

Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said Novel of Philip K. Dick: Unfolding The Technology Evolution

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Abstract

Philip K. Dick often encircles his writing as what is real to fantasy and human to android. The present author attempts to analyze the paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or even words of the most controversial novel he wrote in the late '70s, entitled "Flow my Tears, The Policeman Said," which unfolds the technology of today's era. On the other hand, Dick was not known for an elegant or literary style; however, this raw writing, coupled with an inimitable imagination and social criticism, garnered as one of the most essential science fiction writers ever [1];[2]. The present author further investigates the betrayal, drugs, culture, futuristic world, and unconditional love in the novel. The novel is precisely science fiction [3]. However, the present author found evidence of reality and relevance to science and technology even though the terms used in the novel are prevalent, e.g., 3-D color TV sets, 3-D color videotape, 4-D picture/photo, electronic tracking device, microtransmitter, etc. According to [4], the novel is a great testament to being human in the face of mechanical adversity. Thus, this science fiction novel speaks about the conspiracy within a conspiracy using sophisticated technology. Finally, the researcher assumes that some scientists and inventors have prudent guidance in shifting fantasies to realities of the twenty-first century.

Keywords: *conspiracy, futuristic, mechanical, gadget and technology*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sometime from 1928 to 1982, a science fiction author named Philip K. Dick wrote extraordinary masterpieces in science fiction (the date has a significant sequence- the number 2 and 8). Lawrence Sutin, a subtle but startling irony best novels, is a world-famous science fiction writer of the futuristic worlds in the late 21st century. However, the novels, stories, and essays of Dick seem as innovative as ever, which is to say - as vitally important to our own time as only great literature can be [5]. On the other hand, Philip K. Dick was born premature with his twin sister Jane in Chicago on December 16, 1928. His father was Edgar Dick, and his mother was Dorothy Kindred. Dick felt deeply in his entire life when his twin sister Jane died six weeks after her birth. His parents divorced when he was five years old. His family members served as many characters in his masterpieces and creative works - science fiction includes mainstream, real/fake, and human/android [6].

Dick briefly attended the University of California in 1949 before dropping out. The sad moment of Dick, when he was diagnosed and suffering from schizophrenia - a label that terrified him. Other psychotherapists and psychiatrists in later years would offer other diagnoses, including the one that Dick was relatively sane. Critiques would say he frequently referred to as 'nervous breakdowns.' His experience of these was transformed into fictional portraits, most notably of "ex-schizophrenic" Jack Bohlen in *Martian Time-Slip* (1964). Dick died on March 2, 1982, from a combination of recurrent strokes accompanied by heart failure, in a 1981 entry in his *Exegesis* (an extensive journal he kept to explore the ramifications of 2-3-74). This was the year the novel (*Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*) was published and earned a reputation in science fiction [7].

Henceforth, the present author focused and analyzed every detail of evidence in science and technology beyond conspiracy of the most controversial novel he wrote, entitled "Flow my Tears, The Policeman Said." The novel was awarded first prize in the John W. Campbell Awards for the best science fiction novel of the year in 1975. It was also on the shortlist of awards like Nebula and Hugo. This science fiction novel talks about a variety show and television star host who loses his identity overnight.

Furthermore, his uniqueness in this lineage is the greatest, with his ability to create the best works in the broadly popular science fiction form. Dick remains compulsively readable. He is the master of the psychological pratfall, the metaphysical free-fall, the political conspiracy within a conspiracy.

The researcher sought to analyze the technology, conspiracy, drugs, machinery, equipment, and gadget terms used in the novel and the terminology used in today's era. The novel Philip K. Dick entitled: *Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said*. The objectives were as follows: (a) to find out a brilliant poem hid with magnificent meanings; (b) to present text evidences in the novel that speaks about the title “flow my tears, the policeman said”; (c) to pinpoint the racist views and race problems exhibited in the novel; (d) to highlight the power of sophisticated technologies and machines to alter/tamper the identity of a person and forging documents and robots perhaps; (e) to recognize the issue of conspiracies through the use of refined technology like microtransmitter is vivid in the novel; (f) to identify the betrayal and conspiracy of the protagonist-John Taverner; (g) to ascertain the carceral theory (surveillance society) in the novel; (h) to determine the cyborg theory in the novel; (i) to establish the simulacrum theory in the novel; (j) to describe the recreational drug in the future in the novel; (k) to distinguish the futuristic Vision of the Author in his Novel (*Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said*) that already existed and might be existed in the future.

