” practicing architects and theorists **Mark Linder** and **Francisco Sanin** (Syracuse University) focused on Benjamin’s approach to the history of architecture in conjunction with his influence on the future of architecture, urbanity and urban planning.

Mark Linder asked why Benjamin did not write an explicit aesthetics of architecture, given both the applicability of his theory of the material and technical conditions of experience in texts like the “Artwork” essay to that art form as well as the important role that architecture plays in works such as the *Arcades Project* (1927-1940). Here, but also in other works such as the radio talks *Enlightenment for Children* (1929-1932), Benjamin engages with the socio-political influence of architecture as a crucial factor in the socially conditioned construction of the subject, as Francisco Sanin pointed out. Through a Benjaminian approach to “read the city as a text,” it seems plausible to regard architecture as a symptom of historically contingent political developments and thus as an important object

of study for historical materialism. In turn, such a theoretical evaluation of architecture may offer productive suggestions for the challenges that practicing architects face when confronted with the task of developing buildings and urban environments. Indeed, these buildings and environments themselves function as sites of subject-formation, even if they do not explicitly express this aim in the way the “ideal city” of the Renaissance or other large-scale urban remodeling projects once did.

Linder and Sanin further illustrated their understanding of Benjamin’s reflections on architecture and their practical impact both historically, drawing on various examples from twentieth-century architecture, as well as through their presentation of students’ projects at Syracuse that try to use Benjaminian ideas as a point of departure for understanding and developing concrete architectural models. Examples included the affinities between Le Corbusier’s surrealist architecture and Benjamin’s essay on Surrealism, modern attempts at working with the “reproducibility” of houses in a productive way (such as the Smithson’s 1949 Stanton School building in Chicago), the movement of “new brutalism” as architectural resistance to mass-media imaging, and several provocative student projects such as a self-imaging house and an analysis of the architecture of US-Mexican border facilities.

Linder and Sanin concluded by emphasizing that issues of conflict and survival within public spaces not only serve as key themes in Benjamin’s thought, but are also very much at stake

both in the theory and practice of architecture today. (Reinhard Möller)



Peter Gilgen

The organizers divided the conference activities between Cornell and Syracuse Universities, incorporating local infrastructures into the primary topics: archive, media and architecture. Accordingly, the concept comprised thematic sections that focused on urban memory and memoryscapes, cultural archives in theory and practice, collective media yesterday and today, technology and social semiotics.

Fittingly, the second day of the conference, which was dedicated to questions of architecture and media, was hosted by the School of Architecture at Syracuse University. The morning event was a roundtable discussion on Benjamin’s *Arcades Project* (Bernd Witte, Michael Jennings, Peter Gilgen, Karl Ivan Solibakke) that was moderated by Francesco Sanin, a practicing architect and professor of architecture at Syracuse University, and which attracted a very active and informed audience.

The afternoon began with a suggestive panel entitled “Images? Precisely.” Brigid Doherty, Tom Gunning, and Mark Hansen presented concise papers on issues concerning the overwhelming presence of images and visual media in the contemporary world. If Gunning, in keeping with Benjaminian presuppositions, took film to be the fundamental paradigm of the visual media, Hansen formulated a strong challenge to this position and argued for the novelty of electronic media. Doherty engaged both sides of the argument and made a strong case for the power of images, especially in terms of art. The panel was followed by Pier Vittorio Aureli’s key-note address, in which the well-known architectural theorist took issue with the “theology of the tabula rasa” to which he juxtaposed Benjamin’s theory of history as expressed not only in his theoretical writings but also, and perhaps most forcefully, enacted in the concrete method of the *Arcades Project*.

The conference, which was attended by capacity crowds both at Cornell and Syracuse, came to a close with a gallery talk and an opening reception for *Datenwerk*, an immersive multimedia installation by Adrienne Buccella, Jeffrey Nedelka, Gabriel Nolle, and Brian Lonsway that took up the entire space of Slocum Gallery (Syracuse University). The intention of *Datenwerk* was to explore the contemporary implications of the *Arcades Project*. *Datenwerk* was at the same time a media transposition and a multimedia continuation of Benjamin’s *magnum opus* that remained incomplete at his death. The artists’ installation clearly

took its lead from Benjamin's collection of musings, quotations, and fragments of writing. The *Passagenwerk* used the shopping arcade to reflect Benjamin's observations on life, culture, and the city in turn-of-the-century Paris, but many have argued that it is the collection as much as, if not more than the arcade itself which has the capacity for such reflection; *Datenwerk* took its departure precisely from this contention, and sought to bring

to bear the capacity of the multi-media archive on all sorts of reflections of contemporary life. If Benjamin's authored and collected fragments served, among other things, to index a 19th-century spatiality, *Datenwerk* proposed that an index of 21st-century spatiality is already authored, in the vast archive of fragments tweeted, blogged, liked, or posted. To this end, the installation spatialized the collectively authored social media archive, merging Benjamin's

observations with edited feeds from Facebook, Flickr, Reddit, Anobii, Foursquare, Pinterest, Twitter, and YouTube.

The organizers—Peter Gilgen at Cornell University and Karl Solibakke, Mark Linder, and Francisco Sanin at Syracuse University—were delighted about the great interest their conference found on both campuses. They expressed the hope that such collaborations would become more frequent in the future.

IGCS Welcomes Markus Späth from Gießen



In April 2013 the Institute for German Cultural Studies will be delighted to welcome Dr. Markus Späth as the next faculty exchange representative from the Justus-Liebig-University of Gießen's International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture. Having taught at the University of Gießen since 2003, Markus Späth has been a Diltthey-Fellow of the Volkswagen Foundation since 2008 with the Institute for Art History in addition to serving as Associate Member of the GCSC. He studied art history and history at the universities of Hamburg, Vienna, and London before receiving his Ph.D. in 2003 from the University of Hamburg with a dissertation on cross-media relations of the visual arts and historiography in the memory culture of 12th-century Italian monasteries. These research

findings were published in 2007 in a monograph titled *Verflechtung von Erinnerung: Bildproduktion und Geschichtsschreibung im Kloster San Clemente a Casauria während des 12. Jahrhunderts*.

Conducted under the auspices of his Diltthey-Fellowship, Markus Späth's current research examines the imagery of late medieval corporate seals as tools of authentication in charter communication across northwestern Europe. By studying diverse parameters of seal design beyond the nationally defined frameworks of sigillographic research that has been foregrounded to date, this new book project aims to demonstrate how reciprocal dimensions of often contradictory processes of artistic exchange become both apparent and crucial for understanding the visual cultures of medieval Europe. The particular focus for Dr. Späth's visit to Cornell will be on recent concepts of cultural geography, which challenge the traditional idea of *Kunstlandschaft* in the German humanities.

Two related essays on the subject of his current research are available in English: "The Body and Its Parts: Iconographical Metaphors of Corporate Identity in 13th-Century Common Seals" in *Pourquoi les sceaux? La sigillographie nouvel enjeu de l'histoire de l'art* (2011) and "Architectural Representation and Monastic Identity: The Medieval Seal Images of Christchurch, Canterbury" in *Image, Memory, Devotion: Liber Amicorum Paul Crossley* (2011). The IGCS has been pleased to schedule Markus Späth's German Studies colloquium for April 5, which is sure to be of interest to Cornell community members interested in Medieval Studies and Art History too. His advance paper titled "Beyond Borders: Seal Imagery and Cultural Identity in Late Medieval Europe" will be available by the beginning of April in 183 Goldwin Smith Hall.

