

Godolphin  
Goodolphin  
Goodol'phin : A Question of Integration  
Goodol'Pyn  
Good ol'Pym

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Every writer draws--in one way or another--on the work of other writers. Few thoughts are ever really original, and so most thought is a strand in an intricate net extending backwards in time, until in some remote region of the past we pass from literature to myth. I would like to untangle one knot, or better still one tiny part of such a knot, in some detail. I shall argue that two episodes in Thomas Pynchon's novel V.<sup>1</sup> show a direct indebtedness to Edgar Allan Poe. Moreover, it is no coincidence that these episodes are Foppl's siege party in the chapter "Monday's Story" (which I link with "The Mask of the Red Death"<sup>2</sup>), and the Vheissu affair (which I shall connect with The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket<sup>3</sup>); the two pairings, I shall argue, are interdependent.

Two Parties: Folly at Foppl's and Prospero's

Both Foppl's party and Prospero's, in the "Mask," are staged during a siege. With Prospero it is the Red Death, and with Foppl a Bondel rebellion, that in each case drives a number of the ruling class into forced seclusion. "When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys" (M, 269). Foppl is forced to undertake similar measures: "'Bolt the doors, seal the windows, tear down the plank bridges and distribute arms. Tonight we enter a state of siege'" (V, 217). At both courts, life seems to pass in more or less the same vein: "There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine" (M, 269). "Boisterous were the parties, lively the music, jolly the girls" (V,

213). Furthermore, both hosts seem to have had the same interior decorator. At Foppl's place, Mondaugen enters "a tiny unfurnished room hung all in black velvet, high as the house, narrowing into a chimney and open at the top" (V, 221). Had he been at Prospero's place, he might have wandered off into a similar apartment, "closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue" (M, 270). Pynchon thus builds up a close analogy between his text and Poe's, both in the structure of the plot and in the creation of atmosphere; furthermore, he takes over the symbolic structure of his source. Poe's color symbolism, especially the centrality of redness, is hinted at recurrently, as in the "patch or pool of deep red" (V, 218) which Mondaugen notices in the courtyard of Foppl's farm. Pynchon also alludes to the theme of death which so preoccupies Poe, although a different, more subtle death invades Foppl's place. After some weeks, the company is reduced: "Easily a third of their number were bedridden: several . . . had died" (V, 258).

In both texts, there is the assumption that this trend will go on until total decadence, carrying with it total death, has taken over. In Pynchon's version, it is not one particular mask, but masks themselves--masking--that cause death. (We might also recall Pynchon's Fasching motif.) During the long dying in both narratives, the time that is running out is marked by clocks in the text: in Poe, the grand clock in the black apartment; in Pynchon, Vera Meroving has an artificial Dali-eye-clock.

We will come back to this set of stories at the end. First, a more detailed description of the other set.

#### The Hollow Globe: A Theory

In 1818, a certain Captain Symmes proposed "that the earth, formed by rotation, consisted of five concentric spheres with access through 'holes at the Poles' so wide that a voyager 'might pass from the outer side . . . over the rim and down upon the inner side a great distance before becoming aware of the fact at all.' He called for 'one hundred brave com-

panions' to hop off from Siberia to the North Pole to find 'a warm and rich land stocked with thrifty vegetables and animals, if not men . . .'"<sup>4</sup> This speculative description soon became known as the theory of "Symmes's hole," and it was a topic of considerable discussion in circles interested in the scientific and the fantastic--circles which included both Poe and Jules Verne. The connections among Symmes, Poe, and Verne are manifold. Verne wrote an ending to Poe's story, "Le Sphinx des Glaces,"<sup>5</sup> and commented at length in his Journey to the Center of the Earth<sup>6</sup> on Humboldt and Davy, two people whom Symmes contacted with the hope of interesting them in the expedition he was planning. It seems certain, then, that both Poe and Verne were very familiar with the theory, which views the globe as a place whose structure is verifiable by exploration of the interior.

