Racial Deception

Japanese Reality in The Man in the High Castle *and* No-No Boy

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Abstract. Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, perhaps the most canonical alternate-history novel, has been read in terms of its reality's relation to the actual world without consideration of Japanese racialization, a condition of its alternate world. Conversely, John Okada's *No-No Boy*, the first known Japanese American novel, has been read in terms of Asian racialization in America without consideration of an alternate history also chronicled in the novel. This essay intersects the two novels based on the common historical basis of their ontologies (what they designate as real). Against the recent tendency in race studies to generalize history into ontology, I read history from ontology and find that the alternate histories are phantastical reflections of actual racial histories. While *The Man in the High Castle* renders literal Western modernity's projection of deception as a Japanese reality in line with World War II–era geopolitical rivalry and domestic insecurity, *No-No Boy* depicts deception through a Japanese character as an interwar fascist tendency on which modernity as a whole falls back. In ontologizing the (self-)deceptions of modernity as an alternate history, Dick and Okada historicize race as a negative condition of modern phantasy.

JAAS February 2026 91–129

RACE: A HISTORICAL REALITY BEHIND ONTOLOGY

Arguably the most canonical of Philip K. Dick's writings, *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) depicts an America occupied on the East Coast by Nazi Germany and on the West Coast by Imperial Japan in the aftermath of Axis victory in World War II. This world of the novel, apparently the opposite of the United States–led global order that emerged after World War II, has led it to be categorized as an alternate history, a subgenre of science fiction. "Assum[ing] that an event in the past caused our present," alternate history, in Karen Hellekson's classic definition, "revolve[s] around the basic premise that some event in the past did not occur as we know it did," leading to "history's turning out differently than what we know to be true."[1] Based on Robert H. Canary's definition of science fiction as a literary genre "speculating about the nature of" the rules to which it is bound (e.g., scientific laws, if imagined by the author), Hellekson suggests that, in alternate history, history becomes the basis of science fiction's characteristic move—namely, what Darko Suvin describes as the estrangement of reality in a way that is cognitively valid.[2] This defamiliarization of the world as we know it within what Carl Howard Freedman refers to as "a cognitive continuum with the actual"—i.e., in a way not totally unmoored from reality—is what lends science fiction "historical concreteness and rigorous self-reflectiveness," rendering it critical, indeed theoretical.[3] This implies that alternate history, by extension, is a reflection and potentially a critique of the actual world in its simulation of an*other* history that is in some crucial way anchored to actual history.

There is no shortage of accounts on precisely how *The Man in the High Castle*—"a text," as Freedman puts it, "that has received more than its share of commentary"—critically intervenes in reality, or on how the alternate constitutes an act in history.[4] Describing it as "the most paradigmatic of alternate histories in terms of its simplified view of history, use of a point of divergence, and [focus on] the paradox of . . . determinism versus . . . free will," Kathleen Singles goes so far as to contend that "history in Dick's novel" is premised on "the Great Man theory of the nineteenth century," in which an exceptional individual shapes the course of history—except Dick depicts individuals as failing to know or to act because they believe in themselves too much or in someone greater than themselves.[5] This extensive critical scholarship on *The Man in the High Castle* has, however, missed an aspect of its alternate history's relation to actual history—more precisely, an actual historical condition of the novel's alternate history that explains its cultural specificity. This condition is the history of Japanese racialization.

In contrast, John Okada's *No-No Boy* (1957)—a novel initially ignored, if not shunned, until its rediscovery and reframing by the editors of *Aiiieeeee!: An Anthology of Asian American Writers* (1974) as a core Asian American text—is palpably about racialization. Set after World War II, *No-No Boy* tells the story of Ichiro Yamada upon his return to Seattle after spending two years in a Japanese American internment camp and two years in federal prison for refusing to serve in the military and to swear allegiance to the United States.[6] Noting that, unlike other Asians, the Japanese formed families in early-twentieth-century America because Japanese women were allowed into the country, Stan Yogi suggests that internment rather than exclusion is the formative event of Japanese America.[7] Japanese American literature during internment reflects this in the form of optimistic belief in, or censored criticism of, America, eventually leading the Nikkei (the Japanese in the diaspora) toward invisibility and assimilation in the postwar period.[8] *No-No Boy*'s initial neglect is perhaps due to its other path. The consensus in the critical scholarship is that *No-No Boy* "embraces an assimilationist conception of citizenship" precisely through the sacrifice or woundedness embodied by, rather than repressed by, its protagonist.[9]

