

THE UNRECONSTRUCTED MAN: THE FICTION OF PHILIP K. DICK.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis concerns the works of the American Science-Fiction writer, Philip K. Dick. It is divided into four sections. The first section starts with an examination of his novel *Ubik*, and Dick is seen as following in a literary tradition established by Lewis Carroll, and also sharing much with contemporaries such as William S. Burroughs. Problems of ontology which feature in other writers' works are also pursued by Dick who reflects the paranoia of the 1950s and the fears of nuclear holocaust as well as a scriptural scholarship in his own religious thinking. The second chapter, "The Atrocity Exhibition", shows an example of this thinking in the form of the short story "Exhibit Piece". This story encapsulates Dick's political and philosophical views during the 1950s and also shows important connections between his work and the writing of authors as apparently diverse as Jorge Luis Borges and William Golding. It also points the way towards the ideas that Dick was to develop in his later fiction.

The works of Robert Heinlein, A. E. Van Vogt and Alfred Bester, Science-Fiction authors of the 1940s and 1950s, are examined in the following two chapters. These demonstrate that this genre was producing fine writing as well as fostering philosophical and theological debate. Dick's own work is placed into a context within these currents of thought in his own literary field. The chapter "Playing Games" looks at the novel *The Game Players of Titan* and shows how it assembles a multitude of Science-Fiction tropes for the purpose of allegorizing the meta-relationship between the author and the reader.

The seven chapters of the following section examine the novel *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* in view of these observations. The author's own

relationship to the characters in the fiction is analysed in terms of mankind's relationship to the divine will. The chapters "Hovelists and Novelists" and "Transubstantiation" explore this allegorical process and include an introduction to the theological theories Dick is trying to develop in his work.

The subsequent nine chapters form a section discussing the novel *The Man in the High Castle*. This novel initiates the theological premise on which *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* is based. While the study of the latter shows Dick at his task of building elaborate structures in language and narrative, *The Man in the High Castle* shows the religious and historical background to these allegorical processes. In this novel Dick produces an original synthesis of his scriptural studies to justify the works of God to man in a way appropriate to the paranoia and doubts of the twentieth-century. *The Man in the High Castle* shows Dick combining political satire with religious speculation and a self-reflexive narrative structure. The chapters entitled "The Civil War", "Roosevelt and Hume", and "Two Bibles" trace the changes wrought by Dick in the structure of history in the novel. "Dick's Own Mason" examines the links between Dick's fiction and the formulae of Freemasonry. The interpretation offered in the last two chapters of this section draws on narrative information which provides the keystone to the understanding of both novels and from there to Dick's works as a whole.

311 pages.

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PREFACE

Whilst generally the author-dates method of source citation is used, in Dick's case, owing to the large body of work and the profusion of novels written in any given year, I felt that this would be potentially confusing to the reader. Dick's novels are cited by title, whereas others will receive an author-date citation. As there is no standard edition of Dick's work, and since each printed edition of any given novel differs entirely in pagination from that preceding it, references to Dick's works will be given by chapter, and where this is not possible, as in the case of the short stories, by story title.

In my discussion of the novels, I make use of what have become established abbreviations for Dick's novels in the critical literature:

Androids *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Flow My Tears *Flow My Tears the Policeman Said*

Game Players *The Game Players of Titan*

High Castle *The Man in the High Castle*

3SPE *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*

Transmigration *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*

States of the United States are given their standard postal abbreviations, for example, Ca. for California. vt. stands for "variant title".

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PART ONE: DICK'S ANALOGUES AND INFLUENCES

ANTI-TALENT

Ubik (1969) resurrects a term Philip K. Dick introduced into the parlance of Science-Fiction in his short story "World of Talent"¹ but adds greater depth to it: anti-talent. The employees of Glen Runciter are inertials, or anti-talents, characters whose supernatural powers manifest themselves, not in causing or effecting a change but in the negative condition of preventing an occurrence from taking place. Should an inertial come into close proximity to an individual possessing a strong supernatural power, and should the inertial's own anti-talent be of equivalent type and strength, the two powers will cancel each other out. Anti-talents counteract such Science-Fiction mainstays as precognitives, telepaths, parakineticists and the like, rendering their abilities useless. Pat Conley, the anti-precog, can prevent precognition from working by projecting some portion of her psyche into the past and undoing an event predicted by a precognitive. Hers is the only active anti-talent shown in the novel and her actions fall half way between the camps of Runciter, the manager of the inertials, and his arch business rival, Ray Hollis. Hollis manages talent, he has dozens of psychically gifted individuals on his books, hiring them out for purposes of espionage. Those who employ Runciter's organisation seek to protect themselves against the unwelcome attentions of Hollis's men. Straight away we have an archetypal Dickian scenario, the two powerful business barons fighting for control of the market.

¹ Collected in *The Variable Man* (1957)

The market is one which appears to be very much out of control. The psychically talented individuals present considerable logistical problems for those businessmen, themselves lacking such powers, who try to manipulate them. S. Dole Melipone, the most telepathic man in the world, slips through Runciter's *cordón sanitaire* and disappears from sight, both from eye-sight and second-sight. When Runciter is informed that Melipone has "dropped off the map" he suggests looking for his marker-flag on the floor beneath the map, as though the statement were a literal rather than figurative usage. He is also forgetting McLuhan's axiom that the map is not the territory. Runciter's talent-scout, Joe Chip can identify and even quantify the "blr" fields of negative psychic energy propagated by the inertials, but cannot offer any constructive advice to his employer on how to utilise these talents. Nor can Runciter's dead wife, Ella, kept in cold-storage in Switzerland, whose brain is revived periodically for more inconclusive business suggestions. The inertials should restore reality to normal, should be able to cancel out the effect of those characters whose talents are distorting and destabilising reality in the novel. Unfortunately, the cure for a massive disruption to the nature of an assumed common reality is not to be found with a still further distortion in that reality, which is in truth what the inertials provide. The narrative elements of *Ubik* produce structural confusions much more disorientating than Runciter's language problem over Melipone's disappearance.

Much of *Ubik* presents us with narrative statements which cannot be reconciled with one another. At the very end of the novel we can draw several definite conclusions:

- (i) Joe Chip and Pat Conley have never been married.
- (ii) Joe Chip and Pat Conley were once married.
- (iii) Joe Chip is alive and Glen Runciter is dead.

(iv) Glen Runciter is alive and Joe Chip is dead.

These four statements can all be supported with evidence from the text, yet they form two sets of complete contradictions. How can *both* items (iii) and (iv) be true at one and the same time? How has Dick achieved this situation? What he has not done is to introduce a device similar to that at the end of William Golding's novel, *Pincher Martin* (1955). Although *Ubik*'s last two sentences have a powerful shock value they do not operate in the same way as the final sentence in Golding's novel. Golding invites his reader to return to the beginning of the novel and re-read it, this time decoding what had previously been taken to be merely *metaphors* of death as being descriptions of the actual death of the central character. *Pincher Martin* has one interpretation at a first reading and then another, quite different interpretation on a second reading. Re-reading *Ubik* would produce no such corrective resolution. Although the end of the novel reveals that Runciter is in cold-pac it still does not tell us that Chip is alive. It tells us that even the world outside, even the world of our senses in life, is as illusory as the world of the dead. The victims in cold-pac, their brains wired together, hear Runciter trying to communicate with them, but are unaware that they are dead. Runciter is likewise unaware that he is dead, but he *should* be alive. Where does the concept of anti-talent fit into this picture?

Talent, as Dick expresses it, is an analogy for the process of Dick the writer communicating with his readers. Readers' predictive abilities help them to form alternative possibilities as to what will happen next, assumptions which can either be fulfilled or denied. The author knows all the thoughts of the characters, knows their futures, can move them around at will, just as the telepaths, precogs and parakinetics who feature in Dick's fiction. The reader shares in this process, reading the characters' minds, making reasonably accu-

rate guesses at their futures, moving them through an imagined world. *Ubik* balks our abilities as readers. Even having access to the thoughts of these characters does not help us understand them. We are unable to make any useful predictions about their futures as we cannot even untangle what has actually happened to them in the past. Even a repeated reading of the novel cannot explain this for us. Moreover, Dick has exchanged his own authorial talent for anti-talent, the writer's "omniscience" is blocked as is the reader's capacity to make reasoned judgements. Dick presents his readers with the final "heat-death" of the author's universe. From this novel onwards, Dick seems to say, I know no more than you do. The characters stand, and their very powers spread out to destroy not only the gifts of Hollis's agents, but the process by which their narrative can be resolved. Their author has created an analogy for their anti-talent in the fabric of their fiction, they are blocking their own narrative development.

The established relationship between author and reader has broken down. The reader's imagination can no longer be assumed to fill in the missing spaces, as it were, to create a mental picture of the world the author begins to describe. The whole basis of this participatory process is called into question. In *Ubik*, the world has to be described by the characters if it is to exist at all. The blanks the reader has unconsciously been filling in turn out not to be there:

"Then it's all for me, just for me. This entire world."

Jory said. "It's not very large. One hotel in Des Moines. And a street outside the window with a few people and cars. And maybe a couple of other buildings thrown in: stores across the street for you to look at when you happen to see out."

"So you're not maintaining any New York or Zurich or -"

"Why should I? No one's there. Wherever you and the others of the group went, I constructed a tangible reality corresponding to their minimal expectations. When you flew here from New York I created hundreds of miles of countryside, town after town - I found that very exhausting. I had to eat a great deal to make up for that. In fact, that's the reason

I had to finish off the others so soon after you got here. I needed to replenish myself." (*Ubik*, ch. 15)

Jory is a vision of the blind creator god, an image Dick had used many times in his fiction and one which was to become the focus of his final religious trilogy. Like Palmer Eldritch before him in the novel *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (1965), Jory has Neanderthal molars, and like Eldritch, he makes the universe out of little pieces of himself. Yet although Jory believes that he is the centre of his created universe, he is not. Intercessor figures such as Ella Runciter and Myra Laney come from some higher plane to comfort Joe Chip and bring him spray cans of Ubik. At the end, we still do not know for certain whether the whole thing has been due to Pat Conley's talent. Pat Conley believes herself to be responsible for the ills befalling the others, yet turns out not to be, or more accurately, *seems* not to be. How far can we believe Pat's revelation to Joe Chip that she planned the whole of their illusory world with all its time regressions, that she is the ultimate evil behind their misfortune, when Jory also makes the same claim, and on the surface at least, appears to be in a better position to be able to make it? We have only Jory's word that he is responsible. Outside the realm of half-life, Tippy Jackson dreams of Neanderthals called Bill and Matt. Tippy's is not a naturally occurring dream, it is induced by an electrode planted within her brain, a grim foreshadowing of the electrodes by which the brains of all the half-lifers will be wired together in cold-pac, and recalls the Penfold device in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968). Jory introduces himself to Joe by explaining that he is also called Matt and Bill. Jory thus intrudes into the "pre-death world" of the inertials, manifests himself to them when his power to influence is supposedly limited to those half-lifers nearest to him at the Beloved Brethren Moratorium in Zurich. The manifestation is part of an image echoed in the half-life equipment attached to the dead. How can we separate the two worlds?

If I cannot prove that the information I receive from my senses is coming from a real, outside world, asks the scepticist philosopher, how can I know that my consciousness is not the only one in the universe? If it were, then I would be God, but then I should have needed to have created myself, and I do not remember having done that. If someone else created me, then I am not alone. If I did create myself, am I afraid of death because I cannot remember having done so, because I am unsure? Dick extends these ontological fears to cover the mind of God, the creator, a jealous god, unsure of his role in the universe which he has made but seems not to understand. From religion Dick deduces the fears of the anxious human mind extrapolated to the cosmic scale, and produces a guide for the perplexed fit for the twentieth century reader. Dick takes the God of the Christian Bible and becomes God's analyst, but does not restrict himself to this view of religion alone. The faiths of the world form a strong brew in Dick's melting pot.

Ubik marks the high point of Dick's sceptical uncertainty. The "Chinese Boxes" structure of narrative discontinuity which, as we shall see, functions for *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* cannot be resolved for *Ubik*. Here we have an unreconstructed narrative, one which encodes much religious symbolism, but no solution. *Ubik* forms the end of Dick's 1960s series, the sequence of novels which began with *The Man in the High Castle* (1962). The novels he was to write in the 1970s were to be highly personal, and shifted towards autobiography. As Lewis Carroll had done in *Silvie and Bruno*, to include the author in the world of the fantasy, Dick was to begin in his "Policeman Novels" (*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, *Flow My Tears the Policeman Said* (1974), *A Scanner Darkly* (1974)) and conclude in his trilogy consisting of *VALIS* (1981), *Radio Free Albemuth* and *The Divine Invasion* (1982). The first and the last of these three deal with the theme of a new Messiah being born, an event

Dick himself felt to be imminent. Curiously he was not entirely alone in pursuing this subject. The Scots born artist and mystic, Benjamin Creme was touring the United States at the time Dick was writing these novels and a radio interview he heard in which Creme was explaining his theories of the arrival of the *Maitreya* inspired him to contact him. Although the two never met, in the last months of his life Dick was arranging to travel to London to see Creme and had sent him a copy of *VALIS* to show that he was thinking along the same lines.² *The Divine Invasion* takes many of the themes of *Ubik* and puts them into a more overtly religious context. The figure of Pat Conley becomes *Zina*, with whom the new Messiah prepares to do battle. *The Divine Invasion* is effectively an attempt to re-interpret the themes of *Ubik* and *3SPE* in the light of Dick's religious experiences which began in the 1970s.³

This study is concerned only with Philip K. Dick as a novelist and with his contribution to American literature. His role as an evangelist for a religion of the post-War era is more properly the work of other scholars. Towards the end of his life, Dick's belief that the new Messiah was alive and well in the real world grew very strong. His final novels seek to express the religious *mythopoeia* that he had evolved through his previous fiction not as a literary metaphor, but as a real and actual thing. At the end of his life, as Gregg

² Strangely, another Science-Fiction novelist, Patrick Tilley, had published a novel also dealing with the theme of Christ's reincarnation which bears strong resemblance to some aspects of Dick's *VALIS*, namely, *Mission*, which was published in the same year as Dick's novel. There is no evidence that the two novels are in any way connected or that the authors had any contact.

³ For a full discussion of Dick's pivotal religious revelation, the Event he experienced in 1973, readers should turn to Gregg Rickman's *Philip K. Dick: The Last Testament* (1985) and Paul Williams's *Only Apparently Real* (1986).

Rickman reveals (Rickman, 1984, appendix) Dick refused a very lucrative contract to write a "novelization" of the film made from *Androids*, *Blade Runner*, in order to work on his last novel, *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer* (1982). This novel picks up some of the themes of *The Divine Invasion*, and is autobiographical to the extent that it deals with Bishop James Pike, a man Dick knew well. *Transmigration* does not properly belong with the preceding trilogy. It is a mainstream novel, in the same vein as those Dick wrote, and failed to publish, in the 1950s. It is the first novel of Dick's fifth period. Until the discovery of the manuscript of *Radio Free Albemuth* it would have been difficult to have seen it in this light, as it is the only example of a fifth period novel that Dick wrote. Although he had told friends of the title of his next work (*Owl In Daylight*) he never lived to write it. Philip K. Dick died in March 1982.

At the age of nineteen, in 1947, he was rooming at 2208 McKinley Street, Berkeley, with poets Jack Spicer, George Haimsohn and Robert Duncan. Dick receives a mention in Duncan's biography (Faas, 1983, pp. 252-3) as a "young poet celebrity". This celebrity did not last very long, nor the association with Spicer and Duncan, who were to remain poet celebrities. Dick's poetry does not seem to have survived very well either. Dick, working at a local music store at that time, provided a recording machine for the poets to extemporise poetry readings onto vinyl. Dick warrants no more than this one reference, and not so much as a footnote in the history of the Black Mountain School of poetry. Whilst Spicer and Duncan chose a literary form with long established connotations of "high art", poetry, Dick was to make his name in a field which attracted, at that time, as small an audience, and critical disdain, the "low art" form of the "pulp novel", Science-Fiction.

Dick's output of fifty novels would be remarkable in any mainstream author, although it is fairly average for a Science-Fiction writer. The chronology which is provided in Williams, 1986, listing Dick's novels according to the dates on which they were completed, and received by Dick's literary agent, Scott Meredith of New York, shows that many of these fifty novels were written in a matter of a few weeks. Many seem to have been written simultaneously. Between June 1963 and April 1964, which appears to have been one of Dick's periods of peak productivity, he submitted *eight* full-length novels.

Of the novels written during this eleven month peak, two, *The Game Players of Titan* (1963) and *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, will receive substantial discussion here. That any of the works of an impoverished writer who sold barely enough to eat and wrote, as a quotation will show, sixty-eight pages a day, could have any literary value would be surprising. This paper attempts to make a case for seeing the majority of Dick's works, both novels and short stories, as fiction of genuine merit, developing complex religious and philosophical debate. Such novels as *Ubik* provide a challenge to many established assumptions pertaining to the relationship between writer and reader. Does Dick's work alienate the serious literati? Is his work *ghettoised* within the field of Science-Fiction for good reason? What is the approach to take to Philip K. Dick?

A worthwhile starting point would be to examine the progression of Dick's overall *oeuvre* and place it in the context of its literary antecedents, most usefully in this light, the writing of Lewis Carroll. Carroll's first novel, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, describes a dream in which the dreamer is gradually becoming aware of the fact that she is dreaming, and realises a certain limited amount of control that can be exercised over the dream world. This

type of dream is referred to as *lucid dreaming*.⁴ The second novel, *Through the Looking Glass* takes a number of more complex concerns on board. In this novel, Alice begins to question her assumptions about identity. If in the previous tale she was aware of the dream being a dream, might then reality itself be a dream? Faced with the loss of personal identity in the forest, Alice encounters the Red King and is told by Tweedledee that she is no more than "a sort of thing in his dream" (Carroll, 1939, p. 174). Even on the awakening, which structurally recalls the ending of the previous novel, Alice brings back into the non-dream world the concerns which presented themselves to her in her dream, a thing which we do not find in the earlier novel. Alice wonders "Who it was that dreamed it all" (Carroll, 1939, p. 249). Was it her dream or the dream of the Red King? The truth of the matter is that it was neither, it was the dream of Lewis Carroll, and it is this aspect that is examined in the third novel, *Silvie and Bruno*. In this work the ontological concerns move from the state of the dreamer and her relationship to a reasonably secure reality beyond the dream, to include the author himself (who appeared in mufti as the White Knight in *Through the Looking Glass*). The writer appears as a perspective viewpoint in *Silvie and Bruno*, and the narrative shifts in a series of "dissolves" from the fairytale world of the two children to the real world of the author. The novel inside the novel is a clever pastiche/parody of the Victorian Romantic novel, but we find that elements from the fantasy world keep intruding. Mein Herr resembles the Professor very closely, his schemes are very similar, and just as absurd. Both the author and his friends see Mein Herr, and at one point they even meet Silvie and Bruno themselves. The end of the novel deals with the quite inexplicable return of the author's friend from the dead, leaving us with a

⁴ See Green, 1968, for a discussion of this phenomenon.

severe problem of re-analysing the novel to account for this. We are, of course, not supposed to be able to do so any more than we are with Philip K. Dick's *Ubik*.

Silvie and Bruno moves towards a view of a neurotic author, dealing with fears of the unreality of the outside, framing world of the reader by containing a fictional world of the writer and showing that reality slowly breaking down. *Silvie and Bruno* never achieved the popularity of Carroll's other two novels, and is little read in the twentieth-century. Its outstanding treatment of adult fears is far less veiled than that of the Alice books, and while the ontological and theological concerns of the latter may be glossed over, this is much more difficult for the reader of *Silvie and Bruno*. The novel retains a disturbing aura, due to its reflexivity, and the fact that Carroll and the reader are as much characters in it as the fairies who are its protagonists. The surreal elements of the Alice books can be overlooked in the nursery, but they are shockingly overt in *Silvie and Bruno*. A storyline in which, following a coup, an authoritarian dictatorship is instituted in Fairyland whose openly schizophrenic tyrants can manipulate language and reality with equal aplomb, is not the most settling premise for a popular children's classic.

The development in Dick's writing can be seen in a similar light. Dick's early novels deal with the nature of the dream and reality, of dreamers becoming aware of their dreams, as in *Eye in the Sky* (1957). Even during the 1950s, Dick begins to place the reader in the position of representing the outside reality for the characters in the novels, of being the outside, and of being the creator, establishing the world within which the fiction takes place. The structure that Dick proposes first implies this relationship between author and reader, and then starts to challenge it, making the reader ask the same question that Alice

asks in *Through the Looking Glass*, who is doing the dreaming? The final stage is that the author himself becomes the direct focus of the fiction. In Dick's later novels, the emphasis becomes strongly personal, many autobiographical elements intrude into the fantasy. Characters adopt names which either form anagrams or cryptograms of Dick's name. In one of Dick's very last novels, published posthumously, *Radio Free Albemuth*, Dick appears as Philip K. Dick as well as in the form of an alter ego with a different name.

Questioning reality is nothing new. Not only was Lewis Carroll concerned with such ontological problems, but in Dick's own life-time, many other writers were dealing with these aspects in fiction. In his novel *The Ticket that Exploded* (1967), William S. Burroughs explores, as much as in his *The Naked Lunch* (1959), the idea that there is no real:

Somewhere at the heart of the book is a feeling that no genuine reality is accessible at the present time: "There is no real thing - Maya - Maya - It's all show business." Images crowd in on all sides and from the past, predetermining the present and pre-empting it of its own reality. Whatever genuine life might appear is moulded by old fabrications or sucked out by living corpses. The general atmosphere is a curious combination of desolate wasteland and fading film - reality is rotting or dissolving, a mixture of entropy and evaporation. (Tanner, 1971, p. 136)

Burroughs, in breaking down the structure of his narrative by the "cut-up" technique, produces a series of novels which contend that there is no true reality and which present their information in a scrambled mass of competing strands, by which means the reader is given too much information to be able to draw a sense of reality from it. Is this not enough? Dick does not use cut-ups in his work. His novels are very tightly structured and seem to adhere rigorously to the generic conventions. Dick has some aspects, however, in common with Burroughs. He was, like Burroughs, addicted to drugs, amphetamines, for a large portion of his life. He writes about the decay of reality, of reality

appearing like a film (*The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*), of the schizophrenic hell-layer into which the mind may sink, (*Martian Time-Slip* (1964)), of the holocaust which leaves the horribly deformed struggling for survival against the machines in a world in which the human and the android are often indistinguishable, (*Dr. Bloodmoney* (1965), *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*). How is Dick's work different to Burroughs's?

For Dick, the questioning of reality is not the central issue. Leibniz, Locke, Hume and Berkeley provide much of the common ground between writers who raise problems of ontology. Melville, in *Moby-Dick* (Melville/Beaver 1972) also alludes to these questions. Dick understood philosophy, he enrolled at U. C. Berkeley (Ca.) to study German and Philosophy (Foundation, 26, p. 73). Dick makes the problems of ontology that he and other writers of this period find central not into an end in themselves, but into a means to an end. The contradicting structures of Dick's narratives run hand in hand with a developing synthesis of religious ideas drawn from a variety of sources, notably Zoroastrian, Buddhist and early Christian.

Dick produces a *mythopoeia* appropriate to an age where established values and a concrete sense of reality has broken down. If in the past our ancestors had a faith in the foundation of their reality it was derived from a faith in God, in a jealous creator who could both reward good and punish evil. In the world as it stands after after Nietzsche's declaration of God's death, after two World-Wars, with the sense of uncertainty and paranoia engendered by the Cold-War wherein even one's closest friend, one could be led to believe, might possibly be a Communist, with reality so dubious, Dick does not merely point out that reality is an uncertain thing. He presents a created religious structure, a structure produced for the purpose of underlying fictional narra-

tive, in which the basis of its *mythos* is that very uncertainty and unreality. Dick is producing a faith for the post-War age, a *credo* of paranoia. Dick recognises a close affinity between the reality break-downs inherent in Cold-War hysteria, those of the schizophrenic (whom the followers of R. D. Laing in the 1960s believed to be reacting in a sane way to an insane society)⁵ and loss of faith in the stabilities of realist fiction. Through fiction the link is made to the complex of belief systems in a whole range of world religions dealing with the *lack* of faith in the reality of the material, visible world. If the author is the God of his characters he can mediate, can be an *intercessor* to both the characters and the readers, helping to enlighten them.

Certainly Dick was not alone among Science-Fiction writers in creating a religion suitable for the world in which he lived. L. Ron Hubbard did likewise, creating the quasi-religion of Scientology, which attracted fellow Science-Fiction authors A. E. Van Vogt and Robert A. Heinlein, and even, to an extent, William S. Burroughs. Dick was not drawn to Hubbard's church. Although towards the end of his life he became more involved in trying to evangelise his faith, Dick's religious quest in his fiction is to try to provide an underlying metaphor for the concept of the rejection of a definitive reality, and the abandonment of realism.

Whilst Burroughs deconstructs his narratives on the level of language, breaking down all formal structures and providing a disturbing, fractured view of the world, Dick pursues a different line. The multiple focus which he utilises through many of his novels, wherein the viewpoint through which the

⁵ Shapiro, 1981, p. 22.

reader sees is fixed first on one character, then on another, has its roots in Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book* (1872). Dick uses this idea in the post-Einstein world, where every viewpoint is equally valid. Dick offers a fractured view just as does Burroughs, a view where our insight into the minds of all the characters is frustrated by their individual worlds, all equally valid, all equally individual and wholly different. Dick's is a reality break-down which pretends to be something else. While Burroughs deconstructs narrative overtly, breaks down the language and the form, Dick's narratives are broken down within a formal framework. Dick has the conventional realist novel pull itself apart. The reader of Burroughs is in no doubt that the author is dealing with the end of reality, the death of language. Dick uses formal, established structures to *create* the means of their own destruction. What we are watching in Dick's fiction is the novel *imploding*, the reader does not even have the surety that Burroughs provides, that the deconstruction is overt. The formal frameworks give Dick the ability to create a continual series of interlocking metaphors for the deconstruction process to examine itself examining itself.

These reality break-downs are held within a metaphoric super-structure, a series of conceptual archetypes, as Jung would call them, from man's religious past, brought into the present to watch the process. Many times in Dick's work stalks the spectre of the atavistic Old Man, the Neanderthal fore-runner to humanity lurking in the hearts of men, ready to return, given the opportunity. In constructing fictitious future technologies Dick comments on the fragile nature of our modern world.

Tanner talks of the difference between the English treatment of character and the American:

...I think we could say that for the English novelist, when his hero comes up against the prevailing structure of society, he considers this to be an encounter with some reality (sometimes with the most meaningful reality). Whereas for the American writer such an encounter is more likely to be experienced as an entanglement with misleading apparitions, hence the perpetually dissolving cityscapes, and the sense of moving among insubstantial ephemera, to be found throughout American fiction. This is one reason, I think, why there is so much less interest in conventional character study and analysis in it than in contemporary English fiction. (Tanner, 1971, p. 151)

Dick's characters often appear stereotyped, they seem to be overwhelmed by the decomposing structures around them. Dick does analyse character very deeply in some novels, in *The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike* (1985), for example, and in *The Man in the High Castle* for another. Where he does not, there is usually a reason. All the time we are kept in touch with the characters by the multiple-focus viewpoint, Dick's trademark so to speak. The overwhelming of the character is part of the transitional, one might almost say transcendent, nature of the reader/character relationship, a relationship turning into one of reader/author, or even reader *as* author. It is worth pointing out that, even in some of Dick's least literarily valuable novels there are moments of extraordinary emotion which he can elicit from the most apparently two-dimensional characters. The return of Lord Running Clam in *Clans of the Alphane Moon* (1964), and the child-like innocence of the decerebrated Amos Ild in *Our Friends from Frolix 8* (1970), are moments of true pathos, of joy and sadness mixed, which, dependent on the subjective experience of the reader, can be strongly moving. For Dick, the kind of characterisation he utilises is the best for the kind of themes with which he deals. As Tanner's remarks suggest, his seeming lack of interest in characterisation is not his alone in modern American fiction, but with Dick it is not a lack of concern. There is a method here.

In order to illustrate development in Dick's work, I have chosen a number of key novels and short stories. That I devote such a large bulk of this paper

to discussing *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* and *The Man in the High Castle* should not be taken to mean that these are the only two of Dick's works that could be subjected to such intense scrutiny. The formal richness of novels the calibre of *Martian Time-Slip*, *Dr. Bloodmoney*, *Ubik* and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* can only be hinted. The reason for examining the two that I chose in such detail, is that they encapsulate many of the themes which are in a process of development in Dick's work. They are both pivotal novels, and act as a guide to the *mythopoeia* that Dick is creating in his fiction as a whole. They are taken out of sequence for the reason that there are two aspects, the fictional and the religious, which are fused together on a stylistic and formal level in the fiction of Philip K. Dick. In order to understand the mythic complexity of *The Man in the High Castle* it is necessary first to examine the narrative structuring of *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, even though that novel was written later.

The next four chapters of this paper will concern themselves with Dick antecedents and the roots of his philosophies and fictions in his writings of the 1950s. Heinlein and Van Vogt, both to become Scientologists in the 1960s, mark the emergence of modern Science-Fiction. It is their ideas and forms, along with those of magazine editor John W. Campbell, who introduced the concept of supernatural talents into American Science-Fiction of this period, which provide the template for Dick both to stencil and to mock. Many of Dick's short stories from his earliest writings show him examining literary themes which were to preoccupy more accepted, "mainstream" authors during the latter years of the 1950s and into the 1960s. Concise and economical, Dick's shorter fiction experiments in form and philosophy with wit and method. It is important to start at the beginning in order to understand the development of Dick's work, a corpus of fiction which frequently plays subtle games with its readers, setting up a

cat's cradle of self reference where Dick's own earlier writings form the key to the paradigms introduced in his later work.

THE ATROCITY EXHIBITION

Published exactly a year after he submitted his earliest extant Science-Fiction novel, *Cosmic Puppets* (1956) to his agent, Dick's short story "Exhibit Piece" appeared in *Worlds of If* Science-Fiction magazine in August 1954.⁶ This story introduces themes which are to feature prominently in many of his later novels, notably *The Man in the High Castle*, *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* and *Ubik*, which will be discussed at length later. Speculations as to the nature of the life after death appear here, also the worry in the mind of the dreamer as to whether the dreaming or waking world is the real. Such ontological concerns as these, and the examination of the role of the individual's identity within a shared reality, a group culture, also pointedly prefigure many themes which were to preoccupy a significant number of more "mainstream" writers of the 1950s and 1960s, most notably William Golding, Jorge Luis Borges and Thomas Pynchon.

"Exhibit Piece" opens with George Miller arriving for work at the N'York History Agency where he is researching the twentieth century, Eisenhower's America, which by convenient coincidence happens to be the exact period in which the story's original readers were living. George is proud of his work. His obsession with academic accuracy extends outside the Museum. The "Medievalists" of Asimov's future century portrayed in *The Naked Sun* (1958) and *The Caves of Steel* (1958) adopt twentieth century artifacts and mannerisms for

⁶ Collected in *A Handful of Darkness* (1955).

no better reason, it would seem, than to give purchase to Asimov's twentieth century readers to experience a sense of reassurance from the idea that their own world is still held in some form of unexplained nostalgic esteem by the inhabitants of this very alien future world. Dick appears to be following suit in his story. George presents himself as an exhibit, as a twentieth century anachronism. He wears a suit to work and carries a briefcase, practices unheard of in this future century. Dick is using a convention of nostalgia for the present, but using it for a specific reason. Unlike Asimov, Dick is not concerned with providing a vague sense of the familiar but with reproducing an exact replica of his readers' world:

'...Idolise the past, if you want. But remember, -it's gone and buried. Times change. Society progresses.' He gestured impatiently at the exhibits that occupied the level. 'That's only an imperfect replica.'
'You impugn my research?' Miller was seething. 'This exhibit is absolutely accurate! I correct it to all new data. There isn't anything I don't know about the twentieth century.'

George's ability to know everything about the twentieth century is, even at this early point in the story, somewhat disturbing. Does he mean that he knows all that there is available to know, or all that there is to know? Is the source of his information within the twenty-second century or from outside it? The analogy is to the difference between textual and extra-textual information. Is George a part of the world Dick is writing about or a part of the world that he is writing *from*? For George the source of his information seems very close to home. His home and family inside the exhibit are very familiar to him. As they call him by name he begins to remember their names, all the while surprised that he should be able to do so. He feels sure he has seen the children somewhere before:

Briefly the observation flashed through his mind that the boy looked familiar. Damn familiar, like someone he knew, only younger.

The someone he knew is, of course, himself. The boy looks like his father, only younger, and his father is George Miller. The family live in Eisenhower's America, and the world is very much as George's twenty-second century researches showed it to be. The whole thing seems very real indeed ("The three dimensional backdrop was utterly convincing; or was it the backdrop?"). The family have noticed no lapse of absence from George. He went outside to collect the newspaper from the bushes where the lazy delivery boy had left it instead of putting it on the porch-step, but failed to find it.

By this time George has begun to think that the whole of his life in the twenty-second century is a momentary hallucination, a kind of fugue state he entered while out in the garden looking for the newspaper, an hallucination which appeared to last for years in his own subjective time but which took no time at all in the world his family still occupied. The doubt in his mind is that it might not have been an illusion, that he might actually have been able to travel from one world and one time to another, completely different, that his life is complete and consistent in each one, that he has, in fact, two lives.

There are a number of possibilities. On one hand, Dick's speculations show a playful disregard for the proposition that Kant leaves without argument in the Transcendental Aesthetic of his *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1976, p. 69), namely that our lives should be confined to one time and place. Nonetheless, philosophers have not left this assumption unchallenged. In 1962, in *Philosophy*, Anthony Quinton proposed a mythological setting to show that, in theory at least, it is not necessarily essential that our conscious experience of the world be confined under the terms that Kant outlines. Quinton's myth involves a person living in England, who, on falling asleep, appears in another

place entirely, a hut by the side of a tropical lake. After a day of tropical activity, he falls asleep once more, this time to find himself back in England. What Quinton describes is the state of the dreamer, who always returns to the same dream, but whose dream is so vivid and always so consistent that it is impossible for him to tell which is the dream and which is the reality. They must be treated as equally real. There is no pathway which links the two worlds. They can only be entered by falling asleep and beginning to dream.

Like the dreamer in Quinton's myth, George Miller has two worlds and two lives. They are in different centuries and in different places, one is in twenty-second century New York, the other in twentieth century San Francisco. The complicating factor seems to be that time does not run at the same speed in both versions of reality. The whole of George's life in the Museum-world appears to him to have taken place in the time it took him to go outside to look for the morning newspaper. Even so, there is no problem here: George is still the same, still maintains a continuity of personality and identity even in two worlds with different time-scales.

George can cross from one world to the other simply by walking down the street. The visitors to the Museum and George's fellow workers cannot do this. They cannot drive off into what is for them a three dimensional backdrop, cross the Golden Gate Bridge and visit Dr. Grunberg in town. Only George has access to this other world in its totality. The others merely see the replica which George has made. This would seem to mitigate against the view, which George himself seems to believe, that his replica is so accurate that it has actually *become* the twentieth century.

There is a sense of homage here to A. E. Van Vogt's *The World of Null-A* and the premise that if two things are sufficiently identical they will in fact become the same thing, albeit in two different places. This idea will be examined in detail later as it is one which Dick returns to, but here it seems not to work. George's two lives are unique to him, he is the only one able to travel from one to another. He would seem the epitome of Quinton's dreamer, except for one small doubt, one aspect that disturbs him. There should not ordinarily, even given the somewhat extraordinary nature of George's life/lives, be any reason why he should be so worried about the newspaper:

'You know, of course, that your feeling is common to most of mankind. Especially during periods of great tension. Where -by the way- was the newspaper? Did you find it?'

'As far as I'm concerned --'

'Is that a source of irritation with you? I see you react strongly to a mention of the newspaper.' Miller shook his head wearily. 'Forget it'.

'Yes, a trifle. The paper boy carelessly throws the newspaper in the bushes, not on the porch. It makes you angry. It happens again and again. Early in the day, just as you're starting to work. It seems to symbolise in a small way the whole petty frustration and defeats of your job. Your whole life.'

'Personally I don't give a damn about the newspaper...'

If, as Dr. Grunberg even suggests ('So you're dreaming me...I suppose I should thank you.') all the things in Miller's world are being dreamt by him, then the psychiatrist's decision to bring up the subject of the newspaper is part of the dream, part of the complex of anxieties which beset Miller. Were he not worried about it he would not dream someone telling him that he was worried.

Miller seems to "know" the headline subconsciously, seems to be worried about what it contains, seems to be trying to avoid remembering it, although logically he has not seen it yet. Miller, like Lao Tsu, is in the position of not knowing whether or not he is a man dreaming he is a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he is a man, or in this case:

'Either this is an exhibit on R level of the History Agency, or I'm a middle-class business man with an escape fantasy. Right now I can't decide which...'

Perhaps the newspaper could help him to decide. What does the headline tell us? It does seem fairly unambiguous:

RUSSIA REVEALS COBALT BOMB
TOTAL WORLD DESTRUCTION AHEAD

Having turned his back on the world of the twenty-second century and crossed over the 'time bridge' into the San Francisco of Eisenhower he discovers that the Garden of Eden has bitter fruits. Atomic war and world destruction lie ahead in the twentieth century. Of course such fears were characteristic of the U.S.A. of the Cold-War era, but the headline promises something more than just fear. The Cobalt Bomb was the fabled 'Doomsday Machine', the weapon which would destroy both sides in any atomic exchange, mooted at a time before the massive preponderance of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles that were to come during the 1970s would guarantee to do this job anyway. Stanley Kubrick refers to it in *Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* as the ultimate nuclear device. Without an effective means of delivery, the 'Doomsday Machine' would irradiate the planet from one location without having to be flown over enemy territory. It is only with this information that we can begin to understand the authentic significance of the scenario in "Exhibit Piece".

George Miller, in common with every other human being on Earth, is dead. He died long before the beginning of the story. The world was destroyed by the Russian Cobalt Bomb in the mid-twentieth century. All that remains of humanity

is George's dream. Dr. Grunberg should indeed be thankful, the escape fantasy is in fact the *ultimate* escape, a means of living after death, of preserving the world after the loss of the body.

To remain in the twentieth century means that eventually the newspaper has to be faced, eventually the time will swing around to Doomsday again. The only way to avoid this is to escape into an imaginary future. George, as a middle-class business man in San Francisco in the mid-1950s knows nothing about the state of the world in another two centuries, but '...there isn't anything I don't know about the twentieth century!' he says, and on the face of it that is not too surprising. How could all the superfluous information about the world as it was be assimilated into an escape fantasy without it causing George's subconscious to ask awkward, and self-destructive, questions? Fail to assimilate it and the gaps in George's imagination regarding the future will show up, and he will inevitably fall back on dangerous anachronisms. The obvious solution is to make himself into a museum researcher, assembling an exhibit of the 1950s. All the memories of his past life can be lovingly reproduced and cherished, George can indeed have two lives, one inside the Museum and one outside. Half his day can be harmlessly spent indulging his memory of the world he has lost, but cannot allow himself to remember that he has lost, the rest with dreaming about the better world of the future that was never to be.

However, the more perfect the exhibit becomes, the more the danger that it will draw in memories which will lead back to the awful truth - the truth that the world no longer exists and that the dreamer is dead. The most obvious such memory incorporates George's own family and the inevitable morning chore of picking up the newspaper, the newspaper which will one day reveal the terrible news TOTAL WORLD DESTRUCTION AHEAD.

'...Idolise the past, if you want. But remember - it's gone and buried...'

At a second reading we can start to see the hints that make a grim foretaste of the final sentence of the shock headline. The very setting of the Museum suggests death, the world that has gone, preserved from decay. The newspaper represents the fear of the truth. But George has not made life easy for himself. The life of the twenty-second century is a dream, but the life he knew in the now-destroyed twentieth century is represented as a construct, 'a bundle of plastic and wire and struts'. Implicit in George's eventual retreat into the world of the exhibit, his 'real' world, is the acceptance that the world he has left is equally artificial.

Dick returned to this theme briefly in his 1966 short story "We Can Remember it for You Wholesale",⁷ in which the archetypal little man, Douglas Quail, dreams of visiting Mars and being a secret agent. He is not a secret agent, only a meagre store keeper, and his income would never enable him to make the trip to Mars. However he can afford artificial memory implants which are intended by the company, *Rekal*⁸ to enable him to 'remember' a trip he never made as vividly as he would had he actually made it. However, when Rekal have Quail hypnotised under drug therapy they discover that he actually was once a secret agent on Mars and had been given a new identity as a cover by the government and amnesia treatment to cause him to forget his mission and his former pro-

⁷ Collected in *The Preserving Machine*, (1969).

⁸ Rekal=Recall, but is also an anagram of klear=clear, as in a clear glass through which we would see the world as it is, instead of seeing, as St Paul puts it, through a glass darkly.

fession. The amnesia fails because although Quail forgets having been an agent he perceives the residual memory as a desire to do the things that in real life he actually did.

The situation in "Exhibit Piece" is essentially the same, but for the fact that George has made himself forget, and has, like Quail in the later story, subsequently forgotten that he has forgotten. Only the newspaper remains, like the faked souvenirs of Mars nestling in amongst the genuine in Quail's desk drawer. To remember the past in Quail's case is fatal, as his cover will be broken, a cover that must be kept even from himself, and government agents will kill him. For George too, to remember is to die, to be annihilated.

In George's own mind, however, the disturbing memories of the true state of his world remain; although glossed over and forgotten they keep reasserting themselves. The boys are off to the Russian River at the weekend, a grim reminder of the Russian threat to George's world. With laconic wit Dick names George's son *Don* to drive the message home. Other names have sinister significances for George.

Head of the History Agency is Edwin Carnap, 'one of the most powerful figures of the twenty-second century'. At the end of the story he arrives in person to confront George with the fraud of his alternative universe in the past. Dick has not chosen the name Carnap at random. Rudolf Carnap was one of the most influential philosophers in the field of logical positivism during the 1950s,

when he was based in California. He developed a 'construction theory' in his major work the *Aufbau*,⁹ which according to Anthony Flew's summary shows:

how highly theoretical statements, that do not apparently describe immediate experience, are reduced by definitions to ones that do. The *Aufbau* provided such a system, based firmly on descriptions of immediate given experience, and Carnap was zealous in promoting the view that sentences that do not have this rigid relation to experience, particularly those of metaphysics, were meaningless answers to pseudo problems. (Flew, 1979, pp. 55 - 56)

For George Miller meeting the symbolic incarnation of logical positivism is actual death to his metaphysical construction. Carnap was a zealot for analytical sentences, the Wittgensteinian ideals of meaningful statements based on *a posteriori* rather than *a priori* logic.

Carnap is a *Deus ex Machina* for George, the symbol of the deceit on which the whole of the artificial world is founded:

'We've already begun demolition preparations,' Carnap said calmly. 'We'll do it piece by piece, not all at once. So you may have the opportunity to appreciate the scientific and *-artistic-* way we take your imaginary world apart.'

The artistic is stressed. Naturally the demolition of George's exhibit which Carnap has commanded, is to be artistic, since the whole of George's imaginary world is an artifact, albeit in mental existence only. Even Carnap and his colleagues are part of it, he is dreaming them as well. Dick is pointing outside the frame of his text to the reader, creating the artistic, imaginary world by the process of reading the story. The destruction of it will be part of the

⁹ *Aufbau* means construction but also building, a meaning obviously not lost on Dick here with the references to constructing actual buildings which themselves subsequently turn out to be semantic forms.

narrative as much as the creation of it has been, if not more so since the destruction will take place outside the text, brought on by the apocalyptic last sentence. This will be a process entirely in the mind of the reader.

The fact that the crucial item is a newspaper itself leads us back to the process of the writer and the printed page. George's world is being destroyed not because it is faulty, because it has been shoddily constructed, but because it is too good. It was so good that George has become totally convinced, has wanted to actualise all the parts of it, not merely the ones where he is safe. In Leibnizian manner, he actualises the 1950s world because it is a perfect facsimile, because it has been made so close to the original that it can no longer be contained as a mere description. It is a fiction which, like Dick's own, is construed into a believable world by the reader. George is both author and reader, he has separated his codifying and decoding regions into Museum-world and Exhibit-world; he participates in both. In the world of the Exhibit, destroyed by atomic war, he created the world of the Museum in the twenty-second century. While in this dream reality he created the very world he had originally left. He is the author of both. One text contains the other completely. George is living in two dreams, dreams which are not as we might expect, that is to say the dream and then the dream-within-the-dream, but two dreams which are both inside one another, from which there can never be any awakening, save the annihilation of death:

...Grunberg continued, 'I understand what you say. You have a general feeling that everything around you is unreal. A sort of stage...And in addition to this general feeling of - insubstantiality, there are specific projected memories of persons and places beyond this world. Another realm in which this one is contained. Perhaps I should say, the reality within which this is only a sort of shadow world.'

Dick places Miller in a series of impossible spaces each of which seems totally authentic, with a wealth of clues subconsciously washing around which point to the real state of affairs, the death of the world, and which point also to a strong analogy with Dick's own process of writing and the way in which he defines a character in a narrative space.

Dick's story presents the reader with a vision of the world after death, a central character whose life has ended even before the beginning of the narrative, and who sustains the world of the story by *his* imagination. George Miller is a proto-authorial figure, possessing an activating imagination, one which can actualise the world around him in much the same way as the author can create the fictional world on the page. Miller is a dreamer within the dream, another "author" within the fiction created to contain him by Dick. This is an idea Dick is to develop particularly strongly in *The Man in the High Castle* and *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (1965) but there are aspects of it beginning to show in all his novels of the 1950s especially *Eye in the Sky*. Dick's conscious awareness of the process of the writer is one which becomes a striking feature of these novels. In "Exhibit Piece" he makes the allusion concrete by including Carnap and the stress laid on the sentence, on the role of language in the construction of this fictional world, leading us to look outside the text to the position of the author, Philip K. Dick himself. Dick shows here for perhaps the first time the process of *allegory* which he is introducing into not only his fiction, but Science-Fiction .

Dick was not entirely alone in his interest in the life after death. Other authors had also explored the possibilities of constructing a coherent and often allegorical narrative around a central character or characters who are dead or about to die, at the beginning of the story. The Ambrose Bierce short story

"An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"¹⁰ is one of the earliest examples in American fiction. A Civil War spy is to be executed by hanging from the bridge at Owl Creek, but as he drops the rope snaps and he escapes by swimming away. As the prisoner makes his way home he begins to feel tired and weary, he walks up to the door of his home and falls unconscious. The coda of the story reveals that his body is still swinging from the makeshift gallows on Owl Creek Bridge, the flight home just a vivid fantasy in the mind of the prisoner during his death agony. This revelation must necessarily be made from a viewpoint other than that of the hanged man, from which perspective the rest of the tale has been told. Such a shift, intriguingly, does not occur at the end of Billy Wilder's film *Sunset Boulevard* in which the dead body in the swimming pool is revealed to be the narrator of the film who promises to tell us how the whole story happened. The story is about him and his involvement with the faded film star Norma Desmond which he recounts on the soundtrack of the film in the tradition of the detective genre. He is shot and falls into the pool to show that all three are one, the dead man, the narrator and the central character. Astonishingly the narration continues even after this is revealed, the voice of the man we now know to be dead dispassionately describing the way the police treat his lifeless body. There is no sense here of the revelation being a feared thing, that the awareness of death is something that must be avoided at all costs. The screen convention of the "voice-over" narrator as a disembodied voice becomes an ironic joke in this film as the narrator is very literally disembodied. He is unlike the prisoner in Bierce's story in that the knowledge of his death seems to not worry him, there are no clues pointing to the truth which must be pushed out of his mind. The clues which encode the truth as to

¹⁰ Collected in Bierce, 1973.

the death of the character, and in this special case, the death of the author, are a common feature of the few narratives which have ventured into the world of the dead for their subject matter.

In 1955 the novel *Pincher Martin* by William Golding first appeared. In the United States it was to be more bold as to its surprise ending by running under the title *The Two Deaths of Christopher Hadley Martin* the surprise ending being that the aforesaid Christopher Martin is dead from the beginning of the novel, but that this information is withheld from the reader by dint of the very authentic-seeming world created by Martin in order to escape death. The second death occurs when this fantasy breaks down. Martin drowns in the Atlantic, his ship having been sunk by a U-Boat during the Second World War. He is dead by the third page of the novel, but although the reader can easily disentangle the poetic prose after knowing the true state of affairs at the end of the book, the point at which he goes down for the proverbial third time is easy to miss at a first reading. After all, Martin fights back, he comes up, kicks off his heavy seaboots, the first rule in his survival training. He later comes to regret having lost them, and yet has a strange fear of them. The final sentence of the novel reveals that the body, after it has been washed up in Scotland, was still wearing the boots, thus informing the reader that the whole of the novel has taken place after Martin's death.

The boots are objects of fear because they represent the truth that Martin cannot face. He wishes that he had them back because then his false world would be less different from the real one. There are many references to him being "like a dead man" which at first reading seem to be metaphor alone but which when re-examined in the light of the ending can be seen to be literal description. Martin is like a dead man because⁴ he is a dead man, but in order

not to have his world collapse around him he must force all the thoughts of death and his rotting body out of his mind. All the inconsistencies in his created world, a rock in the sea, must likewise be explained away. When Martin starts to become less adept at this he convinces himself that he is mad and that all the holes in his world are illusions. Eventually he meets a vision of God, who comes to him in the form of himself wearing seaboots, boots which seem much more real than the ground on which they stand, and God then proceeds to kick his world to pieces.

The sequence that Golding creates for his "hero" is much like that of Bierce's. The story begins with the protagonist alive, he then dies, but because the story centres on his viewpoint the reader accepts the fantasy in his mind that he has not died. The transition from life to death is so imperceptible that the narrative appears to be continuous. The escape from death endeavours to be so much like the world the protagonist has left as to be indistinguishable from it. There are, however, nagging anomalies, things which point to the protagonist's death, and which, if thought about thoroughly, would destroy the bubble-thin illusion on which the escape fantasy is based. The act of creating an entire world, complete with all the details, realistic and believable, of the real world in imagination is a very difficult job. Eventually the number of anomalies become too great for the protagonist to ignore any longer, and the first reflexive thoughts directed to them destroy the whole fabric of the illusion.

Another novel which follows this model is Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman* (1967). Again, the novel begins with its nameless protagonist alive and reasonably well, but for the loss of a leg, and shortly follows him into the afterlife in which he meets the most outrageous and disturbing things. At the

end of the novel it is revealed to us that he was killed in the first chapter. Instead of O'Brien ending the story here, it merely begins all over again, this is a vision of hell, and the protagonist, and subsequently his former henchman in his criminal activities, are doomed to relive the same nightmare over and over again.

Throughout the narrative, O'Brien's central character leaves subconscious traces in the text hinting that his life is over and that this is some form of hell-world. His dreams are of death. The policemen he encounters reveal quite late in the novel that they have known all along that he was the murderer of Old Man Mathers, and that they are going to hang him the next day. All the while the nameless protagonist has felt assured that no-one is aware of his part in the murder, the profit from which, hidden by his accomplice, he was in the process of collecting when he was killed. It is the murder that has condemned him to this hell, but the policemen's strange and casual admission that they have known all the time about his guilt is a foreshadowing of another fact that is hidden but known all the time, namely that the protagonist is dead and in hell. The policemen's obsession with bicycles is clearly prompted by the subliminal memory in the murderer's mind of the iron bicycle pump which was used to knock Mathers unconscious prior to killing him. Many features of this afterlife are suggested by things which were known to the murderer or which featured in the murder itself. Many times we are confronted with the motif of boxes which are opened to reveal either wonderful or horrifying things. Policeman MacCruiskeen shows the murderer a miniature wooden chest that he has made in his free time, and he marvels at how well it is made and how small it is. MacCruiskeen opens it to reveal another chest, exactly the same only much smaller. Inside that there is another one and then another. Eventually chests

so small that they can only be seen under a powerful magnifying glass are produced:

At this point I became afraid. What he was doing was no longer wonderful but terrible. I shut my eyes and prayed that he would stop while doing things that were at least possible for a man to do. (O'Brien, 1967, p. 64)

MacCruiskeen has another box in his bedroom which contains a small piece of cardboard on which is painted a colour like no other ever seen in history. The sight of this colour would reduce a man to insanity by its sheer novelty. When the murderer is to receive help from an army of one-legged men, MacCruiskeen intends to defeat them by painting his bicycle in this colour and riding it in front of them:

I sat there for a half an hour, still weak, bereft of light and feebly wondering for the first time about making my escape. I must have come back sufficiently from death to enter a healthy tiredness again for I did not hear the policeman coming out of the bedroom again and crossing the kitchen with his unbeholdable and brain-destroying bicycle. I must have slept there fitfully in my chair, my own private darkness reigning behind the darkness of the handkerchief. (p. 143)

The thing inside the box which is too terrible, or unbeholdable, is the truth of what was really in the black cash box hidden under the floorboards in Old Mathers' house, not money but high explosive and death, a bomb planted by the murderer's greedy accomplice. When the box is reached for, the light changes in the room and from that moment on the nightmare of the crazed policemen becomes the stuff of life for the hapless murderer. The truth of death is something the murderer, also, of course, the narrator, hides from himself, but not from the reader. The sleep is like death ("...I must have come back sufficiently from death..."). The hint of the prisoner's plight ("...my own private darkness...") being a solipsistic hell where only he is real is only partly true, since at the end of the novel, the accomplice dies of old age and joins

our "hero" in this peculiar world. However, there is no question that this is a hell that they have created for themselves, built by their actions in life, and not built very well either:

As I came round the bend of the road an extraordinary spectacle was presented to me. About a hundred yards away on the left-hand side was a house which astonished me. It looked as if it were painted like an advertisement on a boards on the roadside and indeed very poorly painted. It looked completely false and unconvincing. (p. 46)

Pincher Martin comes to the same nightmare vision at the end of his more temporary hell when his world literally starts to crack and it appears as a theatrical backdrop, merely painted on. Both Golding and O'Brien have God-like figures appearing at the end to challenge the whole basis of the belief in the continued life of the hell-wraith. In O'Brien's work this figure is the massive Third Policeman, a gigantic apparition who turns around to reveal that he has the face of Old Mathers, the ultimate vision of horror in this particular hell. For Dick, in "Exhibit Piece", this role is taken by Carnap. At the centre of all these universes is the thing that will shake them apart. For the wraiths involved this ultimate shaker may just as well be God, because it has God-like powers to destroy the created world. The Gods of these stories are the makers of the maker, the representatives of the frame outside.

