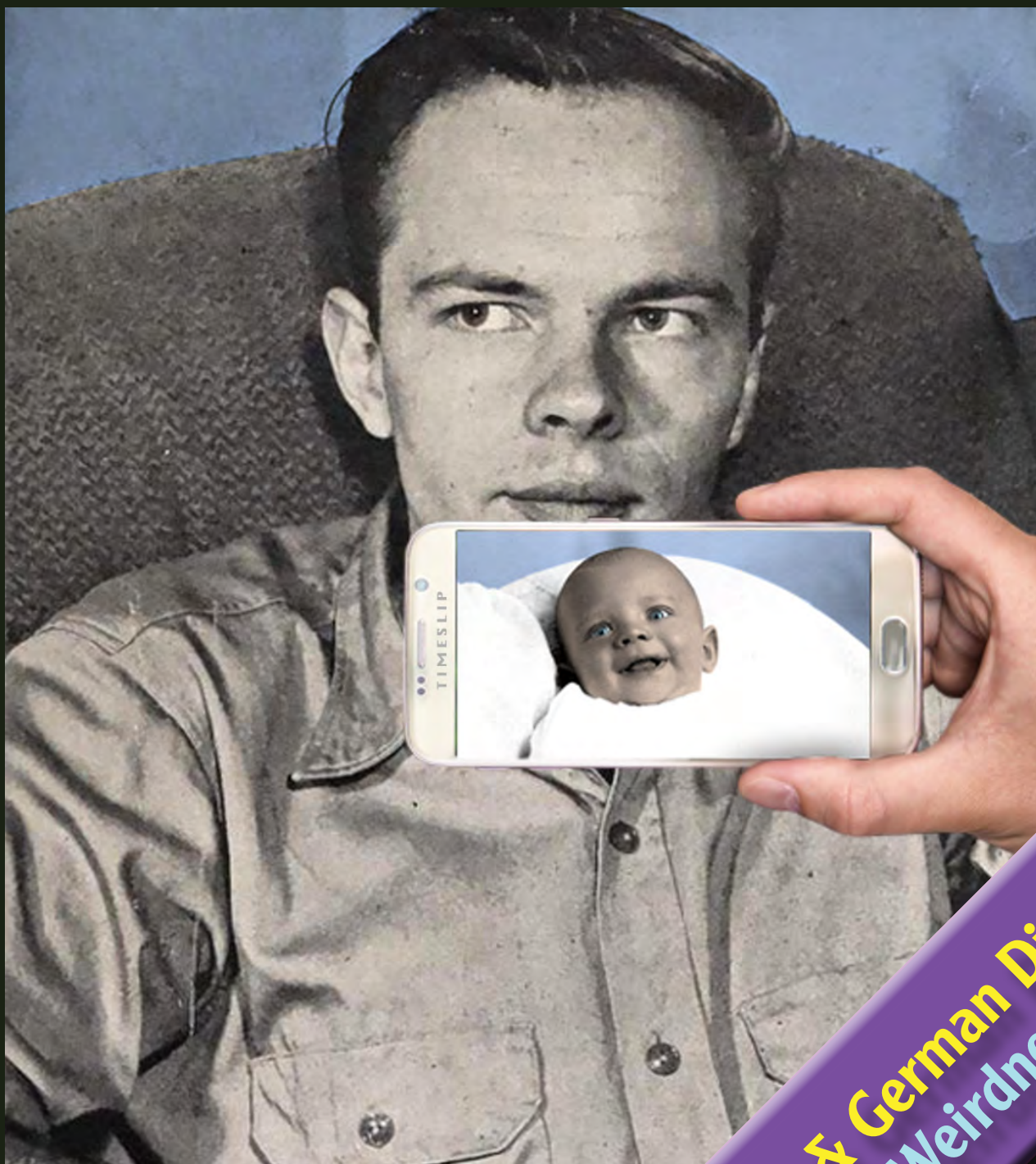


Above Photo of Phil © Tessa Dick, by kind permission

May 2021

Large photo by Arthur Knight from the jacket of *The Man in The High Castle* (1962)



Baby photo of Phil © Tessa Dick, by kind permission

Chinese & German Dick
& High Weirdness

P K D

#42

Contents

Page

Cover - Philip K. Dick Earthman Timeslip by Nick Buchanan (thanks to Arthur Knight & Tessa Dick)	1
Editorial - by Patrick Clark	3
PKD in the Hometown of I Ching - By Qiangpan Chen (a.k.a.CHEN Zhuo)	4
The Strange February 1980 Letter(s) of Philip K. Dick by André Welling	19
"Who's Afraid of Philp K. Dick?" by Paul Walker.	22
A collection of book reviews collated by Patrick Clark	23
HIGH WEIRDNESS by Erik Davis Reviewed by Lord Running Clam	35
PKD dissertations/theses listings compiled by: Frank C. Bertrand	38
Say It in German by Andre Welling	41
Correction by Andre Welling	43
Back Cover - More Chinese book covers supplied by Qiangpan Chen	44

PKD **Otaku** is a zine made by fans for fans.

It exists to celebrate, explore and discuss the work of Philip K Dick.

The PKD Otaku Team have enjoyed the writing and ideas of Philip K. Dick for decades, and continue to do so.

The subject of Philip K. Dick benefits from diverse perspectives, opinions, and insights.

In this zine we hope to explore the Novels, Short-Fiction, Non-fiction and ideas of Philip K Dick.

If you would like to contribute (a letter of comment, an article, essay or review) please make your submission in MS Doc, Rtf or Txt form to the Otaku Team c/o Patrick Clark via email:

pkdotaku@gmail.com

All submissions are welcome and considered, but we cannot promise that all will see print.

Thank you for maintaining the dialogue!

-- The PKD OTAKU Team

PKD **Otaku** Layout, Logo, Graphics and Typesetting

by Nick Buchanan n.buchanan@hotmail.co.uk

Editorial

by Patrick Clark

Welcome to another issue of PKD Otaku. Derailed, as has been our entire terrestrial civilization, by circumstances beyond our control – until now. I’m excited by every issue but I am especially happy with this one because of its international flavor. You will find some new PKD primary material, sort of, from Germany. You will find a comprehensive survey of Phil’s books in China that really pleases me as it tells us that Phil is alive and well in the Middle Kingdom. What will be the effect on Chinese society? I have no idea but I do expect a “perturbation in the reality field” of some kind.

PKD movies and streaming services seem to be drying up. Maybe just a hiatus, maybe the phildickian entertainment meme has played out. The new *Matrix* film might revive interest. You have to wonder if the PKD sense of reality-breakdown, once rather esoteric and science fictional, has become so normal that we know longer think of Phil when we experience it in our day-to-day lives. Sort of like not really remembering Isaac Newton whenever we experience gravity. We take it all for granted. If so, then what is the future of PKD even outside the entertainment, uh, “Matrix”? I don’t see much mention in the legacy press anymore where he once appeared regularly in some kind of political context. Having lately experienced a real Yancy in our actual government, Phil’s fictional version is no longer persuasive.

That leaves Phil’s actual work: the books, stories, essays, letters, interviews, speeches. Here, the report from China is especially welcome. And not simply China. The PKD fb page often shows scans of foreign-language editions, very recently a couple from Croatia. I used to collect these translations. Lots and lots from Japan. A couple of nice ones from Turkey and Croatia. My favorite is a Czech samizdat translation of *Man in the High Castle*. I wish I knew the full range of all of this. Any stats available? Does the Estate keep a list?

I wonder if Phil has been eclipsed by HP Lovecraft. There seem to be a lot of movies and shows with Lovecraftian themes and creatures. Thousands of books and stories. What does that same about our times? Is this “The Age of Horror”?

Speaking of Lovecraft, Phil seems to have largely gotten a pass from PC crowd. I wonder why. He certainly would be considered un-woke by current standards. His attitude to-

ward homosexuality in *FLOW MY TEARS* for one. Joanna Russ had some harsh things to say on the matter in her *F&SF* review but the whole of Chapter 12 is not just gratuitously hostile it doesn’t even make sense in the narrative. What was going on with *that*? And, well, abortion and “The Pre-Persons”, another time Russ went ballistic. Considering these “ideological errors” – there must be a Soviet term for this – you would expect some condemnation. Maybe I shouldn’t even bring this up.

I continue to think about Phil all the time. I’ve been re-reading some of his novels again during the pandemic. Lately I have come up with the following thoughts and questions:

The dilemma in PKD’s novels is not between illusion and reality but between competing realities.

What if 2-3-74 had never happened? No *Exegesis*. What would Phil have done instead?

In *VALIS*, Phil says he “created” Horselover Fat to “gain much-needed objectivity”. Did what began as a tactic to write a new novel become an actual mental state – a bifurcated mind? Did Horselover Fat take over a part of Phil’s personality and go off on his own direction or was Phil always in control?

Is Horselover Fat “Thomas” or is “Thomas” Horselover Fat?

And so, was it Horselover Fat who actually wrote the *Exegesis*? I’m pretty certain that he wrote *The Divine Invasion*.

The Gnostic Phil, that is, Horselover Fat, is probably clinically insane. He hears

voices, he believes in outlandish conspiracies, he feels some outside force is controlling him.

Is *VALIS* the real *Exegesis*? Or is the *Exegesis* the real *VALIS*?

Did Phil believe in UFOs? I don’t recall him ever saying.

Has anyone ever requested the police report and records of the November 17, 1971 break-in at Phil’s house? If not, why not?

I hope all of you reading this have been having your own thoughts and questions. Consider sharing them.

‘The dilemma in PKD’s novels is not between illusion and reality but between competing realities.’



PKD in the Hometown of I Ching: a bibliography of Philip K. Dick publishing history in Chinese

By Qiangpan Chen (a.k.a.CHEN Zhuo)

As Chinese readers, it's fascinating to meet their hometown elements in a foreign novel or short story, mostly because of the excitement of looking through the foreign authors' lens to look back at their own culture.

In Philip K. Dick's work, China and Chinese were rarely as its background or as its characters. Maybe because one of his first straight novels, *Gather Yourselves Together*, which has a unique setting in mainland China in 1949, got ruthlessly rejected and then that fact forbade him to try using China as background again (until *Faith of Our Fathers*). But we do occasionally meet Chinese here and there in his books, for instance, Jack Bohlen's greedy boss Mr. Yee, and the almighty I Ching (arguably it's a character instead of just a plot driver) in *The Man in the High Castle*.

I always wonder during PKD's lifetime, has he ever considered the possibility of his work being introduced to China, and translated into Chinese. I also wonder, if PKD's work was introduced to China 20 or 30 years earlier than the reality, what kind of inspiration would be put into the Chinese readers and writers. In an alternative world, a Chinese Science fiction tradition was impacted by PKD, instead of I. Asimov, A. Clarke, then today we might see something entirely different, instead of the phenomenon of Three-Body Problem emerging from China.

Now is a quite spectacular moment in the history of Chinese sci-fi readers and writers, at some level, they are enjoying both Golden Age, New Wave, Cyberpunk all at the same time. For Chinese readers, *Stand on Zanzibar* and *Eye in the Sky* are both new books on the bookshelf there, they have never read them, never heard of them either.

The purpose of this brief is to introduce the bibliography of PKD's work and related text in Chinese (published in mainland China or Taiwan), to give you an overview of PKD's ongoing broadcasting (or divine invading?) in China.

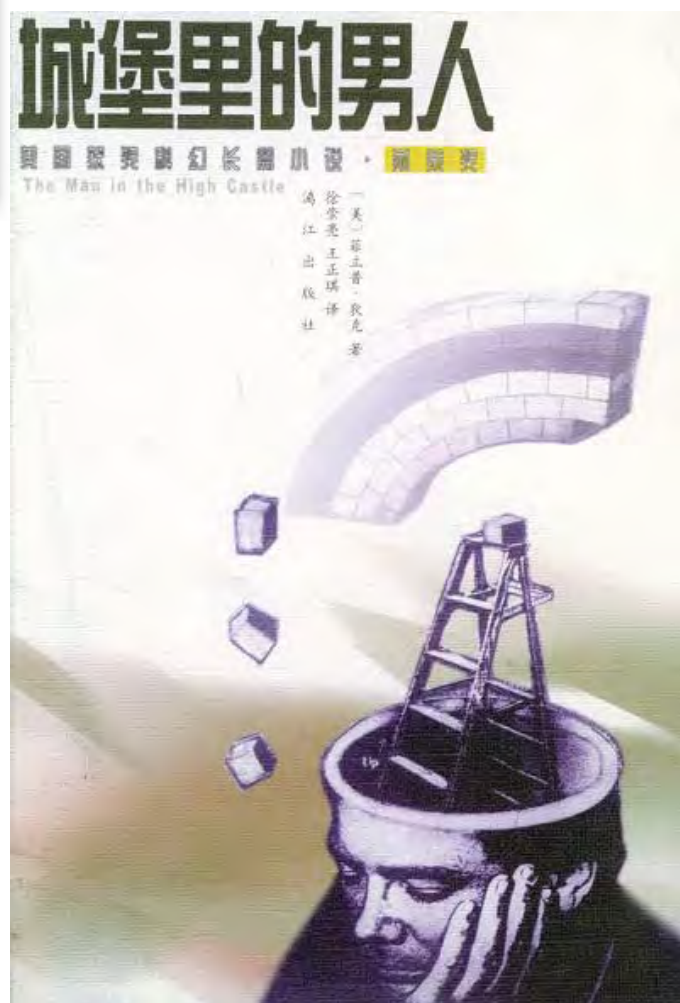
1980s

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? 《杀手的一日》 (literally means, A day of the Killer, was published in Taiwan at 1981, even before PKD's death, by a publishing house called 'National Press', translated by Kai-zhu Wang. On the cover, it mentioned a 'Sci-fi collection'.



2000s

In 2001, the first PKD's novel was translated and published in mainland China, *The Man in the High Castle* (《城堡里的男人》), by Li Jiang Press (漓江出版社), which was famous for publishing modern classic western novels. The translators are XU Chongliang, WANG Zhengqi (徐崇亮、王正琪).



1990s

Between 1992 to 1999, PKD's work appeared in China (mainland) a few times, mostly in Sci-fi collections, the stories include *We Can Remember It for You Wholesale* (1992, 1997), *The Indefatigable Frog* (1997), *War Game* (1998).

In 1999, the first PKD book was published, '*Memory Inc.*' (《记忆公司》), which is a comic book adapted from *We Can Remember It for You Wholesale*, the publishing house is Shanghai Tech Edu Press (上海科技教育出版社). The adaptor is PENG Sanping (彭三平).

Apparently PKD was almost neglected in the whole Chinese reader circle for nearly 50 years, including 20 years after his death. This situation has been changed since 21 century, partly because the adapted movies of his work started to get attention, partly because of other mystery reasons I still don't understand.

Then some strange things happened, a publishing house called JiangSu Education Press (江苏教育出版社), who primarily publishing textbook for schools, and never made a move in Sci-fi market, suddenly translated and published 14 PKD books in Chinese. Those books include 11 Sci-fi novels, 2 straight novels and 1 story collections:

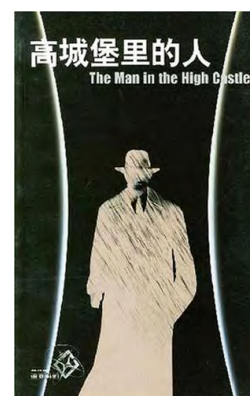
2003, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, 《银翼杀手》, translated by ZHAO Yuzhou (赵鱼舟), title name is from the movie Blade Runner



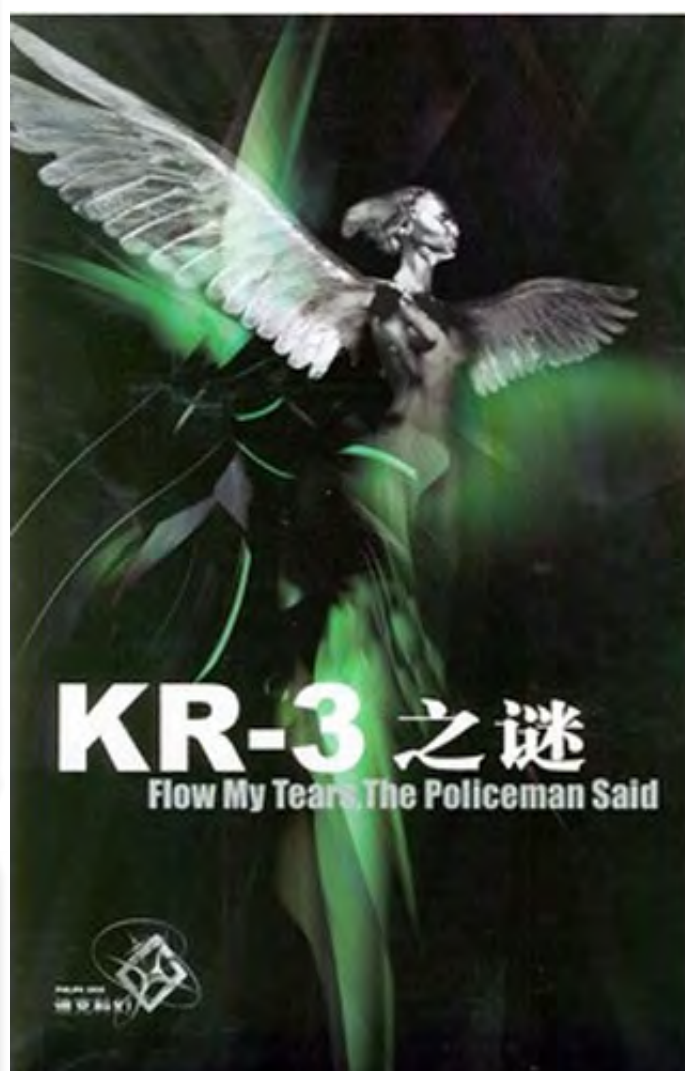
2003, *Minority Report*, 《少数派报告》, translated by ZENG Min (曾鸣), a collection with 8 short stories.

