Dream Tonight of Peacock Tails

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Essays on the Fiftieth Anniversary of Thomas Pynchon's *V.*

Edited by

Paolo Simonetti and Umberto Rossi

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

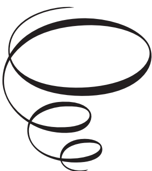

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Works by Thomas Pynchon vii
(With List of Abbreviations)

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction 1
Dream Tonight of Thomas Pynchon
Paolo Simonetti

Part One: Re-*V*isions

Chapter One 13
Monkey Business: The Chapter "Millennium" Removed from an Early Version of *V.*
Luc Herman and John M. Krafft

Chapter Two 31
Cherchez La Femme: The Coercive Paratexts of Thomas Pynchon's *V.*
Tore Rye Andersen

Chapter Three 53
Traveling and Spying into Baedeker's Land: (Re)living and (Re)telling The Great Game, Political Tourism and Other Victorian Intelligence Activities in Thomas Pynchon's *V.*
Mario Faraone

Chapter Four 75
Re-Reading *V.* in the Emergency of the Crisis
Stipe Grgas

Part Two: *V*-Locations

Chapter Five 95
Florence, or Pynchon's Italian Job
Umberto Rossi

Chapter Six 117
"Paris for Love"?
Clément Lévy

Chapter Seven.. 131
Katabasis, Orpheus, and Alligators: *V.*'s Various Underworlds
Jennifer Backman

Chapter Eight.. 153
"He Could Go to Malta and Possibly End It": Malta as "Prime Location" in The Epilogue of *V.*
Paolo Simonetti

V.: A Bibliography.. 173
Mario Faraone

Contributors.. 199

Index.. 203

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All the quotations from Thomas Pynchon's texts are taken from the first editions. Quotations from unpublished typescripts have been indicated in the reference lists at the end of each chapter.

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INTRODUCTION

DREAM TONIGHT OF THOMAS PYNCHON

PAOLO SIMONETTI

> [F]or here, millions of mixed shades and shadows, drowned dreams, somnambulisms, reveries; all that we call lives and souls, lie dreaming, dreaming, still; tossing like slumberers in their beds.
>
> —Herman Melville

In my younger and more academically vulnerable years, during one of the first university lessons I ever attended, a renowned professor said something that struck me as odd, probably because of its utter simplicity and apparent superficiality: "If you open a literary masterpiece somewhere in the middle", he solemnly told an audience of candid freshmen, "you will surely find something crucial to discuss; with great probability, there is an element, a sentence, a concept, that can best enlighten the whole book". At the time I felt very clever, and thought that probably he did not have time to plan a proper lesson, so he was relying on his expertise in order to improvise a speech; I dismissed him as a botch, and went on with my studies.

Years later, when I asked Umberto Rossi to join me in organizing and editing a collection of essays on Thomas Pynchon's *V.*, we immediately agreed on virtually everything, except for the title of the book. We were looking for something that could sum up the multifaceted aspects of the novel, as well as the manifold theoretical, structural, and thematic approaches of the prospective essays. In the following months, both of us proposed several tentative titles, but we felt that somehow the core of the matter was still missing, just like the elusive V. of the novel. Then one night, when I was on the verge of "overthinking myself into brainfreeze" (*IV* 96), I remembered the weird predicament of that old professor (wherever he is now, I wish him good luck!). On the spur of the moment, I

opened my first edition of *V.* somewhere in the middle, and came up with what felt like the perfect title for the collection.

"Dream tonight of peacock tails, / Diamond fields and spouter whales. / Ills are many, blessings few, / But dreams tonight will shelter you" (*V* 254): this is the first stanza of a poem/nursery rhyme that appears in "Mondaugen's Story", the ninth and probably the most renowned chapter of *V.*, placed as it is in the very middle of the novel—the very same chapter that Luc Herman, in the *Cambridge Companion to Thomas Pynchon*, has declared to be "the novel's strongest testimony to the force of the historical imagination" (Herman 25). So representative is that chapter that in 2009 the Italian publishing house Rizzoli, fostering the arguable belief that "Mondaugen's Story" could stand alone perfectly well outside of its proper context, decided to publish it as a solo short story.

In the chapter, Stencil learns how Kurt Mondaugen, a young German radio engineer who had arrived in South-West Africa in 1922, at the time of Abraham Morris's upheaval against British rule, ended up staying for two and a half months in the house of Foppl, a veteran of the Herero wars who had become a wealthy landowner. While the revolt breaks out in the surrounding fields, the atmosphere inside the fortified house turns increasingly surreal and oneiric: "[I]f dreams are only waking sensation first stored and later operated on", the narrator argues about Mondaugen's state of mind, "then the dreams of a voyeur can never be his own" (*V* 255).

Dreams and hallucinations figure prominently in the chapter, and certainly they shelter neither the characters nor the reader. The text presents a sustained ontological uncertainty among reality, memory, and dream, so that one struggles to establish whether the events experienced by or told to Mondaugen are reliable historical reconstructions, memories of some other character, drug-induced illusions, fictional inventions, reveries caused by the disease (at some time Mondaugen gets scurvy), or individual projections.

