

The Zone and the Real:
 Philosophical Themes in Gravity's Rainbow*

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Gravity's Rainbow (GR)¹ is a work that will require approach from multifarious directions if we are to begin to come to terms with its richness. It is the custom of Pynchon to use his novels, in part, as glosses on general themes of a sort normally termed "philosophical." This practice is found in great and delightful abundance in GR. It will be our purpose here to set out what we take to be the dominant philosophical themes of GR, acknowledging the provisional nature of such an attempt. We shall be claiming that the book deals in a fairly direct way with certain broadly metaphysical and epistemological issues currently of much interest to philosophers. Our claim will be that among the major concerns of GR is the issue of whether or not it is possible to have knowledge of the Real and further whether there is a Real at all.

We should perhaps state what we take one to be doing when one gives a philosophical interpretation of a novel. We will be setting out the major themes from current philosophical literature alluded to or manifested in GR. This involves the manifestation of these themes in the manner of the narration, in remarks of characters, plot action, etc. Most importantly, we find events in GR occurring or relayed in accord with the manner several interrelated philosophical themes would have them. Again one should note, though perhaps few readers of GR will need this pointed out, that GR is resistant to any sort of

* Editors' Note: We are glad to publish, with minor editorial changes, the more theoretical section of a previously unpublished essay written in 1974 and circulated in MS. Tony Tanner writes that he "profited from reading it" (Thomas Pynchon; London: Methuen, 1982, 92, n. 14) and so, we think, will the readers of PN.

simple-minded formulization in terms of entropy, rationalization, paranoia, the dehumanizing effects of technology, or such stuff.²

Before proceeding, we wish to give an account of the relevant philosophical matters: when all the evidence there could in principle be on some matter supports equally well two or more opposing hypotheses, this gives rise to an epistemological indeterminacy (E.I.). E.I. is a thesis concerning what we can know. For example, if it is the case that when all the evidence is in concerning the correlation of Slothrop's sexual habits and the distribution of rocket hits, we have equal support for two or more incompatible hypotheses, then this gives rise to an epistemological indeterminacy. We can never know which of two hypotheses is the correct one as long as the evidence supports both equally well. Metaphysical indeterminacy (M.I.) is a thesis about the nature of reality or about the nature of the world. M.I. holds true if there is no fact of the matter concerning the world. There may, for instance, be a "fact of the matter" in or about physics, but not a "fact of the matter" concerning the mental state a person is in. M.I. holds true as a principle with respect to some matters and not others. When a matter is metaphysically indeterminate, there is nothing about which a hypothesis can be right or wrong. An example of a limited case of M.I. that is of paramount concern in GR is that of the indeterminacy of translation (I.T.).³ There is, according to the I.T., no fact of the matter concerning what people mean, or how one language is to be translated into another. One should note that whereas M.I. implies E.I., it is possible that even though there is no way in principle for us to determine which of two or more competing hypotheses is correct, one of the hypotheses might still be correct. Thus E.I. does not imply M.I. As we shall attempt to show, many of the attempts by the persons in GR to understand the events they are interested in involve the equating of events in one symbol system with events in another symbol system, and explaining the events referred to by the symbols of one of the systems by saying they behave analogously to events in the other system (hence the relevance of I.T.).

In order to understand the words of another, we must first translate his words into our own idiolect. (This also holds, of course, in the case of homophonic translation). In order to understand persons of a "form of life"⁴ other than our own, we must first translate their language (this incorporates gestures, etc., as well as words) into our own. If we are to interpret events in the world in terms of their correlation with events in an abstract theory, be it anything from the manifestation of the sephiroth to Pavlovian mechanics, we must first set up a correspondence relation between the events we seek to explain and the events in the abstract theory which we intend to use as our explanatory device. In illustration, if one is to explain the events that befall persons in GR in terms of doctrines associated with the Tarot Cards, then we must first decide what characters are to correspond to which of the cards, etc. All of the various interpretations of texts and phenomena in GR involve the translation of events in one order into events in another. Let us consider two cases. Concerning Leni Pökler's use of astrology we have:

He was the cause-and-effect man: he kept at her astrology without mercy, telling her what she was supposed to believe, then denying it. "Tides, radio interference, damned little else. There is no way for changes out there to produce changes here."

