

## **The Metacolonization of Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*: Mimicry, Parasitism, and Americanism in the P.S.A.**

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In *The Man in the High Castle*, Philip K. Dick presents the United States as divided up so that the eastern two-thirds belong to Germany, the West Coast belongs to Japan, and the Rocky Mountain states make up a buffer zone in between; the axis powers have won World War II and the United States is a colonized nation. From this basic premise, critics have done much to elucidate the complex themes interwoven in the novel, most notably by examining Dick's political exploration of three world views corresponding to his subdivision of the United States into the USA (Nazism), the PSA (Taoism, the *I Ching*), and the RSA (a synthesis of Taoism and Nazism in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*). So far, however, critics have not examined the fact that, even though most of America belongs to the Nazis, none of the novel's plot takes place in Nazi territory. This is a crucial issue, because Dick's emphasis on the Japanese-occupied PSA reveals that he is interrogating Americanism as a world view along with the others.

Except for the Juliana Frink subplot set in the neutral RMS territory, the novel takes place in the Japanese-occupied PSA, a location which presents a highly ironic scenario. Historically, the Japanese have been subjected to the full force of Western colonization, "modernized" to conform to Western values and practices; this history is reflected in Dick's PSA, where the Japanese colonizers (represented by Tagomi and the Kasouras) speak English, fetishize American historical objects, and have Christian names like Paul and Betty. Thus, Dick offers a PSA colonized by colonized people, where the Japanese colonizers are mirror images of Western ideals and values instilled by colonialism. In essence, Japanese occupation of the PSA produces results historically associated with Western colonization of Third World countries, and, as Childan's dealings with the Kasouras and Tagomi illustrate, the PSA represents an America occupied and "oppressed" by a simulation of itself.

Kim Stanley Robinson suggests that "Dick's Japanese San Francisco is at least in part a utopia," and in light of this, he asks an important question: "How is it that this has developed, out of what was our own history?" While it is true that Dick does not account for "the *shift* from a harsh Japanese wartime fascism to the benign Buddhist government ruling San Francisco" (Robinson 44, my emphasis), Japanese history is not an absence in the novel, as Robinson claims. Most of *High Castle's* white characters are old enough to remember America and Japan before World War II, and they are aware of Japan's colonial past; in addition, the present Japan of *High Castle* remains in an underdeveloped state despite Japan's colonial power. Dick establishes the latter when Paul Kasoura suggests that Childan should mass-produce the Edfrank jewelry and unwittingly reveals that Japan is still a Third World country, where labor is cheap and "Most of the masses still believe in magic, you know. Spells. Potions" (Ch. 11: 171). Likewise, when Tagomi remarks that Baynes "holds to the Nordic ideology regarding so-called Oriental culture" (Ch. 2: 16), he indicates that, even in Dick's alternate history, Japan has been subject to

the sort of intellectual colonization Edward Said calls "Orientalism," wherein "the space of weaker underdeveloped regions like the Orient is something inviting [Western] interest, penetration, insemination--in short, colonization" (Ch. 14: 219).

Subtle as the cues are, Dick's Japanese characters offer a fairly comprehensive history of Japan's construction under Western colonization, and Robert Childan fills in the gaps. Childan, we learn, "was thirty-eight years old, and he could remember the prewar days, the other times" (Ch. 1: 2), and his purely Orientalist/racist views of the Japanese occupying the PSA highlight the ways in which the West has constructed Asian people prior to the events depicted in the novel. "Ambiguity," Childan observes, is the "quality of the Oriental mind" (Ch 11: 173), and furthermore, the Japanese "are inscrutable" (Ch. 11: 174). He says of the Japanese, "They are--let's face it--Orientals. Yellow people" (Ch. 2: 22); their interest in historical objects is "Typical of their mania for the trivial, their legalistic fascination with documents, proclamations, ads" (Ch. 2: 25); they are "*not exactly human*. They don the dress but they're like monkeys dolled up in the circus. They're clever and can learn, *but that is all*" (Ch: 7: 109). Overall, the Japanese are "just what you'd expect from a race that when told to duplicate a British destroyer managed to copy the patches on the boiler" (Ch. 11: 170).

