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**Enlightenment Ideology Awry in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?***

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**Abstract**

Though regarded as a philosophical movement of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the words of Adorno and Horkheimer, the idea of Enlightenment has represented throughout the history of mankind man's effort to control nature. In today's world, the control and manipulation of nature has reached the point of self-annihilation with the use of advanced mass deception apparatuses and creation of simulacra replacing and surpassing reality. Philip Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* is a science-fiction novel depicting a future post-apocalyptic society in which the humanity's effort to control nature through science, technology, and mass deception ends with an almost total extinction of animal life, fatal damage of our planet, and great difficulty to distinguish between the real and the simulacrum. This article proposes that, with its over-kiplized setting, physically and psychologically defective citizens, powerful mass deception apparatuses and with its simulacra surpassing their real counterparts, the post-human world of the novel represents the malfunctioning of Enlightenment ideals and the self-annihilating end that the Enlightenment ideology brings humanity to. The article studies these issues within the theoretical framework of Horkheimer and Adorno's idea of Enlightenment and Jean Baudrillard's idea of the hyperreal, simulation and simulacra.

**Keywords:** Enlightenment, dystopia, simulation, simulacra, android

## Philip K. Dick'in *Androidler Elektrikli Koyun Düşler mi?* Eserinde Çarpık Aydınlanma İdeolojisi

### Öz

Bir onyedinci ve onsekizinci yüzyıl felsefi akımı olarak görülmesine karşın Aydınlanma düşüncesi, Adorno ve Horkheimer'in deyimiyle geçmişten günümüze kadar insanlığın doğayı kontrol etme çabasının ifadesi olmuştur. Doğayı kontrol etme çabası günümüzde ileri kitle aldatma araçlarının uygulanması ve gerçeğin yerini alan ve gerçekteki karşılıklarını her yönüyle aşan simulakr'ların yaratılmasıyla yıkıcı bir aşamaya ulaşmıştır. Philip Dick'in *Androidler Elektrikli Koyun Düşler mi?* adlı eseri, insanlığın hayatı bilim, teknoloji ve kitle aldatma yöntemleriyle kontrol etme çabasının yıkımla, hayvanların neredeyse yok olmasıyla, gezegenimizin kalıcı bir şekilde bozulması ve gerçeğin ve simulakr'ın ayırt edilemeyecek bir şekilde iç içe geçmesiyle sonuçlanmasını işleyen bir bilim-kurgu romanıdır. Bu çalışma, toza ve çöpe yenik düşmüş edebi mekânı, fiziksel ve ruhsal olarak sağlıksız insanları, güçlü kitle aldatma araçları ve her yönüyle gerçeğin yerini tutan simulakr'larıyla romanın insanlık-ötesi dünyasının Aydınlanma ideallerinin artık işlemediğini ve Aydınlanma ideolojisinin insanlığı getirdiği yıkıcı aşamayı yansıttığını savunmaktadır. Makale bu konuları, Horkheimer ve Adorno'nun aydınlanma tanımına ve Jean Baudrillard'ın hiper-gerçek, simülasyon ve simulakr düşüncelerine dayanarak ele almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Aydınlanma, distopya, simülasyon, simulakr, android

Enlightenment is a philosophical and intellectual movement of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries based on the primacy of reason and the importance of experimental science. It commonly refers to “a complex movement of thought, culture, temperament, and politics represented in its early phases by thinkers like Descartes and Locke, and in its later phases by figures like Kant or, in America, Jefferson and Paine” (Smith 1263). In his article in the British Library, Matthew White defines it as “the period of rigorous scientific, political and philosophical discourse that characterized European society during the ‘long’ 18th century: from the late 17th century to the ending of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.”<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant states: “Enlightenment is mankind’s exit from its self-

incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without the guidance of another. . . . Have courage to use your own understanding! This is the motto of enlightenment" (58). For Peacock, the Enlightenment is "a process of converting God's nature into a history of human language; it is "a principal instrument in the reduction of the divine to the human" (96). For the Frankfurt School philosophers Horkheimer and Adorno, the Enlightenment began much earlier than the seventeenth century and represents man's effort in the history of mankind to control and categorize nature. Regarded in the widest sense as the advance of thought, the Enlightenment "has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1). According to Horkheimer and Adorno, the primary purpose of the Enlightenment is the disenchantment of the world and the exclusion of myth, fantasy, and mystery from the circle of everyday life. The supernatural, gods, demons and spirits represent human beings' fear of natural phenomena. For the Enlightenment, "anything which does not conform to the standard of calculability and utility must be viewed with suspicion" (2), and "only what can be encompassed by unity has the status of an existent or event (4). Nothing is allowed to remain outside of the objectification of the mind, "since the mere idea of the 'outside' is the real source of fear" (11). Reason serves a universal tool for the fabrication of all areas of life, rigidly purpose-directed, relentless, and allowing nothing to remain outside its calculative activities.

Science-fiction is a futuristic literary genre that, especially in its beginning, celebrates the advantages of scientific advancements but mostly warns humanity of the dangerous scientific outcomes of the social applications of the Enlightenment ideology. It "questions the role, relevance, costs, and benefits of current and future technologies, and presents ideas that can influence public opinion" (Menadu and Cheer 2). Questioning the increasing role of technology and science in our lives, science-fiction creates public opinion by representing the advantages of technological developments but mostly warning about their dehumanizing effects. Thus, there is always a relationship between utopia/dystopia and science-fiction. The humanizing curiosity of the unknown, the human aspiration of finding the other is what gave birth both to utopia and science-fiction. For Suvin, it is not only this curiosity or aspiration, but also "a hope of finding in the unknown the ideal environment, tribe, state, intelligence, or other aspect of the

Supreme Good (“On the Poetics” 374). Thus, Suvin argues, science-fiction stands between the opposite ends of the factual and imaginary possibilities, rendering factual science into imaginary artifact by way of estrangement. It is “an explicit or implicit comparison of its imagined community with the author’s environment, by example or demonstration” (*Positions and Presupposition* 33). It is similar to utopia because “at the basis of all utopias is an open or hidden dialogue, a gesture of pointing, a wide-eyed glance from here to there, a ‘traveling’ shot moving from the author’s everyday lookout to the wondrous panorama of a far-off land in space and time” (33). For Roberts,

SF is better defined as ‘technology fiction’ provided we take ‘technology’ not as a synonym for ‘gadgetry’ but in a Heideggerean sense as a mode of ‘enframing’ the world, a manifestation of a fundamentally philosophical outlook. As a genre, therefore, SF textually embodies this ‘enframing,’ taking as its ‘standing reserve’ not only the discourses of science and technology, but also the whole backlist of SF itself. (18)

It is an enframing which makes it close to fantasy; science-fiction is “that form of the Fantastic that embodies a technical (materialist) ‘enframing’” (21). Both fantasy and science-fiction are, using Suvin’s words, a traveling from factual reality to the wondrous panorama of a far-off land in space and time, but with a critical difference: science-fiction projects a world of advanced science and technology and seeks an answer to the “what if” question within a story context.

Though science-fiction dates back to Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (1516) and even further back to Lucian of Samosata’s *True Story* in the second century AD and Plutarch’s “On the Face Apparent in the Circle of the Moon” that is covered in his *Moralla* (Roberts 25), it would not be wrong to say that the real beginning of science-fiction literature was the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when scientific developments peaked with all their side effects on humanity. In English literature, Sir Francis Bacon, a 17<sup>th</sup> century philosopher, statesman, essayist, and man of literature whose work was dedicated to scientific development and the use of scientific method in all areas of life, was among those who praised the benefits of science. In *New Atlantis*, a utopian science-fiction novel published posthumously in 1626, Bacon portrayed a futuristic society in which

