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Entropy and Apocalypse: The Trapped Protagonists in Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*

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Abstract

Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow (1973) is essentially a historical novel covering many important periods of human civilization expressing the apocalyptic vision of the novelist who employs the postmodernist literary devices to dramatize the mood of decadence and despair. The plot of the novel is set amidst the ruins of the Second World War encompassing a period between the age of European expansion in the 16th century to the emergence of the Cold War. The novel is the most widely celebrated unread novel of American literature and strikes as a piece of folklore. Pynchon's versatile genius manifests in his manifestation of a wide range of subject matter and the application of postmodern literary techniques of presentation, fragmentation, paranoia, and interpretation. The novel is based on many parallels, oppositions and double structures in the content, characterization, and themes. In Gravity's Rainbow, Pynchon enjoys involving his characters in a cosmos in which no absolute truth and no singular concept can survive in the postmodern American society.

Keywords: apocalyptic; decadence; despair; paranoia; fragmentation

In contrast to T S Eliot's *The Wasteland* who can "connect/nothing with nothing" (Eliot47), the multifarious characters of *Gravity's Rainbow* seek to connect everything with everything in a "progressive *knotting into*" (Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow* 3). Although Thomas



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Pynchon incorporates apocalyptic narratives in his highly complex novel *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), no apocalyptic events materialize in that novel. Each apocalyptic narrative is set and then subverted or effaced through the promotion of a counter transcendence which is mainly textual in nature. The critics observe that Pynchon followed the model of *Moby Dick* of Melville. Pynchon borrowed so many image, themes and nuances from Melville to mirror the malaise of the postmodern America. It is stated that Pynchon establishes the German V2 rocket as a direct symbolic analogue of Melville's whale. He uses whiteness and light imagery to depict the profound dark themes and characters. Pynchon also uses technical and scientific jargon to express metaphysical insights. Pynchon gives a flood of images and metaphors to depict the traumatic experiences of his characters in an encyclopedic style. Pynchon captures the zeitgeist of the post-World War 11 and the cultural tapestry of the mercantile American society. Pynchon's *Gravity Rainbow* advertises the classic "doom of the World" on the pattern of Spengler's *The Decline of the West* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Pynchon has chronicled the paranoid atmosphere of the Second World War and the Cold War introducing multiplicity of characters leading a hellish life being threatened by the tension of the doomed days. The plot is packed with the symbols of apocalypse such as falling rockets, warring nations and the terror of the anarchy is imminent for the final annihilation of the world. The most menacing situation is the shadows of the falling rockets as Pynchon envisages the imminent doom of the world. The apocalypse becomes a suspended moment of textual indeterminacy. The novel's penultimate



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moment of utter nuclear annihilation strangely ends un-apocalyptically into bouncing-ball singsong. Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973) is a highly apocalyptic narrative; its eschatological vision eludes definition.

Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* is too subversive to admit the materiality of such an event that supersedes human mentality. The apocalypse loses its materiality as both a historical event and a textual moment in Pynchon's narrative not because any postmodern subversive strategy or a skeptical or periodic logic. *Gravity's Rainbow* has its apocalyptic moments but is textually effaced through the promotion of a counter discourse of transcendence. Apocalypse, in Pynchon's text, is subverted but never replaced by agnosticism as an alluring alternative for knowledge. Knowledge takes the form of technology in human world. The destructive nature of this technological knowledge is epitomized in the novel by rockets. Hence the plot of the novel evokes doomed atmosphere of war and paranoia. The rocket is the icon of the novel itself. Rockets hover over the entire action of *Gravity's Rainbow*, both literally and metaphorically, as the human means of death and the apocalypse. Highly destructive V-2 rockets keep striking London throughout the novel, establishing a dense atmosphere of the apocalypse. The rocket is not only the ultimate product of the technological progress in the twentieth century but figures as an emblem of the age's apocalyptic mind. It endorses the two contrary phenomena that shape the human condition: apocalyptic determinism and transcendence. Its ascension represents the human desire for transcendence which is betrayed by Newtonian gravity. The determinism of