The most salient evidence of the Japanese colonists' still-colonized status is their imitativeness and craving for American historical objects; as Mackey puts it, "As masters of imitation themselves, [the Japanese] have adopted ersatz tastes in feeding off of the superficialities of an alien culture" (Ch. 4: 50). Tagomi, for example, collects American Civil War revolvers, is the proud owner of a buffalo head, and is fond of borrowing and mangling American slang, as when he says "Fleece-seeking cortical response" when he means "woolgathering" (Ch. 5: 65). Likewise, Paul Kasoura collects "the art of the cities" (Ch. 1: 4) and "authentic American folk jazz," while Betty Kasoura cooks "native foods to perfection," makes sure to get "the real McCoy" by doing her "shopping in teeny-tiny American markets down along Mission Street" (Ch. 7: 107), and sets her table with "Early American bone napkin rings," "sterling silver American" silverware, and Royal Albert cups and saucers (Ch. 7: 105). Childan observes of the Japanese, "What they say is true: your powers of imitation are immense. Apple pie, Coca-Cola, stroll after the movie, Glenn Miller . . . you could paste together out of tin and rice paper a complete artificial America. Rice-paper Mom in the kitchen, rice-paper Dad reading the newspaper. Rice paper pup at his feet. Everything" (Ch. 7: 107).

The Japanese colonists of the PSA appear to be under the influence of what Iranian poet Reza Baraheni calls the "Woolworth mentality" and Jalal Al-ahmad refers to as "Westomania" (Nixon 150); in V. S. Naipaul's hegemonic terms, the Japanese are parasites of American culture who covet Americana as "the stock of some great universal bazaar" (Nixon 149). Like the postcolonial Uruguayans Naipaul describes, "Their habits of wealth made them, profoundly, a colonial people, educated but intellectually null, consumers, parasitic on the culture and technology of others" (qtd. in Nixon 144). As Childan says of the Kasouras, "It's all on the surface. Advantage of wealth and power makes this available to them, but it's ersatz as the day is long" (Ch. 7: 107).

Like Naipaul, Childan sees Japanese "'colonial' derivativeness as a travesty of the eminent cultural life of the West" (Nixon 137). At the Kasouras for dinner, Childan observes:

Witness them drinking from English bone china cups, eating with U.S. silver, listening to Negro style of music. . . . Even the *I Ching*, which they've forced down our throats; it's Chinese. Borrowed from way back when. Who are they fooling? Themselves? Pilfer customs right and left, wear, eat, talk, walk, as for instance consuming with gusto baked potato served with sour cream and chives, old-fashioned American dish added to their haul. But nobody fooled, I can tell you; me least of all. (Ch. 7: 106-7)

Nixon remarks that "once the image of the ungrateful parasite is in place, a quick figurative crossing can be made to assumptions about the unappreciated host's forbearance and philanthropy" (148). But a complex paradox is at work here. First, in Naipaul's framework, the parasites are (post-) colonized natives freeloading off of the superior culture of the colonizer; in Dick's world, the colonizers are feeding off of the colonized, but the colonizers are themselves products of colonization. Second, we can't help but notice that Childan *thinks* about Japanese mimicry in "Japanesed" English, and as he condemns Japanese parasitism, he is sitting at the Kasouras' table, eating their food, using them to advance his business and social status, and dreaming of seducing Betty. Clearly the colonization process is working in more than one direction.