Poe's narrative of Pym relies heavily and directly on the theory. The ending can only be properly understood if one presupposes a "something" on or under the Pole. Seen in this light, a quotation from Pynchon also takes on a deeper meaning. Godolphin says that in Vheissu "'dreams are not, not closer to the waking world, but somehow, I think, they do seem more real'" (V, 155-56). Joel D. Black has shown that Pynchon is very aware of the "living world" theory,<sup>7</sup> and, if one assumes that he also knows about Symmes's theory (very likely, as he draws directly from Pym), there is a direct explanation of the phenomenon evoked in the description of Vheissu. Dreams can be more real in Vheissu because they are dreamt nearer to the core of the earth, where the final truth lies hidden.<sup>8</sup> The fact that the inhabitants of Vheissu do indeed live underground, or at least know about the inside of the globe, is explicitly stated, albeit by a suspect informant. "'Having explored the volcanoes of their own region . . . certain natives of the Vheissu district were the first to become aware of these tunnels, which lace the earth's interior at depths varying--'" (V, 181). Later: "'Tell me what Vheissu is really the code name for. Tell me, you idiot, what I already know: that it stands for Vesuvius'" (V, 181).

It is also asserted that this network extends to

the Polar region: "' . . . a barbaric and unknown race, employed by God knows whom, are even now blasting the Antarctic ice with dynamite, preparing to enter a subterranean network of natural tunnels, a network whose existence is known only to the inhabitants of Vheissu, the Royal Geographic Society in London, Herr Godolphin, and the spies of Florence'" (V, 181). Numerous links connect Vheissu to Verne's underground realm.<sup>9</sup> There are tunnels, and also frequent mention of volcanoes: "'And there are Volcanoes with cities inside them which once every hundred years erupt into flaming hell but people go to live in them anyway'" (V, 177). These evoke at once Verne's expedition, in which Lidenbrock, a German scholar (cf. "Herr" Godolphin) and his nephew also begin their journey in the North, penetrating into the interior of Earth's crust by entering at the crater of the volcano Snefels, in Iceland. They then move through a lush, warm, densely vegetated underground region to the South, namely Sicily, where they are spat out, like the cities in Vheissu, because of the sudden eruption of a volcano identified as Stromboli (the third important Italian volcano, besides Vesuvius and Aetna). We have, then, (in Pym, V., and Verne's Journey) a set of three expeditions, all concerned with an underground realm, and all going from the extreme North to the South. There are other similarities.

#### Vheissu/Tsalal: The Topography

Godolphin, only explorer of Vheissu, future member of Poppl's crew, explains to Victoria Wren in Florence how Vheissu is reached: ". . . on camel-back over a vast tundra, past the dolmens and temples of dead cities; finally to the banks of a broad river which never sees the sun, so thickly roofed is it with foliage. The river is traveled in long teak boats which are carved like dragons and paddled by brown men whose language is unknown to all but themselves. In eight days' time there is a portage over a neck of treacherous swampland to a green lake, and across the lake rise the first foothills of the mountains which ring Vheissu" (V, 153). This description, I would argue (aware of the danger of caballing caries), is a carefully constructed collage of several interwoven

topoi. It is a stylized journey from the extreme North to the extreme South (see also Mondaugen's North/South obsession<sup>10</sup>), and a journey through parts of South America mingled with exotic elements. At the same time, of course, it is the route to Vheissu per se.

The first sentence of the description evokes the region of the North Pole and the coldness of the adjacent region; but it also evokes Peru, where one travels on llamas, guanacos or vicuñas--all species closely related to the camel. The traveler to Vheissu also passes the remnants of dead cultures that immediately bring to mind the lost cultures of the Incas, complete with their burial rites and dolmens. The highlands of the Andean Cordilleras are, furthermore, in large parts "tundra"-like in their vegetation and climate. Then one travels further on the river, through a warmer, more exotic climate: a tropical region on or even below the Equator. The exotic aspect is stressed by the introduction of teak boats that are dragon-shaped, belonging to an Indian or Indonesian civilization. But on our South American scale, it might well be a journey first on the Pilcomayo River, then the Paraná, through tropical country, and then later on the Río de la Plata, leading to Buenos Aires, through extensive swampland. The climate here again gets colder, and the landscape more mountainous. On both parallel journeys, we have reached the border of Antarctica, land of polar climate. Furthermore, we can make an analogy between the green lake and the Arctic Sea, known for its sometimes intense green color, which is due to ice. Significantly, the area around Buenos Aires is also the most northerly region where floating ice is still encountered.