IGCS Welcomes New Director as of July 2013

The IGCS was founded in 1992 by Peter Hohendahl, under whose inspired leadership the Institute thrived for the next fifteen years. In 2007 I was greatly honored and pleased to be given the opportunity to expand on this dynamic legacy with continued dedication to cutting-edge and cross-disciplinary research, at Cornell and elsewhere, on the study of German culture in its broadest sense. As the end of my term of service now approaches, I am especially delighted to announce that my esteemed colleague Paul Fleming will assume the director's mantle this coming July. Paul Fleming is Professor of German Studies at Cornell University, which he joined in 2011 after ten years at New York University, where he served as Chair of the German Department



and Director of College Honors. Major scholarly monographs include *Exemplarity and Mediocrity: The Art of the Average from Bourgeois Tragedy to Realism* (2009) and *The Pleasures of Abandonment: Jean Paul and the Life of Humor* (2006). He regularly translates from German, including Peter Szondi's *Essay on the Tragic* (2002) and Hans Blumenberg's *Care Crosses the River* (2010). His current book project, provisionally titled *The Perfect Story*, examines the philosophical use of the anecdote in and as theory with respect to questions of exemplarity, evidence, and contingency. He has recently published articles on Ernst Kantorowicz and *The King's Two Bodies*; anecdotes and the lifeworld in Hans Blumenberg; Hebel and tales of mis/understanding; as well as on Carl Linnaeus's *Nemesis Divina* and contingency. In spring 2012 he co-edited a special issue of *Telos* on Hans Blumenberg. He serves on the editorial boards of the journal *German Quarterly*, the *Signale* book series at Cornell University Press, and the *Manhattan Manuscripts* book series in Wallstein Press. Together with Rüdiger Campe he is also co-editor of the exciting new book series *Paradigms: Literature & the Human Sciences* in de Gruyter Press. Effective July 1, 2013, he will be the new Director of Cornell University's interdisciplinary Institute for German Cultural Studies. This is a position for which he is eminently well suited in training, talent, and disposition, and all of us invested in critical interdisciplinary studies of German culture will benefit greatly from the expertise, commitment, and ideas he brings to our shared mission. Cornell University's unique institutional and scholarly strengths in the broad field of interdisciplinary German cultural studies will likewise benefit the Institute's new director in turn, and I would like to encourage all members and friends of Cornell's German Studies community to give Paul Fleming the generous support and intellectual inspiration you have been kind enough to share with me. My years of service have been a deep source of analytical discovery and collegial productivity because of all of you, and I look forward to many new discoveries and continued exchange under Paul Fleming's distinguished leadership.

Leslie A. Adelson, Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of German Studies
Director, Institute for German Cultural Studies, 2007-2013

2012 Hohendahl Graduate Essay Prize in Critical Theory Awarded

The Institute for German Cultural Studies is pleased to announce that Avery Kristin Slater, a doctoral candidate in English, has been awarded the 2012 Peter Uwe Hohendahl Graduate Essay Prize in Critical Theory. Established in 2011 on the occasion of Prof. Hohendahl's retirement from Cornell's teaching faculty, this prize honors a distinguished scholar of international renown for his many publications on German literatures of modernity, comparative intellectual histories, critical theory writ large and the Frankfurt School especially, and the history and desiderata of university education in Europe and North America.

Titled "*Weltverlorenheit: Lyrical Ontology, Poetic Translation, and the Passive Voice of Extinction*," this year's prize-winning submission especially impressed the selection committee with its scholarly erudition, intellectual rigor, and original insight. Avery Slater summarizes her findings in an abstract that she was kind enough to prepare for GCN readers: "This paper explores the ethics of translation through the work of Paul Celan, specifically in the poem 'Grosse glühende Wölbung.' Extending and challenging the readings of Celan's critics as well as his translators, who have tended to reduce Celan's poetic methodology to gnomic and agonized hermeticism, this paper excavates neglected layers of deep historical and mythic allusion at work in this poem. By way of this excavation, I theorize Celan's poetics of infralinguistic translation as offering a historically salient alternative to modes of lyric interiority. Through tropes of extinction and apocalypse, Celan's ethics of translation not only challenge anthropocentric ontologies; they also offer, in their place, a newly apostrophic structure of relation. This post-lyrical apostrophe locates the living as mutually in correspondence with the dead, an encounter occasioned by what I call an ethics of worldlessness immanent in the practice of translation."

The IGCS once again received outstanding essays for prize consideration in fall semester and is additionally pleased to announce that one of them has been awarded Honorable Mention. Daniel Bret Leraul (Comparative Literature) earned this distinction for his submission, "Life Formed: On the Early Lukács." The IGCS extends warm congratulations to all the essayists for their exceptionally fine work and serious engagement with critical theory. The Peter Uwe Hohendahl Graduate Essay Prize in Critical Theory is made possible by a generous gift from an anonymous donor, in whose words "critical theory and critical historical inquiry are fundamental to engaged encounter with our times." The next call for new submissions will be issued in fall with a deadline of October 15. Special congratulations now to Avery Slater and Bret Leraul!

IMMIGRATION & DEMOCRACY

a speaker series

JANUARY 25

ELIZABETH COHEN
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

3PM • 153 URIS HALL

From Birthers to Dreamers: Citizenship and the Moral Meaning of Time

APRIL 5

ERIK BLEICH
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

3PM • G08 URIS HALL

The Freedom to be Racist? How the US and Europe Struggle to Preserve Freedom and Combat Racism

FEBRUARY 22

INÉS VALDEZ
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

4:30PM • 429 ROCKEFELLER HALL

Confronting Anti-Immigrant Hostility: Sovereignty and the Narrowing of Political Judgment

APRIL 15

DOMINIK HANGARTNER
LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

3PM • 153 URIS HALL

Does Direct Democracy Hurt Immigrant Minorities? Evidence from Naturalization Decisions in Switzerland

MARCH 1

RANDALL HANSEN
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

3PM • G08 URIS HALL

Expulsion, Citizenship, Statehood: Germany, Palestine, and India, 1945-1951

APRIL 19

HIROSHI MOTOMURA
UCLA

3PM • MACDONALD MOOT COURT ROOM

CORNELL LAW SCHOOL

Are Unauthorized Migrants "Americans in Waiting"? The DREAM Act, Birthright Citizenship, and Legalization



MARCH 8

ARASH ABIZADEH
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

3PM • 153 URIS HALL

The Special-Obligations Challenge to More Open Borders

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2013_Immigration_Speaker_Series



Roland Kamzelak, the Director of Development at Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach (DLA), was at Cornell on September 11 to introduce faculty and students to the tremendous resources available at the literary archive. Situated in the small town of Marbach, just south of Stuttgart, the archive is operated by the 3,500 members of the Deutsche Schillergesellschaft (DSG)—unsurprising considering that Marbach is Schiller's birthplace. The DLA consists of two buildings: a literature museum (the "Literaturmuseum der Moderne") and the archive itself, as well as a dorm for visiting scholars and researchers.

The DLA began in 1903 as a museum and library built in Schiller's former living quarters. Most of the objects at that point were pictures, although the collection also included the works of the Swabian writers. In 1922, the building was renamed the Schiller Nationalmuseum, and by the mid-thirties it had undergone thorough renovations. But the archive was not officially born until 2003, when the growing collection was transferred to a new building. The vast collection is mostly housed underground to protect against light and is climate controlled to maintain ideal tem-

perature and humidity.

The collection includes letters and manuscripts from 1700 onwards. One could, for example, find out what Goethe was paid, or which alcoholic drinks Jean Paul demanded for different genres of writing, or read numerous exchanges between

editors and writers. The specialty of the DLA, however, is the twentieth century: the archive contains original manuscripts of Kafka's *Der Prozess* (1925) as well as the complete correspondences of writers such as Gottfried Benn. In-

deed, over 80% of the material consists of correspondences. The DLA acquires much of its material through the purchase of academic estates belonging to writers such as Martin Heidegger. As a result, in addition to letters and writings, the collection contains over 220,000 objects and artworks, including portraits and photos of authors. The owner of the largest collection of death masks in Europe, the DLA includes such curiosities as Napoleon's death mask and a pair of Schiller's socks.

The archive uses a special cataloging system that allows the books to be sorted and searchable without being physically marked—a great advantage in the case of rare and valuable books. In addition to the great wealth of manuscripts available whose physical corrections might provide insight into texts available only in edited and printed form elsewhere, the DLA also possesses media documents and secondary sources about the authors in the library. This feature, along with the thirty readings and author visits that the DLA holds every year, puts Marbach on the map for any scholar of German literature. (Matteo Calla)

Roland Kamzelak



Professor **Annetta Alexandridis** (Cornell) opened the conference with her presentation titled “A Real Work of Peace: What Ernst Curtius Has To Do With The Temple of Zeus Café.” Alexandridis described Curtius’s approach to archaeology as uniquely peaceful for its historical context.

Unlike the more exploitative approaches of English

and French archaeologists, Curtius strove to respect indigenous culture by preserving the findings of an excavation and leaving them in the places in which they were found. At the same time, Curtius knew that the German government would be reluctant to finance such excavations if they did not get something back in return. Alexandridis recounted in her talk how Curtius thus promoted the technique of casting so that his findings could be replicated and brought back to Berlin while the actual findings could remain in their original cultural context and be put on display for local audiences.