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gravity is bound by apocalyptic fall. Thus, in order to universalize this implication of the rocket into belief and ritualism Pynchon invokes Tarot symbolism and Cabbalist mysticism to mythsize, the 0000 rocket. Blicero, the human initiator of the apocalypse, has the tarot card of the Tower which Pynchon reads in Freudian terms as a phallic figure denoting Eros and life. Yet, due to its heavy Biblical history as a religious emblem it is also taken, according to Pynchon, " any System which cannot tolerate heresy: a system which, by its nature, must sooner or later fall. We know by now that it is also the Rocket" (762). Similarly, the Tower as Rocket figures in the Cabbalist system of mysticism as combining both the divinity of creation and the agency of human destruction. The path of the tower on the Cabbalist Tree of life is one of victory and sex. It is haunted by two evil demons or Qlippoth which are the Raven of Death and the Poison of God. Because the rocket conceals the Tree of Life whose ten paths or Sephiroth correspond to the rocket countdown, the critic Dwight Eddins (1984) finds the rocket as the "sacred guarantor of return is thus co-opted by technological mysticism" (179) as part of a one-way process designed to thwart the renewal of live, which Captain Belicero disparages as 'this cycle of infection and death" (738). This is precisely how the rocket works as an agent of the apocalypse. It entraps life within an eschatological cycle of eternal return to what the Zone-Hereros calls "holy centers." Pynchon reads the rocket as the ultimate avatar of the teleology of death in the system of Cabbalist mysticism. He says that new order of demons evolved, working their peculiar evil of the path of the tower, He expresses this in Cabbalist terms:



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The Ravens of Death have now tasted of the Poison of God . . . but in doses small enough not to sicken but to bring on, like the *Amanita muscaria*, a very peculiar state of mind. . . . They have no official name, but they are the Rocket's guardian demons. (762-3)

These demons represent, in Blakean terms, the ideologies and philosophic paradigms of the post-Enlightenment west that produced the rocket gospel of war and apocalypse. This association of the rocket with the System is based on their mutual apocalyptic implications. This is elucidated later in the Kekulé section. Kekule, the German chemist who discovered the structure of aromatic chemicals, dreamt of "the Great Serpent holding its own tail in its mouth, the dreaming Serpent which surrounds the World" (419). This is the rocket which is invoked as the Biblical Serpent to epitomize the death and destruction it is capable of bringing about in the human world. Pynchon, however, elaborates this dream into an extended allegory on the postmodern condition. Pynchon's allegory may be long but worth quoting in full here:

The Serpent that announces, "The World is a closed thing, cyclical, resonant, eternally-returning," is to be delivered into a system whose only aim is to violate the Cycle. (419).

Pynchon weds science with religious discourse to rationalize the apocalypse in modern terms. He borrows the term 'entropy' from thermodynamics to fashion the genesis of the apocalyptic ending of life cycle. Entropy is actually one of Pynchon's favorite metaphors for the human existence in the twentieth century. Entropy denotes a thermodynamic process which accounts, in Edward Mendelson's words, for "the slowing down of a system, the calcifying decay of life and available



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energy on a scale that may be minute or global." (in Harold Bloom, 12) If the Biblical inception of the human world is based on the evil and sin that the Serpent brought into the primordial innocence before the Fall, entropy, as a scientific term, accounts for the inevitable destruction of this fallen world and that this destruction is even latent in its very material foundations. Thus, by extending this principle of entropy one can logically deduce that "the universe itself must eventually suffer a —heat-death,|| reduced and simplified to a lukewarm system in which no energy may be used for any purpose" (in Bloom 13).

Such a reading of the system as fatally entropic can account for the rocket as system, as both follow entropic rules that ensure apocalyptic destruction. The serpentine rocket flies in an attempt to break the circle of the earth in what amount to a transcendence of the earthly limitations. Yet, its attempt is doomed to failure by the law of entropy. Once it consumes its energy it comes under the grip of gravity. Its fall ensures destruction in the human world. Pynchon, here, conveys a secular mode of apocalypse in spite of the rich Biblical reverberence in this passage. The critic Lee Quinby (1994) describes this mode of apocalypse as history —moving towards entropic inertia ... This is the dystopian view that history has exhausted itself. The irony is that we live on beyond morality or meaning. This kind of apocalypse is quite different from the Biblical or theological apocalypse in that it is utterly nihilistic and denies any possibility of human salvation by whatever power in the universe. The critic Lois Parkinson Zamora (1989) 52) further suggests that "this apocalyptic mode is used by Pynchon as a reaction