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such Enlightenment qualities as generosity, piety and scientific knowledge are commonly held by its inhabitants. While in the heyday of the Enlightenment, science-fiction novels depicted utopian societies enjoying the benefits of scientific advancements, the genre began to have an increasingly dystopian tone from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards; "A Voyage to the Island of Laputa," which is the third voyage of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818), H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), and many other of his works, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel* (1949), and Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), written with the collaboration of the famous filmmaker Stanley Kubrick, are only some of the science-fiction novels that represent this increasing dystopian tone in English literature. The influence of the Soviet Yevgeni Zamyatin's *We* (1920-1921) on the development of the genre, especially on Huxley's *Brave New World*, should not be underestimated. Thus, speaking in terms of the theoretical background of Horkheimer and Adorno's idea of the Enlightenment, the effort to subdue nature, categorize life, and set reason as the sole authority has led to science-fiction projections of a de-humanized life with glass cities and unhappy citizens. The increasing dystopian tone, as argued in this article, suggests the disillusionment with the Enlightenment ideals and their malfunctioning in practical human life.

The Enlightenment ideals which led to two world wars and to scientific developments as the invention and use of nuclear bombs, interplanetary spaceflight, and the increasing use of computer technology in everyday life caused science-fiction to be concerned with the influence of technology on everyday life and the fate of the planet. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly the last quarter of the century, bore witness to a proliferation of dystopian science-fiction works in American literature depicting post-apocalyptic future societies in which the ideals of the Enlightenment are represented to have brought nothing but destruction and disillusionment. Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* (1950) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (2005), and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) are examples of science-fiction novels signifying that the Enlightenment ideals are going awry in practical life.

Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is a cyberpunk novel representing the epitome of the dystopian tone in the science-fiction novel of the second half of the century and the genre's concern with the fate of the planet if technology continues its dehumanizing effects. The novel depicts a future post-apocalyptic society in which the Enlightenment effort to control nature with science and technology and subside it with dystopian cities shows its catastrophic consequences, such as the almost total extinction of animal life, fatal damage of the planet, the use of advanced mass deception apparatuses, and simulacra replacing and surpassing reality. The novel features a one-day experience of a bounty hunter, Rick Deckard, who is given the task of retiring six escaped Nexus-6 high-tech androids, with a subplot relating John Isidore, who is classified as special because of his bad health and low IQ and who helps fugitive androids since they relieve his loneliness. The Enlightenment ideals of advanced thought and technology, the submission of everything in life to the calculative acts of reason and the total control of nature with all its myth-generating aura show their dystopian outcomes from the very beginning of the novel in the description of the setting. The novel takes place in post-apocalyptic San Francisco; after what is called World War Terminus, the world is filled with dust, soot, and radioactive motes, which always becloud the sun and the face of the day. World War Terminus had such a devastating effect that "it caused the death of many people, a lasting health problem or brain damage on those who survived, and almost the total extinction of all species of animals.

Rick Deckard is one of those who survived; in San Francisco, before the war, the place was "chattered like a bird tree with life and opinions and complaints;" but after the war the sun ceased to shine on earth and the owners of the buildings had either died or migrated to a colony world. The world was so contaminated with dust that the "entire planet had begun to disintegrate into junk" (69), or as the novel names it "kipple." Kipple is especially what characterizes the abandoned buildings in the suburbs of the post-apocalyptic San Francisco where the sub-plot (anti)hero John Isidore lives alone. When he discovers in the building the presence of Pris Stratton, a fugitive Nexus-6 android, he describes kipple to her as:

Kipple is useless objects, like junk mail or match folders after you use the last match or gum wrappers or yesterday's homeopape. When nobody's around, kipple reproduces itself.

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For instance, if you go to bed leaving any kipple around your apartment, when you wake up the next morning there's twice as much of it. It always gets more and more. (52)

The over-kipple-ization of the planet has made the garbage collecting and trash disposal industry as one of the Earth's most important ones.