Jorge Luis Borges presents a similar idea in his story "The Circular Ruins".¹¹ A wizard dreams a man from the skeleton out, each night dreaming more of him until his is complete. He then decides to impose him on reality, gives

¹¹ Collected in Borges, 1962.

his dream man little tasks to perform and wakes to see they have been done. The dream man does not know of his dream nature, the only thing which would prove to him that he was not real would be to step into the fire, which would not consume him. In agitation the wizard, afraid for his "son" walks into the fires of the burning temple of the Fire God and discovers that he is not burnt:

With relief, with humiliation, with terror, he understood that he also was an illusion, that someone else was dreaming him. (Borges, 1962, p. 63)

The themes common to all these narratives are that the life after death retains an exact resemblance to the world the dreamer or wraith has recently left; that there are elements in the self created world he inhabits which point to the fact that he has indeed created this world in his own mind; these elements are at once consciously perceived by the dreamer or limbo-locked soul, but are not consciously cognized by him, since cognition would mean interpreting them in such a way as to reveal that he is indeed dead or dreaming. Finally these anomalous elements are greatly feared by the soul in limbo, a fear which he is quite unable to comprehend, the lack of comprehension itself being another factor of danger in this very fragile after-life "existence". The difference between conscious perception and cognition represented by these stories is a very important one in respect of the position of the narrative viewpoint and the position of the reader in the interpretation of the text, and indeed in the construction, along with the hapless wraith, of his mentally constructed world. The wraith constructs his world in his mind, the reader constructs both him and his world in his or her own mind.

These narratives imply a strong dichotomy in the minds of their wraiths between things perceived by one part of the brain and things understood by another part, except that after death there is no body and no brain. In the absence

of a brain what is being discussed is the way in which one layer of consciousness can be "painted over" another, the new layer being the most immediately accessible, the lower layer still there, still showing through at various points where the fresh "paint" is thin. These ideas point to *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Stevenson, 1979) in which the central character's consciousness is divided and embodied in separated modes of perception, the motives and actions of one being either partially, or not at all, understood by the other. Likewise, Oscar Wilde in his *A Picture of Dorian Gray* (Wilde, 1974) presents a character whose consciousness has been divided such that the comprehension of his motives is encapsulated in a region of "consciousness", the painting, which has no psychic contact with the actual consciousness which is active in the real world. The painting is a layer of a created reality which is affected by the world beyond its frame, yet is unable to affect that world itself. Dorian hides the painting not only from the world, but from himself, detaching the consequences of his actions from even his own moral scrutiny.

Pincher Martin hides the reality of his death, perceived at some level by his vague, after-death sensory facilities, from the higher brain functions which remain in his limbo-world that would be able to interpret them in the right way. Pincher, in common with O'Brien's murderer and Dick's George Miller, sees in order not to see. He perceives the evidence for his death, uses a part of his consciousness to recognise these elements as a threat to the part of his consciousness that is engaged in creating and sustaining the world in which he lives, and then makes a conscious/sub-conscious decision to prevent the higher cognitive functions of his disembodied "brain" from being consciously aware that this perception and primary cognition has taken place. Pincher is in effect two men living two lives. There is a driven and a driver, the primary perceptual element is dependant upon the secondary to sustain the illusion that it, and

its conscious partner, are still alive and existent. If this relationship breaks down, the consciousness is made aware of its own death, the whole system collapses. An excellent analogy to this process is familiar to all who have ever seen a Chuck Jones cartoon film. Daffy Duck confidently strides out past the cliff edge and continues walking on air up until the moment that he looks down. It is only when he is consciously aware that there is no ground under him that the familiar laws of gravity take effect. This cartoon convention plays with our willingness as audience to accept that the character's consciousness is the single motivation factor in the continued existence of its universe. We know that there is no cliff, that there is no gravity, that cartoon characters need never fear the consequences of the fall as one of the other prime conventions of cartoon films is that death does not exist, it can be threatened but never realised. Likewise in a novel, if the viewpoint character should die, another must take over, otherwise the novel ends. The character who propels the narrative, who provides us with our means of constructing our vision of his or her surroundings, must continue to live, and that desire on the part of the reader, or in the case of film, viewer, that the central, viewpoint character should go on living in order to continue propelling the narrative forward, matches the desire that the author imbues in his character to desire to continue living. This is, needless to say, a concession to realism in any case, since most human beings desire to continue living even if only long enough to finish the story, hence the myth of Scheherazade has so much currency.

To talk of a genre here would be most misleading. O'Brien's novel predates all but Bierce's story, yet his was published last, it being therefore impossible for any of the others to have read it while forming the ideas for their own writing. Dick's story predates Golding's novel, showing that he was working on similar ideas without any knowledge of this most literary author. Although

originally published in Argentina during the 1940s, Borges's work was not available in English translation until the mid-1950s and not printed in popular form until 1962, by which time Dick had already published *The Man in the High Castle*. Nevertheless, these stories all have features in common, all of them seem to define the problems inherent in the concept of a self-sustained life after death.

The stories define regions of consciousness which may communicate with one another or not as the case may be. They show characters creating a world from nothing, feeding themselves false sense-data culled from their own memories and fantasies and trying to prevent their higher cognitive functions from becoming aware that the messages purporting to come from the outside world are in fact coming from inside their own heads. What is described is a character inducing schizophrenia, a failure of the brain to distinguish signals coming from itself from those coming from the sense organs referring to the outside world. Schizophrenics who hear voices are in fact "hearing" the other side of their brains processing information.¹² A strong feature of Dick's writing was to be the speculation as to how far the schizophrenic's mind was a model for the minds of supposedly sane individuals. If none of us can be completely certain that we are not dead or dreaming, how can we know that there is not another region of our consciousness which is able to perceive the absolute reality of the universe, but which is keeping this knowledge from us, afraid of the consequences for our survival if we were indeed able to see through the glass clearly.

¹² The overstimulation of the schizophrenic's consciousness in this way is suggested by Stevens's hypothesis of the "neostriatal gate" (Shapiro, 1981, p. 49).

Novels such as *Time Out of Joint* (1957) and *Martian Time Slip* show Dick grappling with this problem, but it is with "Exhibit Piece" that he begins his interest. Dick's familiarity with the *Bardo Thödol* or *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, to which he refers extensively in *The Man in the High Castle* and subsequent novels, points us to the initiating point of his ideas in this direction. The Tibetan scriptures¹³ when recited by Buddhist Lamas to the corpse of a recently deceased person are intended to filter through to the dead soul in the *Bardo* or dream plane, where it will hopefully hear and be able to avoid the pathways to rebirth which will present themselves and follow the light of true enlightenment, escaping the otherwise endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Initially, soon after death, the dead soul experiences the *Chikai Bardo*, wherein life appears to continue exactly as it did in life. The dead soul is unaware that any substantial change has taken place, it does not know that it is dead. Once the soul realises this it passes into the *Chönyid Bardo* wherein it is aware of its death, but continues to experience a pseudo-reality. Only when this has passed does the *Sidpa Bardo* or "Bardo of awaiting rebirth" begin. The dead soul witnesses visions of mating couples and the dawn of the six lights of the *Lokas* or worlds into which it is to be reborn.

George Miller's experiences can be interpreted very easily in terms of the *Bardo Thödol*. It is reasonable to assume that Dick was already familiar with the Tibetan scriptures by the time he wrote "Exhibit Piece" as he had already written *Cosmic Puppets* in which Zoroastrianism is extensively discussed and it is not unreasonable to think that his studies of non-Christian scriptures had included the less obscure regions of Buddhism before more adventurous reading

¹³ First published in Lama Kasi Dawa-Samdup's English translation under the editorship of W. Y. Evans-Wentz in 1929 at Oxford.

in Ancient Egyptian religion. George is placed between the *Chönyid* and *Chikai Bardo* but he is unable to achieve either enlightenment or rebirth, since all life is dead, and he has not evolved spiritually sufficiently far to be able to see past his desire to continue living. The voices of the *Lamas* are, of course, not present, but the voices George hears come from his own mind, although from that region of it which he chooses not to perceive. This is the region of his mind which sees through the fabric of illusion he has created, which is dangerous for George's continued *Bardo*-style existence.

Douglas Quail was a man with two mutually exclusive memories in one body. George Miller does not even have a body, yet he has two memory schemes, and two mutually exclusive regions of perception and consciousness, two regions which in the course of the story, come together explosively, as explosively for George as the coming together of the Critical Mass in the Cobalt Bomb which, when united, killed the world.

Dick presents these regions of consciousness in a way which the other works in this very nebulous "genre" do not. For Dick, the construction of George's after-death world is an analogy for the construction of the fictional world of a character by that character's author. The reader has two regions of consciousness, which must be kept separate. One is the consciousness of the real world which lies beyond the pages of the book and could intrude at any moment. The other is the world of the novel in which the central characters' perceptions and the author's descriptions and speculations take over the voice of the reader's "mind's ear" talking to him in the same way that his own brain chatters away to his everyday life. The novel replaces this percept system, the reader suspends the processing of primary sense-data in order to be involved in the world of the novel. The outside world's sensory input is shifted away from

consciousness. The reader constructs the world of the novel or the short story in his own mind, just as George constructs the world in which he lives in his own mind. George is an author, but as Dick very grimly points out at the end of his story, the author is dead.

L'OISEAU CHANT AVEC SES DOIGTS

Jonathan Hoag has a problem. Like Miller he has two separate areas of consciousness, but he wishes he could bring them together, life is very difficult for him with them kept apart. He cannot remember what he does for a living. He leaves for work in the morning and immediately returns, many hours having passed without his being aware of their passing. His memory of his day's work is blotted out of his mind. The only thing remaining to inform him that anything has happened to him at all during the past eight hours is a mysterious, reddish-brown stain underneath his fingernails. He has to scrub hard to remove it. He thinks it must be blood. Dr. Potbury knows it is not. It is something worse than blood. Potbury refuses to say what it is. Hoag hires a private investigator.

From the outset, Robert A. Heinlein's novella *The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag* (1942) provides us with a curious reversal of the usual forms of the detective genre. A man hires a private eye to uncover a secret, but the secret is his own. Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest* (1931) and Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1938) treat the subject of a man hiring a detective to discover something he already knows for nefarious political reasons, but Heinlein's story is different to these. Hoag does not know his own secret. Hoag is a Jekyll and Hyde figure, half his life and thus half his motivations and desires are lost to the other half of his conscious mind. Hoag does not remember what he does during the day, what we do not know is whether or not his daytime self is able to remember what he does during the evening. Is the subject of the investigation aware that the investigation is taking place? The investigator has

no access to the mind of the investigated, but there may well be a communication running the other way. If the two selves are mutually exclusive, neither having any knowledge of the other, they are indeed separate selves. If there is a cross-over, then part of Hoag's motivations will be lost to him, present only in his daytime, complete memory. Thus the husband and wife detective team he assigns to the case suggest he sees a psychiatrist.

The investigation does not run smoothly. Not only does it appear that Hoag has two distinct mental "selves" but the detectives run into what seem to be two physically distinct Hoags. More than one Hoag suggests a hoax. What Ted Randall, the male half of the detective team, meets up with the Sons of the Bird in his nightmares, he begins to think the the whole thing is part of a huge hallucinatory deception which Hoag is operating. The story, until the re-appearance of Dr. Potbury, presents what seems to be an examination of developing schizophrenia. The split-personality condition which Hoag claims to suffer from acts as either a metaphor or indeed a catalyst for a psychological breakdown in which Randall comes to believe that his dreams are part of the real world, that the Sons of the Bird really can walk through mirrors, that they have indeed kidnapped his wife's soul and held it in a little bottle. We are given a remarkable picture of one man's disintegration into madness, the strange case of Jonathan Hoag comes to look increasingly suspicious, as though it were only part of a process of insanity. Before Cynthia Randall is sent into her coma, she and Randall speculate that they are suffering from *folie à deux*, a form of delusional madness where two people share the same condition and have the same hallucinations. Randall, terrified of the Sons of the Bird from his nightmares, paints over all the mirrors in the house to stop them from coming back. Then he calls a doctor for Cynthia. He calls Dr. Potbury:

Potbury took a step towards him. 'You *are* crazy - and drunk, too.' He looked curiously at the big mirror. 'I want to know what's been going on around here.' He touched a finger to the smeared enamel.

'Don't touch it!'

Potbury checked himself. 'What's it for?'

Randall looked sly. 'I foxed 'em.'

'Who?'

'The Sons of the Bird. They come in through mirrors - but I stopped them.'

Potbury stared at him. 'I know them,' Randall said. 'They won't fool me again. The Bird is Cruel.'

Potbury covered his face with his hands.

They both stood perfectly still for several seconds. It took that long for a new idea to percolate through Randall's abused and bemused mind. When it did he kicked Potbury in the crotch. (Heinlein, 1973, p. 189)

The idea which percolates into Randall's mind is, naturally enough, that Potbury is a Son of the Bird. Up until this point we have been reading a very bizarre detective story. Half the time it seems as though the client is insane, then the detective starts to become insane. From the moment that Potbury gives the Sign of the Bird in answer to Randall's password, just as his Brothers of the Bird had done in Randall's dream, the plot shifts abruptly to Science-Fiction.

The Sons of the Bird are real and they are afraid of Hoag for good reason. He is an emissary from another plane of reality, the one where live a race of beings one of whom, an artist's apprentice, created the universe in which Randall and Potbury and all humanity find themselves living:

'The teacher did not approve of the Sons of the Bird and suggested certain improvements in the creation. But the artist was hasty, or careless; instead of removing them entirely He merely - painted over them, made them appear to be some of the new creations with which He peopled His world.

'All of which would not have mattered if the work had not been selected for judging. Inevitably the critics noticed them; they were - bad art, and they disfigured the final work. There was some doubt in their minds as to whether or not the creation was worth preserving. That is why I am here.' (p. 201)

The story is complex and difficult to take stock of completely. There are two immediately obvious mythic bases for it. On the one hand there is the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, which Heinlein dovetails with the Oedipus to produce his Orphic detective tale. Randall goes in search of Cynthia's soul which has been taken to the underworld. It is interesting to notice the coincidences between this story and Jean Cocteau's film version of the Orpheus, *Orphee* made in 1950, where Orphee, the poet, travels to the underworld first to assist the Angel of Death in the induction of his friend, a fellow poet, into the world of the dead. The Angel of Death, a woman dressed in black, uses long rubber gloves to enable her to pass her hands through the mirrors by which means she gains entry to the world of the living. When Eurydice dies, Orphee employs the gloves to pass through the mirror into the world of the dead in order to bring her back. The phrase *L'oiseau chant avec ces doigts* (The bird sings with its fingers) is a line of poetry which Orphee alone hears on his car radio. It is being broadcast by his deceased friend from the world of the dead. In Heinlein's tale not only is the basis of the story the same legend of Orpheus, but the reference to "The Bird" is there, and also the passage from one world to another through mirrors. Even the gloves are a common feature. Hoag's gloves stay on his hands, thus frustrating Randall's attempts to take his fingerprints.

The other most immediate aspect of Heinlein's story is the theme of Freemasonry. The shadowy inhabitants of Heinlein's other world call themselves the Sons of the Bird. Freemasons refer to themselves collectively as the Sons of the Widow ("on the supposition that all Master Masons are Brothers to Hiram Abiff, who was a Widow's Son.", Hannah, 1952, p. 53). The coincidence is undoubtedly intentional. The Sons of the Bird are a secret society, separated from the world at large, yet able to interact with it in a mysterious and fearful way. At their "Board Meeting" they take an informal register of those present

(only Potbury missing) and conclude that they have a quorum, just as their Masonic analogues would do. Their alternative cosmology is akin to the Masons' "Mystic lecture" and is recited to Randall by Stoles as though reading from a script. He can break off at one point to berate Randall for not paying attention without losing his place in the "text". When the right passwords are uttered the Sons of the Bird respond by making the appropriate signs, just as Freemasons have their grips, their hand signals. In fact, the Sign of the Bird, hands covering face, resembles the Masonic sign of Grief and Distress very closely, ("given...by clasping the hands and elevating them with their backs to the forehead...", Hannah, 1952, p. 148).

This close association places *Hoag* into a common genre with Thomas Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966) with its Trystero, a pseudo-Masonic organisation existing in secret throughout American society and leaving clues of its existence in subtly forged postage stamps, for example. It is an all-controlling, formerly powerful society which contemporary America has "painted over", a level of reality which has gone underground but which is anxious to reassert itself.¹⁴

As we shall see later, Freemasonry presents an alternative to God, and so does Heinlein. The creator which Hoag refers to may be treated to God-like capitalisation, but he stresses the fact that the creator he serves is not the

¹⁴ Heinlein's story predates Pynchon's by so wide a margin that it must contend as a probable source. In the same vein is Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson's *Illuminatus* trilogy (1975) in which a secret society manipulates the whole of human history for its own purposes, which seem to have something to do with the production of the right kinds of conditions to produce immortality for its initiates, a plot bearing more than just a passing resemblance to that of Norman Spinrad's 1969 novel *Bug Jack Barron*.

same as God. The "God" which Hoag presents is but one of many equal creatures in some unspecified higher plane which is trained as an "artist", but in an art which, as Hoag points out, is not human. These creatures imagine art works and make them, our universe is one such work. Written well before Borges's "The Circular Ruins", Heinlein's story tackles the same theme, that of a dream being made real, an art work which may have a life of its own, a concept in the mind of a creator which has an independence, and a lack of knowledge of its "maker". Heinlein also raises the aspect of the creators themselves being part of another plane of creation, they are not "God". Our universe has been chosen for judging. To Dick's mind the similarity to Leibniz's concept of the universe existing in multiple forms which represent alternative, equally viable versions of reality which the divine mind chooses either to actualise or discard would unquestionably have been very striking. In Heinlein's version there are aspects which should not have been actualised but which have been.

Heinlein is, whether intentionally or not, raising the question of whether or not there is a distinction between God and the Creator God. Philosophically, or even logically, the position of these supreme alien creator-artists is somewhat problematic. If they are capable of creating an entire universe and regarding it as an art object, where are *they*? Outside time and space, or in an undefined region of it? These are questions sceptics have posed of God the Creator. Heinlein proposes a form of non-divine being, one of many in a complex society of such creatures. Inevitably the question arises as it has done in philosophy over God Himself: who created the Creator? If the creator/creators are outside time and space, where is *their* creator going to stand? If they are not outside time and space, how can they avoid affecting themselves by their own creative efforts, changing their own world by interfering with the nature of their and our shared reality?

In the light of Dick's obsessive interest in philosophy, and his extensive reading of Gnostic and other non-Christian Scriptures, the problems raised by the Heinlein story seem very exciting. For the first time in Science-Fiction comes the idea that the Creator God and the True God may be separable entities. This concept seems in many ways incidental to Heinlein's story, but the implication is definitely there. Heinlein examines this theme again in his 1956 short story "All You Zombies" in which, by the combination of a time machine and a sex-change operation, a man is enabled not only to be his own father, but his own mother *as well*. The question raised by the hapless narcissist at the end of this *tour de force de grande guignol*, namely, whilst he knows where he comes from, but where do all you Zombies (i.e. ourselves) come from, is locating precisely the paradoxical identity of creator and God. The self-created man is his own God, he is both Adam and Eve in his own private loop of the universe. He is, however, painfully aware of the fact that he created only himself, not all the rest of humanity, so where did they come from? Creation, although Heinlein does not pursue the argument quite this far, is not necessarily the sole prerogative of the divine, so therefore what is the role of the divine in a self-created universe? The potential that this story initiates is the challenge of constructing a cosmology, not to say a cosmogony, for Science-Fiction, a metaphor which can accommodate these forms of reality shifts and incorporate existing religious philosophies. It is this challenge that Philip K. Dick takes up.

Hoag and the fiction of the "after-death" deal with discontinuous mental spaces. In these spaces, an *embedded* subconscious representing a perception of an external reality conflicts with a *primary* subconscious representing a self-preserving fantasy-world. Both subconscious forms compete for dominance before a narrative-constructing consciousness. These progressive detachments

examine the ego's connections with the world of experience as well as its contact with other parts of itself, and its contact with the overlying realm of the divine. Could other parts of the mind, parts hidden from us, already be divine? *Hoag* begins associations with religious experience that other writers soon picked up, but which Dick took to fruition.

TWITCHING

Whilst *Hoag* demonstrates the idea of the dreamer being dreamt, as Borges likewise examines in "The Circular Ruins", A. E. Van Vogt in his 1948 novel *The World of Null-A* brings to his Science-Fiction future speculations on the nature of personal identity. "Exhibit Piece" shows us the dreamer realising that he is being dreamt by himself, that he is his own author or creator. Van Vogt's nightmare future has much in common with both Jonathan Hoag's split consciousness and George Miller's precariously divided cognition.

The World of Null-A was a remarkably influential novel in the field of Science-Fiction of its day. Echoes of its themes can be seen in the writing of many other writers. Apart from Philip K. Dick, Kurt Vonnegut owes a debt to Van Vogt and also Alfred Bester. Van Vogt's imagination is nowhere near so fecund as Bester's, such novels as *The Demolished Man* (1953) and *The Stars My Destination* (1956) (vt. *Tiger!Tiger!*) display a similar narrative pace to Van Vogt's but with the addition of a sharp wit and a high degree of verbal inventiveness, sadly lacking in Van Vogt's humourless prose. What makes *Null-A* so interesting is its philosophical speculations, the full complexity of which, one may surmise, Van Vogt had not fully worked through himself.

This novel was undoubtedly the major influence on Dick's Science-Fiction writing at this time. He returns to its themes time and again, either by way of homage, or outright parody. *Solar Lottery* (1955) most clearly betrays Van Vogt's influence, the computer which chooses the Solar President for example, and the political intrigues surrounding powerful magnates and assassins are all

closely modelled on *Null-A* but its echoes recur in *Now Wait For Last Year* (1966) in which Gino Molinari's alternative bodies are kept waiting for him just as Gilbert Gosseyn's are in Van Vogt's novel.

Null-A stands for Non-Aristotelian logic, a form of logic based on the denial of Aristotle's. Van Vogt was clearly picking up on the ideas of Korzybski's *Science and Sanity* (1933) here, the theory that mental illness in the modern world is caused by an adherence to the logic of Aristotle, namely that the solution to any given problem is to be found in an "either/or" proposition. This idea was to find its true home in the theories preached in *Dianetics* (1950) developed by L. Ron Hubbard, another Science-Fiction writer, in his pseudo-religion Scientology.

The ideals of Null-A are at no time explained in the novel *The World of Null-A* nor do we ever come close to a description of just what Null-A is supposed to be. From the context in which it occurs we can surmise that it has something to do with not being insane, that it is a process whereby people become models of ideal sanity. The biographical information on Van Vogt cues us to look towards *Science and Sanity* for the nature of this strange ethos. The rejection of the "either/or" proposition from Aristotle, does however, sound suspiciously similar to a rejection of the Hegelian dialectic, the basis of Socialist thought. Marxism, according to the thinking of Null-A, would appear to be entirely based on Aristotelian logic, and therefore insane. How Van Vogt, were the question to be asked, would square this connection with the strangely socialistic society he portrays in *The World of Null-A* in the view of rabid anti-Communism prevalent in America at that time can only be subject for conjecture.

The novel opens on Test Day. A form of Proto-Olympic Games are being held to sort the contestants into those who are genuine Null-A candidates and those who have not yet attained the correct level of Null-A training to make them eligible for Civil Service posts. There is also the chance to go to live on Venus, a world being colonised only by Null-A graduates. The idea of a gigantic test to sort out potential job applicants run along similar lines to an Olympic Competition, but run by a massive computer, was clearly very strongly influential on Kurt Vonnegut, who depicts the same situation at the opening of his novel *Player Piano* (1953). The attack of the Greatest Empire on the colony world Null-A Venus in Van Vogt's work bears a strong similarity to the abortive Martian invasion of the Earth in Vonnegut's *The Sirens of Titan* (1962), the difference being that in the latter the humour is intentional.

The sense is that of purifying, of evolving the race such that eventually all people will aspire to the heights of Null-A understanding. After his successful completion of the first day's questioning session ('What is Null-A?'), Gilbert Gosseyn is offered some answers by the Machine:

"Please don't be surprised at the simplicity of today's test. Remember, the purpose of the games is not to beguile the great majority of the contestants into losing. The purpose is to educate every individual of the race to make the best possible use of the complex nervous system which he or she has inherited. That can only be realised when everyone survives the full thirty days of the games..." (Van Vogt, 1970, p. 36)

The religious overtones in this suggest more than merely Hubbard's Scientology. The idea of awaiting the day when all people will pass the test, when they will all have achieved this special kind of enlightenment is remarkably similar to Buddhist Rebirth Doctrine, in which human beings as well as all other living things return to the plane of the living time and again to have their souls purified over aeons of time until eventually all will achieve su-

preme enlightenment or *Nirvana*. Van Vogt compounds this comparison in *The World of Null-A* in that Gilbert Gosseyn is indeed reincarnated during the course of the novel.

Gosseyn is killed, shot to pieces by the agents of the World President quite early in the novel. In the next chapter, however, he is alive and well again, our bewilderment is shared by Gosseyn himself, who cannot understand how he has come to be transported to Venus and all his horrific wounds healed so quickly. The novel focuses on Gosseyn's viewpoint, thus the scenario shifts directly from his death to his rebirth without any discontinuity. In fact, Gosseyn has been killed, and on Venus there was a new body, exactly identical to the first, lying in wait for Gosseyn's death in order to be animated. The laws of physics which obtain in *The World of Null-A* allow for the accumulated life experiences and memories of an individual to pass directly from one body to an exactly identical one. In this vision of the world if two things are sufficiently similar they cease being two different things and become the same thing:

"The problem," Prescott continued, frowning, "is greatly complicated by a law of nature, of which you have probably never heard. The law is this: if two energies are attuned on a twenty-decimal approximation of similarity, the greater will bridge the gap of space between them just as if there were no gap, although that juncture is accomplished at finite speeds." (Van Vogt, 1970, p. 143)

Gosseyn's second body is already so attuned, therefore the thoughts from the first body pass directly to it. There is a considerable logical problem in this idea, in that if one energy is *greater*, and in fact one of the energies must necessarily *be* greater, there must be a difference somewhere. The transfer only works at a state of similarity of twenty decimal places. Presumably the transfer would be more complete at a greater degree of similarity, but the more identical the bodies become, the less the difference between the greater and

the lesser. There are two contradictory processes here. One is an impetus toward greater similarity, the other a need to maintain a crucial difference between the driver and the driven. The greater the similarity, the less the difference, and vice versa. Quite apart from anything else, quite apart from the absurdity of quantifying so vague an idea as similarity to so many decimal places, one would imagine that the difference between an inanimate body and a living man would be more than merely one in one hundred million million million, otherwise in our everyday lives we would find it impossible to distinguish dead people from living ones.

The transfers are, we discover at the end of the novel, aided by a machine called a Distorter, which appears to be able to "tune" atoms to various states of similarity, a sort of atomic resonator. Gosseyn is important to the galactic powers in this tale because his extra brain is in fact an *organic* Distorter, thus he has the facility to move objects around parakinetically, by "tuning" their atoms, and eventually learns to teleport himself by "memorising" the atomic "tuning" of specific locations and then "tuning" himself to match them, he instantly materialises there. Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* is based on more or less the same premise. In a world where all human beings have learnt the secret of teleportation Gully Foyle is vitally important as the only one whose brain is sufficiently evolved to be able to teleport across deep space and through time. Van Vogt, in developing the idea of psychic, or, as they came to be known in the Science-Fiction of the 1950s and thereafter, *psionic* powers, was also developing a reasonably consistent justification for them. Much of the interest in *psionics* derived from journalist Charles Fort's book *Wild Tal-*

ents (1932) where he catalogued newspaper articles purporting to provide evidence for the existence of psychic gifts.¹⁵

Where Van Vogt's ideas become really interesting is in the way that they challenge philosophical assumptions about the nature of personal identity, yet the novel does not really examine these issues. A. J. Ayer summarises the point in *The Problem of Knowledge* (1956):

One might indeed be a very different sort of person from the person that one is: one might be very much more like some other person than one is in fact. But it is not even logically possible that one should be identical with another person...Thus, if my inability to observe what goes on in the mind of another is due to our being separated persons, there is no possible adjustment of my situation by which it could be overcome. (Ayer, 1956, p. 217)

Van Vogt creates the logically impossible, two people who are identical, or at least almost identical. Yet he raises a more difficult problem, even if the two "identical" Gilbert Gosseyns are in one-way telepathic communication, how can they be the same person, how can they share the same consciousness? Are two separate things which are identical to twenty decimal places of similarity necessarily the same thing? Reason says they must still be separate, so does telepathy on Van Vogt's model equate to having direct knowledge of someone else's mind and consciousness? Ayer again:

For even a telepathic experience, it will be argued, is private to oneself; the peculiarity which is attributed to it is that of revealing what is going on in someone else's mind; but this does not make it any

¹⁵ See Nichols, 1979, p. 480 for a full discussion of *psionics* and Fort's contribution to the subject. There is a somewhat piquant circularity in the idea of *psionics* beginning as a form of Ripley's *Believe It Or Not* "true stories" compendium then transferring to Science-Fiction and therein being given pseudo-scientific "explanations" to attempt to bring it back into the realm of the factual and definable.

the less an experience of one's own, and considered merely as an experience of one's own it is logically independent of the experience of anyone else, even of that which it purports to reveal. (p. 204)

Is Van Vogt's thought experiment philosophically valuable? If I am in telepathic communication with someone wherein I receive all their thoughts and impressions of sense-data, does it mean that there is a continuity of consciousness between me and my telepathic "sender"? Would I share the consciousness of someone merely by absorbing their memories, thoughts and sense impressions? Would we be the same person?

Van Vogt raises extraordinary questions of personal identity and the nature, if assumed, of telepathy. Dick chooses to answer these questions, and even in his first published Van Vogtian novel *Solar Lottery* we can begin to see the form his argument would take later in his most complex fiction.

Kim Stanley Robinson in his book on Dick's work, *The Novels of Philip K. Dick* (1984), quoting Darko Suvin, quite rightly points out that Dick's multiple focus narrative style leaves the reader to construct the fictional world in the absence of an omniscient author (Robinson, 1984, p. 16). The fact that the perspective viewpoint of the novels keeps changing constantly gives the reader a degree of "democracy" in which a very large amount of information and opinion from all the characters is presented. Dick's style, emerging in *Solar Lottery*, is to eschew the traditional third-person narrative in which the author becomes a character and reports the whole action, both exterior and interior monologue, to the reader. This is the role of the so-called "omniscient author" because the author is assumed to know everything happening in the novel, all the thoughts from the characters, all their motives, all the descriptions of all the scenes, in other words all the sense-data from all the characters

plus his own. Dick's style presents us only with what is known, seen, felt or understood by the character whose viewpoint we are taking at that particular time.

The World of Null-A, for example, also does this, as it is written entirely from the viewpoint of Gilbert Gosseyn, but it differs from the omniscient author style because it remains consistently with Gosseyn's point of view, we know no more than he does at any given moment. This is a third-person narrative with one fixed viewpoint-character, as opposed to the first-person narrative in which one viewpoint character tells the whole story. Dick extends this by shifting from one such third-person narrative to another. He is to perfect this technique when he comes to novels such as *The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike* and *The Man in the High Castle*, but in *Solar Lottery* there are still moments where information is given to us where it is hard to pin down the source, and we can only assume an authorial voice. However, for the most part we see the world of the novel through the eyes and ideals of one character at a time. The pivots of our knowledge are Cartwright, the dissident repairman, follower of the strange cult of Preston and quite early in the novel made Solar President or Quizmaster, supposedly by chance; the other pivot is Benteley, a wage slave caught up in the machinations of the previous Quizmaster to restore his position. Verrick, the outgoing President and his personal assistant, Eleanor Stevens, also seem to have centre stage at some points, but there is less defined transfer of viewpoint in this book as there is to be in Dick's later ventures.

What makes *Solar Lottery* remarkable is the fact that Dick uses a device which draws attention to this technique, which in effect *allegorizes* it and makes it part of the overt content of the book as well as part of the form. Verrick wants

to kill Cartwright and so manufactures an android so near human as to make no odds, called Keith Pellig. Pellig is to assassinate Cartwright, which is well within the law as the Quizmasters are chosen at random, the weaker rulers succumbing to assassination quickly, the strong outwitting the killers' bullets to reign supreme.¹⁶

To maintain the motif of randomness, Verrick demes that Pellig's actions will be randomised in order to confuse the the telepathic guards who protect Cartwright. He has a very specific plan to achieve this. The psyche of Pellig's operator is transmitted into the android, the operators are "twitched" in and out at random, thus there are in effect many assassins, each with his or her own plan of attack. Benteley is introduced to this method by being switched into Pellig while he is asleep, without his knowledge. He awakes to find himself in Pellig's body, seeing with Pellig's eyes, seeing Pellig's face in the mirror. The means by which this psychic transplant is achieved are never described, but the effect is that the operator *becomes* Pellig. Pellig has no mind of his own:

'Does Pellig have any personality?' Benteley asked, as he dressed.
'What happens when all the minds are out?'

'Pellig becomes what we call, vegetable. He doesn't die, but he devolves to a primitive level of existence. The body processes continue; it's a kind of twilight sleep.'...

Benteley veered away from the memory as he said, 'When I was in it, I thought Pellig was there with me.'

'I felt the same way," Eleanor agreed calmly. 'The first time I tried it I felt as if there was a snake in my slacks...' (*Solar Lottery*, ch. 7)

¹⁶ This much seems to hint towards the myth of the Fisher King and is possibly derived from Weston, 1920, pp. 60 - 61, in which is described a Nigerian tribe whose leaders, chosen by contest, are open season to assassins should they leave their compound.

Transmigrating souls do not present the reader with a problem. Souls that swap around are only like characters who change places, the reader can easily keep tabs on them. Souls that switch to areas where there is no incumbent consciousness, or which raise the question of *contingent consciousness* are more troublesome. For John Locke, in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke, 1939) the possibility of souls transmigrating from one body to another was not a philosophical problem. The problem had to do with the contingency of personal identity throughout the process. Locke is very careful to distinguish between *souls*, *spiritual substance* and the *man* or *person*. In considering the case of a man claiming that he has the same soul as Nestor at the siege of Troy, Locke decides that without the memory of the events in the life of Nestor, without the ability to attribute Nestor's actions to himself, he cannot claim to be the same *self* as Nestor. Even if his animating spirit were the same, it would not signify a continuity of *self*:

For this would no more make him the same person with Nestor, than if some of the particles of matter that were once a part of Nestor were now a part of this man; the same immaterial substance, without the same consciousness no more making the same person, by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter without consciousness, united to any body, makes the same person. But let him once find himself conscious of any of the actions of Nestor, he then finds himself the same person with Nestor. (Locke, 1939, II, XXVII, 14)

For Locke, as for Van Vogt, memory is the deciding factor in determining whether or not we count the two separate bodies as the same self. Gilbert Gosseyn II remembers all the things that Gilbert Gosseyn I did during his lifetime, but is memory the only deciding factor in contingent identity? Dick's use of the device of transmigration suggests that he has more in mind. The use of the "twitching" system for operating Pellig points to his allegorical intention.

In creating the shifting viewpoint style in which so many of his novels are written, the style which reaches its pinnacle with *The Man in the High Castle*, Dick simultaneously presents us with the image of the transmigrating souls of the Pellig's operators, "twitching" in and out of the Pellig's android body at random. The readers of Dick's novel *Solar Lottery* are put in the position of the Pellig, having first one perspective viewpoint and then another "twitched" at them. The reader retains the memories of Ted Benteley and of all the others involved in the novel, yet does not have a contingent consciousness with them. We are not Pellig, not a mindless vegetable into which consciousness is pumped in concentrated doses. If we absorb a written record of a person's memories this does not make us share the consciousness of this person. We have a functioning consciousness of our own which enables us to recognise that the input of memories we receive in the text are external to our own selves, are part of incoming sense-data. Gosseyn II does not share a common consciousness with Gosseyn I because it is inanimate, unconscious, receiving telepathic signals without being able to interpret them, no different to hearing noises in one's sleep.¹⁷

Telepathy would be no different to any other sensory input and Dick presents us with this fact very clearly in *Solar Lottery*. The Quizmaster is protected by telepathic guards who read the minds of all those who approach. Presented with the Pellig, their customary method of perceiving is confused:

¹⁷ Ralph Blum in his 1972 novel *The Simultaneous Man* deals with this subject as well, with a convict who, instead of execution, is selected for an experiment in which his memory trace is wiped and that of another living man "injected". It soon becomes apparent that the two memories, although identical, do not share the same consciousness. The new "Simultaneous" man feels the lack of a soul and seeks eventually to derive one by using the research scientist whose memory he has been given in a similar experiment, this time for his benefit.

'Suppose you were talking to me,' Eleanor said tightly 'Carrying on a conversation. And I vanished completely. Instead of me a totally different person appeared.'

'A different person physically,' Verrick agreed. 'Yes.'

'Not even a woman. A young man or an old man. Some utterly different *body* who continued the conversation as if nothing had happened.'

'I see,' Verrick said avidly.

'Teeps depend on telepathic rapport,' Eleanor explained. 'Not visual image. Each person's mind has a unique taste. The teep hands on by mental contact, and if that's broken...' The girl's face was stricken. 'Reese, I think you're driving them insane.' (*Solar Lottery*, ch.11)

It is a joke against Van Vogt. Dick takes the same themes of transmigration and telepathy to turn *Gosane* into *insane*. The whole of *Solar Lottery* is in fact a parody of *The World of Null-A*, especially in the way Dick uses a philosophy to act as the central metaphor for his world. For Van Vogt it was Non-Aristotelian logic, a refusal to accept the dialectic, the either/or of conventionally logical thought. Dick decides to take the theory of *Minimax* as the underlying philosophy of his novel, the theory of randomness in game-playing, of trying to minimise one's maximum loss, or vice versa. Hence in *Solar Lottery* the philosophy the world lives by is that of the random, lucky charms, a giant Premium Bonds Machine choosing the Quizmaster at random, an assassin who operates by randomly staggering towards his victim, and then swerving away again. Game Theory really existed, developed by John Von Neumann in the late 1940s it was indeed, as Dick claims for it in the introduction to *Solar Lottery*, a part of U. S. foreign policy making during the 1950s. Dick reverses Van Vogt, who took a fringe-science idea and applied it to general use as a world view in fiction, and takes a mainstream mathematical theory and turns it into a religion. The resulting fictional world, far from Van Vogt's stultifyingly ordered Null-A Venus, is a society with crazy randomness as its central metaphor.

William S. Burroughs also refers to this theory in his work:

[Burroughs] alludes to the principle of random action in game and military strategy: 'assume that the worst has happened and act accordingly. If your strategy is at some point determined...by random factors your opponent will gain no advantage from knowing your strategy since he cannot predict the move.' Since Burroughs brings in the military analogy we can perhaps suggest how he sees the cut-up method as working...If we regard normal linguistic habits as bridges and roads into the human consciousness (Marshall McLuhan sees a direct connection between...roads and words), we can see what Burroughs is trying to do. He is sabotaging the main lines of communication which the occupying army will otherwise use. (Tanner, 1971, p. 126)

Philip K. Dick in *Solar Lottery* anticipated the ideas Burroughs explains in his discussion on cut-up technique. Dick also has a firm understanding of the ways in which the random can be used to point to structures in the human consciousness.

The element of the random which plays such a part in the use of the Confucian Book of Wisdom, the *I Ching* was to play a vital role in the structure of *The Man in the High Castle*. There is the structured randomness, the coincidence, on which all fiction depends, the repeated motif, the chance encounter which is really not a chance at all.

The final implication of the random is that all stages of the decision making process should be randomised, such that eventually the natural world, the chance happening, is the final root of all structure. Borges examines this in his story "The Lottery of Babylon", in which even the choice of which runes to cast has to be decided by other runes, and so on ad infinitum. The potential for the intrusion of the divine will is supposedly inherent in the process of the random, such is the ethos underlying the consultation of the *I Ching*. Dick returns to this theme many times in his writing.

Dick both learns from his predecessors and strives to go beyond them. The crucial difference is in the awareness Dick has for the nature of writing, which for all their originality, Van Vogt and Heinlein do not approach. Dick creates a new form of writing, and produces an analogy to it, a device within the text in order to examine that form itself. *Solar Lottery* is a novel looking at itself as much as it is a novel about people looking and being looked at. It is as concerned with its own identity as a work of fiction as the characters in it are with the nature of their personal identities. It is this that makes *Solar Lottery* something special. Already we can see the themes from short stories such as "Exhibit Piece" being brought forward and examined on a larger scale. "Exhibit Piece" is an exquisite piece, but although it is certainly true to say that *Solar Lottery* has its problems, it marks a subtle shift in the Science-Fiction of its period, a move up.

The previous year, 1954, Dick had published a short story which combined elements of the fairy tale with the mythological and the roots of American Gothic he was developing in Science-Fiction. "Upon the Dull Earth"¹⁸ shows mortals dabbling with forces beyond this world and living to regret it. The angels Silvia likes to play with, much to the horror of her boyfriend Rick, are not really the angels she seems to think they are. They are shades from some other plane of reality, but the characters in the story have only their accepted notions of their religious analogues by which to judge them. When Silvia is taken before her time the angels try to send her back to the plane of the living, but they are as imperfect as normal mortals, and their plans back-fire somewhat. Instead of revivifying her, they send Silvia's soul back into the body of her

¹⁸ Collected in *A Handful of Darkness*, (1955).

sister, Betty Lou, who literally then becomes Silvia. However, the balance has been upset, the natural order of the creator, who is no longer around to give advice, has been changed. Slowly other people change into Silvia as well until eventually everyone in the world has become her, including, right at the end, Rick himself.

There is no question that the model for "Upon the Dull Earth" is Edgar Allen Poe's "Ligeia",¹⁹ in which a man's dead wife returns to him by transforming the physical and psychic form of his new bride, Rowena, into herself. We are presented with the possibility in "Ligeia" that it is the insane narrator's force of will which changes Rowena into Ligeia. As in "The Tell-Tale Heart", or "The Black Cat", the narrator, who has murdered his wife, experiences sensory aspects relating to his crime haunting him in his guilt-crazed madness. However, the reader is made a part of this process. Ligeia is described to us in exhaustive detail, Poe's narrator spends more than half the story telling us what she looked like and how she was when alive. Rowena is hardly described to us at all. Our super-inforced image of Ligeia overwhelms our mental image of Rowena. It becomes impossible to think of Rowena without forming the image of Ligeia, the weight of description within this particular fictional world brings her back. Dick's parody takes Poe's gothic to its logical conclusion, namely that eventually the whole of this fictional landscape would be transformed into Ligeia, eventually even the narrator himself would be overwhelmed by the readers' minds' eye views of her. The factor of memory in personal identity is not decisive for us, but for fictional characters it is the decisive factor, since they are channelled through our memories. We are both constructing them and

¹⁹ Collected in Poe, 1938.

reconstructing them. The first-person, mad, narrator in the Poe story is echoed by Dick in the similarity between Rick's name and his own. Rick/Dick; the author/reader, becomes literally consumed in his own fantasy.

In all the preceding examples, the character has exhibited aspects of the authorial role, creating fictions in which they can live, either after their death, or safe from a psychologically destructive reality. When this dichotomous mentality begins confusing the basis of the reader's facility to construct the real world, the underlying logic of the narrative is in grave danger. In *Hoag* we see the prototype of the detective genre used to legitimise this process to the reader. In *The Game Players of Titan* Dick starts to deconstruct even this relatively "safe" narrative space.

PLAYING GAMES

PKD. Well, I found a structure and I just wrote novel after novel... I had my structure, my multifoci structure, and I had just won the Hugo award... So I figured I could just sell my stuff now and I just wrote a lot.

GR. But they were quite good. Some of them are very different.

PKD. All I remember is writing 68 pages a day.

GR. You were on a different typewriter by then?

PKD. Electric.

GR. You have nothing to say about *Game Players of Titan* (1963)?

PKD. Not a thing.

(Rickman, 1984, p. 156)

In *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan describes various forms of narrative "gaps". A gap in a narrative, in its simplest sense, is a section of a story which the author does not give the reader. She points out that no narrative text can operate successfully without such gaps, as it is impossible to represent the whole of a fictional world in the space of the text. The gaps enable the reader to participate in the process of "filling in" the text, of reconstructing the fictional world the text presents. Gaps of the informational kind, those in which there is a piece of information that we are not given, the basis of the detective story, may be temporary, as those

in detective stories generally are, or permanent, as in Rimmon-Kenan's example, Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) in which we are left wondering even when the story has finished whether or not there were ghosts at Bly. A temporary gap will give us a difference in the speed at which the story is *told* compared with the speed at which the things supposedly *happened*. There is a hypothetical "story-time" which refers to the "real" events of the narrative as opposed to the way they are presented in the text:

Temporary gaps result from a discrepancy between story-time and text-time...Created by temporal displacements, such gaps exist in the text alone. In the abstracted story the withheld information will appear in its appropriate place in the Chronology. Permanent gaps, on the other hand, exist in both story and text; the information is never given. Thus a gap in the story entails a gap in the text, but a gap in the text need not entail a corresponding gap in the story. (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983, pp. 128-129)

The number of narrative functions Dick takes on board in *The Game Players of Titan* is startling. The gaps in this narrative present us with bigger problems than merely worrying us as to whether or not they will be filled in. As we shall see later when looking at Dick's short story "The Unreconstructed M", his experiments in detective fiction deal with narrative form, presenting a range of gaps that present us with one text and several contradictory stories.

The Hinkle Bomb which has rendered most of the Earth's population sterile recalls the name of Charlie Chaplin's *Great Dictator*, a satire on Adolf Hitler, Adenoid Hinkle. Bernhardt is as it were Adenoid's off-spring, B following A. Just as Chaplin's film was a spoof of the Second World War so Dick's novel presents a crazy version of the Third, a nuclear holocaust which has embarrassing and humiliating consequences rather than heroically tragic ones. The Earth has fought two wars, one against the Red Chinese, the other against the inhabitants of Titan, the telepathic vugs. The order in which these wars were

fought has been left very vague indeed. All we know for certain is that the vugs have won control of the Earth. Yet the relationship between the vugs and the humans is not a simple one. The vugs are large amorphous blobs of cytoplasm which slither into the room every now and then. To encourage them to leave the humans make use of a "vug-stick" to poke them. As Hazel Pierce rightly points out²⁰ "one would not expect a defeated people to keep weapons ('vug-sticks') in their homes for use in prodding unwelcome representatives of the victorious group out of their homes, but this is what in fact occurs."

Peter Garden, an absurd symbol of fertility, "peat garden", in a world of sterility, is a Bindman, one of the best. The game the vugs have instituted on the Earth after their victory resembles a kind of cross between Poker and Monopoly called *Bluff*. It is this game which is used to decide not only who owns what vast tracts of land there are available in the now scarcely populated Earth, but also who sleeps with whom; it settles the sexual combinations which may uncover, by chance, a fertile couple. The first thing that strikes one about the arrangement is that it is very slow. It is also very over elaborate. It is, nonetheless, what the vugs want. The best way of discovering fertility and repopulating the globe is surely not to be found in the game of *Bluff*.

Counteracting the effects of a very slow birth rate is a very slow death rate. The Hynes gland has been removed from as many people as possible, without which people do not appear to age. Whether this operation was performed by human or vug doctors we are not told. If human, it raises important questions about the state of human politics pre-war. Why should the government, aware that it could

²⁰ Greenberg and Olander, 1983, p. 117.

extend the life-span of either the whole population or just that section of it able to pay, keep such information under wraps? If the discovery were made only after the war would it not be just too much of a coincidence? Isaac Asimov in his novel *The Caves of Steel* had also speculated about the politics of ageing, as the inhabitants of the scarcely populated colony worlds live to nearly three hundred, their secrets of longevity dare not be introduced to the Earth with its massive overpopulation problem. For Dick the issue is more involved. It is revealed finally, in Chapter Thirteen, that the vugs are tampering with the human birth rate. Their politics are sharply divided on Titan between the moderate party and the extremists, the Wa Pei Nan, who want to eliminate the human race. This possibility cannot be wholly trusted, of course, but it would tend to suggest that the whole explanation of the Hinkle Bomb is an illusion. Likewise the apparently long life-spans of the characters, by implication, cannot be seen as all that real either. More meddling by the vugs, the effects perhaps of the moderates overwhelming the Wa Pei Nan. Dick has the vug who masquerades as human (or human who masquerades as vug, we are never quite sure which), E. R. Philipson, repeat the phrase from W. S. Gilbert which Mr. Tagomi receives as a coded message from Tokyo in his previous novel *The Man in the High Castle*: "Things are seldom what they seem; Skim milk masquerades as cream." (Chapter 10).

Into this strange scenario Dick injects what at first appears to be a conventional detective story. Pete Garden has lost his home Bind of Berkeley to Jerome "Lucky" Luckman, the most fertile man on Earth, who travels to California to play for West Coast real estate. However, when after Luckman's first game

with Pretty Blue Fox²¹ he is found murdered, Pete and his fellow Bindmen are all prime suspects. The detectives arrive, one yug, the other human. They are, naturally, telepathic.

Alfred Bester and Isaac Asimov had both dabbled with the idea of telepathic detective agencies. Both had immediately devised ways of rendering their detectives helpless. Bester's *The Demolished Man* has the murderer memorise the most persistent advertising song ever composed so that whenever the *peepers* or telepathic police try to read his mind all they can hear is the "crazy music". Asimov's police are equipped with the *psychoprobe* in his 1955 short story "The Singing Bell"²² but it does them little good. If psychoprobed and found innocent, a suspect was entitled to massive compensation for invasion of his mental privacy. Thus evidence had to be watertight before the probe was used, thus it might just as well not be there at all.

Having telepathy featured in the Science-Fiction of the 1950s was more or less *de rigueur* but clearly those writers who attempted to link it to the detective genre felt that it was impossible to maintain any sense of mystery and sustain the narrative if the criminal's mind could be read in its entirety.

²¹ Dick uses the same three word call signs for his game-playing groups in this novel as he does to mark the "Hovels" on Mars in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*. The neighbouring groups are called Pear Book Hovel and Straw Man Special.

²² Collected in *Asimov's Mysteries* (1968).

Dick had been tackling a much more interesting problem in his 1955 short story "The Minority Report"²³ in which the police employ three retarded mutants with phenomenal precognitive powers to predict all crime in advance. The police promptly arrest the "criminal" before he has a chance to do anything. As a result of this practice, crime no longer exists anywhere in the world.

While it would seem to be completely impossible to construct a murder mystery under such a regime, Dick manages to do so. His plot hinges on a logical *tour de force* in which the three precognitives are out of step with one another, each taking the potential murderer's knowledge of the preceding precognition into account.

It is in this story that Dick vocalises the inherent problem with precognition both as a presumed psychic talent in the world and as a device in fiction:

"...unanimity of all three precogs is a hoped-for but seldom achieved phenomenon, acting-Commissioner Witwer explains. It is much more common to obtain a collaborative majority report of two precogs, plus a minority report of some slight variation, usually with reference to time and place, from the third mutant. This is explained by the theory of *multiple futures*. If only one time path existed, precognitive information would be of no importance, since no possibility would exist, in possessing this information, of changing the future..." ("The Minority Report", ch. 5)

The potential must exist to take action to avoid the crime ahead, the precognition must not assume all possible measures to avoid the outcome will fail. It is this case that the Oedipus legend deals with. Laius and Jocasta are foretold the future of their unborn son, that he will kill his father and marry his mother. They decide to try to avoid this outcome and endeavour to kill

²³ Collected in *The Variable Man*, 1957.