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against the —anthropomorphism of traditional apocalypsel in favor of the black mechanism of a purely physical world that is irreversibly running out of energy” (54). He employs the thermodynamics process of entropy which functions as a metaphor for envisioning this kind of apocalyptic mode. The absence of redemption from this entropic vision of the apocalypse nullifies any eschatological or stereological possibilities characteristic of the Biblical apocalypse. Time no longer proves redemptive or regenerative in this kind of apocalypse. This nihilistic attitude of the apocalypse in *Gravity's Rainbow* is concretized by employing it in the form of cautionary tales of technological hubris, notably, the rocket as an agency of nuclear apocalypse at the end of the novel. Because the rocket is itself a product of another system of beliefs, the rhetoric of apocalypse it comes to express is both an era-bound and a trans-historical system. Pynchon's framing of his apocalyptic vision with war narratives is meant to epitomize the cosmology of the apocalypse as wish fulfillment of the human will to death. However, Pynchon's World War II remains an historical fact but is completely devoid of its apocalyptic significance, at least, on the level of textual representation. His war never disrupts history radically in terms of ends and beginnings. It only leads to another Cold War and to the creation of the Zone, which is a psychic state of irreality that comes to exist in the war zone of Europe during 1944, represents an analogous location of mediation between past and future. Slothrop, Pynchon's sometime central character, reflects on the essence of the Zone as he walks through it as follows:



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Maybe for a little while all the fences are down, one road as good as another, the whole space of the Zone cleared, depolarized, and somewhere inside the waste of it a single set of coordinates from which to proceed, without elect, without preterite, without even nationality to fuck it up. (566)

The determinacy of the apocalypse is over in such an imaginary state. The only interplay allowed in such a state is that of temporality. The very historicity of the apocalypse is negated as the ultimate end of the all-dominant logos of temporality. The absence of the apocalypse as a force in the world of the Zone is best seen in the negation of the distinction between the Elects and the Preterites, those chosen for salvation and those doomed to damnation. Such a negation would undoubtedly undermine the very notions of eschatology and soteriology that make up the orthodox Judeo-Christian traditions of the apocalypse, where the eschaton means the end of times, judgment day which itself guarantees soteriology who is saved. This is but a manifestation of Pynchon's vision of life as perpetual transformation rather than a series of violent disruptions. He makes this clear when he uses for his epigraph of *Gravity's Rainbow* a quotation from the remarks of Wernher von Braun, the Nazi and NASA rocket engineer, before the July 1969 Apollo moon launch: " Nature does not know extinction; all it knows is transformation. Everything science has taught me, and continues to teach me, strengthens my belief in the continuity of spiritual existence after death." Most of *Gravity's Rainbow's* commentators mistakenly take this as a manifestation of Pynchon's Gnosticism- knowledge as the sole agency



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of human redemption. Steven Weisenburger (1988) in his authoritative *A Gravity's Rainbow Companion* is typical of this tendency: He asserts that "this epigraph is used to epitomize the "idea that science is another of the means humans use in the attempt to surmount 'extinction.'" (Weisenburger 15) He further goes to state that this scientific endeavor "will soon correspond with other disciplines represented in the novel" (Weisenburger 15). The point of weakness in such interpretations is that they stop at the word 'transformation' in the epigraph forcing Braun and Pynchon into straight-jacket Agnostic position. Reading this 'transformation' in the context of the whole epigraph, indeed of Braun's whole speech, will show that this transformation is not a process of salvation or preservation against annihilation. It is rather a process of transcendence whereby the man transcends the limitation of physical existence into the salvation of spiritual freedom. Transformation as transcendence is not mystical as it requires the agency of death as a threshold to the ultimate liberation from materialism and history. Extinction in the form of ending and apocalypse is inescapable as it conditions and directs historicity and human mentality. Material salvation through knowledge is impossible as such. It can only momentarily subvert the inevitable. A true salvation can only be attained through death transcendence. Pynchon seems to read death as a phenomenon of cultural metaphysics. Pynchon makes this clear in *Gravity's Rainbow* when he says:

The persistence, then, of structures favoring death. Death converted into more death. Perfecting its reign, just as the buried coal grows denser, and



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overlaid with more strata—epoch on top of epoch, city on top of ruined city. This is the sign of Death the impersonator. (169-70)

