

## Specialised Encyclopaedically Marked Items (SEMIs) on the Scale of Encyclopaedic Transposition (SET) based on the translation of *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon

Łukasz Barciński, University of Rzeszów

### Abstract

*The preservation of the encyclopaedic aspect in translation emerges as one of the most important challenges to the rendition of the works by the American postmodern writer, Thomas Pynchon. This article endeavours to analyse the specialised lexical items that constitute the dimension of encyclopaedic used in the tissue of a literary text as applied to a scale of their transposition to another language. For this purpose, it offers an attempt at the categorisation of the transposition of such items, based on previous elaborations, which, however, applied merely to cultural transposition, and did not take into consideration their encyclopaedic specificity. The scale of encyclopaedic transposition (SET) seems to make allowances for this specificity and to offer a customised scale for the analysis of possible shifts and refractions of specialist encyclopaedically marked items (SEMIs) in the translation process.*

**Keywords:** encyclopaedic; postmodernism; translation; transposition; Thomas Pynchon

### 1. Introduction

The literary creations by Thomas Pynchon, an American postmodern writer, have been described in a vast array of ways as his novels have been overloaded with details, facts, and items of information from various areas of human knowledge. For instance, Wood (2001) applied the concept of hysterical realism, Smith (2012) – the idea of ludic syncretism, Daw (2000) – “a Jeremiad, or an encyclopaedia of cultural minutiae,” and most importantly, Mendelson (1986) – the notion of encyclopaedic narrative, used specifically in relation to Pynchon’s *opus magnum*, i.e. *Gravity’s Rainbow*. Mendelson (1986: 29–36) makes a list of aspects of encyclopaedic (specialised areas of knowledge, variety of literary styles, polyglotism, philosophical reflections, inclusion of other forms of art into fiction, etc.), stating that *Gravity’s Rainbow* can be seen as “an encyclopaedic narrative”, an example of “the most important single genre in Western literature of the Renaissance and after” in the same category as Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*, or Joyce’s *Ulysses* (29). Mendelson’s insights applied to the analysis of Pynchon’s multifaceted works led to the identification of “the genre of encyclopaedic narrative both in formally intrinsic terms and in terms of extrinsic matters of reception and expectation” (1976: 1267). In Pynchon’s novel, the concept of encyclopaedic emerges as a distinctive narrative technique and thematic element. Pynchon’s use of encyclopaedic can be seen as a reflection of his exploration of the complexity, interconnectedness, and chaos of the modern world. The novel is known for its vast array of historical, scientific, cultural, and philosophical references, woven throughout the narrative. These references often require readers to have a diverse range of knowledge to fully appreciate the layers of meaning within the text. Pynchon’s encyclopaedic approach mirrors the encyclopaedic nature of the world itself, where information is constantly available and

interconnected but can also be overwhelming and challenging to navigate. Encyclopaedicity in *Gravity's Rainbow* also mirrors the novel's thematic exploration of the interplay between order and chaos, control, and randomness. The inclusion of such a wide variety of information contributes to the novel's intricate and labyrinthine structure, creating a sense of unpredictability and a reflection of the chaotic nature of the characters' experiences during World War II.

Subsequently, other scholars pursued Mendelson's interest in 'monstrous' novels from different angles in order to delineate the scope of this literary phenomenon: Karl's mega novels, (2001), LeClair's systems novels of excess (1989), and Moretti's world text (opera mondo) (1996). The enquiry seems to gain momentum as more synthetic approaches to the matter are introduced, e.g. Ercolino's *Maximalist Novel from Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow to Roberto Bolano's 2666* (2012) explores the intricacies of this literary creation, including its various paradigms. Ultimately, the concept of encyclopaedicity has become one of the most distinctive lenses applied to the novels by Thomas Pynchon. As a result, the preservation of the encyclopaedic aspect in translation emerges as one of the most important challenges to the rendition of Pynchon's works: If the precision of encyclopaedic references is lost, then, to put it bluntly, the original encyclopaedic novel simply stops being one in the target language text.

The question arises: How can we analyse this dimension in translation to adequately describe the possible shifts of meaning in a way that is tailored to the requirements of this genre? This article attempts to answer this question by analysing the specialist lexical items that constitute the dimension of encyclopaedicity used in the tissue of a literary text as applied to a scale of their transposition into another language.