The construction of such a dreamscape is only one of the many strategies employed by Pynchon to represent the subjective, idiosyncratic, coercive, and not always completely conscious mechanisms of historiography. As Shawn Smith put it in 2005:

> Mondaugen's voyeuristic dreams are also Stencil's dreams of V., which are not his own because they exist to explain and interpret history. Mondaugen's point of view is also Stencil's because, as the omniscient narrator informs us at the end of the previous chapter, Mondaugen "yarned" the story of "his youthful days in South-West Africa" for Stencil's benefit [...]. The Mondaugen who figures in this chapter, in other words, is Stencil's surrogate and his literary creation, because Stencil

> narrates the chapter through Mondaugen's third-person limited perspective. (Smith 33, 34)

In this multilayered palimpsest it is almost impossible to locate a stable narrator, so that one of the novel's prominent features, as Tony Tanner aptly stated in 1982, is "a permanent instability in the relationship between the interpreting mind and the varying fields of signification that it must negotiate" (Tanner 41). From this point of view, "Mondaugen's Story" really stands for the whole novel.

In a 1969 letter to Thomas F. Hirsch (quoted by David Seed in *The Fictional Labyrinths of Thomas Pynchon*) on his own use of South-West African materials in the ninth chapter of *V.*, Pynchon revealed that he came across *The Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts* "in a kind of haphazard fashion", because he was "actually looking for a report on Malta and happened to find the Bondelzwarts one right next to it in the same, what the NY Public Library calls, 'pamphlet volume'" (Seed 240). Pynchon went on to state that since then he had been fatally "hooked on it" and that "for some reason [he couldn't] leave it alone" (Seed 240); he was reluctant not to use the additional material he found "long after" he had written *V.*, and declared that "hopefully this will all show up, before long, in another novel" (Seed 242). In this light, "Mondaugen's Story" is twice as important, since it came to Pynchon in a serendipitous way, and it ended up representing a sort of prequel to *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), whose main theme is the German rocket V-2, a redoubling of the "first" *V.*; some of its characters—Mondaugen, Foppl, and especially Weissmann—would surface again (personally or by name) in *Gravity's Rainbow*, where the history and culture of the Herero would play a crucial role.

Dream Tonight of Peacock Tails is also one of the many ideas Pynchon half-seriously submitted to his editor at Lippincott, Corlies ("Cork") Smith, for the title of his novel. Other proposals included a Chandlerian title such as *Blood's a Rover* (in turn a verse from A. E. Housman's 1896 poem "Reveille", and then chosen by James Ellroy as a title for his 2009 crime fiction novel), a Fitzgeraldian one such as *Down Paradise Street*, one with obvious Poesque echoes, *Of a Fond Ghoul*, and one reminiscent of Faulkner, *Footsteps of the Gone*. These titles somehow reveal Pynchon's own "anxiety of influence", as well as his conscious ambition to take part in the American literary canon. Pynchon himself confessed that one day in 1959 he attended a party at Cornell dressed as F. Scott Fitzgerald—specifying that it was "not a masquerade party" and that he "had been through a phase of enthusiasm" for him (*IF* x); in 1964 *V.* earned him the William Faulkner Foundation Award for notable first

novels. Even if such modernist icons, as David Cowart wrote, "may have supplied only postures to imitate with varying degrees of irony" (Cowart 191), nonetheless they were important and encumbering presences for Pynchon, hardly to be dismissed by an ambitious debuting novelist.

Along with such "literary" titles, Pynchon proposed obvious failures (probably his own idea of pranks), such as *The Republican Party Is a Machine*, or *And His Ass Falls Off*—this last one deriving from a story heard by Profane in the first chapter of the novel, about a boy desperately trying to get rid of the golden screw he has as a navel; one day he finds out in a dream the way to unscrew it, and when he wakes the screw is gone; but then, "delirious with joy, he leaps out of bed, and his ass falls off" (*V* 40).

In turn, Cork Smith suggested more descriptive, though banal, titles: *The Yo-Yo World of Benny Profane*, *The Quest of Herbert Stencil*, and a long time favorite, *World on a String* (probably inspired by a 1932 popular song composed by Harold Alden and then recorded also by Frank Sinatra in 1953) that Pynchon nonetheless strongly disliked; finally, both author and editor settled for the simplest and probably best solution, choosing the by now famous letter followed by a period, that, as Tanner wrote, is "an initial, a sign, a shape which might be seen anywhere" (Tanner 44), an overturned Scarlet Letter without a precise connotation, a White Whale impossible to pinpoint, an undifferentiated clue that though pointing in several—infinite?—directions ends up leading nowhere.

The manifold ideas evoked by the poem, with the accent on the protective but also creative power of dreams, as well as the suggestive image of the multicolored tails/tales of the peacock that combine beauty and violence (in Greek mythology, Hera placed Argus's eyes in the tail of a peacock as a constant reminder of his foul murder); the Melvillean reference to spouter whales and the exotic splendour of the diamond fields, that also recall sad scenes of slavery and violence; the horde of monsters menacing the dreamer—vampires, banshees, ghouls, skeletons, ogres, trolls, loups-garous (or werewolves), wraiths, harpies, goblins, along with the invincible Angel of death; all these elements creatively mix symbolism and masquerade, terror and magic, opposing a dreamlike, imaginative dimension to the gloomy historical world depicted in the novel.