"Not produce," she tried, "not cause. It all goes along together. Parallel, not series. Metaphor. Signs and symptoms. Mapping on to different coordinate systems, I don't know . . ." (159)

Events in this world are, then, to be explained in terms of the characteristics of the astrological events with which they are in parallel. Roger Mexico says that his statistics cannot be used to predict where the rockets will likely hit next, for it is impossible to translate his equations into a form that is useful for those who would avoid the rockets:

Roger has tried to explain to her the V-bomb statistics: the difference between distribution,

in angel's-eye view, over the map of England,
and their own chances, as seen from down here.
(54)

The inability of the statistics to predict where the rocket hits will probably occur arises from difficulties in translating the statistics into a relevant form.

In the past (and in GR) when Pynchon has made use of a particular source, he has made no effort to conceal the source. Indeed, he writes in such a way that no one familiar with the source in question can miss the correlation. We shall attempt to show that this is also the case with respect to the matter of the indeterminacy of translation. One finds exactly the right terms used in GR in the manner they are used in the relevant philosophical literature. One should perhaps note that the terms in question are of sufficiently specialized usage to rule out the probability of coincidence in this similarity.

The indeterminacy of translation is one of the major themes in the philosophy of W. V. Quine.⁵ The primary source for his views on translation is Word and Object, Chapter 2, "Translation and Meaning." The general claim of that chapter is that there is no fact of the matter concerning how one ought to translate one person's words into the language of another. Perhaps the simplest way to attempt to establish our claim is by the use of quotation from the relevant aspects of Quine and GR.

What we shall be arguing is that the section of GR that concerns Tchitcherine (a Russian intelligence officer and half-brother of Enzian) in Central Asia (336-59) is a kind of commentary on the absurdities that result from thinking that there is a fact of the matter concerning translation. Tchitcherine is sent to Central Asia to help in the development of an alphabet for the Kirghiz language. Chapter 2 of Word and Object deals with the methods a linguist has at his disposal in translating the words of one language into those of another language. The basic procedure followed by the Quinian translator is as follows:

We have had our linguist observing native utterances and circumstances passively, to

begin with, and then selectively querying native sentences for assent and dissent under varying circumstances.⁶

From this data the linguist develops what Quine calls an "analytic hypothesis." An analytic hypothesis then is a matching up of the words in one language with the words in another language after observation has allowed us to translate the truth functions (such as negation, conjunction, and alteration), identify the sentences all natives assent to, and decide what native sentences are such that the stimulations which give rise to assent or dissent to them are the same. An analytic hypothesis is, then, roughly an attempt to go beyond the results that observation can yield in terms of translation of one language into another. Recall that epistemological indeterminacy arises when rival hypotheses are equally compatible with all the data in principle available. According to Quine, this is exactly the situation we are in with respect to translation.

The indeterminacy that I mean is more radical. It is that rival systems of analytic hypotheses can conform to all speech dispositions within each of the languages concerned and yet dictate in countless cases utterly disparate translations; not mere mutual paraphrases, but translations each of which would be excluded by the other system of translation. Two such translations might even be patently contrary in truth value, provided there is no stimulation that would encourage assent to either.⁷

Quine claims then that there is nothing for hypotheses concerning translations to be right or wrong about.

The most generally persuasive argument for our claim lies in the absurdities and irresolvable conflicts that arise in the disagreements that develop in GR between proponents of differing accounts of the structure of the Kirghiz language. However, there is excellent confirming evidence in the Central Asia section and elsewhere in terms of the use of a common terminology in both Quine and GR.

The Quinian linguist takes as his informant the "Educated Native Speaker." (This expression is now a part of philosophical jargon.) Tchitcherine has as his sidekick in Central Asia one Dzaqyp Qulan: "They throw amiable cigarettes, construct him paper existences, use him as an Educated Native Speaker" (340). Concerning the conversations of Tchitcherine and Wimpe, a German drug salesman and one of the three knights of the Zone (along with Blicero and von Göll), we find:

How could they have failed to be observed? By and by, as the affair in its repressed and bloodless way proceeded, the Soviet chain of command, solicitous as any 19th-century family, would begin to take simple steps to keep the two apart. Conservative therapy. Central Asia. But in the weeks of vague and soft intelligence, before the watchers quite caught the drift of things . . . what heads and tails went jingling inside the dark pockets of that indeterminacy? (344)