One of the more famous excavations took place in Olympia, and Cornell’s own Temple of Zeus Café displays some of the benefits of Curtius’s casting methodology. The collections of replicated casts, which resemble the actual findings that were made at the Temple of Zeus in Greece, can be found in the basement of Goldwin Smith Hall. Thus according to Alexandridis, Curtius’s method of casting replicas offers an archaeological paradigm that prioritizes peaceful encounters with other cultures. (Matt Stoltz)

European Correspondences September 4, 2012

Laurent Ferri (Cornell) delivered the second presentation of the symposium, entitled “Last Glimmers: E.R. Curtius and the European Republic of Letters.” Ferri introduced the collection of letters to Ernst Robert Curtius held by Cornell Library’s

Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections. The collection was given to Cornell by Mrs. Jane Marsh Dieckmann,

widow of Herbert Dieckmann (1906-1986), a professor of Romance Studies at Harvard and Cornell and a former student of E.R.



Alexandridis

Curtius.

Ferri’s talk discussed and historically contextualized excerpts from Curtius’s correspondence with prominent French poets and intellectuals such as Paul Valéry and Louis Aragon. Ferri highlighted the fact that much of E.R. Curtius’s correspondence foregrounds a lively interest in contemporary literature and is less of a reflection on his work as a Romanist. On the basis of his extensive

epistolary activity, Ferri argued that E.R. Curtius should be seen not only as a well-known Romanist but also as a prominent member of the European Republic of Letters. As a product of the *Bildungsbürgertum*, Curtius can be understood as part of a declining intellectual tradition that based its activity on epistolary exchange and which came to an end due to the social and political developments of the first half of the twentieth century.

Drawing on Dena Goodman's seminal study *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (1994), Ferri defines the



Ferri

Republic of Letters as a literary community that transgresses national boundaries and is based, rather, on the idea of dual citizenship: a real and an imaginary one. Ferri thus reads Curtius's failure to intellectually engage with the phenomenon of National Socialism as a result of his withdrawal into "imaginary citizenship." He concluded that Curtius understood letter exchanges as a refined elitist leisure activity, and that he viewed the politicization of spiritual and intellectual life as a betrayal of the independent self. (Andreea Mascan)

"What a day job: Philology as default" was the title of the talk that **William J. Kennedy** (Cornell) delivered on Tuesday, September 4. Kennedy, a professor in the Department of Comparative Literature, teaches the history of European literature and literary criticism from antiquity to the early modern period. His interests focus on Italian, French, English, and German texts from Dante to Milton.

Kennedy's talk addressed Ernst Robert Curtius's work, focusing on his book *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (1948), which Kennedy confessed to having read as an undergraduate student with a growing feeling of disappointment,

having been horrified at Curtius's argument that the term "classicism" is simply a mask for the chaos it conceals. Curtius, Kennedy lamented tongue-in-cheek, further argues that there is nothing special about the seventeenth-century Baroque, claiming that classicism and mannerism designate not so much specific historical time periods as constants within European



Kennedy

culture.

Kennedy traced Curtius's roots back not only to Ferdinand Brunetière, whom Curtius dealt with in his dissertation, but also to Wilhelm Dilthey and Friedrich Gundolf, who influenced him in their emphasis on the importance of "Erlebnis." He then moved on to outline Curtius's critique of German Studies, his understanding of the history of culture as a continuous evolution, and his development of the idea of the topos as a cornerstone of philology. (Hannah Müller)

To illuminate Ernst Robert Curtius's methodological approach, **Paul Fleming** (Cornell) brought Curtius into renewed dialogue with Erich Auerbach, Curtius's interlocutor and fellow Romanist. Fleming's presentation, "Beginnings – Methodology in E.R. Curtius and Erich Auerbach," set out from the fundamental question posed by both Curtius and Auerbach in the years immediately after the Second World War – namely, how literary scholarship was even possible at all in the present, given the demise of the *Bildungsbürgertum* and the destabilization of a shared canon.



Fleming

Though Curtius's focus was European literature while Auerbach was concerned with non-European traditions as well, both formulated the problem as one of a particular historical moment in which it was no longer possible either to presuppose knowledge of Latin, Greek, and the Bible, or to

master the increasing number of texts clamoring for critical attention. Under these conditions Curtius and Auerbach each saw their task as the need to formulate a new approach to the study of literature. Curtius began from the whole to access the parts. Just as the chemist might dissolve a substance to make the underlying structures visible, Curtius sees the scholar's role as the dissolution (*Auflösung*) of the literary whole into its principal parts. For Curtius, the transhistorical building blocks of literature are topoi. Auerbach, by contrast, derives the larger context from the monadic contours of the radiant particular. The modalities of realism, for example, should be able to be found in any random passage of a writer like Balzac.

While Auerbach praised Curtius's *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* as a methodologically productive point of departure (*Ansatz*), he criticized the way that Curtius's dissolved particulars were prone to fall back into indistinction. For Fleming, if Curtius figures as a chemist, Auerbach's methodological alternative is that of the nuclear physicist. (Carl Gelderloos)

In co-sponsorship with the Institute for German Cultural Studies, Cornell Cinema presented **Grant Gee's** film *Patience (After Sebald)* in its Ithaca premiere on September 27. **Peter Gilgen** (Cornell) introduced the filmic homage to the author and literary critic W. G. Sebald (1944-2001) by drawing attention to Sebald's complex relationship with Germany: although he mostly lived in the UK and is still today better known in the English-speaking world than in Germany, Sebald wrestled all his life with his "uncanny home country." This can be seen in his academic work on German and Austrian literature (*Unheimliche Heimat* is the title of a 1991 essay collection), in the essay "Luftkrieg und Literatur" (1999), and in the novel *Austerlitz* (2001).

Patience (After Sebald) is a loose adaptation of Sebald's travelogue *The Rings of Saturn* (1995). Subtitled in German as *Eine englische Wallfahrt*, the book gives an account of the walking tour Sebald undertook in August 1992 along the coast of East Anglia. In his interpretation of *The Rings of Saturn*, Gilgen discussed the ways in which the text evokes a sense of place, addresses questions of

belonging, and deals with the notions of ecology as in *oikos* (home) and *logos* (relationship). Gilgen also pointed out that Sebald's text, while associating the passage of time with the vanity of human life and loss, nonetheless rescues the ensuing mood of melancholy from Freud's critique of it by showing melancholy's political potential.

Mostly shot in grainy black and white, only to be interspersed with color images, *Patience (After Sebald)* is less a documentary of Sebald's pilgrimage than a cinematic montage, featuring long takes of the coastal landscape alongside various historical motifs, all of which are tied together by the voice-overs of Sebald and some of his friends and colleagues reading from the literary original. As Gilgen suggested, rather than providing an interpretation of Sebald's work, Gee's film immerses the viewer into Sebald's world and offers a taste of the writer's exceptional sensibility. (Jette Gindner)

At the Annual History of Art Graduate Student Symposium, “(In)Appropriated Bodies,” which took place on November 16-17, **Kaia Magnusen** (Rutgers University) delivered a paper entitled “Death, Dance, and Decay in the Weimar Republic: Otto Dix’s ‘Bildnis der Tänzerin Anita Berber.’” As a cabaret dancer and actress during 1920s Weimar Germany, Berber quickly rose to stardom for her provocative dances that frequently featured on-stage nudity and thematized drug addiction, death, prostitution, and sexual desire. Magnusen first described Berber’s performances as continuations of the late-Medieval allegory of the *danse macabre*, which Berber’s dances feminized insofar as they were explicitly connected to the dangers of sexual temptation.

With her flapper fashion and androgynous physique, Berber, on the one hand, became the very epitome of the emancipated *neue Frau*, but was simultaneously decried as such by the conservative factions who, shocked by the explicitness of Berber’s dances as well as her open bisexuality, called Berber “the priestess of depravity” and blamed her for contributing to larger processes of social decay. Symptoms of such decay were allegedly seen in the aftermath of the First

World War, when rising urbanization and worsening socio-economic conditions in the Weimar Republic frequently made women the chief breadwinners by forcing many of them into prostitution. The increased use of contraceptive devices, which led to sexual

emancipation among females, was lamented by the patriarchal Right as “a threat to the nation,” with Germany’s capital becoming subject

to its own “Verhuring” that claimed men as its “innocent victims.”