While the Japanese expend much effort and money imitating the superficialities of American culture and acquiring American historical objects, they nevertheless retain surface elements of Japanese culture and institute them in colonized America. Pierce points out that "Japanese customs and cultural attitudes permeate the structure of the PSA. For instance, pedecabs transport people in the city; ritualized public manners (bowing) smooth over the roughness of human contact" (Ch. 7: 110); and the Chinese *I Ching* is widely used. On the surface, Japanese occupation seems to be a positive influence upon America's West Coast; indeed, Mackey observes, "the Japanese are humane, conscientious rulers who are sickened by the genocidal Nazis" (47). However, Frantz Fanon argues that "the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness" (210-11). Benevolent as the Japanese may be, the PSA presents a casebook example of the detrimental effects of colonization upon the nation and its native people. Fanon submits that "The colonial world is a world cut in two," and "The zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers" (38).

The American native's world is now a Third World country, and according to Fanon, "in underdeveloped [colonized] countries, young people have at their disposition leisure occupations designed for the youth of capitalist countries: detective novels, penny-in-the-slot machines, sexy photographs, pornographic literature, films banned to those under sixteen, and above all alcohol" (195). Thus, "even before the last bomb fell," San Francisco's Market Street was overrun by "the bawdy shows, the sex movies, the shooting galleries, the cheap nightclubs with photos of middle-aged blondes holding their nipples

between their wrinkled fingers and leering, . . . honkytonk jazz slums [and] rickety tin and board shacks" (Ch. 1: 3). The worst part, as Childan notes to himself, is that the utopia the Japanese have built is founded upon the ruins of his nation: "loot piled up by the conquerors. Pillage from my people" (Ch. 7: 106).

Fanon asserts that "The look that the native turns on the settler's town is a look of lust, a look of envy; it expresses his dreams of possession--all manner of possession: to sit at the settler's table, to sleep in the settler's bed, with his wife if possible. The colonized man is an envious man" (39). Thus, as a native of a colonized country, Robert Childan turns a covetous eye toward Paul and Betty Kasoura, thinking, as he looks at Betty, "How easily . . . I could fall in love with a girl like this" (Ch. 1: 3). To him, the Kasouras provide an opportunity for financial gain and social climbing, "a chance to meet a young Japanese couple socially" and sit at their table "as a man," and the possibility of stealing the settler's wife. However, Fanon notes, "The first thing which the native learns is to stay in his place, and not to go beyond certain limits" (52), and Childan checks himself: "What aspirations bordering on the insane if not suicidal did he have?" (Ch. 1: 5).

The best Childan can do is to "[clothe] his aggressiveness in his barely veiled desire to assimilate himself to the colonial world" (Fanon 60), and in this sense he resembles V. S. Naipaul's "'mimics' who inhabit the partly Westernized societies of the Third World [and] have learned the security of living off the creativeness of others" (Nixon 131). In his efforts to achieve the settler's place, Childan mimics their customs and mannerisms; for example, he speaks and often thinks in "Japanesed" English, and he struggles to master "The various modes of address . . . whom to treat politely, whom rudely" (Ch. 2: 20). But even more significantly, Childan, ever an opportunist, adopts the Japanese taste for American historical objects; that is, he becomes a parasite of the parasites, a mimic of the mimics. Thus, Childan, "dealer in the collectibles of his own conquered nation" (Mackey 50), becomes representative of the false bourgeoisie Fanon describes as characteristic of underdeveloped countries: the "sort of little greedy caste, avid and voracious, with the mind of a huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the . . . colonial power hands out to it" (175).

Dick offers a significant twist to Childan's resemblance to Fanon's natives, for "The get-rich-quick middle class" Fanon describes is what it is because "It remembers what it has read in European textbooks"; by learning and imitating the values and practices of European colonizers, Fanon's colonized natives "imperceptibly . . . [become] not even the replica of Europe, but its caricature" (Fanon 175). Since America is founded upon the values and practices of European colonizers, Dick is suggesting that American natives such as Childan *are caricatures of themselves*. The America of *High Castle* is, in effect, colonized by its own romantic notions about itself without even knowing it, blindly aping its own colonialist attitudes and plundering its own history and culture.