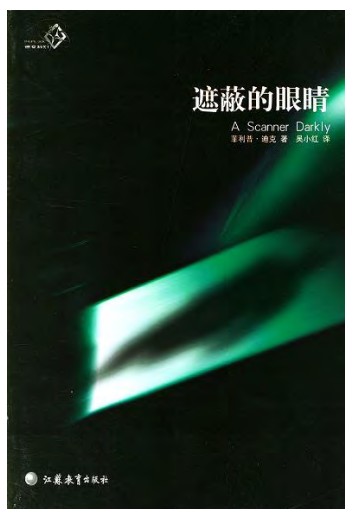


2003, *The Man in the High Castle*, 《高城堡里的人》, translated by CAO Guochen (曹国臣).



2003, *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*, 《KR-3之谜》, translated by HU Dan (胡丹), the title literally means 'The Mystery of KR-3'.





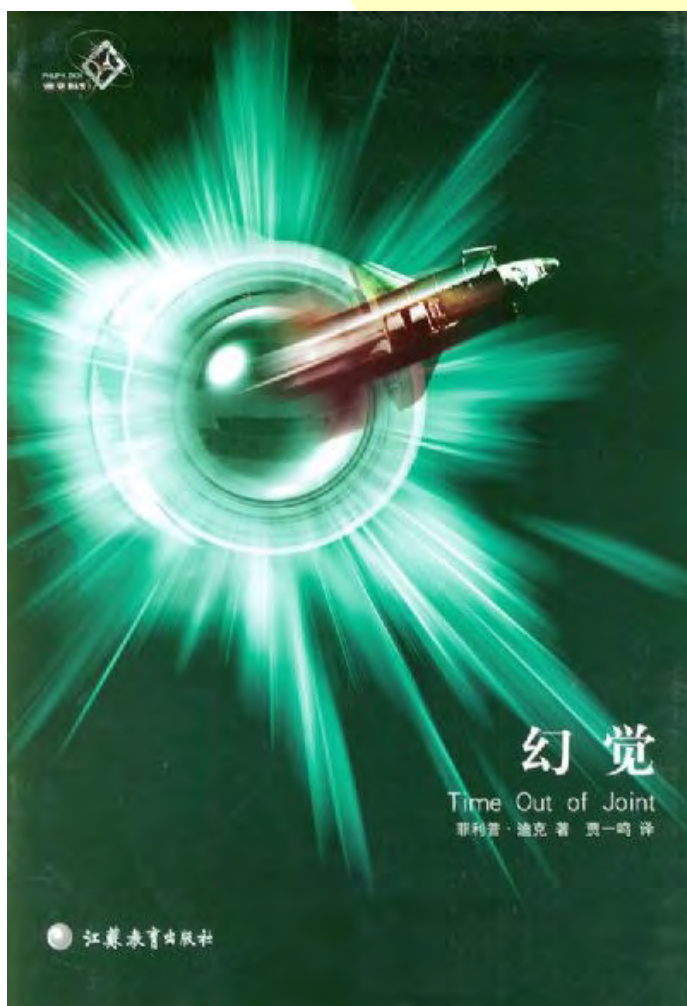
2004, *A Scanner Darkly*, 《遮蔽的眼睛》, translated by WU Xiaohong (吴小红), the title literally means 'The Covered Eyes'.

2004, *The World Jones Made*, 《琼斯缔造的世界》, translated by LI Weizhang (李维章)。



2004, *Time Out of Joint*, 《幻觉》, translated by JIA Yimin (贾一鸣), the title literally means 'The Illusion'.

2004, *Clans of the Alphane Moon*, 《阿尔法卫星上的家族》, translated by LV Hui (吕惠)。





2004, *Martian Time-slip*, 《火星人的时光倒转》, translated by YE Xuerong (叶学融).

2005, *Now Wait for Last Year*, 《末日危机》, translated by CHEN Ye (陈晔), the title literally means 'The Crisis of Doomsday'.



2005, *Confessions of A Crap Artist*, 《一个废物艺术家的自白》, translated by FAN Xiaoqing (范小青).



2005, *We Can Build You*, 《模拟造人》, translated by WANG Bin (王斌).



2005, *Valis*, 《瓦利斯》, translated by LAN Xiaoluan, GUAN Jinbao (蓝小雯、关金宝).

2005, *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*, 《主教的轮回》, translated by XING Jianyu(邢建玉).



Unfortunately, some of those books' translation quality were not satisfying or even too terrible to read over. In the meantime, strangely, the few thousand readers (including myself) were completely hooked by PKD's world and realized how awfully special he is. Most of the time we hardly understood his text, then we thought it was because he is too strange, but we didn't know most of the strangeness was because of the bad translation.

During 2000s, several publishing house in Taiwan also introduced PKD's book, they were all related with the adapted movies for those years:

2002, *Minority Report*, 《关键报告》, translated by YAN Yun (严韵), published by Yi Fang Press.

2004, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, 《银翼杀手》, translated by HONG Lin (洪凌), published by Yi Fang Press.

2005, *Paycheck*, 《记忆裂痕》, translated by ZHOU Huiping(周慧萍), short story collection, published by Zheng Zhong press.

2005, *A Scanner Darkly*, 《心机扫描》, translated by CHEN Yifen (陈怡芬), published by Mo Wen Tang.

2007, *Golden Man*, 《关键下一秒》, translated by DU Keming(杜克名), short story collection, published by Zheng Zhong press.

2010s

After the first big wave of PKD's novels from Jiangsu Jiaoyu ebbed, his name vanished from Chinese Sci-fi market for nearly 8 years, except a few short stories appeared in magazines like SF World. Although the introduction of 14 PKD's books was a commercial failure for Jiangsu Edu, as Chinese reader, it was a feast (with some bitter taste) of enjoying PKD's work.

At the beginning of 2010s, another publishing house based in Nanjing (same city as Jiangsu Edu based), Yilin Press decided to publish 5 PKD's books, including 4 novels and 1 short story collection, among them, *Ubik* was the first time introduced into Chinese. All of those books were paperbacks.

Yilin Press is one of the most important literature publishing houses in mainland China, their publishing focus was about classic literature, and modern classic, but they also publish popular genres, like John Michael Crichton's books. The Philip K. Dick series was the first time Yilin seriously published foreign Sci-fi classic. In 2021, Yilin's new move is going to publish 6 novels by Stanisław Lem (five of them are first introduced in Chinese).

Considering to maintain its Sci-Fi market share (they had published both Ted Chiang's collections and the *Martian*), Yilin Press renewed their contract of PKD's work, although they didn't want to expand it. What they did in 2017 was to reprint the 5 books with brand new design and made them as hardcovers. Hardcover Sci-fi in China market is very rare, what Yilin did was a bold move, but the market seems like the reprint version and many readers were attracted by the new design (which is mystery and abstract, not like typical Sci-fi book in Chinese), and didn't care about pay a few extra dollars.

2013/2017, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, 《仿生人会梦见电子羊吗?》 translated by XU Donghua (许东华)



2013/2017, *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*, 《流吧！我的眼泪》, translated by CHEN Zhuo (author of this article, 陈灼)



2013/2017, *Ubik*, 《尤比克》, translated by JIN Ming (金明).

2013/2017, *The Man in the High Castle*, 《高城堡里的人》/《高堡奇人》, translated by LI Guangrong (李广荣).

2013/2017, *Minority Report*, 《少数派报告》, translated by ZHOU Shaorong (周昭蓉), short story collections.



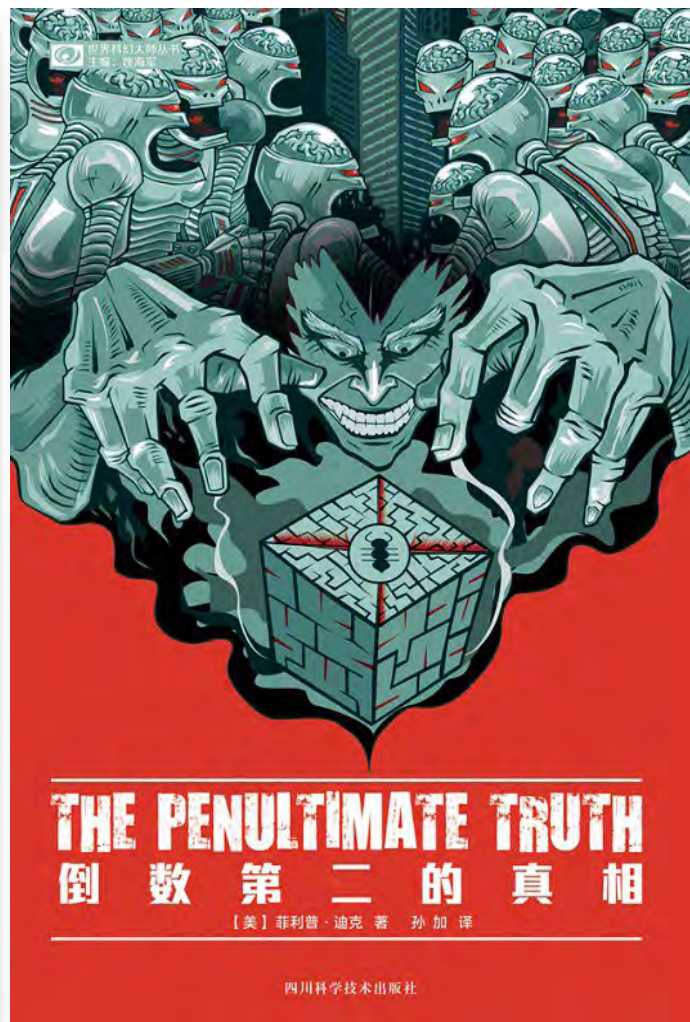
When Yilin started its expanding in Sci-fi territory, SF World (科幻世界) decided to take a bite of PKD. SF World, as its name indicated, a pure SF (include fantasy at certain degree) publishing brand, with several magazines running under the hood. SF World is the godfather of the Chinese SF market, they have introduced PKD short stories at their main magazine since 1995 (*The Indefatigable Frog*), then 2003 (*The Minority Report*), then 2006 (*Colony*) and 2007 (*Rautavaara's Case*). After that, PKD vanished from SF World's readers for 6 years.

During 2013 and 2014, SF World made their first move on PKD, their strategy was to publish a whole novel in their magazine (the one dedicated for long foreign novels), and then publish them as books if magazine readers like them. Those two novels in the magazine are *The Game-player of Titan* (2013), and *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (2014). Later, in 2015, SF World published 5 PKD novels as books with comic style cover designs:

2015, *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, 《帕莫·艾德里奇的三处圣痕》, translated by WANG Meizi(汪梅子)



2015, *The Penultimate Truth*, 《倒数第二个真相》, translated by SUN Jia (孙加)



2015, *A Maze of Death*, 《死亡迷局》, translated by ZHU Ningyan (朱宁雁)



2015, *The Game-players of Titan*, 《泰坦棋手》, translated by SUN Jia (孙加)

2015, *Dr. Bloodmoney*, 《血钱博士》, translated by YU Juanjuan (于娟娟)



SF World, with implying of the adapted movie's plot:

2017, *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol.1*, 《记忆裂痕：菲利普·迪克短篇小说全集 1》, translated by YU Juanjuan (于娟娟),



After those five books published, it seems no one can stop SF World from signing more contracts for PKD's publishing. It turned out they have signed the full collection of PKD short stories, and 10 other novels of his work, and 1 biography.

Firstly, the 5 volumes of Collected Stories were published between 2017 to 2019, with an additional story collection based on the TV show Philip K. Dick's *Electric Dreams*. The titles of each volume of PKD's Collected Stories are using one of PKD's adapted movie's titles.

The covers of the Collected Stories are using the same comic style as the first 5 novels published by



2018, *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol.2*, 《命运规划局：菲利普·迪克短篇小说全集 2》, translated by XIAO Yuquan (肖钰泉).

2018, *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol.3*, 《预见未来 : 菲利普·迪克短篇小说全集 3》, translated by HAO Xiuyu (郝秀玉)



2019, *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol.5*, 《全面回忆 : 菲利普·迪克短篇小说全集 5》, translated by SUN Jia (孙加)



2018, *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol.4*, 《少数派报告 : 菲利普·迪克短篇小说全集 4》, translated by HAO Xiuyu (郝秀玉)

2019, *Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams*, 《菲利普·迪克的电子梦》, translated by XIAO Yuquan, HAO Xiuyu (肖钰泉、郝秀玉)

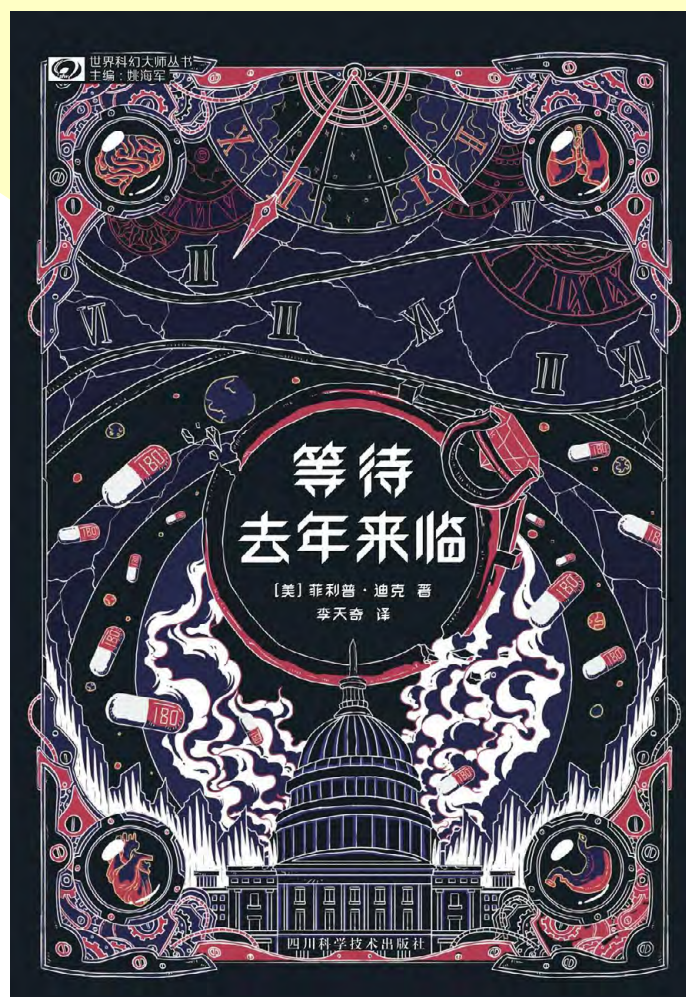


Secondly, the 3 novels published at 2019:

2019, *Solar Lottery*, 《太阳系大乐透》, translated by WEI Chunyu (魏春予).



2019, *Now Wait for Last Year*, 《等待去年来临》, translated by LI Tianqi (李天奇).



2019, *Valis*, 《神圣秘密》, translated by SUN Jia (孙加).



The only PKD book published in Taiwan in the 2010s is another version of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, translated by QI Yiwei (祁怡玮), published by Ji Mo Press in 2017.



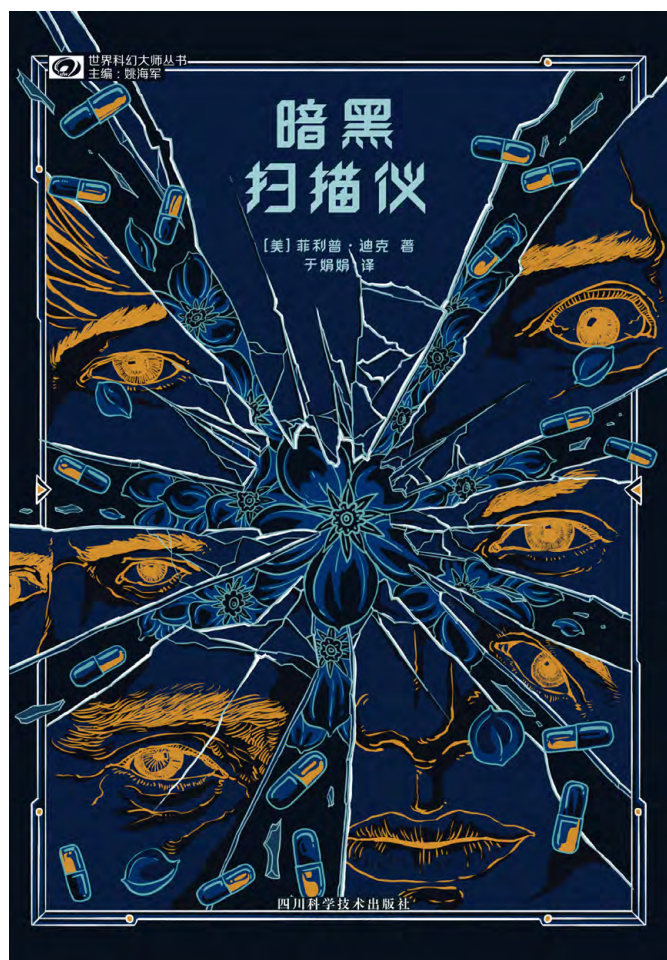
2020s

Because of the impact of Covid-19 and the tightening of publishing policy of the Chinese government, the publishing speed of PKD's book got much slower in 2020. There were 1 novel, 2 biographies of PKD published in 2020.

