

PKD OTAKU #1

Vittorio Curtoni: MY LIFE WITH PHILIP K. DICK

I started reading science fiction, in Italy, when I was nine year old in 1958. What I read most at the time was "Urania", a so-called magazine which in truth was not a magazine (and is not today, or is only partly), because it has always been a sort of paperback series sold at the newsstand, with a novel, or an anthology or a collection, in each issue, and at the most some columns about books, movies, and the like. In its long life (it appeared in 1952 and introduced the neologism "fantascienza", which is the Italian equivalent of science fiction) "Urania" has published almost all the most important sf writers; the biggest exception that comes to my mind is Kurt Vonnegut Jr., who anyway says he's not a science fiction writer, so it's all right I'd say.

My first Dick novel was *A Glass of Darkness*, translated here as *La città sostituita (The Replaced Town)*, because Italian publishers have this wild mania of changing the titles of foreign books. I never understood why, though I've done it more than once, but without understanding why. It is a must, I suppose. Anyway, it was published here in 1962, and I read it while I was at junior high school, and was so stunned by it that I immediately fell in love with this Philip K. Dick I didn't know a single thing about. What captured me was the concept of the faked reality of the town, and the epic battle between cosmic forces: it seemed to express something that had always been in me without my conscious knowledge. At the time I was also beginning to know and love with the same passion the works of Edgar Allan Poe, so Dick and Poe have always been darkly united in my mind, and at least once, in my introduction to the final volume of the collected stories of Phil Dick, I've tried to put their names together, and who knows if I did right or not.

My second Dick was *Solar Lottery* (aka *Il disco di fiamma, The Flaming Disk*), followed by *Eye in the Sky (L'occhio nel cielo*, which strangely means *Eye in the Sky*), and so on.

In 1970, while attending the university, I had the rare privilege of becoming the editor of another Italian sf series, "Galassia", in tandem with Gianni Montanari, a friend from my same hometown, Piacenza (north Italy, about 50 miles from Milan). We were both enthusiastic Dick fans (the very first sf book Gianni ever read was *Il disco di fiamma*), and there was such a cornucopia of Dick books to be translated that our only problem was not to inflate the market with his novels; but for sure we published a lot of him, from *Clans of the Alphane Moon* to *A Maze of Death*, from *Ubik* to *Our Friends From Frolix 8*, etc. The only novel that another publisher, Libra Editrice, was able to steal from our hands was *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, and we cried a lot about it, but well, you can't always win.

Dick was also one of the first writers I ever translated, at the beginning of what is today my profession: Gianni and I did together, a half each, *Clans*, and later I translated alone *Maze*. Between stories and novels, I've lost count of the Dick pages I've translated, but he's probably, in terms of quantity, my second writer in thirty years of translations (the first being, alas, Ron Goulart, offered to my care for reasons I frankly can't imagine from the end of the Seventies to the mid-Eighties, when, all of a sudden, all Italian publishers stopped translating his novels). I must have absorbed like a sponge the Dick style: I'm a science fiction writer myself, a story writer, and every time I publish a story everybody keeps telling me how much Dickian it is. A wonderful feeling, though at times I don't understand what's so Dickian about my stories, but I probably have him under my skin and am unable to notice his influence. He's like a guardian angel suspended over my soul, or my mind, and God bless him for his presence!

Anyway, to make a long story short: Italian readers and editors like me have always loved Phil, but for decades nobody gave a damn about his writings. It was sf, so it was trash: adored in the sf ghetto (yes, we too had it, same as the States; we often tend to have the things good Americans have, especially the worst ones), simply ignored by our literary community, the academia, the media, and everything.

Patrick: LIES about *The Unteleported Man*

The big shift between the end of UTM and the end of LIES, INC. is in chapter 15 of LIES (page 173) and chapter 16 of UTM (page 196). The last bit common to both books reads:

"I suppose so," he said. And opened the tin.

Acrid smoke billowed about him, stinging his nostrils.

In LIES it's Matson's nostrils being assailed and the rest of LIES is more or less what appears in the Berkley (and Ace) editions as chapters 7 through most of 9. But in UTM the action is quite different.

It is *Rachmael* who is in the situation. The UN time-warping weapon has returned him to Whale's Mouth just prior to being shot by the LSD dart. (LIES p. 75) "This" time he ducks and the dart misses him. Before the THL soldier can fire another dart Rachmael activates the device again.