The cruelty described or hinted at in the historical chapters, the grotesqueness of the most surreal contemporary scenes, the various locations—real and imagined—in which the plethora of characters move and act, all find an objective correlative in *Dream Tonight of Peacock Tails*. After all, when we last see Stencil in the novel he is running in pursuit of the umpteenth tenuous clue to V., one Mme Viola in Stockholm,

"oneiromancer and hypnotist" (*V* 451). Maybe the only place where he can find the riddle's final solution is in a dream.

Since the publication of *V.* in 1963, Thomas Pynchon has received an unparalleled amount of critical attention: more than forty monographs, hundreds of articles and book chapters, a dozen websites, and even a dedicated wiki where any reader can contribute his/her own notes for each of his novels, not to mention a growing Facebook "secret" group, aptly called W.A.S.T.E. In fact, Pynchon's works are not a matter for academic scholars exclusively; in the recent decades, rumors of the reclusive author's "sightings" have stirred the community of fans and *aficionados* in unpredicted ways. Suffice it to mention here only the "Pynchon in Public Day", an event organized for the first time by Martin Eve and 'John Dee' on May 8, 2011, on the occasion of Pynchon's 74th birthday, which has become an annual "culture jamming festival" for fans all around the world; Pynchon enthusiasts can post to the blog of the event pictures of themselves with their faces covered by a Pynchon book, going about their neighborhoods "carrying extremely heavy books, drawing horns on public property and discussing topics that could potentially include German rocketry, entropy and all manners of paranoia" (Nazaryan) as a journalist from *The New York Daily News* put it.

If this were not enough, the announcement of a forthcoming Pynchon novel is a cultural event to be endlessly debated in blogs, videos, newsletters, social networks, and websites months and sometimes years before the actual publication, as happened with *Bleeding Edge*, published in September 2013 but talked about at least one year before. Nonetheless, apart from J. Kerry Grant's *A Companion to* V. (2001, more a series of annotations for students' use than a critical study), until now no monograph or collection of essays entirely dedicated to *V.* has been published.

At the 2013 International Pynchon Week held in Durham, UK, Umberto Rossi and I presented a panel whose title, "*V*-Locations", was meant as a not too clever wordplay on *Against the Day*'s third section, "Bilocations"; we asked for contributions dealing in creative and original ways with the diverse places, cities, and "settings" depicted in the novel, and the result was a thorough exploration of *V.*'s inner architectures, a partial cartography of the novel's spatial coordinates. Then, in September 2013, at the 22nd AISNA Conference in Trieste, Italy, we organized a panel focused on "Rereading *V.* Fifty Years Later", where scholars of different cultural backgrounds and methodologies were invited to reassess the novel's place in the American literary canon by rereading it in the light

of the most recent European and American political, economic, and historical events. Predictably enough, the discussions revealed that Pynchon's reflections regarding emancipation, freedom, and culture actually foreshadow some of the most topical issues and anxieties of the new millennium.

In planning and putting together the present book, we deliberately privileged a multidisciplinary and transnational approach, looking for collaborations from as international and diverse an academic context as possible. Taking a cue from the fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of *V.*, we asked scholars from Europe and the U.S.A. to contribute essays in the two major areas just mentioned—a diachronic, historical axis, and a synchronic, spatial plane—but at the same time leaving each scholar free to work his/her own ideas through his/her own preferred theoretical and methodological approach.

Unlike the earliest commentators on Pynchon's oeuvre, who had only three novels and a handful of short stories to ponder over, we can now see with the benefit of hindsight a much larger picture of what the young author of *V.* was able to achieve. So much so that maybe it is even too easy to note how Pynchon's first novel contained *in nuce* the traits of his subsequent twofold output. Since the first publication of *V.*, critics have noted and commented on the novel's peculiar intertwined double structure. In 1988 David Seed published a two-column chronology, listing on the left the events taking place in the novel's present (from December 24, 1955 to October 1956), and recording on the right the historical sections that spread without any chronological order from 1898 to 1943. "The metafictional question that Pynchon poses, but refuses to answer", wrote Shawn Smith, "is exactly how these two time schemes and points of view fit together" (Smith 20).

Maybe these two time schemes, the contemporary frame and the historical episodes, might fit together if we see the "historical" chapters of *V.* as foreshadowing the three major and large historical works (*Gravity's Rainbow*, *Mason & Dixon*, and *Against the Day*), while the New-York-to-Malta frame with Benny Profane and Stencil Jr. prefigures the so called Californian trilogy (*The Crying of Lot 49*, *Vineland*, and *Inherent Vice*)—with the latest, *Bleeding Edge* (which is a New York novel set in the twenty-first century and dealing with crucial historical and political issues) somehow bridging the gap once again.

All in all, we might take the V of the title as hinting at the two divergent, but not too different directions of Pynchon's writing: the great, encyclopedic, proliferating exploration of a (more or less) remote past, and the more intimate memories, between fact and fiction, of a recent past—

roughly 1958 to 2001 (the years of Pynchon's own adult life). Maybe we are just victims of the notorious textual trapdoors of a most complex author, but by now we cannot fail to see that celebrated letter (also thanks to how it was employed by another artist who was indeed inspired by *V.*, Alan Moore) as a veritable emblem of Pynchon's virtual realities, considered as a multidimensional and multitemporal hypertext.