From there on, the journey closely resembles an expedition to the Pole. "Native guides will only go a short distance into these mountains. Soon they will turn back, pointing out the way. Depending on the weather, it is one to two more weeks over moraine, sheer granite and hard blue ice before the borders of Vheissu are reached" (V, 153-54). We have here the ring of mountains that surround Antarctica, and then the expedition is on its own, struggling to reach the

Pole. The borders of Vheissu are, then, the Pole itself, or better, the rim of the hole that forms the access to it. But Vheissu, like Captain Symmes's country, is tropical, and so one could also construct yet another journey that remains inside South America, ending, perhaps, somewhere in the icy mountains of Bolivia. The description of the journey is anything but geographically clear-cut. It is a bricolage of several themes, combining tropical elements of South America with a stylized journey from Pole to Pole, interspersed with possibly Asian set-scenes.

Vheissu itself shows close parallels to Tsalal, Pym's last station before he reaches the polar region. (Godolphin also comes to the Pole after Vheissu.) To get to Tsalal one has to cross terrain like that which is near Vheissu, and to crawl over " . . . large shapeless blocks of the black granite" (N, 230). Like Vheissu, it is an unexplored region: "At every step we took inland the conviction forced itself upon us that we were in a country differing essentially from any hitherto visited by civilized men" (N, 193). The reports that strengthened Symmes's conviction about his theory of "warmer water and contrary migration of birds near the poles"<sup>11</sup> also hold true here, as in Vheissu: "No ice whatever was to be seen. . . . Indeed, the temperature of the water was here far too warm" (N, 235).

Almost everything in V., then, serves to build up an analogy between Vheissu and the countries imagined by Symmes and Poe. The motif of the journey, the warm climate near the Pole and the unexplored countries of Tsalal and Vheissu all point to a close connection among the different concepts. But it is never a clear correspondence. Pynchon takes pains to create one of his virtually open statements into which at first sight almost every association can fit (as with the letter-title V. itself).<sup>12</sup> Only after a close scrutiny does one realize that the effect was a carefully planned one, and anything but vague. Pynchon has succeeded in creating a parallel country without sacrificing its individuality and uniqueness. We have numerous topographical links between Vheissu and the Pole and Tsalal and the Pole, Vheissu and Tsalal, and

the "Underground." However, it is not just the countries that are alike; a closer look at the respective inhabitants reveals further similarities.

#### Vheissu/Tsalal: The Inhabitants

Neither literary country can live up to the pleasant expectations of Captain Symmes, who expected to find a "warm and rich land stocked with thrifty vegetables and animals, if not men." Pym is soon forced to remark that ". . . the islanders for whom we entertained such inordinate feelings of esteem, were among the most barbarous, subtle, and bloodthirsty wretches that ever contaminated the face of the globe" (N, 205). Godolphin also experiences this shift from goodness to depravity. "'And you would be in love with her [a woman of Vheissu].'" "At first. But soon that skin, the gaudy godawful riot of pattern and color, would begin to get between you and whatever it was in her that you thought you loved. . . . To flay that tattooing to a heap of red, purple and green debris, leave the veins and ligaments raw and quivering and open at last to your eyes and your touch" (V, 156). Indeed, Vheissu, like Tsalal, is "'hardly a restful place. There's barbarity, insurrection, internecine feud. It's no different from any other godforsakenly remote region'" (V, 155). The dangers in both countries are also directly responsible for the reduction of the expeditions from twelve members (in Pym's case) and thirteen (in Godolphin's case) to three in both narratives. Godolphin describes the three survivors. "'It was bad country. Thirteen of us went in and three came out. Myself, my second-in-command, and a civilian whose name I have forgotten and who so far as I know has vanished from the earth without a trace'" (V, 157). Pym escapes with his comrade Peters and a native with the name of Nu-Nu.

The two groups of survivors can be split up into three pairs that are almost equivalent. Pym and Godolphin, the leaders of their respective expeditions, both go on to the Pole. The civilian and Nu-Nu seem marginal to their expeditions, and are stigmatized, one by being a civilian, the other by being a native of the hostile Tsalal; both die, or at least vanish permanently. Also, Pym's Peters and Godolphin's second-in-command share a fate of remarkable similarity.

Peters is now "a resident of Illinois" who "cannot be met with at present" (N, 240). The sinister implication of his mysterious seclusion is mirrored in Godolphin's equally ominous statement--reluctantly made--which implies that some disease, or perhaps madness, struck his second-in-command: "'He is, he is in hospital. Retired now'" (V, 157).