Having seen Berber perform twice, Otto Dix made the dancer the subject of his painting in 1922, when Berber was 26 years old. The infamous Berber attracted Dix, who also shared her enthusiasm for offending bourgeois sensibilities. In her analysis of the painting, Magnusen expounded on Dix’s rendition of Berber’s features as both predatory and domineering as well as diseased and cadaverous. It is especially Dix’s portrayal of Berber’s cocaine-induced nosebleed and the grotesque wrinkles in her skin-tight, red dress—suggesting premature aging—that betrays Dix’s problematic fascination with, and patriarchal affirmation of traditional gender roles, Magnusen concluded. (Anna Horakova)

(In)Appropriated Bodies



Alex Street Visiting Scholar

Alex Street received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, in December 2011. He is a Visiting Fellow at the Cornell Institute for European Studies for the 2012-13 academic year. At Cornell he has organized and is currently directing a speaker series on the interdisciplinary theme of Immigration and Democracy, while also working with Professor Michael Jones-Correa from the Department of Government to study the attitudes and aspirations of US-born citizens growing up with undocumented parents. On a volunteer basis

through the Cornell Prison Education Program, Alex Street additionally teaches an Introduction to Comparative Politics at the Auburn Correctional Facility.

With a primary emphasis on the political behavior of immigrants, this visiting scholar seeks to bring new empirical evidence to bear on issues such as how people achieve political representation. His research analyzes barriers to the incorporation of minority groups and incorporates many kinds of data, including interviews, opinion surveys, census files, survey experiments and search engine queries. The results of his research are forthcoming or in print, in journals from Europe and North America.

The History, Theory & Aesthetics of the Musical Canon

A Festival & Conference Honoring James Webster on his 70th Birthday

(October 26-28, 2012)

Professor James Webster is well known in the field of musicology for his distinguished scholarship on Haydn and eighteenth-century historiography. Perhaps less well known, however, are his many contributions to the field as a teacher, mentor and colleague. Nowhere was this clearer than at the conference entitled “The History, Theory and Aesthetics of the Musical Canon”—affectionately referred to in the Department of Music as “WebsterFest,” which was held at the end of October.

The conference organizers, Neal Zaslaw, Elizabeth Bilson and Margaret Webster, assembled a program featuring papers by fourteen accomplished scholars. Speakers included nine Cornell doctorates, two former Cornell undergrads (now professors of music), and three colleagues, one of whom, Lewis Lockwood, had taught Webster as a graduate student at Princeton University in the 1970s. Music was performed as well, notably Haydn’s “Harmóniemesse,” featuring the Cornell Glee Club and Chorus and the Cornell Chamber Orchestra, under the baton of Chris Young-hoon Kim.

Rich in academic insight,

the conference weekend also felt like a celebratory reunion; nametags were hardly necessary. A testament to Webster’s own scholarly breadth, the topics of the papers ranged broadly from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, through seventeenth-century instrumental music, to experimental linguistics. (Evan Cortens)

Hermann Danuser (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) presented the opening talk of the conference, entitled “*Canons*, not *Canon*: 21st-Century Perspectives on Goethe’s Ballad, *Erlkönig*,” in which he offered another perspective on the musical canon—the canon of the performance history of Goethe’s Ballad *Erlkönig* (1782).

Danuser claimed that there is not just one canon, but many complementary canons, or perspectives on the canon. What has hitherto been referred to as a “canon” is thus a construct of critics and scholars; the task of modern musicology is to maintain the canon while at the same time calling it into question. Post-modern historicism urges musicologists to grant canonical status not just to Schubert’s *Erlkönig* (1815/1821) but also to Corona Schröter’s

composition (1782/1786), as well as to Johann Friedrich Reichardt’s (1793/1794), Carl Friedrich Zelter’s (1797/1807), Bernhard Klein’s (1815) and Carl Loewe’s (1817/1824) settings of Goethe’s ballad. Danuser further claimed that even critics of the thesis that the origins of the German Romantic Lied is Schubert’s op. 1 and op. 2 had inadvertently prolonged a “monomyth,” and yet by incorporating these other interpretations of Goethe’s ballad, this monomyth could be expanded into a “polymyth.”

Danuser then highlighted the features of each of the six interpretations that, in his opinion, justify canonical status for all of them: Schröter’s chronological position and gender status; Reichardt’s handling of the strophic form; Zelter’s biographical paradigm (not for his musical contribution—the composer was Goethe’s personal friend); Klein’s rendering of the ballad’s different “voices,” Loewe’s status as the debut, the opus 1 of an author considered the classical composer of the ballad genre; and Schubert’s formal autonomy. Danuser concluded by emphasizing that even musicologists still have a right to prefer Schubert’s composition, and

by offering his cordial birthday greetings to Jim Webster. (Giulia Comparato)

The conference continued on day two with papers from **Michelle Fillion** (University of Victoria) and **Tom Beghin** (McGill University). Professor Fillion, in her paper, “Beethoven *Grazioso*,” discussed the development of the “grazio” from its more traditional use in compositional work from Couperin to Mozart to its slightly more complicated and sophisticated application in Beethoven.

The grazio is traditionally intended to produce a pleasing simplicity, pastoral charm, and cultivated naïveté, in which grace is associated with innocence and moral simplicity; grazios usually do not therefore exhibit the greatest of a composer’s abilities, but are, rather, employed to avoid tragic zones and violence. So too have Beethoven’s grazios been taken as the more simplistic, less challenging moments of his music, intended for those who cannot comprehend his more complicated work.

Fillion argues, however, that Beethoven’s grazios are better understood as his rendition of *naïve dichtung*, interpreted in light of Friedrich Schiller’s understanding of the concept of grace. More traditionally conceived of as unadulterated innocence, grace is, for Schiller, the grace of the past, represented in the myth of Arcadia. Schiller’s new concept of grace thus represents the synthesis of freedom and form, which has been achieved by unifying these opposites rather than reifying their opposition.

Interpreting Beethoven’s grazios in light of Schiller’s concept of grace allows one to make sense of how Beethoven incorporates more complicated themes into his grazios, introducing dissonance only to have it resolved in a greater unifying harmony. In this way, Fillion argues, Beethoven’s grazios can be seen as the musical counterpoint to Schiller’s concept of naïve poetry, both understood as a forward-looking and critical naïveté that represents the synthesis of the real and the ideal.

Tom Beghin, in his presentation entitled “Recognizing Topics vs. Executing Figures,” focused on the problematic relationship between musical topics and rhetorical figures, asking the question: how can the former be defined vis-à-vis the latter? Any answer, Beghin claims, is problematic and fraught with paradox. A possible solution, Beghin suggested, as to how topics and figures can coexist would involve understanding the relationship between musical topic and rhetorical figure more in terms of the performer.

The performer, in this case, is conceived of not merely as the one who presents the music to the audience, but is more comparable to an ancient rhetorician who actually delivers the argument. Understood this way, it is possible to think of topics and figures as that which makes continuity between score and performer possible. This realignment of musical topic and rhetorical figure would represent a shift, from the perspective of the performer, from merely doing the performance to understanding the music as a relationship between souls.

(Stephen Klemm)

Session VII included two presentations on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s comic opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1789). **Jessica Waldoff**’s (College of the Holy Cross) and **Richard Kramer**’s (The CUNY Graduate Center) analyses of the work converged in their focus on Konstanze’s act I aria “Traurigkeit” and its dramatization of feeling.

In her presentation, “Absorption and Theatricality in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*,” Waldoff traced the parallel as well as paradoxical relationship between two motives that lie at the heart of the aria: *Empfindung*, or feeling, on the one hand, and absorption or solitude on the other. The convergence of these motives, Waldoff argues, produces a puzzling moment in the aria, and by implication, poses unique challenges for its performance on stage. The scene mandates that the singer and actor both dramatize Konstanze’s profound sadness to an audience as well as choreograph her absorption and solitude. This double-task ultimately lends itself to reevaluating the role of the audience that Mozart envisioned for a production of his opera. Beyond Mozart’s comic opera, Waldoff pointed to different musical as well as literary projects (such as the epistolary novel), which also exhibit sentiment and absorption in tandem. Waldoff argued that staging absorption and inner sentiment at once requires and negates the audience.

“Traurigkeit” as narrative content and musical motif of the aria also served as the topic

for Richard Kramer's analysis, titled "Konstanze's Tears." Kramer offered a description of the central musical motives and their formal, harmonic realization in the aria, most poignantly in the aria's reaching for the high E flat. He then opened up his reading to address the motif of "tears" not only in the opera, but more broadly in the music and theater of the

time, to which the letter exchanges between Lessing, Mendelssohn and Nicolai attest. The motif of *Tränen*, Kramer suggested, indicates that the aria is written as a lament, a genre that Walter Benjamin has read in relation to music and language. Benjamin's interpretation of "Klage" describes the emergence of music from its origin in pure sound and words.