II. METHODOLOGY

Unlike other elements in analyzing the novel, like classical, romanticism etc., science fiction has unique elements such as realistic and fantastic details, usually grounded in science and set in the future. Thus, this study anchored to the science fiction elements in analyzing the novel under study by Philip Dick. It is said that the unknown machines, inventions and sophisticated gadgets vividly linked to science and technology make a severe presentation of humanoids or robots, the political or social structures different from those of the known present or past. Exploring the outcome of such differences is the traditional purpose of science fiction, the product of futuristic ideas [8].

On the other hand, the new and different political or social systems (dystopia, post-scarcity, or a post-apocalyptic situation where organized society has collapsed). The novel is set in a futuristic dystopia, where America has become a police state after the Second Civil War. The main character of this novel is suffering misery, oppression, conspiracy by losing his identity, and claustrophobic betrayal of state and government control like a communist form of government [9].

Since this is a science fiction novel analysis, the researcher attempted to support his analysis by adopting theories to support his claims further. Henceforth, the researcher believed this novel has a basis in any theories like the CYBORGS theory of Donna Haraway. In this theory, Cyborgs disrupt orderly power structures and fixed interests and signify a challenge to settled politics, which assumes that binary oppositions or identities are natural distinctions. Those oppositions are cultural constructions. Haraway underlines the critical function of the cyborg concept, especially for feminist politics [10].

The current dualistic thinking involves the ‘logic of dominance’ because the parts of the dualisms are not equivalent. Thus, the logic produces hierarchies that legitimize men dominating women, whites dominating blacks, and humans dominating animals. Instead, Haraway suggests that people should undermine these hierarchies by actively exploring and mobilizing the blurring of borders. In the novel, there is evidence of the hierarchy that legitimate men dominate women and whites dominate blacks. On the other hand, the cyborg concept rejects rigid locations, notably those separating 'human' from 'animal' and 'human' from 'machine' [11];[12]. The present author believes that there is evidence in the novel that humans and machines are linked to each other and possess a solid connection to them

Another theory anchored in this article is ‘The CARCERAL’ by Michel Foucault, which seeks the whole of his work to make sense of how our modern society is organized differently from the society that preceded us. He has been especially well-known precisely because he tends to overturn accepted knowledge, illustrating the dangers inherent in those Enlightenment reforms designed to correct the barbarity of the past periods (the elimination of prisons, the modernization of medicine, the creation of the public university, etc.). As Foucault illustrates, each modernization process has disturbing effects on the power of the individual and government control. He further explores transitioning from a ‘culture of spectacle’ to a ‘carceral culture’ [13];[14]. This control system perhaps has been aided in our culture by new technological innovations that allow federal agencies to monitor your movement and character, for example, the internet, telephones, cell phones, ATMs, credit cards, and the ever-increasing number of surveillance cameras in urban spaces [15]. The manifestation of this theory is evident in the novel when the police power is manipulating the state, and the criminals are thrown into the forced labor camp.

The last theory used by the present author is 'The PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA' by Jean Baudrillard, which says what has emerged in postmodern culture is that our society has become so dependent on models and maps that we have lost all contact with the natural world that comes before the map. Reality itself has begun to copy the structure, which now positions and identifies the natural world: The boundary no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive. It is despite the map that precedes the territory—the precession of Simulacra that conditions the boundary on the Precession of Simulacra [16].