World War Terminus has left a lasting damage on the world to the extent that life has become no longer possible in this planet. Such mass deception tools as posters, TV ads, government junk mail, and especially Buster Friendly, a talk show on TV which lasts throughout the day, always propagate emigration to Mars; "emigrate or degenerate" is blabbed everywhere. Staying in the world is difficult, if not impossible. With the effect of the dust, the inhabitants of the world of the novel have both physically and mentally degenerated. The idolization of social progress, the control mania and fear of deviation in the organization of the state, which are direct consequences of the social applications of the Enlightenment ideology, go to the extent of classifying people as physically and mentally regular or irregular. Resonant of the racism in American history, those who stay are required to take monthly medical checkups by the San Francisco Police Department doctors to prove a regular. However, a person proven regular could reveal the reverse in a checkup exam taken the next month. Rick Deckard has proven to be regular, though his status may change instantly with a checkup taken another month. However, John Isidore has been unable to pass the checkup and thus classified as a special. Because of his peculiar biological classification, he lives in isolation in the "deteriorating, blind building of a thousand uninhabited apartments, which like all its counterparts, fell, day by day, into greater entropic ruin" (15). His being a special does not mean he cannot work; he works for a false animal repair firm, but not in the status of a regular.

What is of particular importance for the purpose of this study is the almost total extinction of natural and animal lives. In the post-apocalyptic world of the novel, trees do not grow and nature does not exist. Natural life is almost never mentioned in the novel and when mentioned, it is referred to as a pre-war issue. When Rick Deckard visits the Rosen Association, the creator of the Nexus-6 humanoid robot, to test the validity of the Voigt-Kampff Scale, he sees in the entrance of the building an owl in a cage, "in the center of which jutted up a branching

dead tree” (Dick 33), the tree being represented as lifeless. Later when he examines Luba Luft, a Nexus-6 fugitive android disguising herself as an opera singer, Rick asks her a question representing a pre-war situation when “trees and bushes are still growing” (83), which is, to the knowledge of the author of the present article, the only other place the word tree is used.

Not only natural life, but also animal life is an issue of the past. The rarity of animals has made the love or the concern for them a measure of empathy and having an animal has even become a measure of social status in the novel. As suggested even in the title of the novel, animals, fake or real, play an important role in the novel. Love of animals or feeling empathy for them constitutes the basis of the Voigt-Kampff test scaling the testee’s reactions to situations including animal imagery. The questions of the test aim to detect whether the testee is an android by scaling his or her empathy for an animal, assuming that androids lack empathy for animals, and for others as well. Those who have a false animal hide it is false and having a real animal is presented as the highest incentive of life.

The difficulty to distinguish real animals from simulacra is a constant issue of the novel. Rick Deckard has an electric sheep, but his neighbors suppose it is real. His neighbor has ‘a real’ horse, but, “staring off in an empty fashion into space” (Dick 6), it gives the sense of being a simulacrum. One incident requires a little more emphasis for indicating the worth of animals in the novel and the difficulty to distinguish the real from the simulacra. Working for a false animal repair firm, John Isodore picks up a malfunctioning cat, which really sounds as if it is dying. Assuming it to be electric, he tries to find its control panel and cables, but unable to find them, he thinks: “damn expert workmanship; so absolutely perfect an imitation. Cables not apparent even under close scrutiny. Must be a Wheelright & Carpenter product - they cost more, but look what good work they do” (Dick 57). When the false cat ceased to function, he takes it to the firm building, the false animal hospital and learns that it is real, a very rare situation. As Milt, Isodore’s fellow worker, says: “the fakes are beginning to be darn near real, what with those disease circuits they are building into the new ones. And living animals do die; that’s one of the risks of owning them” (62). They propose doing an electric replacement of the cat, a very faithful reproduction of it, which the owner’s wife accepts on the condition that her husband will never know it.