Defined by war and material production of historicity, Pynchon distances death as the Cartesian Wall of Western philosophy and history. Blicero, and Weissmann, one of Pynchon's most fiendish characters, describes the Western obsession with death as ultimate way to attain the salvation of the apocalypse as follows: "Europe had found the site for its Kingdom of Death, that special Death the West had invented"(736). The Kingdom of death and its Western site that Pynchon speaks of are but the Biblical tradition of the apocalypse that the mind of Christian Europe had succumbed to during these last two thousands of its history. Wars are waged and mass deaths are committed in the pursuit to establish the kingdom of God on earth via apocalypse. Western culture as such has come to be obsessed with the wish to death and power that such philosophers as Nietzsche diagnosed as the primal cause of the Western cultural nihilism. Furthermore, Blicero makes clear the apocalyptic overtone of his speech soon when he speaks to his cherubic lover Gottfried as he loads him into the ultimate weapon of the apocalypse, the 0000 rocket: —I want to break out – to leave this cycle of infection and death. I want to be taken in love: so taken that you and I, and death, and life, will be gathered, inseparable, into the radiance of what we would become. . . (737). Thanos prevails as Eros is banished to oblivion under the inescapable grip of the logos of death. This failure of the bond of love points to the degree Western culture is obsessed with death as a new start via apocalypse.



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This is the result of Calvinist indoctrination of death as the cultural index of Original Sin. However secular might Pynchon be these obsessions underlie the apocalyptic narratives in *Gravity's Rainbow*. Human reality is fallen. It is a vicious cycle of infection and death because of Man's original sin. The love that Blicero highlights as a salvation is not secular or spiritual. It is the love of God that is described as 'radiance' which means either the majesty of God or peace, spiritual peace. Plicero inscribes a process of transformation of being into the original state of light and peace before the original sin and the fall. This is a transcendence of the earthly into the divine and, according to Blicero, it can be achieved through bringing the Biblical apocalypse on earth. It is through this apocalyptic transcendence that Blicero can be re-united with his lover outside the boundaries of life and death in eternity. Blicero's firing of the rocket is but one example of the ritual murder that is committed in the name of religion for such an action, according to Dwight Eddins (1984) "symbolizes an artificial apocalypse, engineered to celebrate the religion of Gnostic artifice"(23). The human-engineered apocalypse is never redemptive and wish-bound as it remains historical and self-destructive. The death that Bilcero strives to transcend through the rocket is the ultimate end for the rocket is betrayed by gravity and becomes the agent of the death that it was employed to transcend.

Blicero uses violent disruption to realize his dream of apocalypse. The ideology underlying this dream might be perverted but its end is highly suggestive. He uses the 00001 rocket to target America. The invocation of America as the site of the apocalypse is very



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significant in the conceptualization of the apocalypse as a process of cultural metaphysics. Just prior to his sentimental speech on achieving transcendence with Gottfried, Blicero describes the imperial process that signifies the creation of the Kingdom of Death in Biblical and historical terms:

America was the edge of the World. A message for Europe, continent-sized, inescapable. [. . .] In Africa, Asia, Amerindia, Oceana, Europe came and established its order of Analysis and Death. (737)

Pynchon, here, delineates the corruption of the American dream through the contamination of the European will to power. America as the 'New Eden', as the early settlers had envisioned, "has become a garden of evil" (Northcott 15-6). It lost its utopian spirit of cultural innocence through the process of imperial self-fashioning after the historic-religious models of post-Enlightenment Europe. The equation of 'empire' with 'death' affects a cultural poetics of apocalyptic historicity. This death is conceptual rather than actual. It is apocalyptic as it is meant to fulfill eschatological ends. The Turkish scholar Akca Atac (2007) phrases this eloquently when he says that "at the heart of apocalyptic, there is empire – an empire which is entangled in Realpolitik but at the same time pertains to God's plan for mankind...the apocalyptic empire is to play a unique role on earth, influence world politics and finally offer the imperial seat to Christ when the time comes" (54). This is a peculiarly western tradition that started with the Roman Empire and descending through modern European imperial powers to the United States in the twentieth