"Now" he is back at the Fox's lair before Freya's attempt to pass the deep-sleep components. (LIES chapter 5) He tries to explain to Freya that this is the second time he has met her there to make the attempt but of course she doesn't understand what he is talking about. It is, after all, her "first" time. Rachmael reaches into his pocket for the time-warping device but it's gone. He has gone back to a time *before* he had been given the weapon by the UN.

He tells her that THL will prevent her from passing him the deep-sleep components. She then suggests disassembling the *Omphalos* and sending the sections through a Telpor station to Whale's Mouth and then having Lies, Inc. technicians reassemble the ship there. [This makes no sense.] But Rachmael decides to try to change the "present" and obtain the components after all. The robot busboy stumbles into him as before and steals the components but this time Rachmael is ready. He and Freya attack the robot and retrieve the components. They then escape into the streets and safety.

Since he can now utilize deep-sleep on his flight, Rachmael decides to make the trip to Whale's Mouth on the *Omphalos* as he originally intended. [This also makes no sense.] Only he now plans to take Freya with him. He is preparing to make the proposal to her when the chapter – and novel – comes to an end.

That's it. To call it "unsatisfying" is an understatement! There are no Lies, Inc. technicians at Whale's Mouth who could reassemble the *Omphalos* so Freya's suggestion is impossible. I did like the plan to break the ship down to suitcase size components though. It seemed like an A. E. van Vogt idea. Rachmael, on the other hand, *knows* what the true situation at Whale's Mouth is. He knows that the Telpor can send and receive and so no interstellar transport ship is actually necessary. But he's going to make the 18 years journey anyway. Go figure. Hard to tell what Phil had in mind at this point except maybe just to bring the novel to a close and move on.

PKD: unreleased interview, Metz, 1977

This wonderful interview was originally librated from a fine French site where BOTH versions (original English and French) are available. While I wasn't too worried about making a hard copy version of this for distribution I can't justify a broader dissemination as I don't have the permission of the original authors. However, all is not lost. The interview is still available at La ParaDick site. Please check out::

http://www.Le-ParaDick.com/itw_m77.html (the original version)

http://www.Le-ParaDick.com/itw_m77_fr.html (the French translation)

Simon Ings Philip K Dick: Dr Bloodmoney - an infinity plus review

Dr Bloodmoney: SF Masterworks 32

by Philip K Dick

(Millennium, £6.99, 304 pages, paperback; first published 1965, this edition 10 August 2000.)

In the slip 'twixt cup and lip sit Philip Dick, and *Dr Bloodmoney*.

To put it another way, *Dr Bloodmoney* is about the horror of getting what you really want.

Dick's novel of nuclear apocalypse has, typically, nothing to do with the realities of nuclear conflict, and less to do with apocalypse. San Francisco and its suburbs must come to terms with catastrophe tailored by Dick to his own moral and psychological (primarily Jungian) concerns.

It was as if the man had been gripped by his unconscious. He was no longer living a rational, ego-directed existence; he had surrendered to some archetype.

'The Impersonal, Doctor Stockstill thought, has attacked us.' (p74)

Dick's apocalypse--brilliantly rendered--is 'a pageant of figments', 'a permanent dreadful metamorphosis'. Yet, on the surface at least, the cruelty of the conflict, and the debasement of its victims, are massively downplayed. Society recovers. '... it would be all small towns and individuality,' one character thinks, presciently, 'like Ayn Rand talked about in her books.' (p78)

And so it transpires: an American bucolic idyll, *Dr Bloodmoney* is one of Dick's more domestic novels, an affectionate send-up of the petty liberal culture of his one-time home in Marin County.

Where, then, the horror?

As usual with Dick, it stems from ordinary human wants. No one understood the will to power like Dick, no-one grasped its pervasive, unshakeable appeal.

Before the apocalypse, McConchie the salesman is watching television:

'He thought of himself in the nose cone, like Walt Dangerfield, strapped next to a woman of great physical attractiveness. Pioneers, he and her, founding a new civilisation on a new planet. But then his stomach rumbled and he realised how hungry he was; he could not postpone lunch much longer.

'Even as he stood watching the great upright rocket on the TV screen, his thoughts turned toward soup and rolls and beef stew and apple pie with ice cream on it, up at Fred's Fine Foods.' (p35)

When he gets there, Hoppy Harrington, limbless from thalidomide, is in a trance. Liberated from his own limitations and appetites, Hoppy dreams:

'I'm like everybody else; in fact I'm better than anybody else. I can do anything they can do and a lot more. I can go wherever I want, and they can't. They can't move.'

'Why can't they move?' the frycook demanded.