In this context, the commodification of American historical objects comes to the fore as a central issue in *High Castle*. As Pierce points out, the Japanese colonists demonstrate a "deep interest in and reverence for the past, as evidenced in the acquisition of 'native' artifacts from prewar America and the dependence on the *I Ching* . . . for guidance in

personal and social decisions" (Ch. 7: 110). The Japanese view the past as a source of accumulated wisdom, and so they rely upon the *I Ching*, "A book created by the sages of China over a period of five thousand years, winnowed, perfected, that superb cosmology--and science--codified before Europe had even learned to do long division" (Ch. 1: 11-12). Likewise, according to the Japanese view, American historical objects are emblems of America's accumulated truths, narrating the story America tells of itself. Naturally, America's self-portrait is flattering and heroic: Colt .44 revolvers of 1860 tell of America's "epic Civil War" (Ch. 4: 51), for example, and Tagomi's buffalo head narrates the Hollywood Western version of the American frontier: it "is nothing less than creature which sustained the aboriginal in bygone days," and Tagomi is eager to "demonstrate art of buffalo slaying" (Ch. 5: 65). When America narrates its history, all is romance and courage; never does it have bloodstains on its hands.

As purveyor of such revered historical objects, Childan possesses similar ideals about American history; in fact, he founded American Artistic Handcrafts Inc. upon an illusion: Major Humo told Childan about a friend who collects "Horrors of War" cards, which Childan recalls using as "flip cards" as a child, "And so, by stages, he had gotten into the business" (Ch. 2: 24-25). Of course, reminiscing about the genesis of his business, Childan doesn't think about the "Horrors of War" depicted on the cards but muses, instead, "How enjoyable to recall those good days, those early happy days of his childhood" (Ch. 2: 24). The prewar past, to Childan as much as to the Japanese, is a sort of repository of lost innocence, prosperity, and rugged individualism. For example, Childan's gift to the Kasouras is a "Bit of ivory carved a century ago by whalers from New England. Tiny ornamented object, called a scrimshaw." Upon presentation, the object immediately conjures up romantic whaling images reminiscent of *Moby Dick*, and the Kasouras' "faces [are] illuminated with knowledge of the scrimshaws which the old sailors had made in their spare time"; Childan, too, is mesmerized: "No single thing could have summed up old US culture more" (Ch. 7: 100).

Childan cherishes the romantic story his country tells of itself, and he depends upon it as both the source of the American Dream and his means of achieving it through capitalist enterprise. The romance of America is Childan's bread and butter, both material and spiritual; hence, he is proud that "His displays . . . really were the best of their kind on the Coast," and it is important to him that his customers understand and appreciate the immense value of his wares. But at the same time, Childan unwittingly proves "America" to be a trivia item that can be purchased for the right price. In the end, "America," reduced to an assortment of "American traditional ethnic art objects," is useful only "to decorate perhaps a new apartment for your stay here" (Ch. 1: 3-4); likewise, contemporary American art, in the form of the Edfrank jewelry, is valuable as "Small sculptures. Wear a work of art. Exclusive creation on your lapel or wrist" (Ch. 9: 140).

Thus it is ironic that Childan condemns the Japanese for their failure to understand and appreciate the "real" meaning of America; as he puts it, "there's . . . no common ground. What words mean to me is sharp contrast vis-a-vis them. Their brains are different" (Ch. 7: 106). Perhaps it is true that the colonizing Japanese ruling caste "turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it," thereby devaluing

precolonial history (Fanon 210), but their version of America is the version America has literally sold to them. As a representative American, for example, Childan has no understanding of his own country's history or genuine appreciation for its culture. As demonstrated by his ignorance of *Miss Lonelyhearts* (Ch. 7: 108), Childan seems to know even less about America than the Japanese do, and his lack of interest in the Edfrank jewelry shows that he really doesn't want to know what America is. His primary concern is "if it will sell" and how he can "Push the handmade angle. And the uniqueness." In addition, Childan plans to graft a gift of the jewelry to Betty Kasoura as a "brilliant pretext" for seducing her (Ch. 9: 141). Like a true mimic, Childan has "a weak sense of history," and one result is that "material values, political languages, and social institutions . . . are appropriated in incongruous, denatured, and therefore damaging forms" (Nixon 131-32).