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These incidents, especially that of the cat, indicate that the simulacra, whether of human or animal, has an important place in the novel, both as an ideological tool and as a mass deception apparatus for the Enlightenment. As characteristic of the cyberpunk genre, high-tech is accompanied by low life in the novel, and the low life of the characters caused by the absence of the real—such as real love, real human passion, real nature, and real animals—is compensated by high-tech with the creation of the simulacra of reality, so that the simulacra replace or absorb the real. Thus, the Enlightenment ideal of the advancement of thought and science has resulted in a total diminishing of the line between the real and simulacra and the absolute domination of simulacra over reality. For Jean Baudrillard, “the real is dead, it never existed, it was, and is, just a staging, a simulation” (qtd. in Introna 2); “there is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. There is an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative where the object and substance have disappeared” (“Simulacra and Simulation” 174).

The difficulty to distinguish the real from the simulacrum or the absorption of the real by simulacrum can particularly be seen in the representation of Nexus-6 androids. In Baudrillard's sense, simulacra take the place of reality to the extent that androids seem more human than humans and humans more android-like. In *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*, Francis Fukuyama argues that “the most significant threat posed by contemporary biotechnology is the possibility that it will alter human nature and thereby move us into a posthuman stage of history” (7). The advancement in biotechnology, as indicated in the novel, has resulted not only in a deterioration of human genes due to the nuclear war, but also in the creation of simulacra of humans as well as animals which seem more true to life than real humans. In the post-Nuclear war setting of the novel, the human genes are deformed to the extent that specials increase in number day by day, people are made dependent on mood organs and empathy boxes, and live similar lives in their everyday lives, similarity or sameness being the most obvious outcome of biotechnology. While all the humans in the novel are represented as lifeless, ill, or degenerate, androids are lively, have dreams, and feature some human qualities more than humans. Rick Deckard is unhappy, cold especially in the beginning, and has only the dream of having a

real animal. Rick's wife Iran is portrayed as lifeless, with no motive to live, in constant need of what is called the Penfield mood organ to get into a mood, and as either watching Buster Friendly or fusing with Mercer throughout the day. The portrayal of Iran as a depressive and lifeless housewife is, as a matter of fact, another outcome of the Enlightenment ideology, which, in spite of the high technology, deems real women only worthy of being housewives. This issue can be the subject of feminist criticism, and further elaboration on it could be the topic of another paper.

In contrast, the androids are lively and seem to have more dreams than humans, and so, to use Fukuyama's terms, they seem to be the real representatives of the posthuman future. As Galvan puts it in "Entering the Posthuman Collective in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*,"

A bildungsroman for the cybernetic age, Dick's novel describes an awakening of the posthuman subject . . . The androids Rick encounters, together with the numerous machines by which he and others interface with their world, blast the illusion of an exclusive and empathic community of humans. (414)

In the opening of the novel, Iran's lifelessness is in contrast to the liveliness and feminine air of Rachael Rosen, the Nexus-6 android Rick tests in the Rosen Association to verify the Voigt-Kampff Scale and who is created as the double of Pris Stratton. Rick contrasts the lifelessness of Iran with the vivacity of Rachael in some places of the novel. When he calls Iran on the vidphone to say that he has destroyed, or as the novel calls it "retired," Polokov, the first Nexus-6 android on the list, Iran stares at him "sightlessly," which makes him think he has spoken into a vacuum; he says "most androids I have known have more vitality and desire to live than my wife" (Dick 75-6), which makes him think of Rachael and her offer to help him.