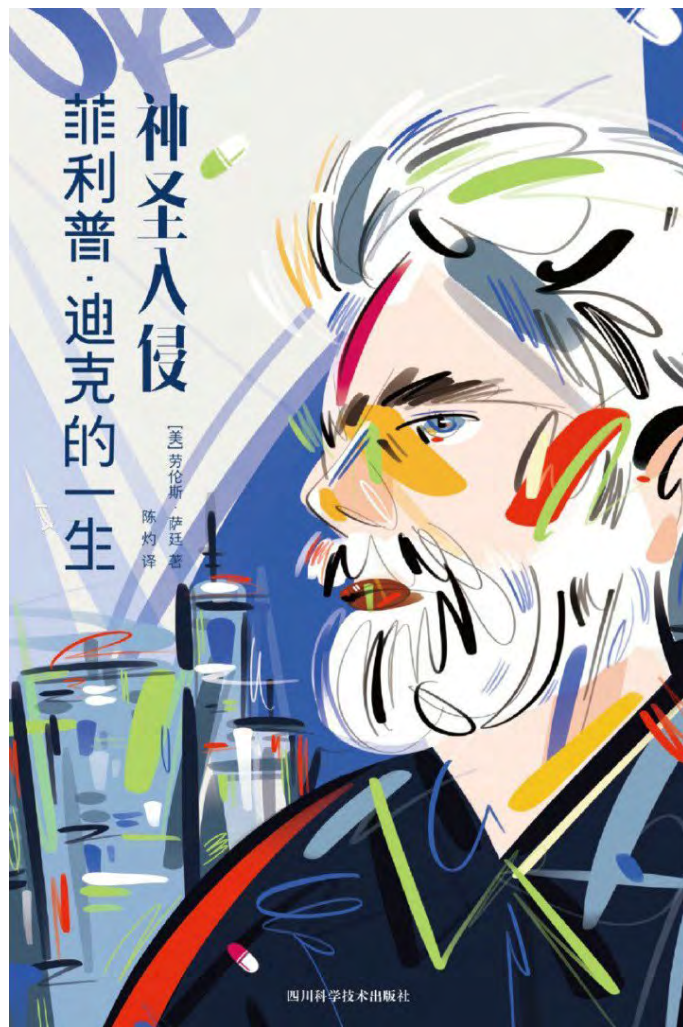
A Scanner Darkly is the fourth book of SF World's 10 PKD novel bundle. Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick also introduced by SF World, which is very rare as a non fiction (and as hardcover) in the history of this publishing house.

Another biography is Anne R. Dick's *The Search for Philip K. Dick*, which was published by Eight Light Minutes, a Sci-fi brand based at Chengdu.

2020, *A Scanner Darkly*, 《暗黑扫描仪》, translated by YU Juanjuan (于娟娟).



2021, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick*, translated by CHEN Zhuo (陈灼)



2020, *The Search for Philip K. Dick*, 《菲利普·迪克传》, translated by JIN Xueni (金雪妮, Emily X. Jin)





From 2021 and beyond, SF World has another 6 PKD novels in the process of editing, all of them have new translation, which include :

Eye in the Sky, 《天空之眼》, first time introduced in Chinese, translated by SUN Jia (孙加)

Martian Time-slip, 《火星时间穿越》, new translation by LIU Weiyang (刘未央)

Clans of the Alphane Moon, 《阿尔法卫星上的家族》, new translation by LI Tianqi (李天奇).

Counter-Clock World, 《逆时钟世界》, new translation by LI Yi (李懿).

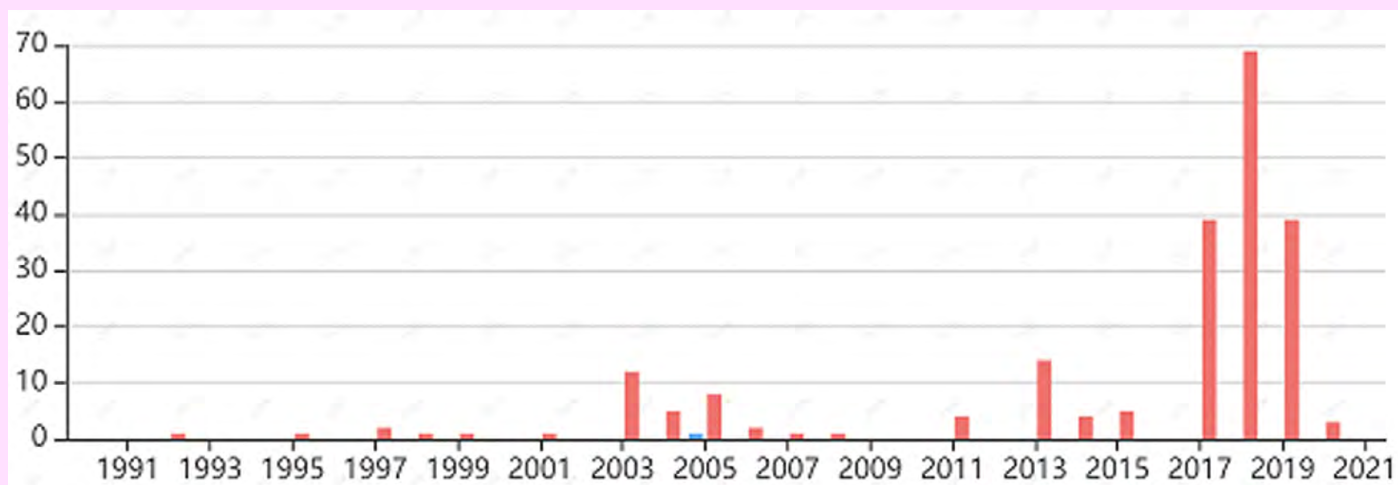
Divine Invasion, 《神圣入侵》, first time introduced in Chinese, translated by SUN Jia (孙加)

The Transmigration of Timothy Archer, 《神圣主教》, new translation by YANG Qiaolu (杨峤璐)

Apparently, the enthusiasm of PKD's biography's publishing has not declined yet, another biography, *I Am Alive and You Are Dead*, translated by ZHANG Junfeng (张俊丰), is in the process of editing by Nanjing University Publishing House, and hopefully to meet the Chinese reader in 2021.

Summary

In summary, for the last 40 years, including mainland China and Taiwan, there were 45 (not including reprint) book length PKD books or related text published, 7 more books are on the horizon. In those 52 books, 23 PKD's novels were introduced into Chinese, some of them were re-translated several times (*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* 5 times, *High Castle* 3 times); 3 different style of biographies were published in 2 years (none of other Sci-fi writer had this honor before).



(Source: CSFDB, this chart indicates the publishing trend of PKD text and related publishing in Chinese)

At last, please allow me to give applause to SUN Jia, she had translated 5 PKD's novels and 1 volume of Collected stories so far; YAO Haijun, as the leader of SF World, who introduced 15 novels, 5 volumes of Collected stories, 1 biography of PKD, and many other editors such as WU Yingying, CHEN Yao, WEI Yingxue, and translators as LI Tianqi (she had translated two novels of PKD). Without the contributions of generations of translators and editors, PKD might still be buried somewhere and never got attention from the Chinese readers.



(left: SUN Jia, right: CHEN Qiangpan. 2019.11)

About the author:

Qiangpan Chen is the translator of *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* (2013, 2017, Yilin Press) and *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (2020, SF World), his new translation *Fiasco* by Stanisław Lem (2021, Yilin) to be published in May of 2021.

For the last decade he devoted the time and energy to spread the knowledge and info about PKD in the Chinese circle.

Qiangpan was born in Anhui province in the early 1980s, he moved to Sydney in 2016.

The Strange February 1980 Letter(s) of Philip K. Dick

by André Welling

The following is a letter from Philip K. Dick, dated allegedly 2/2/80, apparently (but not explicitly stated) sent from Phil to Uwe Anton and then published in German (as translated by Anton) in „Die Seltsamen Welten des Philip K. Dick“ (*The Strange Worlds of Philip K. Dick*), edited by Uwe Anton, Meitingen 1984: p. 77 - 80. Patrick told me that the original cannot be found in the published letter volumes, so I decided to translate it „back“ into English to make the content available to a wider audience.

The letter as published by Anton is missing the beginning (greeting etc.) and the closing part (salutation etc.). The printed text has only one paragraph break (after „as a writer“, see below) but in this translation more paragraphs have been added for readability. Italics were taken over from the source. A small glossary has been added by me. There's a three-point ellipse in the source text where it's unclear whether Anton let something out or the three points are Phil's (after „excellent films“, see below).

The overall strange narration is Phil Dick's, not mine.

--- Start of translation source without letter head or greeting

“Indeed I am rather fine. I finally learned how to live alone. I am dedicating my full time to writing and those intellectual, philosophical, and theological endeavours that fully occupy me since March 1974. I think I rather formulated the big questions instead of finding the answers, but that's OK. Plato said that for a philosopher the search for these answers is the goal and target itself. (I would put it like this: Assuming the existence of God - how does he relate to the world? And where in the world, given that relation, can one find him? How many of the things happening in the world are caused by God? Where can we discover his influence and in



what respects would the world be different if he would not exist, assuming that there even would be a world in this case?). In the past I asked myself whether the world exists and if so, can we prove it? Now I think that there is a relationship between the world's esse (1) and the reality of God, that God is the esse of the world. And the world does only exist because God exists. The whole world is therefore an epiphenomenon somehow derived from God. I studied Shankara (2) and Eckhart who said much of the same. And Heidegger and Spinoza.

I have good friends and I recently bought my apartment. I've been living here for almost four years now and I have cable TV and watch a large number of excellent films...The film industry is the lifeline of this area, and I have my stereo and two cats. I feel that I have withdrawn from the world and into thoughtfulness to a high degree. I feel that I am now in the third (and last) phase of my life and my works. The next world has started talking to me, it takes the form of a woman's voice whispering to me in the night. And I dream of endless beauty.

In Canada I was devastated, but my life changed for the better in March 1974. Then I glimpsed, for the first time, another reality that sits atop this one, a kind of second signal. I started solving my problems again, especially the problem of my isolation. I think the fate of all writers is inescapable loneliness. I'm closer now to my eldest daughter, she is twenty years old and studies at Stanford. I feel close to the *salvator salvandus* (3) even though he might not be Christ. In March 1974 he broke the power of *heimarmene* (4) - of the tyrannical world order - as he came upon me and thus released me - here my thoughts are purely Gnostic - and I won't ever be just a thing again. I strongly identify with Beethoven and his concept of freedom, and with the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years' War. I consider history as the unveiling of mankind's struggle for liberation and me as a combatant in this struggle, both as a living soul and as a writer.

When I look at other people I can see their unhappiness and contrast this with my own peace of mind. I'm reading

constantly (when I am not watching movies) and spend much time with Cristopher whom Tessa brings over each week.

My last novel, VALIS, published by Bantam, is really good, I have already written an 80-page outline for a sequel which my agent (who is very good) likes very much. Many of my novels have been reprinted and in 1978 my gross income was 100,000 dollars so I am not in financial need anymore. (I paid cash for my apartment, it has two bedrooms and a patio for the cats.) I'm preoccupied with certain social problems, like world hunger, and help poor kids via an agency called Covenant House in New York which is led by a Catholic priest, and do support two small kids abroad. And I do help out in my own church, of course, in 1979 I paid all the bills of the community service bureau. It's a socially conscious church, because we live in the poor part of Santa Ana, in the heart of the Mexican working-class district.

I get a lot of mail and the flood of visitors and telephone calls is not drying up, and in 1977 I was in France, in Metz (yes, I wrote about it in an article in Foundation; it was definitely the high point of my life). I met an enchanting French woman there and last year she came over and stayed with me for a month. I was supposed to accompany her back to France but I ultimately decided that my work is of greater importance to me. I don't know whether this was the right choice, but it was a choice, nothing forced or imposed upon me, and I made it. My work and my religious-philosophical-intellectual quest are so important to me that they trump everything else.

I'm currently also working on an alternative-reality novel in which Paul did not convert to Christianity and in which Manichaeism is the religion of the Western world. In the novel (which takes place in the present), a liberal Manichean scholar tries to reconstruct Christian history from defamatory fragments about the life and times of Christ as published in polemical writings of early Manichean apologists. He concludes that Christianity is the true religion and then calculates with a computer, that, if that's the case, there must be a Christian underground, and he starts searching for it. In the end, having endured countless defeats in his quest, he meets a hidden-living

real Christian who gives him a small book. When he opens the book he recognizes it as being the lost 4th gospel (none of the gospels survived). So he feeds the book to the memory banks of his computer and commands it to print out that text on all computer terminals around the whole world.



Back then, when Nancy left me, my life was in ruins. Now I am so much stronger and so much more happy. Much of my inner joy stems from the fact that I accept the facticity of my choice: That my writing and my intellectual life comes first, that I am foremost a writer and not a family man. And that wasn't forced upon me by heimarmene, in fact, I do see my role as a family man, i.e. married with children, as a DNA-programmed heimarmene determinism, as a fate in whose clutches I

was unhappy and powerless. I'm not sure whether I am a Christian because I am not sure if it was Jesus or the Christian God who saved and liberated me, but God as God certainly liberated me - one can read many details about my March 1974 experience in the novel VALIS (which is starkly autobiographical)."

---- Translation source ends here without letter closing part

Glossary:

(1) "esse" is the Latin "present infinitive" of "sum": to be, exist, have.

(2) Adi Shankara was an Indian philosopher and theologian from the first half of the 8th century CE.

(3) The "salvator salvandus" is the Gnostic figure of the "saved saviour" or saviour in need of saving. It's in stark contrast to the capable Christian "salvator mundi."

(4) Adapted from Wikipedia: Heimarmene is a goddess and being of fate/destiny in Greek mythology (in particular, the orderly succession of cause and effect, or rather, the fate of the universe as a whole). The term "Heimarmene" (personified or not) is also widely used in the Gnostic religion (such as in the Pistis Sophia manuscript).

"Die seltsamen Welten..." from which I translated the letter entry "Die Macht des heimarmene" was the first near-scholarly, special interest omnibus publication

(essays both by him and about him, letters, short stories) on Philip K. Dick in Germany, in 1984 (that year!). This book outed Uwe Anton as Germany's prime Dickhead and the book's existence seemed to prove a hard-core base of fellows.

Research comment: Phil sent another letter to Uwe Anton later in February 1980 (2/25/1980) which was published in *"The Selected Letters, 1980-1982."* In this letter he repeats some things he writes about here, like how much he grossed in 1978, that he paid cash for his apartment, or about the 80-page VALIS sequel outline. Does he not know what he already told his correspondent earlier? Or did Anton mis-state the date of the letter published in his German book and "back-translated" here? Or, as Patrick ventured, was Phil stoned when he wrote the first letter so he did not recall it that well when writing the later and shorter letter to Uwe Anton which is preserved in *"The Selected Letters?"*

And here is that slightly later letter as printed in *The*

Selected Letters, 1980-1982:

The cover Phil refers to in this letter is the one below this text. Uwe Anton (with Ziegler) only published two "real" (non franchise) science-fiction novels and since then he has been for many years a leading figure behind "Perry Rhodan" to which he contributed over decades. <http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?10670>

Personal comment: I'm somewhat glad Phil did not write the novel about the born-again Mani priest and his eschatological PC printer hack. (A.W.)



6 THE SELECTED LETTERS OF PHILIP K. DICK

[TO UWE ANTON]

February 25, 1980

Dear Uwe,

How wonderful to hear from you! Es freut mich sehr! Thank you so much for sending me the two editions of magazines containing the interview with me. As to your novel, you certainly got a good cover for it. My recent covers here in the U.S. are dreadful. I envy you. Anyhow, congratulations.

VALIS is supposed to come out this summer, although the French edition may come out sooner. Things have been going well with me, although I am saddened by the fact that my relationship with Joan (who was with me at Metz) has broken up. I am still in touch with her by phone, however; she is living in Northern California, about 600 miles from here. I hope to go up and visit her soon.

My income from writing has increased enormously. In 1978 I grossed over one hundred thousand dollars, although last year it dropped. I bought my apartment, a condominium, for \$52,500 cash. Now I owe the income tax people a lot, and am desperately trying to raise the amount before April 15th.

Basically, what I've been doing is working on a sequel to VALIS; I wrote an 80-page outline and my agent hopes to sell it for a rather large sum. Meanwhile, I have a movie deal; my story "Second Variety" has been bought by a new movie company and they have signed Dan O'Bannon to write the screenplay and direct it; he wrote *Alien*, I believe, and *Dark Star*. It will be a Dan O'Bannon Production. If and when they go into production I will get a good deal of money, enough to take care of my tax problem.

The research I am doing for the sequel to VALIS is taking me into fascinating areas of philosophy and theology. I am on the verge of creating a new cosmology and cosmogony; it is exciting. The results will appear in VALIS REGAINED. One thing I am trying to do is fuse early Hebrew monotheism with the philosophy of Heidegger—which no one has ever done before. And, as always in my thinking, there is a streak of Gnosticism, regarding which I am now something of an authority.

Again thank you for what you sent me, and keep in touch. I have already heard from Frank Bertrand and am writing to him soon.

With warm regards,
Phil Dick

“Who’s Afraid of Philp K. Dick?”

by Paul Walker.

Science Fiction Review no. 36, April 1970 p. 27

I’m told Edward Albee entitled his masterpiece “Virginia Wolf” because, in her later years, Miss Wolf had difficulty distinguishing reality from illusion, and that was what the play was all about. What reality/what illusion is not Albee’s thematic territory exclusively, but the growing preoccupation of many major or minor writers. Gunter Grass, in his magnificent surrealistic exercise *The Tin Drum*, blended reality and illusion for a portrait of a contemporary world which defied traditional realism. Vladimir Nabokov, whose whimsical monsters are only now coming into recognition, also blends the two in a poetic stew that is a visionary statement of the illusion of being human. John Cheever, whose NEW YORKER prose and best-seller status deprives him of his proper appreciation, revels in the multiple realities of middle class suburban existence. Among them is Philip K. Dick, who has cherished and nurtured this theme throughout his career and is the best practitioner in the SF field.