'Just can't,' Hoppy said. 'They can't go into the air or on roads or ships; they just stay. It's all different from this. I can see each of them, like they're dead, like they're pinned down and dead. Like corpses.'

Our will to power, Dick argues, is held in check by constraints--by our bodily needs, and by our social situation. Freed by apocalypse, the will to power among Dick's characters is no longer held in check. The Personal and the Impersonal slide into each other, and wishes come dangerously true...

Doctor Bloodmoney's logic is the logic of the moral essay, rendered in the language of dreams. At the very start of the novel, we see that Doctor Bloodmoney, architect of the apocalypse, already straddles the gap between Personal and Impersonal, between cup and lip. He writes his personal paranoias large upon the world with a nuclear nib. McConchie, on the other hand, even after the apocalypse, never loses the distinction between self and other. He is profoundly conservative. While other survivors loot stores for food, he steals paper money, unable to believe that it is worthless; he eats raw rats to survive. His 'slowness' puts him at a short-term disadvantage, but in Dick's forgiving Ayn Rand future, his long-term success is assured: he keeps to Dick's idea of the necessary limits.

For Dick, the will to power is non-grainy: a smooth, amoral logic ladder that seamlessly connects a cripple's desire to walk with a megalomaniac's identification with the Angel of Death. The necessary friction--the moral grain, if you like--comes from some petty but salutary limitations of the physical and social world.

It's an uncomfortable point, for Dick no less than for the reader. This edition blindly reprints a ghastly, self-satisfied afterword by the author, in which he attempts to close off the text's uneasy morality. McConchie is right, Bloodmoney is wrong; well now, that's a relief.

Perry Kinman: Notes on my one and only PKDream, dated June 27th, 1995

I was going through Clans making detailed notes on everything at the time. Maybe that's what set it off. Still, it's amazing I've only had one after all these years (18 of them) of being a diehard fan. Anyways: PKD has a word processor, a portable type. Laptop. It's of a rounded design. To the side of it is a tape machine, recorder, a memory storage system.

I walk up to look at it. It is on a small stand, like on a display. Phil is sitting a short distance away at a table. Some

people standing around him. Talking. Perhaps he is signing books.

On the screen of the word processor is some text out of CLANS. I get up close to the screen looking to see if I can tell which part of the book it is.

The screen then changes to a chart. It's a flow chart. The boxes are shiny 3-D spaceships with info written on their sides. They move up and down, away, they hover. The writing on their sides is out of CLANS too. Phil watches me through the people. Keeping an eye on his computer. I reach up and turn off the word processor. The tape player clicks off automatically too.

(switch to..)

Phil is in a jumbo jetliner with his word processor. He sits alone on a stool. All the seats are taken out, so it's hollow and huge. The plane is coming in for a landing. A smooth landing so Phil sits still on the stool. The whole plane is loaded with packs of cigarettes, jumbled in a mess that reaches to his knees. He is not so sure he likes it, a surprised look on his face. Finished loading or unloading, there is no change to the interior of the plane. Phil has a strange 'why me?' look on his face as it takes off and flies away.

Patrick: *The Variable Man* – two points

Just finished reading Phil's collection of stories, THE VARIABLE MAN. First published in 1957, it contained five of Phil's stories published from 1953 to 1955. They were "The Variable Man," "Second Variety," "The Minority Report," "Autofac," and "A World of Talent." A couple of things struck me while reading. First, in four of the five stories there has been some sort of nuclear war. Called variously "The Fifth Atomic War," "the Anglo-Chinese War," and "Total Global Conflict," the war is either crucial to the story, as in "Second Variety" and "Autofac" or only tangential but nevertheless prominently mentioned. Of course the Hydrogen Bomb War is a central motif in much of Phil's fiction. Consider: "The Golden Man," "The Turning Wheel," "Foster, You're Dead," "Breakfast at Twilight," "Captive Market," "Recall Mechanism," "The Days of Perky Pat," "Precious Artifact," "If There were No Benny Cemoli," "The Defenders" and this is by no means an exhaustive list. As for the novels: *The World Jones Made*, *The Game Players of Titan*, *The Penultimate Truth*, *Dr. Bloodmoney*, *Do Androids Dream*, *The Unteleported Man*, *Deus Irae* all take place on an Earth devastated by nuclear war. (I believe in an afterword to a late edition of *Dr. Bloodmoney* Phil says all through the 50s and early 60s he expected World War 3 to break out any day.) Well, I suppose this is no great revelation but what I really wondered was, "Why did he stop writing about it?" By 1966, the year he finished *Do Androids Dream*, he was through with it as a plot element (*Deus Irae* was started in 1964, so it doesn't count.) What changed his mind?