Pris Stratton and Roy Baty are two other androids that are presented more life-like than humans. Pris is Rachael's double and she shows signs of humanity when, "with cold tears descending her cheeks" (118), she tells Isidore their loneliness in Mars. Roy Baty is presented as the strongest, the most intelligent and strategic character who, together with his wife Irmgad Baty, ran a drugstore in Mars. There

he provided 'pain-killing' drugs to fellow androids which help them put up with living in Mars, because all had become "schizophrenic, with defective emotional lives" as Mars is not suitable for habitation (127). Irmgard provided them with beauty aids, such as creams and ointments since on Mars one needs a lot of skin conditioner. It is interesting that humans who emigrated to Mars do not complain about living there, but androids do, maybe because they are designed as servants to humans. However, androids accept neither being servants nor living in a cold and lifeless planet as Mars. Roy Baty was the group leader, organized their trip to Earth and, while in Mars, created group solidarity in the group with drugs, as lack of group feelings is one of the characterizing features of androids. His marriage with Irmgard is also comparable to the cold and lifeless marriages among humans in the novel, such as Rick's and Iran's.

The representation of androids as more humane than humans and the replacement of the real human by its simulacrum culminates in the case of Luba Luft. Luba Luft is an excellent opera singer, sensitive, and can be said to be the most humane android and one of the highest quality characters of the novel. After retiring Polokov, Rick sets out to find Luba Luft, the next android on the list, whom he finds in the old opera house rehearsing Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Rick is surprised at the quality of her voice; "it rated with that of the best, even that of notables in his collection of tapes" (Dick 78). What follows is even more worth of note for our discussion of the interfusion of simulacra and reality and the difficulty to distinguish them. The technological outcome of the Enlightenment peaks here to the point of the total blurring of the difference between the real and the false. Questions such as what is false and what is true, who is human and who is an android, who deserves to live more than the other, and who has more empathy than the other become open to dispute at this point of the novel. Upon continuing to bother her, Luba Luft calls a police officer, who knows neither Rick nor Inspector Harry Bryant, Rick's superior at the San Francisco Police Department. He is taken into custody in a police department building he has never seen before and questioned by officers he has not known. He at last realizes that there are two parallel police agencies, that of the humans and that of the androids. The police official who questions Rick, whose name Rick learns to be Garland, is surprised to see himself on Rick's android list; "It's an unpleasant situation," he says in remorse, "to find yourself a bounty hunter's

assignment all of a sudden” (92). The other person in the room, Phil Resch, who introduces himself as a bounty hunter, is for Garland an android who escaped from Mars separately. Phil Resch kills Garland without letting Rick see for certain whether he is an android, and then he recklessly kills Luba Luft during her visit to an exhibition, without feeling any empathy for her. Luba’s statement before being killed by Resch should not be passed without notice:

I really don’t like androids. Ever since I got here from Mars my life has consisted of imitating the human, doing what she would do, acting as if I had the thoughts and impulses a human would have. Imitating, as far as I’m concerned, a superior life form. (106)

Then, turning to Resch, she asks: “Isn’t that how it’s been with you, Resch? Trying to be...” Without letting her finish her expression, as if the question revealed a truth about his personality, Resch draws his laser gun and kills her. The killing of Luba Luft draws Rick to questioning his job and reflecting on the difference between humans and androids. At this point of the novel Rick is certain that Luba Luft deserves to live more than Resch, who, because of his lack of empathy, seems more android-like than Luba Luft.

As already said, advanced mass deception apparatuses have an important place in the novel for the Enlightenment ideology. The Penfield Mood Organ, without which humans cannot experience any human sensation, is already mentioned in the case of Iran. The most significant deception tools that pervade the characters’ lives throughout the novel are the TV talk show *Buster Friendly* and *Mercerism*, which is the new religion of the post-apocalyptic setting of the novel. Both mass deception tools can be said to be means of pacifying the humans in the novel and keeping them within the boundaries of the Enlightenment control system. *Buster Friendly* and *Mercer*, as said in the novel, are “fighting for control of our psychic selves; the empathy box on one hand, *Buster’s* guffaws and off-the-cuff jibes on the other” (Dick 59-60). In “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” published in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno argue that such mass deception apparatuses as religion and media have always been means of control for the Enlightenment ideology. They call the Enlightenment’s culture industry mass deception and argue: “culture today is infecting everything with sameness” (94); all mass