Dick’s is the literature of anxiety. Perhaps, more the literature of modern man than the majority of his contemporaries, mainstream or SF. It is not a psychotic world for the illusions he inflicts are not fantasies; in fact, they are contesting realities. His anxiety – his conflict between realities: the intellectual of the moral and philosophical, and the emotional – is the natural and endemic condition of his fictional people, place and time. His backgrounds assume a bland existence, his mood disdains sensationalism, and an air of realism pervades his work into his most bizarre episodes.

His world exists on many planes. There are no rules, divine or human, no tangibles that are unquestionable, no anything but the fact that of its multiple existence, which is itself debatable. The only real thing in Dick’s work is illusion, plus the nothingness, the meaninglessness of reality. His characters themselves are illusions, existing superficially, thinking, feeling, but lacking any genuine substance, for there is no genuine anything. They are drifters, who believe they know where they are going, anxious, confused, lonely, perched on the edge of an abyss into which Dick plunges them in novel after novel.

Dick’s enthusiasm for Taoism, the *I Ching*, and far eastern philosophy is not playful, but dead serious. At least in

his fiction. There is being, but only in the cosmic sense. All things exist only in relation to their cosmic being. Everything else is illusion and worthy of avoidance if not rejection.

This is presumptuous on my part to offer any explanation of Dick’s philosophy, for so much of it lies beneath the surface of his work or in his head. It could probably fill a volume alone if he wanted to write it. He may or may not believe any of it, but it is there.

I’m told Dick is very funny. Satire, farce, jokes are contained throughout his work, but I’m not amused. His world is frightening. It is a world, without gods or human values, based on more than superstition and arrogant human presumptions, that does not exist but exists anyway. A world, parallel, psychic, social, moral and illusionary, where not even death matters. He seems to say, “Nothing matters, you know. The hell with it.”

Dick resists categorizing. It is difficult to keep him in mind when discussing other SF writers. His style, his thrust, is commercial, which is why it is so easy to underestimate him. His characters are good, but spiritually repetitious in that they all seem hung on the same Christmas tree the day following the abdication of Christ. His backgrounds run from adequate to fascinating. He is fine at describing much by suggesting little. His plots are among the most skillful in SF. He gets out of impossible situations with astonishing agility. Unfortunately, he is often clumsy in prose, and especially in beginnings, which drop the reader unexpectedly into the midst of his characters’ lives and forces him to race to catch up before the plot is underway.

As much as I respect and enjoy his books, I find Dick unsatisfying. He lacks compassion. There is no fun and games in the misery and terror of his protagonists, nothing amusing about the bleak human dilemma he delineates, but Dick seem to feel nothing for them or his kind. I wonder if he is not a little contemptuous: look how silly and stupid everything is.

However, Dick’s work is among the most potent and significant in SF. Consistently, it is a personal statement of high quality and originality. If ever fans offer a Nobel Prize for a writer’s life work, I vote Dick should be the first recipient.

[I know: it’s Virginia Woolf. Surely Paul Walker knew that, too. I’m guessing it’s a typesetter error.]

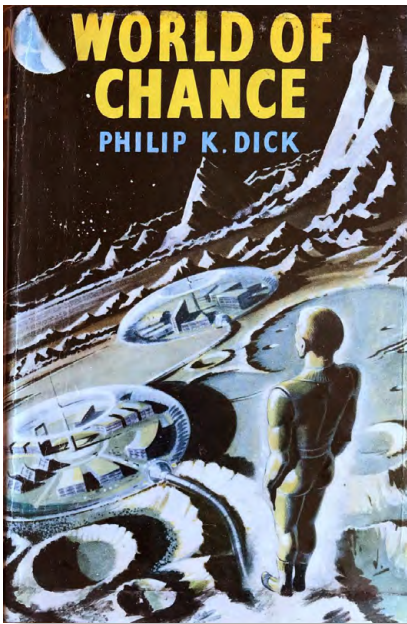
A collection of book reviews

Collated by Patrick Clark

We haven't had many old book reviews in some time now; then I found a bunch more.

WORLD OF CHANCE

Authentic Science Fiction September 1956, pg. 153



WORLD OF CHANCE, by Philip K. Dick, published by Rich & Cowan, 1780202 Great Portland Street, London, W.1, at 9s 6d, is a novel by an author who has gained an enviable reputation in the science fiction field.

Unfortunately, interesting as this book is, it does not do justice to the given theme, which is that positions of power in a future civilization are

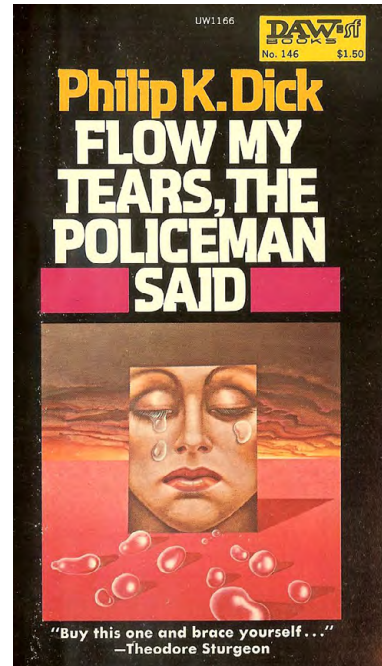
determined by sheer chance and that the Quizmaster, the supreme authority, can be disposed and replaced at the whim of, apparently, a glorified raffle.

I say "apparently" because the workings of the system are not made clear aside from vague references to things which are never explained. Instead, the action revolves around the efforts of the deposed Quizmaster to assassinate his successor by means of an android which becomes more and more versatile as the story progresses, finally ending up as a self-contained spaceship able to reach beyond Pluto.

The new Quizmaster has devoted his life to launching a spaceship filled with colonists to a mythical world far out in space. He has also cheated to obtain the coveted position, something which seems to have no real bearing on the story, and doesn't seem to know what to do with his authority when he gets it. The main character, Ted Bently, suffers the usual vicissitudes and winds up with the usual reward.

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID

Gerald Jonas: *New York Times Book Review*, July 20, 1975
pg. 10, 12



Philip K. Dick's *FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID* (DAW, paper, \$1.50) draws its narrative strength from a device that never fails to enthrall no matter how many times it is used. Jason Taverner, a TV star whose face and voice are familiar to 30-million fans, wakes up to find himself in a world that is exactly like his own except that no one has ever heard of Jason Taverner. Dick skillfully explores the psychological

ramifications of this nightmare but he is even more interested in the reaction of a ruthlessly efficient computerized police-state to the existence of a man who, according to the computers, should not exist. Little by little, the police apparatus—in the person of Police General Felix Buckmaster—takes control of the book. As the focus shifts, the reader gradually becomes reconciled to the possibility that the author has no "rational" explanation to provide for Taverner's Kafkaesque experiences. Then, perversely, Dick provides an explanation that is so weak artistically, and so unsatisfying psychologically, that it can only be read as the author's grudging obeisance to what he thinks of as the demands of the science fiction market. A serious miscalculation, I would say, and a major flaw in an otherwise superb novel.

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID

David Wingrove: *Vector* November/December 1976, pp. 20-21

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID by Philip K. Dick; Panther; St Albans; 1978; 60p; 304 pp; ISBN 0-586-04203-2

Is this "reality" all we have, or is it a fragile illusion woven

about us? In a future world, Jason Taverner, TV celebrity, loses his basic existence and becomes an “unperson”. Police General Felix Buckman is intrigued by this situation and lets events take their course; as interested as Taverner in discovering Just what exactly is happening.

In the hands of anyone else this situation would develop into a simple, tense thriller with the denouement never in doubt. Dick, however, plunges us into the sewage of human existence and leaves us in no doubt that this is no thriller. This is existence, what it means “to be”.

“It would be funny, he thought, if it were happening to someone else. But it’s happening to me. No, it’s not funny either way. Because there is real suffering and real death passing the time of day in the wings. Ready to come on at any minute.” (page 63)

This is Dick through Taverner; the Phil Dick of 1974, no longer the harlequin of pyrotechnical philosophies but a man cowered by sour eclecticism, by a set of circumstances so similar to those of Taverner that this could almost be a fictional biography. He could well have written a story that seethed with hatred against the system; one that “pointed the finger”. But Dick is Dick and above that. General Felix Buckman is no uncaring fascist. He acts because he must; a higher morality begs his service. Taverner’s eventual sacrifice to the politics of higher-echelon policy decisions is justifiable and Dick makes it clear that he understands the motivations of the sinners as well as those sinned against.

This is a sour book by comparison with all else that Dick has written; as strong in theme as *The Man in the High Castle* yet without light relief, without contrast. It is typically Dick in all other respects. Telepaths and “sixes” (a genetic experiment of which Taverner is a part), “quibbles” (flying cars) and strange experimental drugs form part of the tapestry of 19M. We are hurled unwary into a police state of horrifying proportions: the blacks are a slowly dying race due to a compulsory sterilization programme; the students beneath the ground like hunted rats, kept there by the storm-trooper “pol-nat” forces; there are street check points and a profusion of bureaucratic demands upon the individual. Dick seems to ignore this, accept all this, whilst exploring the facets of personal reality. But by so doing he creates an atmosphere in which the social morality of Taverner’s world is made questionable.

Taverner is a “winner” at the beginning of this book, a man without doubts. But the wheel of fortune turns swiftly and discards him at the bottom. He becomes a “loser”;

admittedly a man of great inherent capabilities, but with a comparative naivety. He is used by Dick as a touchstone. The manner in which people react to him is revelational:

“So what are you, then? A man who has his picture taken all the time that no-one’s ever seen or heard of.” (page 36)

Thus the enigmatic Kathy (herself a product of schizophrenia and paranoia) describes him, and this revelation (which comes slowly to him) provides the tension of the book. Only by extracting someone from their environment as totally as Dick does here could we reach the inner core of the man. The irrationality of Taverner’s world is mirrored in the illogic of the psychotic Kathy. She is forever turning a question back upon itself, entrapping and confusing, complex and unstable. Her relationship with Taverner is an exchange of conundrums, a dance to an anarchic music which terminates abruptly. And this is all so real, so achingly real that even the trappings become credible - even Cheerful Charlie, the empathic talking-doll, a *deus in machina* (and part of Taverner’s subjective reality?)

Characterization is Dick’s major achievement in this novel. Taverner and Kathy are strong, unpredictable “people”, but Buckman and his sister/wife Alys are on a different level of complexity. General Buckman explains himself this way:

“I am like Byron, he thought, fighting for freedom, giving up his life to fight for Greece. Except that I am not fighting for freedom; I am fighting for a coherent society.” (page 97)

One has the feeling that despite all else Dick would endorse that view.

Alys is a woman who is neither owned nor owns; a woman whom even the powerful Buckman fears. She is freedom incarnate, without rules, and therefore beyond good and evil. That we learn that she is the fulcrum of the strange happenings in the novel is unsurprising. Through her we tumble into multi-dimensioned vistas of perception and peel back the attenuated skin of reality. Her death is the release of this tension and the beginning of comprehension. “Reality” is back with us, Taverner is a person again (and a celebrity) and, with that, prone to the hazards of existence. That he is accordingly “used” is understandable in terms of the world Dick envisages: that Buckman can do nothing else is consistent with the demands of the situation. Taverner is betrayed, framed for the murder of Alys,

and that, to him is the final revelation.

This is all heavy metaphysical stuff indeed. But Dick is enjoyable even at his most morose. Moreover, the purely irrational things within his books are those which make him unique as a writer. The assail touches of pathos (Emily Fusselman's rabbit which tried to be a cat and failed; Buckman's meeting with the black man, Montgomery L. Hopkins, in the all-night filling-station) are unforgettable. They, along with Cheerful Charley and the all-too-human characters, make this a unique book.

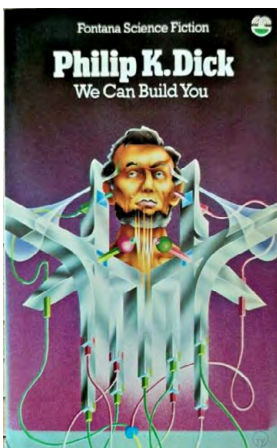
Like The Man in the High Castle, this book is rooted firmly in reality. Without that anchorage an exploration of "reality" would be untenable. That it is once again by drugs (a perception drug here) is predictable in view of Dick's past record (Ubik, Now Wait For Last Year, The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch) but hardly a fault. Dick is the great explorer of the interface of morality and immorality. Within this novel these aspects serge into each other with surprising ease whilst the layers of reality and hallucination shift and coalesce constantly. That Dick is little known outside of this claustrophobic genre is, to me, incomprehensible. But then Dick explains that too:

"The blue vase made by Mary Anne Dominic...wound up in a private collection of modern pottery. It remains there to this day, and is such treasured. And, in fact, by a number of people who know ceramics, openly and genuinely cherished. And loved." (page 204)

And in that same way I admire Dick's work: "openly and genuinely cherished. And loved."

WE CAN BUILD YOU

Andrew Darlington: *Vector Oct 1977*, pp. 18-19



On the cover of We Can Build You it says "Fontana Science Fiction", which is just as well because there is little sf content within the covers, those sf derived images that Dick uses are introduced as a kind of Kafka-esque absurdity quotient, a mere quirky addition to the unpredictable plot. There is a token Spaceship, and with a kind of sad nostalgia Dick, through his protagonist, wonders "What's it got

aboard? Soil Samples? The first nonterrestrial life to be found? Broken pots discovered in the ash of an extinct volcano - evidence of some ancient civilized race? More likely just a flock of bureaucrats". It is a bleak, humorous, wistful book, with the science fiction content reduced to cyphers manipulated for effect, as symbols of surreal strangeness. VECTOR is quoted on the cover of The Game-Players of Titan to the effect that "if it's ideas you want then Philip K. Dick is the author to read", The anonymous scribe is gnawing at the edges of an understanding of what Dick is all about. It seems to me that increasingly Dick has used conventional sf images as symbols, and has brought out the significance, or lack of significance of the symbols, through his manipulation of them; a process of increasing stylization that is clearly defined over the years...

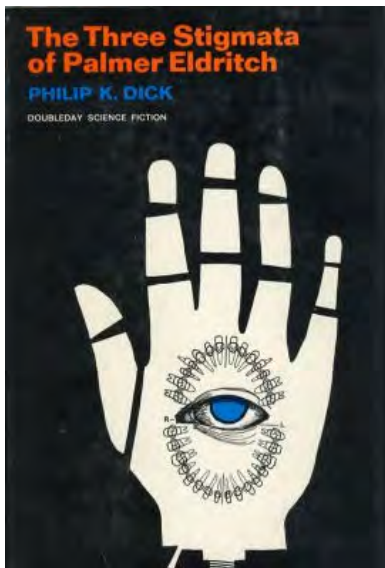
The shift in the emphasis from science fiction as a literary device to science fiction as surreal symbol is completed in We Can Build You (serialized in 1969/70 by Ultimate Publishing, and issued in the US by DAW in 1972). The main narrative theme is of Louis Rosen, an electronic organ and spinnet salesman for the Frauenzimmer Piano Company, and the development of his relationship and his doomed love for the schizophrenic Pris Frauenzimmer. The sf content comes in the shape of Simulacra - exact electronic representations of the historical characters Abraham Lincoln and Edwin M. Stanton. But, just as there was no real attempt to invest the Vugs with believably alien psychology, there is no attempt to make the simulacra convincing as constructs. That is not Dick's purpose. Lincoln and Stanton merely join the cast on equal terms with the other characters, and at one point, Rosen even observes that "in many ways it (Stanton) was more human - God help us - than we were". More likely they, with electronically programmed memories and absolutely Pavlovian responses are intended to present analogies to the novel's obsession with mental health. The novel's title referring, not to simulacra, but to prevailing attitudes to sanity which imply restoration not to a state of multiplex humanity, but to a pre-programmed statistically-determined social norm.

The plot, the gimmicks, have become vehicles for Dick's quirky existential humour, for his discourses on Spinoza and the soul, on Jewishness, mental illness as "current fashion", a drug the effect of which is directly analogous to that of Beethoven's Sixteenth Quartet, and for Dick's own experiments in anecdotal writing styles which, at no time, are less than brilliantly executed. It is an immensely wistful, humorous novel, yet the underlying bleakness of relationships is as pessimistic as anything from "Second

Variety". "The basis of life is not a greed to exist, not a desire of any kind. It is fear," writes Rosen. "Absolute dread. Paralyzing dread so great as to produce apathy ... All the activity of life was an effort to relieve this one state ... Birth is not pleasant. It is worse than death ... There is no philosophizing, no easing of the condition. And the prognosis if terrible: all your actions and deeds and thoughts will only embroil you in living the more deeply." Sentiments that recall Dave Garden's suicidal compulsions. A strange, oblique, love-story novel, less accessible and direct than *The Game-Players of Titan*, but with much compensatory subtlety. For example, there is an in-joke directed at his own less sophisticated science fiction pulp origins. One of the quoted motivations behind the simulacra construction had been a "science fiction magazine called *Thrilling Wonder Stories* and ... a story about robot attendants who protected children like huge mechanical dogs; they were called Nannies".

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH

Chris Priest: *Vector* no. 40 1966, pg. 31-32



Philip K. Dick is one of the few contemporary American writers who uses science fiction as it should be used as a vehicle for the examination of a new idea from a new angle. In "Three Stigmata" he is questioning reality; both subjective and otherwise. He is also looking at religion from a new standpoint, and in running these two ideas together has come up with a complex science

fiction novel that is unusually good.