The second thought after reading VARIABLE MAN has to do with the last story, "A World of Talent." No nuclear war in that tale but there is an interstellar conflict between Terra and its psi-dominated colony planets which have seceded. Written in June 1954 and, until *The Collected Stories* volumes appeared, never reprinted after THE VARIABLE MAN, "A World of Talent" contains ideas that will resurface years later in seminal novels. Here is an early, perhaps the earliest, appearance of the Anti-Psis like Joe Chip of *Ubik*. Indeed, one of the main characters in the story, an Anti-Psi named Pat Connley, re-appears in *Ubik* as Pat Conley. There is an autistic boy named Tim, trapped along his own timeline, appearing now as a child, later as an old man, or, again, as a middle-aged man who is clearly the template of Manfred Steiner in *Time-Slip*. Tim (adult version) describes his power this way:

"It's like suddenly being lifted off the chess board and seeing everybody as pieces – seeing the whole Universe as a game of black and white squares – with everybody and every object stuck on his space-time spot. We're off the board; we can reach down from above. Adjust the position of the men, change the game without the pieces knowing. From outside."

If that doesn't sound like Valis/Zebra in action, I don't know what does. So what's it doing percolating around Phil's head in 1954?

Gavin Logan: counter-clock sheep

I got to thinking about how people always complain when their favorite book "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" asks the bizarre title of Philip K. Dick's novelization of the Ridley Scott motion picture Blade Runner. This motion picture was the cinematic realization of a phantom third novel in K. W. Jeter's noirish Blade Runner "trilogy". The buzz of the sci-fi community was towards Jeter penning this eagerly awaited tome but instead, he passed over the reins to his writer friend Dick.

Dick is perhaps best known for his philosophical writing, although in recent years he has strayed into the genre of science fiction, hoping perhaps to appeal to a wider audience. Unfortunately, this reviewer feels that Dick's attempts missed the mark by a long way.

Primarily, Dick leaves alone large chunks of the film's plot and theme, happy to concentrate in depth on smaller aspects of the film such as the fake animals. In fact, he introduces a whole new element - Mercerism - a kind of futuristic television incorporating a pseudo-psychological empathy test. Gone are Scott's fascinating plays on traditional noir thrillers, gone is the lean, fit figure of Harrison Ford, replaced by a seemingly middle-aged, worn out beat cop.

The subtle development of Deckard's possible identity as a replicant is left out to dry as the replicants of PKD are given sympathetic personalities. No longer strictly figures of evil; we are made to feel sorry for them, to see Deckard as a man devoid of empathy.

What becomes obvious with each turn of the page is that Dick has his own agenda. He uses the foundation of Scott's dazzling cinematic landscape to play out a morality tale for his readers. In his eyes, the humans are the soulless villains of the piece and the replicants (a term Dick erroneously claims as his own neologism) are the hunted innocents.

The very term "Blade Runner" is not mentioned once in the entire text and the title is one of the most rambling and inappropriate that this reviewer has seen in a long time.

Philosophical writers be warned: leave our cinematic masterpieces alone.

(The Caledonian Quarterly, Ersatz Press 9991)

Three Late Night Thoughts About PKD's *Time Out Of Joint* While Listening to Pink Floyd's Song "Comfortably Numb"

By Frank C. Bertrand

Hello.

Is there anybody in there?

Just nod if you can hear me.

Is there anyone home?

3.0 I sometimes wonder if anyone thinks twice, or even once, about the title – *Time Out of Joint*. Does it perhaps cause at least a small bell to briefly ring in the murky depths of one's mind? It's not exactly a common 21st century phrase. It has a quaint, antique air about it I'd say, as if written by William Shakespeare or someone of his ilk.

Then again, a cursory dip into *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* informs me that Lytton Strachey (1880-1932) once said of Hurrell Froude: "The time was out of joint, and he was only too delighted to have been born to set it right." Might we not also say this of Ragle Gumm? I'm not too sure though how "delighted" he was to experience his particular time out of joint.

Further checking indicates this phrase is indeed attributable to Will Shakespeare, and can be found in Act I, sc. 5, l. 188 of *Hamlet*: "The time is out of joint; O curséd spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!" Now, this sounds more like something Ragle Gumm would say.