In this way, the aria illustrates and makes possible the arrival of a word's "Gefühlsleben" in music. The motif of "tears" serves as a marker of the aria's role as lament and also identifies the underlying emotional and physical state, which the harmonic structure of the aria engages. (Christine Schott)



Visiting Scholar in April 2013

The Institute for German Cultural Studies will be pleased to host Dr. Kristin Böse as a Visiting Scholar specializing in Medieval Studies and Art History in April 2013. Since 2010 she has been a Fritz Thyssen Research Fellow in the Institute of Art History at the University of Cologne, where she previously also taught for several years. Kristin Böse studied art history, archaeology, and German literature at the universities of Dijon and Hamburg before receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Hamburg in 2004 with a dissertation on the visual representation of visionary and ascetic experiences in Trecento and Quattrocento Italy. Her book *Gemalte Heiligkeit. Bilderzählung neuer Heiliger in der italienischen Kunst des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts* (2008) was awarded the Hans-Janssen-Prize in 2010 for early-modern Italian art history by the *Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Göttingen.



Kristin Böse is currently preparing a book on the aesthetics of framing in early medieval Spanish manuscripts. In her assessment it is notably the non-figurative book design that helped shape identity by referencing different topographies such as the political, the monastic, and the spiritual at the very edge of the Christian world. At Cornell she will examine the interactions between identity formation and art production in medieval Spain. This can be understood as the result of a reciprocal segregation and exchange along boundaries drawing on recent transnational concepts of cultural geographies in Europe, particularly as they pertain to visual culture.

Related arguments will appear in a forthcoming article in English in *Dressing the Part* on the Castilian reception of Andalusí textiles in the 13th and 14th centuries. This publication reflects the author's passion for textiles, their metaphors, and material cultures in the European Middle Ages. She looks forward to scholarly exchange with members of the Cornell community interested in medieval studies, art history, and fiber science. While at Cornell, Dr. Böse may be contacted through IGCS on University Avenue.

Barbara Köhler

IGCS Artist-in-Residence, April 1-19, 2013

The Institute for German Cultural Studies greatly looks forward to welcoming Barbara Köhler as IGCS Artist-in-Residence in spring semester (April 1-19, 2013). Born in the former East Germany in 1959, Barbara Köhler has emerged as one of the most creatively significant and formally exacting German poets of our time with prize-winning publications such as **Deutsches Roulette** (1991), **Blue Box** (1995), **Wittgensteins Nichte: Vermischte Schriften** (1999), **Niemand's Frau: Gesänge zur Odyssee** (2007), and literary translations of Gertrude Stein and Samuel Beckett in addition to acclaimed multi-media installations and sound performances concerning the evolving nature of poetic language and textual arts.

Inspired by the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein to tax and tease the interplay of language and world, Köhler's poetry originated in the avant-garde subculture of the German Democratic Republic's "unpublic" (Erk Grimm). Her first book publications appeared in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1990s and have been followed since by **Ungarisches Wasser** with Osman Osten (2000), the highly celebrated **Niemand's Frau** in dialogue with Homer's *Odyssey*, and most recently **Neufundland** (2012). Several of these books appear with accompanying CDs or DVDs in which the author lends a distinct performative dimension to her creative process. This poetry is characterized in the contemporary field by an arguably unparalleled and paradoxically liberating precision in Köhler's keen attention to both the rules and possibilities of grammar, rhythm, place, kinship, and sociability writ large and small.

For her fine-grained artistic work—much of which challenges inherited constraints of myth, gender, perception, and grammar itself with a pervasive sense of playfulness and discovery—Köhler has received numerous awards and distinctions. These include the *Literaturpreis der Jürgen-Ponto-Stiftung* (1990), Darmstadt's *Leonce-und-Lena-Förderpreis* (1991), Bad Homburg's *Hölderlin-Förderpreis* (1992), the *Else-Laske-Schüler-Lyrikpreis* (1994), Heidelberg's *Clemens-Brentano-Literaturpreis* (1996), the *Literaturpreis des Ruhrgebietes* (1999), the *Lessing-Förderpreis* (2001), the *Samuel-Bogumil-Linde-Literaturpreis* (2003), the international *Norbert-C.-Kaser-Preis* (2005), the *Literaturpreis Leuk* (2007), the *Joachim-Ringelnatz-Preis* (2008), the *Poesiepreis des Kulturkreises der deutschen Wirtschaft* (2009), and the *Erlanger Literaturpreis für Poesie als Übersetzung* (2009). Köhler, who has resided in Duisburg since 1994, has additionally served as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Warwick, Oberlin College, and the University Duisburg-Essen. In 2012 she was selected to hold the prestigious *Thomas-Kling-Poetikdozentur* at the University of Bonn.

Journeying in and through language, from Greek antiquity to our global present, Barbara Köhler unweaves and re-weaves the German language of poetics for contemporary readers, listeners, and interlocutors. Cornell University will be especially fortunate to have her visit this spring. A literary reading, a lecture on contemporary aesthetics, a compact seminar for graduate students from relevant disciplines, and other opportunities for interactions with students are planned. Updated details will be posted on the IGCS Website as they become available <<http://www.arts.cornell.edu/IGCS>>. Barbara Köhler's literary reading and aesthetics lecture will be free and open to the public.

Barbara Köhler, *Lyric Poet, Performance Artist, and Literary Translator*
Artist-in-Residence, April 1-19, 2013
Institute for German Cultural Studies, Cornell University

and

Hans Jürgen Scheuer, *Professor of Medieval and Early Modern*
German Literature at the Humboldt University of Berlin
Visiting Scholar, April 2013
Institute for German Cultural Studies, Cornell University

*are pleased to offer a **Compact Seminar for Graduate Students***
in German Studies, Classics, English, Comparative Literature,
Performing and Media Arts, and other relevant fields

Tuesday, April 9, 2013, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

location to be announced

Pre-registration required and advance materials available

through Olga Petrova at IGCS <ogp2@cornell.edu> as of 1/15/13

DESMÒS POIKÍLOS | BUNTES VERBINDEN | (K)NOT A FABRIC

Der „vielgewandte“, πολύτροπος genannte Odysseus, the man of twists and turns, ist eine klassische Trickster-Figur, ein Spezialist für Wendungen. Seine Irrfahrten beschreiben einen seltsamen Knoten – δέσμον ... / ποικίλον (Od. 8, 447f.) –, in dessen Mitte sich eine Verneinung findet: die Behauptung Outis, Niemand zu heißen, zu sein. Auf Reisewegen, die Nicht-Orte verbinden: οὐ τόποι – Utopien. Dort trifft er bspw. auf Weberinnen, wie ja auch seine Ehefrau Penelope an einer Textur arbeitet, die sie Nacht für Nacht wieder auflöst. Bindung und Lösungen, Networks und Knoten, to do – and how to undo: Heterogenes, Vielfarbiges wird verknüpft, verbunden zu einer komplexen, verschlungenen und mutmaßlich mehr als 3000 Jahre alten Geschichte, in der Namen sprechen können und Wörter in viele Richtungen deuten. Ihren Wendungen und Modi gehen die Schriftstellerin Barbara Köhler und der Mediävist Hans Jürgen Scheuer mit den SeminarteilnehmerInnen nach: eine Entdeckungsreise, eine Odyssee.

*Born in the former East Germany in 1959, Barbara Köhler has emerged as one of the most creatively significant and formally exacting German poets of our time with prize-winning publications such as **Deutsches Roulette** (1991), **Blue Box** (1995), **Wittgensteins Nichte** (1999), **Niemands Frau** (2007), and literary translations of Gertrude Stein and Samuel Beckett in addition to acclaimed multi-media installations and performances. Hans Jürgen Scheuer is an especially accomplished Professor of German Medieval and Early Modern Literatures at the Humboldt University of Berlin with deep knowledge of ancient Greek rhetoric and philology too. Together these two special guests of the IGCS will explore with seminar participants the importance of*

Homer for Köhler's poetic craft and the continued relevance of the Odyssey for poetic language more generally. Graduate students interested in poetic arts from any historical period from antiquity to the present are welcome to take part in this unique seminar, which is sure to be lively and illuminating for all.