Palmer Eldritch returns after ten years in the Proxima Centaurus system, bringing with him a derived narcotic called Chew-Z (pronounce it 'choosey'), which has the power of inducing such vivid hallucinations that they are indistinguishable from reality. Fairly early on in the book, Leo Bulero (who runs a firm already doing pretty

well out of another drug called Can-D, which has a slightly less potent effect) falls foul of Eldritch and is injected with Chew-Z. From here on out, it is probable that all succeeding incidents are imaginary. Although Bulero is roused by Eldritch from his hallucinations, and returns, apparently, to what he knows as reality, he can never be certain. Later on in the book, when another character called Barney Mayerson (previously Bulero's top precog consultant, but now in disrepute) voluntarily submits to the drug, he experiences recurring "realities" that turn out, cm after the other, to be hallucinatory. Things become further complicated when he takes an overdose of the drug (although at the time he has no way of telling whether or not he is taking the overdose) and finds himself doomed to living forever in hallucination.

In fact, Dick is not strictly interested in the physical nature of the world he has created in this book. He is exploring subjective reality, sounding it out to see if there is any true difference between the thread of reality that runs through this book and the solipsist hallucinatory worlds that his characters create. It is to his eternal credit that the quasi-religious denouement (as hinted at in the book's title) is played down to an extent that it becomes the only logical rationale. A less subtle writer would have spoiled the entire book by stressing the point.

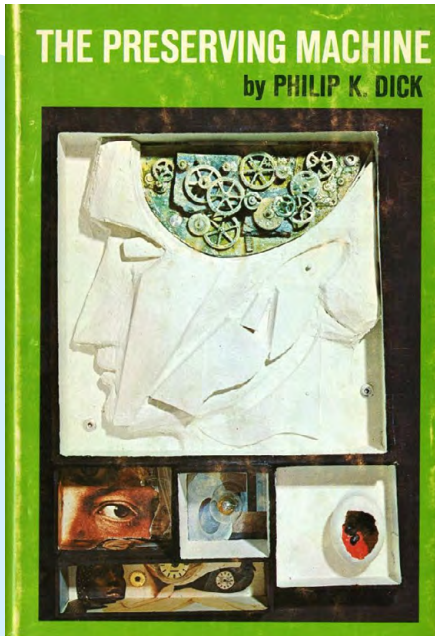
Certainly, the book is not faultless. Its atmosphere is akin to some of A.E. van Vogt's novels, and in places the dialogue is so much like van Vogt's that it makes one wonder whether Dick has realised the similarities and is taking a polite swipe at his precursor. The passage immediately following Bolero's first (and only?) experience of Chew-Z is a case in point.

Despite a few such superficial (and unimportant) faults, this book could well be a major step forward in science fiction. Dick's ideas are original and stimulating, and are presented in a way that gives them maximum demonstration. His implication is that by their very nature neither reality nor religion can exist should the other be 'real'.

In review, this novel might seem confusing or obscure. It is an extremely difficult book to describe with justice, but Dick's plotting is tight and his description has a simplicity and clarity that adequately carries any ambiguity there might be. It is, then, an extremely rewarding book.

THE PRESERVING MACHINE

Richard Delap: *Science Fiction Review* December 1969, pp. 34-35



I have seen only one previous collection of Dick's shorter fiction (*The Variable Man*, Ace), so this new collection of works dating from 1952 to 1966 fills a gap that has long needed attention. Nearly all the stories included are good or better, and even the three less-than-average stories are not really poor. The author's most remarkable talent is his extraor-

ordinary range which is often as adept at farce as at tragedy, as well as an uncanny ability to sometimes combine the two. That a single man could have written all these stories is indeed in itself only a tiny bit less than staggering.

"The Preserving Machine" tells of a machine which turns musical scores into strangely active animals. But the struggle for survival does unpredictable things, and the outcome...is it evil, inevitable, or both? Whatever, it's weird.

"Upon the Dull Earth" is an sf-horror tale of a young woman whose ability to dabble with the unknown dimensions leads to disastrous consequences. Although the climax is foreseeable, it's still a disturbing tale with an eerie, attached sense of dread.

In the book's best story, "War Game," three men carefully examine alien toys from Ganymede, looking for dangerous or subversive elements. One mysterious set of toy soldiers keeps the men in a very worried state as they suspect but cannot confirm a danger. The danger is there, and its subtlety is as appallingly ingenious as is this story.

Following the colonization of Mars and Venus, newly-formed cultural and physiological differences cause humanity to war again in "War Veteran," and one man, a time-traveler, holds the key to changing the war-torn future. It's a bit long, but on the clever side and mostly en-

tertaining.

Implantation of simulated memories causes a lot of problems when used on an ordinary man whose real memories mysteriously coincide with the fake ones. Dick tries hard to make the highly implausible "We Can Remember It for You Wholesale" convincing, but nothing he does can really excuse the disappointingly stolid plotting.

"Captive Market" is a downbeat but ok story of a business-woman who can travel through a sort of time-warp, moving into the future where the last survivors of a world scale war need supplies to carry out their plans of taking a ship to Venus. (Dick's on the side of the villain in this one.)

A giant computer is President of the U.S. in "Top Stand-By Job," but union rules have made it mandatory that a human being be placed in a 'stand-by' position. An alien invasion, a computer disablement, and an overweight, all-too-human stand-by give Dick the chance to make some to-the-core statements on Man's inability to eat one potato chip.

Is the world really so terrifying? In "Roog," from a dog's-eye point-of-view, Dick makes a short but effective comment on perception.

"Beyond Lies the Wub" is an amusing tale of some men's dizzy encounter with their superior—a fat pig from Mars. In spite of the wild humor, the story says something relevant.

In "If There Were No Benny Cemoli," a search for "war criminals" on an again nearly destroyed Earth, a homeostatic newspaper, and elements of detection and deception mesh well.

A devastated Earth (hmmm, Dick seems to love to ravage this planet), aliens who are dying (literally) to help, and the sometimes terrible consequences of frustration — these are the things used to build "Pay For the Printer." Too bad it disintegrates when the author insultingly uses the last two pages to explain the obvious.

A wheels-within-wheels plot, "Retreat Syndrome" is about a man who suspects he is on Ganymede (but it seems he's on Earth), who knows he has murdered his wife (but she's still hanging around), and who has a psychiatrist who intrudes upon both the real and the unreal. It's a suspenseful, intriguing, very good story.

"What the Dead Men Say" runs high on melodrama while telling of the devious methods employed for power-gains,

and concerns a man who during a "half-life" after death still seems seeking to control the lives of others. The intricate plot gets buried under some unconvincing psychology, but Dick did make an interesting prediction (the story was published in 1964) about Richard Nixon that had to be updated by only a couple of years for this printing.

A mostly predictable story, "The Crawlers" still carries a sharp sting in its tail. Radiation is the implied reason for a group of ugly human mutant children who crawl about, building homes' underneath the ground and suffering at people's uncontrollable urges suspense- to put them out of their misery.

"Oh, To Be a Blobel!" is a blackly amusing, O. Henry-like whimsy about a man who is human part of the time and Blobel (an alien, unicellular amoeba) the rest. His wife, originally a Blobel, has similar problems by being human at times. And Dick does some wicked table-turning with both.

If Ace can get together more collections such as this, they will bring a nice change of pace, as this one has, to the high quality "Specials" line.

yngvi: *Son of WSFA Journal* March 1971, pg. 7

the preserving machine, philip k dick, ace books book club edition

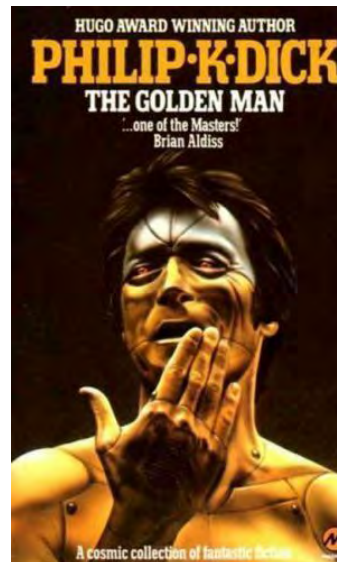
i think that
philip k dick
is a reincarnated
scorpion
when you think
youve got the head straight
the tail stabs you in the ass
his stories
come to a truly
beautiful
ending
and then make a
u turn
to the west of never
his novels are weird enough
but his short stories
are condensed
schizophrenia
this book
has fifteen stories

all good
some very good
and i have
the galloping jeebies
I feel
as nutty as a bedbug
but im not a bedbug
im yngvi the cockroach
who is not a louse

THE GOLDEN MAN

David Penn: *Vector* December 1981, pp. 37-39

Almost no Dick novel so far has been fully successful, yet



it is patently obvious that he is capable of work of real genius: he can create real characters, he can create atmosphere, he has a brilliant and evocative range of images, he can write prose which is vivid and effective, he has a powerful vision of life. But he never seems to be able to get it all together, and when you're talking about a writer of such talent working within a genre so desperately in need of it, the situation begins to look more and more gloomy.

When he does succeed in producing something well-made, it's in the best of his stories. One or two of those in *The Preserving Machine* are some of the best explorations of an image you could hope to read; the same is true of some of those in *The Golden Man*, an edition of 'quality' Dick stories hard to find anywhere else.

'The Last of the Masters', for example, is a vision of the mechanistic, centralized nature of Western societies. The symbol of this is a robot, Bors, designed as an administrating machine and built during our own age of technology which has survived into a time when people rule themselves: it governs a tiny pocket of traditional society, running factories, building arms and commanding a hierarchy. Built into it is a drive to serve man by leading him, and it is struggling to preserve what it sees as

civilisation amongst what it sees as barbarism and chaos. But at the same time it is deteriorating: it can no longer walk, only one of its arms functions correctly, and the coils that comprise its memory (containing the information necessary to construct an Industrial state) are burning out. It is a frightening contraption with enough humanity to make it into a character capable of inspiring sympathy. We recognise that it is struggling heroically to do what it thinks is right, and is not some Frankenstein creation Insanely perpetuating a tyrannical system, although there is something of an obsessive plunge-to-destruction about it. Dick subtly builds this strange figure with little episodes and quiet references, having the robot when we first meet it come awake in a hospital bed, supported and nursed by its human aides. When it is placed on two chairs to conduct an interrogation, the girl Interrogee kicks away one of them and it sprawls helplessly on the floor crying for help. Dick describes in lingering detail, with a detachment that reinforces the image, the final collapse of Bors when an agent of the Anarchist League attacks it:

“The robot shuddered. Its machinery thrashed. It half-rose from its chair, then swayed and toppled. It crashed full-length on the floor, parts and gears rolling in all directions.”

There is action in the story, as the Anarchists discover the existence of the robot's surviving industrial state and send agents in to destroy it. There are other standard thriller devices: a helpless girl, an ambush, and unexpected turns to keep the pressure up. But none of it, in this case, detracts from Dick's effective opposition of symbols, centering on the supernatural figure of Bors, almost akin to a Shakespearian tragedy.

There are other stories in the collection as good as this, and some of them are even more precisely constructed, lacking any superfluous action. 'The Golden Man', 'King of the Elves', 'Return Match', 'The Mold of Yancy', 'Not By Its Cover', 'Sales Pitch', 'Small Town' and 'Precious Artifact' — all these are far superior to anything done by most other writers of science fiction. But, appallingly if not quite unexpectedly, there are many stories in the book which were written during the same periods as the good ones but which are little more than prose TV dramas, their content of Dick mythos notwithstanding. The development of their plots hinges on continual twists, revelations, detective work, stock characters and fast pacing. There is none of the concentration of the other pieces, of the

clarity and precision that characterizes, for example, 'The Golden Man', or the brilliantly effective representations in 'The Last of the Masters', or any of the depth the latter has with or without its concession to action.

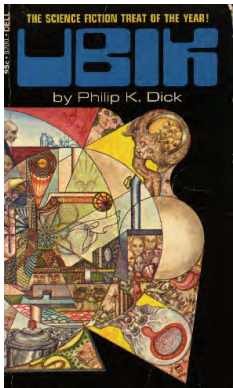
Probably the worst example of hackwork in the collection is 'The Unreconstructed M'. In this story, a police officer Investigates a murder which, unbeknown to him, has been committed by a machine that can leave false clues at the scene of its crime to implicate an innocent party. Various other characters are introduced, and as the story progresses, we discover that they are all connected to each other by some strange set of coincidences. For example, the policeman discovers that his wife has become the lover of the man who built the assassination machine. Many want this machine for their own ends, and all vie desperately for it. Behind this made-over episode of *The Streets of San Francisco* seems to be the idea that our technological society is tremendously vulnerable to fakery. But what's the point of all the fast scene-changing and knotty revelations? It's hard to see how they throw any light on the theme — in fact all such machinations only conspire to obscure and bury it. It seems obvious that this story was written for a market, and its rapid flights of actions were simply Included for their escapist value.

In stories like 'The Unreconstructed H', Dick is first and foremost a market writer, a churning-out of science fiction adventures, and an explorer of theme only second. His vision of the world becomes a sort of prop for a way-out action-packed potboiler, and whenever that happens his brilliance vanishes. In the stories I listed earlier his overriding concern is to communicate a vision or an image, but in this and other stories in this collection — 'The Little Black Box', 'The War with the Fnools' and 'A Game of Unchance' — he is trying purely and simply to write something that will grab someone's attention. If he wrote so poorly in only a few short stories and consistently took care to avoid cheap devices in other work, the point would hardly be worth making; but in fact nine out of ten of his novels lack the model construction of his ideal style, and so do far too many of the stories in this and other collections. He may be improving, as *A Scanner Darkly* and perhaps *Valis* and *The Divine Invasion* suggest, but if he doesn't then his inconsistency and weakness for crowd-pleasing will leave him with the reputation that most of his previous work credits him with -- that of a very uneven and uncared science fiction writer capable of occasional flashes of brilliance. And, in view of those flashes of

brilliance, some of which are visible in the best stories in *The Golden Man*, it's obvious that Dick owes himself more than that.

UBIK

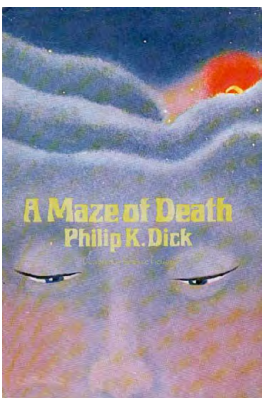
Richard E. Geis: *Science Fiction Review* August 1970, pg. 38



Dell has published *Ubik* by Philip K. Dick (9200, 95cents) and banners it "The Science Fiction Treat of the Year!" I'll go along with that. It is a constantly surprising, absorbing journey into a fantastically involuted, layered reality-world that I consider one of Dick's best. It's a roller-coaster ride: hang on and keep your eyes open. Not that it will do you any good....

A MAZE OF DEATH

Richard E. Geis: *Science Fiction Review* August 1970, pp. 35-36



A fan reviewer not too long ago started a review of a Philip K. Dick novel by saying, "Here's Phil Dick playing with reality again..."

It applies to *A Maze of Death* (Doubleday, \$4.95) too, except that 'playing' isn't the right word. Exploring or revealing or cataloguing is more accurate.

Because Philip K. Dick is perhaps the most serious and dedicated sf novelist we have. He is endlessly fascinated with "reality." He is forever digging in its garden and turn-ing up weird rocks, artifacts, treasures...weeds....

A Maze of Death is difficult to review if the reviewer is reluctant to give away the character of the reality beneath the reality that is explored in the 200 pages that precede the final two short chapters.

I am not above quoting the dust-jacket teaser; it gives a reluctant to give away the character of the reality beneath the reality that is explored in the 200 pages that precede

the final two short chapters.

The landscape was alien and inert. A mall cluster of temporary barracks was the only break in a panorama of monotony and hostility. This was Delmak-0. From various, points in the galaxy a disparate group of fourteen people had gathered believing that finally their professional and personal aspirations would be fulfilled in this new world of new beginnings.

Shortly after the last arrivals, however, communication was mysteriously destroyed with the satellite which, would have revealed the mutual purpose of the colonization. And there was no turning back—one of the contingencies of their mission was they should all arrive in one-way space ships. They were stranded—a colony of outcasts thrown back to the beginning of time. Their hope lay in will and ingenuity as well as supplication to the omnipotent Mentufactor to intercede—this was a century when God held living form and being.

But organization and trust were difficult. And then without warning came murder. Seth Morley, an embittered marine biologist and Dr. Babble, for once overcoming his hypochondria obsession, proved beyond doubt that indeed Ben Tallchief's fatal heart attack had not been due to natural causes. Now existence became a one-to-one struggle and the odds for survival seemed slim with a psychotic among them who killed without motive. Soon, from fear and mistrust, they would kill each other off and whoever had planned this fantastic travesty could term it "successful," unless, of course, one of them decided to solve the diabolical jig jigsaw puzzle.

And in the last chapter, after giving the reader an "explanation" of the previous realities, Dick— Well, Dick Giveth and Dick Taketh Away. He does not like frames and boundaries and neat, secure, solid endings. He will fracture the frame, tear the fabric, put a gate in the fence around his story-worlds—always. Ho matter how many levels he has dropped you in his story, when you step out and thud your mental feet on the floor and mutter hopefully, "This is solid. This is the last layer of the reality onion"—then the concrete goes soft and you sink...

I like Philip K. Dick's books. I like his style. I can live without certainty, but there must be many, many people who despise his writing for its imposed insecurity...

I think one day professors will be writing long books exploring Philip K. Dick's inner worlds.

James R. Newton: *Son of WSFA Journal* June 1971, pg. 4

This is not quite up to the quality demonstrated in some of Dick's previous novels (thirty-one have been published as this is written – for example, The World Jones Made, Solar Lottery, Ubik, and Hugo-award-winning The Man in the High Castle).

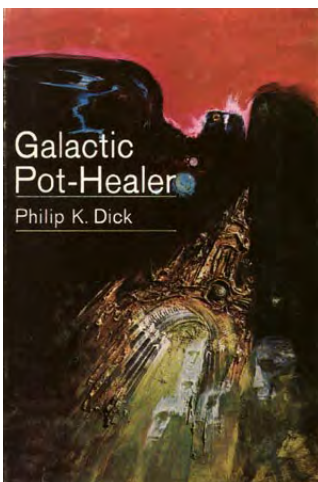
"Maze" comes on strong as a science fiction mystery. But the logic somehow deteriorates subtly as a series of mysterious improbabilities puts ugly scratches on the smooth patina of believability inherent in otherwise sound characterizations. Fictional people lose reality when immersed in a plot pegged on the unreality of heavenly manifestations and other unexplained happenings.