## 2. SEMIs – specialist encyclopaedically marked items

The presence of lexical items which are marked by their affiliation to the sphere of specialisation within a discipline, a scientific area of study, or a field of knowledge brings a change within the literary work. The introduction of lexical items, higher in register than the usual level of language, de-automatises the perception of the reader, by introducing a hermetic term, which requires a level of initiation into a specific lore. In literary fiction, such items might, on the one hand, be seen as foreign bodies – insertions from the realm of the non-aesthetic or specialised, whose main, if not sole, purpose is to make a specific and precise reference to an existing phenomenon, whether physical or abstract. However, placed in the literary environment, such items can play a new-found role and be successfully utilised for the purpose of a work of art. This process could be defined as a certain form of linguistic cooptation, i.e. the utilisation of lexical items found in specialised lexicons to play a new role as aesthetic items, of the higher register, derived from a pool of knowledge, not readily available for 'regular' language users. Such items, in the new environment of *belle lettres*, evolve to function simultaneously as utilitarian and aesthetic – technically precise and at the same time aesthetically pleasing in its coopted form harnessed to perform in another habitat. The literary frame accentuates the aesthetic aspects of the form of such items, their figurative capacity. This alloy of technical adequacy and literary beauty, the 'techsthetics' of such items (their technical aesthetics), might gain a special significance when analysing novels which could be described as encyclopaedic.

Consequently, for the purpose of analysing the phenomenon of encyclopaedicity, it might be useful to introduce an adequate term that could describe the specificity of such lexical

items, i.e. *specialised encyclopaedically marked items* (SEMIs). These include lexical items on a plane higher than ordinary language, not part of the general vocabulary of a speaker of a particular language and belonging to a realm of knowledge associated with a certain effort involved in its acquisition. In other words, SEMIs include lexical items which could be found in specialised encyclopaedias, dictionaries, or other reference books to denote a specific phenomenon, abstract or physical, within a realm of organised knowledge.

### 3. SET – the scale of encyclopaedic transposition

In consideration of the above, the present article endeavours to offer an adequate tool to analyse the transfer of encyclopaedicity (understood as the rendition of SEMIs) by applying previous achievements of translation theory in a customised and extended manner to suit the requirements of a specific lexical item. Previous achievements within the area of translation studies did not seem to focus explicitly on the very phenomenon of encyclopaedicity within literary works but rather on the transfer of culture, understood as the rendition of culturally bound items. The attempts to cover the entirety of translation solutions for cultural items on a scale have been undertaken by, for instance, Newmark – the extremes of semantic and communicative translation (1991), Hervey and Higgins – exoticism vs. cultural transplantation (1992), Aixelá – conservative vs. substitutive strategies (1996) or Hatim and Mason – minimal mediation vs. maximal mediation (1997). As a result, for an adequate translation analysis of SEMIs, as defined above, it might be useful to offer an attempt at the categorisation of their rendition, based on previous elaborations, in the form of the scale of encyclopaedic transposition (SET), which endeavours to make allowances for their encyclopaedic specificity and offer a customised scale for the analysis of possible shifts and refractions of SEMIs in the translation process.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate goal of the application of the scale is to verify to what extent, if at all, an encyclopaedically marked item has been precisely recreated in the target text, i.e. whether the denotation of an ST SEMI (source text encyclopaedically marked item) has been adequately rendered in the form of a TT SEMI (target text encyclopaedically marked item) or whether the target text rendition introduces any alterations:

1. PRECISION in the form of a recognised equivalent – precise preservation of the ST denotation – (might be of foreign or domestic etymology) an item functioning as a valid equivalent of the ST SEMI within a specialised field; an item of completely different linguistic derivation than the ST SEMI. It is possible to have many recognised equivalents in the target language, with different derivations or etymologies.

---

<sup>1</sup> One of the facets of the specific approach to the translation of SEMIs might be their paradoxical perception both as domestic and foreign: They may be derived from foreign expressions (may have a foreign etymology), and yet they are used within the domesticated discourse of specialised terminology, used domestically as the proper domestic term to denote a phenomenon or an object. The total perception of a SEMI in the target text of the translation within the discourse of being foreign or domestic might be a combination of: a) its etymology (domestic, i.e. derived from the target language, or foreign, i.e. derived from any other than the target language); b) its encyclopaedic markedness (explicitly belonging to the specialised language category) inherently related to higher register; c) the domestic dimension of an SEMI in the target language (It is used domestically as the natural recognised signifier for a specific object in a given specialised discourse, regardless of its etymology).