As mentioned by Baudrillard, when it comes to postmodern reality and simulacra, It is no longer a question of copying, duplication, or even parody. It is a question of replacing the signal of the real for the real. Baudrillard is not merely giving and suggesting that postmodern culture is imitation because the notion of artificiality still needs some sense of reality against which to recognize the artifice. His point, instead, is that we have lost all ability to make sense of recognition between nature and artificial. To clarify his viewpoint, he proposes three orders of simulacra. In the first order of simulacra, the pre-modern period is recognized as just an illusion, a place marker for the real. The second order of simulacra is the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century on mass production and the proliferation of copies. There is still a belief in an effective political action of the hidden fact of the real. In the third order of simulacra is the postmodern age. There is no longer any recognition between reality and its representation; only the simulacrum exists [17].

In the novel, imitations of the scenes, characters, etc. and surprisingly, repetitions of words are very apparent. Dick has kept these repetitions of words from the passages in the Holy Bible, but he only mentioned verses, e.g., Isaiah 65: 13 and 17 and Psalm 69: 12, 29, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28 in the Bible (see Holy Bible). Therefore, the present author searched the passages in the Bible and found the significant revelation of his ingenious novel.

On the other hand, the researcher used the qualitative approach, mainly textual analysis in the novel by taking the text evidence from the novel, particularly the constant comparison analysis since [18] have adopted to analyze data collected in one round and even used to analyze a single document from a single case. In this case, the researcher used this method in analyzing a single novel by Dick as a manifested document through creative writings the novel. Moreover, constant comparison analysis can be utilized with talk, observations, drawings/photographs/video, and documents making it an extremely versatile analytical technique.

Thus, the researcher displayed the novel's 'literary/text evidence' as he quoted every detail, as mentioned in the science fiction element. The approach used in this analysis was adopted from [19].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This article exhibited the text evidence as the researcher quoted every detail from the novel in connection with the elements and theories he mentioned earlier. A brief synopsis of the meritorious science fiction novel of a popular variety show host, Jason Taverner, wakes up in a world where he never existed. It covers the theme of "What is real?" it is an attractive police-state setting and conspiracy of the state.

The novel is set in a dystopian future in the United States, entering a post-totalitarian era with prospects of future democratic reform. Set in a then-future 1988, it extrapolates events from the late sixties and early seventies. These culminated in a 'Second Civil War,' also called the "Insurrection," which led to the collapse of democratic institutions in the United States and elsewhere. Compulsory sterilization of African Americans has sharply reduced their population and, after the laws for sterilization were eventually reversed, increased their social status to the point where even verbally harassing someone of color is considered a significant crime. By comparison, radicalized former university students escape a desperate existence in subterranean kibbutz communes. However, there appear to be no social barriers to the use of recreational drugs in this future, nor are some forms of pedophilia which are considered a crime.

The opening of this novel is a brilliant poem with magnificent meanings. The first two stanzas read:

The love in this novel is for Tessa,
and the love in me is for her, too.
She is my little song.

Flow my tears, fall from your springs!
Exiled forever let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,

There let me live forlorn.

[20]

The first stanza is heartedly dedicated to his wife, Tessa, who he considers an inspiration in writing this novel. The second stanza speaks about the title itself 'Flow my tears, fall from your springs!' speaks as 'flow my tears' and also speaks about the 'music' of the characters such as Jason Taverner- host of the variety show and music record icon and General Felix Buckman is a music lover. The title of the novel is FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID. "The Policeman Said" articulates the police power of the United States after the Civil War, which led to the downfall of democratic institutions in and elsewhere.

Sample text evidence in the novel about the title "Flow my tears, the policeman said."The policeman (General Buckman) is crying in the novel.

The "Insurrection" in this novel expresses the struggles of the black race.

... "Now they had entered the slums of Watts proper. Tiny dark stores on each side of the cluttered streets, overflowing ashcans, the pavement littered with pieces of broken bottles, drab painted signs that advertised Coca-Cola in big letters and the name of the store in small. At an intersection, an elderly black man haltingly crossed, feeling his way along as if blind with age. Seeing him, Jason felt an odd emotion. There were so few blacks alive now because of Tidman's notorious sterilization bill passed by Congress in the terrible days of the Insurrection. The clerk carefully slowed his rattly quibble to a stop to not harass the elderly black man in his rumpled, seam-torn brown suit. He felt it, too.