By the time Dick gets around to exploring the improbabilities away (and he waits until the final two chapters) as part of a psychotherapeutic computer construct by which latent psychoses are drained from the minds of an interstellar spaceship crew, it's too late.

And that's too bad.

GALACTIC POT-HEALER

Matts Linder: *Science Fiction Review* February 1970, pp. 33-34



Philip Dick has always been an author of strange tales, but this one is stranger than most. The question is, should the novel have been named Galactic Pot-Boiler instead? I'm inclined to think so and I believe many readers will. Maybe the name was even deliberately chosen with that in mind; being an avid reader of Dick, that wouldn't surprise me. Particularly since it's more of a comedy than any other novel by Dick; there

are some very funny passages in it. For example:

...he had become friends with Nurb K'ohl Daq, the warmhearted bivalve.

"Here's one they're telling on Deneb four," the bivalve said. "A freb whom we'll call A is trying to sell a glank for fifty thousand burfles."

"What's a freb?" Joe asked.

"A kind of—" The bivalve undulated with effort. "A sort of idiot."

"What's a burfle?"

"A monetary unit, like a crumble or a ruble. Anyhow, someone says to the freb, 'Do you really expect to get fifty thousand burfles for your glank?'"

"What's a glank?" Joe "asked.

Again the bivalve undulated; this time it turned bright pink with effort. "A pet, a valueless lower life form. Anyhow, the freb says, 'I got my price.' 'You got your price?' the interrogator interrogates. 'Really?' 'Sure,' the freb says; 'I traded it for two twenty-five-thousand-burfle pid-nids.'"

"What's a pidnid?"

The bivalve gave up; it slammed its shell shut and withdrew into privacy and silence.

The plot itself is—at least on the surface—perhaps the least complicated to come out of Dick's seemingly complicated mind. There is only one protagonist, as opposed to the usual two or three at least.

Joe Fernright, pot-healer without anything, to do, is leading an extremely dull and moneyless life. He is saved from death from boredom by a creature called Glimmung, a sometimes god-like, sometimes enormously naive being who wants him to help with the raising of the Heldscalla cathedral from the bottom of the sea of Sirus V. Together with a set of people from different worlds he is taken there. With diving equipment, Joe goes down to survey the sunken cathedral, together with a girl, Mali. This somehow forces Glimmung to act prematurely, and he is almost defeated by the Black Glimmung, who later just misses killing all the people hired by Glimmung. Then Glimmung, with the help of these people, succeeds in raising Heldscalla, employing the ingenious device of changing into a female, whereupon the cathedral changes into a fetus

(no, I'm not making this up) and thus can be lifted by Glimmung. Joe and the others, who have helped by being absorbed by Glimmung, may now choose between staying absorbed or being set free. Joe and one other creature choose to leave; the others—including Mali, whom Joe loves—stay. The last paragraph of the book has practically nothing to do with the rest, and it is marvelous.

Dick's novels usually have a strange, inexplicable but somehow consistent logic. But this one hasn't. Nobody, but nobody, acts logically. There is a lot of mythical detail complicating and governing the actions of the people in strange ways. They act like neurotics most of the time. The most likeable and consistent person is not a person but a robot, Willis, who half the time insists he be addressed Willis or he won't obey:

To Willis, Mali said, "Call me a taxi."

"You have to say, 'Willis, call me a taxi,' the robot said.

"Willis, call me a taxi."

There are some very strange pieces of writing here. For example: "She paused, her face knotting profoundly." I'd like to see that being done. One gets the impression from many of Dick's novels, and, particularly from this one, that they are first drafts, printed without anything corrected but the misspellings.. This surely must be such a book. It seems to me that Dick, has been getting sloppier; of late. That's a great pity, because he used of the most fascinating sf authors around.

Galactic Pot-Healer is recommended only to those who usually read Dick's works, because to them it ought to be of no little interest. If you don't have his previous books to compare with, this will probably strike you as a fantastic piece of rubbish and you aren't likely to finish more than a dozen pages of it.

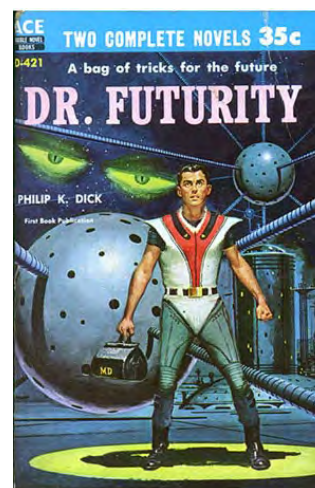
Incidentally, when Glimmung is staying in the sea, hurt after a struggle with the Black Glimmung, he communicates with Joe by sending him notes in bottles.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This strikes me as a superficial review. I have read the book and feel that Mats has ignored or overlooked the strong elements of depth psychology and symbolism that make up the plot and action; the machines that dominate and cow the people, the yin-yang presence, the statement of individualism vs the group, the use of Glimmung as a symbol and device of irrational

power to point out both the triumph and tragedy of the single, isolated mind. The book, and Dick, demand more than most readers are willing to give in thought and self-analysis...more than most readers are capable of giving for lack of education, intelligence and maturity. To accuse Dick of sloppy writing and first-draft hackwork is both insulting and ridiculous. —REG

DR FUTURITY and THE UNTELEPORTED MAN

Kevin Smith: *Drilkjs* October 1976, 24-25



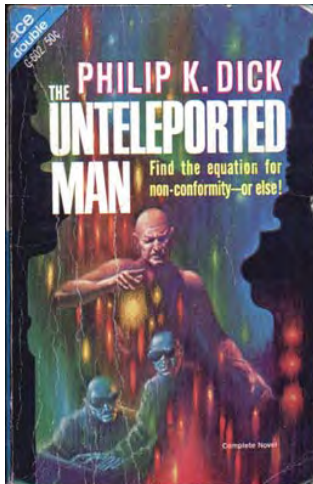
These are two slight and enjoyable novels, admirable for whiling away the time on a train journey (that was when I read them, in fact) but not possessed of any great significance. I put them among the higher quality of "stop gap" literature (see Dave Cookfield in the letter column).

Dr Futurity concerns a medical doctor, Jim Parsons, whisked out of his own time of 1998 into a future, where

his profession is obsolete, not because disease has been eradicated but because sick or injured people are at once painlessly killed. The structure of the Society, moreover, is such that these people go willingly to their deaths, a point vividly illustrated when a girl Parsons has saved from death swears out a complaint against him and trots off voluntarily to undergo the "Final Rite".

This is not the point of the story, however, for all that it occupies the first sixty pages. Parsons has been brought forward by one particular tribe of the society to save the life, illicitly, of a highly respected member, and this serves as a springboard for some highly involved time-travelling. Parsons and others flash backwards and forwards in time, helping and hindering themselves as they go until all is solved at the end. The traditional paradoxes of time travel are there, but are sidestepped. A paradox that isn't resolved involves the plots why, having gone to great trouble to bring the doctor forward in time, do the tribesmen lose him for sixty pages? During that period, when Parsons could have been killed half a dozen times, they are

mere helpless watchers, unable to assist him in any way. In fact, if they had used their time machine properly, they could have avoided the whole book; But what would have been the use of that? Dr Futurity is a good read and can be recommended for just that... don't expect anything very memorable, though.



Although first published four years after *Dr Futurity* in 1964 *The Unteleported Man* is not so enjoyable a novel. It is primarily concerned with the efforts of one man to take a space ship on an 18-year trip to a planet colonised by tele-transportation devices. However, the hornet's nest he stirs up, as powerful organisations conflict in their efforts to aid and prevent him, throws up a multitude of other characters, each of whom occupies

the limelight for a while. By the end the initial protagonist is a mere bit player, so much so that the final scene is dominated by Joe Peasant off to get drunk. Joe who?

The whole book is bitty; the central theme is not allowed to dominate and the plot twists do not make up for this in the way that the time travel 'complexities' do in *Dr Futurity*. In addition, there is a surfeit of the clever-clever gimmickry found all too often in SF generally and Dick in particular. For example, the friendly organisation is "Listening Instructional Educational Services Incorporated"—"Lies Inc" to its enemies; and the unfriendly organisation is "Trails of Hoffman Limited". How twee can you get?

But for stop gap literature it is not at all bad, and much preferable to ERB, Doc Smith and Laurence James.

DIVINE INVASION

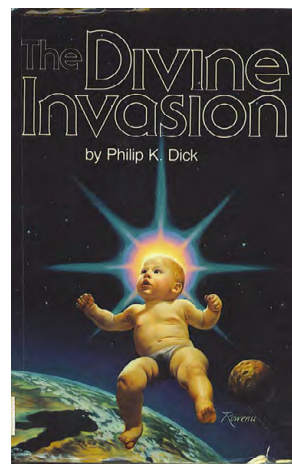
Paul Kincaid: *Vector* October 1981, pp. 28-29

Philip K Dick is not exactly the most predictable of writers, nor is he the most consistent. But at his best he is certainly one of the most challenging and exciting. In *THE DIVINE INVASION* he is pretty close to his best.

VALIS was a difficult, puzzling book because he was exploring concepts that were grand even by his standards.

Having worked out the theory, the ground rules, he can now produce the story to go with it; and in *THE DIVINE INVASION* he has produced the sort of wide-ranging novel that is his hallmark, a virtuoso display of startling ideas, vivid characters and impish humour.

I suppose, in retrospect, that after *VALIS* something like this was inevitable. Yet it was far from predictable, for he has used *VALIS* as a springboard from which to launch himself into even more daring, not to say outlandish, areas. He has taken the basic premise of *VALIS*, that God is deranged, and twisted it round. God was driven from earth at the time of Masada and since then the devil has ruled. God, in the meantime, has taken up residence on an obscure planet in the CY30-CY30B system. In neighbouring domes on this planet live Herb Asher and Rybys. God impregnates Rybys and maneuvers Herb into marrying her, then the two of them, accompanied by the prophet Elijah, return to Earth. Thus they smuggle the son of God past the watchdogs of Belial, the ruling alliance of the Catholic Church and the communist party. There is an accident, Rybys is killed. Herb is put into cryogenic suspension, and Emanuel is born with brain damage and loss of memory, and in that state must prepare for the ultimate battle with Belial.



It is a scenario that only Dick could have concocted, because only he has the gall. And of course that is precisely why he gets away with it. That, and the way he never lets the outlandish get out of hand. There is always a touch of identifiable ordinariness that keeps it all, somehow, within the bounds of believability. Herb Asher is one of his most fallible and most credible creations - the relationship with Rybys that never quite works

for either of them, the laziness and self-centeredness that make him reluctant to obey God's commands, and above all the hero-worship of the singer Linda Fox that becomes a genuine love that is to save his soul. It is Asher that allows us to accept the appearance of God as a ten-year-old with amnesia, though again this is a clever creation. By His nature God, perhaps, never works totally as a character in fiction -- even Golding was unable to make the saintly innocent of *DARKNESS VISIBLE* into a credible person, and once omnipotence and omniscience were added the task

became impossible. But by making his God imperfect Dick has neatly circumvented the problem and so succeeds better than most.

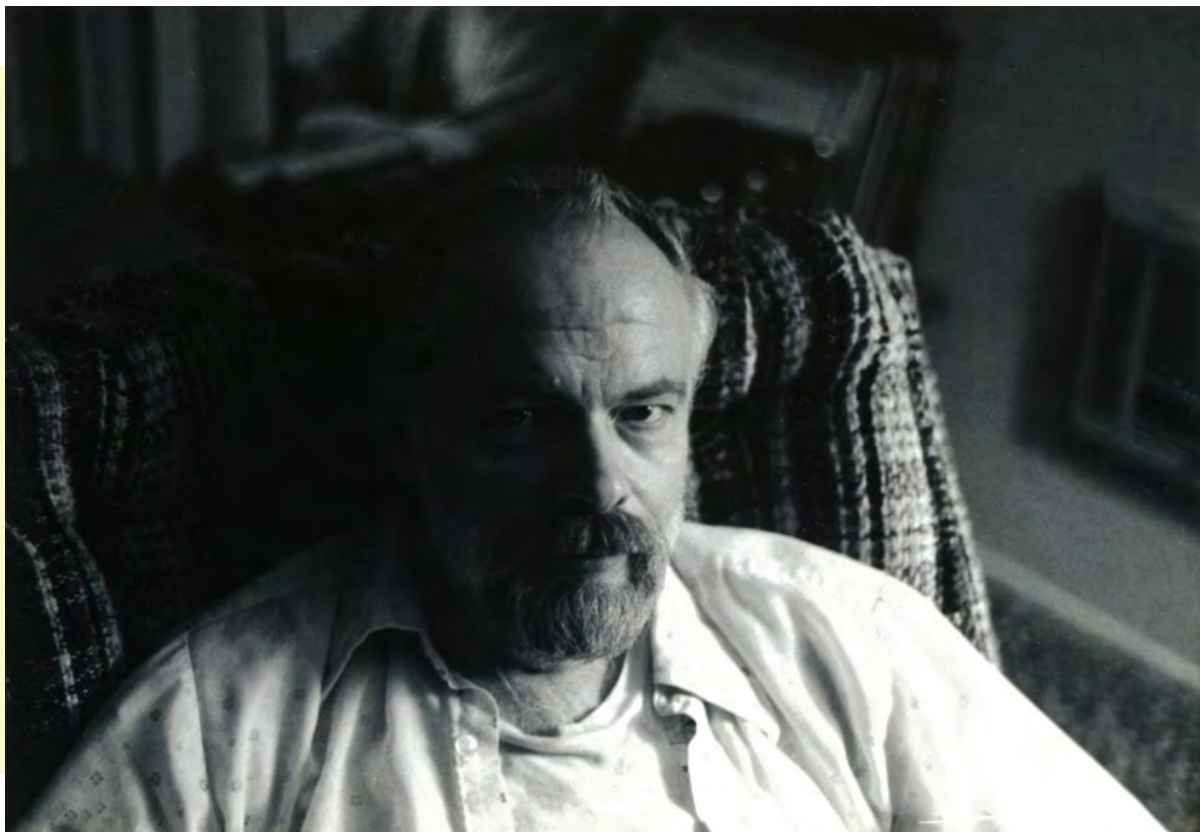
The basic story alone would be enough to satisfy most novelists, but Dick can never resist throwing that extra spanner into the works. In his cryogenic sleep Herb Asher is haunted by music broadcast by a nearby radio station. The events on CY30-CY30B are shown in flashback by way of his dreams, in which the music plays a real part. Herb later finds himself shifted into an alternative time-stream, with disturbing memories of his former life breaking through. In part this demonstrates the power of God and His adversary, but it also raises once more Dick's perennial questions about reality.

I suppose it is too much to hope that a book which builds so intimately upon VALIS - and one critic has even suggested that THE DIVINE INVASION should be read as written by the Phil Dick who was a fictional character in VALIS - should have completely shaken off all the worst characteristics of its predecessor. THE DIVINE INVASION, Indeed, is awash with esoteric references to the Talmud and such-

like - Dick's God is very much the Old Testament God of the Jews. However, he has at least got the balance better, the references are more evenly distributed throughout the book, and it is Dick the storyteller rather than Dick the religious Inquirer who is very definitely in control.

It is the ending of the book with which I am least happy, because it seems to me something of a cop-out. Despite the Talmudic references, Dick has. Throughout the book, been playing fast and loose with our established conception of God. He is clearly building up to an epic confrontation between God and Belial, but at the last moment this does not take place. Instead we are blandly informed that it is a choice that every Individual must make for himself -. This may solve the problem of naming a winner, and it may sit more easily with a belief in the primacy of the individual conscience, but it does run counter to the thrust of the novel up to this point.

Still, such quibbles apart, it is nice to be able to commend an excellent novel by an excellent writer.



HIGH WEIRDNESS: DRUGS, ESOTERICA and VISIONARY EXPERIENCE IN THE SEVENTIES

by Erik Davis

(Strange Attractor Press & The MIT Press, 2019)

ISBN 978-190-7-22287-0

Reviewed by Lord Running Clam

When Erik Davis's *HIGH WEIRDNESS* arrived in the mail I set it on my desk where it sat pulsing faintly next to my copy of *THE EXEGESIS* which itself glowed a pale gold in resonance, as if the two books somehow belonged together. I carefully pried it open and unfolded the covers, stood the book on its end and matched up the flaps to reveal a black-and-white drawing of a head in a wall and a girl with closed eyes and no ears, bubbles bursting in air, smoke curling from the oblong third-eye of the face in the wall. Hmm, I thought, that would look great on my mantelpiece next to my Trouble With Bubbles palantir.

In correspondence with Erik I'd offered to do a review of *HIGH WEIRDNESS* for PKD OTAKU – this was before I got the book – and though he didn't actually write anything in particular I could sense him chuckling in the reply email. But looking at it on my desk next to *THE EXEGESIS* (the two books were now humming in low unison) I realised that this may be no simple task. And when I pried it open and got a paper cut for my pluck I knew I was in trouble. But, if nothing else, I am a Ganymedeian slime mold of my word and I put on my wubfur gloves and began to read...