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culture under monopoly is identical, and the contours of its skeleton, the conceptual armature fabricated by monopoly, are beginning to stand out (95). Each single manifestation of the culture industry “inescapably reproduces human beings as what the whole has made them. And all its agents, from the producer to the women’s organizations, are on the alert to ensure that the simple reproduction of mind does not lead on to the expansion of the mind” (100). Under the tyranny of this culture the individual has the deception of freedom; “the ruler no longer says: ‘Either you think as I do or die.’ He says: ‘You are free not to think as I do; your life, your property—all that you shall keep. But from this day on you will be stranger among us’” (104-5). The culture industry controls its consumers by entertainment, which is “the prolongation of work under late capitalism” (109). The only escape from the work process in factory and office is “through adaptation to it in leisure time” (109).

Buster Friendly, as already said, is a TV talk show program telecasting and broadcasting via satellite not only all over the Earth, but also in colony planets. When a space-travel to another planet finds its destination, the travelers find Buster Friendly awaiting them. It is a TV show which continues “twenty-three unbroken warm hours a day” (Dick 58) and is an indispensable aspect of every human’s house in the novel. Maybe, the show is called Buster Friendly because in their loneliness, Buster is the only friend always intruding the isolation of the people and injecting “in a friendly way” the system’s ideological notes. Everybody watches Buster Friendly and his “friendly friends” talking throughout the day and propagating the system’s mass deception apparatuses by the use of the element of entertainment. Watching Buster’s talk with a woman called Amanda Werner, Isidore wonders how Buster finds the time to tape both his aud and vid shows and how Amanda Werner finds time to be a guest every other day, month after month year after year. As Isidore’s employer Hannibal Sloot states, “Buster Friendly is immortal;” if not, how can he do “forty-six hours of show a day” (Dick 61). He is, as Isidore puts it, “the Earth’s most knee-slapping comic” (51), “the most important human being alive” (55). In the beginning of the novel, Iran and Rick turn on the TV and see Buster talking to his friendly friends; in the chapter relating Isidore, the TV is always on, with Buster constantly speaking; after killing Polokov, Rick speaks with Iran on the vidphone, with Buster speaking in the background; and when Rick meets Rachael in a hotel

room, he turns on the TV and watches Buster blabbing on TV. These are some of the incidents in the novel indicating that Buster Friendly is a constant image in the novel and plays an important role as a mass deception apparatus in the novel.

Mercerism, on the other hand, represents the empathic side of humanity; it is a new religion followed by the citizens of post-World War Terminus based on the life and teachings of a man called Wilbur Mercer. As already said, the world of the novel is characterized by high-technology but low life and, as such, the characters of the novel, living mostly in abandoned buildings, suffer from loneliness, lifelessness, and lack of human contact. According to Mercerism, “all life is one,” and no man is an island (Dick 117). Mercerism sustains the citizens of the post-apocalyptic society individually and collectively by creating in them the feel for the other and the sense of fusion with the sufferings of the other. Mercerism has two tenets: the moral duty of having and loving an animal and feeling empathy for the sufferings of another human being. The individual has an empathic experience by fusing through an empathy box with Mercer who appears as endlessly climbing up a hill in a desert while being assailed with rocks. As a result of high technology, the real fuses and becomes one with the simulacrum to the point that the real becomes indistinguishable from the simulation of suffering. This is what happens to Rick Deckard towards the end of the novel when he feels great sense of loss after retiring Luba Luft and the other androids. Using his empathy box, he fuses with Mercer and is wounded because of the stones thrown at him in the dry hill. For Horkheimer, religion encourages people “to passively bear injustice in the hope of attaining reward in the afterlife” (Brittain 267). “Communities continue to demonstrate a persistent tendency to merely replace one authoritarian religion, often by relocation the position formerly occupied by a divine being with some new authority” (267). Mercerism seems to serve this function in the novel. As Galvan argues, “Mercerism and the ideology of empathy that is its mainstay, far from appealing to innate human characteristics, function merely as the means by which the government controls an otherwise unwieldy populace” (416). When he fuses with Mercer after ‘retiring’ Luba Loft, Rick sees on the screen the faint, old, robed man toiling upward, with a stone all at once thrown at him. He asks help from him, to which the old man replies how he can save him, if he cannot save himself.