2. PRECISION in the form of an exoticism – precise preservation of the ST denotation; an item transposed from the ST without any changes in its linguistic form into the TT (might be a recognised equivalent or a linguistic novelty).
3. PRECISION in the form of borrowing – precise preservation of the ST denotation – an item transposed from the ST as a borrowing, an item operating within the norms of the target language (might be a recognised equivalent or a linguistic novelty).
4. PRECISION in the form of a calque – an item directly translated (through-translated) from the ST into a TT item (might be a recognised equivalent or a linguistic novelty).
5. PROXIMITY – semi-precise preservation of the ST denotation – shifting the meaning of the ST SEMI on a scale of generalisation, making it more specific or more general (e.g. hyponymy, hypernymy).
6. DESCRIPTION – the loss of the ST SEMI – explanation of the meaning of the ST SEMI; might be in the form of a longer or shorter phrase.
7. TRANSPLANT – the loss of the ST SEMI – the rendition of the ST SEMI with a term having a different denotation but thematically related to the ST SEMI, i.e. within the same specialised discourse; might be a domestic or a foreign transplant, i.e. the TT SEMI might be from the target culture of translation or another foreign culture.
8. REPLACEMENT – the loss of the ST SEMI – any substitution thematically not related to the ST SEMI; could be motivated by many factors: the translator's lack of knowledge, aesthetic purposes e.g. replacement for the sake of maintaining a rhyme.
9. REMOVAL – the loss of the ST SEMI – the complete omission of the ST SEMI without any substitution.
10. COMPENSATION – the introduction of new SEMIs into the target text – the utilisation of SEMIs from the target language of the translation in other places in the target text than the location of the ST SEMIs in the source text.

It might be added that it is possible to notice combinations of the above categories, given the richness of literary creations and intricacies of SEMI transposition into the target text. For clarity, the particular elements on the scale will be provided with examples from the Polish rendition of *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon.

#### 4. The Scale of Encyclopaedic Transposition (SET) – examples

*Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon as an encyclopaedic novel contains a multitude of phrases from different specialised disciplines, making it apt material to present various elements on the Scale of Encyclopaedic Transposition.<sup>2</sup> Each element on the Scale of Encyclopaedic Transposition presented below will be illustrated by an example from the rich

---

<sup>2</sup> The most prominent specialised disciplines in the narrative of *Gravity's Rainbow* are professional jargon (cinematography, ballistics, statistics, chemistry, physics, behavioural and Pavlovian psychology, etc.) (Weisenburger 1988: 6–7). The extent of the recreation of the dimension of encyclopaedicity has been analysed by Barciński with the conclusion that although “the encyclopaedic precision of many translation items is low and many are simply omitted”, on the whole, encyclopaedicity has been “partially recreated” (2016: 111–112).

material of *Gravity's Rainbow* in the Polish translation (*Tęcza grawitacji*) by Robert Sudół for the Prószyński i Sówka publishing house in 2001.

### 1. PRECISION in the form of a recognised equivalent<sup>3</sup>

This example deals with the medical term denoting the disease *Oriental sore* “caused by a parasitic protozoan of the genus *Leishmania*” (Cambridge Dictionary: *Leishmania*). It is translated by means of its recognised equivalent in the field of medicine in Poland: *leiszmanioza skórna* (the TT SEMI of foreign derivation; choice of an equivalent of higher register). Other possible recognised equivalents of lower register include: *biały trąd*, *owrzodzenie z Aleppo*:

In 1935 he had his first episode *outside* any condition of known sleep—it was during his Kipling Period, beastly Fuzzy-Wuzzies far as eye could see, dracunculiasis and **Oriental sore** rampant among the troops (Pynchon 1973: 13)

W 1935 roku pierwszy raz przeżył taką historię poza wszelkim znanym stanem snu - zdarzyło się to w jego kiplingowskim okresie: jak okiem sięgnąć, nieładzcy Sudańczycy z poboru, wśród wojska szerzy się **leiszmanioza skórna** i skażenie przez nicienie (Pynchon 2001: 17)