This event is sponsored by Cornell University's Institute for German Cultural Studies. All participants are asked to read the Homeric *Odyssey* in any language of their choosing in advance. Participants will additionally be provided with shorter required readings (from the *Odyssey* in ancient Greek and German, various translations, and Köhler excerpts from *Niemand's Frau*) in the form of a Reader. Pre-registration and reading knowledge of German are required. Prior knowledge of ancient Greek is welcome but not required.

photo credit: Christiane Zintzen



**Tragic Legacies: Antigone and Oedipus
in Literature, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis
April 26-27, 2013**

Conference at the A.D.White House, Cornell University, organized by Anette Schwarz, German Studies
The main question addressed by this symposium is: why do literature, philosophy and psychoanalysis still, again or interruptedly refer to models of tragedy and especially to Antigone and Oedipus when discussing social and kinship relations. This topic will be examined by an international and interdisciplinary group of contributors and will represent the fields of Classics, Philosophy, German Studies, English, Comparative Literature, Performance Studies and Feminist and Gender Studies. All presenters will speak to the relationship between tragedy—as both a genre and a form of sociality—and the idea of modernity.

Keynote address: Professor Rachel Bowlby (Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature at the University College of London). Speakers: Professors Miriam Leonard (Lecturer in Greek Literature at the University College of London; Olga Taxidou (Senior Lecturer in Drama at Edinburgh University); Silke-Maria Weineck (Comp.Lit. at University of Michigan); Eva Geulen (German St., Frankfurt); Ulrike Vedder (German St., Humboldt U. Berlin); Erik Porath (Media Studies, Berlin); Elisabeth Strowick (German, Johns Hopkins University); Andrea Krauss (German, Johns Hopkins University); Barbara Hahn (German, Vanderbilt University); Cynthia Chase (English, Cornell U); Kathrin Rosenfield (Philosophy and Drama, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil).

Detailed program will follow.

DAAD FACULTY SUMMER SEMINAR

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

JUNE 17 - JULY 26, 2013

THIS SIX-WEEK SEMINAR FOR NORTH AMERICAN FACULTY in the interdisciplinary field of German Studies will focus on the notion of "economy" in the work of Marx and Freud. In spite of the accomplishments of the Frankfurt School as well as more recent efforts to integrate Marxism and psychoanalytic thought certain fundamental questions demand to be thought anew. The central challenge continues to be the right way to capture the relation between the creation, circulation, and extraction of value and surplus-value as understood by Marx and Freud's understanding of the formation of libido and its restless movement along chains of representations.

ECONOMIES OF DESIRE:

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND LIBIDINAL ECONOMY IN GERMAN CULTURE AND THOUGHT



How do the pivotal concepts of fetishism, the symptom, labor-power, abstraction, and alienation converge or diverge in Marxist and Freudian thought? What accounts for the predominance of the language of "work"—the "dream-work," the "work of mourning"—and of economic language more generally in Freud's writings on the "psychic apparatus" and the kinds of "pressures" to which it is subject? In what ways is this expanded field of politico-libidinal economy related to the sphere of religion?

Other possible materials to be discussed are Max Weber's analysis of the "spirit of capitalism," Walter Benjamin's suggestive reflections on the status of "capitalism as religion," Bataille's writings on economy, sovereignty, and the sacred, Slavoj Žižek's repeated returns to theological discourse, Goux' work on "symbolic economies," Derrida's writings about spirits and specters, and Giorgio Agamben's recent investigations into the "economy of glory" in the Christian West.

The seminar additionally aims to test much of the theoretical discourse under the experimental conditions of aesthetic experience. Possible "laboratories" include literary works by Goethe, Kafka, Brecht, and Sebald (and perhaps the film, *The Matrix*).

Participants will be invited to offer their own "case studies" based on their research interests and disciplinary expertise. Scholars concentrating on any historical period or cultural medium are welcome to apply.

For questions about seminar content, please contact Prof. Santner; for other seminar-related questions, please contact Olga Petrova at Cornell University's Institute for German Cultural Studies, ogp2@cornell.edu.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 1, 2013

Form and instructions at <http://www.daad.org>. All application materials to be addressed to Prof. Santner.

Seminar Director:

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Tuition:

Participants are eligible for a \$3200 stipend; a \$50 fee applies.

Eligibility: Participation is open to faculty members in the Humanities and Social Sciences at colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. Applicants who have received their Ph.D.'s within the past two years but do not yet hold faculty appointments are encouraged to apply. Graduate students and Ph.D. candidates are not eligible. Participants are expected to have an active interest in German intellectual and cultural history and must be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. or Canada. Seminar meetings will be conducted in English; advanced reading knowledge of German required.

"Simply Reproducing Reality": Brecht, Benjamin, and Renger-Patzsch on Photography

August 24, 2012

Carl Gelderloos (Cornell) opened the Fall 2012 colloquium series with a paper titled "'Simply Reproducing Reality': Brecht, Benjamin and Renger-Patsch on Photography." The paper sought to reconstruct the discursive positions of these three figures in relation to one another by highlighting the differences and affinities in their respective conceptualizations of the photographic medium, aiming, ultimately, at a broader understanding of how nature and technology are "reconceptualized and mutually reconstituted" in aesthetic discourses of the Weimar period.



By historically situating the work of these three figures, Gelderloos argued for their mutual concern with photography's role in training new modes of perception. Gelderloos demonstrated how Renger-Patzsch's specific concern with formal play and visual perception contributes as much to the contemporary discourse of Weimar culture—with its heightened interest in the visual, as well as its configurations of the mutually entangled phenomena of nature, technology, perception and modernity—as do Benjamin and Brecht's critical frameworks.

Much of Gelderloos's analysis of these figures centered on the issue of the photographic medium's mode of *Wiedergabe*: while the simple reproduction of reality through photography is charged with accusations of fetishism and obscuration in Benjamin and Brecht's work—an accusation that relies on a critical distinction between surface appearance and underlying reality, which Gelderloos traces to Marx's discussion of commodity fetishism—Renger-Patzsch's work reevaluates the very constitution of *Wiedergabe*. As Gelderloos argued, Renger-Patzsch's understanding of photography involves not the immediate reproduction of surface or visual impression, nor does it posit any explicitly discursive claim. Rather, photography is, for Renger-Patzsch, capable of reproducing visual forms and allowing such forms to interact freely, in this way aiming to recreate perceptual experience and train visual perception to recognize the essential features of the photographed object.

If Renger-Patzsch's work, then, is accused of *Verklärung* and commodification by Benjamin and Brecht, Gelderloos shows how his position as both straw-man and foil to Benjamin and Brecht's theories of photography points to a variety of "foundational tensions" at work in the treatment of the photographic medium and its representational capacity in Weimar discourses of new perceptual possibilities. (Nathan Taylor)



JUNGGESELLEN IN LITERATUR UND WISSENSCHAFTEN DES 19. JAHRHUNDERTS

September 7, 2012

In her paper entitled “Junggesellen in Literatur und Wissenschaften des 19. Jahrhunderts,” visiting scholar **Ulrike Vedder** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) examined the problematic figure of the bachelor within a literary, scholarly, and juridical discursive complex in the nineteenth century. The question, for Vedder, was how the debates about the bachelor and bachelorhood change with notions of what constitutes a family, and how the family differentiates itself both internally and externally.



Nineteenth-century bourgeois society came to view the family as the basis of not only the state, but of humanity as such. At the same time, the family became a major object of interest in pedagogy, philosophy, anthropology, medicine, law, and literature, fields that contributed both to the naturalization of the family unit and to its constitution as a legal and scientific concept. Under these circumstances, the bachelor emerges as a problematic figure and an occasion for scholarly and cultural debate, inasmuch as he (and it is almost exclusively the male bachelor who is the subject of this discourse) represents a contrast to notions of family and genealogy. The bachelor complicates systems of inheritance, and his lifestyle represents a break from tradition and poses a threat to an imagined future of familial continuity. The outsider position that the bachelor holds troubles genealogy, given that the bachelor does not produce legitimate offspring and thus brings the family line to a halt. Vedder looked first at the *Hagestolzenrecht* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which mandated that at least a portion of the property of a bachelor should be turned over to the local noble, a measure grounded in moral and demographic arguments that continued to inform discourses about the bachelor in the late nineteenth century.

By the end of the century bachelorhood becomes pathologized as it is increasingly associated with notions of decadence and cultural decline. The bachelor comes to represent a figure of sexual perversion that threatens to break down the bourgeois family from the outside, both in a moral and in a medical sense. Vedder finally traced this arc through case studies of the bachelor as a literary trope in works by Adalbert Stifter, Theodor Storm, Oscar Wilde, and Franz Kafka. (Alex Phillips)



Shelf Lives of Books: Libraries and the Institutionalization of World Literature

September 28, 2012

How is world literature “made” through private and public libraries? In the third colloquium of this fall series, “Shelf Lives of Books: Libraries and the Institutionalization of World Literature,” **B. Venkat Mani** (University of Wisconsin, Madison) presented a summary of two chapters of his upcoming book.