### A Color Theory

Colors form a very important symbolic sub-structure in both journeys. Godolphin remarks on Vheissu's colors and their disquieting aspects. "'The colors. So many colors. . . . As if you lived inside a madman's kaleidoscope'" (V, 155). He mentions the "'iridescent'" (V, 155), changing pattern, and the resulting desire to "flay that tattooing to a heap of red, purple and green debris." Finally, the fur of the spider monkey that he finds buried in the South Pole ice is "'still rainbow-colored'" (V, 189). Both stories rely heavily on a dichotomy of color vs. whiteness. In Poe, these extremes are worked out in the juxtaposition of the colorful, exotic civilization of Tsalal with its fear of anything white, and the whiteness of the polar region and the shrouded human figure. The inhabitants of Tsalal not only fear anything white, they also do not have anything white; even their teeth, as Pym remarks, are black. "Teke li-li" is their special word for their white-aversion. The impossibility of combining different colors to produce white is even expressed in the nature of their country. The expedition encounters a river: "It was not colorless, nor was it of any one uniform color--presenting to the eye, as it flowed, every possible shade of purple, like the hues of a changeable silk. . . . It was made up of a number of distinct veins, each of a distinct hue . . . these veins did not comingle" (N, 194). In Pynchon, it is the color of Vheissu that clashes with the whiteness of the polar ice (in the spider monkey episode, for example). But the analogies are even more elaborate.

Rudolf Arnheim, in his book Art and Visual Perception, deals at length with colors, their composition and their relations, including generative complementaries, "colors that in combination produce a monochromatic white or gray."<sup>13</sup> Using its schema and

taking a closer look at the "debris" that Godolphin's grim imaginings evoke ("flay that tattooing to a heap of red, purple and green"), we see that these can be split up into red, the color of blood (separated from the other colors by a comma), and green and purple, which together form a complementary pair. Beneath the analogies of complementarity and separation lies the paradoxical idea that a coat of colors both hides the final truth and, at the same time, adds up to it.<sup>14</sup> This is a compressed image of the "mockery of life": the (perhaps false) image of colorful change and vitality, which carries in itself (deceptively) its own negation, the seed of the final truth, the possibility of final annihilation in/into whiteness. In Poe, it is the white specter, and in Pynchon the spider monkey, unable to hide its own "nothingness" under its rainbow-color disguise, that expound this paradoxical relation of color and whiteness, the hues of life and annihilation. Godolphin feels that "Until Vheissu. It was not till the Southern Expedition last year that I saw what was beneath her skin. . . . Nothing. . . . It was Nothing I saw" (V, 188). It should be noted that the colors of the rainbow also recreate white light when passed again through a prism.

Both stories, then, share an intricate color symbolism based on the juxtaposition of color and whiteness, of life and annihilation. One is almost tempted to reinterpret Poe's Tsalal in Pynchon's vein now, as that which is really inside the globe: the horrible country--horrible beyond words--behind the shrouded figure.

### The Final Integration

We are faced, at this point, with a proliferation of parallels, but the whole labor still seems Sisyphian and dead: a mere shuffling of quotations. We haven't yet touched the real integration.

It is again Godolphin who puts Vheissu in a relation to the overall structure and theme of V.: "Everyone has an Antarctic" (V, 224), he says, implying a confrontation of the individual with the "Nothing," but at the same time he realizes that "The discretion, the sense of comedy about the Vheissu affair are with us no more, our Vheissus are no longer our own, or

even confined to a circle of friends; they're public property" (V, 230). Vheissu was "'a luxury, an indulgence'" (V, 230). He makes these statements, significantly, during Foppl's siege, when he is a member of the surrounded party. Pynchon puts this siege into direct relation to Vheissu, when he has Vera Meroving urge Godolphin, "'Don't you see? This siege. It's Vheissu. It's finally happened'" (V, 230). Thus, a paradox emerges about Vheissu and the siege: Vheissu is the siege, yet there is "'No time for pranks. No more Vheissus'" (V, 231).