3.1 A couple of variants on this can also be noted. In I.ii of *Hamlet* the King says "Our state to be disjoint and out of frame", while in III.iv Hamlet notes "...the fatness [grossness, slackness] of these pursy [corpulent] times".

- 3.2 This meaning-loaded phrase is in at least two other Shakespeare plays: 1) *Troilus and Cressida*, I.ii “every thing so out of joint that...”, and 2) *The Second Part of King Henry The Fourth*, V.iv “thou hast drawn my shoulder out of joint”.
- 3.3 Nietzsche notes it as well in section 7 of *The Birth Of Tragedy* (1872): “In this sense the Dionysian man resembles Hamlet: both have for once penetrated into the true nature of things, - they have *perceived*, but it is irksome for them to act; for their action cannot change the eternal nature of things; the time is out of joint and they regard it as shameful or ridiculous that they should be required to set it right.” (“penetrated into the true nature of things” and “action cannot change the eternal nature of things” read like something PKD would write in his much misunderstood *Exegesis*.)
- 3.4 It can also be found in Bk 4, Ch. 13 of Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* (1795): “ ‘The time is out of joint: O cursed spite / That ever I was born to set it right!’ In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet’s whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it.”

*Come on, now.
I hear you’re feeling down.
Well I can ease your pain,
Get you on your feet again.*

- 7.0 I can’t help but ponder **why** PKD would use a phrase from *Hamlet* as the title for one of his novels. Are we meant to compare/contrast Ragle Gumm with Hamlet? There’s been a centuries old debate about whether Hamlet’s “madness” is real or feigned. Seems to have been hardly any “critical” debate about Ragle Gumm’s state of mind. It’s far more likely we’re meant to consider how the time (history, culture, society) of the novel, as well as our own time, is out of joint (dysfunctional?), and why.
- 7.1 It’s also likely that the concept of “time” itself is in question, is out of joint, perhaps as impacted by our notions/perceptions of “reality”. Do we need to have “time” to have “reality”? Is it Gumm’s sense of time or reality that is more out of joint? Or is it Victor’s “time” (Reality) that is more out of joint? (PKD has said “I love to just play games with time-space causality. It’s my old interest in epistemology,” *In His Own Words*, p. 46. We also have these PKD novel and short story titles: *Martian Time-Slip*, *Now Wait For Last Year*, *Counter-Clock World*, “Time Pawn”, “A Little Something for Us Tempnauts”.)
- 7.2 Recall reading once something about in literature there is the time of the piece itself and the time of the content – time can become both subject and the medium of narrative – there is the time of the book and the time of the narrator as well as the time of the reader.
- 7.3 A stronger possibility is the concept of *Zeitgeist*, which is German for “spirit of the times,” referring to a loose metaphysical characterization of the rich and varied matrix of ideas, philosophies, trends, social structure, political climate, etc. that comprise the “spirit” (tone, psyche, mood, ambience) of a culture during a given era, say the US in the 1950s, which is what this Dick novel is about. (In an interview with John Boonstra, PKD said “I had been reading a lot of Oriental philosophy, reading a lot of Zen Buddhism, reading the *I Ching*. That was the Marin County zeitgeist at that point, Zen Buddhism and the *I Ching*.”)
- 7.3.1 The concept of *Zeitgeist* has been attributed to Hegel. In fact in his *Introduction to the Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (1820) he writes about “Geist” and “Volksgeist”, positing “three basic stages of the movement of Geist through history, each representing a further evolution of the consciousness of freedom.”
- 7.4 Also notions of “public time” (PKD’s “koinos kosmos”): medium of organic growth and fundamental change, rather than simply additive succession, and “private time” (PKD’s “idios kosmos”): a qualitative force to be experienced, not to be measured, intense yet illusory, quite ‘without reality’ apart from the psychological life

of the individual; is arbitrary, relative in quality to the passing personal emotion, continuous, yet variable in tempo.

7.5 Could also consider Wyndham Lewis' 1927 book, *Time and Western Man*, wherein in the second section, "An Analysis of the Philosophy of Time," he explores the philosophical influences of the fad he calls "the time-cult."

Relax.

I need some information first.

Just the basic facts:

Can you show me where it hurts?

13.0 Just who is Ragle Gumm? What do we know about him? And why are such things done to him in the name of a "civil war"?

The basics seem to be that he is 46 years old, grew up in Los Angeles and got his start as a fashion designer of Miss Adonis Hats. Later on he got into the synthetic aluminum business and started his own company called Ragle Gumm, Inc., which made "Aluminide". (Quite a change here, from fashion design to synthetic aluminum!)