But if Childan is somehow distorting and misrepresenting America through his greed and ignorance, and if the Japanese do the same through their parasitism of American culture and mindless aping of American customs, what, then, is the "real America"? Childan confronts this issue when Frank Frink reveals a Civil War Colt .44 to be a forgery. "Is it possible, sir," Frink asks, "that you, the owner, dealer, in such items, *cannot distinguish the forgeries from the real?*" (Ch. 4: 52). This possibility makes Childan consider that, perhaps, he is no better informed about his country than the Japanese collector of "Horrors of War" cards who "*does not know how these cards actually were put to use*" (Ch. 2: 24). Childan begins to question his own subjective construction of American history: "not merely U.S. history involved, but our own personal. As if, he thought, question might arise as to authenticity of our birth certificate. Or our impression of Dad." As he continues to ponder the implications, he wonders, "Maybe I don't actually recall F.D.R. as example. Synthetic image distilled from hearing assorted talk. Myth implanted subtly in tissue of brain. Like, he thought, myth of Hepplewhite. Myth of Chippendale. Or rather more on the lines of Abraham Lincoln ate here. Used this old silver knife, fork, spoon"; yet Childan arrives only at the comforting conclusion that, with "historicity," "You can't see it, but the fact remains" (Ch. 9: 136).

However, the questionable authenticity of the gun alerts Childan to the possible merits of the Edfrank jewelry: "*With these, there's no problem of authenticity,*" he muses, thinking that, "If I quietly build up a stock of nonhistoric objects, contemporary work with no historicity either real or imagined, I might find I have the edge over the competition" (Ch. 9: 141). In fact, Paul Kasoura reinforces Childan's hopes by suggesting mass production (Ch. 11: 171), so it is surprising when Childan suddenly turns over a new leaf and defends the integrity of American art. But, of course, Childan defends the Edfrank jewelry not on the basis of its aesthetic or cultural value, "but according to a foreign aesthetic" (Robinson 47). The jewelry's only redeeming feature is that it possesses "wu"; as Paul Kasoura puts it, "Here is a piece of metal which has been melted until it has become shapeless. It represents nothing. Nor does it have design, of any intentional sort. It is merely amorphous" (Ch. 11: 167). But even more important is the fact that Childan is defending the jewelry "from the process of mass production, which is almost to say the process of Americanization, it is a procedure so natural to us" (Robinson 47). "America" is mindless capitalism, supply and demand, mass production--which makes the Wyndam-

Matson Corporation, which mass produces ersatz American historical objects and wrought-iron staircases (Ch. 4: 43), about as American as America gets.

Childan's confrontations with the fake gun and the Edfrank jewelry initiate Dick's challenge to American idealism, deflating any illusions we may cherish about America as champion of artistic integrity and individual achievement, but it is Tagomi who does the most to unveil the delusion of American "history." As Robinson points out, Tagomi "is saddened that Americans cannot hold their traditional values-- Tagomi's sentimentalized version of them--when their country is occupied." Because Tagomi cannot separate the fictional version of America from the fact, he is disappointed to find concrete examples of romantic American ideals missing in his present; thus, he "keeps oppressed values alive, by becoming the embodiment of American values himself" (Robinson 45-46). Mythic America, based upon self-sufficiency and individualism, cannot exist under foreign occupation; after all, the ideal America is a colonizer, upholder of manifest destiny and conqueror of the great frontier. Thus, Tagomi's moment of truth as the embodiment of traditional American values occurs when he is required to use those values to defend himself, General Tedeki, and Baynes from a Nazi attack.