Venkat Mani shed light on the role of libraries in the current debates about world literature, arguing that in current scholarship, the role of physical and virtual libraries, librarians, private collectors or even publishers producing translations has only been marginally evaluated. Venkat Mani made a case for libraries as an



important transactional site for world literature, further describing the transformation of the library from a house of books (the *Bibliothek*) to an institution of virtual memory. His paper pointed out that libraries open access to that which is not immediately natural and familiar, and they establish a specific kind of linguistic and cultural literacy that readers and authors from one part of the world acquire when they gain access to literature from other parts of the world.

Venkat Mani’s presentation also included a discussion of the genealogy of world-literature as a concept from the nineteenth to the twentieth century in Europe, drawing special attention to the works of Goethe, Auerbach and Marx. The guest speaker finally examined Hermann Hesse’s *Eine Bibliothek der Weltliteratur* (1929), since Hesse was the first author to discuss world literature as a problem of libraries. (Giulia Comparato)

The Shape of Nineteenth-Century Germany

November 16, 2012

Helmut Walser Smith (Vanderbilt University) presented his paper “The Authority of Political Geography and the Shape of Nineteenth-Century Germany,” which examines the emergence of a conscious German national identity as it ties to Germany as a geographical space beginning in the nineteenth century. Adding to the concept of the nation state an experiential dimension and evaluating the “density” of artifacts that describe and reference the German nation state, Walser Smith asks whether we should recognize in the nation state a greater degree of historicity. With this, Walser Smith seeks to expand the notion of the nation state as a cultural construct frequently understood as being related to geographical space in self-evident ways.



Walser Smith’s paper provided an overview of nation-based sentiment in Germany from the 1500s to the late 1800s, describing the development of a type of nationalism in which a patriotic sentiment both for a political system and an individual state territory gradually converged to produce an overarching notion of nation. Whereas the inhabitants of the German lands had once perceived the “fatherland” as demarcated by territorial boundaries of first the town and then the state, after the Peace of Westphalia (1648) Germany can be described as a political system (the Holy Roman Empire), in which patriotism for the individual state, on the one hand, and patriotism for the nation, on the other, began to overlap. Between the years of 1814 and 1870, this convergence became even more pronounced and engendered a consciousness of Germany as a nation. Printed artifacts of the 1800s—most prominently maps—help account for the nascent notion of German national geography and identity in relation to evolving concepts of state territory.

Walser Smith additionally considered the relevance of national sentiment and passionate feelings for the fatherland, for which sacrifice or the willingness to die for a nation becomes emblematic. He characterized the nation as a space of identity, which marks the possibilities of belonging to an imagined community and perceives itself in the plural form “we.” (Christine Schott)



The Poetics of the Minuscule from Hooke to Blanckenburg

November 30, 2012

In “The Poetics of the Minuscule from Hooke to Blanckenburg,” **Christiane Frey** (Princeton University) explored the rehabilitated reputation of the infinitely small in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well as the problems involved in understanding the minuscule in the areas of epistemology and poetics. Frey’s paper critically engaged in the puzzles presented by the infinitely small both historically and scientifically.

The introduction and proliferation of the microscope in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries opens up the world of the infinitely small, Frey argues, by revealing to the eye that which was previously invisible or at least “sub-visible.” Up to this point the sub-visible world was typically associated more with the grotesque and the formless than with the well-ordered structure of the visible. The ability to actually see the sub-visible world under the lens of the microscope thus allowed the objects of the sub-visible to morph from objects of disgust into objects of wonder. Not only are sub-visible objects themselves organized in a highly sophisticated manner, but the microscope also reveals a whole world of sub-visible microorganisms governed by causal laws. If a whole world can be opened up with the help of one tool, why is it not plausible to think that a more powerful tool could open up more worlds and so on into infinity? The microscope, Frey continued, opens up the possibility of the infinitely small existing within the finite world by introducing a new world of sub-visible entities into the world of finite beings.

The problems created by the possibility of the infinitely small become, for Frey, objects of interest in both epistemology and poetics. These disciplines borrow from one another in order to solve the problems of depicting the infinitely small in interesting ways. Leibniz, for example, uses a poetic solution in order to come to terms with infinitesimal magnitudes, while Brockes applies more scientific methods to help him depict the world in his poetry. The challenges involved in thinking and depicting the infinitely small, Frey concluded, thus stretch both disciplines to their boundaries while also revealing a great willingness to borrow from one another. (Stephen Klemm)



Global Anarchisms: No Gods, No Masters, No Peripheries

September 21-22, 2012

Friday

Opening Remarks

Seneca film director and artist **G. Peter Jemison** (Heron Clan, Seneca Nation) opened this conference, put on by the Institute for Comparative Modernities, with words of thanksgiving in the Seneca language. Following Jemison, **Salah Hassan** (Cornell) further acknowledged Cornell's location on the homeland of the Cayuga Nation. These initial remarks highlighted the political and ethical implications of holding a conference on land that first belonged to indigenous peoples. Hassan also remarked on the timeliness of the conference theme: Occupy Wall Street, the Arab Spring, and other anti-capitalist and anti-war movements have brought the strategies and philosophies of anarchism to the forefront of political discourse. These movements, even if not explicitly anarchist, embrace the inclusive and multilayered politics of anarchism and challenge the dominant narrative informing the politics of modernity.

Conference co-organizer **Barry Maxwell** (Cornell) noted the contentious nature of the word "anarchism." Often used as a synonym for "chaos," anarchism, he argued, is simultaneously repressed and sanctioned. Anarchist groups and activities have become a favorite target of law enforcement and government repression, but we can also observe a "newfound enthusiasm" for sanctioned forms of anarchism: Maxwell cited the "anarchy zone" in the Ithaca Children's Garden as well as the recent naming of the anarchist poet Philip Levine as the US Poet Laureate for 2011-2012.

These opening remarks by Jemison, Hassan, and Maxwell framed "Global Anarchisms" as a timely, contentious, and necessary conversation, affirming its global scope but firmly situating it within its particular geographical and institutional position on traditional Native American land. The conference was organized by Barry Maxwell (Comparative Literature and American Studies) and Ray Craib (History) to bring political histories and concepts of anarchism and indigeneity to bear on contemporary notions of communism and globalization. (Leigh York)

Saturday

Black, Red, and Grey: Anarchism, Communism, and Political Theory

Mohammed Bamyeh (University of Pittsburgh) opened the second day of the conference with his paper "Anarchy, Enlightenment, Tradition: A Perspective from the Arab Spring." In theorizing the origins of the revolutions of the Arab Spring, Bamyeh invoked Thomas Kuhn to characterize revolution as a paradigm shift and thus a form of enlightenment. Yet the anarchist method central to the Arab revolts calls for an account of the relationship between enlightenment and tradition, since it is precisely in the prefigurative, praxis-oriented, personal, collective, and anti-hierarchical dimensions of the revolts that an anarchist revolutionary ethic produces new knowledge. New forms of political practice, drawing on latent cultural traditions and everyday social forms, constitute an anarchist version of enlightenment whose long-term cultural repercussions far outweigh their immediate institutional political effects. To illustrate the implications of this revolutionary knowledge production, Bamyeh concluded by juxtaposing a theoretically orthodox "anarchism of the vanguard" with the culturally embedded "anarchism of tradition" seen in Tahrir Square.

Banu Bargu (The New School) gave the next paper, "Anti-anti-communization." In exploring the dual crises of capitalism and revolution, Bargu turned to communization as an example of new radical formations located on the border between anarchism and communism. A central question for communization is how the proletariat, as a class, can abolish classes as such. For communization, revolution is a struggle for the end of work and the abolition of the proletariat. While compelling critiques of communization have centered on the insufficiency of a theorization of revolution that is self-abolishing, Bargu emphasized that these critiques do not necessitate a return to traditional notions of revolution but should rather prompt more nuanced understandings of communization as a philosophical practice. Communization can demonstrate how the debate about workers' identity can challenge the concept of identity as such: communization could therefore entail not merely a position on a philosophical battleground, but the production of communist or anarchist concepts.