We think the contributions collected in this volume tell us something about Pynchon's way of working, as well as about our own ways of reading and interpreting his novel. Luc Herman and John M. Krafft's keen analysis of the "Millennium" chapter, contained in the manuscript of *V.* but not included in the published version of the novel, offers an enlightening glimpse of the writer's workshop, something even more precious given Pynchon's well-known reticence. The story Benny Profane tells his friend Fina Mendoza—a story featuring, among other things, two toy monkeys, an equivocal brewery, an insane asylum founded by "a gentle Romanian anarchist, circa 1850", an ominous yellow cloud, and a toothless woman who may or may not be a witch—is Pynchon the folk comedian at his best, and it shows the rapidly maturing writer struggling to achieve a balance between farce and tragedy.

Tore Rye Andersen's brilliant study of the paratexts of *V.* exposes a hard-to-dismiss misunderstanding that has gone on since the first publication of the novel; through a painstaking analysis of the covers and the dust jackets of the first American and English editions of *V.*, as well as some of the jackets of the later editions, Andersen shows that book descriptions can have "a significant impact on the early reception of a novel, establishing a number of conversation points that are duly taken up by reviewers".

Mario Faraone shakes the dust off his old copy of Baedeker's 1898 *Egypt: Handbook for Travellers* in order to reflect on the "mixture of scholarly precise description and romantic visualization of the sights" contained in the travel guide and on Pynchon's brilliant imitation of that style, which accounts for "a powerful way to evoke the golden age of the Grand Tour, and for a narrative strategy to build the necessary atmosphere in which the characters will like their experience". As Shawn Smith aptly argued, "the tourist experiences a perceptual disjunction. On the one hand she accepts the illusion of objective detachment Baedeker writes into his system. On the other hand, however, she is indeed in the thick of events, whether she acknowledges it or not" (Smith 28). Moving from Anthony Trollope's short stories to Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, from Victorian travelers to professional spies, Faraone's essay explores this and other significant issues related to the *fin de siècle* setting of *V.*

The "historical" section of the book ends with Stipe Grgas's momentous rereading of *V.* in the shadow of the European recession developed from the American economic crisis of 2007-2008; according to Grgas, Pynchon writes against the "sanitized narrative" of the Tranquillized Fifties, creating a world in which "the ballast of the past weighs heavily on the narrative present". From his analysis of *V.*, Pynchon appears to be a writer of the Depression, who "anticipated today's 'precariatisation' of labor", and whose characters are entangled in a world of "fleeting commodity" without any possibility of deliverance; "[t]he incidence of the animate-inanimate dichotomy, the Gothic (magic) nature of V. and, finally, the negative identification of the object of the search, all provide evidence for placing Pynchon's novel within this theoretical framework".

Starting from George Levine's idea that "[t]o 'make sense' of the narrative we must exclude most of the evidence" and "become tourists, like the characters whose fate most absorbs us" (Levine 122), in the second section of the book we travel through the various locations of the novel, starting from the rather Pynchonian Florence depicted in *V.*'s seventh chapter. Umberto Rossi clarifies some of the "meaningful mistakes" in Pynchon's nevertheless proficient Italian spelling, proposing that they "may work as remarkably effective—and highly meaningful—interlinguistic puns", if not as allusions to the Italian "complex knot of historical, political, architectural issues" that function as a synecdoche for the structure of the whole novel. Rossi originally shows how the fundamental opposition in Machiavelli's *The Prince* between *virtù* and *fortuna* reflects that of paranoia and anti-paranoia Pynchon proposes in *Gravity's Rainbow*, and that is crucial "for an understanding of history in Pynchon's fiction".

The image of Paris as the romantic capital of love is challenged by the title of Clément Lévy's evocative tour; moving from a geocritical standpoint, it helps us discover a very different city from the one depicted by American expatriates such as Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Miller—a "mysterious space" that remains in the background and has little to do with Pynchon's peculiar "Baedeker land". Lévy identifies some of the historical places mentioned by the author, showing nonetheless how in *V.*'s fourteenth chapter the French capital merges with other cities Pynchon evoked earlier in the novel, creating "a personal Parisian space" that, though lacking "an action-filled plot", is "above all based on the sentimental relation between V. and Mélanie"—not necessarily a loving one.

Jennifer Backman takes upon herself the role of Virgil and leads us pilgrims through "*V.*'s various underworlds"; by reading the novel "as an Orphic text" and examining Pynchon's "subterranean spaces" that "both draw on classical myth and comment on contemporary culture", Backman suggests that "instead of one, cohesive Orpheus figure that descends into the underworld, *V.* features a fragmented Orpheus, composed of multiple characters". Such a multiplicity prefigures the mythological poet's final dismemberment by the frenzied Maenads, but it ultimately reminds us of "a set of issues and images" recurrent in Pynchon's poetic. Pynchon's Orpheus resembles Ihab Hassan's "Vanishing Orpheus", who "leaves behind a lyre without strings", an instrument that "the moderns inherit" and that can produce only a "song of silence", which "responds to an ancient sentence with intimations of transcendence, upward or downward" (Hassan 6).