### 2. PRECISION in the form of an exoticism

*Degorgement* – a specialised term within the discipline of oenology – denotes “the process in which sediment is removed from wine” (Pynchonwiki: *degorgement*). The term is rendered as an exoticism without any alteration of its form (also the italics are preserved in the target text). Both the exoticism *degorgement* and the Polish borrowing *degorżacja* operate as recognised equivalents within the Polish oenological discourse:

Jeroboams come and go, fat, green, tattered gray foil at the necks giving back the bar’s electric radiance. Corks grow straighter, less mushroomy, dates of ***degorgement*** move further into the war years as the company gets drunker. (Pynchon 1973: 212)

Wjeżdżają i znikają ogromne butle - pękate i zielone, podarta złota folia wokół szyjek odbija elektryczną świetlistość baru. Korki nabierają kształtu prostego walca, coraz mniej przypominają grzybki, daty ***degorgement*** zbliżają się do lat wojny, a towarzystwo ma coraz mocniej w czubie. (Pynchon 2001: 176)

### 3. PRECISION in the form of borrowing

*Moire* – a specialised term from mathematics and physics – denotes “a shimmering pattern seen when two geometrically regular patterns (such as two sets of parallel lines or two halftone screens) are superimposed especially at an acute angle” (Merriam-webster: *moire*). The term is rendered as a borrowing (*mora*), operating as the recognised equivalent in the Polish discourse. A more precise term in English is *moire patterns* or *frings* (the Polish recognised equivalent is *prążki mory*).

---

<sup>3</sup> Each example contains the original quotation from the source text, then the Polish translation. Analysed phrases are marked in bold in the quotations for convenience.

Well. What happens when paranoid meets paranoid? A crossing of solipsisms. Clearly. The two patterns create a third: **a moire**, a new world of flowing shadows, interferences. ...” ‘Want me here’? What for?” (Pynchon 1973: 395)

Rany. Co się dzieje, gdy paranoik spotyka paranoika? Krzyżują się solipsyzmy. Wyraźnie. Dwa wzory tworzą trzeci: **mora**, nowy świat płynnych cieni, interferencji... - Chcą mnie tutaj? A po co? (Pynchon 2001: 318)

#### 4. PRECISION in the form of a calque

*Dragon's teeth* – a specialised military term for “wedge-shaped concrete antitank barriers laid in multiple rows” (Merriam-webster: *dragon's teeth*) – is rendered as a calque (*smocze zębiska*), a recognised equivalent in Polish, with slight alteration: Instead of the usual *zqb*, the target text uses an augmentative: *zębisko* – a large tooth.

They found the countryside, this year, at peace by a scant few days. Already vines are beginning to grow back over **dragon's teeth**, fallen Stukas, burned tanks (Pynchon 1973: 281).

Tego roku wieś zastali pogrążoną w spokoju od kilku dni. Winorośl już zaczyna porastać **smocze zębiska**, strącone sztukasy, spalone czołgi (Pynchon 2001: 229).

#### 5. PROXIMITY

*Tessellation* – a term within mathematics or computing, denoting “the process of fitting shapes together in a pattern with no spaces in between” (Cambridge Dictionary: *tessellation*) – has been rendered as a hyperonym: the vague term *mozaika*. More precise equivalents in the Polish specialised discourse might include: *teselacja*, *parkietaż* or *kafelkowanie*.

Household Milk, broken biscuits at half the usual points, and isn't menthol a marvelous invention to take just enough of it away each morning, down to become dusty oversize bubbles **tessellating** tough and stagnant among the tar shorelines, the intricate draftsmanship of outlets feeding, multiplying out to sea, as one by one these old tooth-paste tubes are emptied and returned to the War, heaps of dimly fragrant metal, phantoms of peppermint in the winter shacks (Pynchon 1973: 130)

mleka w proszku, pokruszonych sucharów, wartych połowę tego, co całe, i czyż mentol nie jest cudownym wynalazkiem, wystarczy zafundować sobie odrobinę co rano, by między wysmołowanymi brzegami ułożyła się ospale, acz z uporem **mozaika** zakurzonych rozdętych bąbli, zawila geometria ujść kanalizacyjnych zasila morze, zwielokrotniona po drodze, tymczasem stare tubki jedna po drugiej zostają opróżnione i wracają na Wojnę, stosy nikle wonnego metalu, zjawy mięty w zimowych hangarach (Pynchon 2001: 110)

#### 6. DESCRIPTION

The medical term *dracunculiasis* – “infestation with or disease caused by the Guinea worm” (Merriam-webster: *dracunculiasis*) – is rendered by means of description: *skażanie przez nicienie* (‘being infected by nematodes’), explaining the nature of the ailment. The Polish established equivalents include the higher register *drakunkuloza* and the lower register *choroba robaków gwinejskich*.

