

This thesis deals with six texts by two of the best-known contemporary American novelists, namely Paul Auster and Thomas Pynchon. The thesis analyzes three most recent novels by each writer: *Invisible*, *Sunset Park* and *4 3 2 1* by Paul Auster and *Against the Day*, *Inherent Vice* and *Bleeding Edge* by Thomas Pynchon. All six novels explore various modes of authenticity – a notion which in each author’s work adopts specific mechanisms of establishing ways of existing within the world that are directed towards a critique of the forms of society that try to limit individuals, confine them to prescribed objective categories. Chapters I to IV establish one by one the primary approaches to understanding how authenticity works within individual novels. First two chapters explore Paul Auster’s works, and emphasize their portrayal of change as an organizing leitmotif. Chapters III and IV deal with selected works by Thomas Pynchon and analyze their use of entropy and information overload within individual narratives. The final chapter then combines all these notions and provides a comparative analysis and a critical interpretation of all six works against a theoretical and critical framework. The thesis explores the differences between Auster’s and Pynchon’s approach to authenticity, notions of the subjective or the complex systems of change within the flux of modern existence. It further uses a variety of critical texts to argue that the Heraclitean change is at the very heart of these attempts. What is fundamentally the source code of the six novels is a way of accepting subjectivity which in effect, to paraphrase Mieke Bal, achieves a certain fragile objectivity within the fictional.