Immediately I was captured by Erik's cheerful writing on matters deep and dense. Every paragraph – and this is so throughout the book – sparks some idea that you'd like to stop and think about (and Erik has lots of Endnotes to help you out) but that way lies madness. I'd be reading the book forever. What I had to do was absorb *HIGH WEIRDNESS* like a slime mold sucking up sustenance as it motates

through life. I must read the book straight through and see what sticks. So that's what I did and I naturally sought and found structure in the book. Actually, it came to me as I was dozing off after a devoted session with *HIGH WEIRDNESS*: I was sitting there in my easy chair, reading away, when the book bonked me on my nose and shocked me awake! interrupting a proto-dream which, thankfully, I mostly retained and after I'd dabbed the blood from my now hugely swollen nose, wiped the splatters off the book (I looked at the pages later: there was a carmine spot on page 325 over the word 'palimpsest' and, to drag this incursion out, I said to myself, What the hell's that? Sounds like some sort of monument... So I looked it up. Palimpsest: "a manuscript or piece of writing material on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for later writing but of which traces remain." Aha!

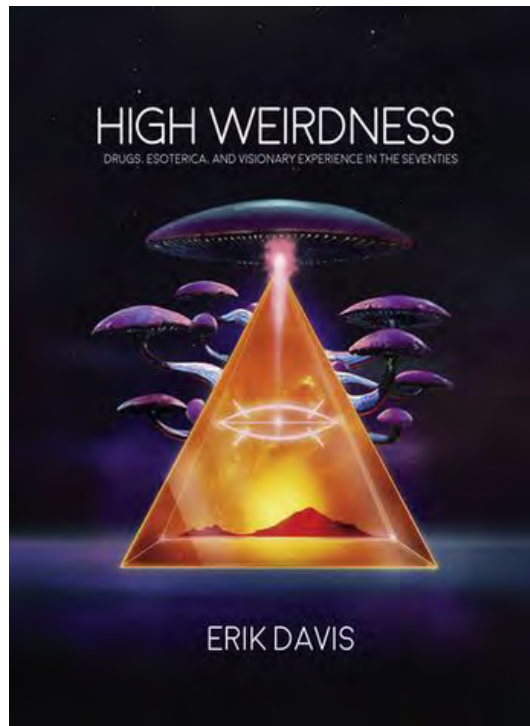
I thought, that's got to mean something) I made a sketch of my proto-dream, enhanced below.

And this is what happens when you stop anywhere in Erik's book. It's like *THE EXEGESIS* that way.

Now to the review. First, the technical details.

This is the paperback edition brought to us by Strange Attractor and MIT presses. It is solidly produced and well-designed by Richard Wilkins. The cover is by Arik Roper and the flaps by John Thompson. It has 546 pages and weighs exactly 2 lbs. This, like the edition of *THE EXEGESIS OF PHILIP K. DICK*, is a weighty tome, although not as hefty as *THE EXEGESIS* which comes in at 3 lbs. Annotations and

Notes occupy 80 pages and the Bibliography and Index another 50. There's lots of photos and illustrations inside. The main body of the text focuses on three San Francisco weirdos of the 1970s: the McKenna brothers (well, four), Robert Anton Wilson, and Philip K. Dick. Erik is proud of his city and its heritage of weirdness and chose these local boys from a world of chance to launch his attack on reality. He writes knowledgeably of the lives and work of all three. In his writing one can detect the experience gained as Annotations Editor on the *EXEGESIS* project. For surely,



the effort of all involved in that massive abridgment of PKD's Opus Aeternum must've been instructive in how to compress by judicious selection the maximum amount of information into the smallest space. But, rather, than as in the editing of THE EXEGESIS, which compresses the work of one man, Erik's book addresses the nature of reality with a multitude of inquirers from disparate and distant fields all squeezed into an interrogatory sphere.

So, we have here a book for many people. For Philip K. Dick fans it is a preface to THE EXEGESIS, an introduction perhaps, even a companion. For Professor Kripal and the Doctoral Board at Rice University it is a PhD thesis. For the reader interested in altered states of consciousness, psychedelic adventures and general weirdness – not only The Weirdness Out of the 70s – it brings their disparate factions together as factors in a reshaping of our conceptions of reality. For the general reader: Good Luck! Your perseverance will be rewarded as you move on to THE EXEGESIS in your own search for meaning in an unreal world where the nearest thing to a reality decider is found in the works of a paperback science fiction writer.

To meet the expectations of these various readers Erik has contrived a model attached to a proposition. I see the proposition like this: By combining the efforts of many experts and experiencers in many fields, inside and outside of the Academic, to address the life and writings of the one man we all agree on somehow altered our grasp of the meaning of reality, no matter however loosely, Philip K. Dick, we may come to a reshaping of our understanding of reality in a more encompassing and comprehensive form. Here is a sketch of how I saw it in my pre-sleep:

In the center there is a triangle with PKD at the apex and the McKennas and Wilson at the two lower points. In

the center of the triangle is one of PKD's weird fish/eye symbols. This is taken from the cover picture of this book. The fish/eye may represent THE EXEGESIS itself and reality as a subject. The three psychonauts at the points interact in pink beams with each other and reflect on the Eye of PKD. These interactions form the main three texts of HIGH WEIRDNESS (interspersed with commentary on the larger picture of reality as expressed by the three psychonauts and Erik himself).

Then contain this triangle inside a bubble, as represented by the dotted circle and pale blue area of my sketch, and bombard it in true scientific fashion with everything you've got as shown by the spermicles of symbols hitting the bubble. This treats reality as a subatomic particle that will yield its secrets if only we smash it hard enough with enough inquiricles. Fair enough, this is Science in action. And your tools are only as powerful as those you own. Erik has a lot. His arsenal is eclectic, full of offbeat intellectual weapons and scientific barbs. If he was a military regiment

Erik Davis would be the heavy artillery, ever ready to launch missiles of explosive inquiry at any rampant reality.

Of course, Erik's eclectic approach is open to criticism. And I'm sure he's prepared for it. After 30 or more years as a student, writer, speaker and all-around-man-about-town, he knows what he's talking about. One might even suspect that he, himself, often partakes of the psychedelic substances on which he writes so knowingly. And his recent taking of a PhD

at Rice University certifies him as a Grandmaster in the academic world (unlike PKD in the annals of the SFWA) and he can do what he wants subject only to the cheers and jeers of his fellows. And even here he has little to worry about as he is an independent scholar pursuing his own career.

But Erik is not concerned with all that. He's having fun

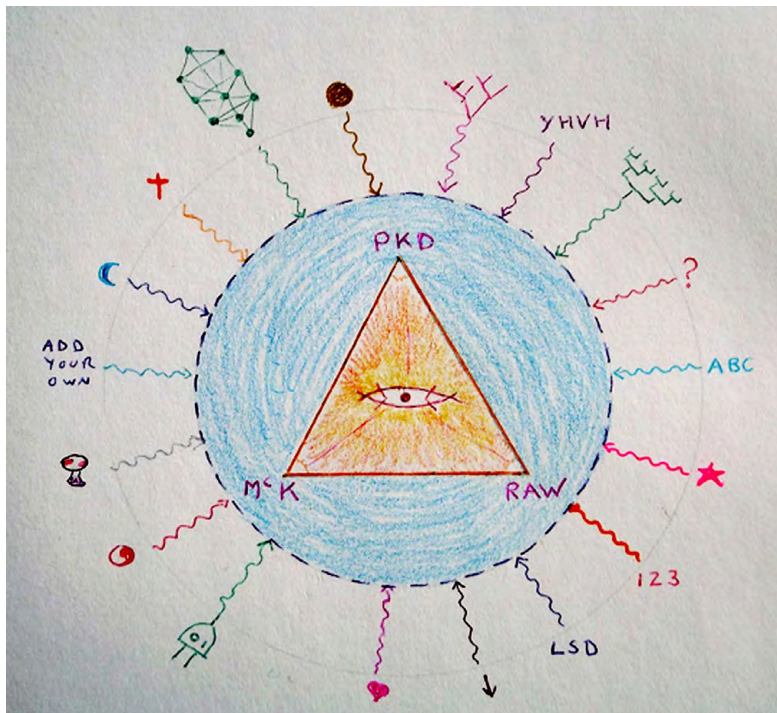


Diagram by Lord Running Clam

as he blows past the timid and conventional inquirers in more fettered places. And why not? In the reality biz we all have our own ideas, and that we agree on anything at all is a marvel.

These spermicles of massed inquiry, heavily annotated and buttressed by intellectual and outre fields from A to Z, all focus on Philip K. Dick. The EXEGESIS lurks, along with VALIS, UBIK and his other novels, next to HIGH WEIRDNESS – like Shelob waiting to pounce on the unwary who would venture into the 3 lb anteroom of her lair. And this is the road HIGH WEIRDNESS takes: to THE EXEGESIS. Erik Davis has been there and back, like a Hobbit bearing his Ring of Magic Mushrooms encrusted with LSD to Mount Doom. Many have ventured there. More were daunted at the door. Few have pierced through to the end. But Erik Davis took the trip and returned to write about it. Do you want to go? If so you will have a trusty companion in Erik's book

but, like any grimoire, its secrets must be delved. Before I close I must note that this is a review of HIGH WEIRDNESS IN THE 70s and not a critique. The perceptive reader will notice that I haven't mentioned any particulars from the three texts. I decided not to go into the details of their stories and lives because to do so would mean singling out a few perspectives from the many presented and to criticise the book in any detail would entail research

into arcane fields of Academia that, as Erik Davis demonstrates, takes many, many years to even know exist. Read the book and discover for yourself how really weird are our three psychonauts.

However, I will present one quote from Erik germane to his book: "This is not, after all, a book about drugs." It is a book about Philip K. Dick.

'For Philip K. Dick fans it is a preface to the Exegesis'

– Lord Running Clam, September 2020

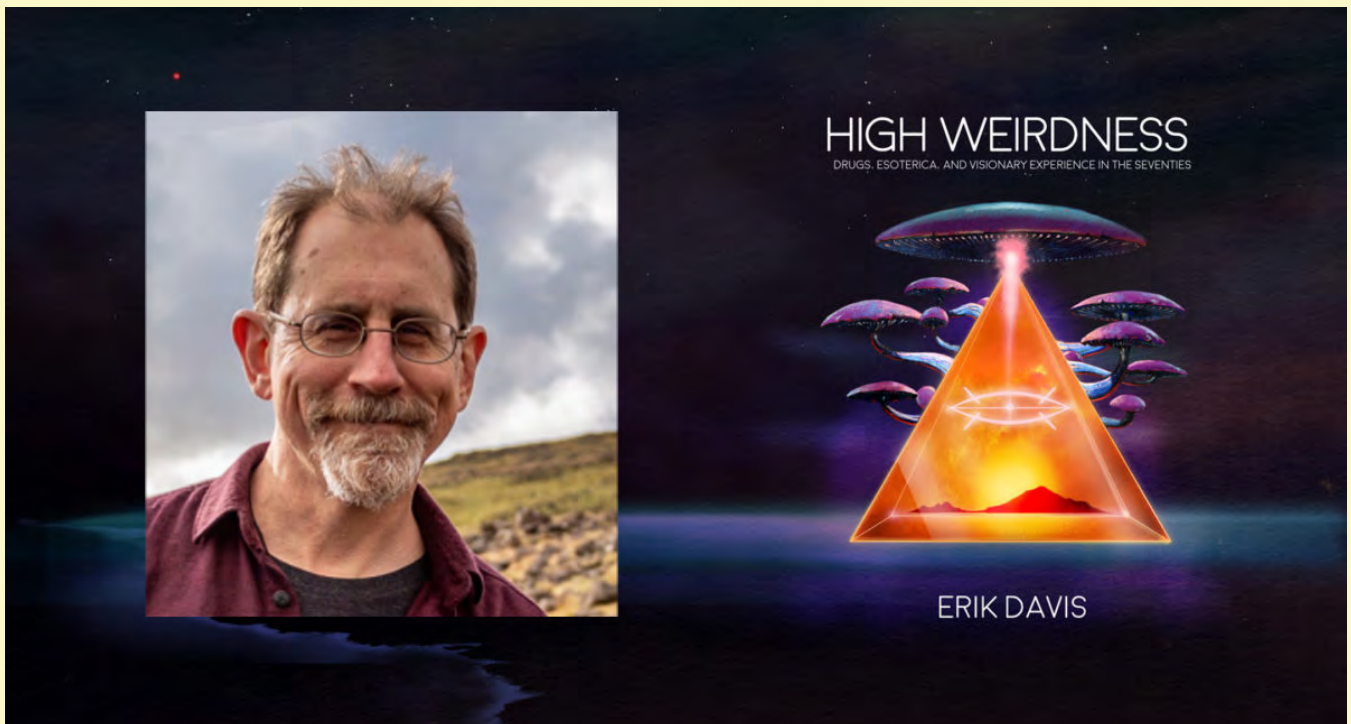


Photo of Erik Davis courtesy of MIT Press

PKD dissertations/theses listings

(last updated: 2/2/18)

Compiled by: Frank C. Bertrand with the undaunting and indefatigable assistance of Professor Ritch Calvin, Dept. of Cultural Analysis and Theory, SUNY Stony Brook, Immediate Past President SFRA. My sincere thanks to Ritch for his unselfish help with this ongoing project.

Note: These are BA (senior honor thesis), MA theses or PhD dissertations devoted in whole, or significant part (at least one full chapter), to Philip K. Dick. It is based on a much longer list first done in the 1980s and made available at Jason Koornick's original philipkdickfans.com website – now very ably managed by Michael Fisher -- a list that has since been republished by others without proper credit being given. It is in order by latest year first, and within

each year alphabetical order by last name. This edition covers the years 2013-2017 only. (The previous listing can be found in **PKD Otaku** #30, December 2013, p. 28) It is intriguing to see the increasing number of works in other languages and other countries about PKD. If you should know of any corrections and/or additions, please contact me via **PKD Otaku**.

Dookie, Gyan. *Kaikkivaltias kapitalisti – Philip K. Dickin The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch (1965) uusliberalismin ja posthegemonisen vallan allegoriana*, 2017, 98 pgs. MA thesis. University of Helsinki (Finland).

Dunder, J. (Jukka). *Kertomus Skitsoidin Kenen Tahansa Epävarsinaisesta Täälläolosta: Philip K. Dickin A Scanner Darkly Ronald D. Laingin Eksistentiaalisista – Fenomenologisen Psykiatrian Näkökulmasta*, 2017, 146 pgs. MA thesis. University of Oulu (Finland).

Miller, Quentin Samuel. *The Android in the Anthropocene:*



A Material Ecocritical Reading of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, 2017, 60 pgs. MA thesis. Montana State University.

Oakes, Elizabeth Ann. *Altered States in Speculative Fiction: A Computational Stylistic Analysis*, 2017, MA thesis. University of Helsinki (Finland).

Roy, Marc-André. *Visions, délires et dédoublements: schizophrénie et subjectivité dans trois romans de Philip K. Dick*, 2017, 133 pgs. MA thesis. Université du Québec à Montréal (Canada).

Bourget, Jason. *Making the Men of Tomorrow: American Science Fiction and the Politics of Masculinity, 1965 – 1974*, 2016, 236 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. Queens University (Kingston, Ontario, Canada).

Cassel, Catherine S. *Bugs After the Bomb: Insect Representations in Postatomic American Fiction and Film*, 2016, 224 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Michigan.

Daněk, Šimon. *Alternate History Novels: Comparison of Harris's Fatherland and Dick's The Man in the High Castle*, 2016, 40 pgs., BA Honors Thesis. Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic).

Englund, Matt. *The Shock of Dysrecognition: Philip K. Dick and the Act of Reading*, 2016, 196 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. State University of New York at Binghamton.

Raba, Andrew. *Radical Detours: A Situationist Reading of Philip K. Dick*, 2016, 150 pgs. MA thesis. Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand).

Steimberg, Alejo Gabriel. *La realidad bajo ataque: La resurrección de lo fantástico en la ciencia ficción ontológica de Philip K. Dick*, 2016, Universidad de Extremadura (Badajoz, Spain).

Suij, L.L.M. *From Fear of the Other and the "New Exotic Lover" to Posthuman Love: The Representation of Female Gendered Intelligent Machines in Do Androids Dream of*

Electric Sheep?, *Galatea 2.2*, *Ex Machina* and *Her*, 2016, 49 pgs. MA thesis. Universiteit Utrecht (Netherlands).

Vainikainen, Alexander. *Drömmar svenskämnet om hållbar utveckling?: En ekokritisk läsning och didaktisk discussion om romanen Blade Runner*, 2016, 37 pgs. Independent student thesis. Mälardalen University (Sweden).

Wit, Sébastien. *Les Sentiers qui bifurquent: hazard, combinatoire et divination dans le roman expérimental des années 1960: (I. Calvino, J. Cortázar, Ph. K. Dick, M. Saporta)*, 2016, Ph.D. dissertation. Université Paris X – Nanterre (France).

Amorim, Alexandre Sobral Loureiro. *Corporeidades insurgents: um ensaio sobre as (im)possibilidades da vida em um tempo de ciborgues*, 2015, 100 pgs. MA thesis. Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre, Brazil).
Correia Félix, João Filipe. *Symbolic Utopias: Herbert, Asimov and Dick*, 2015, 221 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Sussex (Brighton, England).

Forster, Martin. *Menschmaschinen im Film*, 2015, 88 pgs. Magister der Philosophie. University of Vienna (Austria).

Gomes, Junior, Edison. *A Carne Cibernética: Um Estudo Semiótico Sobre Corpo e ética no romance de ficção científica Androides sonham com ovelhas elétricas? de Philip K. Dick*, 2015, 197 pgs. MA thesis. University of São Paulo (Brazil).

Rudge, Chris John. *Psychotropes: Models of Authorship, Psychopathology, and Molecular Politics in Aldus Huxley and Philip K. Dick*, 2015, 446 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Sydney (Australia).

Simkins, Jennifer. *Modern Myth Creation in the Science Fiction of Wells, Clarke, Dick and Herbert*, 2015, 260 pgs., Ph.D. dissertation. Macquarie University (Sydney, Australia).

Skotnicki, Michal. *Popcorn Politics – Selected Philip K. Dick Stories in Contemporary Film Adaptations*. 2015, 19 pgs.