Sample text evidence on racist views and race problems exhibited in the novel.

... "Two adults, one child," the clerk said. "So the black population is halved every generation. Ingenious. You have to hand it to Tidman; he solved the race problem, all right."

The novel highlighted the power of sophisticated technologies and machines to alter/tamper with a person's identity and forge documents and robots, perhaps.

...It was small. But he saw a number of what appeared to be complex and highly specialized machines. On the far side a workbench. Tools by the hundreds, all neatly mounted in place on the walls of the room. Below the workbench large cartons, probably containing a variety of papers. And a small generator-driven printing press.

... "Good," Kathy said. She ripped the photos from the camera, carried them cautiously to her workbench, waving them to dry them. "These damn 3-D animateds they want on the military service papers--that camera cost me a thousand dollars and I need it only for this and nothing else . . . but I have to have it." She eyed him. "It's going to cost you."

...Bringing forth his military-service chit, Jason rubbed the small profile 4-D picture of himself. And it said tinnily, "How now, brown cow?"

The issue of conspiracies through the use of refined technology like microtransmitters is vivid in the novel.

...He thought, something of my abilities, my alleged and well-known properties, have come with me to this strange place I now live in. This place where I do not exist except on forged cards manufactured by a pol fink. Eerie, he thought, and he shuddered. Cards with microtransmitters built into them, to betray me and everyone with me to the pols. I haven't done very well here. Except that, as she says, I've got allure. Jesus, he thought. And that's all that stands between me and a forced-labor camp.

The betrayal and conspiracy of the protagonist-John Taverner is evident in this novel.

...Jason said, "Nobody remembers me. And I have no birth certificate; I was never born, never even born! So naturally I have no ID cards except a forged set I bought from a "pol" fink for

two thousand dollars plus one thousand for my contact. I'm carrying them around, but, God: they may have microtransmitters built into them. Even knowing that I have to keep them on me; you know why—even you up at the top, even you know how this society works. Yesterday I had thirty million viewers who would have shrieked their aggrieved heads off if a “pol” or a “nat” so much as touched me. Now I'm looking into the eyes of an Forced-Labor Camp (FLC)."

...A xeroxed file from police vaults. Summoned out of the void by the overly eager—and overweight--Inspector McNulty. A small note in pencil: "Taverner does not exist."

The carceral theory (surveillance society) is displayed in the following sample text evidence:

...I'll find another forger, he decided, one that isn't a pol informer, and get a full new set of ID cards, ones without microtransmitters. And then, evidently, I need a gun.

..."But," Buckman said, "you will be electronically monitored wherever you go. You will never be alone except for your own thoughts in your own mind and perhaps not even there. Everyone you contact or reach or see will be brought in for questioning eventually. . . just as we're bringing in the Nelson girl right now." He leaned toward Jason Taverner, speaking slowly and intently so that Taverner would listen and understand. "I believe you took no data from any data banks, public or private. I believe you don't understand your own situation. But"--he let his voice rise perceptibly-- "sooner or later you will understand your situation and when that happens we want to be in on it. So--we will always be with you. Fair enough?"

The cyborg theory of Donna Haraway is demonstrated when one of the female characters in the novel bravely exposes even the most private part of her body to over sixty million people.

..."Miss Ellar finally showed up, went into her dressing room, opened the paper bag, and then--and this is the part that still makes me break up--she came up to me, perfectly seriously, and said, 'Mr. Taverner, I'm sorry to bother you about this, but to demonstrate the Feminine Hygiene Deodorant Spray I'll have to take off my skirt and underpants. Right there before the TV camera.' 'So?' I said. 'So what's the problem?' And Miss Ellar said, 'I'll need a little table on which I can put my clothes. I can't just drop them on the floor; that wouldn't look right. I mean, I'll be spraying that stuff into my vagina in front of sixty million people, and when you're doing that you can't just leave your clothes lying all around you on the floor; that isn't elegant.' She really would have done it, too, right on the air, if Al Bliss hadn't--"

The simulacrum theory is the portrayal of the reality which is not...The production of the real... the imitations of the original...