Finally, my essay deals with a spatial analysis of Malta as the "prime location" of the novel, a privileged site in which the empty core of the novel is brought to the fore. Taking my cue from Pynchon's casual mention of irony as a motive for putting his chapter set in 1919 Malta at the end of the novel and calling it "Epilogue", I suggest that Pynchon wanted to deconstruct not only the function of myth as a meaning-giver structure—something that Modernist works such as T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and James Joyce's *Ulysses* had already attempted—but also the cinematic imagination that has replaced myth in the twentieth century.

Mario Faraone has made every effort to provide the most complete and up-to-date bibliography of *V.*-related critical material; he compiled it by means of a thoroughly advanced consultation of the British Library and of the National Congress Library OPACs, and accessing a number of digital and paper resources, databases and online catalogues, including ABELL, Academic Search Complete, Arts and Humanities Citation Index, EBSCO, JSTOR, LION, MLA, PROJECT MUSE, ProQuest Central, and YWES. A specific section about *V.*'s translations in foreign languages has been added. The bibliography includes also *V.*-related essays, proceedings, and garlands.

Umberto and I hope that the essays included in this collection will help focus attention again on *V.*, a too often underestimated masterpiece that, probably even more than *Gravity's Rainbow*, established Pynchon as one of the great masters of American literature—comparable in terms of importance and impact on the literary world to such giants as Herman Melville and William Faulkner. By exploring the novel's apparently chaotic but meticulously organized structure, by outlining how Pynchon developed *V.*'s seminal features in the remainder of his career, and by

rereading his first novel in the light of recent U.S. and European history and economics, we hope to afford Pynchon scholars as well as enthusiastic fans new and original insights into a quest that, to quote Tanner again, "may be analogous to—identical with—an attempt to trace out the aetiology of twentieth-century [and we would add twenty-first century] history" (Tanner 47).

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PART ONE

RE-*V*ISIONS

CHAPTER ONE

MONKEY BUSINESS: THE CHAPTER "MILLENNIUM" REMOVED FROM AN EARLY VERSION OF *V.*

LUC HERMAN AND JOHN M. KRAFFT

In the spring of 1962, Pynchon rewrote *V.*, which he had first submitted to his editor at Lippincott, Corlies (Cork) Smith, the preceding summer. Their correspondence suggests that Pynchon had been waiting for substantial comments from Smith before launching his own planned revision. The clean typescript delivered to Smith in the summer of 1961 is not known to be extant, but the typescript draft on which it was probably based was eventually acquired by the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center (Austin, Texas), where this early version of *V.* has been available for study since 2001. Elsewhere, in an overview essay, we have described how fast Pynchon honed his fiction-writing skills, turning an oversized and sometimes clunky first version into a consummate novel (Herman and Krafft 2007). In the present essay, we focus on typescript chapter 10, titled "Millennium," which was almost entirely removed from the published text even though it contains another avatar of the elusive V.-figure(s) at the center of the novel, both reinforcing and problematizing some of the connections between past and present which that figure thematizes.

The 685-page typescript consists of thirty chapters. Chapter 10 takes up pages 151 through 171. Pages 151, 154 and 155 are original Dittoes in blue (Herman and Krafft 2007, 2). Page 151 has a smaller font than the rest of the chapter, and its text does not fill the entire page. The smaller font size combined with the blue Ditto color is unusual, but it does appear elsewhere in the typescript, for instance, on page 1. The remaining pages of the chapter are most probably photocopies of Dittoes (Herman and Krafft 2007, 2). As in many other chapters, all pages of chapter 10 have small corrections in pencil. Thus "Rocco" (followed by a comma) is added as the very first word of the chapter, before "Profane and a stuffed monkey with one arm torn off" (*TS* 151). Pages 154 and 155 have "-6-" and "-7-,"

respectively, at the top, but these page numbers have been struck out. Such differences between pages 151, 154, 155 and the rest of the chapter indicate that Pynchon used parts of earlier versions of the chapter when composing the typescript draft we have, and provide ample evidence that the Ransom typescript of *V.*, while nearly identical in content, is not the document Pynchon sent to Smith from Seattle in the summer of 1961 but a copy of the working draft of that text (Herman and Krafft 2007, 2-3).

As contextualized by the preceding pages of the typescript, "Millennium" consists largely of a story co-protagonist Benny Profane tells his wannabe girlfriend Fina Mendoza. "Seesawing" in the rain with Profane in New York's Riverside Park at the end of typescript chapter 9, she asks him about his past: "What was it like on the road" (*TS* 149). No Sal Paradise despite Pynchon's professed admiration for *On the Road* (*SL* 6-7), Profane answers with a story about road labor. According to Jules Siegel, Pynchon himself did some roadwork in the summer during his years at Cornell (his father "was commissioner of roads for the town of Oyster Bay, Long Island" [Siegel 122]). That experience may have prepared Pynchon to address this topic. Profane, for his part, doesn't "remember much of it," but he does venture a tale about "one day [that] stood out clear" (*TS* 150). He admits to himself that "[m]aybe the things that made it up hadn't all happened on the same day, maybe he had taken things that happened and words from other days" to "ma[k]e it a better story" (*TS* 150). He "suspect[s]" this is how "sewer stories [came] into being" (*TS* 150; cf. *V* 120), and he knows it is "how he sometimes made up myths to tell to girls" (*TS* 150; cf. *V* 142). Although he is not sexually interested in Fina, he tells her his "street story" "to keep in practice" (*TS* 150).