**The previous listing
can be found in PKD
Otaku #30, December
2013, p. 28**

BA essay. Stockholm University (Sweden).

Tikkanen, Marko. *Through Glass Darkly: Authenticity History and Consumerism in Philip K. Dick's The Man in the High Castle*, 2015, 81 pgs., MA Thesis. University of Eastern Finland.

Brueckner, Sophia (Sophia Agnes). *Out of Network: Technologies to Connect with Strangers*, 2014, 146 pgs. MA thesis. MIT (Cambridge, MA.).

Fuerst, Carl. *The Lattace-work Gun-stinging Insect: The Story of Genre in the Science Fiction Novels of Philip K. Dick*, 2014, 279 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. Northern Illinois University.

Altomare, Francis C. *A Calculus of Fire: Strange Loops and Autopoietic Consciousness in Selected Twentieth-Century Fiction from James Joyce to Philip K. Dick – A Cognitive Approach*, 2013, 436 pgs. PhD dissertation. Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Brand, Maria. *Empathy and Dyspathy between Man, Android and Robot in Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick and I, Robot by Isaac Asimov*, 2013, 26 pgs. Senior Thesis. Lund University (Sweden).
Greenham, Ellen. *Neocosmicism: God and the Void*, 2013, 445 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. Murdoch University (Perth, Australia).

Greskó, Péter. *Gnosticism in the Writings of Philip K. Dick*, 2013, DE – TEK. University of Debrecen (Hungary).
Maass, Alexandra. *Digital Cityscapes in American Science Fiction: Physical Structure, Social Relationships, and*

Programmed Identities, 2013, 129 pgs. MA Thesis. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

McLeaish, Ashley. *Wasteful Speculations: An Exploration of Science Fiction through the Lens of Waste Studies*, 2013, 116 pgs. MA thesis. Texas State University – San Marcos.

Meyer, Amanda L. *Exploring the Nature of Reality in Science Fiction through the use of Taoism and Advaita Vedanta*. 2013, 82 pgs., MA Thesis. Texas State University – San Marcos.

Zabán, Zsolt. *In the Shadows of Technology*, 2013, DE-TEK. University of Debrecen (Hungary).

Starn, Natalie. *Cognitive Mapping in the Postmodern Novel: Philip K. Dick's Ubik, Kim Stanley Robinson's The Gold Coast, and Don DeLillo's White Noise*, 2013, 63 pgs. Honors Thesis. Kent State University (Kent, Ohio).

Stevens, Amanda B. *New Gnostic Gospels*, 2013, 45 pgs. MA Thesis. East Carolina University.

Taborisskaya, Masha. *Don't Turn That Dial: Advertising, Mass Media, and the God Character in the Novels of Philip K. Dick*, 2013, 58 pgs. MA Thesis. Montclair State University (Montclair, New Jersey).

Viskovic, Richard D. *Philip K. Dick's search for reality: An investigation of Philip K. Dick's metaphysical questioning, focusing on his 1960s science fiction novels*, 2013, 270 pgs. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Auckland (New Zealand).



Barclay Shaw illustration for Clans of the Alphan Moon - see www.barclayshaw.com

Say It in German

by Andre Welling

[On page 117 of THE SELECTED LETTERS OF PHILIP K. DICK 1975-1976 is a letter Phil sent to Uwe Anton in Germany on February 28, 1975. Phil wrote it in German. Unable to read any language other than English (I'm an American so monolingual almost by definition), I had to wonder what Phil was saying here. I turned to my friend Andre, long-time PKD enthusiast and correspondent for a translation, which he graciously provided. – JPC]

*

Overall the German in this letter is pretty bad, really bad, bordering on comical ruin. Most of the sentences are grammatical train wrecks, some nearly unintelligible (many not really sentences). On the other hand, considering that Phil made this without using KI translators on the Web and Office spell / grammar checkers, it's pretty good, for someone not really able to write German. You can understand what he is getting at. But he is asserting some pretty weird stuff here, it also reads a little "drunk" as a whole. Many fun bits for the German reader.

The letter is written like someone knows a dictionary well and some ground rules of conjugation and declination (but not too much) but has no idea how sentences are stitched together exactly in German. So this would work well for reading, the dictionary look-up approach, but not so well in writing. It generates comical results. For instance at the end when Phil wants to thank Anton again he starts the sentence with "Wieder" which can mean "again" in German but not in this context, or as a first word, when it had to be followed by a verb: "Wieder habe ich gesündigt" (I have sinned again). In his context of repeated thank yous he would have to use totally different words like "nochmal" (which also means "again") or "erneut" (which, you guessed it, means "again") to appear German. Also his strange use of non-Dictionary words like "gekommt" is explainable thus because he just applied the learned conjugation of one verb to another but German isn't that easy. So it's "können" (being able to) and "gekonnt" (mastered) but it's not "kommen" (coming) and "gekommt" (came?) but rather "gekommen" (arrived, manifested, assembled, ejaculated).

So here's my back-translation from that faulty and drunken German.

Dear Mr. Anton,

I'm so late -- but many thanks for GANYMED #7 and especially for what you wrote (on page seven) in the editorial. You speak the truth here, my friend. I wish I could say things like that in the United States, sorry about that, but maybe in the future, when we regain our lost liberties, really regain them, then, "that day after tomorrow" [Überrnorgen], even we can write brave words like those again *_ourselves_* (italics by Phil).

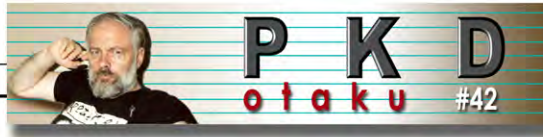
[There is actually a word in German that can either mean the exact day after tomorrow or some broad far-away future time, "Überrnorgen", literally uber-tomorrow. So we wouldn't say «The World of Tomorrow» but rather «Die Welt von Überrnorgen» which is more awesome, more «Über alles»...]

It's curious how a country can lose its liberty. A raid on my house in 1971 made it impossible for me to work. The secret police looked for FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID (I'm telling this here for the first time, what if there had only be one draft? Ach! No FLOW MY TEARS today!). A police snitch read the manuscript. Are these days lost now?

[He lost me here, but it's a good question in any context]

In night and fog the secret police was camping here, the snitches drank and laughed with us, trying to appear as friends. One of them sold me a handgun and told me "You will die soon". He meant that I should commit suicide. (He also said that I was gravely sick, so death would come anyway).

[The last part was so non-sensical and weirdly phrased with literally "death stretching-out for me" that I largely gave it the quaintest possible meaning. Note the "night and fog" expression earlier which comes from German "Nacht & Nebel" which is a meme or poetry fragment used to describe any illegitimate setup to assault or vanish someone: They came in night and fog, it's pretty



much a given that there is no due process or proper identification...]

ROLLING STONE magazine will tell all this at last. You have came here to visit me.

[I translated the last sentence here pretty verbatim goofy because I have no clue what it means or, if it just means what it (largely) says, that Anton visited him in the U.S., what the sentence/thought is doing here, finishing the FLOW heist story. BTW Phil uses here a non-existent German past tense

conjugation of "kommen" ("coming"), "gekommen", which has a certain Dada charm because it's properly "gekommen" like in "Ich komme!! Ach! Ich bin gekommen" ("I come!! Sigh! I came.")]

Again, thanks a lot. Always have I loved Germany and it's so wondrous to me that in Germany there's such a great freedom to read everything! And think everything.

Cordially (In friendship)
Philip K. Dick

THE SELECTED LETTERS OF PHILIP K. DICK

117

[TO UWE ANTON, second version]

February 28, 1975

Lieber Herr Anton:

Ich bin so spät—aber danke sehr *Ganymed Magazin* #7 dafür, und besonders was Sie gesagt haben, zum Beispiel Seite sieben: "Editorial". Es hat mir sehr gefallen. Sie schreiben die Wahrheit, hier, mein Freund. Wäre es möglich in the United States schon dieses zu sagen—nicht noch, und das tut mir ein Leid, was ein Leid, sondern eines Tages, wenn die alte verlorene Freiheit zurück kommt, wieder kommt wirklich, dann Übermorgen können wir selber solche brave wörter schreiben.

Es ist erstaunlich wie ein Land die Freiheit verloren kann. Eine Razzia (wie Sie sagen) in 1971 gegen mein Haus hätte es unmöglich gemacht, mir zu arbeiten. Die geheime Polizei suchte FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID zu finden—Ich erzähle dies am ersten Zeit, hier: wäre es möglich für die Polizei die einzige Handschrift zu finden—Ach; kein FLOW MY TEARS Heute. Ein Polizei Spitzel hatte das Manuscript gelesen. Sind diese Tage verloren jetzt? In Nacht und Nebel lagen die böse Polizei, hier; die Spitzel tranken und lachten mit uns, wie unsere Freunde erscheinen. Einer verkaufte mich eine Pistole und sagte mir "Bald sterben Sie." Er meinte das Ich Selbstmord begehen sollte (er sagt, auch, das Ich so krank war das der Tot für mich bald jedenfalls ausstreckte.)

Rolling Stone magazine wird dies endlich erzählen. Sie haben hier gekommen, mich zu besuchen.

Wieder, danke sehr. Immer hab' Ich Deutschland geliebt, und es ist mir so wunderbar, das in Deutschland die Freiheit liegt hoch für alles zu lesen. Und denken.

Cordially, in Freundschaft,
Philip K. Dick

[TO HENRY KORMAN]

February 29, 1975

Dear Henry,

I had worked out beyond any reasonable doubt evidence that the ancient deity Dionysos had infused me and made me his back in March of last year. In an article to be printed in England, in a book, I was going to reveal this.

However, I have discovered that I have been tricked. It is not the ancient Phrygian god of the vine tree, but Erasmus pretending to be Dionysos. My problem now is that I have toiled in vain in order that Erasmus have his little joke.

To his credit, he was delighted when I abruptly guessed that it was him and not Dionysos. Still, after I had enjoyed realization of the clues which Erasmus had left along the way (all of them puns, double puns, and which I always saw solemn and heavy meaning in—the wrong meaning leading me astray), I discovered that there are in the universe always layers below layers,

CORRECTION!

On page 11 of that #41 is a piece apparently attributed to me, the only Andre that Patrick knows (maybe). *"Dick's fallen worlds are not, to put it mildly, happy places ..."* It's not from me. Seriously, I don't invoke Emerson. So what happened? I traced the quote to Patrick's "A Pandemic PKD Journal" Covid pre-journal 18 pages of craziness where it was listed right after one of my old corporate signatures. I didn't think at the time that it was supposed to be grouped with my scribbblings. So I searched for the true source in Listverse and could find the exact listed order of that quote in an old Dave Applebaum post "[pkd] Reality and similar constructs" from 2003. There he collected vintage PKD quotes and odd stuff and also my sig and that uncredited long quote, finished with an Alan Watts quote. The "fallen" thing was actually the only thing uncredited in that Dave list of quotes. Turns out (Google Books search) it's from one Alexander Star from a *New Republic* essay (as quoted in Thierry Bardini's JUNKWARE). See attached. – Andre

Ergebnis 1 von 1 in diesem Buch für Dick's fallen worlds are not, to put it mildly, happy places

work. In the second case, however, by far the most profitable for his psyche and the source of all his hope, the crucial point that Davis makes is that *transcendence is fed back to immanence*. If, as Erik Davis had it, PKD's Gnosticism fed transcendence back in the immanent "churning world," it means that glimpses of God can be found in the creation of the evil demiurge. No one, I think, has understood and expressed this idea better than Alexander Star, in a cover essay for the *New Republic*:

Dick's fallen worlds are not, to put it mildly, happy places. And yet they are at least partially redeemed by fleeting glimpses of a hidden god. "Trash" and divinity, Dick believed, were intimately linked. In an Exegesis entry, he wrote: "Premise: things are inside out . . . Therefore the right place to look for the almighty is, e.g., in the trash in the alley." . . . Carrying on a distinctly American visionary tradition, Dick proposed that God preferred industrial waste to holy sanctuaries. In its spiritualization of the coarse and the vulgar, Dick's demotic Gnosticism unexpectedly echoes Emerson, or Whitman, or even Melville. He sought a kind of urban sublime, looking for shards of divinity in piles of junk.¹¹

Well, the "Editor" (let's talk about him in the third person) certainly dropped the ball here. He pulled the text out of a cut&past document he had created years before and failed to notice that the statement attributed to Andre quoted there was actually by Alexander Starr in his article "The God in the Trash", *The New Republic* December 6, 1993, pp. 34-41. Failure acknowledged! As a penance, here is a slice of true Andre phildickian musings:

From: Andre Welling
Sent: Friday, June 24, 2005
Subject: Re: the PKD robot

by gosh. How phil would feel that they made him

the template of a Nexus-1 make-believe android/robot? he would think this is (maybe unconscious) revenge of the AI pros. JF Sebastian makes his maker (the author) to payback. So utterly post-modernist old fashioned – Phil issues a hearty laugh. I think he would go have a chat with his replacement, if only to apply a Voight-Kampff Test of his own, obliterating the stupid fake by word and argument.

...connect PHILbot vers. 0.87

PHIL: Hi

<sucklefipp47>: Are you really there, Phil?

PHIL: Yeah. Really! <chuckle>

<sucklefipp47>: Is Deckard an android?

PHIL: Are you sober?

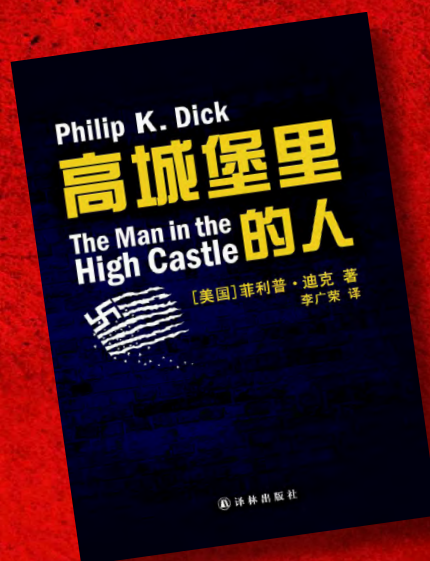
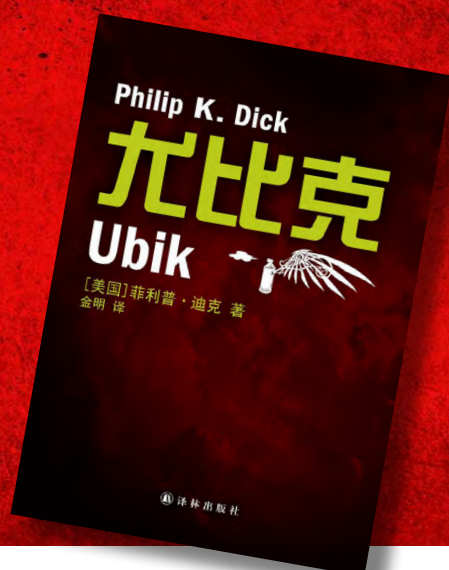
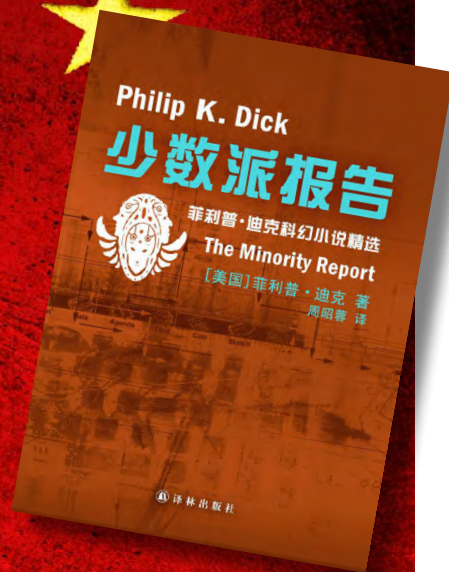
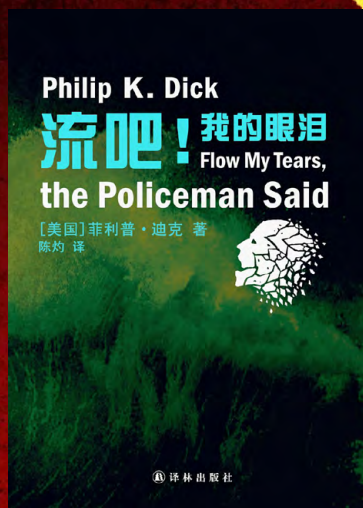
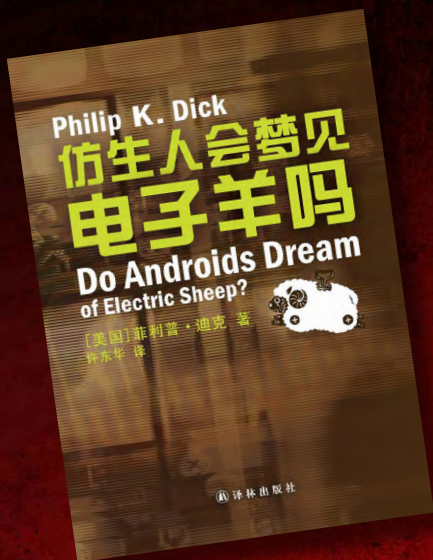
<sucklefipp47>: [timeout]

<yogurtsottoth>: Phil, do you think sleeping with your sister is unhealthy?

PHIL: Sister Mercy pulls the trigger.

<yogurtsottoth>: Sure. So sad how the Philip K. Dick Franchise fund runs a cheap copy of 'you' just for good measure here. Come on Phil, utter one of your pieces of existential anxiety. You will be the new Zippy.
PHIL: What if Sweet Mustard was invented by Nazi time travelers?
[timeout]





Book cover images supplied by Qiangpan Chen (a.k.a.CHEN Zhuo)