In 1935 he had his first episode *outside* any condition of known sleep—it was during his Kipling Period, beastly Fuzzy-Wuzzies far as eye could see, **dracunculiasis** and Oriental sore rampant among the troops (Pynchon 1973: 13)

W 1935 roku pierwszy raz przeżył taką historię poza wszelkim znanym stanem snu - zdarzyło się to w jego kiplingowskim okresie: jak okiem sięgnąć, niehumanoidalni Sudańczycy z poboru, wśród wojska szerzy się leishmanioza skórna i **skażenie przez nicienie** (Pynchon 2001: 17)

## 7. TRANSPLANT

The historical term *dacoits* denoting “one of a class of criminals in India and Burma who rob and murder in roving gangs” (Merriam-webster: *dacoit*), has been translated as a foreign transplant, as *asasyni*, “a member of a Shia Muslim sect (...) sent out on a suicidal mission to murder prominent enemies” (Merriam-webster: *assassin*). The transplantation consists of transferring the Indian historical context of a dangerous outlaw group into the cultural context of Arabic countries.

he had a long-running fantasy of his own, rather a Eugène Sue melodrama, in which he would be abducted by an organization of **dacoits** or Sicilians, and used for unspeakable purposes (Pynchon 1973: 13).

Pirata męczył jego własny koszmar – melodramat w stylu Eugene Sue – w którym zostaje on porwany przez bractwo **asasynów** albo Sycylijczyków i wykorzystany do celów nienadających się do opisanego (Pynchon 2001: 17).

## 8. REPLACEMENT

The source text concept from the area of linguistics, *idiolalia*, “a private language, as invented by a child or between two children, especially twins” (The Free Dictionary: *idiolalia*), is replaced by another term which is utterly not related: *bałwochwalstwo* (‘idolatry’, ‘the worship of false gods’).

Manichaeans who see two Rockets, good and evil, who speak together in **the sacred idio-lalia** of the Primal Twins (some say their names are Enzian and Blicero) (Pynchon 1973: 727)

manichejczycy, którzy widzą dwie Rakiety, dobrą i złą, gardlujące w **świętym bałwochwalstwie** Pierwotnych Bliźniaków (niektórzy twierdzą, że ich imiona to Enzian i Blicero) (Pynchon 2001: 572)

## 9. REMOVAL

In this scene characters in the novel repeat consonantal alliterative sounds related to unappetising types of food as “an act of rebellion which builds in crescendo”. Nevertheless, they invariably fail “to transcend [their] own implication in the overdetermined networks of power [they] want to subvert” (Mattessich 2002: 131–132). The culinary term *jam tarts*, a baked type of dish, is removed probably due to aesthetic reasons: As the phrase *toe-jam tarts* appears within a song, it was omitted to preserve the rhythm of the particular line and the rhyming pattern of the stanza. The recognised equivalent in Polish for the removed expression *jam tart* is *tarta z dżemem*.

Oh gimme some o' that acne, à-la-mode,  
Eat so much-that Ah, jes'ex-plode!  
Say there buddi*h*? you can chow all nite, on  
**Toe-jam tarts** 'n' Diarrhea Dee-lite... (Pynchon 1973: 715)

Och, zaserwuj nam te cudowne eklery z egzemy,  
Aż nas rozsadzi, tyle tego zjemy,  
Koleho, przysięgam, na wszelkie frasunki,  
Najlepszy jest barszczyk z biegunki! (Pynchon 2001: 364)

## 10. COMPENSATION

In the same passage, another culinary expression is added although it does not have any counterpart in the source text, possibly as a compensation for the removal of different types of dishes in other parts of the relatively long fragment. The phrase used as compensation is *parujący bulion z bobkami*, with the culinary term *bulion* meaning *bouillon* or *stock*.