Oedipus when he is only an infant so that this fate will not befall them. However, they fail in this. Oedipus is taken home by the shepherd who finds him on the mountainside and he raises him as his own son, he and his wife blissfully unaware of the prophecy. Oedipus, when grown, also receiving the prophecy dooming him to kill his father and marry his mother, fulfils it completely, unaware of the identity of his true parents owing to the steps they took to prevent the fate they had had foretold them. The oracle is in many ways self fulfilling. It takes into account the measures the two prospective parents will take to avoid their fates which are prompted entirely by the oracle itself. The avoiding action ensures that Oedipus will not know his true parents, essential if the prophecy is to be fulfilled.

It is also the Oedipus myth which provided the structural template for the detective story itself, with the riddle asked by the Sphinx being answered, to the destruction of the Sphinx, by a marginal figure, called in to solve the mystery and eventually returning to the margins once more. Most modern versions of the genre leave out the part of the story which deals with the prize that society gives the detective destroying him, but recently, since the structural root of the genre is now a *given*, more authors, and particularly film-makers, are including references to incest in their detective stories. For Dick, far more central to the Oedipus-detective myth is that element of precognition, the oracular judgement which itself causes Oedipus' fate to occur. It is therefore hardly surprising to find both telepathy and precognition playing an important part in *The Game Players of Titan*.

Firstly we must look at the way in which Dick decides to side-step the issue of the detective's telepathic ability, and their potential to read the minds of all those suspected of involvement in the killing of Luckman. He uses a

technique which totally disorientates the reader: he puts a large gap in both the story and the text. Yet it is the way that this is done that makes it so radical a decision. One entire day is wiped out of the memory of Pete Garden, and, as it turns out, five other members of Pretty Blue Fox. The implications for the reader are derived from the fact that at the time that this happens, the perspective viewpoint of the text is fixed on Pete Garden. Towards the end of Chapter Six, Pete leaves the apartment of his new neighbour, the telepathic and strangely alluring Patricia McClain, and the location immediately switches to his flying car over Utah. He has an immediate impression that time has passed, but cannot tell how much. This is not the kind of memory wipe we might expect. Far from Pete merely not being able to remember what he was doing on that day, his memory loss resembles that of Jonathan Hoag, the memory loss ends at the *present*. Pete's current consciousness is interrupted, and since we are seeing what he sees, so is ours.

Rushmore circuits, a form of electronic brain attached to almost all household appliances from tea-kettles to cars, talk back to their owners and often argue with them. Pete manages to reconstruct most of what he did during the lost day by asking his car. The car's Rushmore circuits give a basic third person narrative, the plot without any interior monologue, without any clue as to motivations and intentions, the story and nothing else:

'What have I done during the last five hours?'

The car said, 'At nine-thirty you drove from Marin County, California to Carmel, to the Game room in the Carmel condominium apartment building.'

'Who did I see?'

'I don't know.'

'Continue,' he said, breathing shallowly.

'You stayed there for one hour. Then you came out and took off for Berkeley.'

'Berkeley!' he said.

'You landed at the Claremont Hotel. You stayed there for only a short time, only a few minutes. Then you took off for San Francisco. You landed at San Francisco State College and went into the administration building.'

'You don't remember what I did there, do you?'

'No, Mr. Garden. You were there for an hour. Then you came out and took off once more. This time you landed at a parking lot in downtown San Francisco, at Fourth and Market; you parked me there and set out on foot.'

'Going which way?'

'I didn't notice.' (*Game Players*, ch. 6)

Not only are we unable to understand Pete Garden's motives, but he cannot either. Without his memory he is in effect hearing the story of a totally unknown individual, someone who is physically him, but who does not share the same consciousness as him. This is an occasion where the character is no wiser than the audience. The telepaths and the precognitives, Alan McClain and Dave Mutreaux, can be *as well* informed as the reader. Characters such as E. G. Philipson are better informed, but their information remains extra-textual. In fact, Pete Garden's missing day is never filled in, we never discover whether or not he was involved in the murder of Luckman. Garden construes that the Titanians had Luckman killed and that the six from Pretty Blue Fox had been working under their influence. However, this is only conjecture. The Rushmore circuit is the exact antithesis of the Omniscient Author, it is the author which knows next to nothing. In Leibnizian phrase, it is a poorly perceiving Monad. Pete experiences the reverse of precognition, an absence of knowledge of past events rather than an actual knowledge of future events. Likewise the precognitive's knowledge need not be of his own future, whereas Pete's lack of knowledge refers even to his own past.

The Game Players of Titan puts more *psionic* talents together in one novel than any Dick had written since *Solar Lottery* back in 1955. These themes had tended to be reserved to the short stories he wrote in the 1950s. In asking why he should want to reintroduce them at this stage it is important to look at the implications of talents like precognition in philosophy and in terms of the narrative process itself.

Should precognition be analogous to memory reversed, as in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, that is that the precognitive should be inversely "remembering" a future event, then the event would be inevitable, or the precognition could not be so termed. Such a form of precognition would have to restrict itself to previewing only good events in order that the previewer should not take any avoiding action to prevent unpleasant events from occurring and thus invalidating his ability as true, "unremembering" precognition.

Carroll's White Queen demonstrates her impotence in the face of the "inevitable" pricking of her thumb. Her precognition is explained as the consequence of living backwards, yet although her reactions follow the correct order of the inverted sequence, the actual events continue in normal time. The broach slips and pricks her thumb. Were she living backwards the thumb would first "unheal", then bleed and finally be "unpricked" by the broach. Thus the white Queen's "backward consciousness" is either a false perception which produces self-fulfilling prophecies, or an unfortunate compromise between perception running one way and causality running the other. Carroll continues the theme of falsely perceived reversed worlds in his *Silvie and Bruno*, in an episode in which events do "unhappen", but people's perception and time consciousness is still running in the normal direction. Speech in the chapter dealing with the "Outlandish Watch" is run forwards in pronunciation but reversed in syntax, representing, not actual reverse order but the observer's perception of reverse order.

The key factor of perceptual precognition is the impotence of the precogniser to affect any change in the sequence of events, unless the precognition itself is ruled invalid as a vision of the actual future. Lewis Carroll represents

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this state in the same chapter referring to a watch able to reverse time for a limited period:

But the real usefulness of this magic watch would be to undo some harm, some painful event, some accident... (Carroll, 1939, p. 432)

The author does this by reversing time long enough to remove a packing case from the path of a cyclist, who in the previous time-scale, had fallen over it.

However:

...when we again reached the exact time at which I had put back the hand...the wounded youth was once more reclining on heaps of pillows.

This precognition is derived precisely from perception. The future is not changed because the perception of the accident motivated the passage into the past to prevent it, which, once prevented, eliminates the motivation of its prevention, and thus restores it. While in his subjective, transient past the experimenter with the watch could foresee the accident because he had come from the future where it had happened. His ability to do this comes from the realisation that the perceptual nature of the foresight not only set up the false "past" but also testifies to the reality, and thus inevitability, of the event in real time. The actual process of the experimenter's time trip is analogous to the process of memory, of *reanalysis* of a dream state to fit a new, and more favourable interpretation, only to find that when the dream or memory ends, reality is restored unchanged.

In *Clans of the Alphane Moon*, Dick produces a very similar effect with the case of Joan Trieste's *psionic* talent:

"...I can make time flow backward. In a limited area, say twelve by nine, about the size of your living room, up to a period of five minutes...They rush me to bad accidents and, you'll laugh but it really works, I turn

time back to before the accident, or if I'm too late, if more than five minutes has gone by, sometimes instead I can bring back a person who's just died, see?" (*Clans of the Alpane Moon*, ch. 4)

The effect is local and excludes from its scope not only the outside world but also the *psi* herself. This is a restricted "unhappening". Those within the space of your living room do not remain five minutes in the past but step outside this local time dislocation afterwards. The event occurs within the overall reality of real time, thus what is perceived as time-flow backwards is in fact a real-time unhappening seen as time reversed. In Dick's world, indeed in *Counter Clock World* (1967), perception continues to run forwards while events may be undone. Joan Trieste's *psionic* power is that of unmaking, subtly distinct from that of Pat Conley in *Ubik*.

Thus Dick's time-travel aspect of precognition does not detach the sense of undoing from normal perception. Should the past be changed, were time itself run backwards, our ability to know that something was altered would disappear, as in fact happens to Glen Runciter in *Ubik* when Pat Conley shows him the extent of her powers. Precognition by perceiving a future world as present and attempting to alter the past in accordance with one's own desires is either to negate the validity of the perception, or to fail and confirm the fatalism of the universe. Alternatively one can accept the indeterminacy of all perception and experience precognition as a series of alternate worlds, potential probabilities, as presented in *The Game Players of Titan*:

Now she had picked up the precognitive region of Mutreaux's mind, and by entering it she made herself, temporarily a pre-cog; it was an eerie sensation to possess this talent as well as her customary one.

She saw, as if arranged in neat boxes, a supple viable sequence of time possibilities, each one obviating the others strung so as to be knowable simultaneously. It was pictorial and oddly static rather than dramatic. (*Game Players*, ch. 15)

The combination of telepath and precog pushes us into the world of the author, omniscient, knowing the futures possible and the minds present. There is an uneasy balance in the act of including these forms of *psi*-talent in a novel, Dick is saying. On one hand they represent characters who have as much knowledge as the Omniscient Author would normally be expected to have, they know what is going to happen to them, they know what is going on in the minds of the other characters. They are to all intents and purposes competing with the authorial voice, a part of the process of writing laid bare, the mechanics of the novel with all its cables and conduits open to public gaze. Make no mistake, it is the *psionic* talents who are forming the plot in *Game Players*, they who are calling the shots. They murder Luckman, they are planning with the Wa Pei Nan. The precogs can preview a whole range of possible outcomes, a number of different ideas in the mind of the reader, trying to guess ahead, to find out who the murderer might be, pick up the clues. They fall down when they try to preview each other.

Mary Anne McClain has a talent for animating things and people through solid objects. This talent cannot be foreseen by either her father or David Mutreaux. Her talent is, of course, the one form which stands opposed to theirs in that it is an active force rather than passive reading, involved with doing rather than merely observing. The telepaths and precognitives are processing information, Mary Anne processes matter. Hers is the force of the active, theirs of the reactive. It is her talent which eventually defeats them.

The means by which the Players manage to win the Game normally is by bluffing, as the name of the Game suggests. If they are challenged incorrectly their opponent is fined: if the opponent fails to pick up a bluff, they are again fined. The Game Players of Titan themselves can not only read the minds of their

human opponents but can use other *psionic* talents to change the values of the cards even after they have been drawn. The Platonic ultimate template of The Game, thinks Joe (*Game Players*, ch. 13). The version played on earth is a mere shadow of this, the perfect form of The Game. Yet the vugs' supreme Game seems to have many features in common with the one on Earth, for example the rewards and penalties on the squares. 'Pet cat uncovers valuable old stamp album in attic. You win \$3,000.' reads one, another: 'Postman injured on your front walk. Protracted lawsuit settled out of court for the sum of \$300,000'. Surely if the Titanians are as radically different to human beings as we are given to believe, the concepts of stamp collections, postmen, lawsuits and even front walks must be totally alien to their culture. The humour derives from the very mundane nature of the anecdotes, especially when, as in the final game, the stake is control of the Earth itself. They are absurdly domestic and represent aspects of the American way of life and law, the hopes of discovering valuable antiques, the urge to sue all and sundry over minor grievances. The anecdotes do not, in fact, differ very much from those on the *Chance* or *Community Chest* options in Monopoly. The difference that Dick points to is a structural difference. How can one bluff opponents if they are telepathic and able to change the value of your card? Pete finally works out the method. Mary Anne's talent counteracts the effects of the influence over the cards and David Mutreaux is, much against his will, pressured into providing the bluff element:

'We could dampen his pre-cog faculty to an undetermined degree. So that it becomes unpredictable.' Through the use of phenothiazine spansules, he realised, which act over a period of hours at a variable rate. Mutreaux himself would not know if he were bluffing or not, how accurate his guess was. He would draw a card, and, without looking at it, move our piece. If his pre-cog faculty were operating at maximum force at that instant his guess would be accurate; it would not be a bluff. But if at that instant the medication had a greater rather than a lesser effect on him-

It would be a bluff. And Mutreaux himself would not know.
(*Game Players*, ch. 15)

As Dick is to point out again in his short story "The Faith of Our Fathers"(1967), phenothiazine is a drug in the category of anti-hallucinogens, those which restore schizophrenics to a view of reality, or which counteract the effects of hallucinogenic drugs.²⁴ The precognitive effect is "hobbled" by an injection of the "real" world. The Game may be played, and won, by this technique alone.

Dick, in order to create his mystery, must "hobble" the *psi*-talents of his characters, yet does so in a way far more subtle than his contemporaries in creating their mysteries. He must also "hobble" *our* ability to see ahead, to read the minds and motives of the characters in the novel. Dick leaves us with the idea that it is the introduction of reality into the process which impedes our readerly precognitive ability. He also suggests that these talents are part of psychosis, of mental illness, that in fact they are part of a fiction all of their own.

Precognition in particular forms the central strut of Dick's 1965 novel, *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*. The structural and philosophical implications of the talent are never far from his mind. How far is the reader from psychosis? How do we assess our personal identity? *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* collects a large number of themes from Dick's earlier fiction, extends the worries of *Game Players* and provides a wealth of writing skill which places Dick in contention for serious literary honours.

²⁴ See Shapiro, 1981, pp. 38 - 46.

The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch again presents a breakdown of the detective format to leave the reader no familiar territory. The dichotomous after-death consciousness which we have seen in "Exhibit Piece" and the "twitching" of personal identity from both *Solar Lottery* and *World of Null-A* are combined and the reader's own narrative space is invaded and invalidated in an analogy to the "invasion-from-outer-space" *overt* plot of the novel.

The character-as-author overlap which we have seen in Dick's, and others', early works linked with quasi-religious philosophy, becomes the basis for a more direct assault on the reader's preconceived notions of the physical and the divine.

PART TWO: THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH

Taking a number of disparate plot elements and melding them together, as he had done in *The Game Players of Titan*, Dick constructs a world in which the characters' spiritual conflicts are matched in a form of "pathetic fallacy" conflict in the natural world. The Earth in the early twenty-first century is starting to burn through the increased heat of the sun. Although this phenomenon is unexplained, the source for Dick's idea comes without doubt from Val Guest's 1962 Science-Fiction thriller, *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*, a film in which atomic tests at the North and South poles tilt the Earth onto an orbit closer to the sun. Whilst the film has an apocalyptic trend, Dick's novel presents the inhabitants of the ever-hotter world quite sanguine about their condition. Although certainly an inconvenience, increased heat of the sun has come to be endured and accepted. For those who can afford expensive villas at the luxury resorts of Antarctica it can be a boon. Such a magnate is Leo Bulero, head of Perky Pat Layouts. Layouts, in American usage, generally refers to graphic-treatments for advertising agencies. Dick gently plays with his readers' expectations by withholding the truth about Perky Pat until after it has begun to look as though P. P. Layouts is indeed an advertising agency. The real nature of the doll and the needs of her customers huddled below the frozen wastes of Mars are revealed to us gradually, while we are invited to pause and notice other strange things. Barney's portable computerised psychiatrist, for example, is programmed to make him worse rather than better. Many of the novel's protagonists are involved in various processes of improvement, either physical or spiritual, but these processes frequently transpire to make matters

worse rather than better. The difference is between those who want to be better, and those who genuinely want to be made worse.

Evolution therapy provides Dick with a clear opportunity to display the intersection of precognition and narrative awareness, linked to physical change. The perceptual model of precognition would, of course, require that the precognitive be physically changed, so that they not precognise events that they would want to take avoiding action to circumvent. The device produces the effect of amplifying the theme of manipulating people's minds, either for good or ill purposes, besides hinting at the degenerative potential of mankind, which Dick also points to in *The Simulacra* (1964), in which social disfunction among the human population leads to a reborn race of Neanderthals taking control of the world. In this, E-therapy hints at another aspect of "alternative futures" precognition. Who, after all, is to say that the next stage of human evolution *will* be a shift towards *greater* intellectual development? The survivors of the post-apocalyptic "fire age" may be more likely to need the rugged hard hides, thick skulls and animal cunning of the Neanderthals than the increased brain capacity of the "bubbleheads". Evolution is merely an adaptation to environment and the developing wasteland would favour those with durable brawn more than with fragile "hydrocephalic" heads. This is the conclusion Dick reaches in *The Simulacra*, and thus Eichenwald, as well as looking towards the future and back to the past can also be seen as presenting two possible, equally viable, alternative futures for mankind: mental advancement as against raw survival. Who is to say that the "blasted back" victims of the failed treatment may not, in the fullness of time, turn out to be the ones who actually benefit as the Earth becomes a dustbowl?

Just as Palmer Eldritch is to hold sway over the protagonists' world-views and perceptual landscapes, so, in the guise of preparing them for the "fire age", Dr. Denkmal changes his patients' brains and physical bodies. Dick is also most likely thinking of L. Ron Hubbard's *Dianetics* in the context of E-therapy. Hubbard's *Dianetic* "training" originally centred around the use of an *E-Meter*, a form of early polygraph, or lie detector, described in Hubbard, 1966. Successful patients would live out their early traumas, the E-Meter recording their level of stress, and develop greatly advanced mental powers. They were also supposedly able to remember past incarnations under Hubbard's "expert" tutelage (Nichols, 1979, p. 161). Hubbard was another Science-Fiction writer, much vilified at the time due to wide spread suspicion of his pseudo-religion Scientology, he was clearly an obvious target for Dick's satire.

Denkmal's clinic, "Eichenwald", recalls not only Adolf Eichmann, but also Buchenwald.²⁵ Denkmal is turning out "bubbleheads", people whose brains are greatly enlarged so that their skulls resemble large bubbles. The term "bubblehead" is highly redolent of the S. S. slang for intellectuals, "Eggheads", who, as noted by Joe Cinnadella in *The Man in the High Castle*, were so called because their heads broke easily in street brawls.

The "therapy" supposedly makes the patients more advanced, better able to cope with life in the "fire age", yet at the same time it makes them more vulnerable, "hydrocephalic". They come to resemble the enlarged skulls of the mentally retarded, appearing *less* advanced rather than intellectually superior, and this

²⁵ Dr. Denkmal resembles a number of pseudo-Nazi doctors in the fiction of this period, most notable analogues are Dr. Benway in William S. Burroughs's *The Naked Lunch* (1959) and Dr. Hilarius in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966).

reminds us of the risk that all Denkmal's patients run. In a small number of cases the treatment "blasts back". Instead of being evolved into the *next* stage of human evolution, some hapless victims are unpredictably reversed into the *previous*, Neanderthal stage. Does E-therapy offer enlightenment? Richard Hnatt discovers that there are apparently genuine insights to be had:

He perceived too, that Dr. Willy Denkmal was a cheap little pseudo-quack, that this whole business preyed off the vanity of mortals striving to become more than they were entitled to be...Below lay the tomb world, the immutable cause and effect world of the demonic...any aspect or sequence of reality could become either at any instant. Hell and heaven, not after death, but now! (*JSPE* p. 63)

Hnatt's perception, though not a perception in any non-*psionic* sense, since it is wholly *a priori*, reveals to him that the nature of E-therapy is fraudulent. Yet it is E-therapy that is giving him this revelation, or so it would seem:

He seemed to feel a loss of weight, nothing more, at least, not at first. And then his head ached as if rapped by a hammer. With the ache came almost instantly a new and acute comprehension... (ch. 5)

The first act of this "new and acute comprehension" is to call into question the motives for wanting the treatment ("it was a dreadful risk he and Emily were taking") and then to call the comprehension itself into question, doubting the validity of E-therapy. The next "perception" Hnatt experiences is even more interesting as it extends the problems of deciding whether E-therapy actually works and whether there is a relationship between the therapy and precognition:

"You know, because I take that E-therapy, I've got a huge frontal lobe. I'm practically a precog myself I'm so advanced..." (ch. 2)

The next step is from precognition to narrative structure. Effectively Hnatt "perceives" the plot of the novel:

With a lightning leap of intuition it came to him: someone had found a translation drug which satisfied the UN's narcotics agency. The agency had already passed on Chew-Z, would allow it on the open market...

...So for the chance to ruin Leo Bulero, the UN was allowing a non-Sol race to begin operations in the system.

It was a bad, perhaps even terminal, exchange. (ch. 5)

Quite apart from his insight into the novel's plot, Richard Hnatt gains insight into his own role as the counterpoint to Barney Meyerson. He realises, before the treatment, that he may be the one to devolve and Emily, he hopes, should be the one to advance. However, once the process begins, he realises that it may well be Emily who will devolve, and he too will be out of a job:

...suppose she evolved back just enough to lose her ceramic talent? And they both would be ruined; his career hung on seeing Emily remain one of the planet's top ceramicists. (ch. 5)

On taking the treatment, his insight, or fear, shifts from the idea that he could be personally responsible for losing his job, by "backfiring", to the idea that Emily might "evolve back" and be the cause of both their ruins. This latter realisation puts him in touch with Barney Mayerson's own marriage to Emily:

"...see, his wife became pregnant twice, and the board of directors of his conapt building, I think it's 33, met and voted to expel him and his wife because they had violated the building code. Well, you know 33; you know how hard it is to get into any of the buildings in that low range. So instead of giving up his apt he elected to divorce his wife and let her move, taking their child..." (ch. 1)

This explanation sets up a parallel with Richard's own fears about the future. The malfunctioning E-therapy would indeed bring about a divorce between the evolved partner and the "backfiring" one ("fused molars, tiny brain, bent legs and cannibalistic tendencies"). This divorce would be, just as Mayerson's, based on a combination of free choice ("he elected to divorce his wife...") and physical change on the part of Emily, in the first instance her pregnancy, in

the second her regression. The choice in both cases is exercised by the man, and, with the benefit of hindsight in Barney's case and foresight on Richard's, regretted.

"And then later on apparently [Mayerson] decided he made a mistake and he got embittered; he blamed himself, naturally, for making a mistake like that." (ch. 1)

...it was a dreadful risk he and Emily were taking and it wasn't fair to subject her to this, just to further sales. Obviously she didn't want this... (ch. 5)

Dick's irony is very economical. The neck-tie trader tells this story of Mayerson's failed marriage to Richard Hnatt himself, who knows the story only too well. It provides the reader with plot exposition while adding to the anguish of one of the characters. It also links Emily's past, her private life, with commerce, just as Hnatt himself does under E-therapy ("...just to further sales"). Dick also provides the paradox that the insight produced by E-therapy is that the therapy is itself fraudulent, and adds to this the paradoxical importance of the Hnatts in the narrative. By linking them structurally to Mayerson he shows they are a form of moral centre to the narrative, counterpoised to Mayerson and Bulero, subjected to the influence, either good or evil, of Dr. Denkmal, but free of the intervention of Palmer Eldritch.

Without being able to objectify the feeling, Richard Hnatt gains a form of narrative insight. Not so much precognitive ability, this is more akin to a cadence with the general movement of the plot. Dick places the scene at Eichenwald wherein the Hnatts undergo their treatment directly before the point at which the narrative, like the white room itself for Leo Bulero, blows up in the reader's face. The point at which Leo encounters Palmer Eldritch at his demesne on Luna is the turning point of the narrative, from then on it is impossible for us to make objective judgements about the nature of reality in this

fictional universe. For Hnatt, his treatment may well provide him with a greater sense of understanding, but it may be that it is just as illusory as the world of Perky Pat, hence the doubting of Denkmal's own validity. The similarity with precognition runs further in Hnatt's case, as the "perception" that he arrives at comes at the moment of no return, the point at which it is impossible to turn back from the treatment. As in the case of a perceptual precognition, the future, if actually perceived, is impossible to change, since the perception implies direct, actual knowledge.

The Kresy gland, which Denkmal stimulates in order to produce his "evolution" effect, is written as though German, in which case it would be pronounced as the English word "crazy". The gland is crazy indeed, it is absurd to think that there should be a physical means of stimulating evolution within an individual of a species, but more than this, it behaves crazily as well, evolving some, and devolving others. Dick again adds a Science-Fiction element which, instead of dealing with futuristic technology, involves the discovery of a gland in the human body which is unknown, and unthinkable, in our own century. In *The Game Players of Titan* this was the Hynes gland, here the Kresy gland appears. This shift is from the external works of man to the inner structure of the human form being uncovered: a suggestion of greater advancement already existing but being untapped, rather than that of new technology having to be invented. In this Dick follows Van Vogt with his Null-A potential analogous to spiritual evolution, a form of socialistic development of the "new man", proto-homo sovieticus. Likewise Alfred Bester in *The Stars My Destination*, wherein teleportation, known as "jaunting", is not achieved by technological means, but as a function of the mind inherent in all living human beings, but unknown until accidentally discovered by Dr. Jaunte during a near fatal experiment. The implication of both Van Vogt and Bester is that the po-

tential for these achievements exists now, although we are unaware of them, unable to exploit them because the conditions are not yet right, although when they are, all people will have access to these developments. Again the political analogy would be that of a Marxist "progressive history", quite inappropriate to the thinking of these authors, and to the political climate of America at that time. The religious analogy is, as noted above, to Buddhist rebirth doctrine, the god-like potential of all living things finally reaching its zenith.

Dick uses the hidden potential idea and turns it around to make it examine itself. The Kresy gland causes an individual to advance, usually, into the next stage of human evolution. This implies that humanity knows where it is going, or at least "knows" in its physical being rather than its mental awareness. If evolution is a blind process of survival of the fittest, how can an individual possess a gland which has the species' next stage of development already coded within it? Evolution in this model is a twin-stage process. The future of the race is predetermined, but only those who are strong will survive to further this preordained plan. On this showing, an individual's contribution to the development of the species is very hard to determine.

How far is Dr. Denkmal's discovery a benefit to mankind and how far is it a curse? Is it a deception, as Richard Hnatt "perceives" it to be, do people believe in it because they want to believe? If the future is going to bring greater enlightenment and development, here is a device that examines exactly that process. The Kresy gland is a metaphor of its own discovery, evolution, rapid development. However, its very erratic nature is a cause for concern. Not everyone who undergoes the treatment benefits from it. Some become Neanderthals.

The Kresy gland may be a crazy plan. The insights gained by even the successful patients may be unreliable as they are becoming insane, becoming crazy. Here again we see echoes of Van Vogt, and Dick's cautious reading of his wildly optimistic future. Again, the process that should make people GO-Sane makes them completely IN-Sane. How far can we trust Leo Bulero's view of the world even before he meets up with Palmer Eldritch? Leo is a highly advanced bubblehead, one of Denkmal's most successful clients. How far is his mind, his very view of reality, changed by this process before even Eldritch's Chew-Z arrives on the scene? Can we be sure that people are benefiting from the treatment merely because, after having taken it, they *think* that they are? Does not the process cause them to think that it is beneficial? Hnatt's vision tends to suggest otherwise, but for him it is already too late to turn back.

That Dick is an obsessively self-referential author can be taken as read. There are many sections in *3SPE* which can only make sense if previously published short stories have been read. The reason why the Proxers have false teeth and wear wigs is never explained in this novel, we have to have been familiar with "Precious Artifact" (1964, in *The Golden Man*) which tells of a war in which almost all human beings have been killed by the inhabitants of Proxima Centauri, who deceive the last remaining humans into thinking that the war has not been so totally destructive as it really has been. The Proxers wear wigs and false teeth because the radiation has caused all their real hair and teeth to drop out. The psychiatrist in the story plays with a yo-yo just as Monica does in *3SPE*. Dick playfully expects his readers to be familiar with all his published stories, if we know them we can appreciate Dick's shorthand, his inclusion of allusions to himself, to other parts of the massive future landscape he has been building in his fiction.

It is with this in mind that we must see that Dick intends us to know about the Wub and the properties it has. The Wub is a telepathic Martian pig, introduced to us in Dick's first published short story, "Beyond Lies the Wub"²⁶ in which the Wub, when killed and eaten, takes possession of the mind of its consumer, raising the question which one is the consumer and which the consumed? Bearing this in mind, what are we to make of Leo Bulero wearing an expensive "hand fashioned wubfur derby..." when he arrives on Ganymede to talk to Eldritch? Does the Wub, even after death, have influence over Bulero's mind via the hat? In a 1968 story, "Not by its Cover", Dick tells more about the Wub, how its fur has a continued life, changing the text of books in which it is bound to agree with the Wub's own very singular views on reincarnation and immortality.²⁷ Dick wants to provide as much ambiguity as he can, subtly hinted, that the thoughts passing through Leo Bulero's head are actually sane, or even his own, long before Palmer Eldritch appears.

Evolution is split into two aspects, both the spiritual and the physical. The intellectual development of the Null-A graduate is taken in an immediate, physical form by the patients at Eichenwald. A dangerous "short cut" to enlightenment, it provides an automatic dichotomy between the spiritual world and the physical analogous to the separated real and dream "after-death" worlds of George Miller and the broken-backed, compartmentalised moral and physical landscapes of Dorian Gray. What is offered to the Null-A aspirants after a lifetime of self denial and asceticism is promised by Dr. Denkmal as an in-

²⁶ Collected in *The Preserving Machine*, 1969.

²⁷ Collected in *The Golden Man*, 1980.

vestment for the rich. Any aspect of the religious is negated by the naked commercial ethos of Eichenwald which is completely at odds with the pseudo-Buddhistic intentions of The Machine's hopes for Null-A Venus.

Dorian Gray wishes for physical change to be separated from his own spiritual journey. Leo Bulero accelerates physical change without any spiritual or moral development.

The self reference alerts us to the idea of linking these ambiguities to the narrative in an associative way, but also helping to make this connection is Dr. Denkmal, who shows himself to have an authorial awareness of analogy and punning:

"...in English, blood and wafer; you know, in the Mass. Is very like the takers of Can-D; have you ever noticed that affinity?" (ch. 5)

"Today you will notice...only a very slight but very, very important change in the frontal lobe...it will smart, that is a pun, you know? It smarts and you become, ah, smart." (ch. 5)

Denkmal's own name may pun crudely - "think ill" (Honi soit qui mal y pense), but it has an actual meaning in German, one of crucial importance to the pre-cognitives and not least to Leo Bulero himself.

THE MONUMENT

Desperately clutching at some possible superiority he may have over Eldritch, some chink in the armour of the "interplan industrialist", Bulero thinks of Denkmal:

Could Eldritch have gotten it wrong? he wondered. Misunderstood the Proxers? After all, to his knowledge Palmer hadn't evolved, didn't possess the powerful, expanded comprehension which came with E-therapy.
(ch. 5)

When on the *chooser*-planet Sigma 14-B, Leo encounters "evolved Terrans" who put their advanced mental development down to the work of Denkmal. They direct him to the Monument, a Proxer shrine commemorating the slaying ("in fair combat with the champion of our nine planets Leo Bulero of Terra") of Palmer Eldritch.

"I wonder," he said half to himself "if Palmer's seen this." (ch. 9)

In other words, has Palmer seen the Monument. Denkmal means monument, so this is, although Leo may not realise it, the same as wondering whether or not Eldritch has seen Dr. Denkmal, whether he has had E-therapy. Dr. Denkmal disappears from the narrative at the same point as the Hnatts take their fateful first dose of his treatment. Yet the Monument on Sigma 14-B is a literal representation of his name's actual meaning. In *Time Out of Joint*, Ragel Gumm steps up to a cold drinks stand and finds that it melts away leaving behind only a small piece of paper on which is written "cold drinks stand". This sense of the words standing for the thing itself which Dick introduced in this earlier novel, and of course implies in the short story "Exhibit Piece", where meaningful sentences threaten to replace the vitally hopeful fantasy of George

Miller, returns in *3SPE*. As a narrative unit, Dr. Denkmal is just as meaningful as a "Nazi-type German doctor", or as a solid block commemorating the defeat of Palmer Eldritch. Leo thinks that his advanced evolution will provide him with the means to overcome Eldritch's influence, even at the very end of the novel he is still hoping this. However, also inherent in both Dr. Denkmal and the Denkmal/Monument, is the fear that both are actually working in Eldritch's favour.

The question here is not whether Palmer Eldritch or even Leo Bulero are highly evolved, but whether the Monument represents any insight into the future. The Monument is seen by Leo on the satellite where he finds himself stranded after his first infusion of Chew-Z has, supposedly, begun to wear off. This interlude is a vision of the future, a century or so after the death of Eldritch. However, is it a real future? Is Eldritch really going to be killed by Leo, or is the whole of this "precognition", though perceptual in nature, an illusion? Likewise the question is raised, does the other Denkmal produce a perception of the future? Are the bubbleheads really the next stage of human evolution?

It is typical of Dick's punning humour that he has Monica like having someone "smart and evolved like you to talk to" when she is with Leo, and the echo of Denkmal's feeble pun leads us to the only one of the "evolved Terrans" whose name we are given: Alec, Smart Alec. Monica herself, a creation or incarnation of Eldritch himself, is also based on the Monument, sharing the first three letters of her name with it like three stigmata. It is as though Eldritch were accepting the possible development of the potential future the Monument represents, but not quite. MON is only half of Monica's name, which is roughly the percentage probability Eldritch accords to the Monument's future existence ("...Yes, I've seen the monument. About 45 percent of the futures have it.

Slightly less than equal chances obtain, so I'm not terribly concerned...").
Monica's name itself means "name" in American slang. Dick creates a circular
"name of a name" or "name which means name" paradox such as Lewis Carroll's
Alice discovers in *Through the Looking Glass*:

"...the name of the song is called 'Haddock's Eyes'."
"Oh, that's the name of the song is it?" Alice said trying to feel
interested.
"No, you don't understand," the Knight said looking a little vexed.
"That's what the name is *called*, the name really *is* 'The Aged Aged Man'."
(Carroll, 1939, p. 224)

This same recursive naming quite neatly equates Monica with the *logos* which
Eldritch tells Leo he supplies.²⁸

Denkmal's process it itself based on probability, the chance that the subject
will evolve instead of regressing to a lower stage of human development.
Likewise the Monument is extant only in a certain number of "alternative
futures". Denkmal may bring about the acquisition of precognitive powers: the
Monument is perceived only through precognition. The perception that Richard
Hnatt undergoes during E-therapy concerns itself partly with the problem of
resolution, how does life "choose" how to develop and what course to take:

Always, in his middle level of the human, a man risked the sinking.
And yet the possibility of ascent lay before him, any aspect of the se-
quence of reality *could become either* at any instant. Hell and heaven,
not after death, but now! Depression, all mental illness was the sinking.
And the other, how was it achieved? (ch. 5)

²⁸ In passing it is worth noting another coincidence between Lewis Carroll's
meeting between the White Knight and Alice and that between Leo and Monica.
As they set off, Carroll's Knight asks Alice if her hair is well fastened
on. Leo's first act on meeting Monica is to pull hard at her hair to see
whether she is a Proxer, as Proxers wear wigs.

The problem is Leibnizian again. How does God choose which of the possible worlds to actualise? For Leibniz the answer was the best of all possible worlds, but the question raised by that is that we need to know how God defines "the best". Dick returns to the theme of the potential of rising or falling in the religious vision of Wilbur Mercer in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* where Mercer's journey up the hill, attacked by the killers throwing their rocks, represents an actual move from the slope down to the tomb world and up into the light of salvation for Mercer's devoted followers. Of course, they, like Richard Hnatt, experience this climb as an actual perception, since they are linked by some unexplained telepathic means to Mercer's own mind. They feel what he feels, they see the same things he sees. Mercer's followers take a risk in deciding to follow their messiah, yet he is always there for them, always striving to save them from the falling. Hnatt is an audience ready and waiting for Mercer, he has already seen the potential of the tomb world to swallow him. However, for most of the characters in this novel, the choice of which world is to be actualised for them, the rising or the sinking, is not at issue. The choice, as Leibniz conceived for humanity, is being made by external deities, not by the individual consciousness *guided* by divine will, as in Mercerism.

Leibniz's God chose a compromise between variety and order in actualising worlds. Palmer Eldritch chooses worlds which give him the best chance of survival. In utilising the concept of alternate futures, Dick is extending the logical premise of Leibniz's alternate presents into the realms of precognitive perception, perception being the sole function of Leibniz' Monads. Closely associated with John Von Neumann, the bug-bear Dick berates in his foreword to *Solar Lottery*, was Norbert Wiener, whose book *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1950) acted as a strong inspiration to Kurt Vonnegut in writing his 1952 novel *Player Piano*. Wiener conveniently sums up Leibniz's views on Monads:

The most interesting early scientific account of the continuity of the soul is that of Leibniz. Leibniz conceived the soul as belonging to a larger class of permanent spiritual substances which he called *monads*. These monads spend their whole existence from the creation on in the act of perceiving one another; although some perceive with a great clarity and distinctness, and others in a blurred and confused way. This perception however does not represent any true interaction of the monads. The monads "have no windows" and have been wound up by god at the creation of the world so that they should keep time with one another through all eternity. They are indestructible. (Wiener, 1950, p. 106)

Monads are quite a problem for Leo Bulero one way and another:

The UN was a windowless monad over which he has no influence.
(*3SPE*, ch. 2)

So, likewise, is Palmer Eldritch, windowless and beyond influence. Without windows, the monads perceive but cannot be seen into, they are a surface at which perception takes place. Palmer Eldritch, seeing only with "Jensen Luxvid artificial-type eyes", has entirely abandoned natural sight for the "windowless" state of seeing through mechanical intermediaries. Organically blind, taking his perception from something entirely outside himself, Eldritch is a very efficient monad. Leo Bulero has also tried to have his vision corrected by the somewhat frightening expedient of major surgery, but finds that in a world of false perceptions, only false perceptors could be of any use:

And the two evolved Terrans; they wavered in a mild but pervasive distortion which reminded him of the days when he had had astigmatic vision, before he had received, by surgical implant, totally healthy eyes.
(ch. 6)

He is not quite so good a monad as Eldritch. He is one of the ones that perceive in a "blurred and confused manner", or, as Anne Hawthorne would put it, as St Paul says, through a glass darkly. Eldritch is the supreme monad, capable of perceiving all the possible worlds revealed by Chew-Z and then selecting which one to actualise, in other words which characters to *become*, like Barney

Mayerson for example. Under E-therapy Richard Hnatt understands that human destiny can actualise one alternate world or another. Whether heaven or hell is the individual's choice, given a perception of both we can select the best possible.

The Monument provides evidence of Palmer Eldritch's ability to perceive various alternative futures since, through Chew-Z, he inhabits most of them. Both Denkmal and the Monument represent hope. In the first instance the hope that mankind will outlive the fire age (assuming that it is not merely a Prox induced fantasy) and secondly that Leo Bulero will escape from the fantasy world of Chew-Z and defeat Palmer Eldritch. However, they both represent confusion since they both reduce our certainty. In the former case we are uncertain as to the reliability of the "evolved" perception, in the latter, the Monument, we are uncertain as to the nature or resolution, if any, of the narrative. Both are linked to the narrative development by the device of precognition. The theme of evolution is, like Eldritch and Bulero, reincarnated in a new and equally ambiguous form. It becomes a symbol in the second half of the novel. Denkmal and Eldritch seem to be in the same kind of business. Richard Hnatt realises:

[Denkmal's] whole business preyed off the vanity of mortals striving to become more than they were entitled to be, and in a purely earthly, transitory way. (ch. 5)

Eldritch's slogan on Mars, "God promises eternal life; we can deliver it", puts him also into the category of preying on the "vanity of mortals striving to become more than they were entitled to be...", i.e. non-mortal. Yet here the way is neither earthly, nor, as Barney is to discover to his cost, transitory:

"Well, you got what St Paul promises, as Anne Hawthorne was blabbing about: you're no longer clothed in a perishable fleshy body - you've put on an ethereal body in its place. How do you like it Mayerson?" (ch. 11)

Both of them alter reality by making physical changes in the subject's brain. Leaving aside for the moment the issue of the reality or otherwise of Leo's plan to initiate litigations against Eldritch, the brain mutating drug which produces the Q-form of epilepsy is guessed by Barney Mayerson to have been developed by Dr. Denkmal. Although the association with the Monument makes Denkmal seem like an anti-Eldritch, he is in fact Eldritch's complement. The Monument is no victory over Eldritch's plans, as Barney discovers, since it provides a means by which Eldritch, aware of the manner of his death, can utilise the translation worlds of Chew-Z to escape death forever.

The Monument has, however, another incarnation. Before even the title page of the novel we are given the following quotation, which in interview once Dick claimed was the essence of his credo:

I mean, after all, you have to consider we're only made out of dust. That's not much to go on and we shouldn't forget that, but even considering, I mean, it's a bit of a bad beginning, we're not doing so bad. So I personally have faith that even in this lousy situation we're faced with we can make it. You get me?

This statement, separated entirely from the text of the novel, almost seems to have no contact with the book at all. It is placed in the same way that traditionally one would expect to find either a dedication or a quotation, which in some of Dick's other novels (*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *Ubik*) is what we indeed find. Yet in these other examples, even these quotations come *after* the title, not before it. The quotation claims to have been dictated by Leo Bulero immediately on his return from Mars, yet in order to accept this statement it is necessary to believe that Leo ever went to Mars in the first place, something we are in grave doubt about at the end of the novel. Effectively the memo is circulated after the events at the end of the novel, yet in the text it precedes all else. It, like the effect of Chew-Z, makes time purely

subjective, as though past present and future were universally commingled and any one was as immediately accessible as another. Should Leo succeed in returning from Mars it would prove that he had actually been there, and thus that he had a chance of killing Eldritch. The memo may refer, however, to Leo's "return" from the *chooser* planet Mars, from a trip he never made. Thus Leo never escaped from Eldritch, and the whole novel is a fantasy, even the section preceding Leo's injection with Chew-Z. Like the Monument, the memo (itself contained in the word "Monument") stands as a block of text outside the fictional world of the novel. The Monument is part of Leo's hallucination, impossible to pin down precisely within the various fictional worlds present in the novel. The memo offers hope that Leo will defeat Palmer Eldritch, but at the same time it suggests that this will never happen. The end of the novel leaves this opening optimism in a very fragile state.

A point of negative correspondence between Palmer Eldritch and Denkmal is that Denkmal very shrewdly seems not to have taken his own treatment whereas Eldritch seems not to have been able to avoid taking his. Doctors are ambiguous in this world. Dr. Smile is designed to make Barney *worse* instead of better, and what does this imply about Denkmal? Certainly his "backfiring" process may be detrimental, but Eldritch has the complement even to this. Without needing to be devolved at Eichenwald he has had his teeth replaced by stainless steel molars, all exactly alike:

Neanderthal teeth, he thought...Reversion two hundred thousand years back; revolting. (ch. 11)

Eldritch has paid to have himself made to look as though he is a Neanderthal, just like the unlucky patients at Eichenwald would do. Although Barney remembers the ways in which Eldritch obtained his three "stigmata" he cannot remember

the reason why he had his teeth replaced. His eyes were lost in Chicago, an acid attack by some unnamed rival, his arm lost in a hunting accident on Callisto. Although we are told that his teeth were installed "prior to his trip to Prox by Czech dental surgeons" we are not told why. Eldritch represents both the future men and the atavistic "old" men. Denkmal can transform people either forwards or backwards. Eldritch, by his mastery of Chew-Z commands both the past and the future through the synthetic alteration of reality produced by the drug. His own senses are all false, all but his hearing. They are not so important for what they tell him as for what they tell those who see him, and later, as in Barney's case, *become* him.

FICTIONAL WORLDS AND "CHOOSER" WORLDS

In order to gain some conception of how reliable the actions of the protagonists are in relation to the narrative itself it is necessary to examine just where the disjunctive ambiguities caused by Chew-Z actually occur. The first problem comes in the fact that we cannot pin down precisely where Chew-Z is first introduced into Leo Bulero's system. Assuming, of course, that it ever is. When he arrives at Eldritch's demesne on Luna, Leo is shepherded away by the guards so that, ostensibly, he can meet Eldritch personally:

Ahead of him, blocking the tube, appeared another uniformed guard from Eldritch's staff; he raised his arm and pointed something small and shiny at Leo Bulero.

"Hey," Leo protested feebly, freezing in his tracks; he spun, ducked his head, and then stumbled a few steps back the way he had come.

The beam - of a variety he know nothing about - touched him and he pitched forward, trying to break his fall by throwing his arms out.

(ch. 5)

From this point on any possibility of making definite, objective statements about Leo's world becomes very difficult. The reality or otherwise of the narrative is lost to the reader, although there are several definite possibilities. The first is that Eldritch has lured Leo to Luna in order to kill him, and that in the passage quoted above he has done just that. The rest of the novel, on this basis, takes place in some form of afterlife wherein Leo is atoning for his sins. This would make it very like George Miller's position in "Exhibit Piece", such that Leo is trying not to realise that he is dead, and that no matter how horrible the Chew-Z illusion he confronts, it is better than admitting that his life is over. Better by far to think that he has merely

fallen into the clutches of Palmer Eldritch. Naturally Dick provides us with tantalising evidence to support this possibility:

"Suppose I want to construct my own universe...Maybe there's something evil in me too, some aspect of my personality I don't know about that would cause me to produce a thing even more ugly than what you've brought into being." (ch. 6)

I'll see you in what the Neo-Christians call hell [Barney] thought to himself. Probably not before. Not unless this already is, and it may well be, hell right now. (ch. 7)

There is relatively little problem in reconciling the fact that the first of these two speeches is made by Leo and the second by Barney, since if it were really Leo's hell, Barney would be a thing made out of a portion of Leo, or a kind of thing in the Red King's dream for Carroll's Alice. The relationship of viewpoint between Barney and Leo is a fascinating one, which, even in the next hypothetical view, raises the same problem. How could Barney, if the whole subsequent development of the novel is entirely set in Leo's private world, hold a point of view entirely distinct from the world Leo occupies?

Charles Beaumont in his short story "Shadow Play" (1957), experiments with the idea of characters in a dream discussing their fates in a part of the dream where the dreamer has no access, the implied world of the other characters' existence. Beaumont surmises that if the dream is lucid, if it is so realistic that it is indistinguishable from the dreamer's everyday reality, it is not unreasonable that the characters in the dream should continue their conversations even when the dreamer is not talking to them directly, or even looking at them. Dick had clearly been interested in this aspect in "Exhibit Piece" as George's colleagues seem to have things to say to one another out of his earshot, but Dick does not present us with a scene in which George's viewpoint is not present. Nevertheless, from *Solar Lottery* onward this was a possibility and in *3SPE* Dick pursues

this idea the implication that, whether Leo is dead or under Chew-Z, his is the only viewpoint that holds sway over the whole of the rest of the novel, and all the other characters are only things in his dream, or hell. Leo adopts therefore a technique which is almost akin to that of Gilbert Gosseyn's transmigration, or Bill Keller's soul shifting in *Dr. Bloodmoney*. He has the ability to shift from the dream he is dreaming in which he is himself watching, to a viewpoint in which he is present but not the one dreaming, the viewpoint is with someone else, and then to shift again to another area of the dream where he is not present at all, wherein the viewpoint is entirely someone else's.

Dick, having included precognitives and telepaths in his previous novels, and again including precognitives here, and having made the connection between their abilities and the author's powers with respect to his created characters, endows these characters with another authorial gift, the ability to shift from one interior monologue to another, one which has no connection with the first. The continuity of consciousness between these areas of narrative space, these interior monologues, had previously been something construed only by the reader. Here Dick puts not only an authorial power in the hands of his characters, not only gives Leo a hitherto exclusive to author ability, but also a hitherto exclusive to *reader* ability.

As though we had not already guessed, Palmer Eldritch also has this facility:

...he can even enter a world in which he's dead...(ch. 11)

We can, of course, accept the alternative viewpoint that Leo's opinion is correct, that he really is in an hallucinatory world and that:

Eldritch had given him an intravenous injection of a translating drug, no doubt Chew-Z. (ch. 5)

In this situation, the first disjuncture comes when:

The room blew up in his face. White light descended, blanketing him and he shut his eyes. (ch. 5)

The Chew-Z area is apparently defined by inconsistency in our ability to pin down its nature. Dr. Smile first appears to be the same as the version of him in the real world, but Monica knows better:

"I was kidding. That's not really Dr. Smile; it's just pretend to keep us from loneliness. It's alive but it's not connected to anything outside itself; it's what they call being on intrinsic." (ch. 5)

Nevertheless, Dr. Smile seems to pass on Leo's information to Barney. Midway through Leo's Chew-Z hallucination, the narrative shifts back to Barney Mayerson and Roni Fugate in Leo's office. They have received the information from Dr. Smile on Sigma 14-B and have contacted Felix Blau, so obviously Dr. Smile was right and Monica was wrong. It is, however, always possible that, even assuming Leo has been forcibly fed Chew-Z, the "chooser" world may contain things that are objectively real as well as things that are completely false:

And the rat, unlike everything else, was genuine. Unlike themselves; he and the girl - they were not real either. (ch. 5)

Unfortunately, if you are false, how can you be a reliable witness to the reality of the things you perceive? If Barney and Felix Blau receive their information from a non-existent, "intrinsic" Dr. Smile it follows that they are as unreal as everything else. The office where Barney sits is an analogue of Looking-Glass world for Lewis Carroll. If a mirror presents you with an image that is very much like the world you know, but noticeably different from it, i.e. inverted, it is thus firstly another world, and secondly, a complete world.

The fragment seen in the mirror/window implies that the whole of the rest of this inverted world beyond the boundaries of its edges:

"How would you like to live in Looking-glass House Kitty? I wonder if they'd give you milk to drink in there? Perhaps Looking-glass milk isn't good to drink, but oh, Kitty, now we come to the passage. You can just see a little *peep* of the passage in Looking-glass House, if you leave the door of our drawing room wide open: and it's very like our passage as far as you can see, only you know it might be quite different on beyond. (Carroll, 1939, pp. 133 - 134)

This hypothetical universe may have all forms of differences with our own in the parts we cannot see. If any part of it is visible, then the rest must follow. The unseen faces of the clocks have human faces on the other side of Alice's looking-glass. If Leo is in a fictional world which nevertheless resembles the real one, and it has a version of himself then somewhere it must have a Barney Mayerson and a Felix Blau.

Quantum Mechanics postulates an infinite number of alternative universes, existing simultaneously with our own, in which all possible outcomes of any given experiment actually occur.²⁹ This vision of the universe as a series of equally valid alternatives, only one of which we perceive, if taken as a metaphor rather than in a strictly scientific sense, leads to a close analogy to Leibniz' view of contingent reality, of the alternative presents waiting the perception of God in order to be actualised. In the instance of Schrödinger's Cat, the resolution of one alternative universe as opposed to another is made by the perception of the system's observer. If the observer sees that the cat is alive, an alternate exists in which it is dead, but only one is actually

²⁹ For a full discussion of this aspect of Quantum Theory, see DeWitt, 1970. This article also discusses the paradox of Schrödinger's Cat.

perceived. However, it is the act of perceiving which resolves the indeterminate state of half-living/half-dead cat into one form or another. Thus the intervention of the perceptor forces a definite *perceptual* outcome. If the facility to foresee the future is brought into play, the paradox becomes even more complicated, akin to the cat's perceiver himself being perceived, the band of indeterminacy being widened to include more and more of the universe outside the test chamber.

The glimpses of "alternate futures" seen by the precognitives are mirrors which reflect fragments of many alternative universes. However, as with Leo's hallucination, as with Alice's Looking-glass, the fragment implies the whole, and as with Schrödinger's Cat, the act of perception resolves the alternatives. The act of precognition in *3SPE* produces complete alternate worlds, which, although fictional, become real. What Quantum implies of the universe as a whole, Dick produces in his fictional world. This provides the necessary resolution to the disjuncture on Luna. The world into which Leo is plunged, even if it does last for the whole of the rest of the novel, is not an individual fantasy, but a valid alternative fictional universe, exactly analogous to the fictional universe all the characters inhabit from the beginning of the novel. It is also every bit as real as the alternative futures previewed by the precognitives. The precognition in which Barney sees himself lying dead in downtown New York momentarily provides the reader with a vision of an event just as real as those described as supposedly *actually* happening to Barney Mayerson. The reader reads both the text referring to the events in the characters' lives, and also the descriptions of the precognitions which represent alternative futures. Each is imaged in the reader's mind in the same way, and on the same level of reality. They are thus equally valid. For the time that the reader is being told that Barney is to be found dead in downtown New York, it is an

active part of the narrative. It does not matter that it is discarded as narrative later, as, of course, it does not happen. The alternative is, in the reader's mind, a real thing, a thing as real as the rest of the story. In fact the description of Barney's sun-shrivelled body lying in the burning sun comes in the passage where Barney and Roni are receiving information from the fictitious, intrinsic, Dr. Smile on Sigma 14-B and are evidently not part of the same reality that they were in the earlier part of the narrative, before Leo's arrival on Luna. It is therefore a meta-meta-reality, though indistinguishable in the reader's mind from whatever level the real is situated in the novel, assuming that it is.