Then along about 1995 he volunteers to work for the "One Happy World" government, he and his staff doing statistical research on plotting missile strikes. It seems that he has a knack for sensing patterns, a talent for solving puzzles. He is so successful that his picture is on the cover of the January 14, 1996 issue of *Time* magazine. Later in 1996 he spends a week at the warm mineral waters spa, Roosevelt Hot Springs, on Venus. (Intriguing allusion to Roosevelt!)

It's shortly after returning from Venus that the weight of his responsibilities starts to get him down and he also has a change of heart about whom to support in the civil war, switching from the One Happy Worlders (isolationists) to the Lunatics (expansionists). He spends more and more of his time meditating about the 1950s, then one day, is indeed (psychologically) back in the fifties, which is where the novel begins.

13.1.1 Does Ragle Gumm experience a withdrawal psychosis, retreat fantasy, daydream or fugue? We know he feels a great deal of anxiety and guilt about the civil war, along with dread, conflict and hate.

13.1.2 Psychologically a "daydream" is considered a form of autistic thinking where one's imagination is controlled primarily by inner desires and not outer. There can be a "conquering hero" type who overcomes all odds and destroys all opposition to reach a goal that gives status and recognition. Or there is the "suffering hero" type who is the target of undeserved abuse, a victim of horrible affliction, a martyr for all mankind.

13.1.3 A psychological fugue (also called "dissociative reaction") is a disturbed state of consciousness in which one performs acts of which he appears to be conscious but of which, on recovery, he has no recollection. They arise out of an unconscious desire to escape a threatening or intensely distasteful life situation.

....

Now I got that feeling once again.

I can't explain, you would not understand.

This is not how I am.

I have become comfortably numb.

Patrick: A PKDream

Dear Perry,

You know, I dreamed about Phil last night! It's kind of mixed up but I was at some out-door site, in some windy field, I believe, and there was a sale going on of "uncollected PKD manuscripts." Papers were lined up on the stony ground with rocks holding them down in the wind. Phil was there and was arguing with the person selling the material. He came over to where I was standing and talked with me and some other person -- he seemed to know the other person and I was mostly just standing around listening. Turns out he was angry about the sale because it wasn't really PKD material. It was material incorrectly attributed to Phil. I noticed that one of the documents was a letter to "Dear Abby" written by "Joy Dick."

Very weird. I'm going to ask around for other people's PKD dreams and see what I get.

Patrick

Dear Patrick,

Can you identify where the bits of your dream came from? The wind, field, rocks holding paper down, Dear Abby, Joy Dick, a sale, PKD manuscripts. Maybe Phil is reaching out to you with some coded message. It may be important to us all.

I used to ride the trains a lot. On Wednesdays I'd go to a place further out of the city than I live to teach. Then from there go into the center of the city. The time was 3 or 4 in the afternoon, for me the hardest time of the day to stay awake. Anyway, on this crowded, hot, swaying train I'd start getting comfortably numb and fantasies would roll. I'd be just awake enough to know my stop when it came.

One day, in this condition, I saw a guy get on the train who I swear looked like Phil. He had on green polyester pants and the beard we know so well. I thought 'Oh, so Phil didn't die. He caught a slow boat to China, got off in Japan and started teaching at Ubik U.' which we were close to at the time. I drifted deeper into my daydreams and saw this guy suddenly say to no one "It's time? OK." He got up and went over to a spot below a ceiling fan and stood there. Someone from on top of the train pulled the whole fan up like a trap door. From where I was sitting I could see that that place up there was not this world. Arms reached down and helped Phil up, and after the last of his green polyester pant legs were gone the fan was lowered back into place. I watched the fan all the way to my stop. And I watched it whenever I rode the train again for a long time after that.

Does a daydream equal a dream?

Perry

Flashpoint Transcript: K.W. Jeter 1/7/99

Likewise ripped off from the Internet.

jlin I recall Phil Dick writing DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP? After reading about Nazis, with the idea of the replicants being more human than human. Or something like that.

KWJeter More human than human is from the movie BLADE RUNNER. In ANDROIDS, the androids are definitely less human. They specifically lack empathic ability. I think Phil got that notion from some of the women he married, actually.

Tom_Disch Oh? Which one?

KWJeter Another time...in private...

Tom_Disch I've only met Anne and Tessa.

KWJeter No comment.

Tom_Disch Just being troublesome. Sorry.

KWJeter Actually, I like Anne. But I'm just glad I never had to live next door to her and Phil while they were together.