A good bit of the absurdity of thinking that there is a fact of the matter concerning translations can perhaps be seen in the following:

These Arabists are truly a frenzied bunch. They have been lobbying passionately for a New Turkic Alphabet made up of Arabic letters. There are fistfights in the hallways with unreconstructed Cyrillicists, and whispers of a campaign to boycott, throughout the Islamic world, any Latin Alphabet.[. . .] And there is a strong religious angle in all this. Using a non-Arabic alphabet is felt to be a sin against God--most of the Turkic peoples are, after all, Islamic, and Arabic script is the script of Islam, it is the script in which the word of Allah came down on the Night of Power, the script of the Koran-- (354)

Perhaps the most intriguing bit of textual evidence is in the following:

Not at all. The boots reappear, smiling sentry right behind them. "Stimmt, Herr

Schleppzig." What does irony sound like in Russian? These birds are too inscrutable for Slothrop. (378)

The key word here, "inscrutable," plays an important role in Quine's writings on the indeterminacy of translation. To say that, in the relevant jargon, a term is "inscrutable" is to say that there is no fact of the matter concerning the reference of the term.

The indeterminacy of translation now confronting us, however, cuts across extension and intension alike. The terms "rabbit," "undetached rabbit part," and "rabbit stage" differ not only in meaning; they are true of different things. Reference itself proves behaviorally inscrutable.⁸

It appears clear then that the work of W. V. Quine is at least as important a gloss on Pynchon as that of Maxwell, Weber, Adams, Rilke, or Borges.

One of the more explicit statements of the issues centering around the question of M.I. is found in a remark of Pirate Prentice to Roger:

"I mean what They and Their hired psychiatrists call 'delusional systems.' Needless to say, 'delusions' are always officially defined. We don't have to worry about questions of real or unreal. They only talk out of expediency. It's the system that matters. How the data arrange themselves inside it. Some are consistent, others fall apart. Your idea that Pointsman sent Gloaming takes a wrong fork. Without any contrary set of delusions--delusions about ourselves, which I'm calling a We-system--the Gloaming idea might have been all right--" (638)

The hypotheses concerning Gloaming (and perhaps all other hypotheses) are to be rejected because there are equally good hypotheses that deny what they assert. Pirate rejects the idea that theories can be judged in terms of a correspondence with reality. The Real is then just those forms of thought that have official sanction.

In order to show that indeterminacy is a more important theme than entropy, rationalization, breakdown of communication, paranoia (around which most interpretations of Pynchon's work have centered), one needs to show that our considerations about indeterminacy explain these matters. Consider the following already much-noticed passage:

If there is something comforting--religious, if you want--about paranoia, there is still also anti-paranoia, where nothing is connected to anything, a condition not many of us can bear for long. (434)

Paranoia, then, involves seeing the world as having a determinate structure in which all the parts are related to each other. Further, if the world is not determinate, then it cannot cause or determine our actions. An especially interesting example of paranoia, in that it combines E.I. with metaphysical determinacy to produce paranoia, is given by Sir Stephen Dodson-Truck:

"I've been given the old Radio-Control-Implanted-In-The-Head-At-Birth problem to mull over--as a kind of koan, I suppose. It's driving me really, clinically insane. I rather imagine that's the whole point of it." (541-42)

One becomes paranoid when one sees the world as a determinate structure, whether revealed or hidden:

Thus the official version. Grandiose enough. But Generaldirektor Smaragd and colleagues are not here to be told what even the masses believe. It might almost--if one were paranoid enough--seem to be a collaboration here, between both sides of the Wall, matter and spirit. What is it they know that the powerless do not? What terrible structure behind the appearances of diversity and enterprise? (165)

Entropy is also, of course, very much a part of the concerns of GR. Entropy, as a Pynchonian metaphor, involves the running down of things, from systems to persons, as well as the tendency of all things to blur into one another. However, as long as the myth of the determinate world does not impose itself on us, neither

rationalization nor entropy need occur, for there is no imposition of something on us from outside in a determinate way.

Perhaps a clearer perspective on these abstruse matters can be gained by considering several passages where we come to see the effect of the Second World War on those most vulnerable to the cataclysm. Perhaps we can here find a key to the common factors in the sensibilities of those in the Zone.