Both Barney and Roni experience their precognitions in the forms of newspaper headlines which they have previewed. They see themselves in the future, reading newspapers the headlines of which refer to future events. Their only access to definite information about the future comes from seeing it at second hand, written down, already translated into a form one stage removed from reality and one stage nearer to fiction. When this source of information is lost to them they are reduced to speculation alone:

"I've provided Leo with information that'll lead to a meeting between him and Eldritch. Had it occurred to you that the two of them might form a syndicate together?" He eyed her intently.

"I see nothing like that ahead. No 'pape articles to that effect."
"God," he said with scorn, "it's not going to get into the 'papes."
(ch. 4)

Here, by analogy, is the process of perceiving a fictional variant of the future in which the reader is engaged. Instead of previewing the future directly, Barney and Roni rely on a vision of a printed record of a future in which the event desired to be foreseen has already happened. This is a future past.

It also stands for the complex state in which Roni and Barney stand at this point in the narrative Dick is constructing. Leo is supposedly on a satellite called Sigma 14-B somewhere in orbit about the Earth. Monica tells him the Dr. Smile is not connected to anything, yet Dr. Smile manages to communicate with Barney, and it is during this interlude that he previews the newspaper article in which he is dying on the pavement. He perceives only the newspaper picture, not the scene itself, thus this precognition is a foreknowledge of someone else's past knowledge rather than a perceptual precognition of an event itself. In the fiction of the novel, we are not witnessing the events themselves, but a report of them. Barney's precognitions take the form of an interaction of the text with the perceptual level of the reader, an imitation of it.

Leo's hallucination under the influence of Chew-Z takes place in the twinkling of an eye. Afterwards he finds himself back in the corridor with all the reporters and notices that no time has passed in the outside world while he was under. How then could Barney have had time to receive any information from Dr. Smile and make a decision not to rescue Leo based on his doom-laden premonition? The hint is there that Barney and Roni are no more than things in Leo's dream, or hell, or whatever. Leo's interaction on the reader-level is thus as paradoxical as theirs. The act of perceiving resolves the world into one alternative or another, but leaves the resulting reality on as indeterminate a level of uncertainty as before.

Readers create the fictional world on the page in which the characters exist. The characters themselves speculate on alternative universes in which they may at some stage exist. That very speculation is perceived by the readers of the text as an integral part of the text, the description of it is tantamount to actualising it. Dick sets up a sequence of alternative storytellers, any one

of whom could conceivably take over the running of the narrative. We are left very uncertain as to whether or not this has in fact happened. Leo's world may be a fantasy, or it may be his actual life. It may even be some other character's invention. We cannot distinguish. The preternatural talents possessed by the pre-fash consultants represent a convenient metaphor for this translation of different narrative voices within the text.

INDETERMINACY

The first thing with which Dick presents the reader of *3SPE* is a stream of indeterminacy. Not for nothing is Barney Mayerson introduced to us waking up. The novel begins with the suggestion that dreaming is over, yet the implicit suggestion is that the world Barney is "waking up" to is just as disorientating as any dream, even had that dream taken place before the novel begins. Of course, what *does* take place before the novel begins is Leo's inter-office memo. If this memo were a part of Barney's dream, and were he subsequently to become a part of Leo's "dreams", then the circularity would be essentially Carrollian. This circularity is strongly implied by the nature of Barney's awakening:

His head unnaturally aching, Barney Mayerson woke to find himself in an unfamiliar conapt building in an unfamiliar bedroom... (ch. 1)

The association the reader is invited to pick up is that of a hang-over. Barney's head aches "unnaturally" because the headache has been induced, presumably by alcohol. The following failure to recognise his surroundings could well be the result of a rough night. However, the word "unnaturally" is an unsettling one. It does not recur when this scene is re-enacted under the overt influence of Chew-Z:

And then he was flat on his back. His head rang, ached; with difficulty he managed to open his eyes and focus on the room around him. He was waking up; he had on, he discovered, his pyjamas, but they were unfamiliar... (ch. 10)

The headache is not "unnatural" this time, since it fits in perfectly with the version of reality supplied by Chew-Z. Precisely what has Barney been taking that he has woken up from at the beginning of the novel? Whatever it is, it is not a natural awakening, any more than the "awakening" Leo Bulero anticipates at the end:

"Aw come on! Eventually I'm going to wake up or whatever it is you finally do when that miserable stuff is out of your system..." (ch. 13)

Indeed, is it an awakening at all? What is the nature of reality in our universe? Not only is Roni Fugate unfamiliar but the whole world seems to be in question:

For all he knew, he was several hours' drive from his office; perhaps he was not even in the United States. However he was on Earth; the gravity that made him sway was familiar and normal. (ch. 1)

What kind of "sleep" could Barney have expected to be in which would cause him to wake up on another planet? In *The Game Players of Titan*, Pete Garden experiences an actual subliminal shift from Earth to the vugs' home world:

He felt even sicker now, too sick to go on any further.

'Where's the men's room,' he asked the vug, 'or shall I say the human's room?' He looked around, squinting to see. The colours were all wrong and when he tried to walk he felt weightless or at least much lighter. Too light. He was not on Earth. This was not one-G pulling at him; it was only a fraction.

He thought, I'm on Titan. (*The Game Players of Titan*, ch. 10)

Unwitting victim of a parakinetic talent which transported him to Titan, Garden's first indication that the psychiatrist's office, designed to look terrestrial, is in fact not, is the gravity, weaker than it should be. This disjuncture in *Game Players* follows the prime disjuncture wherein Garden's memory is interfered with, and hence our appreciation of the narrative. Barney

Mayerson, however, actually anticipates the possibility that he has been teleported in his sleep. We are prepared for a disjuncture which does not appear to come.

Dick cunningly presents the one object in the apartment which is unfamiliar to the reader as being the only thing that Barney can recognise. The suitcase psychiatrist, Dr. Smile, provides Barney with the only information he, and of course, the reader, have about the world he suddenly discovers. Like the Rushmore circuit in Pete Garden's car, Smile fills in the details of the previous night.

Thus our first introduction to the supposedly last outer "onion skin" layer of reality in the novel comes via the untrustworthy robot Barney employs to make himself so insane that he will escape the draft to Mars. Smile's first greeting is very unsettling:

'Ah, Mr. Bayerson.'
'Mayerson,' Barney corrected, smoothing his hair with fingers that shook. (*JSPE*, ch. 1)

After Leo's first "trip" into the land of Chew-Z, the *intrinsic* Dr. Smile makes the same mistake:

'I know a Mr. Bayerson,' Dr. Smile said. 'In fact I'm with him right now, via portable extension of course, right in his office.'
'There's nobody I know named Bayerson,' Leo said...It came back to him than. 'Hell, you mean Mayerson. Barney. Back at P. P. Layouts.'
(ch. 5)

In Leo's *chooser* world, Dr. Smile is intrinsic, false, not connected to anything, yet in the opening reality we are presented with exactly the same slip of the "tongue". Leo cannot recognise "Bayerson" as Dr. Smile's habitual name for Barney, he has never heard it before, which is odd, considering that:

'...I've got informants in the selective service and anyhow, Dr. Smile notified me, I was paying him - you didn't know this of course - to report to me on your progress in declining under stress.' (ch. 7)

Yet if the intrinsic Dr. Smile is part of Leo's hallucination, how does it come to use the same misnomer as the "real" Dr. Smile in Barney's apartment? Either the hallucination has aspects of the real and of the imaginary, or the initial layer of the novel, that of the opening, is as illusory as the rest of the novel. Dick is, however, producing a slightly tighter turn of the screw than merely pointing out that our perceptions of external reality may well be as false as a drug fantasy. The nature of the unreal "reality" is disturbingly familiar:

The bathroom door opened a crack; he caught a glimpse of Roni pink and rubbery and clean, drying herself...

...small, up jutting breasts with nipples no larger than matched pink peas. Or rather matched pink pearls, he corrected himself. (ch. 1)

Roni might well be expected to look pink and clean, but "rubbery"? This external layer of reality is the world of Perky Pat, the "rubbery" world of the synthetic doll:

'I'd like to marry her,' he said aloud suddenly.
'Who?' Tod asked. 'Perky Pat or the new girl?'
'He means Perky Pat,' Norm Schein said and snickered. (ch. 8)

The quibble over Roni's nipples sounds slight but is in fact very telling. They are "matched", rather than "matching", as though some external agent had done the matching and chosen them. Pink peas carry the wrong connotation, mainly because peas would have to be dyed or synthetically grown in order to be pink, it is not a natural colour for them. Yet in changing the description to "pearls", Barney is more poetic in a sense, but unconsciously changes an unnaturally coloured but organic and living metaphor, a pea, for one inorganic

and non-living, a pearl. Thus Roni, presumably a living woman, is categorised, metaphorically, into the synthetic and non-living world of Perky Pat. Barney also corrects himself, not factually, but in a sense artistically, as though acting as a surrogate author, making a correction of style much as Dick himself might do in the manuscript.

Just as Barney's name is quibbled by Dr. Smile, so the breasts have the stamp of doubt on them which is echoed by Fran Schein under the influence of Can-D:

She put her hands under her breasts, then, languidly, lifting them, a puzzled expression on her face. "These," she said, "are Pat's. Not mine. Mine are smaller; I remember." (ch. 3)

Here, the best we can manage is a world in which we are influenced to perceive our interactions with non-human artifacts as equivalent to real life, as under Can-D. Icholtz marks the transition; a man both like the dolls and also like the organic disease of Chew-Z, the "protoplasm" of Palmer Eldritch:

The man bobbed, toylike, in front of him, meanwhile digging into his pocket as if scratching at some familiar microorganism that possessed parasitic proclivities... (ch. 3)

"As if scratching...", scraping away the skin, trying to claw down to another layer. Skins form the currency of Terra because they are the only product "which could not be duplicated by the printers". The reference to the "Biltong life forms" comes from an early Dick short story called "Pay for the Printer" (1956).³⁰

³⁰ Collected in the anthology *The Preserving Machine*.

The Biltongs can produce exact copies of objects placed before them indistinguishable from the originals, but things "printed" not made. Since, in *3SPE*, the Biltongs have replaced most terrestrial production lines, manufactured goods are only prints, not made, they are printed as a book would be. Dick stretches the original story nicely. Here is a world full of fictional objects, things "written" not made. An added irony comes from the fact that in "Pay for the Printer" the Biltongs were Prox life forms, and that in *3SPE* Palmer Eldritch is taking terrestrial method of mass production to the Prox system, and bringing their drugs back. Fran Schein's name means "banknote" in German; a thing printed, not a thing unique, but having value in itself. ³¹

The Scheins may be things printed or things made, like pre-Biltong notes, or like the truffle skins. The question of imitations of people troubles Leo Bulero as well:

...like Barney Mayerson they were all engaged in their various imitations of him. Barney with his Miss Rondinella Fugate, small time replica of Leo Bulero and Miss Jurgens. Wherever he looked it was the same; probably even Ned Lark, the Narcotics Bureau chief lived this sort of life...Even Palmer Eldritch. No, he realised suddenly. Not Palmer Eldritch. He's found something else. (ch. 2)

Bulero's mistress, Scotty Sinclair, lives on a satellite called "Winnie the Pooh Acres". The title is intriguingly ironic. *Winnie the Pooh* is a book about a child's collection of dolls, which, in the stories, behave as though they were alive. The child, Christopher Robin, appears himself in the stories, undergoing a "vital interpersonal experience" with the dolls, just as the takers of Can-D

³¹ This ambiguity is not resolved any more than in Anne Hawthorne's speculations on the problems of reconciling the Lutherans vis a vis Can-D (noted by Dr. Denkmal) or whether one should imitate Christ's life or his teaching, as raised by Thomas à Kempis, in à Kempis, 1952.

would seem to do in the world of Perky Pat. The twist here is that "Winnie *ther* Pooh" is the name the doll gives itself. By giving the satellite this name Bulero makes the doll-level of reality the prominent one, unconsciously identifying Scotty with Perky Pat, imitating the world that theirs very well may be anyway.

The inclusion of the first insert of Martian life is very pertinent here. Strangely, rather than beginning Chapter Three on Mars, Dick starts out by presenting a small interlude with Richard Hnatt sipping Tequilla sour in a bar and being approached by the "toylike" Icholtz. Icholtz' name is odd³² though it seems redolent of both *ichor*, the blood of the gods, and also construes "*Ich Holz*" , "I (am) Wood"; a puppet indeed:

A man blocked his way, a peculiar specimen mounted on spindly legs...
(ch. 3)

Icholtz is, even on his first appearance, given a metaphor of death. He is a "round specimen", like an insect, caught and then "mounted" on legs which seem like pins fixing a museum exhibit, very fitting for one of Eldritch's creatures. The quibble of Hnatt's name is also very interesting. Hatt or Natt, or rather Hat or Gnat: evolved individual, bubblehead, wubfur derby and all, or small insignificant insect, another creature for Eldritch's museum. As he is to see under E-therapy, both paths are open to him. This is an important interlude since we are suddenly given a great deal of new information, but it is all information which upsets the status quo, makes the social positions of the characters which have already been established very unstable. On one level, the

³² Though not as odd as Hnatt.

possibility is opened up for the Hnatts to undergo E-therapy ("he'd evolve remarkably, catch up with the big shots...") but also crucially introduces us to the idea that P. P. Layouts' monopoly is under threat from the hitherto unmentioned "Chew-Z Products" of Boston.

The interlude shows the established order breaking down, firstly in terms of its given social relations and also in the continuing theme of disintegrating awareness of reality, by injecting unsettling references to people being dead or artificial. This reinforces the Perky Pat layer of reality as opposed to the one which we would impute to it by association with our own. The first excursion to Mars shows us the Perky Pat world breaking down as well:

From the moment San Regan tunes into the illusory sense-world of Walt Essex little details of his real life start intruding:

'...exciting new sub surface conapt building Sir Francis Drake, the first to be *entirely underground*...' (ch. 3)

The name Francis Drake would surely be less than reassuring to a man called Essex, but for a Martian colonist trying to forget that he is suffering in a hovel, that the conapt building should be underground, like his hovel, would be a very unfortunate coincidence. On his shaving mirror, Walt Essex, alias Sam Regan, finds a note in his own handwriting:

THIS IS AN ILLUSION. YOU ARE SAM REGAN,
A COLONIST ON MARS. MAKE GOOD USE OF YOUR
TIME OF TRANSLATION BUDDY BOY...
(ch. 3)

Exactly the thing a Can-D communicant would least want to see, a reminder of the unreality of his world when the whole point of that world is to escape the reality of the dreary planet Mars. The whole illusion collapses one stage at a time. When Fran Schein arrives, the anxieties from their Martian lives are carried over into the world of Perky Pat:

She wavered visibly. "But that conversation we had just before -"
"There was no conversation. I haven't seen you in a week, not since last Saturday." He made his voice as firm and full of conviction as possible. (ch. 3)

The return to real life at least provides some consolations:

We won after all, he thought as he deftly unhooked her bra...and Fran sighed, this time not wearily...And right here in their dreary abode on Mars. And yet - they had still managed it in the old way, the sole way: through the drug brought in by the furtive pushers. Can-D had made this possible, they continued to require it. In no way were they free. (ch. 3)

Can-D has made it possible for San Regan and Fran Schein to be "alone" together because it marks out areas of awareness and non-awareness. The others, whilst in some form of telepathic communion with each other, have no sensory contact with them.

Here is the final severance with Can-D, the privacy they can enjoy comes from the effect having worn off. However, there is also a sense of blurring between the illusion and the illusion-within-the-illusion. According to a UN ruling "no co-habitation could be proved" in persons taking Can-D and sitting well apart, no matter what "wrong doing" they might be getting up to as Perky Pat and Walt Essex. "No wrong doing could be observed", however it could be shared, since if any of the others who might "show up" were to take the drug as well they would become part of the adultery. The key in the UN ruling, as stated,

is that the observers are just that, observers. As soon as they become more than that they become participants. The privacy of adultery which Can-D in fact failed to afford them is produced when the effects have gone.

The others are present, but they are "slumped inert heaps", "empty husks", non-observatory. The situation is exactly analogous to the UN scenario: in the first instance the couple were "wrong doing" in a fantasy world which the observers in the real world cannot see, the observers seeing only their physical bodies. In the second instance, the couple are "wrong doing" in the physical world, but the observers are all in the fantasy world. The world and the world of Perky Pat seem to blend into one another, or at least seem to be hardly distinguishable. For Sam Regan and Fran Schein as much as for Roni and Barney, the difference between the two worlds seems very unimportant. If Barney is in a drug induced hallucination at the beginning of the novel he ends up in the same situation as the Can-D communicants. The observer in his case is the robot Dr. Smile, who seems able to observe much more than even Barney, since Barney has to ask him what happened. Barney is happy, after a fashion, to take the robot's word for it all, but how different is he to a third party under the UN ruling, simply being told about the "activities" undergone during Can-D translation but being unable to claim actual observation. In Barney's case he does not even seem able to remember having slept with Roni, all he knows is what Dr. Smile tells him. Barney's life may be an illusion in more ways than one.

From a legal standpoint, there is little to distinguish the two worlds one from another. The legal standpoint is the one used by Leo Bulero, and if not sufficient one would have to look elsewhere, to religion perhaps:

...I can't *prove* you get anything better back due to abstention. But I do know this. What you and your sensualists don't realise is that when we chew Can-D and leave our bodies *we die*.... (ch. 3)

Fran Schein cannot prove it any more than Leo, at the end of the novel, can prove to Felix that he, Felix, does not exist. The problem is the same, subjective experience. However, if the takers of Can-D actually die when they use it, can the aftermath be seen as an afterlife? How many afterlives does one have? This idea paradoxically prepares us for the possibility of illusions within other illusions, even whole lives after death, that are to come after Leo's encounter with Eldritch. It also gives a very definite switch of viewpoint, from Earth to Mars. This episode in Chapter Three is itself like a Can-D "trip" which instead of running from Mars to Earth, runs the other way. This episode gives us the impression of translation analogous to that of the hovelists. The problem is that there is no apparent distinction in the fiction between the two conditions. The vision of Mars and of the Can-D hallucination are described in the same way, are as real for the reader as each other. Nevertheless, the hovelists are anxious to get all the details right:

"We've got Perky Pat all the way downtown in her new Ford hardtop convert and parked and a dime in the meter and she's shopped and now she's in the analyst's office reading *Fortune*. But what does she pay?" (ch. 3)

The craving for authenticity goes to such lengths that the layout should include "the tiny figure of a human-type psychoanalyst...couch, desk, carpet, and bookcase of incredibly well-minned impressive books". Pat's analyst is "human-type", not for her the kind that Barney carries around, not Dr. Smile. Pat is in no danger of the draft. Were she, there would be precious little point in using her as the fantasy object of the layout. The collapsing world of Perky Pat as experienced by Sam Regan and Fran Schein greatly resembles that of George Miller, wherein he finds the self constructed afterlife falling apart through too much attention to detail. The colonists, by including the theme of psychoanalysis, are coming too close for comfort to their own plight. Sooner or later the familiar buff envelope with its "Greetings!" message is going to come

through Pat's letter box just as it came through theirs. When that happens her analyst will be on double time making her ill. As with Miller's world, elements intrude that make life uncomfortable, which force the fantasiser to examine the nature of his or her invented world and hold it up to the light to see if, like a banknote, it is genuine.

Pat and Walt are not mentally disturbed, their analysis is a matter of status, "Keeping up with the big shots" just as E-therapy is for the Hnatts, who also seem not to be in any immediate danger of being transported to Mars. It is interesting how much like Pat is Emily in her real-life version of the analyst's office:

"It makes me nervous," Emily whispered; she held a magazine in her lap but was unable to read. (ch. 5)

Barney wants to make the analogy even closer yet:

"Good grief. You on Mars; I can't picture it."

"I can chew Can-D," he said. "Only -" Instead of having a Perky Pat layout, he thought, maybe I'll have an Emily layout. (ch. 7)

The Hnatts form another turning point to the novel. They can, as Richard intuits under E-therapy, ascend into a higher evolutionary plane, or down into the tomb world below. They can represent, as can Perky Pat and Walt Essex, the purely materialistic aspect of life ("...personally I'm tired of Perky Pat - it's too artificial, too superficial...it's apartments, cars, sunbathing on the beach, ritzy clothes..." (ch. 8)) or they can aspire to the more spiritual level, to "some sort of *unmaterialistality* way":

For example, had he ever really looked at Emily's pots as anything more than merchandise for which a market existed? No. What I ought to have

seen in them, he realised, is the artistic intention, the spirit she's revealing intrinsically. (ch. 5)

In other words, they can become either the android or the human.³³ They can either learn to understand each other through empathy, or turn to "fusing" with each other artificially, imitating first the dolls and then finally becoming the ultimate android, Palmer Eldritch himself. Hnatt's name suggests the latent possibility of this transformation. The Czech word "hnat" refers to drive, pursuit, chasing, striving after something, the verb that goes with ambition, and with "that Greek sin - what did they call it? Hubris?". "Hnat" is also a bone, either of the arm or the leg. Thus Hnatt could be either the artificial arm of Palmer Eldritch or the still human leg, remaining rooted on the Earth, in contact with reality. Icholtz seems to be losing touch with the ground. "Bobbing" as though floating he is not connected to any support. The Hnatts' functional similarity to Pat and Walt shows them at the boundary of the android and the human. Structurally it is crucial that we lose sight of them when we do. They represent the other half of the Monument, the potential to defeat Eldritch, for the human to succeed, yet they are left at the moment of indecision. Dick does not reveal whether Richard Hnatt's insights with respect to the conflict between materialism and spirituality will actually enable them to avoid being sucked into the world of Chew-Z, which is precisely what we see Leo devoured by in the next section.

³³ Dick's thoughts on the differences between the android and the human were part of a paper he presented at a Science-Fiction convention in Vancouver in 1972 which has since become his most quoted non-fiction. See Nichols, 1978, pp. 201 - 224.

Again, in Chapter Five, there is a crucial scene, "off-Terra", preceded by a little interlude with Richard Hnatt. Leo's induction into the Chew-Z "trip" begins straight after this section without starting a new chapter, just as Sam Regan's Can-D "trip" did in Chapter Three. The Hnatts stand between the two drugs, with the potential to reach a deeper form of knowledge about the unreality or otherwise of the material world, the tomb world, or the ethereal world above.

It is not too surprising that Barney wants to try and recapture his life with Emily, yet it is seen in Perky Pat terms, that of replacing Richard, or of imitating him, becoming him, via the "Emily Layout", or by way of taking her to Mars with him.

Barney's name, or names, suggest the same kind of duality as Richard Hnatt's. "Meier", the most obvious German root, the farmer, the man in tune with nature, at one with the Earth, is on one hand his potential, and on the other his *destiny*, but on *Mars* ("I'll live here. As a colonist. I'll work on my garden up top and whatever else they do."). The colonists, when he meets them, unconsciously echo this association:

"...Mr. Geyerson -"
"Mayerson," Barney corrected. (ch. 8)

Gaea, the Earth Goddess, is the symbol of the living planet. Geyerson would be the son of the Earth, grown as an integral part of it, rather than manufactured mechanically, like Palmer Eldritch. The colonists identify Barney with the Earth they are exiled from, but the name quibble is one we have heard before, and not from a human-type character, but from the mechanical Dr. Smile:

"ah, Mr. Bayerson."

"Mayerson," Barney corrected, smoothing his hair with fingers that shook. (ch. 1)

The mistaken name hints at the pharmaceuticals company "BAYER", the inventors of Asprin. Bayerson is the son of the drug, the man whose world is a construct from the beginning:³⁴

Barney said, "How'd she and I happen to -" He gestured toward the bedroom. "After so short a time."

"Chemistry," Dr. Smile said. (ch. 1)

Dick cunningly plays on the word. The obvious meaning is sexual chemistry, but there is a darker possibility. Barney's perceptions, indeed his whole world, are the result of "Chemistry", of drugs, like Can-D or Chew-Z. The implicit suggestion is, again, that right from the start of the novel the scene is a drug fantasy. The fantasy may run deeper yet. The colonists make the same mistake with Barney's name as Dr. Smile, they may well be as false as "he".

The colonists' Can-D world suffers the same conceptual breakdown as George Miller's after-death world, as Pincher Martin's and indeed as that of O'Brien's murderer. The outside "reality" keeps intruding through the fantasy. What would be preferable to this kind of illusion, subject to the weakness of an impetus toward ever greater authenticity, bringing in dangerous facsimiles along with the safe ones, is an illusion not subject to any breakdown. Palmer Eldritch offers eternal life, the kind of offer George Miller would happily accept. The cost, however, is that this fantasy is not under the fantasist's

³⁴ *Bayer*, as the chemical wing of the tripartite Nazi industrial cartel, A. G. Farben, also developed and manufactured the death-camp nerve gas, *Zyklon-B*.

control. Whereas George Miller's world, and Pincher Martin's world, were self created and self sustained, the world of Chew-Z is sustained by the presence of Palmer Eldritch. The fantasy in the previous cases was created to meet the survival needs of the dead soul. In the case of Chew-Z all the subjective fantasy worlds are created to serve the purpose of keeping Palmer Eldritch alive.

Dick uses various stylistic means to suggest that we can at no stage be certain even that the initial situation of the novel is not a fantasy, that it does not start as did "Exhibit Piece", in an afterlife illusion, which will eventually be revealed for what it is. The novel becomes a series of recursions, dreams within dreams. Leo may be dead from the time that he arrived at Eldritch's demesne, perhaps even Barney is dead from the beginning of the novel and does not know it. If the mirror show us a part of a fictional world wherein what looks like our world may only be the same in this small piece, and implies a complete imaginary world, different to ours outside the frame, what happens when one mirror reflects another? Is Barney a reflection of Leo in his afterlife, or is Leo a shade in Barney's hell? There are many stages on the descent into the *chooser* inferno to help us to decide.

THE FRAME WITHIN

It is important to see what kind of relationship exists between Palmer Eldritch and divine reason. Are his actions, strange though they be, innately evil? We cannot define evil unless we assume that we can affect other human beings directly. If we are all prisoners in our own subjective worlds, we can only experience pain from within our own minds. This would be our own destiny catching up with us. Trapped in worlds they never made, Leo and Barney are part of a religious allegory wherein communication with another mind is a far from certain process. Neither they, nor the reader, can be sure that either of them is not the only active mind involved in the narrative.

He saw only an empty white expanse, a focused glare, as if there were now no 3-D slide in the projector at all. The light, he thought, that underlies the play of phenomena which we call "reality". (ch. 6)

Eldritch had offered Leo the chance to see some slides but he had turned it down. Nevertheless, Dick allows us yet one more possibility, that if Leo were watching a three dimensional film it would seem very hard to distinguish from reality. Here we see the level of the film stripped away to leave a form of reality underneath; the veil of illusion, what Dick was to call Maya, a term borrowed from the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, being swept away.

A filmic layer of reality underlies much of the relationship between Leo and Barney in the second half of the novel as they reflect each other in a mirror maze. Dick punningly alludes to film and also to the overlapping identities of Leo and Barney in their names. B. Mayerson contains B. Mayer as in Louis B. Mayer, third partner in the film studio MGM. The first two initials of

Mayer's name give L. B. which leads us to Leo Bulero and the Leo which is the mascot of the studio, the MGM lion. "Ars Gratia Artis", art for art's sake, the MGM motto conflicts with the strictly commercial ethos of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and matches the clash of ideals in Leo's firm, selling illusions, for a price, and those of Palmer Eldritch, whose motives, in a dark way, come closer to the idea of "art for art's sake".

There is a strangulated reference to this in Dr. Smile's Latin motto, interrupted by Roni Fugate's entrance:

'Life is short, art is -' (ch. 1)

"Ars longa, vita brevis" Dr. Smile twists the sense of the phrase, he refers not to the art of living, which is long to learn, but encourages the lovers not to procrastinate since life is short. In his sense the reference to art is superfluous. It serves two functions, one to point obliquely to Roni Fugate, implying that, as she walks in at that moment, 'art is...' Roni Fugate. It also provides the last part of the MGM legend, "Ars Gratia *Artis*". For 'art' read 'artificiality'. The artificiality exists only for its own sake, and within a filmic context.

The filmic level of reality is revisited, on Mars, in the final Can-D "trip":

'...we're going to spend the translated period listening to and watching Pat's new Great Books Animator - you know, the device they've just brought out on Terra...You just insert one of the great books, for instance *Moby-Dick* into the reservoir. Then you set the controls for *long* or *short*. The for *funny* version, or *same-as-book* or *sad* version. Then you set the style-indicator as to which classic Great Artist you want the book animated like...' (ch. 8)

Thus in the second scene on Mars, we spend our time, not in the fantasy world of Perky Pat, but in Perky Pat's own fantasy world, in *her* escape from "reality".

Norm Schein picks the *Meditations* to be converted into a "full length *funny* cartoon version in the style of De Chirico...". Dick has good ironic reason for choosing it. On one hand, there is no narrative in Marcus Aurelius, it is virtually impossible to imagine how such a machine could turn it into an animated cartoon film without simply repeating it as it is, but for the "surreal perspectives...and hollow heads" of De Chirico. Marcus Aurelius was educated in the Stoic tradition, whose philosophy Dick well understood:

...the author of the Fourth Gospel declares that Christ is the *Logos*. This expression (meaning either 'reason' or 'word') had long been one of the leading terms of Stoicism chosen originally for the purpose of explaining how deity came into relation with the universe. According to the philosophers, the divine Reason had brought the world into existence through the agency of innumerable particles of itself which indwelt and gave form to everything in the universe...(Aurelius/Staniforth, 1964, p. 24)

The reference to the *Meditations* serves the same function as the "underground conapt" reference on our first visit to Mars and the world of Perky Pat. It unsettles the hallucinators and reminds them that their world is not real. In this world the "divine" Reason is Palmer Eldritch and he has indeed made the universe out of innumerable particles of himself. No matter how much we may think that the world we are seeing is real, under the surface there is either a divine Reason, or there is Palmer Eldritch, and the key is being able to distinguish between the two, a task as fundamental as the ability to distinguish between good and evil, and to Dick's mind, just the same:

39. For you, evil comes not from the mind of another; nor yet from any of the phases and changes of your own bodily frame. Then whence? From

that part of yourself which acts as your assessor or what is evil. Refuse its assessment and all is well. (Aurelius, 1964, p. 72)

For Marcus Aurelius, evil is not an external thing, but derives from the self, from the ability to make discriminations. To Dick's mind, this is a reasonable enough statement in a world which has the assurance of *one* divine Reason underlying the structure of the universe. Where there is no such certainty, where a rival Reason, or even another human being, could be influencing our perception of the universe around us, we have a problem indeed. On one basis we need to be able to tell just what is influencing our perception of the world around us and at the same time know that as all experience is subjective we can never be certain of anything. The Leibnizian concept that this is the best of all possible worlds runs parallel to the idea of the primacy of the creator deity and of its establishing role in the reality of the universe:

"That thing...has a name which you'd recognise if I told it to you. Although it would never call itself that. We're the ones who've titled it. From experience, at a distance, over thousands of years. But sooner or later we're bound to be confronted by it. Without the distance. Or the years."

Anne Hawthorne said, "You mean God."

It did not seem to him necessary to answer beyond a slight nod.

"But - *evil*?" Fran Schein whispered.

"An aspect," Barney said. "our experience of it. Nothing more."
(*3SPE*, ch. 12)

Dick is giving pointers to the philosophical language of the novel, and also marking the transitional stages between this section and the beginning of the novel. As the relationships of characters have changed so have the moral issues. The transitional nature of the last Can-D "trip" is marked by the choice of the *Meditations* as the "Great Book", a work on the same level of reference as Anne Hawthorne's travelling companion, the *De Imitatione Christi* by Thomas à Kempis. It signals the shift from Stoicism to Christianity. Marcus Aurelius's

sixth meditation runs to the effect that to refrain from imitation is the best revenge. It is a revenge that is not open to the hapless inhabitants of Eldritch's *chooser* world.

The way to fight back would be to avoid becoming Palmer Eldritch, but this fate eventually overtakes everyone in the novel, just as in "Upon the Dull Earth", Silvia comes to replace every last human being.

The colonists not only engage in an imitation of life on Earth, but when they watch the Great Books Animator, they are imitating an imitation. The stage is being set for the second disjuncture, where Barney takes the bundle of Chew-Z and enters Palmer Eldritch's *chooser* world. However, the fact that our second visit to Mars begins with an illusion within which there is another illusion suggests an analogy to the situation Barney is to find himself facing. That is the situation in which Leo never did recover from his first injection of Chew-Z, that Barney and Roni and everyone on Earth and the whole of Mars, are things in his hallucination. That when Barney takes the bundle of Chew-Z he, a figment in Leo's dream, already within a Chew-Z hallucination, is delving deeper into a second hallucination, the dream-within-the-dream. Dick's use of the Great Books animator as his metaphor for this recalls the dream-within-the-dream in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman* by William Langland (Langland, 1982), in which a similar device pointing to the double unreality of the "inner dream" is used:

Fortune me fette
And into the lond of longynge and love she me brought,
And in a mirour that highte Middelerthe she made me to biholde.
(Langland, 1982, p. 118)

Whereas the dream up until this time has presented its "reality" directly, here it is seen in a "mirour", at one stage of remove.

There is good reason to suppose that Dick intends that we should see this as exactly that, an "inner dream". It is possible to disentangle the areas of the various *chooser* worlds and determine whether the initial illusion has finished or whether it has not. Again the clue is in the time discrepancies. At the beginning of Chapter Eleven we are switched back to Earth briefly, to Leo Bulero's office where there is a conversation between Leo and Felix Blau. We are told that fifteen hours have passed since the Chew-Z was delivered to Barney's hovel, Chicken Pox Prospects, and so Barney should have reported back by this time. However, in Barney's world, he recovers from the initial dose of Chew-Z and finds himself back in the hovel, but when he tries to contact Alan Faine, Leo's advertising man, he finds that Faine does not remember him, nor recognise their coded messages. He finds the tube that should contain the brain toxin contains only Eldritch's mocking voice. His fellow hovelists resemble Palmer Eldritch. Clearly he has not "woken" from Chew-Z at all. Even had he done so and taken the second bindle of Chew-Z, the time taken would still have been nowhere near fifteen hours plus the time it takes Leo to travel to Mars with Felix Blau. "You've been out about two minutes," Leo informs him when he arrives, which he claims is directly after Barney takes the second dose of Chew-Z.

The way this is presented to us, it would appear that Barney did indeed take the second dose of Chew-Z because he was found locked in his room. Had he not taken it, had the taking of it been part of the first hallucination, he would have "woken" with the other hovelists in the same positions as they had been when they first took the drug. In order for this to be true he could not have tried to contact Alan Faine's satellite, since Leo reports that no contact was made. Therefore the abortive contact must have been an illusion, but it was made during the supposed first "waking" from the effects of the drug. The two

reports conflict completely. Even were there the possibility of areas where the illusion and the real overlapped, the duration of the drug experience still could not be long enough, just as it would have been impossible for Barney and Roni to have received contact from Leo's Dr. Smile in the "wink of an eye", all the time Eldritch is prepared to accept for the duration of a Chew-Z "trip".

There is only one possible explanation. Leo never came to Mars at all. He and Felix Blau are indeed illusions, or alternatively that Barney and everyone else are Leo's hallucinations, the effect is nevertheless the same. Leo never recovers from his first encounter with Chew-Z, everything else are just things in his dream, all that is except Palmer Eldritch. Dick's fiction is working on a deeper level than merely trying to puzzle us with working out whether or not we can sort out which illusion is which. He could have made it much more ambiguous and inconsistent than he does. Dick had read William S. Burroughs's *The Naked Lunch* (1959) and includes a paraphrased quotation from it in *3SPE*. As Leo sits talking to Palmer Eldritch in Chapter Six, Eldritch describes to him the various forms in which Chew-Z is taken by the Proxers. The list neatly matches that of Burroughs in his introduction to *The Naked Lunch* describing the various ways in which he had taken heroin. The reason for Dick's allusion is very telling. Burroughs concludes his list by saying that the end result is the same, addiction. Palmer Eldritch calmly recounts the same variety of infusions by which he has taken Chew-Z and then tells Leo that the result is that he has suffered no ill effect whatever. The conclusion that anyone familiar with Burroughs would take away from this passage is that Palmer Eldritch is lying. The other thing one can take away is the reading that Dick is conscious of Burroughs, has read his work, but does not intend to imitate his style. Had he wanted to try to copy Burroughs's dislocation of narrative in *3SPE* he could have done so, it would be one of many imitations. Dick has other motives.

Burroughs fractures narrative into an almost complete deconstruction of the novel, often cutting up his work and other people's together into a form which breaks language down, making it an integral metaphor for the breakdown of the real. Dick maintains this breakdown within the existing structure and forms of the novel. Like Palmer Eldritch, invading the individual consciousness through an illusion of the universe indistinguishable from the real, Dick uses his coherent narrative structures to act as metaphors for the abandonment of conventional form he is working to create. For Dick, the novel is self destructing, being torn apart from inside and yet *disguising* this process, pretending to be something else. *3SPE* contains many metaphors for the process of writing that Dick had perfected, and reached its pinnacle with this novel.

Thus, Dick is not trying to produce a mystery story, nor a detective thriller. *3SPE* does not even fit Todorov's definition of the fantastic as the ambiguities of space and time and the agencies or otherwise of the supernatural can be resolved.³⁵ Dick is dealing with the conception of the nature of good and evil, and how they relate to the phenomena of the natural world, and the phenomena of the supernatural world, whether the paranormal is of itself evil or simply "other".

Eldritch figures can be found elsewhere in Dick's work. Jory in *Ubik* is an important and obvious example. The Eldritch proto-type can be found in the form of Tim in the short story "World of Talent". The son of two precognitives, Tim is believed to possess no *psionic* talent but is revealed at the end of the story he have the ultimate talent, that of travelling in time. Like Gino Molinari's

³⁵ Todorov, 1975, p. 72.

shifting of alternate selves in *Now Wait For Last Year*, Tim is able to exchange himself physically with another version of himself from either earlier or later in his life. By this method he can either see the future, or change the past:

"The time-travelling talent is the most critical - and the most Promethean. Every other talent, without exception, can change only what's going to happen. I could wipe out everything that stands. I precede everyone and everything. Nothing can be used against me. I am always there first. I have always been there first." (*Variable Man*, p. 218)

In a similar way Palmer Eldritch can exist simultaneously in all times of his life, and the lives of those taking Chew-Z. Eldritch is, like Tim, and "anti-precog". He can foresee his death and take avoiding action which does not change the event but enables him to live on as someone else in a past life.

"

Tim is benign, not something that can be said of Palmer Eldritch very easily. The issue seems to be whether or not we can be sure that these sort of talents are good or evil in themselves. Time travelling would seem open to abuse but not necessarily of itself evil. Is it possible to judge Palmer Eldritch at all. In *Ubik*, Pat Conley is presented to us as dangerous. The tattoo she bears on her arm, *CAVEAT EMPTOR*, "buyer beware", would seem to function like any one of the three stigmata of Palmer Eldritch themselves, a sign of indicating evil intent. We are led to suspect Pat right until the end of the novel, in fact she appears to believe that she is responsible herself, believes that she has been involved in all the disintegrations of reality experienced by the inertials and claims to have achieved these deliberately using her peculiar talent. It transpires that Jory is the real cause. How could Pat believe herself to be responsible if Jory really was? Can we be sure that Jory really *is* responsible? It is very difficult to apportion blame in *Ubik*, difficult to assess who is guilty and who is not. The characters in *Ubik*, as much as in *3SPE*, are left in the same position as Piers Plowman, wondering how to live for the good when

there is no adequate method of determining what is the good. How far is this problem made more intractable when we are unable to determine whether the world we are living in is real or imaginary, whether the focus of our reality is being sustained by a benign deity or a malign, false god?

Dick represents the conflict between objectivity and subjectivity in his fiction by rejecting the conventional viewpoint of the author, and also by refusing a starting point of reality whereby the reader can pin down their interpretation of events. Can the evil which befalls the characters in *3SPE* be defined? It is possible to contend, for example, that physical pain inflicted by one person on another against their will should be an adequate marker of evil intention. Leo Bulero certainly experiences this:

"This is cruel conduct," Bulero said. "Having me put to sleep and then tying me up like this." (*3SPE*, ch. 5)

However, the obvious rejoinder to this is to say that Leo cannot be sure how much of the evil coming to him is part of his own doing, and secondly, how can he be sure that pain and hurt are not purely subjective. By this stage of the narrative, Leo could quite easily be dead, assuming he was ever alive in the first place:

"Suppose I want to construct my own universe," Leo said. "Maybe there's something evil in me, too, some aspect of my personality I don't know about. That would cause me to produce a thing even more ugly than what you've brought into being." (ch. 6)

The idea that our own will can influence the actual state of reality we inhabit was one that Dick was clearly developing through *Cosmic Puppets*, *Time Out of Joint*, *Dr. Futurity* (1960) and most dramatically of all, *The Man in the High Castle*. It was an idea that had common currency, up to a point, in the

Science-Fiction of the time. Keith Laumer's otherwise completely undistinguished novel *Worlds of the Imperium* (1962), deals with a series of alternative worlds in which history has developed differently. Unlike *The Man in the High Castle*, *Worlds of the Imperium* makes these alternative worlds serve no structural purpose, they could just as easily be alien planets in our own universe, or even devious foreign governments on our own Earth for all the difference the device actually makes to the plot. Laumer does however raise an interesting possibility. The pilots who fly between the alternative universes ask the hero to remember times he has been worried or upset and found that he has mislaid something, or that people do not remember what he has said, or that he finds furniture shifted slightly that he does not recall moving. This common condition is explained by the pilots as a momentary shift into an almost identical alternative universe, likened to jumping a groove on a record. The vast number of other universes allows for very fine distinctions, almost imperceptible changes from one to another. This fascinating idea, that our state of mind can determine which universe we inhabit, or rather which one we perceive, is sadly not picked up in the novel's structure, left merely as an intriguing interlude.

Laumer's source may well have been half understood snippets of Everett and Wheeler's papers³⁶ filtering through the *Science-Fiction* grapevine. Lester DeI Rey was clearly influenced by Laumer in writing *The Infinite Worlds of Maybe* (1966), but the sources in *Quantum Theory* are more easily detectable. The way in which Dick equates these "shifts" of reality with the nature of good and evil marks his novels apart from these lesser efforts.

³⁶ From "Reviews of Modern Physics", published in 1957, discussed in DeWitt, 1970.

In *3SPE*, Dick extends the idea that each subjective viewpoint is also a separate version of reality. Not only are individuals responsible for their own destiny, but our attempts to communicate with and form social contacts with other human beings are almost acts of religious devotion. The analogies he makes to the takers of Can-D and the frozen brains wired together in cold-pac in *Ubik* and to religious "communicants" engaged in Holy Communion, point very strongly towards this view. For Dick, Communion is Communication, either with the divine, or with each other. In a universe where we are never certain that we are not dreaming, that we are not already dead, that the universe around us is not something that our sense organs are creating for us, any attempt at bridging the gap between our own subjective world and that of another human being is a religious act.

Directly after Leo has speculated on the evil which may lie within himself, Monica replies with typical Palmer Eldritch irony:

"Whatever it was it could be abolished," the child said indifferently. "If you found you didn't like it. And if you did like it -" She shrugged. "Keep it then. Why not? Who's hurt? You're alone in your -" Instantly she broke off, clapping her hand to her mouth. "Alone," Leo said. "You mean each person goes to a different subjective world? It's not like the layouts, then...But that means you're not here." Or, he thought, I'm not here. But in that case -
The child watched him intently, trying to gauge his reaction. (ch. 6)

"Who's hurt"? Where is the evil if you are "alone"? But then where is the evil if we are all in our own subjective worlds all the time anyway. Are other people really there, or just projections of our own subjectivity? Dick is here touching on something deeper than the more straightforward problem of the solipsistic paradox that we cannot prove the reality of the universe. Even if we accept the reality of the universe, which, in order to live at all, we have to, we cannot escape from the problem that our vision of the reality of the

external world is subject to our constant subjective *reanalysis* just as much as dreams and fiction. Before looking at how Dick treats evil it is important to examine how he involves his readers in a complex allegory of the frame within.

HOVELISTS AND NOVELISTS

"Hi," she said brightly, colorful in her Peking-style silk dress, sans bra. "What's up? I tried to reach you a minute ago, but -"

"You just never," he said, "never have on all your clothes. Shut the door." (ch. 4)

Noting that Roni never has on all her clothes is not the same as saying that she is never completely dressed. There is a sense in which she is both revealing and concealing. Barney implies that there is more here than merely being too slipshod to finish dressing. Every time she appears a different region of her body is covered, another new area exposed. She is like a fan-dancer, we see all of her, eventually, but in an act which, of its very nature is one of preventing us from seeing. This is a dance which requires "so large a fan" that green whiskers, for example, may not be seen. How can we tell that all the parts of her are connected to one another? Even at this early stage, this remark of Barney's seems to usher in the disconnected, alien appendages, the three stigmata themselves which eventually everyone will be wearing.

What would Roni look like if we were to see her wearing *all* her clothes? Does Barney mean all the clothes she has? This implication would leave her greatly resembling Oedipa Maas in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), just after Metzger invites her to play a game he calls "Strip Botticelli":

Oedipa skipped into the bathroom...quickly undressed and began putting on as much as she could of the clothing she'd brought with her: six pairs of panties in assorted colours, girdle, three pairs of nylons, three brassieres, two pairs stretch slacks, four half-slips, one black sheath, two summer dresses, half a dozen A-line skirts, three sweaters, two blouses, quilted wrapper, baby blue peignoir and old Orlon muu-muu. Bracelets then, scatter-pins, earrings, a pendant. It all seemed to take hours to put on and she could hardly walk when she was finished. She made the mistake of looking at herself in the full-length mirror, saw a beach

ball with feet and laughed so violently she fell over... (Pynchon, 1966, p. 23)

The clothing is a trade-off. For each question Metzger answers, she removes one item. The more clothes, the less the likelihood of being stripped naked, in theory at least, the less vulnerability. This likewise implies a search for absolute truth, the piling on of clothes equating with the desire to ask a phenomenally large number of questions. For Pynchon, the physicist, the Einsteinian paradox of the speed of light may be hovering behind this image. The faster an object accelerates towards light velocity, c , the more its mass increases, the more energy is converted into mass instead of being converted into greater acceleration. The more mass, the more energy required to accelerate. The process is such that in order to reach c one would have to have infinite mass. The harder one tries to reach c , the more the obstacles placed in ones way. Metaphorically, the more one tries to gain access to absolute truth, the more the veils which stand between it and the investigating eye.

For Roni Fugate, her "rubbery" nakedness is no indication of any kind of truth. Her constantly changing wardrobe is a symbol of the instability of image. Should she wear all her clothes on one hand Barney might feel closer to the absolute truth about her, he would see all her disguises at once, but, like Metzger in Pynchon's novel, he would be further separated from her, an insulated "beach ball with feet".

The clothing metaphor also marks the boundary between fiction and action, or more accurately, indicates a blurring of the two:

"Wait until you see the swimsuit," she said as she slid into the parked ship, the basket on her lap. "It's really daring; it hardly exists: actually you sort of have to have faith to believe in it..."

...She opened the door and stepped out in her swimsuit. And she had been correct; it took faith in things unseen to make the suit out at all. It was perfectly satisfactory to both of them. (3SPE, ch. 3)

Here is Fran Schein, as Perky Pat, under the influence of Can-D, psychically transported to the layout, wearing the scarcely-existent swimsuit. Before she and Sam Regan began their "trip" she puts their transformation in clothing terms: "We lose our fleshy bodies...And *put on* imperishable bodies..." (ch. 3, emphasis added). When becoming Perky Pat, Fran Schein, like Roni Fugate, changes clothes, in many senses. Taking off her actual body she then dresses herself in Pat's rubbery body and then dresses herself in Pat's clothes. She does not wear *all* of them either. Just before the drug takes effect she is transfixed by Pat's "enormous wardrobe" and then as Pat she wears layers of clothes. Under the sweater and slacks there is the near invisible swimsuit. Perky Pat's reality is reached through her clothes, stripped naked it is nothing more than a doll. Fran and Sam have to believe that the swimsuit is really there, that Pat is not naked. This idea brings the world of Perky Pat to the foreground, like Sam Regan's note to himself, like the reference to Francis Drake, like Fran's fears harking back to their real lives on Mars, it breaks the illusion. The world of Pat is only there while you believe in it. Pat's clothes define her, make her live. Richard Hnatt, while he is waiting to see Mayerson, talks to another sales representative:

"...I'm in neckties, myself. The Werner simulated handwrought living tie...The colors are actually a primitive life form..." (ch. 1)

The clothes can imbue the non-living with life, such that they would appear as though they are alive themselves, another metaphor Dick makes concrete by presenting us with clothes, the ties, which are really alive. Pat's swimsuit is practically metaphorical itself. Dick very cunningly alludes to the first

of many points of contact with Herman Melville, that of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1970):

...was it not Professor Teufelsdröckh who concluded that all symbols - all human institutions, in fact - are clothes? (Melville/Beaver, 1972, p. 715)

Metaphors are clothes. One can take the allusion further. Is not Teufelsdröckh really "Teufels drücke", the devil's printing? Here is pay for the printer indeed ("...the Biltong life forms employed in place of automated assembly lines...") and an accurate description of the universe of Palmer Eldritch, the devil's print. The distinction sticks, a thing not made, but "printed". A duplication of the world we know made on the devil's printing press. In other words a fiction, like the novel itself, *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, printed by Philip K. Dick. *Sartor Resartus* is rooted in Lockean argument as to the nature of the self and self awareness: who am I and how do I know I am not someone else? For Dick this idea begins not only with his study of Locke, but also of his reading of A. E. Van Vogt's novel *The World of Null-A*. By the time the Dick's characters reach *3SPE*, they do not know who they are, nor do they know they are not someone else. Leo Bulero is Barney Mayerson, and Barney is made out of a piece of Leo. By the end both of them are made out of parts of Palmer Eldritch. The metaphor Dick uses for this "printing" is that of producing fiction itself.

After Fran Schein and Sam Regan wake from their "stupor" they take another look at the layout before they retire to their compartment:

On the floor between them was his layout; he looked down and saw the dolls, Walt and Pat, placed at the edge of the ocean, near the parked Jaguar. Sure enough Perky Pat had on the near-invisible Swedish swimsuit, and next to them reposed a tiny picnic basket. (ch. 3)

This is not the state in which it was laid out. For Fran and Sam to have set up the layout in the exact positions that the dolls would be in at the *end* of their period of translation requires that they knew in advance what turn it would take. But if the layout corresponds exactly to the situation at the end of the translation, how could it have been convincing at the beginning? Fran and Sam could not have moved the dolls if they were in the same intoxicated state as the others when they were under the drug:

[He saw] in slumped, inert heaps, the empty husks of Tod and Helen Morris, Fran and Norm Schein, his own wife Mary; their eyes stared emptily and he looked away, appalled...

...even now as he looked - against his will - he saw a thin trickle of shiny brown syrup emerge from each of their slack, will-less mouths. (ch. 3)

Against his will he sees them will-less. The conscious negation of will regards the unconscious annihilation of will. In this state how could they possibly move the dolls around? The conclusion is inescapable, the dolls move by themselves.

In *Cosmic Puppets*, Peter Trilling, agent of the destructive, entropic deity, Ahriman, possesses the ability to animate discarded clay and make his "golems". The difference is that the golems are seen to be animate whilst Perky Pat is not. Movement is experienced only when the state of the layout is found altered with time. Our assumption has to be that the story of the drug hallucination, the visit to the beach, "Pat" and "Walt's" anguished conversation, was the motivation for the dolls change in attitude. Thus Dick presents the drug "trip" as being fictitious, an imaginary story not happening in the same level of reality as the day-to-day lives of the colonists, and yet shows that this fiction can affect that real world directly. The dolls provide an "image focus" for the colonists' disparate ideas of life back on Earth and at

the same time react to their dream-vision in a form of "image-amplification". The verisimilitude of the dolls to the human world back home stimulates the hallucinatory "reality" of the Can-D "trip" while the dream activity of the colonists stimulates the real action of the dolls. We are thus presented with a two-stage recursion, another foreshadowing of the dream-within-the-dream which Dick presents later when Barney takes the second bundle of Chew-Z on Mars.