Alerted to the coming threat, Tagomi "opened his desk drawer and lifted out a teakwood box; unlocking it, he brought forth a perfectly preserved U.S. 1860 Civil War Colt .44, a treasured collector's item" (Ch. 12:183-84). When the Germans burst into his office, Tagomi puts his American role-playing to a real-life test: "At his desk, Mr. Tagomi pointed his Colt .44 ancient collector's item and compressed the trigger"; two Germans drop to the floor dead, and Tagomi says coolly, "Now we will mow them down" (Ch. 12: 190). In the spirit of the moment, Tagomi offers a reasonable facsimile of Clint Eastwood. However, it is important that, even as Tagomi embodies American values, "At the same time he remains thoroughly Japanese" (Robinson 46). Tagomi had not counted on the "Bits of bone, flesh, shreds of tooth" resulting from his actions (Ch. 12: 190). After the fact, Tagomi's Buddhist sensibility is unable to reconcile the fact that "To save one life, [he] had to take two" (Ch. 12: 192). It turns out that there is more to *Americanism* than Tagomi had known about: the American ideal leaves bloodstains on his hands.

In effect, Tagomi is now "authentically" American in the sense that he has acted out the "Spirit of '76" the "real" Americans have failed to exhibit on their own. Thus, Robinson points out, "for lack of any other container, the American reader must invest all of his [sic] patriotic feelings . . . not in any of the American characters, but in Tagomi himself" (Ch. 4: 46). Perhaps unwittingly, Robinson is suggesting that Americans *need* a representative of mythological America; to the point, he says, "We hope to see vigorous resistance, lots of heroism, and perhaps the eventual overthrow of the oppressors, perhaps the re-establishment of the Republic" (Ch. 4: 46). *Americanism* is such a tenacious ideology that even Robinson, an intelligent, well-informed American critic and science fiction writer, will cling blindly to romanticized notions of America, in spite of the horror of Tagomi's experience, and proclaim that, when Tagomi confronts the German SS consul, "the American reader stands up from his [sic] chair and cheers at this moment of defiance and disdain, [enthralled by] visions of John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart altered

into the little figure of Tagomi, a member of the Japanese ruling caste in America" (Ch. 4: 47).

But what do John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart represent? What image does Tagomi embody when he performs Clint Eastwood? What is this "Spirit of '76"? When Tagomi learned America's "history," he was taught only the part about "vigorous resistance, lots of heroism, and perhaps the eventual overthrow of the oppressors," to borrow Robinson's phrasing. Just as Childan fails to acknowledge the horrors of war depicted on Major Humo's flip cards, the romantic story America tells of itself omits the body count. America's heroic narrative does not mention the fact that Tagomi's prized Colt .44 collector's item *kills*, or that his cherished buffalo head represents not just the sustenance of the plains Indians but also loot amassed by white men conquering the "frontier" while slaughtering buffalo *and* plains Indians until both were near-extinction. Nor does it allow the Kasouras' scrimshaw to suggest the near-extinction of whales caused by the whaling industry, the near-extinction of elephants in man's quest for ivory, or the tendency of those sailors, when they weren't carving scrimshaws, to kidnap Africans for sale as slaves. Tagomi has to learn about the bloody side of America's ideals the hard way.