...And I would have been listed in the police files, and in all the other data banks throughout the world. I wouldn't be listed as a famous entertainer, but I'd be there as a shabby bum who never amounted to anything, whose only highs came from a pill bottle. For God knows how long. I may have been taking the drug for years.

...Alys, he remembered, said I had been to the house before. And apparently, he decided, it's true. had. To get my doses of the drug.

..."It's not the sort of music I like . . . I don't think I'd really be playing them all that much."

This is the simulacrum of the identity does not existed from Jason (the main character and he is black) and now Felix Buckman (Police General) is telling the black man that he has no name. Just see the passage taken from the novel...

...Buckman walked toward the black man. The black man did not retreat; he stood where he was. Buckman reached him, held out his arms and seized the black man, enfolded him in them, and hugged him. The black man grunted in surprise. And dismay. Neither man said anything. They stood for an instant and then Buckman let the black man go, turned, walked shakingly back to his quibble.

...Hesitating, the black man stood shivering and then said, "Do you know how to get to Ventura? Upon air route thirty?" He waited. Buckman said nothing. "It's fifty or so miles north of here," the black man said. Still Buckman said nothing. "Do you have a map of this area?" the black man asked.

The description of recreational drugs in the future is mentioned in the novel. This drug is named as KR-3. Let us see the effect of a drug on the user/s.

... "The mescaline," Jason said, "is beginning to affect me." His legs ached: for him that was always a sign that mescaline was beginning to act in his system. "I'll sit down," he said, and managed to locate a leather-covered easy chair before his legs gave way. Or _seemed_ to give way; actually they never did: it was a drug-instigated illusion. But all the same it felt real.

...The mescaline had furiously begun to affect him; the room grew lit up with colors, and the perspective factor altered so that the ceiling seemed a million miles high. And, gazing at Alys, he saw her hair come alive ... like Medusa's, he thought, and felt fear.

... "That's very important," Westerburg said earnestly. "KR-3 is a major breakthrough. Anyone affected by it is forced to perceive unreal universes, whether they want to or not. As I said, trillions of possibilities are theoretically all of a sudden real; chance enters and the person's percept system chooses one possibility out of all those presented to it. It has to choose, because if it didn't, competing universes would overlap, and the concept of space itself would vanish. Do you follow me?"

The futuristic Vision of the Author in his Novel (Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said) already existed and might exist. The description of the futuristic vision of Philip K. Dick is the following:

- (1) 3-D color TV Sets
- (2) 3-D color on videotape
- (3) 4-D picture/photo
- (4) Quibble (air transportation)
- (5) Robotrix
- (6) Electronic tracking device
- (7) Future bomb like a seed
- (8) Floating ten-story structure
- (9) Battery-operated stobe disc
- (10) Small Camera transmitting a TV image
- (11) Phone Screen (Video Call)

IV. CONCLUSION

The novel rootedness in a future 'reality is convincing and compelling. As we see, the latest technologies, as versioned by Dick, came to reality and novels were sometimes set in the '70s when certain technologies existed than today. The emphasis on this novel could prevent it from entirely transcending its genre.

On the side of legal and political issues, the criminals by the police authority of those who do not have proper identification and documentation will be put in forced labor camps as punishment.

The police power vested by the state is the reality in the US. The main reason for this is to protect its citizens. On the other hand, those persons who are not citizens or illegal aliens and precisely not registered will be deported to their own country. In the same scenario in the novel, those entities not registered in the central computer unit will be put in the forced labor camp.

The use of sophisticated scanners and robotics is necessary to ensure the safety of their citizens. However, the existence of this police power is centered on those who would undoubtedly abuse its power.

The racial problems and dream for the liberation of the blacks, as versioned by Dick, came to reality. The president of the most powerful country in the world is headed by the black president- Barrack Obama. This is ending the slavery of the blacks and all humanity.

The researcher recommends reading another novel by Philip K. Dick to confirm the consistency of his writing style. The researcher also recommends to disseminate this research analysis to the students to appreciate the science fiction novel of Philip K. Dick. Moreover, the researcher recommends replicating this research analysis to another novel written by Philip K. Dick.

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