If the world of Chew-Z is a *chooser* world then the world of Perky Pat is surely a *candor* world, a world of make-believe authenticity, unreliable honesty. There is no attempt to distinguish between the "real" world and the *candor* world. Both are fictions. Why do the dolls stop moving when Sam Regan exits from his Can-D hallucination? If someone is consciously looking at them, the dolls cease to move, and yet in the continued communal "trip", the dolls are still going through the motions, still acting out the fantasies which are taking place in the stupefied minds of the communicants. Why does Sam see the dolls representing the state of the hallucination at the moment he left it? Why should not the others expect to see their last moments under Can-D faithfully imitated by the dolls when they "awake"? Although each communicant goes to the same subjective world in the Can-D fantasy, they would seem not to return to the same outside reality. The dolls will be different for each. Those who do not take the drug do not see any movement. Those who do take it see only the evidence of it when they awake. The implication is that Can-D produces a group hallucination, but a unique vision of reality. Dick echoes this process in his narrative technique.

Until the point at which Fran and Sam take the Can-D there is a continuous narrative, switched to Mars directly after Hnatt's meeting with Icholtz. The narrative next transfers to the imaginary, *candor* Earth. Since this part of

the novel's overall narrative is taken from Sam and Fran's viewpoint, there is nothing to distinguish it from the narrative immediately preceding it. Even though the story of Walt's meeting with Pat is intended to be seen as separate from the plot-line of the colonists' lives it is clearly equally real for us because we are reading it in the same way, and it is written in the same kind of language. Thus we should not be too surprised to find that actions in the *candor* world can have sympathetic reactions in the "real" world outside because they have had actual effects on *our* appreciation of the narrative as a whole. Dick is doing more than merely playing formalistic games and pointing out the fictionality of his work as a novel, but actually producing a form of allegorical connection between the forms of hallucination presented by Can-D and Chew-Z and the nature of reading and writing fiction.

The conflict between Leo Bulero's Can-D and Palmer Eldritch's Chew-Z, quite apart from the ramifications of good versus evil, is also a conflict between forms of discourse. The realist text meets the fantastic:

"...We don't want to scare people away; religion has become a touchy subject. It will only be after a few tries that they realise the two different aspects: the lack of a time lapse and the other, perhaps more vital. That it isn't fantasy, that they enter a genuine new universe."

"Many persons feel that about Can-D," Leo pointed out. "They hold it as an article of faith that they're actually on Earth."

"Fanatics," Eldritch said with disgust. "Obviously it's illusion because there is no Perky Pat and no Walt Essex and anyhow the structure of their fantasy environment is limited to the artifacts actually installed in their layout; they can't operate the automatic dishwasher in the kitchen unless a min of one was installed in advance. And a person who doesn't participate can watch and see that the two dolls don't go anywhere; no-one is in them..." (ch. 6)

"They can't operate the automatic dishwasher in the kitchen unless a min of one was installed in advance..." Dick has already provided us with an analogy to the creation of fiction via the continuation of the fictional events into

the non-*candor* world in the first visit to Mars, thus the next step of drawing the same analogy here is not unreasonable.

The reading experience of using an automatic dishwasher is impossible unless the author provides a description of one in the text. The reader cannot have the vicarious experience of using an automatic dishwasher via the text, unless the author has had the experience, or series of closely analogous experiences, in his or her actual life, of using an automatic dishwasher, which will enable the author to describe it realistically. Both author and reader must share a common language of experience such that the author's description of the dishwasher will correspond to certain similar experiences in the reader's actual life, such that the reader will be able to interpret the description as something meaningful. Such, in Palmer Eldritch's phenomenology, are the limitations of the realist text.

Realism has to restrict itself to "mins" of things already installed in the real world. Representations of things understood by the author and the reader both. It is this mode of representation that Can-D embodies, the drug which produces the illusion of a journey back to the actual planet Earth, which at one time in their lives all the colonists will have known. The lavish attention to detail in the layouts is an example of this.

Eldritch is raising the same issue that had troubled Berkeley as well as Leibniz and, indeed, Schrödinger, after a fashion, namely, do objects have a material existence or is their reality dependent on the perceptions of human observers:

'All visible things are emblems: what thou seest is not there on its own account; strictly taken is not there at all: Matter exists only

spiritually and to represent some Idea, and body it forth...' (Carlyle, 1970, p. 91)

In fiction, naturally enough, the matter exists only when the reader is "actualising" it. The world of fiction is very much the world of Berkeley. When Anne Hawthorne and the other hovelists participate in the viewing of the Great Books Animator we are presented with another perceptual shift, in that we and Barney do not participate in the hallucination, and thus *we* see that the dolls do not go anywhere:

Bending down Barney Mayerson picked up the small doll, Perky Pat in her yellow shorts and red-striped cotton t-shirt and sandals. This now was Anne Hawthorne, he realised. In a sense that no-one quite understood. And yet he could destroy the doll, crush it, and Anne, in her synthetic fantasy life, would be unaffected. (*3SPE*, ch. 8)

Do the dolls only move when there is someone there to see them? It is more accurate to say that Dick is making the point that narrative momentum is maintained across shifts of viewpoint. Events will be equally real to our point of view no matter what *chooser*, *candor*, or "real" world might contain them. A further point is that Dick is also denying that Palmer Eldritch knows everything that is happening in the novel. Eldritch is *not* Dick. There is no centre of authorial authority in the novel.

The really vital information that Eldritch is passing on to Leo in Chapter Six is that in the realist text, the reality of the experience simulated, in order for the reader to reconstruct it faithfully, will depend on the reality of the initial experience on the part of the author:

Now Helen Morris emerged from the hovel shivering in the cold Martian sunlight. "We have a question," she said to the three men. "I say that psychoanalysts back on Earth were charging fifty dollars an hour and Fran says it was for only forty-five minutes." She explained. "We want to

add an analyst to our layout, and we want to get it right, because it's an authentic item, made on Earth and shipped here..." (ch. 3)

The mere representation of reality cannot *be* reality, yet the colonists, like the prisoners in Plato's cave, believe that it could be. There is no room for imagination in the world of Perky Pat, no prospect of glossing over the details which may not be strictly accurate but which will nonetheless fit into the artistic whole convincingly. The facts must be exactly right. Plato in *The Republic* (Plato, 1974) through the simile of the divided line, demonstrates his belief in that forms of the visible world of our experience are representations of supreme, exemplary versions of these things contained in the meaning of The Good, the underlying layer of reality. Thus, could we but conceive it, there would be an ideal chair, of which all the chairs in our world are but shadows, and then likewise for all physical objects and philosophical ideals. The shadows of objects and pictures of them are at a further stage of remove from The Good, the meta-meta-level. To demonstrate how this affects our position as thinking beings, Plato proposed his famous simile of the cave:

In this chamber are men who have been prisoners there since they were children, their legs and necks being so fastened that they can only look straight ahead of them and cannot turn their heads. Some way off, behind and higher up, a fire is burning, and between the fire and the prisoners and above them runs a road, in front of which a curtain wall has been built, like the screen at puppet shows between the operators and their audience above which they show their puppets. (Plato, 1974, p. 217)

The puppets are shown, as shadows cast onto the screen, and the prisoners, never having seen anything else, assume that this is the real world. The change of consciousness of the freed prisoner who has seen the outside world is irreversible. Should he return to the cave and try to explain to his former jailmates the state of things in the daylight, they would, says Plato, undoubtedly think he were mad and try to kill him if they were released. The freed prisoner

would have seen The Good, the actual appearance of things in the real world which in the cave were merely puppets casting shadows before a fire. The colonists on Mars fit into this analogy in a very complicated way.

They have lived on Earth, have seen the real world, and, exiled from it, use the layouts and puppets to reconstruct the Earth they knew as a shadow believed to be real. They are in the position of the freed slave trying to return to the cave and put back his chains and continue his life staring at the cut-outs' shadows on the wall. They are trying to regain a form of "pre-lapsarian" innocence wherein it is possible to believe that the puppets *are* the forms of reality, even after having seen that they are not. In fact the colonists go one stage further than the freed slave. They are people who have lived their lives in the light outside the cave and now enter it for the first time. Never having had the strange perception of the prisoners, they use Can-D to acquire it.

Of course, for Plato, the simile of the cave was just that, a simile. It attempted to demonstrate how the philosopher, by reason, could achieve the ability to see that the forms of the real world were really only shadows of the underlying reality of The Good. The Earth was represented by the cave. To Plato's mind representations of world made by men were leading further from The Good, not closer to it. Paintings and poems were shadows of shadows. It is precisely this, the shadow of the shadow, the fiction based on the "real" world, which the colonists want to believe is real. The world the colonists left is still not The Good in Plato's eyes. The real conceptual breakthrough would come in recognising the forms of reality as shadows, but the colonists are very far indeed from being able to achieve that. It is that "enlightenment" which is offered by Palmer Eldritch, by Chew-Z.

The process by which the colonists create their cave is analogous to the process of reading. The reader is presented with a text which contains elements corresponding to the world of experience. In reading, the imagination constructs a visible world in which these elements usually exist. The more these elements resemble their counterparts in the world of our own experience, the more "realistic" the text becomes. When we read a novel, we are, for the duration of our reading experience, pretending that the events described have an actual validity, we are believing that this story represents something that actually happened to real people in the real world. This is not so simplistic as to say that because it is written down we believe that it is true. At no time do we lose sight of the fact that we are reading. Beyond the corner of the page we see the room we are sitting in. Should someone enter the room we will be aware of it. Should someone call our name, we will look up, even though we have been unaware of the television mumbling in the background while we were reading. Neither do we feel, unless otherwise stated by the publisher, that the story we are reading is based directly on fact, that all the people in the novel exist, and that the events in the story actually happened to them in precisely the order that they were described. So what do we believe?

By and large, while we are reading we are not simultaneously conducting a conversation with someone, or going shopping, or solving complicated mathematical equations. Some individuals may find it possible to read a book and do something else at the same time, but there is generally less pleasure in this. Reading is a leisure-time activity, but it is one which discourages distractions.

We dislike being interrupted while we are trying to read. The process by which we analyse the world around us during our waking hours is, in reading, put to

use not to assimilate the forms of actual experience, but to construct the facsimiles of these forms in our "mind's eye".

This process of taking the analytic elements of the waking mind out of gear and using them to create rather than to interpret is one which lasts only as long as the reading experience. As soon as we put the book down, the gears mesh once more and we go back to our usual task of making sense of the world our senses give us. There is no overlap of belief. We do not find ourselves mistaking things we have read in novels for actual events which have happened to us, or to friends of ours, any more than we expect things we have dreamt to persist into waking life. We can already begin to see a strong similarity between these events which do *not* occur in our lives and those which *do* happen to the takers of Can-D and Chew-Z.

The process of reading is not a passive one. We are given the template in the form of the text and use it to construct the hypothetical sensory information which makes the fiction believable. The words need to be there just as the mins of the world need to be present in the Perky Pat layouts. The mins are very well made, they are very artistically accurate. They are useless without the colonists, and without the Can-D.

The colonists taking Can-D enter a world which, like the realist text, relies upon the accuracy of description for it to achieve its effect. The items mentioned are like cues for our imagination to fill in the landscape of the text from our reservoir of experiences. Likewise we cannot fill in details that are absent in a novel. No matter how normal and expected a television may be in a modern living room, to the extent that modern novelists may see little need to point it out as a feature of the furniture, the fact that it is left out of the description of Sherlock Holmes's private chamber is *not* a cue for the reader

to fill one in. Anachronism conflicts very directly with realism, yet at the same time it is a problem to pin down without specialist knowledge. The surface layer of accurate details can be broken down by the wrong historical detail intruding, which, as we move further and further into the past, becomes hard to verify, and also harder to prevent. Absolute realism in fiction is an illusion, it can never be achieved. At best, realism has to be a compromise between the audience's expectations and the writer's own view of the world coinciding.

Realism presents us with a fragment and insists that it is part of a much larger whole. Our reading minds, when given this particle, inevitably construct the extensions to it which form the larger whole. Of course here is no guarantee that the two will be the same. The areas we cannot fill in will be like the cloud of unknowing experienced by those who have been hypnotised and commanded *not* to see something:

[The subject] may be told that he will not be able to see a certain Mr. X who is in the room (negative hallucination). This last situation poses somewhat of a problem, because in order not to see Mr. X at various places in the room he must see Mr. X. It would seem that in order not to see he must first see...Subjective reports of individuals with such negative hallucination indicate they experience either the presence in the room of something 'peculiar' with a 'not to be inquired into' aspect or the existence of a white space for Mr. X. (Marcuse, 1959, p. 73)

"Negative hallucination" of this kind is a fairly accurate description of the state of minds of Pincher Martin and George Miller. The kind of "white space" gaps occur when we are aware that something is missing. The former area of unknowing occurs when we are not sure, where things are left implied that we cannot certainly reconstruct. Here again we come across the Freudian concept of *reanalysis*, the means by which totally disconnected dream images are resorted into a coherent narrative by the waking mind. It is this re-sorting,

reordering quality about making fiction in general to which Stanley Kubrick refers:³⁷

I have always enjoyed dealing with a slightly surrealist situation and presenting it in a realistic manner. I've always liked fairy tales and myths, magical stories. I think they are somehow closer to the sense of reality one feels today than the equally stylized "realistic" story in which a great deal of selectivity and omission has to occur in order to preserve its "realist" style.

Bearing this in mind it is interesting now to examine the way in which the colonists behave towards the world of Perky Pat. In wanting realistic layouts they add details to it, the mins, in a way which the reader does not. They are constructing a text which, through Can-D, they will later "read" back. We have the beginnings of authorial decision-making, a quality which will reappear with the advent of Palmer Eldritch. Not for nothing is Chew-Z called "choo-sy". The details have to be exactly right, and in common with the fictional text, will need to correspond to more than one vision of the real world. Can-D, unlike its rival, Chew-Z, is taken, "in communion" with ones fellow hovelists ("in concert the users' minds fused, became a new unity..."). Author's mind must correspond with user's viewpoint. With Can-D this is unavoidable, the makers of a layout must share the experience of using it with the other members of the hovel:

"Who said you could use my layout?" Sam Regan thought angrily. "Get out of my compartment. And I bet it's my Can-D too."

"You offered it to us," the co-inhabitant of his mind-body answered. "So I decided to take you up on it."

"I'm here too," Tod Morris thought. "And if you want my opinion -"
(*3SPE*, ch. 3)

³⁷ In an interview for *Saturday Review*, 25th December 1971.

The "author" finds his fictional world invaded by other "author/readers" who have other points of view, other subjective versions of the world. It is an unhappy compromise. They are forced to have a common language, their two worlds have to be the same. Viewpoint is very important. It is worth noticing that the colonists do not buy mins of any item that will not be seen directly by Perky Pat. In Pat's world nothing can exist unless she is looking at it, and in the case of the swimsuit it hardly exists even when it is being looked at.

Perky Pat's is a world which restricts the viewpoint of the reader. Should the reader desire to read as "decoder", as Alice does, through the looking-glass. Here the mirror shows only what is there. There is no possibility of exploring the world beyond that patch that we can see. When we step beyond the mirror frame, which Carroll characterises literally as well as metaphorically by having Alice physically step through the glass of the mirror, we are entering a zone where we have only limited control. Our ability to predict will have gone. On the "reality" side of the mirror we can make very simple predictions about the nature of what we will find on the other side. That is to say, we can be sure that it will correspond to things we can actually see in our own world. On the other side these predictions become less valuable. There is nothing in Alice's drawing room which can adequately prepare her for the Garden of Live Flowers, for example, or Humpty Dumpty. Henry James's *The Golden Bowl* (1905), on the other hand, relies for its effect on presupposing basic predictions we are making about the shared reality we have with James's characters. In fact, without our ability to make such predictions, James's famed ambiguity in, for example, *The Turn of the Screw*, would not be possible. James works on a level which assumes our ability to pick up predictive cues from various reality-establishers he places in the text and relies on the fact that we will

unconsciously construct a "real" world from these cues when in fact they may be from more than one "real" world.

Dick is not only using the theme of precognition to make this metaphor concrete, but is also examining very closely the process by which our predictions about the universe can be undermined in fiction.

What happens to Leo Bulero when he tries to reconstruct his vision of the "real" New York under the influence of Chew-Z is a remarkable example of this, and one of the key passages in the novel. Tired of Monica's confusions, Leo desires to get back to New York, and so he constructs in his mind, and thus in the world of Chew-Z in "reality" as well, a staircase that will take him back to his office. All he need do is climb up and out of Eldritch's domain:

"You can't die in a hallucination," Leo said. "Any more than you can be born again. I'm going back to P. P. Layouts." Once more he started towards the stairs.

"Go ahead and climb," the child said from behind him. "See if I care. Wait and see where it gets you."

Leo climbed the stairs and passed through the luminous hoop.

Blinding, ferociously hot sunlight descended on him; he scuttled from the open street to a nearby doorway for shelter.

A jet cab from the towering high buildings, swooped down spying him. "A ride sir? Better get indoors; it's nearly noon."

Gasping, almost unable to breathe, Leo said, "Yes, thanks. Take me to P. P. Layouts." He unsteadily got into the cab and fell back at once against the seat panting in the coolness provided by its anti-thermal shielding. (ch. 6)

In this section Dick is very carefully using an allusion to Jacob's ladder to provide Leo with his stairway to the sky:

He dreamt he saw a ladder, which rested on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were going up and down upon it. The Lord was standing beside him and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. This land on which you are lying I will give to you and your descendants. They shall be countless as the dust upon the earth...I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done all that

I have promised.' Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Truly the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.' Then he was afraid and said, 'How fearsome is this place, this is no other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.' (*New English Bible*, Genesis 28. 12-18.)

Leo constructs a "ladder" to "heaven" in other words a staircase back to the reality he has been separated from by Palmer Eldritch. Standing beside him at the foot of the ladder is "the LORD", that is Palmer Eldritch, albeit in the guise of Monica. The land on which he is lying is the world of Chew-Z right enough, but also a very specific part of it, which will indeed be given to his descendants:

One of the two creatures turned toward him, saw him, gaped and nudged its companion..."My God Alec; it's one of the old forms. You know, the near men."

..."We're Terrans. What the hell are you? A freak that died out centuries ago that's what..." (*3SPE*, ch. 6)

Through E-therapy, Leo has been advanced, although not as much as Smart Alec and his friend. These are Leo's descendants in just the same way as he later claims to be Felix's descendant, but their inheritance is the same, the *chooser* world of Palmer Eldritch, given them by "God". The promise that Eldritch makes is that of eternal life, that the world of Chew-Z will be given to everyone eventually. This is the land that "God" promises to "Jacob". Leo, by creating the "ladder" himself is merely confirming the allusion. On the other side, in "heaven", he discovers the true nature of the realist text and understands why Monica was right.

Leo returns to his office in a fake New York and orders Barney and Roni to come in and see him. Without thinking he starts smoking a pipe. This is something we have not seen him do before. Leo is a cigar man, yet he is settled into the pipe habit to a very detailed degree. He reaches into his desk drawer

for his "favorite English Briar Pipe". It is Leo's thoughts which give us the word "favorite", not Dick's as author. Leo's thoughts and memories are subtly altered here on the other side of the mirror, but he is not aware of any change.

Leo is living in a world which, to all intents and purposes, looks and feels exactly like the one that he was used to before, except for small changes like the pipe smoking which he doesn't seem to have noticed. Leo has created a mirror world, made from simple predictions about the nature of reality as he remembers it. Leo is creating a realist text, and living in it. He is attempting to construct the world of Perky Pat based on things in his own mind, his own memories. The pipe should not be there. There is already a flaw in the fabric of this re-created world. *Ceci n'est pas une pipe.*

Nevertheless, Leo continues as though this were still the real world, making common-sense predictions about the state of things:

"Of course I'm back. I built myself a stairway to here. Aren't you going to answer as to why you didn't do anything? I guess not. But as you say, you weren't needed...Now let's get down to business..." (ch. 6)

Let's get down to business. Let's carry where we left off. Let's say I can make the same assumptions about this world as I can about the one I left. This is a very shaky assumption. If you forget that you are dealing with fiction it has a unpleasant habit of reasserting itself, as Pincher Martin and George Miller both found to their cost. The areas that are not being described or observed directly could have anything happening to them. This problem is often made into the substance of the fantastic. In M. R. James's short story "The

Mezzotint",³⁸ two antiquarians buy a rare mezzotint engraving of an old house and find that, inexplicably, one day a hooded figure has appeared in the corner of the picture, crawling towards an open window on the ground floor of the house. The picture remains exactly the same as long as it is being observed directly. As soon as it is put away, the hooded figure begins to move, and the next time the picture is examined the creature has moved closer to the house. They discover that they are watching the abduction of the new born son of the family by the resurrected skeleton of a man betrayed by the master of the house who was achieving his revenge beyond the grave. The child's disappearance had long been a mystery, but the antiquarians find that it is revealed to them by means of the changing picture. They watch the skull-faced figure stealing away by covering the picture and then looking at it again so that it presents a series of changing frames as in a film. The changes come only when the picture is not being observed. A similar idea occurs in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* where reality is transposed with fiction as Gray's life is played out on canvas instead of in his actual, physical body. The changes remain imperceptible, they can be seen after they have occurred, but try as he might, Gray cannot see them in the process of happening.

If the changes in the pictures were seen happening then the nature of the fiction they represent would be different. This would be a fiction which has an actual nature, one that has an equal validity with the world within which it is a fiction. If the skeleton were *seen* actually in the process of moving, this would be a *real* event, on the same level of reality as the lives of the watching antiquarians. What they actually see is a series of cross-sections

³⁸ Collected in James, 1922.

through an imagined history. A series of alternative mezzotints, fixed and unchanging; a number of possible worlds. It is precisely because the picture changes out of sight that it can occupy a different world from that of the framing reality, which the ghost writer must try to make as convincing as possible. If the mirror frame is sufficiently narrow, when we are presented with a glimpse of the world beyond the frame, the point at which the fictional fantastical world breaks in, it can be that much more fantastical. It is this which Leo Bulero forgets.

The areas Leo is not watching are under the control of Palmer Eldritch:

Roni Fugate murmured, "I'm sorry, Mr. Bulero, but there's a creature under your desk."

Bending, Leo peered under the desk.

A thing had squeezed itself between the base of the desk and the floor; its eyes regarded him greenly, unwinking. (ch. 6)

Even if you are not watching them, the unseen spaces are watching you. Leo has been reminded that the world he is in is not the real one. The real one does not have creatures like this in it, and it is interesting to note that while we get a rudimentary description of the gluck, this creature is not described at all. Create a realistic world and you will have to fill in all the areas of it with real things. Should any spaces be left, and regions that have that "not to be inquired into" aspect, then all manner of strange things may start to creep in. Reality will break down. Palmer Eldritch demonstrates to Leo the limitations of constructing reality from a fiction and then trying to live in it as though it were real:

"Well, that's that. I'm sorry Miss Fugate, but you might as well return to your office; there's no point in our discussing what actions to take toward the imminent appearance of Chew-Z on the market. Because I'm not talking to anyone; I'm sitting here blabbing away to myself." He felt depressed. Eldritch had him and also the validity or the seeming validity, of the Chew-Z experience had been demonstrated; he himself had con-

fused it with the real. Only the malign bug created by Palmer Eldritch - deliberately - had given it away.

Otherwise, he realised, I might have gone on forever. (ch. 6)

The Perky Pat level of reality is no longer adequate. If Leo had stopped to think he would have realised quite easily that the world he had conjured up was not the real one, after all, he had simply invented a stairway to a zone he trusted to luck would be New York City. However, in doing this he was unwittingly opening up the world of the fantastical text. Like Alice, he takes a fragment of an imagined world and assumes that the rest will follow along by implication. Here, however, is a world whose fragment even in the first place is not seen, it is merely taken for granted. The stairway is assumed to be going to New York so that is where it will go. Once there, Leo ignores the assumption about the implied world beyond the frame that he has relied upon to create his fantasy version of new York in the first place, and happily goes on his way thinking that it will be just like the one he knows. Yet the way it has been constructed leads us to expect this as much as to expect the Garden of Live Flowers to behave like gardens we have seen before ("I've been in many gardens before, but none of the flowers could talk..."). It is this fallacy that Palmer Eldritch points out to Leo.

Having decided that he is living in a fantasy world and not the reality he had previously assumed, Leo thinks he can now change the rules half-way through. He is now going to play the game his way. Leo regrets that Roni will not be his mistress:

"Because I'm too old and evolved. You know - or rather you don't know - that I have at least a limited power in this universe. I could make over my body, make myself young." Or, he thought, make you old. How would you like that? he wondered...not looking at Miss Fugate he said to himself, "You're my age Miss Fugate, in fact older...In fact you're over a hundred years old..." (ch. 6)

Leo's first impulse is to make concrete his own revenge fantasy, yet as soon as it is done, without looking to see what has happened, Leo wishes everything back as it was. But it isn't that simple. What Leo expects is that he will have created another fiction, made Roni *feel* one hundred years old, punished her. He does not watch what happens, this is something happening in his imagination. By default, however, here, the areas which are unseen are out of his conscious control, as the lesson of the creature under the desk should have taught him. Leo turns his back on the reality he has created, not wishing to experience it as real, it is still only on the Perky Pat level, a fiction created in the mind, but here used with the intention that the private thoughts of one "user" will be shared with another. Roni can be made to feel the effects of Leo's malice, but Leo does not expect there to be any consequence of this flight of fancy. The point is that he is mixing forms. In closing his eyes he is creating a fiction, assuming that the world he makes in his mind will have a real existence, but one in fiction only. Leo feels that since he has had it pointed out to him that the world he is living in is a fictitious one anyway, it does not matter what he does. What Palmer Eldritch makes clear to him is that even when you switch to fantasy, the setting still has to make concessions to the rules of causality and whatever bizarre laws of physics you may have thought up for your private universe.

Roni Fugate does indeed become one hundred years of age, and then disintegrates into a puddle of living slime. Fragments of bone cohere into a living skull, the skull of an evolved "bubblehead". The skull speaks with Monica's voice to tell Leo that there was something he forgot:

"You made her past one hundred, but she's only going to be seventy. So, she's been dead thirty years, except you made her alive, that was what you intended. And even worse -" The toothless jaw waggled and the uninhabited pockets for eyes gaped. "She evolved not while alive but there in the ground." The skull ceased piping, then by stages disintegrated;

its parts once more floated away and the semblance of organization again dissipated.

After a time Barney said, "Get us out of here, Leo." (ch. 6)

The pun that has the skull cease "piping" reminds us where we came in. Turning your back on an imagined world does not make it go away. Fictions once set in motion will spread out beyond the frame, obeying their own, consistent, physical laws.

Dick is showing that his "reader-decoder" figure, Leo Bulero, is interacting with a number of different forms of text, and learning how to "read" each one. Leo is in fact a prototype reader, since we find that when he is returned to Earth, although *he* is unaware of it, the unreal "Earth" of his stairway is merely being repeated, except this time he *does* go on forever, or at least for as long as the novel lasts.

When Leo "wakes up" from his injection of Chew-Z he finds, as we have already seen, that no time has passed. Yet on Earth enough time for Barney to check out Dr. Smile's story about the satellite Sigma 14-B has passed. These cannot both be right. Just as the reader of Dick's text assumes the point of view of the characters in turn when that character is centre stage, so Leo Bulero actually *becomes* Barney Mayerson.

After Barney finds that Alan Faine no longer recognises him, and it becomes reasonably clear that he has not recovered from the first dose of Chew-Z, he takes a second and is transported into the future to meet a future version of

Leo and a future version of himself.³⁹ In fact what is going on here is very complicated. Leo transposes viewpoint to become Barney, who goes to Mars; takes an imaginary bindle of Chew-Z which plunges him into a dream-within-the-dream. It is from *this* recursion that he wakes...and meets Leo. This meeting is far from being a move back to reality. The text has become so recursive that this kind of shift is no longer possible. Do not let us forget that Dick has started with the possibility that the entire novel may be a dream by an entirely extra-textual dreamer, so we could be looking at a dream-within-a-dream-within-a-dream-within-a-dream.

It is within this context that Dick recalls G. E. Moore to add substance to his Russian-dolls solipsism:

One kind of criticism is simply that reality solipsism denies established fact...G. E. Moore...claimed that he could give a conclusive proof that such doctrines were wrong. He held his hand above a desk and then said that it was certain that he had done so and thus that there were hands and desks and other things. (*Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 7, p. 489a)

Dick's paraphrase of this image is suitably irreverent:

"But this isn't real; this is a drug induced fantasy. Translation."
"The hell it isn't real." Leo glared at him. "What does that make me then? Listen." He pointed his finger angrily at Barney. "There's nothing unreal about *me*; you're the one who's a goddam phantasm, like you said, out of the past. I mean, you've got this situation completely backward. You hear this?" He banged on the surface of the desk with all the strength in his hands. "The sound reality makes..." (ch. 11)

³⁹ The idea of meeting ones future self recalls the passage in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* where it is explained that once a soul approaches supreme enlightenment it is able to remember all its past lives, and even to communicate with them, nudging them on towards enlightenment (Evans-Wenz, 1929, p. 41).

Leo's future self goes one better than Moore and bangs his hands down to make "the sound reality makes", but all to no avail. He has proved nothing. He is no less a phantasm. The added irony here is that sound is the one sense-datum that Palmer Eldritch could perceive directly with his only non-artificial sense organs, his ears. It is fitting that Eldritch should hear this, for the next stage of the viewpoint switching is for Barney to become Eldritch himself:

He heard a laugh. It was Palmer Eldritch's laugh but it was emerging from -

Himself.

Looking down at his hands he distinguished the left one, pink, pale, made of flesh, covered with skin and tiny, almost invisible hair, and then the right one, bright, glowing, spotless in its mechanical perfection, a hand infinitely superior to the original one, long since gone. (ch. 11)

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

In producing these shifts of viewpoint for the reader in terms of characters actually absorbing and becoming others, Dick is not only extending his playfulness with the whole idea of viewpoint which began in *Solar Lottery* to its ultimate extent, but there is a further stage. In reading we adopt the perspectives of the characters, we make them real, in short we become them, to a greater or lesser extent. Dick makes this process explicit, exposing the workings for our scrutiny. Here again is a sense of formalism, of breaking the illusion so that we can see through to the actual means of creation, the way in which we read and the author writes. This, for Dick, by the time he wrote *3SPE* is no longer an end in itself. This formalist device is an analogy for yet another level of the cave simile.

The purpose of the theme of precognition returns in this context. Dick is in fact distinguishing various forms of precognition. There are forms which predict human actions and those which deal exclusively with natural events:

Outside the kitchen window the hot, hostile sun took shape beyond the other conapt buildings visible to him; he shut his eyes against it. Going to be another scorcher, all right, probably up to the twenty Wagner mark. He did not need to be a precog to foresee this. (*3SPE*, ch. 1)

The heat measurements do not seem to have any great significance. We can speculate at a passing Wagnerian reference to the *Götterdämmerung* suggested by the burning heat destroying the Earth and Eldritch wrecking Bulero's empire, but the other units we are introduced to seem absurd. Temperature is measured in Wagners; humidity in Selkirks (Alexander Selkirk? Alias Robinson Crusoe?);

distance is measured in Grables (Betty Grable?). Thus the news report in which Richard Hnatt reads about the latest figures on the increasing heat seems to be complete gibberish to us. We have no way of telling what these strange units might signify. How many feet to the Grable, besides the obvious answer, two? How damp was Alexander Selkirk? How hot was Richard Wagner? There seems to be no reason why these scientific units of measurement should be named after such unscientific people. The purpose is unclear, but then the purpose is also to be unclear. We can make no predictions about the nature of the heat in this future world because we can not relate it to anything in our own world. The scale by which we might be able to do this is confused for us. Thus information about the natural world is closed off from us. At the same time we have been introduced to a unit for measuring stress, the Freud, which is at least named after someone we can associate with the idea of mental health. However, we receive the impression of highly detailed analysis and predictive potential applying to the human mind, and the world of the human, even though it may be in units we do not understand. Since there are no such means of testing susceptibility to stress in our own century we should not be too surprised to find that the units are unfamiliar to us. Yet we *do* have units of length and temperature, it *is* strange that we should not be able to recognise these.

The impression we receive is one of greatly advanced insight into the human world, and greater mystification of the natural world. There are also two levels of precognition at work. On the one hand that of the pre-fash consultants, who have supernatural powers to help them to foresee the future, and on the other hand, the scientific predictions of the physicists at Caltech, who are monitoring the continued increase in the Earth's temperature. One is rooted in the domain of the human world, the other in the world of natural events. Mayerson and the other pre-fash consultants seem unable to predict the changes

in the weather. This dilemma is shown in the confusion over the nature of the heating effect. Is it an act of God or is it the work of the Proxers? Is it, in other words, an act either of blind chance, or a divine being, or the act of a sentient, mortal creature. Does the power of precognition extend to non-human beings? Does it extend to God? There are no answers to this problem. Do inanimate objects have a future that can be read?

Both Roni and Barney foresee the death of Palmer Eldritch by Leo's hand, but do not foresee the end of the heat, which Smart Alec and his friend reveal to Leo in their *chooser* world. The distinction is that between the body and the spirit, the accidents and the essence. In a novel Dick wrote a year prior to *3SPE, Martian Time Slip*, the *Bleekman*, or Martian aboriginal, Heliogabalus, puts into a more organised religious format the kind of insight which occurs to Richard Hnatt under E-therapy:

'Purpose of life is unknown, and hence way to be is hidden from the eyes of living critters. Who can say if perhaps the schizophrenics are not correct? Mister, they take a brave journey. They turn away from mere things, which one may handle and turn to practical use; they turn inward to *meaning*. There the black-night-without-bottom lies, the pit. Who can say if they will return? And if so, what will they be like having glimpsed meaning...?' (*Martian Time Slip*, ch. 9)

Who can tell if Pip will ever return after his glimpse of "God's foot on the treadle of the loom" in Melville's *Moby-Dick*? The pit of the black-night-without-bottom is what Hnatt wants to escape from. As already noted, Hnatt stands at the median point between the human and the *chooser* reality of Palmer Eldritch. Nevertheless, how far is the ethereal world, to which he aspires, close to "reality" and how far does the pit represent the underlying "concrete" reality of the Good, the Sun outside the cave?

The world of inanimate *things* is all around us, and is not necessarily linked to the true nature of reality. Do inanimate objects have a future we can foresee?

"...If you become inanimate, an old log for instance, you're no longer conscious of the passage of time...be a rock, Mayerson. Last it out however long it is before the drug wears off. Ten years, a century. A million years. Or be an old fossil bone in a museum." His gaze was gentle. (*3SPE*, ch. 11)

Eldritch offers Barney the opportunity to lose his consciousness and become an inanimate thing. In fact he becomes Palmer Eldritch. Anne Hawthorne's cat joke merely confuses Barney more rather than explaining to him how Eldritch can assume a sense of the deity. Dick alludes to the source of his ideas much more explicitly in *VALIS*:

What if a high form of sentient mimicry existed - such a high form that no human (or few humans) had detected it? What if it could only be detected if it *wanted* to be detected? Which is to say, not truly detected at all, since under these circumstances it had advanced out of its camouflaged state to disclose itself. "Disclose" might in this case equal "theophany". The astonished human being would say, I saw God; whereas in fact he saw only a highly evolved ultra-terrestrial life form, a UTI, or an extra-terrestrial life form, (an ETI) which had come here at some time in the past... (*VALIS*, ch. 5)

The idea has roots in Dick's brief flirtation with the Episcopalian church, but had really been growing in his mind before then and can be seen emerging in *Time Out of Joint*. The cross reference with *VALIS* shows Dick thinking of transubstantiation in terms, not of thinking that the wine and the wafer *became* the blood and body of Christ, but that they, along with everything else in the universe, always had been. It is the realisation that all the things in the universe are made out of pieces of the deity, taken from Marcus Aurelius, that, for Dick, is the essence of the act of transubstantiation. In a state of transcendence we should be able to experience the true nature of material

things, we should see through the veil of illusion which keeps us from a realisation of the falseness of the material world.

In *VALIS* Dick extends this view to take in the Gnostics' concept of a "Two Source Cosmogony", that of the creator deity, Yaldabaoth, the deranged, blind demiurge, and the *true*, transcendent God, which the central character in *VALIS*, Horselover Fat, characterises as "Zebra", from its ability to "blend in" with the background:

After a year of analysing his encounter with Zebra, or God, or the logos, whatever, Fat came first to the conclusion that it had invaded our universe; and a year later he realized that it was consuming - that is, devouring - our universe. Zebra accomplished this by a process much like transubstantiation. (*VALIS*, ch. 5)

Zebra in this way, is behaving in a very similar way to Palmer Eldritch, devouring the universe, substituting bits of himself for the material objects of the universe, and eventually the physical bodies of his victims. Leo says that he would give his right arm to know what is going on down in Chicken Pox Prospects (ch. 11), and indeed he does, literally, when, by the end of the novel, he has acquired the mechanical arm and other stigmata of Palmer Eldritch as he becomes him:

The same deformity of the jaw. The same brilliant, unfleshly right hand, one holding a homeopape, another a book, a third its fingers restlessly tapping. On and on and on until the termination of the aisle and the beginning of the pilot's cabin. In there too, he realized. It's all of us. (*3SPE*, ch. 13)

The battle was already lost anyway. If Mars has a conscripted population how can there be space-liners bringing people back to Earth? Leo can travel on one merely because he expected there to be such things, and this is still his hallucination. Up to this point, though, Palmer Eldritch's power has been

characterised in terms of absorption, digestion, or sacrifice. He, like Zebra, is taking over by infiltrating slowly, providing stability in the universe of the deranged creator. The underlying layer, as Richard Hnatt understood, is that of mental illness, insanity. However this is also the "hell-layer", which Barney feels he may already be in:

I'll see you in what the Neo-Christians call hell, he thought to himself. Probably not before. not unless this already is, and it may be, hell right now. (ch. 7)

Barney's language at this point is highly pun-laden, and is making the whole scheme of things much more complicated. He thinks to himself:

It takes a certain amount of courage, he thought, to face yourself and say with candor, I'm rotten. I've done evil and I will again. it was no accident; it emanated from the true, authentic me. (ch. 7)

It was no accident, it was the essence. Not the wafer, but the body. The fact that Barney says this to himself with *candor* alerts us to the external level of unreality in the novel. Dick allows further confusion by having Roni refer to something which happened *before* Leo's introduction to Chew-Z, thus making us less sure that this *is* still the original hallucination. Nevertheless, Leo has his fears about Roni. Roni is part of a theme which runs through much of Dick's work, the evil, destructive woman. She has her counterparts in Pat Conley (in *Ubik*), Patricia McClain (in *Game Players of Titan*) and culminates in the figure of Zena in *Divine Invasion*. In *3SPE* Roni presents similar aspects to Zena, the destructive female incarnation of the negative deity:

Rising she departed; he watched her go, thinking, She's the real one. Not Palmer Eldritch. If I do get back I've got to find some method of quietly dumping her. I don't like to be manipulated.

Palmer Eldritch, he thought suddenly, appeared in the form of a small girl, a little child, not to mention later on when he was that dog. Maybe there is no Roni Fugate, maybe it's Eldritch. (ch. 11)

Even Barney, in the supposedly outer layer of reality before the Chew-Z take-over, suspects some unnatural quality to Roni. Roni points out the possibility that the office might be bugged by Leo as she and Barney discuss his betrayal:

Her smile continued, even grew; it dazzled him. The girl was afraid of no-one and nothing on Earth or in the whole Sol system, he realized.
(ch. 4)

Roni provides the second level of Eldritch's power, in this sense a second factor rather than a two tier system of reality-confusion which Dick explores more thoroughly in *Ubik* with Pat Conley and Jory. Roni imitates Eldritch on the Perky Pat level of reality. She is imitating and replacing people, first Barney, and then, Leo suspects, himself. Eldritch can imitate and replace things as well as people. He counteracts the chaotic hell-layer reality while at the same time being "evil". This accounts for the difficulty that Barney has in explaining the feeling he got from Eldritch being that of meeting God, yet at the same time admitting that Eldritch's motives are entirely self centred.

Eldritch is a non-divine being, but one which has aspects of the divine, as has all the created universe. He uses the same facility as the deity envisaged by Marcus Aurelius and the Stoics, namely the ability to make material things out of pieces of himself, in order to infiltrate and take over the universe. He replicates and absorbs the *logos*. The stage is set for this kind of alien invasion in one of Dick's very earliest short stories, "The Father Thing" (1953), in which an invader which grows from a pod-like plant in a suburban back-yard makes itself into an exact duplicate of a boy's father and then replaces the father by sucking all the substance out of him, leaving only the skin behind. The "Father Thing" later takes the little boy, Charles, to meet the "Charles Thing", another pod which is growing into a replica of the boy. The

similarities between this story and Don Siegal's 1956 film, *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers* are so striking that it is hard to believe that the film, and the novel on which it was based (Finney, 1955), did not borrow their ideas from Dick's story. In *3SPE*, Dick amplifies and extends the ideas of his proto-type invasion story. Whilst the pods replicate the physical bodies of their victims, Palmer Eldritch's take-over is completely perceptual in nature. He reproduces the entire universe, each time, subjectively, for each Chew-Z "communicant".⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Eldritch phrases his plans in much the same way as we would expect to find in *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. He talks of becoming a planet (Mars) in terms of becoming "everyone on the planet". Barney may have passed the mental examination to satisfy the UN but their form of mental health is entirely the wrong kind for the sort of future Palmer Eldritch has in mind for Mars. Not for nothing does Dick choose to make the "mental" the deciding factor in emigrating to the UN's colonies. Dr. Smile is preparing Barney to face the "hell-layer", the underlying reality where "depression, all mental illness" inevitably leads, as well as where Palmer Eldritch will be taking him. Smile is another shadow of Denkmal.

A further shadow of Dr. Denkmal comes in the form of the translation worlds themselves, as described by Palmer Eldritch:

⁴⁰ This idea of alien invasion is so startlingly original it is utterly fantastic that Kim Stanley Robinson should compare *3SPE* to Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1952), a rather crude and poorly written piece of anti-Communist hysteria which is practically a love letter to Joe McCarthy. Heinlein's invaders are slugs which brainwash their human hosts into obeying their every command (the comparison between the slugs and the Russians is made quite explicitly several times in the novel) but which, once killed, leave the host shaken but unscathed.

"Be anything you want - you took the drug; you're entitled to be translated into whatever pleases you. It's not real, of course. That's the truth. I'm letting you in on the innermost secret; it's an hallucination. What makes it seem real is that certain prophetic aspects get into the experience, exactly as with dreams..." (ch. 12)

Why should they have "prophetic aspects"? Why should dreams? Do our dreams seem more realistic because they may have aspects of *déjà vu*? How do these prophetic aspects differ from Barney's precognitive skill?

To answer this we need to look again at the way Dick characterises the form of precognition used in *3SPE*. Essentially it is one which treats the nature of causality with Hume's scepticism:

The necessary connection betwixt causes and effects is the foundation of our inference from one to the other. The foundation of our inference is the transition arising from the accustomed union. These are, therefore, the same. (Hume, 1951, Bk. 1, Pt. III, sec. XIV)

There is no certainty that there is a *causal* connection between event A and event B, we can only say that B always follows A. What, after all, is the difference between faulty precognition ("I remember the memo from Friday about Miss Fugate. She's erratic in her talent...") and normal, non-psychical guesswork? The answer is none. The paranormal talents succeed, when they do succeed, by guessing that B will follow A more often than those who have no such talent.

Of course, in some cases it could be argued that "B follows A" could be derived from *a priorism*, but to Dick's sceptical mind, our knowledge of causality inevitably stems from the world of experience. In this way, a precognitive's knowledge of blind chance would be no better than anyone else's, but how would

he fare better with events linked to a human element? Would there be an actual foreknowledge, or prior *experience* of a future event, or something else?

Dick's realisation that the only way in which we as human being perceive time at all is purely in terms of human events reaches its most detailed expression in *Counter Clock World*, but the first overture of this idea can be seen in *3SPE*.⁴¹ Dr. Denkmal's clinic, Eichenwald, offers the chance to evolve at a greatly accelerated rate, or devolve at a similar rate should one be unlucky. How can anyone actually know what the next stage of human evolution will be like? It is hard enough to sort through the fossil record and discover what the *previous* stage was.⁴² How then do Denkmal's patients evolve?

The implication is that each human individual has the whole future, and past, of the species encoded within him or her, and that, by his treatment, Denkmal can unlock this. The idea derives in part from Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, except that it is taken to absurd extremes. What was for Jung principally an invisible, almost metaphoric thing, is made concrete and tangible. What is the future of the species if not the genetic development of all the individual members of the species, each of whom makes his or her unique

⁴¹ An interesting study, and one which claims to be based on fact, which deals with the experiences of Eastern European scientists studying the paranormal, is Ostrander/Schroeder, 1973. The chapter on the Bulgarian precognitive, Vanga, is particularly interesting in this context as it appeared that the experimenters could block her otherwise infallible precognitive abilities by producing a telepathic "jamming signal" and thereby concluded that precognition is really an aspect of telepathy.

⁴² At the time Dick wrote *3SPE* it was generally accepted in palaeontology that *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* was descended from Neanderthal man. Through the discovery of new fossils, this is now known not to be true.

contribution over a period of millions of years. In order to evolve the patients would have to *become* other people, would have to *become* their own descendants:

Those E-therapy sessions weren't in vain...I may not have lived as long as Eldritch in one sense, but in another sense I have; I've lived a hundred thousand years, that of my accelerated evolution...

"Hey Blau," he said, poking with his non-artificial elbow the semi-thing beside him. "I'm your descendant..." (ch. 13)

The evolution of the species is both a physical and a spiritual thing. We have already seen Dick allude to Buddhist rebirth doctrine, and here the allusion is very telling. An individual can evolve completely during the space of a single lifetime, so say the Lamas, by meditation and seeking enlightenment. Even after death, if the words of the *Bardo Thödol* are heard by the corpse the path to Nirvana instead of rebirth can be found. The spiritual journey is a long and hard one, it may take many generations, or it may happen overnight. It requires the knowledge that the material world is merely the veil of *Maya*, a screen which prevents us from seeing the world as it really is, a thing made out of pieces of the divine. Palmer Eldritch offers this vision, offers this enlightenment, and even if he does it for "evil", self preserving reasons, who are we to say that the insight is not divine? Leo, in taking E-therapy, is turning his back on the spiritual, losing sight of his chance for enlightenment. His evolution is a purely physical one. He has turned to the world of things, of the physical and seeks to become evolved in his body without being enlightened in his spirit. The Lamas would not be pleased. In each life our accumulated *karma*, the good or ill merit from previous lives, determines the circumstances of the present life. If the *karma* is improved a soul could be reborn a little nearer enlightenment, with the kind of mind that could contemplate the inner quietism necessary more easily, If *karma* is ill, then the soul may be reborn as a beast, as a ghost in some world of shades and phantoms, or

finally as a wraith in hell. It is this spiritual aspect to E-therapy which occurs to Richard Hnatt, along with the realisation that it is probably already too late for him to save his soul. Emily may be reborn as a Neanderthal, cast down the ladder of evolution just as the souls who return as beasts or ghosts. Leo may spend millions of years in Palmer Eldritch's own private purgatory, but when he emerges, either into the world he left, or into a new incarnation, will he not be much further towards the goal of Buddhahood?

Like the author in creating characters, like the reader in re-creating them, thus Leo *becomes* someone else, both metaphorically when he *becomes* Barney Mayerson, and literally when he becomes an evolved individual. One single human being can be shifted along the time scale, in this case the whole of humanity, in just the same way as Tim in "World of Talent" could move forwards or backwards along the line of his own life. The connection with precognition can be seen even as early as this in Dick's work. Tim, the son of two precognitives is the ultimate *anti-precog*. One individual human being as part of a massive whole, one single, mass consciousness, a part of its physical form, the aspect it takes in the physical world, like the blood and the wafer, like Palmer Eldritch. This is the sense of the divine that Barney experiences. Neither good nor evil, just there.

Dick's allusions and analogies are many and tantalising. Eichenwald and E-therapy may have been suggested to him by E. A. Dupont's 1953 film *The Neanderthal Man*, which featured a "devolution serum". There are other interesting analogies:

But not yet have we solved the incantation of this whiteness, and learned why it appeals with such power to the soul; and most strange and far more portentous - why as we have seen, it is the most meaning symbol of spiritual things, nay, the very veil of the Christian's Deity... (Melville/Beaver, 1972, p. 295)

Not for nothing does Barney pick the example of *Moby-Dick* to explain the workings of Perky Pat's Great Books Animator. The "very veil of the Christian's Deity" is Melvillian longhand for the Eucharist, the whiteness, for him, both its accident and its essence. The veil is akin to the *Veil of Maya*, the Buddhist term for the shadows of things in the material universe which screen us from the reality behind them. And in picking Melville's most famous novel is not Dick also alluding to himself? Are not Philip K. Dick and Moby-Dick brothers in a sense? Dick's style may leave the authorial viewpoint hanging fire, but he injects himself very subtly, his name appearing as well as a powerful analogy as to the nature of the transubstantiation by which Palmer Eldritch makes his Eucharist a bitter pill for the colonists and Leo to swallow.

To a certain extent the comedy in *3SPE* is not easy to see at a first reading, but then neither is the comedy in *Moby-Dick*. The chase of Leo Bulero after Palmer Eldritch, to reach the Monument and kill him, is in many ways a comic version of Ahab versus Moby-Dick. Does not Dick himself tell us this when the colonists have the option to select the *funny* version of Melville's classic presented to them? Does not Ahab have his precognitive "pre-fash" consultant in the form of Fedallah? These are deliberate allusions, and to what purpose? Dick is presenting us with a novel that has many layers of allegory, like Melville's. He presents a novel where the idea of a non-divine being having previously exclusive-to-God abilities is allegorised onto his own role as author by having a character, Leo, possess previously exclusive-to-author functions, namely the ability to adopt other characters' viewpoints. He writes a novel in which *no-one* is escaped alive to tell us...there is no way out from Chew-Z, *and yet we are told!*

Dick alludes to a novel, *Moby-Dick*, which, to use a term of Roland Barthes's, is one of American Literature's most *writerly* texts.⁴³ He gives the hint to those who care to follow it up, that his own is every bit as *writerly*.

But if no-one is escaped alive to tell us, where is the hope, where is the humanity in this tale? In *Now Wait for Last Year*, a novel with a similar theme to *3SPE* and written at about the same time, Dick provides a fourteenth chapter in which a note of optimism is injected, transforming the ending which in *3SPE* is downbeat, into a comic ending. *3SPE* resolutely sticks at thirteen chapters. The end seems to have no optimistic streak in it whatever. Where is the aspect of Palmer Eldritch as Christ-like saviour suggested by his "three stigmata"? Even Barney is confused about the vision of Palmer Eldritch he had when he seemed to become him and left a part of him behind, an aspect of what Barney interpreted as the divine:

"He can't help us very much," Barney said. "Some, maybe. But he stands with empty, open hands; he understands, he wants to help. He tries, but...it's just not that simple. Don't ask me why. Maybe even he doesn't know. Maybe it puzzles him too. Even after all the time he's had to mull over it." And all the time he'll have later on, Barney thought, if he gets away from Leo Bulero. Human, one-of-us Leo. Does Leo know what he's up against? And if he did...would he try anyhow, keep on with his schemes?

Leo would. A precog can see something that's fore-ordained. (ch. 13)

How can Eldritch be a Christ figure and yet still "evil"? Is Eldritch God or merely something closer to God than man, as Anne Hawthorne maintains? Eldritch's role is like that of the Intercessor in *A Maze of Death* (1970), standing between God and man, confused but trying to help. When Eldritch pushes

⁴³ cf. Barthes, 1970.

Barney, tries to make *him* try, he reveals this aspect. What is Dick's vision of God and Christ? How can we see the religious arguments of this novel, the problem of transubstantiation and the divinity/mortality of Eldritch, in terms of an overall religious message? Is this a message which is also analogous to the process of authorship? What is Dick's God?

In order to answer this it is necessary to take a small step back in Dick's writing career and examine his 1962 novel *The Man in the High Castle*.

PART THREE: THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE

Generally regarded as his finest novel, *The Man in the High Castle* won Dick Science-Fiction's highest accolade, the Hugo Award in 1962. Its plot involves a number of different strands which are often tangentially connected but rarely come into direct opposition. On one hand there is the theme of the small business barons under stress, lesser versions of Leo Bulero, in the forms of Wyndam-Matson, Robert Childan and the partners in Edfrank Custom Jewellery. Looking at the plot of the other strands in isolation indicates some of the more overt political themes the novel treats which may tend to be overlooked in the full glare of its disturbing overall premise.

Tagomi, the head of the Japanese Trade Delegation in San Francisco, receives Baynes, an industrialist from the Eastern Bloc who has information for a high ranking general he hopes to meet under Mr. Tagomi's aegis for reasons of secrecy. When the general arrives, the news which Baynes reveals is that the Eastern Bloc government is planning a massive, covert nuclear strike against the general's forces, resulting in a full scale invasion.

Juliana Frink has a brief love affair with Joe Cinnadella, an Italian truck driver she meets in a wayside cafe in Denver. She and Joe travel to Cheyenne to meet a novelist who has written a book highly critical of the Eastern Bloc, a book they both admire. On the way there, Juliana discovers that Joe is in fact a secret agent of the Eastern Bloc government sent to kill the novelist. Using her karate skills, she kills Joe and drives on to warn the novelist of the plot against his life.