The Zone at first merely encompasses occupied Germany, but it quickly comes to take on a much larger import. The Zone refers at least in part to certain ways of being outside the mainstream of traditional culture and life. As we shall attempt to show, there are intimate connections linking indeterminacy and the manifestations of the Zone in the sensibilities of persons most deeply affected by it. Consider this amazing bit of GR:

. . . it was always easy, in open and lonely places, to be visited by Panic wilderness fear, but these are the urban fantods here, that come to get you when you are lost or isolate inside the way time is passing, when there is no more History, no time-traveling capsule to find your way back to, only the lateness and the absence that fill a great railway shed after the capital has been evacuated, and the goat-god's city cousins wait for you at the edges of the light, playing the tunes they always played, but more audible now, because everything else has gone away or fallen silent . . . barn-swallow souls, fashioned of brown twilight, rise toward the white ceilings . . . they are unique to the Zone, they answer to the new Uncertainty. Ghosts used to be either likenesses of the dead or wraiths of the living. But here in the Zone categories have been blurred badly. The status of the name you miss, love, and search for now has grown ambiguous and remote, but this is even more than the bureaucracy of mass absence--some still live, some have died, but many, many have forgotten which they are. Their likenesses will not serve. Down here are only wrappings left in

the light, in the dark: images of the Uncertainty. . . (303)

There is, needless to say, much in this dense passage. Let us then consider it insofar as it sheds light on our concerns. The urban version of wilderness panic comes upon us when we lose our sense that history is a determinate matter. The appearance of urban fantods is a kind of illumination, but one at which the goat-god's city cousins wait. When we see that traditional explanations are undermined by our perception of M.I., the tendency is to quickly fill in the void with another account of phenomena, which itself attempts to see the world in determinate terms. "But here in the Zone categories have been blurred badly." As a philosophical remark on language this has a clear correlation with the issues of translation and M.I. When categories become blurred, even given that we know all there is to know about things, we are still not able to label items, as it is no longer clear what counts as evidence or criteria for what. The images of the new uncertainty correspond, at least in part, to the effects of the perception that the world is indeterminate on those who had always assumed (perhaps not at an explicit level) that the world was a determinate structure. (Further illumination on this matter is given in the Enzian/Katje dialogue [658-63] and in Osbie Feel's movie Doper's Greed [534-36].)

Let us then consider another remarkable passage which indicates an acute grasp of the nature of and problems brought on by the consideration of E.I. and M.I. By examining this passage one can, perhaps, get a further insight into the Zone.

The rest of us, not chosen for enlightenment, left on the outside of Earth, at the mercy of a Gravity we have only begun to learn how to detect and measure, must go on blundering inside our front-brain faith in Kute Korrespondences, hoping that for each psi-synthetic taken from Earth's soul there is a molecule, secular, more or less ordinary and named, over here--kicking endlessly among the plastic trivia, finding in each Deeper Significance and trying to string them all together like terms of a power series hoping to

zero in on the tremendous and secret Function whose name, like the permuted names of God, cannot be spoken . . . plastic saxophone reed sounds of unnatural timbre, shampoo bottle ego-image, Cracker Jack prize one-shot amusement, home appliance casing fairing for winds of cognition, baby bottles tranquilization, meat packages disguise of slaughter, dry-cleaning bags infant strangulation, garden hoses feeding endlessly the desert . . . but to bring them together, in their slick persistence and our preterition . . . to make sense out of, to find the meanest sharp sliver of truth in so much replication, so much waste. . . . (590)

The first few lines of the above are, among other things, a superb parody of a large amount of traditional theories concerning the development of knowledge and of explanations of events in the natural world. It captures the sound of prose by philosophers who, in attempting to sound highly scientific, manage to convey only that they do not know what they are talking about. It is thought that we ought to attempt to explain the occurrences of discrete aspects of our experiences (sensations) in terms of the causal effects of phenomena upon us, matching each stimulation in the brain with that aspect of the world which is the cause of the experience (sensation). The aim of science is then, on this view, to give the simplest yet the most all-encompassing mapping of stimuli onto phenomena. According to this view, when we have the simplest complete account of this mapping, we have knowledge of the determinate structure of the Real. It is not so clear, however, what one is to make of that part of the passage where Pynchon begins listing cultural artifacts. One might take as a plausible hypothesis that it is traditional culture's explanation for our inability to transcend: namely, that we are caught up in material junk. Beneath all the garbage, according to traditional accounts, lies a truth, the cognition of which allows transcendence. The attitude of those chosen for enlightenment evidently involves finding out that the "Earth is a living critter" (590).