Large parts of typescript chapters 9, 11 and 12 were combined into the published novel's chapter 6, "In which Profane returns to street level," which readily explains why the small portions of typescript chapter 10 that Pynchon kept also ended up in chapter 6 of *V.* At the end of "Millennium," the story returns to the situation in Riverside Park: "Rain was coming down very hard now, and still they seesawed, all soggy" (*TS* 168). Then, on the way home, Fina talks about the Playboys, a street gang we have seen in action in typescript chapter 9 and for which she serves as a kind of Joan of Arc (*TS* 136 / *V* 136). The final page of the published novel's chapter 6 part I also deals with Fina and these young men. It integrates snippets from the typescript, such as "[Profane] was sure that any love between her and the gang was Christian, unworldly and proper" (*TS* 168; cf. *V* 145), and the entire bathroom scene on typescript pages 170-171, in which Fina asks Profane to deflower her. He refuses (although only two

pages earlier in the published novel he was about to have sex with Lucille, another young woman who offered herself to him, on a pool table, when a "rumble" intervened [*V* 143-144]). The typescript's "Millennium" chapter concludes with a rather juvenile passage that was also removed from the novel:

> [Profane] fell asleep thinking about it: what is it that attracts them. It was a Mystery of Sex, he decided. He ticked off on the convolutions of his brain all the girls in his life. There were not many—convolutions or girls. He stopped when he reached Rachel Owlglass.
> In the mountains: Summer, '54. (*TS* 171)

Those last two sentences of typescript chapter 10 provide a bridge to typescript chapter 11, "In which Rachel appears as a young centaur," which became the third section of the published novel's first chapter.

If it had been up to Cork Smith, "Millennium" would have remained in the published version of *V.* In his 22 March 1962 response to Pynchon's elaborate plan of revision dated 13 March, Smith is "sorry to see [the chapter] go." While he "grant[s] that it is not essential to the development of the book," he sees its "real function" as introducing "a character named Veronica," "obviously" implying "some connection with V."—a connection "it is fun to play around with." As it happens, there is no Veronica in the chapter, but there is a young girl's stuffed monkey named Valerie. On 24 March, Pynchon acknowledges a connection but does not change his mind:

> It had been my fuzzy and half-assed intention to hint in the Millennium chapter that V. had indeed progressed so far into the inanimate as to have become in 1955 (or whenever it was) a toy ape. However since Stencil never finds out about Profane's adventure with this ape, the point is not worth a whole chapter to make. Out it goes.

One could still argue that, even if Stencil does not find out, the reader might understand the culmination of V.'s development just a little bit better with "Millennium" (or at least the 1955 toy monkey) kept in. In chapter 11 of the published novel, Fausto Maijstral recounts events on Malta during the Second World War, including the disassembly of the Bad Priest, an impostor who is discovered to sport artificial feet, a glass eye, and a star sapphire in her navel. Pynchon may have decided to remove "Millennium," and with it a further stage in the progress of V., because he was keen on narrowing down the history of this female/inanimate alleged agent to a construction on the part of Stencil—the character's individual

and perhaps pathological enactment of the historical sublime, "a weak hope and desire that history, the space of ontological order, exists somewhere, but also the belief that human history will never reach it" (Elias 160). On the other hand, if we take Maijstral's testimony (as well as evidence in the Epilogue Pynchon himself says in his 24 March 1962 letter to Smith is *not* "'told' by Stencil") as independently confirming some details of Stencil's idiosyncratic historiographic construction, we may suppose Pynchon had decided to leave the status of that construction more richly ambiguous, not to trivialize it by means of a V-initialed toy monkey.

The ultimate presentation of this construction may still have been inspired by "Millennium." Profane starts telling the story about his roadwork at the very end of typescript chapter 9 ("'I remember,' he began, 'one day back in '55….'" [150; Pynchon's ellipsis]), but the story appears in chapter 10 as told by an unnamed third-person narrator in a voice unlike Profane's own. This calls to mind an important aspect of the novel's "Stencilized" (*V* 228) historical narratives that constitute the V. plotline, beginning with a chapter set in Egypt in 1898. They are told by Stencil, but in the third person, which Pynchon helps to naturalize in the published novel by having Stencil refer to himself in the third person outside of these narratives as well. In the entire typescript, however, Stencil still speaks of himself in the first person. Pynchon explains the adjustment in his 19 April 1962 cover letter about the almost complete new version of the novel: "The reason is simply to try and solve the technical problem of the historical material and who's narrating it. I know it's a poor trick and it doesn't succeed completely, but it's better than nothing." Maybe the switch between typescript chapters 9 and 10 from first- to third-person narration for Profane's story inspired Pynchon to apply that person switch to Stencil's stories, not least because it reinforced the historiographic relevance of Stencilization highlighted in the additional pages written to introduce the published version of the Egypt chapter, "In which Stencil, a quick-change artist, does eight impersonations," the first of the historical chapters in *V.* (see Herman 2005).