These two plot strands, when mixed together with the third, non-political section, form the plan of the novel. The high intrigue of Baynes's mission is counterpointed with Juliana's discovery of enemy agents at work, already infiltrated. The threat of nuclear war is balanced against the need to be vigilant in the home, to guard against Eastern Bloc subversion. This plot is effectively that of the spy-thriller. It is rooted in American Cold-War fiction. Should we read the "East" as Russia we have a very familiar scenario from films, novels and television serials produced in America during the 1950s and the 1960s. It provides a good, conservative prognosis on Soviet expansionism, which, in the years leading up to the Cuban missiles crisis, would have been sure to find favour with the American reading public.

However, such is not the case. Certainly Dick intends his plot outline to follow a conventional pattern, he expects his readers to pick up on the allusion he is making. We would be forgiven for thinking, however, that this novel is not Science-Fiction, it is spy-fiction. The crucial factor is that the above plot summary omits the information that the "Eastern Bloc" is not Russia, but Germany, and that America has been defeated in World War Two and divided between the Nazi Reich on the East Coast and the Japanese Empire on the West.

This information comes as a considerable shock. Dick withholds it for the first section of the first chapter, dwelling calmly on the description of Childan's business and his dealings with Mr. Tagomi. It is only when we come to focus of Frank Frink that the details of Dick's post-war world become apparent. What political points is Dick making? There are a few obvious ones. For example, Dick faces us with not only one alternative history, but two, Abendsen's novel providing the second. In both of these the world is divided between two superpowers, struggling for dominion over the Third World and

holding the threat of war and destruction over each other. In our world, this is the case with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., in the novel's reality it is Germany and Japan, in Abendsen's novel's reality it is the U.S.A. and the British Empire. No matter how we imagine the outcome of the *Second World War*, says Dick, we end up with the same Cold-War with two strongly opposed power blocs. The other irony is of course that Germany and Japan were allies during the War just as the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. were allies. Dick envisages the Axis divided and opposed just as the two superpowers, former allies, have become in our world. Even Abendsen imagines a world in which the two victorious allied powers are at loggerheads in the post-war era. Britain in this scenario retains its Empire and challenges the United States in its plans to expand into Asia.

Most important is what Dick alludes to by omission. The role of the Soviet Union in the defeat of Germany was greatly downgraded during the Cold-War. If a former ally had become an enemy it did not do to let the public mind dwell on the former alliance. The Soviet part in the War had been forgotten. War films from the 1950s, for example, portray the War as having been won exclusively by America, such was the influence of American culture at this time that this message was aimed also at America's allies in Western Europe. Even as recently as the fortieth anniversary of the 1944 Normandy landings, President Reagan of the United States portrayed the Soviet Union as an enemy and omitted their role in the War entirely from his speech, much to the displeasure of the Soviet Government, whose representatives had not even been invited to the ceremony. Both the visions of the alternative victory Dick includes in *High Castle* assume that the Soviet Union played no part in the War. It is Abendsen's book especially which drives this home. There is no Eastern Front. When the British Empire emerges triumphant it steps in confidently to take over all Reich territory, including Russia as far as the Volga. The Russians do not fight back

and drive the Germans out of Soviet territory as they did in our world, but as they are assumed not to have done in the popular American Cold-War imagination. Although it is as great a simplification as that of which the Cold-War-mongers were themselves guilty, it would be almost true to say that Russia defeated Germany, with help from the other allied powers, rather than to say that America won with some help from Russia. Over two thirds of all German man-power and artillery were deployed at the Eastern Front even after the Normandy landings.⁴⁴ Dick makes us see the Cold-War deceptions for the absurdities they are, giving us a brief image of a ludicrous British Empire, policemen with funny hats all the way to the Volga, a scenario that could never have been without total defeat and acquiescence of the Soviet people.

Thus, on a surface, political level, *The Man in the High Castle* is making a number of important historical points. It questions our vision of the given nature of the post-war world. It treats as facts the fictions created by the Cold-War and shows their false façade. Dick shows an America defeated by Germany and Japan in which the Americans show little sign of discontent and resistance, almost as though they were glad, as Childan obviously is, that the War turned out the way that it did. Childan is discontented only in so far as he shares many of the Nazis' views and would wish to be in their sector instead of under Japanese rule in the West. Characters such as Rita, Wyndam-Matson's mistress, express a sense of longing for the world as it might have been had Roosevelt not died and the War been won by the Allies, and this feeling is re-

⁴⁴ "Soviet armed forces, in the course of the war, had destroyed 506½ German divisions and 100 divisions belonging to German satellites. The Allies, however, destroyed no more than 176 divisions. In the war against the USSR Germany had lost 10,000,000 men, which made up three quarters of its overall losses in the Second World War." (Lyons, 1976, p. 86.)

presented for her in the Hawthorne Abendsen novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Rita, however, is not a focal figure in the novel. She appears in only one section and is subordinated to Wyndam-Matson's perspective viewpoint. Wyndam-Matson had met Rommel, admires the Nazis, lives a reasonably contented life running his petty swindles in the Japanese sector, seeing this purely as business, not as a means of fighting back at the Japanese conquerors by cheating them. Were they Americans in charge we get the impression he would be cheating them in just the same way.

Naziism seems to fit American society very well. Abendsen notes with ironic optimism that in his free America all racial problems had been solved by the 1950s, but in the America Dick knew the situation was very different. The Civil Rights Movement, in its infancy in the early 1960s, sought the vote and basic constitutional freedoms for American Blacks, freedoms which were denied them under local, state, laws. It is possible that Dick had in mind the example of South Africa, a nation which, though through British rule was compelled to support the Allies, had a ruling White population dedicated to Hitler, and one which instituted many Nazi racial policies after the War and the end of British power. South Africa was in the 1960s, and remains in the present day, an image of the world under a slightly less severe form of Nazi rule, a country where Hitler won. The Sharpville Massacre would have diverted the world's attention to South Africa at the time *The Man in the High Castle* was published and the tensions reported from that country leading up to that event may well have influenced Dick in some small measure. The legislature of the Southern States of the U.S.A. practised an "Apartheid" very similar to that of the South African National Party, and it was this injustice that Martin Luther King, among others, sought to correct. Thus, aspects of the Nazi way were present in the world in which Dick wrote. Knowledge of the actions taken by the U.S.A. to protect key

Nazis and provide them with safe havens in South America, action taken by the CIA to support Neo-Fascist governments in various South American countries; would not have been available to Dick, at the time he was writing, it is thus difficult to say how far his work is a satire against U.S. foreign policy of the day. Nevertheless, *The Man in the High Castle* is, on one level, a political satire, akin in some respects to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

Nineteen Eighty-Four is a political satire, written in Britain in 1948, about the state of British politics in 1984. As Anthony Burgess suggests,⁴⁵ Orwell's novel depicts the actual state of austerity in Britain in 1948, the time it was written, and the futuristic dystopia it imagines contains all aspects of British society from that period, exaggerated and satirised. English Socialism is conceived as an ideology possessing aspects of German National Socialism and the Communism of Stalin, but it is also a bitter and disillusioned attack against the British Labour Party and its behaviour in government from 1945 onwards. The future in this novel is one which looks back at the past and comments ironically on the present. Underlying this would seem to be, not a dissatisfaction with the outcome of the War, but the idea that it has made little difference, and that in the grim future Orwell imagines, it will make ever less difference.

Where Dick's dystopia diverges from this view most radically is most obviously that it portrays not a world of the future, brutalised and enslaved by mistakes made in the world of the present day, but an alternative to the present which is brutalised and enslaved by mistakes never made. The reader cannot take

⁴⁵ *New Society*, 5 October, 1978, Vol. 46, No. 835, pp. 8-11.
Also, Burgess, 1980, pp. 31 - 40.

refuge in the idea that this is a story representing a possible but unlikely future, as in Science-Fiction generally, or, as in mainstream fiction, a realistic tale of things which *could* be happening now, but which probably are not. *The Man in the High Castle* takes place in a world which could never have existed and disturbs the reader by presenting an initial situation known to be completely false. The effect is similar to that which Orwell would have produced had he titled his piece *Nineteen Forty-Eight*, as Burgess claims he had originally intended.

A mainstream novel may contain an imaginary story, but the reader cannot objectively prove that it did not happen. We cannot know everyone in the world, cannot be sure that somewhere and at some time, each of the stories from the pens of the world's authors could not have happened to someone. The reader can therefore create various distinct "hypothetical spaces". There can be a "real" future wherein Science-Fiction stories can occur, or alternatively a "real" past where historical novels can take liberties with the famous. The other main kind of hypothetical space is the possible present, the wide scope of other people's lives, of which we the readers know nothing, and can accept the chance of any amount of physically possible fiction having happened in reality. Somewhere, be it in our minds or in the real universe, we create spaces for our fictions to exist.

In watching a stage play the audience, whether witting or unwitting, is presented with a paradox. The story is fiction, the characters are imaginary, yet the actors are real. The audience watches real, living human beings who are pretending to be unreal, and then pretending that the unreal is real. The action of the play may take place across years, or weeks, yet the play itself lasts at most a couple of hours; the actors perform stage time in real time.

Time can be collapsed, space stretched or shrunk. When an actor walks across the stage he both does it and does not do it. Real actions are symbols standing for fictional versions of themselves. The audience can accept the validity of the fiction but cannot deny the reality of the action. An audience using this straightforward paradox of reality versus fiction would need an *entree* into the world of the novel in which there is no "real" aspect, there is no stage on which real performers act. The author provides this hypothetical space for his "performers" and includes himself as a form of intercessor, paradoxically vouching for the reality of the scenes and describing areas of the fiction that no one individual viewpoint would have access to. The "God's Eye View" is only possible for the "omniscient author". These areas of imagined space have survived from the early establishment of the form of the novel in the eighteenth century surprisingly well.

Realism requires an imagined space in our own world, which includes people we do not know whose lives contained the events described in the novel. Fantasy requires an imagined world other than our own where the shared assumptions of the characters may be represented in such a way that it is not too much of a problem that we have no equivalent assumptions in our lives. Were we to read a mainstream novel and find that it was about people we knew personally we could go to them and ask if the story was true or not. If we shared the same described world with the teleporting mass of humanity in Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* we would quickly lose patience with it, or assume that the author had drawn a very broad set of assumptions about the world at large based solely on his friends and acquaintances, although even they would have to disobey fundamental laws of nature which we, in our world, take to be immutable.

Where *The Man in the High Castle* differs from either model is that there is no possibility of imagining the setting of the novel as a fantasy world separate from our own, since it is so evidently the same world as ours, except for one major change in modern history. It cannot be a fairytale kingdom, since the setting is San Francisco, neither can it be set in the future as the Second World War could not possibly be fought twice with different outcomes. It is not another planet as it is most certainly the Earth. Yet we could take a gazeteer of San Francisco and find all the streets (minus the Embarcadero Freeway) with the same accuracy as we could locate places in Joyce's Dublin. We have a text which abandons the notional spaces we have come to expect from both fantasy and realism. Yet it is clearly a fantasy, though written as if it were a realist text. *High Castle* confounds audience expectation to an unprecedented degree, although the paradox is one which Dick has clearly been preparing for in his fiction. Leaving aside the parallels with Quantum Mechanics and Leibnizian philosophy, Dick's own theological concerns expressed in his early novels prepare for the strangeness of *High Castle*.

RECONSTRUCTION

Latent in one of Dick's very earliest novels, *Cosmic Puppets*, is the germ of Dick's theological reading in particular of the Gnostic and Coptic Gospels which form the bulk of the New Testament apocrypha. Peter Trilling moulds "golems" or tiny creatures animated by his will, out of clay, as the infant Jesus is represented as doing in the apocryphal Gospel of St Thomas and again in the Koran. His is however the agent of the destroyer god, Ahriman. He and Ormazd, the positive deity, maintain various elements of the universe, either good or bad. The two deities are derived from both ancient Egyptian and ancient Persian theologies, finding their eventual expression in the writings of Zoroaster, via the Manichaeans. The struggle between Ahriman and Ormazd is the eternal struggle between good and evil, in which all things, animate or not, are dragged into service. Insects, vermin, and other pests are the agents of Ahriman. Others could be created when required:

Peter Trilling squatted down and picked up Mary's discarded clay. Rapidly he pushed the cow into a shapeless mass and began to re-form it.

Noaks and Dave and Walter regarded him with outraged incredulity. "Who said *you* could play?" Dave demanded angrily.

"It's my yard," Peter answered mildly. His clay shape was practically ready...He was concentrating on his clay man, brown eyes large and intense. His small body was utterly rigid; he leaned forward, face down, lips moving faintly.

For a moment nothing happened. Then...

Dave shrieked and scrambled away. Walter cursed loudly, face suddenly white. Noaks stopped flying his airplane. His mouth fell open and he sat frozen.

The little clay man had stirred. (*Cosmic Puppets*, ch. 3)

One of the apocryphal books of the New Testament, *The Account of Thomas the Israelite Philosopher Concerning the Childhood of the Lord*, contains a passage of some striking similarity to this section of Dick's novel:

1. When this boy Jesus was five years old he was playing at the ford of a brook, and he gathered together into pools the water that flowed by, and made it at once clean, and commanded it by his word alone. 2. He made soft clay and fashioned from it twelve sparrows. And it was the sabbath when he did this. And there were many other children playing with him. 3. Now when a certain Jew saw what Jesus was doing in his play on the sabbath, he at once went and told his father Joseph: "See, your child is at the brook, and he has taken clay and fashioned twelve birds and has profaned the sabbath". 4. And when Joseph came to the place and saw (it), he cried out to him, saying: "Why do you do on the sabbath what ought not to be done?" But Jesus clapped his hands and cried to the sparrows: "Off with you!" And the sparrows took flight and went away chirping. (Hennecke, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 392 - 393)

The comparison with the passage from the apocrypha leaves little doubt that Dick was incorporating his knowledge of obscure scripture into his work as early as 1953, when *Cosmic Puppets* was written.

What does Dick gain from Zoroastrianism? The town of Millgate, Virginia, birthplace of New Yorker Ted Barton, has been mysteriously cut off from the outside world. Like Midwich in John Wyndham's novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* (1957), no-one can pass out of the town, or into it, save especially gifted children. It transpires that Ahriman has overcome Ormazd, at least in this one small piece of the Earth, and over the surface of the real Millgate, a false town has been laid down. The inhabitants have been changed in such a way as to be unaware of the change, the first appearance of false memories in Dick's fiction. Ted Barton remembers the town as it was before the change, and, aided by various golems created by Mary Meade, the agent of Ormazd, and by some of the townspeople, he helps to re-create the town of Millgate as it was before the intervention of Ahriman. His memory recovers the town park, but the Wanderers, who have been trying to make correct maps of the old Millgate, do not know whether or not to trust him:

"Barton can't tell anybody anything. Maybe he's a plant sent here to break you. It's possible. He may be a creation, a super-golem. There's

no way to tell, not now. Later, when the reconstruction begins. If it really works you'll know. But not now."

"Then," the slim, brown-haired girl observed, "it'll be too late"...

...Meade's answer was directly to the point.

"You'll have to take a chance on him whether you like it or not. You have no choice. He's the only one who's been able to reconstruct. He brought back a whole park in half an hour. You haven't been able to do a damn thing in eighteen years."

There was stunned silence.

"You're impotent," Meade continued. "All of you. You were all here. You're like me, distorted. *But he's not*. You'll have to trust him..."
(*Cosmic Puppets*, ch. 12)

Barton is an intercessor figure, one who, unlike the others, does not see through a glass darkly. The townspeople of Millgate cannot see that their town has been changed, and cannot restore it even when they do know for the same reason that we cannot see that space is curved because the light we could see it by is also curved; for the same reason that we could not change the future had we perfect foreknowledge because we would be changed so that we would be unable to affect any change. *Cosmic Puppets*, *Martian Time-slip*, *Dr. Bloodmoney* and *Galactic Pot Healer* (1969) form a sequence through Dick's works whereby different aspects of the concept of the outsider who sees through the false layer of reality and who has redemptive qualities, can be explored within the same basic structural framework.⁴⁶

Whilst in *Cosmic Puppets* we are left in considerable doubt until comparatively late in the novel that the town has been mysteriously substituted and an illusory version placed on top of it by a malevolent deity, *High Castle* would

⁴⁶ Many characters map onto others. Ted Barton, for example, fulfils the same role as Joe Fernwright in *Galactic Pot Healer*, where Amalita and Borel take the places of Ormazd and Ahriman. Hoppy Harrington in *Dr. Bloodmoney* manipulates his environment and creates minor golems in the same way as Peter Trilling, but is matched by the redemptive figure of Bill Keller, who with his "sister" forms an analogue to Mary Meade. Dangerfield in his satellite has somewhat similar Christ-like aspects to Ted Barton.

seem to take this as its starting point. *Cosmic Puppets* could be many things, a strange detective story perhaps, the central mystery being the question of why Ted Barton appears listed as dead in childhood in the town's newspaper archives when he is very much alive. The solution that is finally presented is not the most obvious, it is not the kind of solution we could reasonably expect within the conventions of the detective genre. *High Castle* presents a situation in which not only Ted Barton would have specialised prior knowledge, but the reader has as well. San Francisco is better known to people than Millgate, Virginia, besides which the story quickly opens out and reveals that the whole world is engulfed in this false layer of reality in which the Axis won the War. Ted Barton recognises that things have changed in Millgate since he was last there in ways that could not reasonably have occurred. He could either be mad or mistaken. The surprise of the novel is that he is justified in a spectacular way. The spectacular justification of the events in *High Castle* is inherent from the first chapter.

The first section of Chapter One, however, gives us no sense of past present or future. It concerns itself purely with Robert Childan, his worry at having failed to obtain the Civil War recruiting poster that Tagomi wanted, and his embarrassment when Tagomi telephones him and has to be informed of the failure. The sense we have is of Tagomi's superiority, but also a suggestion of Childan's acceptance and adoption of Tagomi's social system:

Tagomi deliberately mispronounced the name; insult within the code that made Childan's ears burn. Place pulled, the dreadful mortification of their situation. Robert Childan's aspirations and fears and torments rose up and exposed themselves, swamped him, stopping his tongue. He stammered, his hands sticky on the phone. The air of his store smelled of the marigolds; the music played on, but he felt as if he were falling into some distant sea. (*High Castle*, ch. 1)

The flowers permeate the scene much as they do for Dorian and Sir Henry in Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray*, but what predominates is the sense of losing place, of being lost, abandoned. When he feels as though he is "falling into some distant sea", the immediate reference is to Bruegal's *The Fall of Icarus* in which the distant splash and sight of feathers and a lone foot disappearing fails to impress the peasants of the surrounding countryside hard at their daily toil. Yet the next time that Childan feels this sense of his world collapsing, the antagonist, played very convincingly by Frank Frink, comes supposedly from the ship, the *Syokaku*, in Japanese "perfect knowledge", which, as Childan discovers, did indeed sink into some distant sea. Frink plays a role somewhat analogous to Ted Barton here. He is the one who sees clearly, the man from the factory where the fakes are made, the one who alone can "see" that the guns Childan sells are not the real thing, but only imitations, shadows of the real. He disguises himself to deliver this information, putting himself in grave danger, although not realising this at the time. Frink is a very ambiguous figure in this exchange. His motives are not very pure, he wants revenge against Wyndam-Matson, but his role is almost that of a Dickian Christ-like intercessor, coming from the realm of the deceptive, the agent of Ahriman, revealing part of the supposedly real world is in fact part of the illusion.

Frink's actions place him in the custody of the German Police, he, like Christ, is to be killed for revealing the falseness of the surface reality to mortal men, but he is himself redeemed by Tagomi. Dick plays off a number of different intercessors in this novel. Frink's revelation of the falsity of the guns, given from a position of authority, since he himself made them, is matched by the revelation that his estranged wife Juliana gives at the very end of the novel, that the world itself is an illusion. The theme of *The Man in the High Castle* could be said to be the intercession of various figures representing

different states of reality, each trying to communicate with the other. There is a very real search for a Christ-figure, one who really can intercede between man and whatever deity there is beyond the level of the purely material.

Syokaku equals "perfect knowledge" and it is lost at the bottom of the Philippines Sea. *High Castle* presents a world in which perfect knowledge is indeed lost without trace as far as the characters are concerned, and most definitely of all for Childan, who, although he is familiar with its language and turns of phrase, does not consult the *I Ching*, the only source of truth Dick provides here.

By the time we leave Childan's viewpoint, we have the impression that the Japanese are in charge, that things are not as we know them, but there is no suggestion that this is not the future. Marijuana cigarettes appear elsewhere in Dick's work, in *Ubik* for example, they are the markers of a future age, when the unimaginable, that marijuana could be marketed legally, can be real. Bombs have fallen, perhaps the Japanese, like the vugs in *The Game Players of Titan* have won some future war. In the second section of Chapter One the true state of affairs is revealed. Frank Frink was left on the Japanese side of the settlement line at the end of hostilities in 1947, and this is fifteen years later.

This point challenges our expectations, not only of Science-Fiction but of fiction in general. This is not an imagined world of the future, nor the world of the present day, nor an alien planet unrelated to our own. *High Castle* presents us with the Earth as it would have been, at the time of writing, had history happened differently. It presents this non-history as though it were the base-line, the underlying reality which a realist novel would expect to

share with its audience. The foremost question we are left with by this novel is where, both literally and metaphorically, *is* the world of *High Castle*? It is not part of our universe, because there is only one Earth, ours, and on our planet Earth the Germans and the Japanese *lost* the War. Not only that, but this is something we can all be reasonably certain about. There is no sense that this story might have been real and that because it affected only a small number of people it is not unreasonable that we should not have heard of the characters involved, or heard of it directly by other means. There is a circle of people described who are not known to us, and as there are thousands of millions of other people in the world we do not know personally, we should not be too surprised to be told a story about people who seem to share ethical and cultural principles unknown to us. This is, after all, very often the case in mainstream fiction.

The condition of an Axis victory occurring at the end of World War Two is an entirely different matter. There are many stories about the War, just as there are many stories told about the Wild West in American folk lore. Were all the War novels and films and all the Westerns ever made collated together, there would be more stories affecting more lives than could ever have existed in reality. We nevertheless accept this, because none of the stories concern either ourselves or people we know directly, we can thus create a notional space for each of them.

We have bigger problems with *High Castle*. It resolutely does not share any of the common assumptions about the nature of our joint reality, nor does it provide any potential for this kind of suspension of disbelief. The Second World War was a real historical event, close enough to the time of writing of *High Castle* to be remembered clearly by a very large portion of the general

public. It was an event so awe-inspiring in its scale as to affect every human being on Earth to a greater or lesser degree. It had so powerful an effect on world politics that its outcome continues to influence every human being on Earth one way or another and without doubt will continue so to do for a very long time to come. Everyone knows which side won. Yet it is exactly this dramatic fact that Dick chooses to change. Not a small change to a battle to enable, say, John Wayne to appear on the sands of Iwo Jima (in Alan Dwan's film of that name), but the ultimate change, one which everyone will immediately know is false.

Dick is doing something more profound than merely saying "What would things have been like had they won?", he is forcing us to confront the very issue of how we assimilate these "notional spaces" in narrative fiction. In presenting us with a space that is just too big to swallow, Dick is giving us the novel equivalent of the sound of one hand clapping.

We are not even given the option of placing *High Castle* in one of Laumer's worlds of the Imperium. There is no sense at any time of our own world being the "real" one existing in some other place. The sense we get is that it may be "underneath", like the real Millgate in *Cosmic Puppets*, buried under Ahriman's entropic fantasy, with all our memories and assumptions changed accordingly. In any other novel set in the present day the reader can say "where was I while all this was going on?" and can come back with an answer. The events described in the story were taking place while we were living our lives in another part of the country, or another part of the world. We cannot answer this way for *High Castle*. The space we make for ourselves as readers is different here. In this novel, if we are anywhere, like the burghers of Millgate, we are

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changed as well, *we* must believe that there was an Axis victory, not just believe it, but feel it.

High Castle is a natural progression for Dick in his fiction. "The Unreconstructed M", a short story published in 1956 very clearly points the way for this kind of development in Dick's writing. An intricate tale, it is a detective anti-story, just as *The Game Players of Titan* represents the detective anti-novel. "The Unreconstructed M" deals with two contradictory and ambiguous layers of reality in much the same way as Henry James's novella *The Turn of the Screw* and short story "The Figure in the Carpet" (1896).⁴⁷

David Lantano and Paul Tirol are two super successful business barons of some future century, in many ways similar to Leo Bulero and Palmer Eldritch. The Unreconstructed M is a machine designed to kill, which leaves a false trail of clues behind it. An employee of Tirol's, Heimie Rosenberg, is killed by the M and a series of clues deposited which point to Lantano as the culprit. The elaborate facility of the M to transform itself into a replica of a television set once the police arrive is useless since it is spotted almost immediately. As the investigating detective Beam surmises, it is an over-elaborate means of killing someone:

⁴⁷ "The Unreconstructed M" forms the basis for much of Dick's later novel *The Penultimate Truth* (1964), which also includes allusions to earlier novels such as *The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike* in the aspect of faked fossils being buried, and also echoes of *Dr. Futurity* in the character of Lantano. Although *The Penultimate Truth* is a much less successful novel than many of the others Dick wrote at that time, it does bring together a number of motifs and characters from much of his earlier fiction. Tony Tanner makes the claim that Kurt Vonnegut achieves this fusion of past plots in his *Slaughterhouse 5* (1970) and it might legitimately be said that, for all its flaws, *The Penultimate Truth* is Dick's *Slaughterhouse 5*.

The unit - a robot device of obvious complexity - clearly belonged to Paul Tirol; as soon as it had identified his presence it had sprinted gladly to him. For...protection?

It had killed Heimie and it belonged to Tirol. So, by a novel and indirect method Tirol had murdered his employee, a Fifth Avenue front man. At a rough guess such a robot would cost in the neighborhood of a hundred thousand dollars.

A lot of money, considering that murder was the easiest of criminal acts. Why not hire an itinerant goon with a crowbar?

(The Golden Man, p. 146)

The only answer must be that it was designed to frame someone, clearly David Lantano. Yet the computer which names Lantano for the murderer uses only some of the false clues. Lantano informs them that another man of the seven on the list fitting all ten descriptive features is not on Sirius, as the police believe, but has recently returned. Thus Lantano offers a further level of ambiguity. We know that the clues were false, yet immediately we have the possibility of another suspect. Lantano cannot have programmed a robot to incriminate himself, or so think the police. Did Tirol use it to incriminate Lantano and fail? Did Lantano use it to incriminate Tirol on the grounds that no-one would believe that he would incriminate himself? The story allows us to accept both possibilities. With Tirol out of the way Lantano can expand his empire. The fruit on his table turns out to be made of wax, he is not as rich as he appears. The offers of natural food (a rare commodity in this synthetically fed world) are all calculated risks. Could not the M be another such risk? If so why does he try to escape? This being Philip K. Dick, needless to say, there is another element. The other element is that of the chief investigating officer's wife, Ellen, linked with Tirol, who claims to have engineered the whole thing in order to blackmail her husband:

Ackers would have to admit a mistake, a basic mistake, and if he had been wrong to pick up Lantano he would be ruined. (p. 159)

The plot begins to resolve itself. Clearly Ellen Ackers had had Rosenberg killed in order to force her husband to let her leave him by blackmailing him with the false arrest charge that Lantano could bring when she revealed that he, Lantano, was innocent. However, this is an even more extreme calculated risk, because of the doom placed on her and Tirol, who benefits from having his biggest rival out of the way. Thus Tirol is banished, and Ackers is ruined, because Beam sorts out the mystery. Yet in the coda, he and Lantano are having lunch at Lantano's mansion. Beam has stepped into Ackers's shoes, and Lantano is now ready to expand. Soon the wax fruit will be real.

Dick is placing narrative spaces in close collision in a way which goes even beyond James's "Figure in the Carpet". Suppose Lantano and Beam had planned the whole thing, how could Ellen Ackers have been persuaded that she was in fact the true culprit, as she admits, to the ruin of both Ackers and, unfortunately for her, Tirol? Beam saves her, but if she was responsible, why do Lantano and Beam, who both benefit, seem to be so closely associated? Why does it turn out that Lantano is not as rich as he would have liked people to believe? They cannot *both* have done it, or can they?

It is impossible to isolate the underlying reality. If we are left with the scheming aspect of Lantano, it remains to explain how Tirol and Ellen Ackers believe themselves to have been the ones responsible.

This is no "Scorpion Story" with a sting in the tail. The end appears to reveal that Lantano was behind the whole thing from the beginning, but there is no direct way that we can reinterpret the story to accept this. Dick is inviting us to *reconstruct* the story such that Lantano is really guilty. This is the Unreconstructed narrative.

The plot is an extension of the function of the M itself. The layer of false clues fictionally creates an artificial state in which Lantano himself, physically present in Rosenberg's apartment, committed the murder. This narrative representation is all the police have to go on as a version of reality, and they have no reason to disbelieve it. Dick deliberately avoids the one factor which would enable us to resolve the narrative into a conventional and acceptable form, namely that Ellen Ackers is in cohorts with Lantano. There is no evidence to support this at all. There is a false layer of reality in which, if we accept Lantano's guilt, Ellen and Tirol collude in the plot and are changed in order to believe it themselves, in just the same way as there is a mechanically created false layer in which Lantano is directly responsible.

The central metaphor is that of the Unreconstructed M itself, the mutating robot whose shell is "uniform...a single surface"; "Printed", not made. A thing taking the imprint of a TV set not from outside but from within, moulding itself from inside. Beam looks at it, considering that it could form itself into any shape it wishes:

Bending he lifted the portable t-v unit and held it in his hands; he felt its weight move up his arms like a slow leaden fatigue. The Ultimate adversary, he thought; too stupid to be defeated. It was worse than an animal. it was a rock, solid and dense, lacking all qualities. Except, he thought, the quality of determination. It was determined to persist, to survive; a rock with will. He felt as if he were holding up the universe, and he put the unreconstructed M down. (p. 158)

The universe, made out of bits of God which form themselves into shapes which we may or may not take to be those of the phenomenal world of the senses around us: Marcus Aurelius again, the phenomenal world of rocks, the noumenal which could be God, or could be something entirely other, so feels Dick. What does the M reveal? Is its moulded "skin" like that of a man, containing a will? The M, like the inhabitants of Millgate, "cannot be educated, morally

corrected" while in its initial "biased" state. It has been turned from killer to murderer. It is defined by Tirol as *unreconstructed*, which also fits the Millgate inhabitants before their "saviour", Ted Barton, *reconstructs* them, makes them see their old town just as it was again. The M, unreconstructed, remains part of the world of Ahriman, or of God, or of Tirol himself. Beam, holding it, feels as though he holds the universe, a vast complex of unreconstructed phenomena which cannot be construed into their noumena, since the construction must come from those who are within it, who themselves need to be changed. The M is the essence of will, or survival, wrapped up in a self-made form. What distinguishes the M from Lantano, Beam, Ellen or Tirol, wills clothed in human form?

Those who fall fall a long way, far beyond the solar system into the outer stars, exiled to rural backwaters on the outskirts of the galaxy. Tirol travels as far as Betelgeuse and a small interstellar junction only to find that the transport systems here are run by Lantano and he has no hope of returning to Earth. Normally exiles are trying to reverse their falls, to reconstruct themselves, just as mankind generally is assumed by Christian ideology to be trying to reconstruct itself into its pre-lapsarian state. Why should Tirol define "education and moral correction" as re-construction? *M* could just as easily stand for *man* as *machine*.

We can be sure of nothing because we are encoded within the universe just as David Lantano's personal identity is mechanically encoded within the M. Within the M lies the narrative, its own, wherein Lantano killed Rosenberg.⁴⁸ Holding

⁴⁸ The killing of Rosenberg was, of course, a *cause célèbre* in 1950s America, Julius Rosenberg and his wife being convicted and executed on the grounds

in his hand the M, Beam holds a fiction, of which he is himself a part. The M is analogous to the narrative, a reconstructed part of the real universe. In wondering whether the universe is like the M, Beam momentarily raises the question of whether the evidence of the shared reality of the human world is not just as false and faked as the coded evidence within the M as to Lantano's guilt in the murder. Is our universe also preprogrammed with misleading information? Are we the slaves of Ahriman, or can we be *reconstructed* by a Bartonian saviour figure to the world of Ormazd?

The M interacts with the outside world, misleading it or illuminating it. The M is a narrative vehicle (literally a vehicle!) within a narrative whose agents take part in the narrative created by the M, and so forth. We have a Jamesian "Chinese Boxes" puzzle, mutually enclosing narratives.

In *The Man in the High Castle* the characters refer to several unreconstructed narrative forms, the *I Ching* and the Science-Fiction novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, which, like the M and their own universe, can be held and contemplated. Their world of an Axis victory is unreconstructed as is the novel within the novel. The question Beam almost asks, namely are we all living in an Unreconstructed M ourselves, *is* asked in *The Man in the High Castle*.

of selling atomic secrets to the Russians. The evidence against them was absurdly flimsy, and many on the left believed it to have been invented.

DIVINE COMEDY

Dick's homework for *High Castle* was remarkably thorough. Both Gregg Rickman and Paul Williams in their books *Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words* (1984) and *Only Apparently Real* (1986) make mention of the fact that the structure of *High Castle* was based directly on that of novels written by students of the French department of Tokyo University after World War Two. These novels, essentially based on the form of French realist novels, had a uniquely Japanese approach in which new characters were introduced in succeeding chapters and set on a course towards one another. However, this structure had its problems, as Dick commented to Paul Williams:

D: ...if you'll draw a diagram, you'll find that Childan is the first character, knows Tagomi, and ultimately they're all linked, but you can't say that any one character knows all the other characters. I once diagrammed it.

W: And you never brought them all together in one room.

D: No, 'cause I thought that was dumb. That was like, towards the end of this Japanese novel's structure, the grotesque scenes required to bring all of them together, it became most of the work was spent figuring out how to get 'em all together. (Williams, 1986, pp. 73-74)

It is very characteristic of Dick that he would look for a literary model which is this unorthodox, so much neither one thing nor another. He does not choose the structure of the French realist novel, nor that of the Japanese, but a peculiar hybrid, a reproduction, a translation. The novel engages in the same kind of imitation of Western forms as do Paul and Betty Kasoura with their faultless replication of pre-War Americana that still somehow manages to feel awkwardly Japanese. Except that *The Man in the High Castle* imitates an imitation of a translation: it is an American novel, copying the style of a

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Japanese novel which was copying the style of a French novel. It is at two stages of remove.

The influences on *High Castle* are cross-cultural to an extraordinary extent. It follows the kind of duplication and imitation trait in Japanese society which prompts Childan's characteristically racist and bitter comment, which retains, nevertheless, a chilling sense of eeriness:

What do you call that? I say that's just typical; just what you'd expect from a race that when told to duplicate a British destroyer managed even to copy the patches on the boiler as well as - (*High Castle*, ch. 11)

Western models will be incorporated into the Japanese consciousness so thoroughly that even mistakes will be duplicated, and Dick leaves us to wonder whether this stems from a desire for complete understanding, perfect knowledge, which is itself a sea-borne destroyer, *Syokaku*, or from a total understanding of the word "duplicate", again, perfect knowledge. Dick's own duplication, an imitation of an imitation, is well in keeping with the model of perfect knowledge which he provides for his characters in this novel, the *I Ching*, or Book of Changes. The edition from which he quotes is the Wilhelm text, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes. It is thus a translation of a translation, first from Chinese into German, then from German into English. Baynes is at one stage of remove from the original text, yet still in touch with the structure, the perfect knowledge. Just so, Kapitän Rudolf Wegener, under his pseudonym "Mr. Baynes", stands separated from true understanding of the Nazi mind with its "unbalanced quality, its psychotic streak", yet appreciates the consequences of "Operation Dandelion", works for those in the German establishment who oppose it without knowing whether these elements will be in power when he returns.

His code name, Baynes, recalls not only the German word for Bavaria, *Bayern*, Hitler's stronghold, but also Cary F. Baynes, translator of the translation of "perfect knowledge".

Thus we can see that Dick is playing off several inconsistencies. On the one hand there is the shock to our own concept of the "real" which we inherit from realist fiction, where, as we have already seen in connection with *3SPE*, we expect total duplication, as in the *candor*-world of Perky Pat, right down to the patches on the boiler. The destroyer is an image of the realist text just as much as the *Syokaku*. On the other hand there is the shifting sense of cultural identity, the switching of narrative viewpoint which throws authorial authority into question. Are those who are in authority in any more direct access to knowledge than the rest of us? Are they like the citizens of Millgate, Virginia, changed? The American administrators, the "puppet white government at Sacramento", hold power over Frank Frink's life yet may be "puppets" in a wider sense of the word than merely being the servants of their true masters, the Japanese. They are also "Cosmic Puppets", as are all the characters in the novel, doubly, being both subject to the influences of Ormazd and Ahriman, and also, of course, the author, Philip K. Dick. The insulting nick-name given them by the white Californians, *pinocs*, most obviously refers to *Pinocchio*, the famous hero of the Italian children's novel about a wooden puppet who dreams of being a real boy. The name Pinocchio can be broken up into two Italian particles: *pino* and *occhio*; *pine-eye*. An eye of wood, or wood in the eye, as in Christ's parable about the mote and the plank (Matthew 7. 3), or an eye whose vision is obscured (through a glass darkly?). They may possess the *pineal* eye, or second sight, making them equate with the faceless, perceiving Monads which rule Leo Bulero's life. But they are puppets nonetheless. The potential for

real power and authority, for perfect knowledge, lies tied to strings, manipulated by other people who may have more knowledge, or less.

An Italian word intruding into a Japanese context is yet another example of Dick's extraordinary cultural cross-matching. The three powers of this hypothetical Earth are culturally very distinct. The forms of the God-like and the Hell-layer for each is different. For the Japanese, the Hell-layer is represented in the *Bardo Thödol*, or *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. In the Nazi, German tradition, the agents of Hell and the Satan are figured by Goethe and Wagner, the *Faust* and *The Ring*. In the latter case, it is not for nothing that jewellery has such importance in the narrative, why Edfrank makes ear-rings, why Juliana wears them, asks for them, why the "squiggle" which so profoundly affects Mr. Tagomi should be, not a pin, but a ring-like object, a silver triangle. The Nazis have sold their souls, like Faust, and their Dr. Death, Herr Doktor Todt, digs roads for them recalling Faust's last act of digging ditches around the Earth, one of which becomes his own grave. The *Götterdämmerung* is drawing near.

For all the characters in *High Castle* it is a time of rethinking established values, either for starting afresh, as for Frink, Juliana, and to a certain extent Childan, or for thinking how to carry on, as for Tagomi and Baynes. *High Castle* is set in the middle of the pathway that Dante describes ("Nell mezzo del cammin di nostra vita..."), a pathway that can lead to Heaven or to Hell, or to both, such is the vision of Richard Hnatt, such is the nature of mid-life crisis represented in *High Castle*.

THE CIVIL WAR

Frank Frink dreams of leaving when he realises that he has probably been fired from his job by Wyndam-Matson. It is at this point that we realise that the map of Dick's hypothetical America is more complicated than we first imagined:

Plans roamed his mind as he lay in bed gazing up at the ancient light fixture in the ceiling. He could for instance slip across into the Rocky Mountain States. But it was loosely banded to the P.S.A., and might extradite him. What about the South? His body recoiled. Ugh. Not that. As a white man he would have plenty of place, in fact more than he had here in the P.S.A. But... he did not want that kind of place.

And, worse, the South had a cat's cradle of ties, economic, ideological, and god knew what, with the Reich. And Frank Frink was a Jew. (*High Castle*, ch. 1)

The South is evidently as notionally independent of the Reich as the Rocky Mountain States, although closely bound to it. The South is a separate state, one where white men have "high place", higher than they have in the Japanese sector; "place" presumably over the blacks. Frink recoils when he thinks of it. The Nazis have exterminated most, if not all, of the Negroes in Africa, and those which remain in the P.S.A. are slaves. The South, we can but assume, is a massive slave state, run by a white minority who enjoy supreme power over their slaves. Yet they are not Nazis, the South is not Reich territory. The South is therefore the southern, rebel, states of America as they would have been had the Confederacy won the American Civil War instead of the Union. Once we realise this we can see why the R.M.S. and the P.S.A. are as they are. These are not the states into which the Nazis and the Japanese have divided the U.S.A. *after* the end of World War Two in 1947, but how they were *before 1941*, after the victory of the Confederate States of America in the Civil War.

The hints as to the South's victory are veiled in the extreme, but significant. The Colt .44 of 1860, shown by Childan to Frink, while the latter is in mufti, points us to the battle of the Second Bull Run. It is interesting that Childan should choose this as a "for instance" battle, as it was a dramatic Confederate victory. General Lee's forces, although heavily outnumbered, inflicted severe losses on the Union army. This is a very nebulous hint. There are more definite, and incontrovertible clues available:

'...Listen. *I met Rommel*. In New York, when I was there on business, in 1948.' Actually he had only seen the Military Governor of the U.S.A. at a reception in the White House, and at a distance. (ch. 5)

Why should the White House be in New York all of a sudden? If the Germans had chosen to base their capital in New York why should they go to the trouble of building another White House when they could have used the existing one in Washington? The answer lies in the fact that this is an America divided by Civil War into three nation states. At the time of the original secession by the Confederacy to form the C.S.A., four slave states remained loyal to the Union; Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware. It was Lincoln's judicious retention of these border states within the Union which made possible the eventual invasion and conquest of the South, even though in order to do this he had to soft-peddle his strong abolitionist stand. Early in the Civil War Maryland was under strong Confederate attack, the Union army sustaining losses in the Battle of the Potomac, for example. Within Maryland lies the District of Columbia and within D.C. lies Washington. The Southern forces were eager to take Washington not only for its strategic importance, but also for the demoralising effect the seizure of the capital would have on the Union. In Dick's version of the Civil War it is clear that they succeeded.

Speculation as to the borders of the C.S.A. is possible from a few clues in *High Castle*, but it is difficult to be very certain as to the extent of the Confederacy. Nowhere in Abendsen's alternative history of post-War America do we hear the name of Harry S. Truman mooted as a possible successor to Roosevelt. Truman was born in Missouri, and if Dick envisages the capitulation of Maryland he may well assume the absorption of all four slave states into the C.S.A.. Garner, Roosevelt's vice president and in the *High Castle* version of history, president after Roosevelt's assassination, was born in Red River County in Texas, an area which at the time of the Civil War was either loyal to the Union, or indeed uninhabited. Although nominally included in the Confederate Territories, with such a level of support in terms of man-power, and an emphasis placed on sustaining rather than expanding territory (inevitable were the less populated South to win) Dick is most likely right in suggesting that this area of Texas would have reverted to the Union. Garner would have been a citizen of the U.S.A..

The Pacific States of America would likewise still have been a part of the Union before World War Two. Since California and Oregon had been loyal to the Union before the Civil War, there is no reason to assume they would not have remained part of the U.S.A. afterwards. As for the Rocky Mountain States, these had not been granted statehood at the time of the outbreak of the Civil War and were largely unsettled, and technically non-aligned. As a landlocked nation, with the U.S.A. to the West and the East, the R.M.S. would have needed to form close ties with the U.S.A.. These states form the buffer zone between the Japanese controlled P.S.A. and the German U.S.A. in Dick's divided America. That the Confederate States of America could have outstripped the U.S.A. in terms of wealth and influence, leaving the North a deprived backwater, as Ward Moore suggests in Moore, 1953, is quite untenable, since with its much smaller

population and almost exclusively agricultural economy, the C.S.A. would have been on the same footing as any other South American republic, such as Argentina, Brazil or Mexico. The aim of the C.S.A. could never have been the conquest of the North, but the protection of its borders. That a nation with an export economy based on raw materials would have been able to out-perform the industrial base of the North with all its technological advantage, let alone undertake the conquest of Mexico and Peru with the shattered economy that the Civil War left to it, does seem fanciful in the extreme. There is no question that Dick's vision of Southern victory is by far the more realistic, the C.S.A. being relatively unimportant as a competitor to the U.S.A., such that Frank Frink's reference to it is the only direct allusion that we are given.

McKinley Kantor's speculative novel, *If the South Had Won the Civil War* (1961) suggests a similar scenario to that which Dick describes in *High Castle*. He also imagines a Southern victory involving the seizure of Washington, but places the new Union capital in Columbus, Ohio, rather than New York. The secession of the South is shortly followed by the middle American states forming a third nation, the Republic of Texas, analogous to Dick's R.M.S.. Kantor, however, does not imagine any other changes to the course of history consequent on these variations, save for the failure of Seward to purchase Alaska from Russia. He does not suggest any change in the outcomes of the two World Wars. Kantor's vision of a divided America seems very little different to the world as it is. The Civil War would seem to have been an historical irrelevance as far as Kantor is concerned, so much so that he proposes the three North American nations sitting down at the conference table come 1960 and negotiating for re-union.

The crucial difference which Kantor injects into his history which results in the change is the surprise death of General Grant, being thrown from his

horse before the Battle of Gettysberg, in place of the actual state of affairs in which the Southern General "Stonewall" Jackson was accidentally killed by his own men while riding at this same critical moment. Dick was probably well aware of this book. An article based on it appeared first in *Look* magazine in November 1960. *Look's* readers liked it enough for the publishers to commission William L. Shirer to write a companion piece entitled "If Hitler Had Won the Second World War" (1961). As Shirer is one of Dick's quoted sources, the close conjunction of these two pieces can hardly have escaped his attention.

In this changed view of the Civil War, what is the role of Lincoln? It is worth considering what features Roosevelt and Lincoln have in common. Both led their country into war, and to victory. Both were re-elected president in wartime, the only presidents of the union to be so elected. Most interesting in the context of *High Castle* is that fact that neither lived to see the fruits of their victories. Roosevelt died less than a month before V.E. day; Lincoln was assassinated by actor John Wilkes Booth only five days after President Jefferson Davis's surrender. Of course for the characters in *High Castle*, both would have been assassinated, or would they? Can we be sure that in this alternative world Lincoln was assassinated? Was Lincoln's strength to be found in his qualities of leadership in reconstruction?

That Dick was familiar with Carl Sandburg's biography of Lincoln is certain, since he refers to it specifically in *We Can Build You* (1972), the novel he wrote directly after writing *The Man in the High Castle*. In *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years* (1939), Sandburg tells the life story of Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth, and includes the following passage:

In April '61, when Booth played with a stock company in Albany, the leading lady, Miss Henrietta Irving, rushed into his room at Stanwix Hall and with a dirk tried to stab him, landing only a light cut on his face,

then she retired to her own room and stabbed herself, though not seriously...

...A trifle short for heroic roles, noted Charles Wyndham, "he made up for the lack by his extraordinary presence and magnetism...He was the idol of women. They would rave of him, his voice, his hair, his eyes."(Sandburg, 1939, Vol. 4, p. 315)

Sandburg mentions the actor Charles Wyndham only the once in his biography. He is an independent witness, someone who knew Booth, the reference points to the attempted assassination of the assassin. Wyndam-Matson's name draws us to this reference in Sandburg's book, as does Matson. Matson was a slave owner whom Lincoln defended, a defence that was intended to fail so that slaves would be granted their freedom by default (Sandburg, 1926, Vol. 1, p. 332). Both references lead back to Lincoln, naturally enough, but to what end? The first is to the possible death of the assassin, the second is to a deceit undertaken for a noble cause, a legal defence that was in truth a prosecution, a transaction of Lincoln's where the underlying reality was at odds with the surface reality, where *Lincoln lost a case deliberately*. This reference, in the context of *High Castle*, points us toward the Civil War itself, also, ostensibly, fought over the issue of slavery. In the version in which Wyndam-Matson lives it too has been *lost by Lincoln*. Wyndam-Matson's name symbolises the conjunction of clues as to the outcome of the Civil War in the world of *High Castle*, and also to the nature of his covert activity, producing false Civil War artifacts. Wyndam-Matson's fake Civil War firearms never fought in the "real" war, but can still be used:

'A Colt .44 is a Colt .44,' he called to the girl as he hurried back into the living room. 'It has to do with bore and design, not when it was made. It has to do with -' (*High Castle*, ch. 5)

Mr. Tagomi, towards the end of the novel, is to use one of Wyndam-Matson's guns in combat against the "S.D. thugs" who are dispatched to attack the Nippon

Times Building in order to kill Wegener. They work very well, confirming Wyndam-Matson's contention as to their effectiveness.

By creating fake Civil War guns, but guns which actually work, Wyndam-Matson is, by implication, creating a fake Civil War, a version of the war which never happened, like a false memory. As in *Through the Looking Glass*, the mirror frame is a boundary only in so far as we cannot see what lies beyond it, but the implied extratextual world extends further. As long as people believe in the weapons, a false world in which they actually *were* used in battle is temporary created. This is the real import of Wyndam-Matson's musing to Rita on the nature of the "historicity" of the Zippo lighter in Roosevelt's pocket:

'I don't believe either of these two lighters belonged to Franklin Roosevelt,' the girl said.

Wyndam-Matson giggled. 'That's my point! I'd have to prove it to you with some sort of document. A paper of authenticity. And so it's all a fake, a mass delusion. The paper proves its worth, not the object itself!' (ch. 5)

The authentic is as false and insubstantial as the fake. Thus Wyndam-Matson's fake Civil War stands alongside the real one: who is to say that one is more real than the other? Only the outcome can determine that. If the Civil War were to be faked in this context, there would only be one fake outcome, that of a Union victory. Wyndam-Matson's first surname refers us to John Wilkes Booth because, in the world of *High Castle*, *no-one would ever have heard of him*. Had the South won, Booth's revenge killing would have been pointless. History would have ignored him. Had he died in Henrietta Irving's attack it would have made no more difference to history than if he had lived, his sole effect on it was that he killed Lincoln. The victory of the South is a symbolic "death" for Booth, his historical death, the loss of his role, his great part.

The other possibility open to us is that the Union won *and* Booth died. In creating a false Civil War, Wyndam-Matson is prefiguring this optimal outcome just as much as fiction writer Hawthorne Abendsen. The implied alternative fiction calls for a missing Lincoln, the Lincoln of the reconstruction, it is this role which needs to be filled. It is part of this implied role that *Abendsen* takes on by *reconstructing* the world, in fiction, in a way different to both our world and that of the Nazi conquerors in the framing novel. The world of a positive reconstruction, the world of Lincoln.

Wyndam-Matson stands at the turning point of the novel in many ways. He is a perspective viewpoint. He appears once only in the novel and yet he is given a position of privilege, in the terms that Dick offers them, in that the chapter section is written from his point of view. Childan, Tagomi, Reiss, Baynes/Wegener, Juliana and Frank Frink are the only other viewpoint characters, each of whom appears several times in the novel. *Wyndam-Matson's other function* is to point towards various possible outcomes, to the fictional world of his own manufactured history, to the "real" version of history which Philip K. Dick has manufactured, and to the idea of the falsity of the whole concept of the authentic, even in our world. Wyndam-Matson is a fiction maker, an artificer creating an alternative history in terms of physical objects just as much as Abendsen does with ideas. He, like Richard Hnatt, points us towards the rising and the falling, the ethereal above, or the hell-layer beneath. His name is further a combination of elements, the *yin* and the *yang*: *W* and *M* both reflect and oppose one another, like the *yin* and *yang* signs, they interlock and contain an element of the other within each, the *V* element (victory?).

Heaven or hell, "win" or "damn", *yin* or *yang*, "*mater*/mother" or "son": whilst Wyndam-Matson is a potent symbol (in many ways, witness that we encounter him

proving his potency with Rita) he is not a knowing symbol. He, unlike Knatt, is not able to analyse the relative values of the possible worlds he has created. He stands as an unmoved mover in the narrative, an object of terror and anger to Frank Frink, a cause of great anxiety to Robert Childan, but without the ability to analyse the whole situation. He exactly balances Hawthorne Abendsen, who likewise does not reflect and analyse the implication of his "discovery" of the world of an Allied victory. The arrival of Juliana into his life causes him to examine this role for the first time, forces him to ask the Oracle the test question about the authenticity of his created world. Likewise Wyndam-Matson does not begin to think seriously about the wider implications of his self-satisfied theories of the false and the real until a woman comes into *his* life and starts to upset the apple-cart. Rita makes these issues real for him, and connects him with Abendsen directly by quoting the book *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Neither Abendsen nor Wyndam-Matson are pleased by these revelations, neither accept their implications fully.

Wyndam-Matson's own vision is very similar to that of Joe Cinnadella, admiring of the Nazi's achievements, refusing to accept the possibility of their losing. After all, had he not seen Rommel in the White House in New York?