Our encounter with the earth is epistemologically on a par with our encounter with other persons. All

understanding of other persons involves translation relations, so all understanding of the earth also involves relations translational in character.

A common device used for setting out the manifestations of indeterminacy in GR lies in the use of viciously circular criteria in identifying particulars. A similar and closely related device is the use of vicious regresses. A vicious regress occurs, speaking informally, if the first step we take in some procedure designed to give us knowledge of the world cannot be taken until an infinite number of previous steps have been taken. One can rather quickly see the connection between vicious regresses and paranoia by considering the following narrational remark: "But in the game behind the game, it is not the point" (208). (Cf. 257, 454, 542, and esp. 659-63.) In the Byron the Bulb story we find a mention and illustration of an infinite regress:

There's no escape for Byron, he's doomed to an infinite regress of sockets and bulbsnatchers. (651)

GR itself is a kind of regressive/paranoid structure. Behind the conspiracy directed against Slothrop by Pointsman we have English intelligence; behind this we have the allied war effort; behind this we have a number of multinational corporations using and shaping the war for their own ends. Viewed internally on any given level, the existence of that level only is consistent with all of the evidence available at that level. There is no clearly depicted stopping place in the regressive structure from which we could be sure that we had understood everything and all the levels involved. There are, however, many suggestions in GR that behind the chemical cartels and such there lies some kind of occult empire full of shadowy figures who actually are the forces that shape events. Josef Ombindi, leader of the Empty Ones, alludes to such a possibility:

"Tibet is a special case. Tibet was deliberately set aside by the Empire as free and neutral territory, a Switzerland for the spirit where there is no extradition, and Alp-Himalayas to draw the soul upward, and danger rare enough

to tolerate. [. . .] We will have to learn such new maps of Earth: and as travel in the Interior becomes more common, as the maps grow another dimension, so must we. . ." (321)

The continuing references throughout GR to shadowy figures and watchers at the world's edge are further evidence that there may be yet another structure behind the chemical cartels. However, if it were certain that there were a "Them behind Them" (given that we have no good reason to think there is a level beyond the shadowy figures) this would defeat the regressive structure as a device for undercutting claims about having knowledge of reality. So, instead of certainty, we are left quite uncertain as to whether the references to watchers at the world's edge and such are best taken as a Pynchonian joke or whether they are as "real" as Seaman Bodine. We can say only that either hypothesis would be reasonable, were it not for the existence of the other.

With some of these perhaps abstract considerations out of the way, we wish to turn to a consideration of the social or human dimensions of the Zone. What things, if any, can be said about those who are in the Zone? One should be sure to note that the equation of those in the Zone with social misfits and outcasts is far too simple-minded, for there are those in the Zone who are quite well-adjusted to mainstream society, e.g., Major Marvy and Bloody Chiclitz.⁹ There is no reason at all to assume that those in the Zone are of higher moral stature than those outside the Zone.

A good bit of the initial impact of the Zone is conveyed in the marvelously apt epigraph of Book 3, "Foto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas any more." Given the frequent references to the film The Wizard of Oz, one cannot help but feel here that mixture of fear and delight that the Zone produces in many who encounter it for the first time. The Zone can perhaps be partially understood through a consideration of a historical remark concerning Zonal chemists:

"They see themselves at the end of a long European dialectic, generations of blighted grain, ergotism, witches on broomsticks, community orgies, cantons lost up there in folds

of mountain that haven't known an unhallucinated day in the last 500 years--keepers of a tradition, aristocrats--" (261).

The Zone is not something peculiar to our time (cf. Katje's dodo-hunting ancestor and the ancestors of Slothrop).