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century. The centrality of the apocalyptic vision to the American imperial discourse is established by the early European settlers in America. Zamora (1989) advances this argument by suggesting that the earliest Puritan texts attest to constant attempts to unite apocalyptic theology and American history: The New World is directly associated with the culmination of history. (Zamora 9) Clearly the New World as the site of a re-created Eden offered the early puritan settlers the opportunity to enact the apocalyptic narrative attending the typology of the earthly Eden in the Bible. This Biblical ideal becomes America's manifest destiny. But with the corruption of this promised land with material ideals of the Old World America loses its ability to offer the fulfillment of renewal or redemption brings to the fore the question of when and where Armageddon would occur. Thus, failure engenders quest and expansion because if New "England failed to resolve into the Promised Land, some other place would be found, and the Puritan eschatological hopes would reconstitute themselves as America expanded across the continent" (Zamara 9) It is at this moment that the American colonial discourse became imperial in the European sense of the word. The Promised Land of the puritans became an empire, a 'Kingdom of Death, in Pynchon's words. The 'death colonies,' says Pynchon above, expanded into the 'kingdom of death,' because expansion and colonialism entail death and displacement of the colonized inferior races. Alternatively the concept of Manifest Destiny, which was coined in the 1840s to justify the American expansion Westward, is no longer heralding the redemptive eschatologies of a divine apocalypse. This is an ironic reversal in history as well as in literary



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representation highlighted by the absence of the divine redemption and coupled with a purely human agency of the awaited apocalypse *Gravity's Rainbow* advances a purely secular apocalypse through a purely human cataclysm, producing a dystopian vision of America which ultimately mocks the very concept of Manifest Destiny of the early Puritan settlers in the New World. *Gravity's Rainbow*, however, is not unique in this vision of the secular or ironic apocalypse. It merely reproduces the historical consciousness of the post WWII era. "Since the end of World War II," says cultural historian Daniel Wojcik (1997)" visions and beliefs about the end of the world appear to have become increasingly pessimistic, stressing cataclysmic disaster as much as previous millenarian visions emphasized the imminent arrival of a redemptive new era" (Wojcik 98).

To conclude, The transcendental, millennial vision of America as a redemptive paradise or the New Eden became more bleak and apocalyptic in nature in the second half of the twentieth century. The secular apocalypse hinges on the destructive capabilities of human beings. Such apocalyptic scenarios tend to describe unredemptive worldly cataclysm initiated by human ignorance, unchecked technological progress, or chance natural mega disasters. The sinister human potential for evil underlies all these causes. Secular apocalypse, therefore, tends to emphasize the human nihilism regardless of its causes or ends. One of the most widespread and most fatalistic secular apocalyptic scenarios imagined is the vision of the world destroyed by nuclear weapons. The inevitability of the nuclear apocalypse is, no wonder, the major shaping



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force of the fatality that colored the modern imagination. Louise Kawada (qtd. in Wojcik 98) notes in this respect that the —Images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Holocaust, Vietnam (rendered by filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola as *Apocalypse Now*) give unalterable contours to the landscape of contemporary memory. Apocalypse is no longer a dark shapeless terror, but a statistically documented event, complete with date, time, and place. Human knowledge rationalizes the horror of the apocalypse so as to undermine its teleology. The violation of the divine origins of the knowledge rationalizes the horror of the apocalypse so as to undermine its teleology. The violation of the divine origins of the apocalypse subverts it into arena of human history as an event solely shaped by human agency.

This subversion of the teleological into the historical in the Biblical apocalypse is actually one of the strategies that Pynchon employs to bring about an apocalyptic closure in his text. In an episode of the fourth part of *Gravity's Rainbow* subtitled —Streets, Slothrop finds a scrap of newspaper with the nonsensical headline "MB DRO / ROSHI" (*Gravity Rainbow*:707). The context of the passage makes it obvious that the whole headline must be —A BOMB DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA. The historical reference coincides with Slothrop's dark forebodings on looking at the destroyed buildings in an unspecified German city. He feels as if wondering through a destroyed city that has itself been the target of some such nuclear bomb: —Perhaps there is a new bomb that can destroy only the insides of structures. Here he speculates about what would later be described as the effect of the H Bomb. This moment is