The Germans make war on the United States of America. They invade and conquer a nation of twenty states in the East, the three on the Pacific coast surrendering to Japan, whose capital is New York. The Germans respect the neutrality of the C.S.A., whose capital is Washington, a nation which, like Spain in its Civil War, had already won its battle to establish a fascist state:

And then too, he might see a slave. German and South ships docked at the port of San Francisco all the time, and blacks occasionally were allowed off for short intervals. (*High Castle*, ch. 2)

Were it not for the evidence of the relocated White House we might draw the conclusion that the Germans, in over-running the U.S.A. had decided to run time backwards, undoing preceding, unifying events in history to a more divisive outcome. As in *Counter Clock World*, causality would run madly into reverse while human consciousness, unchanged, looks on helplessly. Abendsen's vision looks forwards to an America struggling to consolidate its victory in World War Two by moving to a new unity, until it comes to look like the undivided U.S.A. of our own world. Dick cunningly leaves no discernible evidence to point to whether or not Abendsen's world presupposes a Confederate victory or not. Certainly one would imagine that Rita would have commented upon this fact had she been aware of it. Alternatively, Abendsen's plot may be so well concealed, as well as Philip K. Dick's own, that we may be as hard pushed to untangle the evidence of a Confederate defeat in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* as we are to uncover evidence to the contrary in *The Man in the High Castle*. Dick is not only parodying himself, but setting up subtle parallels between his role and that of Abendsen.

ROOSEVELT AND HUME

In the world of *High Castle*, Franklin Delano Roosevelt is assassinated in Miami, Vice-President Garner takes over as President and is succeeded by the Republican, Bricker. In the world of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Roosevelt survives the assassination attempt and is elected for a second term. He is succeeded by Rexford Tugwell, who successfully thwarts the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour by putting the U.S. fleet to sea at the time of the raid. America and the Allies win the War, avoiding the mistakes of the weak leadership of Garner and Bricker which led to defeat:

'Abendsen's theory is that Roosevelt would have been a terribly strong President. As strong as Lincoln. He showed it in the year he was President, all those measures he introduced...' (*High Castle*, ch. 5)

It is here that Dick's homework comes to look really impressive. Fact is stranger than fiction:

NEW YORK, FEB. 16.

The presence of mind and courage of a slight, middle-aged woman, Mrs. W. F. Cross, did much to save Mr. Roosevelt, President-elect, from the attack made on him last night by a crazy Italian at Miami, Florida (as reported in the later editions of *The Times* yesterday).

Five other people, however, were wounded, and two of them, Mr. Anton Cermak, Mayor of Chicago, and a Mrs. Joseph Gill of Miami, are in a serious condition. Mrs. Cross, who is the wife of a Miami physician, seized the arm of the would-be assassin, Giuseppe Zangara, who stood beside her on a bench, and diverted his aim.

After the shooting, Mr. Roosevelt hurried Mr. Cermak to hospital in his car and then, instead of taking the train for the north as he had intended, returned to the Nourmahal, Mr. Vincent Astor's yacht, to await the outcome of Mr. Cermak's injury. Although the bullet which struck Mr. Cermak lodged in one of his vertebrae after traversing his diaphragm and skirting his liver, surgeons decided not to attempt to remove it.

When Mr. Roosevelt went to the hospital this morning, Mr. Cermak's condition was slightly improved by rest, but Mrs. Gill, who had been wounded in the abdomen, was sinking rapidly. She smiled when Mr.

Roosevelt spoke to her, but afterwards became so weak that she had to be given a blood transfusion. The other three persons struck by Zangara's bullets are all to be discharged from hospital to-day or to-morrow.

The attack on Mr. Roosevelt occurred at 9. 45 p.m., just after he had finished a two minute speech from his motor-car to a crowd of 20,000 persons. Previously, after coming ashore at the end of a fishing trip in the Nourmahal, he had taken part in a motor-car parade through the city and had received the congratulations of the city officials...

...Zangara was seized by bystanders, and knocked down by a policeman with a baton. He is a small man, hardly 5ft. 2in. and offered no resistance. While he was being taken to the police station he showed no concern for his victims. He said he was glad he "got" Mr. Cermak. He had shot at Mr. Roosevelt because he hated anyone rich and powerful.

At the gaol Zangara repeated this statement, adding that he had been in constant torment from a stomach operation. He had read in a newspaper two days before that Mr. Roosevelt was coming to Miami by boat and he had determined to kill him. He had bought a .32 calibre revolver for \$8 from a shop in Miami. Once before, ten years ago, he had bought a revolver in Italy, with which to kill King Victor Emmanuel. He was a brick mason, 33 years old, of Hackensack, New Jersey. He had been in Miami two months, and had gone there for his health, but his health had grown worse. "I would kill every President," he said to the police. "I would kill every officer."

Zangara said many irrational things, and the police believe his mind deranged by his physical sufferings. They do not believe that anyone else was associated with him in his crime, but as a precaution they have arrested an Italian with whom he was sharing rooms.

Last night, President Hoover telegraphed to Mr. Roosevelt, saying that he rejoiced he had not been injured and asking for news of Mr. Cermak's condition. Mr. Roosevelt sent a cordial reply this morning. (*The Times of London*, Friday, February 17, 1933, p. 12d)

Had Roosevelt died, John Nance ("Cactus Jack") Garner would indeed have been President. Garner had done so well in the primaries that for a time it looked as though he would be the Democratic nomination for the Presidency and not Roosevelt. What of the other Presidents? John William Bricker could easily have been a contender. He was a Republican Senator, born in 1893 in Ohio, and was Attorney General under Roosevelt from 1933 to 1937. Abendsen's successor

to Roosevelt in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Rexford Tugwell, was also a real man.⁴⁹

Rexford Guy Tugwell, B.S., M.A., Ph.D., Litt.D., was born in 1891 in Springfield, New York, and educated at Pennsylvania University. A close associate of Roosevelt, he was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in 1933; Undersecretary and Administrator Resettlement Administration, 1934-37; Chairman, New York City planning committee, 1938-41; and Governor of Puerto Rico from 1941. Tugwell was, as this thumb-nail sketch of his career suggests, a fine civil servant and administrator, but not really a serious contender for major political office. It would take a very different Tugwell to find himself standing for President:

'His theory is that instead of an isolationist like Bricker, in 1940, after Roosevelt, Rexford Tugwell would have been President...And he would have been very active in continuing the Roosevelt anti-Nazi policies...'
(*High Castle*, ch. 5)

The joke is that Roosevelt was an archetypal isolationist, and that Tugwell, as advisor to Roosevelt, recommended he be *more* isolationist than he actually was:

Roosevelt adhered firmly to Stimson's conviction that the sovereignty of the Republic of China was to be maintained, and that Japanese aggression was to be condemned. Friends had cautioned the President-elect that this rigid moralistic stance toward Japan would create difficulties in American Japanese relations and perhaps lead to war. Rexford Tugwell, Raymond Moley, and Louis Wehle had warned Roosevelt of the dangers of implacably opposing Japanese ambitions, but their criticisms of Stimson seem to have had no effect on the President. (Kinsella, 1978, p. 44)

⁴⁹ Biographical information on Bricker and Tugwell is drawn from *Who's Who in America; 1944-45*, Marquis, Chicago, 1944, p. 233 and p. 2156.

Likewise, having the U.S. fleet at sea at the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour would not have been so crucial a manoeuvre as Abendsen's readers imagine, since we know that in the *real* world, the raid on Pearl Harbour was successful, and yet America still defeated Japan. Abendsen treats this attack as decisive to the outcome of the War, yet, although it was a great setback to the Americans, they still overcame the Japanese navy, the decisive battles being Midway and the Philippines. Abendsen has unwittingly keyed in on one factor that is the same in our world as it is in Dick's alternative world, but has drawn the wrong conclusions from it. This scenario is further complicated by the state of U.S. isolationism at that time which meant that, had it not been for the success of the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbour, the United States may very well have remained neutral in the Second World War.

Dick's cast of potential Presidents are all real people, yet they all seem very subtly changed. It is difficult to see how Bricker or Tugwell could have become President, no matter what the circumstances, in our world neither ever ran for office. Dick is giving us a clue that his version of history is different even *before* Roosevelt's assassination. He gives us another clue. Rita tells Wyndam-Matson that Roosevelt would have been a very strong President had he lived, as strong as Lincoln, "he showed it in the year he was President...", and yet "all those measures he introduced" would have stayed on the drawing board had Roosevelt actually died in Zangara's attack.

Roosevelt was *elected* in November 1932. He was *inaugurated* in March 1933. Zangara's assassination attempt took place on February 15th 1933. Had Zangara succeeded, Roosevelt would have died in the last weeks of Herbert Hoover's Presidency without ever having achieved office at all. Abendsen's dates are exactly a year out. History was different *before* 1933 in the world of *High*

Castle, and Dick clearly signals that it was not Roosevelt's death alone that brought about an Axis victory.

The nature of this prior change is, as already noted, a Southern victory in the American Civil War.

High Castle sets up sequences of changes in history and challenges us to link them in a causal relationship. Can we say that if the South had won the American Civil War the Nazis would have won the Second World War? Is there a direct causal connection between the two events? Dick scrambles our ideas of causality by mixing his false wars with aspects of our actual ones. Absurdly we have Hess's flight to Britain left in, although the destination subtly changed to England instead of Scotland, and we are left to ponder why such an event should remain the same in both versions of World War Two. Does Hess fly to Britain in Abendsen's version of events also? Dick challenges us to unscramble his other changes and decide whether or not they have a significance. Surely, we feel, the further back a change occurs, the more causally significant it will be.

In Ray Bradbury's short story "A Sound of Thunder"⁵⁰ a future travel company offers big-game hunters the chance to go after really Big Game. For a hefty fee they can travel backwards in time to the age of the giant reptiles and have their pictures taken astride a felled Tyrannosaur. Naturally, the beast must be one which would have died at that precise moment anyway, so that the course of history will be unaltered. Any disturbance in the food chain no matter how

⁵⁰ *Collier's*, June 28, 1952. Collected in *The Golden Apples of the Sun and R Is for Rocket*.

small could be amplified over millions of years and have unguessable consequences in the present. The bullets must be picked out of the carcass and the hunters must not leave the special antiseptic gangway lest their feet contaminate the ground. One hunter panics and disobeys this command, and when the party returns they find history has been subtly altered. On the company's billboards, the advertisements are now spelt in a crude, phonetic script instead of the familiar English orthography. Just before the hunters left, a Neo-Fascist party led by a fanatic, ominously named *Deutscher*, had lost the U.S. Presidential election. They now find that *Deutscher* is President. On the sole of the panicked hunter's shoe there is a dead prehistoric butterfly. The butterfly's offspring would have fed insect-eating reptiles, which would have fallen prey to other dinosaurs, and so on for millions of years, all fail to be born. A tiny change is amplified over time into a slightly bigger change. The frightened hunter hears the sound of thunder for the last time when the tour operator shoots him.

Dick produced a witty parody of "A Sound of Thunder" in his 1954 short story, "Meddler",⁵¹ and explored the theme of time-travel in greater detail in his 1960 novel *Dr. Futurity*. In many ways *High Castle* can be seen to have the Bradbury story in the background. There is a change in the past which brings about the victory of the *Deutscher*, the Germans, and the control of America to the Fascists. As "Meddler" shows, Dick was aware of Bradbury's work, and would expect his readers to pick up the allusions not only in that story, but in *High Castle* as well. So where is Dick's tiny change, where is the crushed butterfly in this vision of a world remade?

⁵¹ Collected in *The Golden Man*.

There is a very significant difference between Bradbury's story and what Dick is doing in *High Castle*. "A Sound of Thunder" falls into the same loose category of time-paradox stories as Ward Moore's novel about Southern victory in the Civil War, *Bring the Jubilee* (1953). A time traveller returns to Gettysberg merely as an observer and unintentionally changes the course of history so that the Union win the battle. His time-machine is, in the process, uninvented, and he is thus trapped in the nineteenth century. Moore's novel is fairly straightforward in its use of the time-travelling device. There are no hints that this alternative history was different before the intervention of the traveller at Gettysberg. There are amusing aspects in the alternative twentieth century. On a grand scale, World War Two does not occur, on a smaller scale of change, we discover a reference to a Swiss police commissioner and expert in the art of phrenology called Carl Gustav Jung. *It is an interesting thought* that Jung could have been so different by way of a change in American history.

Moore's novel has many problems. The time-machine is introduced right at the end, with very little justification for its being there. Historically there are absurdities, as noted above. Moore's novel is a whimsy, but there is no question that Dick was familiar with it. The crucial difference between *Bring the Jubilee* and *High Castle* is not in the representations of history, nor the accuracy of research, but in the assumptions made about the nature of the "real" world. For Moore, the world the reader knows, the world in which he writes, is the real. It is this world that is established at the end of the novel. The time-traveller creates our modern world by the change he makes in the Civil War, the accidental killing of a vital officer. Implicit is the idea that we ourselves were, like Jung, completely different in the previous version of reality, but we have no memory of that now, it is uncreated and swept away, the only trace of it is in the journals of the time-traveller, which form the

basis of the novel. Bradbury also presupposes a "real" version of history, which when lost causes the tour operator to vent his fury upon the hapless time-traveller who lost it. The travellers themselves are not changed by their meddling.⁵² *High Castle* eschews the idea of a definite external reality to which we are comfortably returned at the story's end, or uncomfortably denied as in "A Sound of Thunder". Dick also speculates on the difficulty of trying to alter the past at all. In *Dr. Futurity* a man plucked from the present to help a group of fanatics in the future, is employed to travel backwards in time to prevent a murder from taking place. When the traveller arrives, however, to his horror he finds that, by accident, he himself is the murderer. He has been sent to try to prevent something that he ends up causing. The paradox of Oedipus and the Oracle makes the past a very intractable thing, and highly resistant to change. Although *Dr. Futurity* was written not long before *High Castle*, there are no time-travelling meddlers at work in the latter novel. It is very interesting that Dick scrupulously keeps them out of this narrative. This is how things *are* in the world of *High Castle*. The meddler who has wrought the changes is the novelist, Philip K. Dick, himself.

Were we following Bradbury's logic, we would expect the greatest changes to be wrought by the earliest events. Yet Dick confuses us by putting in a number of different changes. There are two instead of one to worry about. Roosevelt dies in Zangara's attack; the South wins the Civil War. Is the first the result

⁵² Moore does not ponder the interesting paradox that if the traveller causes the inventor of his time-machine to fail to be born, his machine would not have been made and so the traveller could not have used it to travel to Gettysberg to change the battle, so the inventor *would* have been born, so the traveller *could* have changed the battle, and then the machine would never have been made, so he would not have been able to go...and so on, round and around forever.

of the second? Can we really be sure that either of these events would have meant that the Axis would have won World War Two? Dick is defying us to pin the tail on the donkey, to say exactly why it was that the Germans won the War. Was it that a butterfly died in the age of the dinosaurs? Is that Dick's crucial difference? How far back do we need to go in Dick's imagined world before their history and ours converge? Is history causal?

For Dick, as for David Hume, there can be no such assumption. If event *A* invariably precedes event *B*, can we say that *A causes B*? Is it more accurate to say, as would Hume, that event *B* always invariably follows event *A*, but there is no actual *provable* connection between them. Thus we live in a universe with time made of sequences which follow certain patterns, but patterns which are not linked by anything other than sequence. Causality cannot be inferred directly from experience. Time therefore, does not exist, it is merely a construct of human consciousness. The world of *High Castle* is an acausal world, the world of Hume, a world where, as in *Counter Clock World*, time is perceived purely in terms of human events.

A world without a concept of cause and effect is not necessarily the same as one without causality. All that Hume, and Dick, are asking us to assume is that, far from apples occasionally falling upwards, and occasionally downwards, what we have taken to be causal is merely casual. The fact that the apple's hitting the ground always invariably follows the falling allows us to make reasonable judgements about future events, yet it does not prove that there is any *direct* link between them. It is easy to make absurd causal connections. That night always invariably follows day does not mean that day *causes* night. If prehistoric Britons invariably practised human sacrifice on the winter solstice it was fairly easy for them to come to believe that the sacrifice *caused* the sun

to rise higher in the sky again the next year. Rejecting causality does not mean expecting apples to float in the air, but it does mean being very careful about making predictions and judgements based on assumed causal relationships.

Another point worth noting here is that in an acausal universe, actions would not have causal consequences. They would *appear* to have, but this would be a purely human judgement. Or rather, a purely human interpretation. Dick is here squaring some very contrary ideas. One gives us Hume's unproven causality, the other gives us the very definite formula of actions leading to punishments or rewards given us by the world's major religions, especially Christianity and Buddhism. Philosophically, actions may be non-consequent, even though our experience may say otherwise. Religion expects good actions to be rewarded in Heaven and evil punished in Hell.

Of course, problems of causality and the connections between the human world and the divine are nothing new in literature. Langland's *Piers the Plowman* was worrying about precisely these issues in the fourteenth century. It is all very well for Piers to be told that if he do well he will gain heaven and if he do ill he will go to hell, when this equation is presupposing exactly the causal relationship between the human and the divine that he had begun to question, without resolving it one way or the other. If, after Hume, this problem is extended to call into question the nature of causal relationships even within the human world, the matter of the divine becomes even further away from direct knowledge.

The *Bardo Thödol* or *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, is traditionally recited to a corpse so that the spirit in the *Bardo* plane may hear and learn to avoid the route to rebirth which it will otherwise inevitably follow. To suggest an

acausal universe is to call into question the basis of most religions which found their beliefs on a series of scalar values consequent on conduct in the human sphere. Alternatively, of course, one can assume an acausal divine world, one in which there is no divine intelligence *deciding* the relative merits or otherwise of specific individuals, but one in which, as in the human world, event *B* will invariably follow event *A* without necessarily being causally connected to it.

Cause and effect are factors in the lives of many of Dick's characters, factors which may mutate and be transformed by personal interpretation. In *Eye in the Sky*, the characters are treated to a whole series of alarming subjective worlds in which other people's views of the universe are taken as the basis of all the physical laws of that universe.

The eight accident victims in the proton beam at the Bevatron plant are linked together into one collective consciousness, in much the same way as the wired-up brains in cold-pac in *Ubik*. The one mind the closest to full consciousness becomes dominant and retains the ability to control the way in which reality is interpreted in the unreal, dream world they all inhabit. As the spirits in the *Bardo* plane, as Joe Chip and the other inertials in *Ubik*, the accident victims are unaware that they are in an unreal, subjective world under the interpretation of another mind. They perceive their surroundings as the same as before the accident, and their lives appear to continue in the expected way, until, that is, things start to go wrong:

Exasperated, Hamilton said, 'We probably fell into a bunch of safety gadgets. Goddam it-'

There was more he wanted to say, but he never got it out. At that moment a stark, fierce pain lashed up his right leg. With a yell he leaped up, banged his head on the roof of the car. Pawing frantically, he yanked up his trouser leg in time to see a small, winged creature scuttle off. (*Eye in the Sky*, ch. 3)

The creature is a bee, a relative of the insects which serve Ahriman in *Cosmic Puppets* and the creature which scuttles away from under Leo Bulero's desk in the dream version of New York in *3SPE*. At first Jack Hamilton can think of no significance for its attack, but the significance is that it is informing him that the world in which he now lives is one in which significance is coded into all events, by an outside agency. When a joke is made in questionable taste the retribution is unquestionable, a plague of locusts descends on the Hamiltons' living room. The next morning the guide who took the party around the plant arrives and introduces himself to Jack as Bill Laws:

They shook hands. 'You've figured it out apparently, When did you figure it out?'

'Some time between last night and this morning.'

'Anything special happen?'

Hamilton told him about the rain of locusts and the bee. 'It wasn't hard to see the causal hookup. I lied - so I got punished. And before that I blasphemed - and I got punished. Cause and effect.' (ch. 4)

The seven unconscious accident victims have been caught in the subjective world of Arthur Silvester, a war veteran and true believer in the obscure cult of the Bayan of the Second Bab, a strange cross between Christianity and Islam. God punishes disobedience with instant, actual retribution. Hamilton goes to visit an old friend of his who once tried to hire him as a graduate, and now, having lost his job, goes to see if Tillingford will employ him. He is shocked to discover that Tillingford's research project is a telephone link between the Earth and Heaven. Also, interestingly, Tillingford reveals a changed, alternative history:

'Norbert Wiener,' Tillingford said, 'You recall his work in cybernetics. And even more important, Enrico Destini's work in the field of theophonics...Using Wiener's work and the invaluable work of Shannon and Weaver, Destini was able to set up the first really adequate system of communications between Earth and Heaven in 1946. Of course he had the use of all the equipment from the War Against the Pagan Hoards, those damned Wotan-worshipping Oak-Tree-Praising Huns.'

'You mean the Nazis?'

'I'm familiar with that term. That's sociologist jargon isn't it? And that Denier of the Prophet, that Anti-Bab. They say he's still alive down in Argentina. Found the elixir of eternal youth or something. He made that pact with the Devil in 1939, you remember. Or was that before your time? But you know about it - it's history.' (ch. 4)

However, it is not *our* history. Like Carroll's mirror, the other side shows us a little, and implies a great deal more. Beyond the edges of the frame it stretches out. If Hamilton and the others are around, then somewhere there must be a Dr. Tillingford, and he must be doing something, even if it is nothing like the physics *we* know. This is history as far as Silvester is concerned, according to his subjective interpretation of reality there is nothing wrong with a telephone line to God, or slot machines which work on prayer rather than money. This is partly the world as he believes it to be, partly the world as it would be if he were in charge, which, under these special circumstances, he is. Intriguingly, the centre of the Babiist faith is in Cheyenne, Wyoming, the home of Hawthorne Abendsen in *High Castle*. The Sepulchre of the Second Bab is the hub of a driving force which operates everything in an unreal, alternative world, the only place where that world can be understood, provided that you choose to accept that world. The other centre is in the mind of Silvester, and it is to him that the remaining seven go to seek their freedom. By choosing Cheyenne for Abendsen's home, Dick is playfully referring back to himself, to the centre of knowledge in his other alternative history, the place where another alternative dwells.

Eye in the Sky does not stay with Silvester. Many other crash victims take centre-stage and dominate the others' universe. This is really the prototype Dickian novel, with the final ending raising the question that the real world outside may really be only another subjective reality. It is this question that *High Castle* draws out. In Silvester's world, cause and effect exist because

they are *his* causes and *his* effects. In the Bayan of the Second Bab, he has supplied a version of perfect knowledge which can be used as a key to his universe. In *High Castle*, Dick supplies his cast with the *I Ching*.

The provision of meaningful books is a strong theme in *High Castle*. Mr. Tagomi paradoxically uses the writings of W. S. Gilbert to decode his instructions from Tokyo, a metaphorical code the Germans cannot break. Bab, was incidentally, the pseudonym Gilbert used to sign his cartoon drawings and his early comic songs, so here we have another "Bayan". The *Bardo Thödol* helps Mr. Tagomi to interpret his sojourn in our world, but it is with the *I Ching* that Dick has the focus of his novel.

The hope that becomes a nightmare for the characters in *3SPE* and that preoccupies the pilgrims of *VALIS*, is held out by the *I Ching*. The hope that, through participation in random activity, something of the underlying reality of the universe, of the god-like figure out of whom the entire universe is constructed, can be discerned. In *3SPE*, we have already seen Dick's dissatisfaction with this idea, the concept of it breaking down when the universe is constructed out of someone else's psyche, not the divine figure we had hoped for but something much more mortal. The precursor to this is to be found in *Eye in the Sky*. *High Castle* examines the medial position, and also examines Dick's own faith, or otherwise, in the *I Ching* and in the Christian Bible.

Dick's deconstruction of the causal in his fiction challenges reader ability to make reasoned predictions about the narrative in a way similar to that of the unsettling effect of precognitives and telepaths in his *psi*-novels. It likewise calls into question the direct causal link between the worlds of the human and the divine, that there can be any contact between actions in life and

"rewards" in the hereafter, a crucial tenet of both Christianity and Buddhism. This causal argument had its roots in Mediaeval theology and is well expressed in Langland's *Piers the Plowman*. Dick places it firmly in the twentieth century and forces us to confront the issues in a very direct way. At the heart of this process is a reinterpretation of traditional religious value judgements, both eastern and western.

TWO BIBLES

Dick's changed history runs further back than merely the Civil War. The title of Hawthorne Abendsen's Science-Fiction novel itself, dealing with an imagined Allied victory, suggests a much more subtle change and one which points the way to the overall meaning of these extraordinary changes in the "given" of history:

Wyndam-Matson said, 'Listen. What does he say about Pearl Harbour?'
'President Tugwell is so smart that he has all the ships out to sea. So the U.S. fleet isn't destroyed.'
'I see.'
'So, there really isn't any Pearl Harbour. They attack but all they get is some little boats.'
'It's called "The Grasshopper Something?"'
'The Grasshopper Lies Heavy. That's a quote from the Bible.' (*High Castle*, ch. 5)

A quotation it may be, but not from the Bible we know. Ecclesiastes is one of the few books of the Judeo-Christian Bible the name of whose author is known. Qoheleth, or Koheles, wrote in a very elaborate and metaphorical manner, very poetic verse, whose meaning is never immediately clear, and has caused Biblical translators no end of trouble. In Biblical Hebrew, the phrase Dick renders as *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* reads:

וַיִּסְתַּבְּרֵלְ הַחֲגָב

(we-yis-tav-ba-il ḥe-ḥa-ghaev)

It is not for nothing that Dick takes care to list the Bible Students as those with whom the Nazis dealt as severely as the Jews and the Gipsies. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and beyond, there was an immense resurgence of

Biblical scholarship which found its centre in Germany. A large proportion of Biblical interpretation dates from this period and originated in Germany.⁵³ The basis of modern Biblical interpretation stems from this period of reassessment.

There are various forms of the phrase, these two Hebrew words from Ecclesiastes 12. 5, in the numerous English translations of the Bible. *The Coverdale Bible* (1535) is by far the most mistaken:

Whan men shal feare in hye places and be a frayd in the streets: whan the Almond tre shalbe despysed the greshopper borne out and whan greate pouerty shall breake in.

The Geneva Bible of 1560, the Bible of Shakespeare, renders it thus:

Also thei shalbe afraied of the hie thing, and feare shalbe in the way and the almonde tre shal florish and the grashopper shalbe a burden and concupisience shalbe driven away.

"Shall be a burden" was the reading which has remained through most of the subsequent English translations of the Bible including the King James Authorised Edition and the New American Bible.

The interpretation of the passage hinges on a clear translation of the words themselves. This re-interpretation comes with the nineteenth century:

"And the grasshopper (i.e. locust, חֲרָבִים, Samaritan חרובוה, Lev. xi. 22) becomes a burden." Many interpreters...find in these words 'וְיִסְּ הָחַ' the meaning that locust-food, or the chirping of grasshoppers, is burdensome to him...

⁵³ For a contemporary source on the phenomenon of German Biblical scholarship and their dominance in this field at the end of the last century, see George Gissing, *Born in Exile*, 1970.

(T. S. Eliot accepts this reading in *The Waste Land*)

...yet these two interpretations are impossible because *הָסִי* may mean to burden and move with difficulty, but not "to become burdensome"...

(So the King James Edition is inaccurate...)

...The LXX., Jerome and Ar. translate: the locust becomes fat...

(So do the Douay-Reims Bible of 1609 and the New English Bible of 1970)

...It is true, indeed, that great corpulence...is one of the symptoms of advanced old age; but supposing that the (voracious) locust might be an emblem of a corpulent man, yet *הַסְתַּבֵּל* means neither to become fat nor to grow. But because the locust in reality suggests the idea of a corpulent man, the figure cannot at the same time be intended to mean that the old man is like a skeleton, consisting as it were of nothing but skin and bone (Lyra, Luther, Bauer, Dathe);...There is nothing, indeed, more probable than that *הַגֵּב* is a figure of the *coxa*, the hinder region of the pelvis, where the lower part of the body balances itself in the hip joint, and the motion of standing up and going receives its impulse and direction by the muscular strength there concentrated. This part of the body may be called the locust because it includes in itself the mechanism which the two membered foot for springing, placed at an acute angle, presents in the locust. Referred to this *coxa* the loins, *יִסְתַּבֵּל* has its most appropriate meaning: the marrow disappears from the bones, elasticity from the muscles, the cartilage and oily substance from the joints, and as a consequence, the middle of the body drags itself along with difficulty... (Delitzsch, 1877, pp. 414-415)

The purpose of this lengthy excursion into Biblical scholarship is in order to make two points. Firstly that the most widespread and influential English translations of the Bible, the King James Authorised Edition and the New American, are inaccurate in their renderings of this phrase from Ecclesiastes 12. 5, and that secondly, more recent translations will tend to follow along the lines of more recent re-interpretation, although this is a slow process. If we look, for example, at a translation made during the 1960s by David Max Eichhorn, we can see the influence of this re-assessment:

"He is afraid to climb a hill; when he walks along the street, he is easily frightened; his hair turns white as the almond blossom; he drags himself along like a broken down grasshopper; all sexual desire is gone..." (Eichhorn, 1963, p. 244)

Critic David Wingrove, in his article on Dick in "Foundation 23" has clearly used a translation of the same stable as Eichhorn's for his end-piece:

And yet the grasshopper does not always drag itself along, does not always *lie heavy* as another version of this passage reads... (Wingrove, 1982)

The translation Wingrove chooses to quote seems to use the same phrase as Eichhorn's. If there *is* a version which reads *lies heavy* why does Wingrove not quote *it*? Could it be that he could not find it? Might he simply have assumed it to exist because it is the version Dick features in his text? Is not the quotation of a translation which does *not* read *lies heavy* simply an admission of critical defeat?

Lies Heavy cannot come from a modern translation, not just because the language is wrong, but because it would be an outdated interpretation. The modern versions which use *shall be made fat* do so because, although it is not strictly accurate, it is more accurate than *shall be a burden* and has the historical precedent set by the Douay-Reims, the Catholic Bible. The interpretation which *lies heavy* actually fits is that of the Geneva Bible, and the Authorised Edition.

What Dick has done is to *correct* the Authorised Edition. He has substituted *lies heavy* for *shall be a burden*. He has replaced the incorrect translation with a correct, although literal, translation, which is in keeping with the state of Biblical scholarship of the day. For Hawthorne Abendsen, the Bible

reads differently because in his universe, not only did the Nazis win the Second World War, not only did the Confederacy win the American Civil War, but the translators of the Authorised Edition of the Bible correctly translated the Hebrew verb *we-yis-tav-ba-il* as a *passive* verb instead of an *active*.

Were one to search through all the hundreds of variant forms of this phrase in the different British and American translations of the Bible it is always possible that one may turn up one in which the translation did indeed read *lies heavy*, but it would need to be a fairly small circulation edition, as none of the major, expected sources, can reveal it. This is a task I am quite contented to leave to later Dick scholars. What is important is that Dick has located a mistaken translation, and chosen to quote a correct version which is *in the same idiom*. "The grasshopper lies heavy" *would* have been the correct version in 1611. The question raised is one of authenticity. Which version of events is the "real" one? Is there a reality, which, like the real town of Millgate, could be uncovered beneath the false layer? How do we know that ours *is* the right version of reality? Previous alternative history novels had tended to grant a sense of the authentic to our own version, which the time traveller either creates, or helps to re-establish.⁵⁴ Dick starts to blur the edges of this idea very decidedly.

Syokaku, perfect knowledge, is, like the Glimmung's Cathedral on Plowman's planet in *Galactic Pot Healer*, submerged under the water. It may be glimpsed, but it will take the intervention of the divine to bring it to the surface.

⁵⁴ *Bring the Jubilee* does admittedly suggest that the Confederate victory scenario would be the *real* version of history but for the time traveller's meddling, but leaves us in no doubt that our own world is vastly preferable to the dismal vision of a defeated Union with which the novel begins.

Of course, it can be brought up by trickery. Frank Frink brings it up, he raises the ship. Simply by telling Childan that it is in the harbour, he creates the possibility that it can be found, convinces at least one person of its reality. For a while, until we are informed of the deceit, for us, the readers, the *Syokaku* floats, sails on the surface. Sails that is until we know better. How are we to know when someone offers us perfect knowledge, that the source of our information is genuine? How can we know which of the two Zippo lighters really was in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's pocket on the day that Zangara killed him?

If you believe in God, all well and good. You have your divine answers provided. If you do not believe, you have to look to the works of man. What if you start to wonder if God is a fake? How can you have God authenticated? How can you *know* that the Bible really *is* the word of God? What you need is a certificate from a higher God, a more-real-than-God God, a meta-God. A certificate that tells you that the Bible is real, that the creator is not a fake. Yet were you to receive this, would you not start to think that God really was a fake, else how could there be a meta-God to provide such an authentication? Would not the meta-God be the *real* God instead? If it were in a position to tell you that *God* was the true creator, why would *it* not be the true creator? Would it not be lying in telling you God was the real creator? And if the meta-God was lying, there would surely have to be a meta-meta-God who would tell you that both were fakes. What if *that* God said that the other two were both real? With worries like this, the pardon of Piers Plowman looks very cold comfort indeed:

"Do you believe man is created in God's image?" Maurice said.

"Yes," Fat said.

Maurice, raising his voice, shouted, "Then isn't it an offence against God to ice yourself? Did you ever think of that?"

"I thought of that," Fat said. "I thought of that a lot."

"Well? And what did you decide? Let me tell you what it says in Genesis in case you have forgotten. 'Then God said, "Let us make man in our image

and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all -'"

"Okay," Fat broke in, "but that's the creator deity, not the true God."

"What?" Maurice said.

Fat said, "That's Yaldabaoth. Sometimes called Samael, the blind god. He's deranged."

"What the hell are you talking about?" Maurice said.

"Yaldabaoth⁵⁵ is a monster spawned by Sophia who fell from the Pleroma," Fat said. "He imagines he's the only God, but he's wrong. There's something the matter with him, he can't see. He creates our world, but because he's blind, he botches the job. The real God sees down from far above and in his pity sets to work to save us. Fragments of light from the Pleroma are -"

Staring at him, Maurice said, "Who made up this stuff? You?" (*VALIS*, ch. 6)

Horselover Fat claims the source of his inspiration as Valentinus, a second century gnostic, and it is already clear from *Cosmic Puppets* that Dick was familiar with the gnostics quite early in his writing career. Valentinus's views are examined by Irenaeus in his writings against the heretics. The Valentinian "Demiurge" is perhaps most similar to Fat's "Yaldabaoth":

They [the Valentinians] go on to say that the Demiurge imagined that he created all these things of himself, while he in reality made them in conjunction with the productive power of Achamoth. He formed the heavens, yet was ignorant of the heavens; he fashioned man, yet he knew not man; he brought to light the earth, yet he had no acquaintance with the earth; and, in like manner, they declare that he was ignorant of the forms of all that he made, and knew not even of the existence of his own mother, but imagined that he himself was all things. They further affirm that his mother originated this opinion in his mind, because she desired him to bring him forth possessed of such a character that he should be head and source of his own essence, and the absolute ruler over every kind of operation (that was afterwards attempted). This mother they also call Ogdoad, Sophia...Terra, Jerusalem, Holy Spirit, and, with a masculine reference, Lord. Her place of habitation is an intermediate one, above the demiurge indeed, but below and outside of the Pleroma, even to the end. (*Irenaeus Against Heresies*, Bk. 1, ch. 5, para. 3. Roberts and Donaldson, 1868, vol. 5, p. 22)

⁵⁵ This misprint is in the text of *VALIS*. It should read "Yaldabaoth" as above.

The Pleroma is the Greek word meaning "filling up", "completing". Πληρωμα in this sense appears to refer to some form of Platonist Ideal, the Good from which the rest of the material world derives. Horselover Fat's discourse with Maurice at the Orange County Mental Health Centre much resembles that between Irenaeus and the Valentinians. Both Maurice and Irenaeus are upholding the primacy of the established church against a rogue interpretation of Gospel and creed. Both fail to understand what the Valentinian creed is really trying to say, and that is very like what Dick appears to be saying in his novels, in particular *VALIS*.

The *Ur*-source of Dick's, of Horselover Fat's, ideas on the Demiurge, Yaldabaoth, can be traced to the *Apocryphon of John*, found in the Codex I of the Gnostic Library of Nag Hammadi, and preserved on papyri in Cairo and Berlin:

Ialdabaoth at the instigation of Sophia breathes into Adam his spirit, his πνευμα, i.e. the power which he possesses from his mother. The Archons recognize the superiority of Adam, to whom out of pity the blessed Father sends to support and help him...the επινοια of light.

The psychic man is now imprisoned in a material body made of the four elements (air, earth, water, fire), mixed together by the four winds blowing from the four cardinal points...

...Adam is then settled in the pretended paradise of delight (τροφη), which is in reality only a deception (απατη). Reference is made to the Tree of Life, whose fruit is the desire (επιθυμια) of death (cf. Manicheism) it represents the αντιμιμον πνευμα, the deceitful counterfeit spirit which hinders men from ascending to *gnosis* and to their fullness. (Hennecke, 1963, Vol. 1, p. 324)

Although Hennecke does not gloss "fullness" in Greek, this is, of course, the very πληρωμα that Sophia stems from, and we can begin to see the reasons which led Lama Samdup, in his introduction to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* to speculate upon Christ's meetings with Tibetan missionaries to Asia Minor. What we have in the form of the Pleroma appears to be very similar to the enlightenment of the Buddhists. It is a *gnosis* which mortals can achieve, yet it is also the region where the creator god was born, or rather fell. Later in the

Apocryphon, John, whom Hennecke associates with the John of Revelations, tells how *Christ* urged Adam to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge against the prohibition of Ialdabaoth, this pointing to a very clear distinction in John's mind, and in the mind of Christ (since the narrative is supposed to have been told to him directly by Christ) between the true God and the creator god. The *gnosis* also sounds very akin to the realisation which the Lamas try to instil in the corpse by reciting the *Bardo Thödol*, the escape from the chain of life and rebirth and the desire to return to the physical world. An escape from the Tree of Life, whose fruit is the desire of death, the desire to be reborn, to remain part of the physical world of the senses, and not the realm of enlightenment.

High Castle stands at the mid-point of Dick's religious thought. It is not unreasonable to see *VALIS* as part of a cipher to the imagery in *High Castle* and *3SPE*, since we have seen the first appearance of the influence of gnosticism very early in Dick's work it is favourable to imagine that he would have been using these ideas through most of his novels. For Dick, in *High Castle* as much as in *3SPE*, the world of the senses is the work of the creator god, whom modern Christianity personifies as the true God, but which the gnostics held was only a false deranged, blind, demiurge, from whose mystification Christ, like Ted Barton, would try to save mankind. In *Cosmic Puppets*, Barton exactly mirrors Christ urging Adam to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, to disobey Ahriman, to reconstruct the world in a *gnostic* way rather than in a literal way. This literal interpretation, if accepted, would show the paradise real, instead of only make-believe (απατη), which would show Millgate the way it seems, not the way it is underneath. Barton is a perfect *intercessor*. Part of the Pleroma, not fallen from it, like the other inhabitants of Millgate, Ted Barton can see the changes in the town that they cannot. He has the *gnosis* of the town. Barton

interceeds for the burghers of Millgate between their world, corrupted by Ahriman, and the real, outside world, to which he still belongs. He is assisted by Armaiti, the daughter of Ormazd, a Zoroastrian prototype for Sophia:

Gone? Armaiti wasn't gone. She was everywhere. In all the trees in the green fields and lakes and forest lands. The fertile valleys and mountains on all sides of him. She was below and around him. She filled up the whole world. (*Cosmic Puppets*, ch. 15)

Filled up: πληρωμα. Dick moves from the straightforward optimism of *Cosmic Puppets* to the much more complex anxieties of *Eye in the Sky* and *Time Out of Joint*, where doubts can be placed on the reality of the world even *after* it has been restored from the grip of some illusory haze that has covered it.

Discovered in 1945, significant date, the manuscripts found at Nag Hammadi were the remnants of the early scriptures which formed the basis of not only the beliefs of Valentinus and his followers, but of much of the early creed of Christianity. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the same year had been a major media event, the discovery of the Gnostic gospels was less celebrated, mainly due to academic rivalry. Dick was certainly aware of two of the manuscripts, the *The Account of Thomas the Israelite*, which had been available in English since 1939, and the *Apocryphon of John*, of which there was a copy in the Berlin Museum, and which had been translated into German. It is unlikely that he could have known of any of the other major Gnostic works directly, such as the *Gospel of Truth*, *The Gospel of Thomas* or the *Gospel of Philip*, as these were only extant in the Nag Hammadi manuscripts. Nevertheless, the New Testament Apocrypha he would have known would have been more than sufficient for Dick to have formulated a belief in the possibility of there being an alternative Bible, an alternative imitation of Christ. For Dick this means that there are indeed *two Bibles*, and with them, two versions of Christianity. As

though the more conventional debates in Christian theology were not enough, here we have something more extreme. How can we tell which is the *real* Christ? Is the true God to be found in the Authorised New Testament, with its four Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Revelations, or is the true message buried in the *Apocryphon* and the Codeces of Nag Hammedi? How is it possible to have a certificate of authenticity for our plan in this life? Are we not left with something as valueless as Piers Plowman's pardon?

Dick's vision is one in which the method is almost borrowed directly from Irenaeus, the scholar who, in the second century, defined the creeds which the emerging *catholic* or "universal" church was to regard as heretical, and from whom, until the discovery of the manuscripts at Nag Hammadi, almost all surviving knowledge of the beliefs of the Gnostics was derived. Dick, like Irenaeus, calls to a unity of faith throughout the world, although he can spread his net wider than could Irenaeus. For Dick, the unity of faith between the Valentinians and Buddhist scripture mitigates in favour of the Gnostics and not traditional, Catholic Christianity.

Were they to be taken as an entire corpus, the books of the present day Bible plus the additional Gnostic Gospels would lead to a faith dependant on interpretation to a very broad degree. The life of Christ and his mission would be more metaphorical, having far less in common with the literal interpretation of the Gospels which dominates the basis of the creed of the Christian churches. Dick sees the outcome as very much one in which the current state of theology has polarised the Gospels into Creed and Heresy. The Church as it stands, recognises as the True God the deity which the Valentinians would have termed Ialdabaoth, the blind creator god. Thus, to Dick's mind, the Church is misled, corrupt as Piers Plowman would have seen it. The *gnosis* which would put mankind

in touch with the Pleroma is hidden. Christ's mission, according to the *Apocryphon* is lost.

In *The Man in the High Castle* there are two Bibles indeed. The version of the Bible to which Abendsen has access is not the Bible we know in our own world. Is this Abendsen's own version? Were Wyndam-Matson and Rita to open *their* Bible at Ecclesiastes 12. 5, would they find, as we do, "the grasshopper shall be a burden"? Has Abendsen access to a purer form of information to those either in the sphere of Axis rule, or to us in our world, such that he can sense the "real" world of an Allied victory? The Bible he quotes has been corrected, *re-constructed*. The only quote we have is from the Old Testament, we have no way of verifying whether or not Abendsen's New Testament contains the Gnostic as well as the Synoptic Gospels. On one outrageous level, Dick is drawing an allusion between a world trapped in a hell-layer of a Nazi Empire, with its negative, life-destroying values holding sway over the Earth, and a world in which Christ's message has been lost, or glossed over with the confusion-layer, the false town plan of Ahriman, the blind, jealous rage of Ialdabaoth. Thus in *VALIS* does Dick repeat⁵⁶ "The Empire never ended". Not only the Roman Empire but the Empire of Confusion ruled by Ialdabaoth. Beyond the layer of the visible world lies a version of reality in which mankind has achieved the *gnosis* which will guide it towards the True God, the Pleroma.

One thing which stands out from Abendsen's version of the "real" history of the post-War world is that it is resolutely not our own. Here Dick departs very distinctly from the format of the "alternative history" novel as it was at the

⁵⁶ Entry #6.

time he wrote *High Castle*. In both Moore, 1953, and Sarban, 1952, there is a real world, ours, which is either established, or re-established at the end of the novel. Dick eschews this option. Our world is glimpsed, as noted above, as a vision, not of salvation, as it is for the hunted dissident in Sarban, 1952, but of damnation, the horrors spoken of in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Abendsen's vision of Allied victory is uncomfortably better than the way things have actually turned out. The resulting *Pax Americana* extends benevolence towards the less fortunate races of Asia, educating, feeding and clothing them. A united America solves all its own race problems, ironic in view of the actual state of affairs in American politics at the time Dick was writing. Abendsen appears to have seen into a world whose state of grace is greater than ours. A world with a higher *karma* than ours, where the post-War reconstruction went well, in which America was magnanimous and loved by all.

Dick, however, complicates matters a little further. Abendsen's future does not turn out quite so well. The opposing *Pax Britannica* eventually comes to resemble Naziism in its racist policies and its "detention centres". The British win their conflict with America. Dick has the last laugh:

'...Sure, the U.S.A. expands economically after winning the war over Japan, because it's got that huge market in Asia that it's wrested from the Japs. But that's not enough; that's got no spirituality. Not that the British have. They're both plutocracies, ruled by the rich. If they had won, all they'd have thought about was making more money, that upper class. Abendsen, he's wrong; there would be no social reform, no welfare public works plans - the Anglo-Saxon plutocrats wouldn't have permitted it.'

Juliana thought, Spoken like a devout Fascist. (*High Castle*, ch. 10)

It takes a devout Fascist to see that without spirituality Abendsen's imagined Empires could not have achieved the great works he describes for them. Yet the welfare public works plans did come about, in our world, in Britain at least. Dick leaves us pondering a number of variables. Abendsen's vision may be on a

spiritually higher plane than ours, or on a lower one but still being higher than the Nazi's version of reality. Only time will be able to sort out whether or not the *karma* of our future is more or less evolved than that of the world Abendsen describes. We can certainly see our world as more spiritually evolved than the world of *High Castle*, but, asks Dick by way of Abendsen's alternative, the *third* possibility, just how evolved are we? What if the souls in the *Bardo* plane are not sufficiently advanced in their spiritual evolution to be reborn into our world, yet not so retrograde to be reborn into the world of the beasts as an animal. Do they go to the world of the Nazi and Southern victories Dick describes? If their *karma* is higher than ours, but not high enough to enable them to enter the *Deva* world, are they reborn into the world of Abendsen's book? If, as the *Bardo Thödol* suggests⁵⁷, and there are many *Deva*, or *demi-god* worlds, might there not be several human worlds also, as Leibniz and the parable of Schrödinger's Cat might suggest?

Dick is warning against the idea of seeing Abendsen's book as an attempt to return to Paradise, since that Paradise is merely *τροπή αμαρτη*, the false Garden of Eden which was only an illusion of luxury, created by Ialdabaoth in order to trick man. Attempt to return to this Paradise and we will do not more than return to bondage to the imperfect Monad of the blind creator deity. Undoing the fall of man leads only to a recovery of Eden where the fruit in the bowl is made of wax. Eden is the domain of Ahriman, not of the True God.

Abendsen's vision reflects this. It is not a model of scripture, but a means of gaining insight into the greater world of the enlightened spirits, of the

⁵⁷ Evans-Wentz, 1929, p. 62.

Pleroma, of Ormazd. It is a vision through a glass darkly. To use the terminology of *Cosmic Puppets*, it is an imperfect map made by one of the Wanderers, not the unreconstructed memory of Ted Barton, the intercessor figure, the Christ-like Saviour:

'I thought you lived in a fortress,' Juliana said. Bending to regard her, Hawthorne Abendsen smiled a meditative smile. 'Yes, we did. But we had to get up to it in an elevator and I developed a phobia. I was pretty drunk when I got the phobia but as I recall it, and they tell it, I refused to stand up in it because I said the elevator cable was being hauled up by Jesus Christ, and we were going all the way. And I was determined not to stand.'

She did not understand.

Caroline explained, 'Hawth has said as long as I've known him that when he finally sees Christ he is going to sit down; he's not going to stand.'
(*High Castle*, ch. 15)

Sitting in the presence of Christ, recalling the comic business about sitting in the presence of the King in Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*, Abendsen's phobia implies death and judgement as a result of being the Man in the High Castle, but also a desire to meet Christ on his own terms, practically as a equal. The other side of the phobia presents Christ hauling Abendsen up, elevating him in a literal sense, toward higher evolution, towards an equal meeting with him. It is this that he shies away from, just as he shies away from the implications Juliana brings him about the meaning of the hexagram *Chung Fu*. Abendsen is a man caught between the earthly and the spiritual planes, with the chance to rise to the ethereal above world above, as Richard Hnatt would phrase it, but also afraid of the danger of the falling, of the judgement. The image is also that of the harrowing of Hell, with Jesus Christ leading the patriarchs of the Old Testament out of the hell-layer, ascending to the ethereal. The Biblical references most closely corresponding to Abendsen's phobia pun on his name as *Abraham* whom Christ will have sit down with him in

heaven.⁵⁸ Abendsen envisages Christ wanting to pull him out of hell, out of the "*Bardo Thödol* existence", but is afraid because he still sees it as his real world. When Nobosuke Tagomi glimpses our version of San Francisco, he is standing while all those around him are seated:

All stools taken by whites. Mr. Tagomi exclaimed. Several whites looked up. *But none departed their places. - None yielded up their stools to him.* (ch. 14)

The meeting with Christ would likewise be a contest as to whose world was the more real, those sitting having the advantage. Also recalled is the advice of the "Old Professor" to the young man in Ecclesiastes 12. that he should think of the Lord in his time of youth, before the silver cord snaps, the golden bowl is broken. The image is that of the well and the wheel, the pitcher drawn. Christ is drawing Abendsen up, but the silver cord could snap, the golden bowl could be broken. Abendsen, in other words, will not reach enlightenment in *this* life.

⁵⁸ Matthew 8. 11, and Luke 13. 29.

DICK'S OWN MASON

Around Abendsen's name, as around so many of the others in *High Castle*, revolve a number of complex allusions. The first time we are introduced to the name it is in the interlude between Wyndam-Matson and Rita:

'Isn't it one of those banned-in-Boston books?' he said.

'Banned through the United States. And in Europe, of course.' She had gone to the hall door and stood there now, waiting.

'I've heard of this Hawthorne Abendsen.' But actually he had not.
(ch. 5)

"Banned-in-Boston" was a common catchphrase in Dick's day for books, and most often films, which the City Fathers of Boston thought unsuitable for their traditional Catholic morality. Dependant on one's sympathies, it was either a joke against Bostonians, or a euphemism for soft pornography. Like Lederman's *Pilgrim Without Progress* in *3SPE*⁵⁹ Abendsen's book is an icon of the forbidden. Lederman, the tanner, the leather-man, matches the images of skins and surfaces with which *3SPE* abounds. Abendsen's name decodes as Mr. Tagomi's messages from Tokyo, to give us a series of metaphorical cadences through the novel.

Abend is, of course, the German for evening, the *dämmerung* which may just as easily be the twilight as the dawn, the dim, vague perception we can just see through the veil.

abendessen - evening meal

⁵⁹ Read by Anne *Hawthorne*, another little touch of self reference from Dick.

evening meal - abend-mahl

That much is fairly obvious, however, *Abend-mahl* is more than merely a synonym for "supper", the *Abendessen* within which we see Abendsen's name contained. It is the German expression for Holy Communion.

Abendsen is in communion with the divine it would seem. Wyndam-Matson mispronounces his name *Abbotson*, thus characterising him briefly as a priest figure. His second misnomer is a crucial one: *Abelson*. In a novel where we have an alternative history with the outcome of two major wars changed, and an additional theme of assassinations which are either changed to succeed or changed in order to fail it is appropriate indeed to see the name of the son of Abel. Abel, slain by his brother Cain in our Bible before he could have any sons, lost his battle. Briefly we have, jokingly suggested, another alternative world in which Abel did not die, another hint towards a changed Bible.

Abendland is the West, the Occident.

Hawthorne leads to Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of *The Scarlet Letter*. The combination brings us to Nathaniel (Hawthorne) West:

'The book,' Paul said, 'which is quite rare, and which I possess a copy of none the less, is by Nathaniel West. Title is *Miss Lonelyhearts*. I have read it with enjoyment, but do not totally grasp N. West's meaning.' He looked hopefully at Robert.

Presently Robert Childan admitted, 'I - have never read that book, I fear.' Nor, he thought, ever heard of it.

Disappointment showed in Paul's expression. 'Too bad. It is a tiny book. Tells about a man who runs column in daily paper; receives heartache problems constantly, until evidently driven mad by pain and delusion that he is J. Christ. Do you recall? Perhaps read long ago.'

'No,' Robert said. (ch.7)

Abendsen does not believe himself to be Jesus Christ, but he believes, albeit only when drunk, that he is being hauled up to heaven by Christ:

'Gives strange view about suffering,' Paul said. 'Insight of most original kind into meaning of pain for no reason, problem which all religions cope with. Religions such as Christian often declare must be sin to account for suffering. N. West seems to add more compelling view of this, over older notions. N. West possibly saw could be suffering without cause due to his being a Jew. (ch. 7)

Maybe this Abendsen is a Jew.