At least part of the manifestation of the Zone in the sensibilities of persons arises in the need to search for other than obvious or mainstream explanations for phenomena. (Cf. Geli Tripping's practice of witchcraft, Achitcherine's obsession with Enzian, von Göll's belief in the power of his black market operations, Leni's practice of astrology, etc.) The further one reads in GR, the more frequent references to nonstandard explanations become. The book itself takes on the characteristics of a cryptic holy text, much as the Zone itself becomes a holy text for the Hereros. Those in the Zone are at least partially driven by a desire to see something more in the Real than others find. This desire may be motivated by the active perception of the unsuitability of life outside the Zone (perhaps Blicero typifies this attitude), or by the simple fact that one is aware of no reality outside the Zone (perhaps Säure Bummer exemplifies this characteristic). The Zone is able to sustain more diversity than the life outside the Zone.¹⁰

Life in the Zone is in some ways more open than life outside the Zone. As Geli says to Slothrop in her attempt to prepare him for life in the Zone, "'You sound like a German. Forget frontiers now. Forget subdivisions. There aren't any'" (294). There are close connections between the openness of the Zone and the indeterminacies we are considering. One consequence of the H.I. thesis is that insofar as any aspect of the world is indeterminate, it cannot impose itself on us: hence the "openness of the zone."

Slothrop's encounter with the Zone leads to a radical alteration in his persona. Those in the Zone feel most directly the loss of the ability to achieve knowledge of the Real. Those in the Zone feel the effects of the knowledge that contact with the Real will not of itself allow one to escape the forces of

entropy or to achieve any sort of transcendence.

Greta was meant to find Oneirine. Each plot carries its signature. Some are God's, some masquerade as God's. This is a very advanced kind of forgery. But still there's the same meanness and mortality to it as a falsely made check. It is only more complex. The members have names, like the Archangels. More or less common, humanly-given names whose security can be broken, and the names learned. But those names are not magic. That's the key, that's the difference. Spoken aloud, even with the purest magical intention, they do not work. (464)

Given that we take as a profound theme of GR that there is no fact of the matter concerning the world, a reader might well wonder about the status of our own descriptive claims concerning the novel. Our claim, then, is that our account is one coherent account around which one's experience of GR may be organized, and that a particular structure comes to develop as a result of informing a reading with the concerns of this paper. We do not deny that there are other ways to organize our experience, and indeed our hypothesis requires that there be other equally coherent ways to structure our experience of the novel. Our hypothesis is fruitful insofar as it helps us "see connections" in GR and insofar as it allows interesting interpretations of GR to be given. Degrees of thematic import can be explicated in terms of the explanatory power of a thematic interpretation of the work.

It may well be that our encounter with GR is one that can never be determinately complete. It is at least certain that we can never be secure in thinking that we have understood all there is to understand about GR, for GR produces in us a kind of paranoia in which we fear that there may be entirely other structures inherent in GR that we are unaware of.

Notes

¹ Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow. (New York: Viking, 1973). All page references to Gravity's Rainbow will be incorporated in the text.

² What we will be setting out here are relatively large-scale conclusions. However, these conclusions are not in philosophical practice detachable from the arguments for the positions. The matters we consider are currently much under consideration, and it is safe to say that it will be some time before any sort of consensus is reached on the matters we consider.

³ Editors' Note: We feel that it may be useful to enlarge on the Indeterminacy of Translation at this point, when the subject is first mentioned. As the authors say in their note 5, below, Quine's work is the major source of this idea; we would explain it by quoting him. "The thesis is this: manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another." (W. V. Quine, Word and Object. [Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960], 27).

⁴ The notion of "form of life" has its origin as a term of current philosophical parlance in the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. There are, as one might expect, several fairly transparent allusions to Wittgenstein in GR. (See, for instance, 60-61, 69, 415.)

⁵ The primary source of the indeterminacy of translation thesis is Word and Object, by W. V. Quine (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960). Perhaps readers unfamiliar with the state of contemporary philosophy but having some acquaintance with its history prior to this century can see some of the import of Quine's arguments for the indeterminacy of translation in the following remark by Hilary Putnam: "Chapter 2 of Quine's Word and Object contains what may well be the most fascinating and the most discussed philosophical argument since Kant's Transcendental Deduction of the Categories," from "The Refutation of Conventionalism," Nous, 8, No. 1 (1974), 28.

⁶ Word and Object, 68.

⁷ Ibid., 73-74.

⁸ W. V. Quine, "Ontological Relativity," in Ontological Relativity and Other Essays. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1969), 35.

⁹ It is surely no accident that Bloody Chiclitz is the only character to occur in all three of Pynchon's novels.

¹⁰ The contrasts in V. between those on the street and those not on the street and the contrast in The Crying of Lot 49 between those in the Tristero system and those not in the system are similar in many ways to the Zone/nonZone contrast in GR.