It is no coincidence that Godolphin turns up at Foppl's place. And likewise, it is no coincidence that Foppl's siege is the other episode in V. closely connected to Poe's work, to his "Mask." To unravel this connection, one has to recall one of the major concepts in V.: the concept of virtù. Very roughly, an act of virtù implies a direct relation between the individual that acts, the act and the one acted upon. At its best, the act constitutes the formative deed of the individual. Its possibility is something that Foppl could still experience in 1904, and the loss of which he mourns later. It is a feeling one could have before assassination has given way to genocidal annihilation. It is still a cruel concept, of course, and extremely dangerous if misunderstood. The fact that Pynchon draws explicitly from Machiavelli (who has also been widely and often misunderstood, whether on virtù or on other issues) shows that Pynchon is aware of the explosiveness of the concept and the danger contained in it. An act of virtù can very well involve the death of the opponent, but it still remains humane--humane in that it still implies a direct relationship between actor, action and victim. Whether the act is moral is a different question altogether. Virtù is a substructure to morality. It does not promise a Utopia of "virtuous" men; all it promises is a more direct, honest relation between friends and enemies. The very fact that a moral judgment can still be made about such a relation is the crucial fact. Different "levels" of "moral energy" still exist in such a relation, as is not the case with Decadence and Entropy. Foppl's reminiscences are Breughel-like tapestries of such acts.

Pynchon's point is that the possibility of such acts of virtù has died out. The mechanization of every aspect of life has taken from us this relation; we are living in an age of annihilation and mass-murder by remote-control, and we live by a press-the-button philosophy. Old Stencil remarks on this degeneration: "There were no more princes. Henceforth politics would become progressively more democratized, more thrown into the hands of amateurs. The disease would progress" (V, 461). Godolphin likewise has commented on this very shift. Vheissu has become the siege, but Vheissu is now a communal Vheissu, which is a contradiction in terms. By definition the act of virtù must be purely personal; communal virtù is unthinkable. Godolphin then ends up in Foppl's parody-universe, hopeless, depraved and perverted, fleeing into yet another act of virtù. In his seventies now, he tortures one of Foppl's slaves: "Below, dancing about the body and flicking its buttocks with a sjambok, was old Godolphin. Vera Meroving stood by his side and they appeared to have exchanged clothing. Godolphin, keeping time with the sjambok, launched quaveringly into a reprise of Down by the Summertime Sea" (V, 259). He isn't aware--or is he?--that somewhere along the line virtù has gone sour. (Or to use Pynchon's wording, "has run afoul.") Time has changed for Pynchon, somewhere around that magical date 1900. No more "virtù"-ous, lonely confrontations of the individual with another individual, or even with a clearly defined horror are possible. No more expeditions to Vheissu or the Pole. The story of Pym serves Pynchon, then, as being about one of these last acts of virtù. But now, at Foppl's siege, Poe's "Red Death" has taken over: the total annihilation of the masses and modern warfare, to be watched from Foppl's terrace by the decadent assemblage, far away and unrelated: "they could see everything spread out in panorama, as if for their amusement. . . . Doubtless there were human voices down there, uttering cries of command, triumph, pain; but at this distance only the tiny pop-pop of gunshots could be heard" (V, 256). But as with Prospero's partygoers, sly Death finds a way. For Pynchon, it is not the plague that comes, but another, equally horrible and indiscriminate sickness: decadence itself (see also "V. in Love"), which levels

all human feelings, helping to bring on the entropic end-predicament of mankind.

Pym is still on the other side of this levelling. Harold Beaver's characterization of Pym's tale as a perfect paradigm of the heroic, tragic individual is interesting in this context. The last image of "the Prince" is that "the whole narrative tips like a seesaw, descending from an innocent prank--and flirtation with death--to cold, murderous, savage annihilation."<sup>15</sup> (Other images of "the Prince" in V. are the English pilots in "Valletta," who exactly fit the description of movie-cliché men of virtù, clichés of which Pynchon makes much more frequent use.)

Old Stencil, the one who presumably met V., or who at least shares a secret knowledge of her ("There is more behind and inside V. than any of us had suspected. Not who, but what: what is she. God grant that I may never be called upon to write the answer, either here or in any official report" [V., 43]), still belongs to the privileged generation of those who had experienced the hope and possibility of virtù. V. may be horrifying, and to write down her final identity may mean death (as, presumably, description of the shrouded figure in Pym or the country behind it is), but V. at least is "real." Godolphin also belongs to the generation of Old Stencil. But Old Stencil is dead, and Vheissu has by now turned into a bedtime story for young Evan Godolphin, who is a member of a new generation, the one that has "lost the touch." He is a "ne'er-do-well" (V., 142), who "couldn't yet become serious over politics" (V., 143), and who "wanted to be left alone, never to 'do well' in his own way . . . would defend that oaf's integrity to the last lazy heartbeat" (V., 144). The past has turned into a tale, a yarn only an oldtimer--Good old Godolphin--can spin.