Dick subtly asks us to consider this "other side" of Americanism throughout the novel, especially as Frank Frink and Ed McCarthy contemplate going into the jewelry business and as Childan muses upon the accomplishments of the Germans. McCarthy says to Frink, "You know what retailers like [Childan] are selling? . . . And Getting a fortune for? Those goddam silver belt buckles from New Mexico that the Indians make. Those goddam tourist trash pieces, all alike. Supposedly native art" (Ch. 4: 43). Perhaps not-so-subtly, Dick highlights the parallel between his own PSA "natives," Frink, McCarthy, and Childan, and the Native Americans whom America's imperialism exiled and degraded to the humiliating position of selling cheap "native art" at tourist stands in New Mexico and around the Grand Canyon. Likewise, Childan, thinking about the Germans, re-emphasizes this parallel, observing, "it had taken two hundred years [for white Americans] to dispose of the American aborigines," and praising the Germans because "Germany had almost done it in Africa in fifteen years" (Ch. 2: 22). Furthermore, if the similarity between America's "disposal" of American aborigines and Germany's "disposal" of native Africans is not clear enough, Childan alerts us the fact that slavery of Blacks is enforced in the PSA, pointing to the real history of slavery, and racial brutality in the USA.

The fact is, the PSA and the Nazi USA are not much different from the USA as we know it, and *High Castle* asks us to consider the ugly realities lurking behind the glorious visions we hold about America. However, while it is easy enough to see evil in Germany's imperialism, it is also easy to believe that America is "different" because its aims are more noble; Germany is fascism, but America is rugged individualism and manifest destiny. Thus, Childan, a Nazi sympathizer, serves as a mediator between America's imperialist and romantic identities: he can admire the Germans for their ambition (imperialism) and, in so doing, celebrate parallel forms of American "ambition" (imperialism)--while at the same time condemning the Japanese (imperialists) for imitating America and devaluing America's glorious past. But only Tagomi understands



the reality of what America is. Tagomi has assimilated Western values and practices so effectively that, in Homi Bhabha's terms, he "translate[s] mimicry into a style of subversive mockery" (Nixon 157). Having played out America's mythology to its usually unstated conclusion, Tagomi unveils and understands the history of aggression, brutality, and bloodshed that mythology conceals, thereby deflating the romantic vision of America he (like Childan) has cherished. Tagomi sees America for what it is, and to deal with the consequences of his knowledge, he intends to consult "Goodman C. Mather. Deals, I am told, with guilt and hell-fire, et al" (Ch. 14: 228).

Robinson believes that if Tagomi "becomes American, then the country is no longer occupied" (46). But the PSA never was occupied, at least not in the traditional sense. As Tagomi's ultimate understanding of "America" reveals, from the beginning, America was colonized by its own illusions of itself. In *The Man in the High Castle*, Dick has given us a worst-case scenario in which, after centuries of colonizing of Asia, after centuries of constructing the "Orient" to suit itself, the West has produced a Japan-as-colonizer that is the mirror image of itself. Dick's Japanese have colonized America following the guidelines set in Asia by Western imperialists, and in America they have mimicked America's heroic ideals just as, "when told to duplicate a British destroyer [they] managed to copy the patches on the boiler" (Ch. 11: 170). As a result, the whole of America, including the patched, ugly parts, are revealed, and the PSA is transformed into a simulation of itself--a simulation modeled upon the ideals the West, including the USA and Nazi Germany, has used to valorize and conceal its own imperialist exploits. But none of Dick's characters, except Tagomi, recognized themselves in the simulation of America that is the PSA because they do not know their own history. Unfortunately, as Childan's crisis with the fake Colt .44 illustrates, a great deal is at stake in maintaining the illusion of Americanism: "not merely U.S. history involved, but our own personal" (Ch. 9, 136), because to acknowledge the bloody side of American ideals would be to shatter the images of glory, heroism, and rugged individualism and to recognize the proximity of these images to imperialism and Nazi fascism. In this sense, Childan's celebration of Nazi "ambition" is instructive, since his view makes all too clear the assumption that Western Imperialism equals progress, whereas a reverse imperialism scenario such as the Japanese colonization of the PSA is an affront to Nature. Like it or not, Childan, a Nazi sympathizer, and Tagomi, a guilt-ridden member of the Japanese ruling caste, are the true "Americans," and Dick's message is clear: we must face the imperialist/fascist underpinnings of Americanism, lest we fail to recognize our mirror images when they confront us in our back yard.

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