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prophetic of the apocalyptic implicature of such a weapon for Pynchon's ironic narrator strangely muses why was he looking upward?" (706). The skeptical tone of this sudden remark is clear and loud. The heavenly plan of redemptive apocalypse is no longer valid in the face of this utter nihilism of the newly invented nuclear apocalypse. Alternatively, this gesture of questioning relocates the origins and intent of the apocalypse from the inevitability of a divinely foretold closure to the relativity of human agency. This means that the apocalypse, as Pynchon imagines it, is no longer a teleological terror for doomsday loses its unitary nature as the ultimate divine closure of human time. The Biblical Armageddon has become mere uncalculated side-effect of human technological progress. Hiroshima might be a distant event in the margins of *Gravity's Rainbow* but the 1973 Los Angeles is a textual space for the inevitability of the nuclear apocalypse. The 0000 Rocket that Blicero launches late in 1945 transcends time as well as geography to target this American city in an alternate present where the American president Richard Nixon is caricatured as Richard M. Zhlub, night manager of the Orpheus Theatre. Pynchon's choice of Los Angeles is significant. He did not choose Boston or New England the seat of the early settlers of America to symbolize the failure of their theological vision of the 'New Eden' and the promise of 'Manifest Destiny.' By choosing Los Angeles he achieves a double effect: First, he chooses Los Angeles because it is the cultural seat of present day America, a city where secularized America is at its best. It is really the negative end of the process of the transformation of the theological conception of the new Land into the mundane and the



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existential. Second, the invocation of the word 'angels' in the name of the city is highly evocative of both the debasement of the Puritan ideals for America and the rocket association with Biblical apocalypse. Los Angeles means "the angels" in Spanish, but the city's full name is "La Ciudad de la Reina de los Angeles" ("The City of the Queen of the Angels"). The Virgin Mary can also be referred to as the Queen of the Angels" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 7th ed.). The city has never been up to its name and it is really the icon of modern secular American mind. The departure with the ideals necessitates a completely different apocalypse. The frequent references to the falling rocket as the 'angel of death' indicates that the impending apocalypse is pseudo-theological in essence. Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* resists such a closure in favor of a more open and ambivalent ending. The rocket is suspended in its last delta-t over the roof of the Orpheus Theatre in Los Angeles while the bored audience is agitated to resume the night movie after a bulb burns out. It seems that Pynchon freezes the whole scene like in the movies as a personal wish to avoid the unavoidable at least textually. Critics of the literary apocalypse find this avoidance to represent the apocalypse, especially the nuclear one, an event common among novelists. They either stop short before it happens or inhabit a liminal space after the disaster. The hypothetical space of nuclear holocaust cannot be inhabited or envisioned by the literary imagination. Writers can only skirt the edge of such horrible disaster because they are quite helpless to comprehend or represent it. Nuclear apocalypse can only be approached by indirection because it challenges the very foundation of the human imagination (Gyugell 2)



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Unlike apocalyptic narratives, nuclear holocaust precludes the possibility of a narrative structure because annihilation alludes narrative closure. This should also account for the relative absence of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from such a vast compendium of contemporary apocalyptic narratives as *Gravity's Rainbow*. The disordered letters of the newspaper headline that Slothrop strike upon in the ruins of a German city testifies to the impossibility of textualizing the event. Slothrop is also caught in the whirlpool of complexity. Tony Tanner observes that the world of the novel is a fictitious world and the novel *Gravity's Rainbow* is packed with ambiguities. The plot unfolds the vastness of the fictive world chronicling metaphysics of Thomas Pynchon. The main question is whether order exists in the novel. There seems to be no ordering principle as the plot is structured around randomness. The reader doesn't move comfortably from some ideal "emptiness" of meaning to a satisfying fullness, but instead becomes involved in a process in which any perception can precipitate new confusion. An instinctive action in the novel is panic, and desperation and an endless fear of impending doom. The characters belong to a comic strip or a film cartoon. A group of mice in a laboratory maze, suddenly become cartoon mice with imitation Brooklyn accents (229). Two characters approaching the very heart of darkness in the novel are suddenly described as "sneaky-Peteing like two cats in a cartoon" (508), one of the characters uses "classic gangster head –move gestures" (530). Pynchon has applied paranoia to almost all of the major worldviews portrayed in the novel: scientific, mystical, religious and political. The main concern of Pynchon



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is to depict Gravity rainbow as a nihilistic novel refuting the order and system. The random nature of the universe is depicted by Pynchon as there is no structure in the novel.

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