By encouraging the citizens to bear oppression and offering

Enlightenment Ideology Awry in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

salvation only through empathy and fusion with the sufferings of another, Mercerism serves as a means of control for the oppressive state. However, it also has positive qualities for the citizens of the post-apocalyptic society. In the dehumanized world of the novel in which the citizens are alone, are without any motive to live, and almost totally deprived of human contact and socialization, it helps them build a collective identity, though not really but virtually. Besides, its making the love of animals and the feel for the sufferings of the other as the main components of Mercerian ethics is another positive contribution of Mercerism to the dehumanized world of the novel.

Throughout the novel, there is conflict between Buster Friendly and Mercer for the control of the human soul. Though both can be said to be Enlightenment means of control for keeping the individual within the boundaries of the system, they separate in that Buster Friendly symbolizes the technological, consumeristic, and dehumanizing aspect of the system, whereas Mercer symbolizes a more humane side, the side trying to sustain human collectivism and love for all living beings. Buster Friendly wages war against Mercer throughout the novel and claims that Mercer is fake and the desert, the hill he climbs, and the rocks thrown at him are nothing but taken in a pre-war Hollywood studio. He suggests that Mercerism is a swindle; Mercer is in fact an old man now called Al Jarry, who worked in the movie industry before the war. The simulation featuring Mercer climbing a hill and being assailed with rocks is in fact a lab production. In spite of Buster's constant propagation that Mercer is a swindle, the human characters continue to believe in his reality because, as Rick puts it towards the end of the novel: "When you use an empathy box you feel you are with Mercer . . . Mercer isn't fake, unless reality is a fake" (186). In his last fusion with Mercer, Rick calls Mercer in the cliffside hill, supposing that he is there, but he realizes that it is his own shadow (183), which recalls the famous psychanalyst Gustav Jung's idea of the shadow, meaning the unknown, dark side of personality. For Galvan, using the empathy box

fulfills the project of the empathy box, as that mechanism is manipulated by the government: in interpellating the political subject and fixing her passively before the screen, Mercer's image serves the purpose not of social solidarity but of disintegration-an outcome which dramatically reduces the potential for public unrest. (416)

Whether a dark, inner voice, or an immortal transcendental being, or a drunkard suffering from a lack of whisky, Mercer is needed in the post-apocalyptic world because as Voltaire's famous saying goes: if God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him. The citizens need Mercer for their lives to be bearable and to be meaningful. The Enlightenment state, together with Buster Friendly, also needs Mercer for mass deception: for beating the citizens with the state apparatuses and then making them silent and isolated fusers.

Thus, in the dehumanized world of the novel, Buster Friendly and Mercer are constant figures fighting for the control of the souls of the people. Buster represents the technological, consumeristic, and laughter-without-end side, while Mercer the religious, collective, and empathic side. However, they both serve the Enlightenment state in their own ways, Buster by propagating the consumeristic and cybernetic values, Mercer by making the citizens bear the injustice. In a world in which the Enlightened reason has totally destroyed animal life, damaged humanity fatally, and created a world of simulacra at the cost of a total killing of reality, Buster Friendly and Mercerism can be said to be mass deception tools serving as means of control for the Enlightened state. In the low-life of the characters of the novel, Buster and Mercer are constant images helping the world of simulacra kill reality and keeping the characters within the borders of the system in their own ways.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment>



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