Bruno Bosteels (Cornell) turned to the Mexican Revolution to explore the relationship

of anarchism, communism, and socialism. In differentiating these, articulations of anarchism can either be negative – the lack of organization or a program to seize state power – or positive – the autochthonic aspects of anarchism embraced as worthy forms of political action in their own right. Yet limiting anarchism to local, peripheral politics generates a host of conceptual and methodological problems, especially given the particular contours of left politics within the Mexican Revolution. In his 1962 “Essay on a Proletariat Without a Head,” José Revueltas argued against the cooptation of the revolution by the state. For Bosteels, Revueltas’s ambivalence towards anarchism – he saw it as both a “deformation” of the proletarian consciousness and a powerful source of autonomy that linked class struggles across the period divide of the Mexican Revolution – suggests that anarchism and socialism should not be theorized separately in the first place. What is needed today, when all autonomous, local, spontaneous protests are immediately labeled anarchistic, is a movement that is neither proletarian nor vanguard, but both communist and anarchist. (Carl Gelderloos)

The Black Mirror: Anarchism, Surrealism, and the Situationists

The second day of the conference continued with a panel that examined historical continuities and confluences among anarchism, Surrealism, and the Situationists. In all three presentations, particular attention was paid to the contemporary meaning of – and need for – the archive.

Penelope Rosemont (Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company) opened the panel with her presentation, “Surrealism and Situationism, an Attempt at a Comparison and Critique by an Admirer and Participant.” Rosemont related her actual experience of visiting the 1965 International Surrealist Exhibition in Paris, where she met André Breton. The exhibition documented Surrealism’s afterlife in Situationism, and particularly their shared belief in the nexus between free individual development and social utopia. Rosemont then focused on two particular ways in which the Surrealists and the Situationists drew on anarchism: firstly, through the Situationists’ attack of the French Catholic Church for supporting Franco’s regime in Spain, which resonated with Arthur Rimbaud’s radically antireligious maxims. Secondly, through the

theories of Charles Fourier, which exerted a profound influence on Surrealist feminist artists such as Leonora Carrington.

Gavin Arnall (Princeton University) delivered a paper entitled “‘Masters without Slaves: Vaneigem *contra* Nietzsche.” The paper traced Raoul Vaneigem’s indebtedness to, and supersession of Nietzsche’s thought in *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (1967). Arnall began by explaining Nietzsche’s master/slave morality as it manifests in the work of the Surrealist Georges Bataille, who credits the notion of personal survival with abandoning the negative struggle against particular oppression and thus continues to disseminate Nietzsche’s naturalized hierarchies. Nietzsche’s master, however, cannot embody absolute mastery, and is subject to self-enslavement because he himself enslaves. Vaneigem thus criticizes Nietzsche’s affirmation of a hierarchical world, which, in his view, prevented the philosopher from realizing his own project. In the Situationist technique of *détournement* that integrates artistic construction into a particular milieu, Vaneigem sees a possibility of fashioning a world of “masters without slaves.”

Iain Boal (MayDay Rooms, London) gave a paper entitled “‘Vùng sâu Vùng xa’ (The Deep and the Far): Anarchism, History and a World in Common.” Boal first offered a few contemporary and historical examples of right-wing discrimination against the so-called “peripheries,” all of which demonstrated the need for implementing the kind of radical historiography that would “trouble orthodoxies” by reading against the grain and “from below.” Read transversely, “space” as well as “the nation” can, for example, become formulae for genocide and ethnic cleansing. While facing the current crises of social democratic states in Europe, the Left finds itself a helpless witness to the disenfranchisement of the underprivileged, along with the resurgence of nationalism and patriarchy. As a means of resistance, Boal co-founded The Archive of Dissent, located in the heart of London’s financial district. The archive, which also functions as a think tank, revisits radical political thought from the past and disseminates radical works of art. (Anna Horakova)

NEW FACULTY PROFILES:



Hirokazu Miyazaki

Department of Anthropology

Hirokazu Miyazaki (Ph.D. 1998, Australian National University) is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director of Cornell University's East Asia Program. His research and teaching, some of which draws in significant ways on selected elements of modern German philosophy and critical thought, focuses on theories of the gift and exchange. Both of his past two major ethnographic research projects—one focusing on indigenous Fijian gift giving (*The Method of Hope: Anthropology, Philosophy, and Fijian Knowledge*, Stanford University Press, 2004) and the other focusing on Japanese financial trading (*Arbitraging Japan: Dreams of Capitalism at the End of Finance*, University of California Press, 2013)—were inspired by Ernst Bloch's philosophy of hope. Prof. Miyazaki has deepened his engagement with Bloch's work further through an international collaborative project on hope culminating in *The Economy of Hope*, a collection of essays he is co-editing with Richard Swedberg, Professor of Sociology at Cornell University and an expert on Max Weber. Hirokazu Miyazaki is currently also developing a new research project focusing on the politics and economics of debt in post-Fukushima Japan. At Cornell he teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses in the Department of Anthropology on topics such as "Gifts and Exchange," "God(s) and the Market," and "Hope as a Method."



Alexander Kuo

Department of Government

Assistant Professor in Cornell University's Department of Government, Alexander Kuo received his Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University and spent the last several years as a post-doctoral research fellow at the Center for the Advanced Studies in Social Sciences at the Juan March Foundation in Madrid, Spain. His research focuses on the different responses of employer associations and firms to the rise of organized labor in the United States and Europe, with specific attention to employer association movements in the United States and Germany in the early twentieth century. In 2006 he was a visiting doctoral researcher at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne, where he conducted archival research for his current book project on comparative political economy and labor history. Having joined the Cornell faculty in Fall 2012, he teaches courses for both undergraduates and graduate students in Western European politics, comparative political economy, social policy, and European political development. A new writing project addresses the public response of European citizens to the most recent economic crisis. The IGCS is delighted to welcome this new colleague in Government to the interdisciplinary German Studies community at Cornell.



FRIDAYS @ 3PM 181 GOLDWIN SMITH HALL

Institute for German Cultural Studies Spring 2013 Colloquium Series

FEBRUARY 1

Rembert Hüser (German Studies, University of Minnesota)

Neighbourhoods: Franz Kafka and the Films in the Museum

FEBRUARY 15

Duane Corpis (History, Cornell University)

**Conversion, (Dis)Honor, and Narratives of Redemption
in Early Modern Germany**

MARCH 1

Peggy Piesche (Germanic Languages, Hamilton College)

**Beziehungen in der Fremde - Gaben, Gastlichkeit und Macht
in Christoph Martin Wielands späten Romanen**

APRIL 5

Markus Späth (Art History, Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen)

**Beyond Borders: Seal Imagery and Cultural Identity
in Late Medieval Europe**

MAY 3

Andrew Piper (History, McGill University)

The Werther Effect



Spring 2013

Calendar of Events



- JAN. 25 *IMMIGRATION & DEMOCRACY*
FEB. 22 *SPEAKER SERIES*
MARCH 1, 8 Organized by Cornell Institute for European Studies (CIES)
APRIL 5, 15, 19 For details, visit <http://cies.einaudi.cornell.edu/calendar>
- MARCH 7 *READING THE WRITING:*
A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TONI MORRISON AND CLAUDIA BRODSKY
Co-sponsored with Africana Studies
4:45pm STATLER HALL AUDITORIUM
Advance tickets required -- ticket information TBA
- MARCH 8-9 *THE ACT: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND/IN ITS EFFECTS*
Conference organized by the Psychoanalysis Reading Group
LOCATION TBA
- MARCH 14-15 *BARBARA (2012)*
Film Screening Presented by Cornell Cinema
3/14 7pm, 3/15 7:15pm WILLARD STRAIGHT HALL
- March 29-30 *"WO BEGINNEN DIE DINGE": THE POETICS OF THE THING*
German Studies Graduate Student Conference
A.D. WHITE HOUSE
- APRIL 12-13 *NEW DIRECTIONS IN LAW AND LITERATURE*
Conference organized by Bernadette A. Meyler (Law School) and Elizabeth Anker (English and Law)
LOCATION TBA
- APRIL 22-25 *1949 AND BEYOND: PATIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY*
SYMPOSIUM EXPLORING RENEGADE POST-DARMSTADT PATHS
Organized by Xak Bjerken (Music Department)
DETAILS TBA
- APRIL 26-27 *TRAGIC LEGACIES: ANTIGONE AND OEDIPUS*
IN LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS
Conference organized by Anette Schwarz (German Studies)
A.D. WHITE HOUSE



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Additional information about all events listed is available on our website: www.arts.cornell.edu/igcs. Event listings will be updated throughout the semester. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact Olga Petrova (ogp2@cornell.edu).

Archived copies of past newsletters are available electronically at <http://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/10777>

Contributions to German Culture News are welcome. If you would like an event listed or have a brief review or article to submit, please contact Olga Petrova (ogp2@cornell.edu).