But there are **nosepick noodles** to be served up buttery and steaming, **grime gruel** and **pustule porridge** to be ladled into the bowls of a sniveling generation of future executives, **pubic popovers** to be wheeled out onto the terraces stained by holocaust sky or growing rigid with autumn. (Pynchon 1973: 716)

Ale czas podać **tatar z tasiemca**, **kleik z karaluchów**, **przystawkę z pryszczy**, **parujący bulion z bobkami**, serwowany warząchwą w układ pokarmowy pokolenia skamlących przyszłych dyrektorów, **krem z krwi**, wwożony wózkami na taras poplamiony niebem holocaustu albo sztywniejący od jesieni. (Pynchon 2001: 564)

## 5. Conclusion

The dimension of encyclopaedicity seems to be of paramount importance for the genre of encyclopaedic novels or any literary creation which encompasses a wide range of specialist references from various fields of knowledge. As a result, it is necessary to develop adequate tools for its examination for the purpose of translation analysis or the assurance of the quality of literary works. Hopefully, SEMIs (specialist encyclopaedically marked items) as defined above, analysed with the tool of SET (scale of encyclopaedic transposition), will offer a venue for a more precise description of this literary phenomenon. The treasure trove of literary works provides an inexhaustible source of linguistic ingenuity and creativity; thanks to the development of adequate tools (such as SEMIs analysed with SET) it will be possible to investigate the multifacetedness of novels containing references to numerous disciplines and their transfer in the process of translation.

## References

- Aixelá, Javier Franco. 1996. Culture-specific items in translation. In Alvarez, Román & Carmen-Africa Vidal, M. (eds.), *Translation, power, subversion*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd. 52–78.
- Barciński, Łukasz. 2016. *A study of postmodern literature in translation as illustrated through the selected works by Thomas Pynchon*. Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego.



Cambridge Dictionary, retrieved July 10, 2023, from [dictionary.cambridge.org](https://dictionary.cambridge.org).

Daw, Larry. 2000. *Gravity's Rainbow. A summary by Larry Daw.* ([www.themodernword.com/pynchon/pynchon\\_grsumm.html](http://www.themodernword.com/pynchon/pynchon_grsumm.html)) (Accessed 2014-08-10).

Ercolino, Stefano. 2014. *The maximalist novel: From Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow to Roberto Bolaño's 2666*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Hatim, Basil & Mason, Ian. 1997. *The translator as communicator*. London: Routledge. doi: 10.5007/5247.

Hervey, Sandor & Higgins, Ian. 1992. *Thinking translation. A course in translation method*. London: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9780203417973.

Karl, Frederick Robert. 2001. *American fictions: 1980–2000: Whose America is it anyway?* Bloomington: Xlibris.

LeClair, Tom. 1989. *The art of excess: Mastery in contemporary American fiction*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Mattessich, Stefan. 2002. *Lines of flight. Discursive time and countercultural desire in the work of Thomas Pynchon*. Durham: Duke University Press. doi: 10.1215/9780822384137.

Mendelson, Edward. 1976. Encyclopedic narrative: From Dante to Pynchon. *MLN* 91(6): 1267–1275. doi: 10.2307/2907136.

Mendelson, Edward. 1986. Gravity's encyclopaedia. In Bloom, Harold (ed.), *Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers. 11–42.

Merriam-Webster, retrieved July 20, 2023, from [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary).

Moretti, Franco. 1996. *Modern epic: The world system from Goethe to Garcia Marquez*. London: Verso.

Newmark, Peter. 1991. *About translation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Pynchon, Thomas. 1973. *Gravity's Rainbow*. New York: Viking Press.

Pynchon, Thomas. 2001. *Tęcza grawitacji*, translated by Sudół, R. Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka.

*Pynchonwiki*, retrieved July 15, 2023, from [gravitys-rainbow.pynchonwiki.com](http://gravitys-rainbow.pynchonwiki.com).

Smith, Evans Lansing. 2012. *Thomas Pynchon and the postmodern mythology of the underworld*. New York: Peter Lang. doi: 10.3726/978-1-4539-0951-5

*The Free Dictionary*, retrieved July 20, 2023, from [www.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.thefreedictionary.com).

Weisenburger, Steven. 1988. *A Gravity's Rainbow Companion*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Wood, James. 2001. Human, all too inhuman. ([www.powells.com/review/2001\\_08\\_30.html](http://www.powells.com/review/2001_08_30.html)) (Accessed 2014-06-10).

Lukasz Barciński  
University of Rzeszów  
Department of English Studies  
E-mail: [lbarcinski@ur.edu.pl](mailto:lbarcinski@ur.edu.pl)