In these new pages, Pynchon's narrator refers to another source for the switch to third person, *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907, 1918), whose autobiographical protagonist always refers to himself in the third person. Stencil does not simply give up when facing the challenge of the "multiple" (Adams 424) of the twentieth century; he intuitively tries to come to terms with it by imaginatively multiplying himself. The result of this multiplication is the "repertoire of identities" (*V* 62) that provides the basis for the multiple focalization of the historical events in the Egypt chapter. In the introductory passage with the explicit reference to Adams,

Stencil himself is said to see his constant self-reference in the third person as turning him into one of the identities informing the historical representation. The switch from first to third person may not lead to historical Truth, but it nevertheless seems to constitute the beginning of an intelligent response to the challenge of the period. Only by thinking of himself in the third person and by turning this third person into *a* and not *the* focalizer can he apparently start making sense of twentieth-century history as it solicits his understanding (Herman 2005, 300).

"Millennium" has its historical aspects too, but it was obviously conceived as part of the contemporary plotline about The Whole Sick Crew set in New York in 1955-1956. (On typescript page 467, we learn that Profane has also told this "street story" to Slab, the self-styled "Catatonic Expressionist" [*TS* 64 / *V* 56] painter.) The chapter provides additional backstory for Profane and illustrates once more his morbid self-image as a schlemihl, albeit one who has occasional successes with women. At the beginning of "Millennium," Profane and his colleague Rocco are roaming the streets of Squogue, on Long Island, "in an old International dump truck" (*TS* 151). When they find a hole in the road, Profane gets out of the truck, "dragging" his one-armed stuffed "monkey in the dust" (*TS* 151). As Profane dreamily watches the release of "cold blacktop patch" onto the road, his boots are covered "ankle deep" (*TS* 152) with tar before he can react. His monkey is buried too, and "[t]hree little kids" (*TS* 152) shoot pingpong balls at him with their toy guns. How much more of a loser could he be? If the detail had been kept in the novel, the monkey buried in cold patch would have provided a nice counterpart to the frozen corpse of the spider monkey "staring up at [Hugh Godolphin] through the ice" (*V* 205) of the South Pole in his narrative about Vheissu, especially since this spider monkey appears to Godolphin as "a mockery of life, planted where everything but Hugh Godolphin was inanimate" (*V* 206). Profane's stuffed monkey is completely inanimate, but Profane "tenderly" retrieves it from the patch, addressing it as a "'schlemihl, too'" (*TS* 153), before finishing the repair work on the road. Still, there is a hint at its possible burial late in the story (*TS* 166, 167), when things have turned strange and Profane no longer seems to care for the toy. Until that point, however, his affection for the monkey is distinctly odd for a character who, in the novel as a whole, is otherwise wary of the inanimate and distressed by displays of a love for objects (cf. *V* 23-24). That is, like the episode's other motifs suggestive of children's literature or coming-of-age stories, this motif of the beloved companion is difficult to take at face value.

Since it is too early to return to the city garage, Rocco and Profane continue their routine inspection of the neighborhood, which affords Pynchon opportunities to indulge in the "ponderous Social Commentary" he so deplores in his 13 March 1962 letter to his editor when considering his own pastiche of a family sitcom in typescript chapter 12 (inadvertently referred to as chapter 27). The narrator describes "the development section of Squogue"—poorly constructed streets with names "bearing vaguely British connotations" (*TS* 153), streets with "a bleak and hostile look all year round" (*TS* 154), houses that are "unimaginative one story Cape Cod jobs" (*TS* 153)—with a degree of deprecation that mixes satire with youthful arrogance. The sound of "Squogue" evokes the real Quogue on eastern Long Island, but the details of the scene suggest instead a tacky lower-class community near the south shore in Pynchon's native Nassau County on western Long Island. Its description here does not seem focalized through the listless and somewhat simplistic Profane, who is an even more adolescent and self-absorbed character in the typescript than in the published novel; so if his story to Fina is somehow Stencilized, then the narrator's input is not quite in synch with that of the character, who is supposed to affect the third-person narration. The published novel is more haunting and sinister without such pedestrian narratorial comments—all the more reason to get rid of them in accordance with Pynchon's self-criticism to Smith regarding the sitcom in the typescript. However, a "British" allusion in the street name Northumberland Place in "Millennium" has survived in Pynchon's work. In the short story "The Secret Integration" (1964), Carl Barrington, the protagonists' imaginary playmate, lives in the otherwise sterile and "cheerless" (*SL* 158) development Northumberland Estates.