They're still at it, trying to poison us. This *jüdisches Buch* - He slammed the covers of the *Grasshopper* violently together. Actual name probably Abendstein. No doubt the S.D. has looked into it by now. (ch. 8)

Reiss makes Abendsen into Abendstein, a calculated misnomer which matches Wyndam-Matson's unconscious "Abelson". Like Nathaniel West, Abendsen is granted the position to be able to see the nature of suffering without cause, becomes able to meet Christ sitting, both fearing and relishing the meeting at one and the same time.

However, by making Abendsen into a Jew, Reiss foreshadows an even greater parallel than between his *Grasshopper*, illuminating the fictional potential of other worlds of grace in a world of senseless suffering under the heel of Nazi domination, and West's vision of the holy idiot, hopelessly destroying himself in a fruitless attempt to alleviate the suffering of his "Lonelyhearts" without merely assigning them to the world of written fiction that their letters imply.⁶⁰ Abendsen is part of a complex series of allusions to quite another sort of "Jew":

Much of Masonic ritual centres on murder. At the 3rd Degree the Victim is Hiram Abiff, mythical architect in charge of the building of Solomon's temple. The ceremony involves the mimed murder of Hiram by three Apprentice Masons and his subsequent resurrection. The three Apprentices are named Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum - known collectively as the Juwes.

⁶⁰ *Miss Lonelyhearts* is collected in West, 1957.

In Masonic lore, the Juwes are hunted down and executed... (Knight, 1983, p. 54)

HAWTHORNE ABENDSEN

HIRAM ABIFF

HITLER ADOLF

Abendsen is the sacrificial victim, hunted down by one of the *Juwes*, *Joe Cinnadella*, but saved by another, *Juliana*. Abendsen, the architect of the alternative universe in which the Allies conquered the Nazis, has aspects of masonry in terms of his "High Castle", which he has turned into a fortress himself, may even have built it himself, since "High Castle" is his name for it. *Joe, Jubelo*, is also a mason in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense:

'I got the Italian genius for earthworks; O.T. gave me a high rating. I wasn't shovelling asphalt and mixing concrete for the autobahns; I was helping design. Engineer...' (*High Castle*, ch. 6)

Abendsen makes the third *Juw* himself, *Jubelum*, as the Jew/Juw, *Abendstein*, and as one connected with the outcome of the *War/Bellum*.

Yet if Hiram Abiff/Hawthorne Abendsen is the sacrificial *victim* and also one of the three *Juwes* themselves, the one possessing the secrets of the Master Mason, for which secrets Hiram Abiff is supposed to have been killed, he would need to both possess the secrets and at the same time be unaware of them. In just such a way, Ialdabaoth "formed the heavens, yet was ignorant of the heavens; he fashioned man, yet knew not man". In just such a way, Abendsen is unaware of the secret he has uncovered, the secret symbolised by the hexagram *Chung Fu* until it is revealed to him by *Juliana*. Likewise, the three *Juwes* would

have to kill each other, to act as their own executioners. This is indeed what happens. *Jubelo* is executed by *Jubela/Juliana*.

Dick carefully links these allusions to many other indications of Masonry. Another *Juw* is *Guiseppe*, or as Dick renames him, *Joe Zangara*, the would-be assassin of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Zangara was by profession a "bricklayer and mason". Roosevelt is one architect, one version of Abiff, ritually murdered, but also there is the idea of resurrection, the hope of a way out, as *Juliana* calls it, which *Abendsen* represents, his name echoing that of "Old Abe" Lincoln, who in Dick's world may have escaped assassination, since the reason for Booth's revenge, the defeat of the South, never occurred.

Juliana saves *Abendsen* from assassination, becomes, therefore, the equivalent of Mrs. Cross, who in our world, caught Zangara's arm and deflected his aim away from the President-elect. Mrs. Cross, the saviour, signifies both the Christian symbol of the cross, and the symbol of the cross-bones and skull seen on the lid of the Masonic Coffin (Hannah, 1952, p. 146) and also on the emblem of the Waffen S.S. *Juliana* indicates this role symbolically by her choice of a "horse shaped" pin to tie up her dress when she goes to meet *Abendsen* (ch. 15). The word *cross* includes the word *ross*, German for *horse*. These names are mirrored, and reversed, in the German contingent. The cross has its match in *Kreuz Vom Meere* and in the name of Hugo Reiss's secretary, *Pferdehuf*, *Horse's hoof*.

Baynes, or Wegener, indicates to Lotze another sense of a pseudo-Masonic organisation, the secret society of Jews who live on in positions of power:

'You would not have known,' Baynes said, 'because I do not in any physical way appear Jewish; I have had my nose altered, my large greasy pores made smaller, my skin chemically lightened, the shape of my skull changed. In short, physically I cannot be detected. I can and have often walked in the highest circles of Nazi society. No-one will ever discover

me. And -' He paused, standing close, very close to Lotze and speaking in a low voice which only Lotze could hear. 'And there are others of us. Do you hear? We did not die. We still exist. We live on unseen.'

After a moment Lotze stuttered, 'The Security Police -'

'The S.D. can go over my record,' Baynes said. 'You can report me. But I have very high connexions. Some of them are Aryan, some are other Jews in top positions in Berlin. Your report will be discounted, and then, presently, I will report you. And through those same connexions, you will find yourself in Protective Custody.' (ch. 3)

The Jews have become a secret society, according to Baynes's story, and, like the Masons, will help one another, and occupy positions of great authority in the state. This story is especially interesting because it is not referred to again in the entire novel. We are left to wonder whether or not this is another fiction within the fiction, or whether this is an actual secret which Wegener protects, revealing it at this point quite needlessly, to frighten a loyal practitioner of National Socialist Realism, an artist who represents the ideal, not the spiritual, who imitates the Nazi ideal both in his art and in his life. Like a Son of the Bird, Wegener is from another world, a prior version of reality which Nazi supremacy has "painted over" in its attempt to impose its ideal on reality. Baynes/Wegener reminds Lotze that the world is still there, under the surface, a secret alternative, like Abendsen's alternative world of Allied victory. We are kept guessing. We are lead to expect that this secret society will reappear later in the novel as a plot device, that it will participate in the narrative. It does not. Dick gives us this quite monumental information and then leaves it hanging. It is still hanging after the end of the novel, as is the realisation that Juliana brings to Abendsen. That also concludes nothing. Juliana leaves and makes her way. There is no resolution of her narrative, it will simply continue. Dick makes the point that the end of the narrative is purely arbitrary, we cannot expect resolution. These are aspects which hang over into our world, beyond the end of the fiction, problems which

affect us as much as Juliana and Abendsen. They can expect as little resolution of them as can we.

In the park on Kearny Street, Mr. Tagomi is treated to a glimpse of another world, "painted over", the world of *our* San Francisco, which he envisages as the "*Bardo Thödol* existence", the layer of chaotic dream below the surface of the world of the living, into which torment the dead are plunged during their transition from life to rebirth. Helping him achieve this glimpse is a piece of jewelry made by Frank Frink and Ed McCarthy. It is a silver triangle which appears to glow in the sunlight, shines back at him. The triangle has long been a symbol of the Holy Trinity, but the way in which the "squiggle" is presented to us in *High Castle* suggests even more. The sun, the Eye of Heaven, the Eye in the Sky, shines at the centre. The sign of the Holy Eye surrounded by a triangle is a foremost Masonic symbol. It is featured on the obverse of the United States One Dollar Bill.

The title of Abendsen's novel is derived from Masonic ritual. Ecclesiastes 12. is recited during the mimed murder of Hiram Abiff in the initiation rite for the third degree of Freemasonry (Hannah, 1952, p. 139). Dick's quotation pin-points a translation error in a part of the Bible involved directly in Masonic rite, it is the point at which all his allusions come together, like Juliana's pin, it holds everything together.

Abendsen's name does not derive from Lincoln alone, but also from the password of a Master Mason. MACHABEN gives the German MACH ABEN or MAKE ABEN(SEN), (Hannah, 1952, p. 83). Mr. Tagomi displays the art of Buffalo slaying with his Winchester rifle. The Buffaloes, along with the Oddfellows, the Foresters and the like, are an order of working-class secret society very widespread in

America. The Ancient and Andeluvian Order of Buffaloes has, in common with Freemasonry, three principal degrees, Kangaroo, Primo and Knight of Honour. Such is the nature of this order that the reference could not fail to be identified by an American reader.⁶¹ They are another part of the indigenous culture that the Japanese have killed off, but they can also be seen as a dying, but still extant aspect of Masonry, this time stripped of the religious and occult elements of Masonry proper, which persists in American society, a form of resistance.

There are hints of Freemasonry in the imagery of Dick's 1960 novel *Dr. Futurity*, with its references to "the Lodge" and to the resurrection of a great master, but it is not until *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (vt. *Blade Runner*) that he returns to these themes, and it is only in this novel that we can see what it is that really attracts him to the idea. *Androids* is in fact the sequel to the novel Dick wrote immediately after *The Man in the High Castle*, *We Can Build You*, the only example of a sequel in Dick's entire oeuvre, although he planned to write a second volume of *High Castle*. Due to the same viscissitudes which dogged the whole of Dick's writing career, *We Can Build You* was not published until ten years after it was written, until after the publication of *Androids*, so it is not too surprising that the connection between the two novels has been hard to spot. *Androids* takes the fortunes of

⁶¹ In many of their films, Laurel and Hardy are portrayed attending Buffalo Lodge meetings, complete with Buffalo hats. In the children's cartoon serial, *The Flintstones*, made by Hanna and Barbera during the 1960s and largely based on scripts from George Burns and Gracie Allen's situation comedies of the 1950s, the two working-class heroes, Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble are also frequently portrayed as keen Buffalo Lodge members. That even American children would be expected to pick up the reference here demonstrates the ubiquity of the Buffaloes in American society, let alone the extent of Freemasonry.

the robot building Rosen Corporation⁶² from the end of *We Can Build You* and moves forward to the next generation. There has been an atomic war and the fallout has killed most of the world's non-human animals. Those who can afford to do so are moving to other worlds.

Rick Deckard, a bounty hunter, kills renegade androids, which are, to all intents and purposes identical to human beings, yet, as most people in this post-holocaust world, he belongs to the cult of Mercer which advocates tenderness and empathy with all living things. Animals, nearly all extinct, are prized not just because of their rarity value but because of their religious significance. Mercerite communicants improve their ability to empathise by caring for animals. Deckard's sheep, Groucho, has died of tetanus, he therefore has an electric replica which he cares for in the same way, but, as his neighbour agrees, it is not the same thing.

Dick⁶³ takes the religious theme from his short story, "The Little Black Box" (1964).⁶⁴ On gripping the handles of the "empathy box", the Mercerites enter

⁶² The name Rosen clearly harks back to *Rossum*, the robots' progenitor in Karel Capek's 1922 play which coined the word "robot", *R.U.R.*

⁶³ The close identification of Rick Deckard with the fears expressed in Dick's later, more overtly autobiographical novels such as *A Scanner Darkly* and *Radio Free Albemuth* may be hinted at in his name, Rick Deckard, which yields "Dick darker".

⁶⁴ Collected in *The Golden Man*.

the world of Wilbur Mercer,⁶⁵ trudge with him up the hill where The Killers hurl their rocks. The Mercerites, in the comfort of their own homes, feel the pain as Mercer feels it, and finally actually suffer cuts and wounds from the rocks as they are thrown. Some even die. Mercer represents a Christ-like saviour figure, but in a different way to that of Ted Barton in *Cosmic Puppets*. In the short story, Mercerism is suspected of being a plot by an alien species to invade and conquer the Earth. Mercerite communicants, very like the Can-D communicants in *JSPE*, fuse with Mercer when they grip the handles of the little Black Empathy Box, they see what he sees, feel what he feels. Mercer, unlike Perky Pat, is a living man himself, this fusion comes to look suspiciously like the fusion with Palmer Eldritch that Barney experiences. The fear of the authorities in the short story reflects this vision of alien invasion that Dick represented in that novel. By the time we come to *Androids* things are more involved.

As with the psychic switching in *Solar Lottery*, the Mercerites can be "twitched" into the physical body of Wilbur Mercer, yet they can all, no matter where they are, experience the same thing at once, in a single common experience. There is a great deal of symbolic similarity between the Mercerites' group communion and the rituals surrounding the death of Hiram Abiff in Masonic initiation:

"Such a link between Freemasonry and the ancient idolatrous mysteries is also manifested by all that is enacted and performed at the initiations. As in the rites of the ancient idolatrous mysteries the drama of the labours and death of the mystery god was repeated and in the imitative repetition of this drama the initiate dies together with the patron of the mystery religion, who was always a mythic person symbolising the Sun of nature which dies in winter and is regenerated in spring, so

⁶⁵ Note *W-M* again.

it is also in the initiation of the third degree of Masonry. Indeed it constitutes a dramatic tale of the death of the patron of Freemasonry Hiram and a kind of repetition of his death, in which the initiate *suffers with him, struck by the same instruments and on the same parts of the body as Hiram*. According to the confession of a prominent teacher of Freemasonry Hiram is 'as Osiris, as Mithra and as Bacchus, one of the personifications of the Sun'..." (Hannah, 1952, p. 71. Emphasis added.)

Mercer matches Abiff. The parallel between the two recalls the issue of the imitation of Christ, and of the nature of personal identity. In Masonic ritual, and in mystery religion, the initiate imitates the physical actions of the deity, or of the patron, undergoes a dramatic *mimesis* of the events of the figure's life and death. The Mercerite communicant is involved to an extent in the recreation of the fate of Mercer, since Mercer is always there, always climbing that hill, but it is perceived in such a way that it appears that the communicant is present at the moment of the actual event of Mercer's martyrdom.

Is it enough, asks Thomas à Kempis, is it enough merely to do as Christ said, to partake in the ritual of Holy Communion in imitation of the Last Supper? Should we rather try to imitate Christ's life, not merely his teaching, imitate the way he lived, the way he thought? Should we try to experience the things he experienced so that our consciousness will be *tuned* to his? Mercerism appears to offer both at once. The Mercerites experience Mercer's *own* version of the crucifixion each time they clutch the handles of the empathy box. Mercer's time does not seem to be related to the flow of time in the outside world, he is always there, his communicants always experience the same sensations, intensified only according to the length of time that they remain hooked up to the box. In their everyday lives they continue to follow the Mercerite creed, the extension of the empathy they learn from their communion with Mercer to the creatures of the immediate world of their own senses.

Mercerism offers the best of both Buddhism and Christianity, offers the insight Richard Hnatt⁶⁶ gains under E-therapy, the way to avoid the falling, to evolve, which has nothing to do with paying large amounts of money to "Ex-Nazi type German doctors" but by learning to empathise with other living things. Buddhism teaches this, right enough, but, save only for the chants of the Tibetan Lamas reciting the *Bardo Thödol* to the dead soul, there is no assistance, no intercession. There is no saviour figure, no-one to intercede between us and the Pleroma, or the Buddha, no-one to bring fragments of light from it who is not himself part of our imperfect world, who sees through a glass darkly. Christianity offers this saviour, but a saviour without the empathy, without the insight of the rising and the falling, without the hope of purification over many lives, of spiritual evolution. If we perform the rituals, believe in Jesus Christ we will, supposedly be saved. Should we not first learn to be like Christ? Where is the hope of seeing through the veil of illusion of this world that Buddhism offers, even though that offer is based on an evolution over many millions of years?.

Mercerism offers a saviour who suffers and invites his followers to share in his suffering. Mercer intercedes from a world that is not ours. Even when it is revealed that he is only an actor on an old Hollywood back lot, he still claims to offer the same hope of salvation, it is irrelevant to him that his physical, visual form is an illusion because the world itself is an illusion. The death of Hiram Abiff is a fine analogue for this, although it is spiritually bankrupt, it offers no hope of salvation, but it does represent a communion, an empathy with the religion's central figure.

⁶⁶ Notice another Rick/Dick.

Freemasonry, which so pervades American society that Masonic images can crop up on such a commonplace as the Dollar Bill provides Dick with as useful a metaphor for secrecy and hidden versions of reality and religion as it did for Melville. At the heart of the allusion is the sense of a secret society, of conspiracy, paralleled in the "hidden" Gospels of the New Testament, the version which is beneath the surface layer. Masonry, espousing the traditional Judeo-Christian values also represents a vision of an alternative religion which was the central thesis of Walton Hannah in his expose of Masonry, *Darkness Visible*, (1952). For Dick the crucial distinction is that the Masons refer, not to God, but the *Great Architect of the Universe*. There is no ambiguity, theirs is uniquely the creator god. For Dick that means it is Ialdabaoth, the deranged Demiurge. A world in which secrets take one, not closer to the truth, but further from it, is what we are presented with. Masonry does, however, name its deity. The name of the Architect is a compound, revealed only to Royal Arch Masons, comprising elements of the names of Osiris, Baal, and Jehovah (Knight, 1983, p. 236), linking the Hebrew creator god (Ialdabaoth) to the personifications of Ahriman in Babylonian and Egyptian religions. Here is indeed the ἀντίμιμον πνεῦμα which keeps mankind from the true *gnosis*.

Dick's principal inspiration for the inclusion of the Masonic motif is due to the coincidence between the two significant events that he changes in order to produce his version of history. The assassination of Roosevelt throws up the profession of Giuseppe "Joe" Zangara, bricklayer and *mason*. During the Civil War, the division of U.S.A. and C.S.A. followed the *Mason-Dixon Line*. Both these are extra-textual, but the latter would be known to all Americans as the frontier between the opposing armies, and the former can be checked in contemporary records. Generally, with the exception of Trails of Hoffman Ltd. in *Lies Inc.* (1986), Dick avoids the idea of conspiracies and the suggestion

of a single organisation controlling all aspects of people's lives and remaining secret. The association between Conspiracy Theory and the Freemasons is one which underpins many novels of this period, Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* for example, and slightly later the *Illuminatus Trilogy* of Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson (1975). Dick's fiction is based in a sense of ontological scepticism which makes it impossible to accept the idea of any powerful political overview which would make such grand conspiracy possible. Wegener tries to suggest the existence of such an organisation, but this reference is left where it starts, it is not examined. Dick is informing us that this is a path he does not intend to follow. His conspiracies are on a different level.

THE NATURE OF THE MOMENT

Wegener's story suggests the idea of a very personal false history, matching the false history which engulfs the whole world in *High Castle*. He has tried to look as though he was not born Jewish. He has had his nose altered, his pores made smaller (how?), the shape of his skull changed. He is challenging us to believe that these things could have been done, yet at the same time he calls into question that the way he appears could be real. It is easier to believe that the fact that he looks so flawlessly Aryan is because he actually *is* rather than to have this support the claim that operations done on him have been such a remarkable success. This is the first hint of the kind of question which appears in *Androids* where Deckard is faced with an alternative, android police force who have no knowledge of him and think *him* to be the android. Wegener presents Lotze with a sense of not knowing. The hypothetical Jewishness of Wegener represents only one level of his possible persons. The other is Baynes, the Swedish plastics manufacturer, his cover during his secret mission to the P.S.A.

Baynes has been reported making a speech in the *New York Times* about the prospects of finding water on the Moon. That a man who does not exist can make speeches involves another level of deception, a very difficult one in this case, as Baynes is not supposed to be recognised or known to the German authorities, otherwise he would be identified by the Reich security forces as Wegener. We are left with the possibility of there being a real Baynes, who has actually made such a speech, or that the deception has created one, that Baynes exists only on paper, only in the *Times* report, that he is a written, fictional char-

acter who has been actualised into the figure of Wegener. Dick already starts to hint towards the fictionality of the characters in the novel, and to the realisation of Juliana Frink, character awareness of fictionality.

Baynes/Wegener is a contradictory figure. He appears to reject a lot of Nazi thought. He is a spy, opposed to Project Dandelion, the attack on the Japanese Home Islands, yet he is himself a Nazi. He thinks in a Nazi way even about the Nazis. When Lotze looks down on the baseball park which he perceives as unfinished, Baynes thinks hard:

'It looks,' Lotze said, gazing down, 'as if it was designed by a Jew.'
Baynes regarded the man for a time. He felt, strongly for a moment, the unbalanced quality, the psychotic streak in the German mind. Did Lotze actually mean what he said? Was it a truly spontaneous remark?
(ch. 3)

Baynes speculates along vaguely similar lines to Richard Hnatt, the hell-layer awaits those who are not sane, who shut out the areas of reality they cannot face directly. Baynes presents Lotze in a racist way, speaks of the German people as being psychotic as a race. This is Nazi thought reflexive, turned against itself. This is analogous to the point in *Androids* where Deckard realises that the test that is not run by Bounty Hunters is the test for empathy towards androids. Empathy towards any other living thing qualifies the test recipient as human, but the possibility of empathising with each other is denied to androids, and as the cold, super-successful Bounty Hunter Phil Resch points out to Deckard, there would be no point in testing humans for sympathising with androids if Bounty Hunters are supposed to kill them. The names *Rick* and *Phil* provide the cue to read this as Dick arguing with himself, or with different aspects of himself, both as writer and as man. Baynes/Wegener is similarly divided. We might well be forgiven for thinking that Wegener was a sympathetic figure, a kind of Nazi dissident, a Winston Smith in the higher echelons of the

Nazi elite, indeed, the very covert Jew he either pretends or admits to Lotze that he is. Yet at the end of the novel we discover that he is in fact an agent of the Nazi aspirant to the Chancellorship, Reinhard "Hangman" Heydrich.

Architect of the "Final Solution", Heydrich was, as William L. Shirer describes him, a policeman in the diabolical mode. His name, along with Göring and Seyss-Inquart, is the most feared as potential Chancellor in the assessment of the Japanese. Yet it is to the protection of Heydrich and his men that Wegener returns. His only fear as he is driven away is that the drivers are *not* Heydrich's men. He is otherwise confident that he will not be shot.

There is another reason that Heydrich is so important a player, albeit off-stage, in Dick's drama:

Years ago he had met Bruno briefly at a Partei gathering. The man had a certain infamous prestige in Police circles, inasmuch as it had been he, in 1943, who had uncovered the British-Czech plot on Reinhard Heydrich's life, and therefore who might be said to have saved the Hangman from assassination. (ch. 10)

Bruno is Bruno Kreuz Vom Meere. The man who saved Heydrich from assassination receives no citation in Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (1960) because Heydrich was indeed assassinated in our world, the British-Czech plot was successful. We see why Dick designates the name *Kreuz*; here is a Herr Cross, the equivalent, and exact reverse, of the Mrs. Cross who saved Roosevelt. Exact, that is, except for one detail, another change Dick makes which draws the parallel between Heydrich and Roosevelt even closer. The British-made bomb thrown by Jan Kubis and Joseph Gabeik blew Heydrich's car apart on May 29th 1942, a whole year earlier than Kreuz Vom Meere's discovery of the plot in

Dick's version of events.⁶⁷ We can now see that it is not Roosevelt's election that is put back a year, but that Zangara's attack is a year late. Dick has both assassinations delayed by exactly a year.

What can we say about the quality of the moment, that thing so crucial to the *I Ching*? The same factors conspire together to enable Zangara to shoot Roosevelt under the exact same circumstances, a whole year later than they did in our world. The same two men are in a position to form the exact same plot to kill Heydrich another year in advance of their plot in our world. For us, Roosevelt was saved, and Heydrich was killed, Dick switches these events around, but he is doing more than just this. Here is not the idea that had things occurred differently Roosevelt would have been shot. Dick is telling us that in this novel, the shooting of Roosevelt *is a completely different event*. Roosevelt escaped death in 1933, before his inauguration. Dick has him leave aside his trip to Miami at this time and go there instead a whole year later. Is it really conceivable that, after a year in office, on the same day in 1934, Giuseppe Zangara would have been waiting with the same gun, standing on the same bench, for President Roosevelt to climb aboard that same train? The event in our world was unique to the moment that it had. It was the result of the nature of that moment. Had things gone differently...had Mrs. Cross not been there at that time...then things might have been otherwise. In our world Zangara could only have succeeded *at the moment he fired*, and only then. The world of *The Man in the High Castle* is not only resolutely not our world, *it could never have been our world*. The quality of the moment is preserved, but it is a completely different moment.

⁶⁷ cf. Shirer, 1960, p. 991.

The moment, which the *I Ching* interprets, is of great importance to the characters in *High Castle*. There are many references to time and The Moment in the choice of timepieces and also the serious tone (ch. 3) of Baynes/Wegener's musings when he realises that all human history is but *ein Augenblick*, a moment, effectively a continuous present, and we are back to Hume again, at least indirectly:

Mr. Tagomi said, 'Sir, I have a gift to graft.'

'I beg your pardon?' Baynes said.

'To invite your favourable attitude.' Mr. Tagomi reached into his overcoat pocket and brought out a small box.

'Selected from among finest *objets d'art* of America available.' He held out the box.

'Well,' Baynes said. 'Thanks.' He accepted the box.

'All afternoon assorted officials examined the alternatives,' Mr. Tagomi said. 'This is most authentic of dying old U.S. culture, a rare retained artifact carrying flavour of bygone halcyon day.'

Mr. Baynes opened the box. In it lay a Mickey Mouse wristwatch on a pad of blue velvet.

Was Mr. Tagomi playing a joke on him? He raised his eyes, saw Mr. Tagomi's tense, concerned face. No, it was not a joke.

'Thank you very much,' Baynes said. 'This is indeed incredible.'

'Only few, perhaps ten, authentic 1938 Mickey Mouse watches in all world today,' Mr. Tagomi said, studying him, drinking in his reaction, his appreciation. 'No collector known to me has one, sir.' (ch. 3)

Project Dandelion, an updated Project Sealion, the invasion of England, is the plan by which the Nazi High Command intend to launch a covert, pre-emptive nuclear strike against Japan. It too is named after a children's timepiece, the "dandelion clock". Mickey Mouse is a fictional animal, extinct, like the buffalo. Implicit in the threat of Project Dandelion is the extinction of the Japanese race, of their culture. The Moment, or at least their method of reading it via the *I Ching* will be lost. The confusion of the cosmic and the mundane when Frank Frink, when consulting the *I Ching* asks "what is the time, now?" (ch. 4) symbolises this translation of the desire to know the state of The Moment in terms of its totality, and its specific, purely in terms of the way it affects us, the here and now.

The difference between knowing the time and knowing The Moment is the difference between reaching out to form an empathic bond to other people and our own isolation in a personal world, a world in which time is a very real thing, despite what philosophy may say to the contrary. Dick, in *Counter Clock World*, deals with this aspect again, in a vision of the future retreating towards the past. Due to the Hobart Effect, an unexplained cosmological event, certain aspects of causality suddenly start to run backwards. Certain forms, that is, but not all. People have a knowledge of the future, but in a negative sense, in that they know when people will come back to life, owing to the time of the "Deaders'" actual deaths before the onset of the Hobart Effect. They know that eventually Beethoven will reappear to unwrite his music, as the works of all the world's artists will vanish at their appointed time. Yet those who have returned to life can still die in a non-reversed way. If shot, they die in real time, not in Hobart's time. The Moment appears to be totally confused. People disgorge food instead of eating it, yet a car's engine will be warm for a while after it has been driven instead of heating up just before it is to be driven, as one might expect if causality were universally reversed.

The Hobart Effect is limited to Earth. On Mars, time continues forwards just as before. Implicit in the device of the Hobart Effect is the fact that, although the novel is set in the future, eventually it will retreat back to the present day. Our moment in time will be reconstructed, but only up to a point. Our narrative space is one in which there are certain people alive at a given time, and they are of such and such an age. This state of affairs will be repeated. We, ourselves, will be re-created, physically. The moment at which we are reading the novel *Counter Clock World* will exist again, but it will not be the same. Time is still marching on, it will still be the future, the only difference will be that the structure of human relations and society in the past

will be physically reconstructed. Our consciousness of time will be running forwards, but we will physically be growing younger. There will have been changes made. People will have been killed on their way to being unborn, thus changing the course of history. *Counter Clock World* offers us a retro-active equivalent to *The Man in the High Castle*, in which our own world will inevitably become an alternative history version of itself. The hopeless struggle of humanity to preserve forward-moving causality is being washed back by the tide of "un-doing" unleashed by the Hobart Effect. Even attempts to learn from it are hopeless. As one of the characters points out, the resurrection of the Anarch Peak has no religious significance, it is just a natural event. The characters are trapped in a world of inconsistent, illogical causality, the world of Hume. The end point of nihilism, the loss of belief in progress, has come about: progress is dead.

Counter Clock World secularises two religious messages. On the one hand there is the idea of the bodily resurrection of the faithful on the day of judgement promised by orthodox Christianity. On the other, the return to the womb which awaits all the characters, assuming they live long enough, recalls the message of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, that in an afterlife indistinguishable from this life, we will be faced with a choice of wombs, into one of which we will pass and be born again, unless that is we learn from the chant of the Lamas and avoid it, strive toward enlightenment. When Mr. Tagomi has his vision on Kearny Street and sees the world of our San Francisco, he imagines it to be the "*Bardo Thödol* existence", the world of dead spirits moving relentlessly towards re-birth. Yet this is our world. Implicit is the suggestion that *we are dead*, that like Joe Chip and the other inertials in *Ubik*, we have already passed into the *Bardo* plane, but do not yet know it. Abendsen's book tells the people of the world of *High Castle* and *High Castle* tells us. The telling is akin to the

chanting of the Lamas to the corpse, trying to communicate to the spirit wandering in error in the *Bardo* plane that the world they think is real is but an illusion. Whose world is the real one? The true enlightenment is to know that all the worlds are illusion:

The great saying of the Buddhist work the *Prajñā-Pāramitā* runs thus: 'Form (*Rūpa*) is the Void and the Void is Form.' Realisation of the Void is to be a Buddha, or 'Knower', and not to know it is to be an 'ignorant being' in the *Sangsāra*. (Evans-Wentz, 1929, lxxii)

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION

Mr. Tagomi is left at the end of Chapter Fourteen, the last in which he appears, turning from one means of interpreting the world to another. The Buddhist interpretation appears to have failed him. He has gained an insight into the world of the "hell-layer", seen the white light of *nirvana* beckoning, but has failed to achieve it. He is unable to interpret what he finds on the other side of the veil of *Maya*, whether a real world or one which is no more real than the one he has temporarily left. A new direction takes him towards the writings of the New England Puritan, Cotton Mather:

'I am suffering,' he told Herr Reiss, who had put out his cigarette. 'Of malady growing these long years but which entered virulent form the day I heard helplessly, your leaders' escapades recited. Anyhow, therapeutic possibility nil. For you, too, sir. In language of Goodman C. Mather, if properly recalled: Repent!'

The German consul said huskily, 'Properly recalled.' He nodded, lit a new cigarette with trembling fingers. (*High Castle*, ch. 14)

Unconsciously forming the smoky red light of the hell-layer with the end of his cigarette, Reiss listens with some obvious emotion to Tagomi eschew the forms of Buddhism for Puritanism, the interpretation of the world as one in which there is a clearer direct connection between the acts of one's worldly life and the hoped-for rewards of the afterlife, as opposed to the "hot winds of *karma*" which blow us to our next incarnation. 'Repent!' cries Tagomi, an escape more immediate than the long struggle for enlightenment and the chance of leaving the wheel of life and rebirth. This is a movement we have met before:

The medieval Church did not talk about an *imitation* of Christ. Man, since he was made in God's image, was, essentially, already like Christ, though because of the Fall, he required Christ's Incarnation to give him back the possibility of realising what he essentially was. The only kind

of imitation of Christ envisaged by the Church is the mystical imitation of Christ's *action*, not of his person. *The Imitation of Christ* on the other hand, seems to take it for granted that man is essentially unlike Christ and that only through a studied conformity of the spirit will he find salvation. Where the medieval Church saw man as a being in the process of of realising himself, the *Imitation* is not interested in what he is but only in what he ought to be. The stress on *imitation* thus implied a loss of faith in the phenomenal world and a loss of belief in the idea that man is made in God's image. By advocating the imitation of Christ in this way the author implicitly dismisses the idea that there is something in man which is not only like Christ but *is* Christ. As a result freedom and morality, outer and inner, are set up in opposition to one another. (Josipovici, 1971, p. 43)

Plato, Buddha and Marcus Aurelius are rejected, Thomas à Kempis is in the ascendant. Puritanism is born. For Tagomi, the study of the works of Goodman Mather is part of his obsession with collecting Americana and of a desire to understand the culture of a conquered people. For Mather and à Kempis, their world view is akin to that of Luther, whose split with the Catholic Church was made most manifest, for Josipovici, not when, in 1517, he nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the church at Wittenburg, but two years later at Leipzig:

...and in 1520 when he put forward his views in *The Appeal to the German Nobility*. At Leipzig he denied the authority of the Pope and the councils and in the *Appeal* he claimed that scripture outranks even the Pope in determining what is right and what is wrong: the truth is what my conscience is compelled to believe on reading Scripture, not what the Pope and councils say. This at first sight would seem to replace one authority - the Church - with another - the Bible. But in fact it raises a fundamental question about authority, and one which could not be resolved in the terms proposed by Luther. As the Catholics were quick to point out, the individual conscience is extremely unreliable, and the fact that people have differed about the interpretation of passages of Scripture shows that there is no way of telling what the correct interpretation is without the guidance of the Church. For how is one to tell a perverse interpretation from a sound one without recourse to some external authority? The Reformers, however, retaliated by asking why it should be taken for granted that the Church would always be right and the individual conscience wrong. By what authority did the Church arrogate to itself this authority? If all men are fallible except the Pope, ran one extremist argument, then only the Pope can know who is Pope, and there is no reason for accepting the judgement of the present occupant of the pontifical chair. (p. 48)

We can now see part of the reasoning behind the emphasis on imitation in the novel as a whole. The reason for the number of fakes seems obvious enough, but we are faced with more than just fakery. Frink's stunt whereby he confronts Childan with the fact that all his guns were made very recently points up a world in which things are an *imitation* of the real, not *essentially* real. A world in which things can be read. Frink can look at the gun and know that it is not genuine. Childan can send it to his friend in the University of California Penology Department for it to be "read" deeper. Theirs is a world in which there is perfect knowledge. If we, like Luther, look at the world and we are instructed by our conscience to see it in a certain way, then that is how it is. For Dick, representing this view in the body of Arthur Silvester in *Eye in the Sky*, should this personal world view escape and start to overwhelm other people's we can start to see the limitations of the individual conscience. This, of course, is Science-Fiction. In real life we are not privy to other people's consciences. This does not prevent us from reinterpreting the world in our own way.

The shift from the world as a construct of illusions to one which, like a book, can be read, and, after Luther, each individual viewpoint is as important as another, is picked up by the *I Ching* ironically enough. When Mr. Tagomi consults it after the incident wherein the two S.D. "thugs" are shot by Mr. Tagomi with one of Frink's fake Civil War guns, the answer it gives is exactly the same as that received by Juliana Frink at the end of the novel, showing that Dick intends these two incidents to be taken together, *Inner Truth*:

Pigs and fishes are the least intelligent of all; hard to convince. It is I. The book means me. I will never fully understand; that is the nature of such creatures. Or is this Inner Truth now, this that is happening to me?

I will wait. I will see. Which it is.

Perhaps it is both. (*High Castle*, ch. 14)

Switching to the world view of Cotton Mather, the Inner Truth Mr. Tagomi has is just that. He will never understand, *and Inner Truth is* what is happening to him at that moment. Able to interpret the world himself he is creating his own truth. Yet he is denied the revelation that is accorded Juliana Frink when she also obtains the judgement *Inner Truth* from the Oracle, the revelation that there is no Inner Truth.

On the nineteenth of June, 1944, the Japanese fleet launched an attack on U.S. Task Force 58 off Guam. The first line of defence were the American submarines some five hundred miles West of the Task Force. At 0905 the carrier *Taiho* was sunk by the submarine *Albacore*. At 1220 the carrier *Shokaku* was torpedoed by the submarine *Cavalla* and sank in the Pacific Ocean, just East of the Philippines at 1624, June nineteenth, 1944. The *Taiho*, although struck first, sank four minutes later (Young, 1973, p. 157). The *Shokaku*, the "Raising of Status", the "Perfect Knowledge" was a real ship, which really was lost in the Battle of the Philippines, just as Robert Childan is told by the girl at the offices of the *Tokyo Herald* in San Francisco, with one important difference:

'According to our reference room, sir,' she said in a giggling voice, 'the carrier *Syokaku* is at the bottom of the Philippine Sea. It was sunk by an American submarine in 1945...'⁶⁸ (ch. 4)

As in the case of the assassination of Roosevelt and the attack on Heydrich, the event is shifted a whole year forward. As in *Counter Clock World* some forms of causality run backwards and some, without there being any objective means of predicting, do not. Unless we run to our reference library and look these

⁶⁸ *Syokaku* and *Shokaku* are the same word, the first complies with the *kunrei-siki* convention of Romanisation and the second with the Hepburn System (Dunn and Yanada, 1958, p. 261). Dick adopts the pre-War convention, established in 1937.

things up, how can we know that the version of reality we are being given is not correct? We are in the same position as in life, in construing the world through our senses, unable to know whether or not the universe we are actualising is based on true information or false. Dick challenges us by making his imagined world so extraordinarily *other* that we cannot fail to know that it is not the world we know. He also invites detailed research into his facts. His lists the sources of his information on the flyleaf. All through the novel the theme of people looking things up in books and other sources of information is very strong. If we follow suit we find a novel as *writerly* as any that Roland Barthes could wish. The role of the reader in *The Man in the High Castle* is a critical one, and also the position of the reader in terms of the text, as in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, is outlined very forcibly.

Childan looks around him as the "Chink" pedals him through the streets:

The radio of the pedecab blared out popular tunes, competing with the radios of other cabs, cars and buses. Childan did not hear; he was used to it. Nor did he take notice of the enormous neon signs with their permanent ads obliterating the front of virtually every large building. After all, had he not his own sign; at night it blazed on and off in company with all the others of the city. What other way did one advertise? One had to be realistic. (ch. 2)

If Childan does not see them then who does? The viewpoint of this section of Chapter Two is entirely that of Childan's perspective. Here we are told what Childan does *not* see. Who is telling us this? The obvious answer, is, of course, Philip K. Dick, but within the schema he has presented in the rest of the novel there are no other occasions where the authorial voice intervenes. The fact that Childan does not notice the neon signs and does not hear the radios is presented in the terms of his being so inured to their effect that they no longer impinge on his percept system. He has to notice them in order *not* to notice them. This is the same "'not to be inquired into' aspect" as Marcuse

found in his hypnotised subjects. The cloud of unknowing wherein so that something can be invisible it must first be seen in order to be unconsciously "unseen". Thus Dick presents the intrusion of authorial knowledge in an area of indistinct knowledge, an area of unknowing, or in Childan's case, deliberate non-perception.

We are faced with a movement between two levels, the first, the way in which the characters themselves react to their environment, the second, the way in which the reader interprets it. The interpretation Childan puts on his world is one in which areas of it may be ignored, or phased out of his field of view entirely. This is one "reading" of the world as book, the initial, perceptual model. The reading of the audience is one which can be made by reading the coded information in the text left by the author. This, in a work where the authorial voice is so excluded is a way of interacting with the writer's viewpoint, which in this case emerges very fleetingly in the case of Childan's cloud of unknowing. As in the case of Wyndam-Matson producing the certificate to prove that his Zippo lighter is the very one which Roosevelt had in his pocket on the day he was assassinated, we have an appeal to a written sub-text which supplements the real artifact:

'...I mean, a gun goes through a famous battle, like the Meuse-Argonne, and it's the same as if it hadn't, *unless you know*. It's in here.' He tapped his head. 'In the mind, not the gun...' (ch. 5)

Mr. Tagomi later feels that evil is not an idea, but a real thing, a thing like cement, holding everything together, like Juliana's pin. It is at this point, after hearing of the "escapades" of the Nazi leaders, that he realises that all his religion is wrong. The world as it is seen by the characters in the novel does not have the facility for them to examine it, to run away and find the documents which will prove the authenticity or otherwise of parts of

it. Where this facility is open to them, where they can check up, they do. Wyndam-Matson has his certificate, Childan the Penology Department at U.S.C. and many of the others have the *I Ching*.

On the reader level there are complex messages which can be decoded by the appropriate information source. As in *3SPE* Dick makes strong use of puns and a series of extended metaphors involving the names and associations of the characters in the novel. As noted above, Juliana is linked to Mrs. Cross, which is symbolised by the pin, which links her to Kreuz Vom Meere and Pferdehuf and from them to Heydrich and then back to Roosevelt. If we run to our references there is more to this allusion yet. The submarine which sank the *Syokaku* in the Battle of the Philippines was called the *Cavalla*, Italian for *mare*, female horse. Notice in passing that the English word rhymes with the German *Meer*, sea, and we are back to Bruno again, the *Cross from the Sea*. The early, *gnostic* Christian emblem was not the cross, but the fish, thus, cross from the sea.

The rejection of his native religion in favour of the Inner Truth of Lutheranism and a belief in the palpable reality of evil in Mr. Tagomi is figured in the fate of the *Syokaku*'s sister ship, the *Taiho*. *Taiho*, the gun, the cannon: the gun which collapses Childan's faith in the authenticity of his stock. Frink sinks the gun. However, *taiho* has another meaning: *to enwomb*. The basis of the Buddhist theory of the afterlife, the *Bardo Thödol* existence, that the soul transmigrates to another physical life, becomes *enwombed* again, is for Mr. Tagomi, lost. Cotton Mather's Christianity replaces it. The *Taiho*, *enwomb*, was sunk by the submarine *Albacore*, a fish related to the tunny. The Christian Fish overcomes Buddhist reincarnation.

Many of the names in the book can be rendered into their symbolic functions. Tagomi's name leads us back to Ecclesiastes 12. as we decode *tago* and *mi* into "wooden pail" and "body and soul", the allusion points to the analogy between the wheel and the well, the bowl and the pitcher and the human body and soul which will return respectively to the earth and to God in verse six. General Tedeki symbolises the hope that Baynes puts in him by the grammatically correct Japanese sentence which his name forms, *te de ki*: "an opportunity in the hand", in English a bird in the hand, "and they say that birds die", Juliana reflects (ch. 3). The name also reveals another Dickian irony, that it is extraordinarily similar to the Italian word for *Germans*, *Tedeschi*. Tedeki is the compound Axis man, but what hope is there if the information Baynes imparts is being told to *The Germans*?

The various levels work in terms of representing either character or reader interpretation. The first is the way in which the characters apprehend their own world, and by their description, we reconstruct it. The names reveal the way Dick encodes his intrusions into the text as author. On an overt level, Dick's influence is minimal, his own independent authorial viewpoint is virtually omitted from this shifting third person narrative. By being able to decode the metaphorical cipher, Dick creates a level at which we as reader interpret the world of the characters, a level of interpretation that the characters do not have access to, at least not in this novel. Were they as keen on looking up their own names and decoding their significances as they are on decoding all other aspects of their world, they would be led to an overwhelming conclusion, that they are fictional characters and that their role is to symbolise various metaphorical conceits. Mr. Tagomi reads metaphorical codes sent to him by Tokyo, the only kind the Germans cannot break. We are encouraged to interpret the text in a metaphoric way. The message is hidden from the Reich monitors,

and from the Empire which never ended. Mr. Tagomi can interpret the signs of his world, and we can interpret his world itself.

Tagomi identifies his vision of the "real" San Francisco with the "*Bardo Thödol* existence...the realm of suffering, rebirth...". His reaction is merely to say that there are alternative worlds, nowhere is there the sense that one is implicitly any more real than another. Were the world Mr. Tagomi visits palpably more real than his own he would not be able to go there. It is not our world because our world could not have a fictional character like Mr. Tagomi wandering around in it. His conclusion is that we cannot know more than our senses tell us, "our space and time creations of our own psyche...". Juliana Frink's realisation is more devastating. Mark Rose is quite right to say that Dick breaks one of the most fundamental ground rules of fiction that the characters should not reveal their world as a fiction (Rose, 1981, p. 129), but he does more than merely unsettle our expectations of fiction, but forces us to make an analogy between his process of writing and our process of perception.

By confronting Abendsen with the truth of his own created world, Juliana makes a very definite statement about the relative values of reality obtaining in both her world and our own. *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, written with the aid of the *I Ching*, tells of a world in which Germany and Japan *lost* the War. Quite apart from the fact that Abendsen's book reveals quite a different world to ours, the final question is crucial:

"Oracle, why did you write 'The Grasshopper Lies Heavy'? What are we supposed to learn?" (ch. 15)

Were we to place ourselves in Juliana's position we might well think to ask the same question as she, except that we might phrase it slightly differently:

"Phil, why did you write *The Man in the High Castle*? What are we supposed to learn?" However, only a world in which Inner Truth exists could have an answer. Juliana's has because Dick has placed the *I Ching* there, and he shows us that, whilst his Bible may be different, whilst everything in this fictional world is different, the edition of the *I Ching* consulted by Juliana is exactly the same as Dick's own. What they are supposed to learn is that their fictional world is just that, a fiction, revealed by the only thing which is *interceding* from the non-fictional world outside, the only text which has *not* been *reconstructed*, the definitive *I Ching*. They are all, realises Juliana, fictional characters, created by an author, Philip K. Dick. Tagomi and Juliana undergo two stages of the ultimate lucid dream. Tagomi realises that he is dreaming, Juliana goes further and realises that she is being dreamt.

"Truth, as terrible as death, but harder to find" she muses as she walks away from Abendsen's home. The implication is that death is all around us but truth is hidden. Death will find us, but we have to find truth. It also implies that we will not find truth in this life. We will find death first, but that will be only another hurdle in the search for truth. Once found, it is a terrible thing. It may take us a long time to find it. We shall almost certainly need someone to help us look.

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

One time a whole lot of kids wrote me about my story The Father-Thing, and every kid wanted to know where I got my idea. That was easy, because it was based on childhood memories of my father; but later on, in re-reading my answers, I noticed that I never said the same thing twice. With all intent at honesty, I gave each kid a different answer. I guess this is what makes a fiction writer. Give him six facts and he'll link them together first one way and then another, on and on until you forcibly stop him.

Literary criticism, probably, should be left to the critics, that's their job. One time I read in a distinguished book on sf that in my novel THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE the pin which the character Juliana used to hold her blouse together symbolised all that which held the themes, ideas and subplots of the novel itself - which I hadn't known when I wrote that section. But what if Juliana, also not knowing it, had removed the pin? Would the novel have fallen apart? Or at least come open in the middle and exposed a whole lot of cleavage (which was why her boy friend insisted she put on the pin in the first place)? I will do my best, though, to unpin these stories.

*The advantage of the story over the novel is that in the story you catch the protagonist at the climax of his life, but in the novel you've got to follow him from the day he was born to the day he dies (or nearly so). Open any novel at random and usually what is happening is either dull or unimportant. The only way to redeem this is through style. It is not what happened but how it is told. Pretty soon the professional novelist acquires the skill of describing everything with style, and content vanishes. In a story, though, you can't get away with this. Something important has to happen. I think this is why gifted professional fiction writers wind up writing novels. Once their style is perfected, they have it made. Virginia Woolf, for instance, wound up writing about nothing at all. (Philip K. Dick. 1976. "Afterthought by the Author." from *The Best of Philip K. Dick*)*

The last words must inevitably go to Philip K. Dick himself, words that demonstrate his humour and his impossibility to be pinned down. In Rickman, 1984, Dick claims that the revelation about Juliana's pin was brought to him by a girl fan who visited him one day in California. The anecdote about the origins of the story "The Father Thing" coming directly before this piece of information give us pause to look before we leap. When I worked on my own explication of Juliana's pin I was unaware of this fragment of Dickian hocus-pocus, not having

found it in "the literature" anywhere else. My personal feeling is that Dick has invented this article on Juliana's pin, a piece of false history if you will, but one which serves as a timely reminder that one cannot take Dick's own words too seriously. Dick sets up complex puzzles involving obscure allusions, puns, double-entendres, a whole panoply of literary devices, but serving what purpose? To remind us where *not* to look, in effect. If one seeks enlightenment, do not search in the cave but in the sunlight outside. Dick conforms to the outward conventions of the novel, of the short story, but uses these forms to break open the expectations that his audience will naturally bring to them.

The false history of *High Castle* demonstrates to us that the past is as closed to us as is the future. If we have no power to foresee, neither have we the ability to look back with any certainty. The past is too complex, too full of conflicting interpretation, just as closely subject to the paradoxes of Schrödinger and his ephemeral cat as any suppositions on the outcomes of experiments and the destinies of men in the future. Read my novels with a critical mind, invites Dick, see all the devices of the greats, but what will they do for you? How more enlightened will you become?

In his second to last story, Dick presents religious and spiritual enlightenment in terms of a clash of cultures. In "Rautavaara's Case" (*Omni*, October 1980), kind, caring alien beings sustain the brain of an otherwise dead human astronaut, Agneta Rautavaara, with images of the afterlife, first from her own culture and then from the aliens'. The collision of the redeemer figure from Christianity with the Proximan saviour produces a fusion very like Jory and/or Palmer Eldritch. The Saviour appears to the astronauts and eats them. Just as the Glimmung absorbs the humans (and others) who have worked for its own survival in *Galactic Pot Healer*, and indeed, in Buddhistic philosophy, the fully

evolved minds will fuse with the cosmic consciousness, the idea of a consuming, absorbing deity as a benign, loving entity is not impossible to grasp, but Dick many times presents its fearful and horrific aspects. Those who are not ready for enlightenment are crushed and devoured by the voracious saviour, eager for them to die for it, as Barney intuitively of Palmer Eldritch, and as Jory presents himself in *Ubik*. Can we even be sure that Ella Runciter *is* working for the good and not Jory after all? The short answer is, we cannot. In like vein, can we be sure that the clash of Dickian mystery with the format of the traditional narrative will lead us to enlightenment of a kind? No, we cannot be sure.

Dick ranges from the confusions of the past in *High Castle* to the hopelessness of there even being a future in *3SPE*. Juliana walks away from Abendsen's house and nothing has happened it would seem. The world has not ended, the bomb has not dropped, she, unlike George Miller will not plunge into her own after-death world. There is no sense of the final realisation being the very thing the helpless wraith had tried to escape. By the time we get to *High Castle* things are more complicated than that. "Before enlightenment, chopping wood and drawing water. After enlightenment, chopping wood and drawing water." Thus Japanese Buddhism, the eternally *minimalistic Zen* defines the difference, i.e. that there is no difference. You may be enlightened, but you still need to live. The gift is to stop living, to become part of the greater consciousness, to achieve Nirvana. George Miller becomes part of his own greater consciousness when he is reunited with the reality of his own death. This is a microcosm of the realisation that the dead soul should hope to reach under the tutelage of the Lamas reciting the *Bardo Thödol*, but then, everyone wants to live. George is not happy with his enlightenment, but for Juliana there will be much more chopping of wood and drawing of water.

The point Dick makes about style is a vital one, and it is not for nothing that he includes it in what seems at first sight a throwaway afterword, but which is in fact packed with choice Dickiana. The end point of fiction, according to this definition, should be to write about nothing, but to do it beautifully. As the enlightenment increases, so the content reduces, until finally there is a perfect nothing, the Zen of fiction. However, to phrase it as Dick does, that Virginia Woolf wound up writing about nothing at all, does have certain ring to it, it has that characteristic glint in the eye as so many of Dick's little gems. Who, after all, wants to read about nothing? Do not Dick's fans want more and more incident, more and more action? Are even critics completely happy with a book about nothing at all? Does Dick mean that if we were truly enlightened we would love the Zen Novel?

How could we trust the Zen Novel even were we to read it? Dick's novels are books about nothing, and the nature of nothing, which read like space adventures because they *are* space adventures. They are the fiction of Palmer Eldritch, the novels of Zebra, that which is both one thing and another, and yet at the same time neither. Dick writes about nothing, and what nothing means to us, and yet tells a great story. He writes crazy plots with wild fantasy, novels with more incident than we can control with ease in our imagination, and yet encodes within them the same stylistic sophistication as if he were writing a novel about "nothing at all". The incidents on the gaming board on Titan in *Game Players of Titan* are ludicrous because it is not possible to conceive of the ultimate Monopoly game, any more, says Dick, than we can conceive the idea of the Platonic Ideal of The Novel. What would the Platonic Ideal Novel, the perfect original of which every novel in the world is merely an imitation, actually read like? Would we need to be an Ideal Reader to understand it?

To reply to such a critical reading as I offer here by saying that surely these are really only zany stories about bug-eyed monsters and space ships is not only fair comment, but the perfect comment. This is what Dick himself says. Cleverly concocting avenues to introduce us to the "hidden" layer beneath his own fiction he then derides it by saying that these are not the works of great art. The works of great art are Virginia Woolf, are James Joyce, are all "about nothing at all". Dick's work disturbs because it resolutely does not obey *any* criteria either for trash or for art. It upsets our preconceived notions about what we are reading. It forces us to confront issues which we thought were all sorted out in the Hundred Years War, but which were not. It forces us to realise we are not as clever as we thought we were. It also forces us, even as jaded and as cold as critics can be, to enjoy. If there is a road to enlightenment, that may be a good place to start looking. We *will* need help, but Dick, like Wilbur Mercer, goes on ahead for us. It is going to be a long climb up that hill.

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