Good old Pym's tale then is just such another wonderful tale of virtù and of the experience of personal horror, irretrievably lost to us. Pynchon thus comments in his reinterpretation both on the story and on the "story as tale." He exploits Poe's story, creating an analogous one with the very means Poe used, but at the same time he reveals Poe's story to be a romantic tale and a lost reality. He stresses the fictitiousness of the story, and thus goes beyond

mere use of Poe's story as a source. He incorporates it, together with another story by Poe, into a grander scheme that fits his specific needs. That Pynchon's new tale is in itself a small work of art, just as wonderful and fantastic as the original, speaks for Pynchon the writer, and maybe for the fact that the reality is lost, but not the fiction.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pynchon, V. (New York: Bantam Books, 1964). Quotations will be from this edition, which will be cited in parentheses in the text as V.

<sup>2</sup> Edgar Allan Poe, "The Mask of the Red Death" in The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe (New York: Random House, 1938), 269-73. Quotations will be from this edition, which will be cited in parentheses in the text as M.

<sup>3</sup> Edgar Allan Poe, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975). Quotations will be from this edition, which will be cited in parentheses in the text as N.

<sup>4</sup> Harold Beaver, "Introduction" to The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Jules Verne, "Les Sphinx des Glaces," rpt. in Edgar Allan Poe, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), 282-311.

<sup>6</sup> Jules Verne, Journey to the Centre of the Earth (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965). Verne's constant allusion to the leading scientists of his age is demonstrated, for instance, on page 9: "Humphry Davy, Humboldt, Captain Franklin, and General Sabine never failed to call on him when passing through Hamburg."

<sup>7</sup> Joel D. Black, "Probing a Post-Romantic Paleontology: Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow," Boundary 2, 8, No. 2 (1980), 229-54.

<sup>8</sup> This notion of final truth at earth's core is closely related to Pynchon's concept of "rockhood,"

and to his investigation into the "inanimate." The laws "written into nature" correspond--in their function as explaining instances--closely to the messages "written" into Poe's stone maze. This "truth by laws of nature" and its inevitability is one of Pynchon's main background-metaphors.

<sup>9</sup> This connects directly to the recurrent topos of the Underworld/Underground in V., which comes up, for example, in Chapter 5 (Profane's descent into the bowels of New York's sewer system), and Chapter 11 (the siege of Malta/Valetta).

<sup>10</sup> E.g., "he shared with his fellow-citizen Karl Baedeker a basic distrust of the South" (V, 212). ". . . this southsickness [was] progressive and incurable" (V, 212-13).

<sup>11</sup> Beaver, "Introduction," 11.

<sup>12</sup> The nature of V. as an "open symbol" is responsible for this phenomenon. V.'s openness to all kinds of allusions and speculations structures the book around a "void," which, however, at the same time holds the book together--the main paradox of V.'s structure.

<sup>13</sup> Rudolf Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye, New Version, Expanded and Revised (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), 342.

<sup>14</sup> The relation of color and truth is taken up by Pynchon in his discussion of the "Venus" of Botticelli, which stands in a direct relation to the spider monkey. "'She is so beautiful'" (V, 151), Mantissa says, but then, in the act of stealing her, of cutting her from the frame, "Cesare dug the knife into the canvas. . . . Signor Mantissa watched its movement, a slow horror growing in him. In that instant he was reminded of Hugh Godolphin's spider-monkey, still shimmering through crystal ice at the bottom of the world. The whole surface of the painting now seemed to move, to be flooded with color and motion. . . . What sort of mistress, then, would Venus be? . . . And she . . . was only . . . A gaudy dream, a dream of annihilation" (V, 193). He leaves her. (And is it only a coincidence that the ebony clock in "The Mask" also hangs

"on the western wall" [M, 270]? The "Venus" in the Uffizi actually does. Pynchon's investigations are thorough.)

<sup>15</sup> Beaver, "Introduction," 20.