In "Millennium," more social observation follows. With Profane keeping an eye out "for jailbait," the road workers make their way to the "local warehouse for the Scheissvogel Brothers Brewery" (*TS* 154) on Stony Bridge Lane. "Scheissvogel," German for "shitbird," is not exactly an inviting name for beer. It also appears as the name of a German beer garden, "Scheissvogel's," frequented by the Gaucho and his band of Venezuelan anarchists in the historical chapter set in Florence. Typescript chapter 15 is an almost final version of the Florence chapter in the published novel (chapter 7, *V* 152-212), and already contains many occurrences of the German name. The name's presence in typescript chapter 10 may constitute another indication, along with the chronologically latest avatar of V., that Pynchon wanted to extend some elements of the historical chapters into the contemporary New York plotline. He may thus have wanted to suggest that the past as imagined

through Stencil's historiographic efforts has concrete effects on the contemporary society of the storyworld. However, the Scheissvogel Brewery itself in "Millennium" evokes less lofty insights into the real world, which may have given Pynchon reason enough to cut the episode when rewriting the novel for publication even if he had once had more complex intentions for it. In Profane's story, the brewery is involved with the local authorities and city workers in a "wonderful hustle" (*TS* 154):

> [Y]ou had to have a city license to open a bar in Squogue and to get a city license you had to make a private pact with the Mayor to serve Scheissvogel beer. In return the brewery supplied free beer for all functions held by the Sons of Italy, the Italian-American Citizens League, the Republican party and the city of Squogue (which allotted 50% of its budget yearly toward entertainment). (*TS* 154-155)

As a result, Stony Bridge Lane is constantly under repair. At the brewery, Rocco and Profane run into another city worker, a "wild Irishman named Leery," and "three card-holding members of the Teamsters Union" (*TS* 155). The latter four use forklifts to play "Grand Prix" (*TS* 155), and they all keep helping themselves to more beer, until they need to sober up for their return to the city garage. It is tempting to suppose that such satire of city workers (getting drunk, making mischief, wasting time) and city-government corruption must owe something to Pynchon's personal experience as a summer employee, and to his personal knowledge as the son of a local-government official and prominent Republican whose career would in fact be touched by scandal in 1963 ("L.I. Aide").

Meanwhile, Pynchon uses the passing story-time to describe the area behind the brewery, which includes a housing development, Bolingbroke Estates (another British allusion), and "the local booby hatch: Millennium State Hospital" (*TS* 156). Bolingbroke is also the name of the guard at the Long Island garbage dump in Pynchon's short story "Low-Lands" (1960). We don't know which text, chapter or short story, was written first. (Pynchon may have composed a whole cycle of Profane stories before conceiving *V.* and then initially incorporated some of the former into the latter.) Like Profane, Dennis Flange, the protagonist of "Low-Lands," has an acquaintance named Rocco. Surnamed Squarcione, he is a garbage collector and so may have the same municipal employer as his namesake in "Millennium." While the names Northumberland and Bolingbroke in "Millennium" falsely imply a certain quality of life, their combination may also point to Shakespeare. In *Richard II*, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, helps the king's cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, usurp the throne to become Henry IV. But in *I Henry IV*, Northumberland is part of

a group of ultimately unsuccessful rebels against King Henry. Pynchon's use of these names in "Millennium" may hint at what Charles Hollander has argued is Pynchon's career-long concern with dynastic rivalry and civil strife. The Shakespeare allusion could also be a roundabout way of setting up Profane's nondevelopment in this chapter against the coming of age of Shakespeare's Prince Hal, who is seen carousing with Falstaff throughout *I Henry IV* but then distances himself from the latter in *II Henry IV*.

With a sneer at the suburban Levittowns that became so popular in the 1950s, the chapter's critical narrator suggests a preference for Bolingbroke Estates: "It was not a housing development in the sense of the usual artificial or ready-made environment (in which you feel the inhabitants are more or less ready-made too). People bought lots and built on them" (*TS* 156). Maybe the individualism of the neighborhood is another remnant of the past. The insane asylum is called Millennium after "a utopian settlement founded by one Maiortheiu, a gentle Romanian anarchist, circa 1850" (*TS* 156). Social experiments like this were not uncommon in the United States before the Civil War, and one of them, called Modern Times, was actually founded (by the nonviolent anarchists Josiah Warren and Stephen Pearl Andrews) in what is now Brentwood, New York, in western Suffolk County on Long Island. Perhaps not coincidentally, as Squogue (more precisely, its environs) is the location of Millennium State Hospital, Brentwood is also the site of Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, formerly Pilgrim State Hospital, once the largest facility of its kind in the world, which opened in 1931 ("Pilgrim"). Modern Times lasted from 1851 to 1864, similarly to Pynchon's Millennium community, which "lasted 10 years" (*TS* 156). Pynchon's name for the utopian community, with its connotations of happiness, prosperity and ideal government, flaunts just as much optimism as does that of its possible model, a "citadel of enlightened selfishness" (Wunderlich 142). The narrator's description of the Millennium community also matches the outsider view of Modern Times: it was established "beneath an extensive stand of tall oaks which were probably conducive to meditation, social vision, and uncomplicated anarchist love" (*TS* 156). While the residents of Modern Times did discuss politics and morality, it seems to have been the occasional nudist and a young man advocating polygamy who gave it a bad reputation for the practice of free love (Strickland). Pynchon's career-long interest in anarchism (Benton) already shows in this early passage, and here, as on many later occasions, he reports the sad disappearance of this form of utopianism. A fire ravaged the oak forest forty years after the entropic end of the experimental community. The description of that disaster combines