Complicating this argument, Jane Im reads Ichiro as caught between Japanese nationalism (embodied by his mother) and US assimilation (represented by Kenji, who fought for the United States, and by Emi, a love interest for Kenji and Ichiro whose estranged husband also fought for the United States).[10] Instead of assimilation, Ichiro, Im argues, embodies racial melancholia in rejecting both whiteness and Japaneseness.[11] Literally signifying the two things that Ichiro refused to do and for which he was imprisoned, *no-no boy* comes to figuratively denote this state of double negation. This condition, Josephine Nock-Hee Park contends, turns Ichiro into an antihero who can only say "no," a "futile attempt to speak as a free American."[12] For her part, Jeanne Sokolowski understands double negation in terms of existential angst, which leads to citizenship's reformulation in a way that heals the injury inflicted by the state.[13] Focusing on the psychological, Gary Storhoff suggests that *no-no* signifies the depressive aftermath of racial persecution.[14] While Japan appears in the scholarship as the name of the difference that hinders US assimilation, at most as America's other, its own world is never tackled.[15] Specifically, while Japanese racialization is painstakingly analyzed, the alternate reality driving an emblematic subject—namely, Ichiro's mother—who lives based on the premise of Japan's victory in World War II (as in *The Man in the High Castle*) is left uninterrogated.

Read in terms of seemingly discrete priorities, *The Man in the High Castle* and *No-No Boy* in fact intersect ontologically: the alternate (versus actual) histories that they present as real index actual racial histories of World War II that are the underside of hegemonic history. Technically speaking, the branch

of metaphysics that deals with "what there is," "whether or not a certain thing . . . exists," "what the stuff of reality is made out of," and "the most general features and relations of the entities which do exist," ontology is the result of a process whereby reality is defined, thus whereby certain things are posited as real and the world is organized according to the criterion and categorization of reality.[16] Perhaps most radically, Martin Heidegger distinguished specific beings from being itself, thereby positing not only the *ontic* difference between things that are there (e.g., the difference between the two novels) but also, more fundamentally, the *ontological* difference between these things and the mode in which they exist (i.e., their mode *as novels*—what it means to be a novel—as opposed to other modes—say, when the novels are treated *as ornaments* on the shelf rather than as imaginative texts to be read).[17]

A critique of modern Western thought's elevation of human consciousness as the basis of things, Heidegger's "ontology" was supposed to bring about the end of metaphysics, with its focus on first principles too abstract (e.g., the idea of *being* in the subject's head) to have any basis on reality. Instead, Heidegger claimed to derive such principles from the things themselves, thereby basing the concept of *being* on the mode in which beings exist.[18] In effect grounding the most fundamental of philosophical questions—the question of what it means to be—on a status—reality—assumed to be not only given but also transparent—things are there and are themselves, if operating in different modes—Heidegger, at the same time, in naming ontological difference, pointed beyond the reality of the thing—the fact that it is there, its *existence*—toward its way of existing in the world—the nature of its being there, its *being*.[19] Reversing modern thought in making things that exist the basis of being, Heidegger nonetheless depicts existence and being (the two levels of his reality theory) in terms of the same subject that is supposed to be the target of his critique of Western philosophy: man perceives what exists as they are, indeed man is distinguished from other beings in asking the question of, thereby having consciousness of, being.[20]

Even in its most radical articulation, then, what ontology reveals is less what reality is than the context in which it is defined. In the case of modern thought, the context is Western modernity, the era in history that defines itself in terms of its break from history to anchor itself to abstract, individual "man."[21] Consistently, as illustrated by Heidegger, modern ontology shows modernity to be the era of reflective, indeed reflexive, man to the extent that man becomes not only the center of attention (notably, in the novel, *the* modern literary medium) but indeed the basis, if not of things, then of the determination of their existence and of their being.

More recently, ontology has been taken up in black studies. In line with critical paradigms that posit "the structural antagonism" between "constructed

categories"—e.g., labor and capital for Marxism, man and woman for feminism—as the foundation of the world, Frank B. Wilderson III points to the construction of categories as having ontological implications while asserting that "the Black or Slave is not a category of Human."[22] Constituting a difference not "within the same species" but from that very species, Blackness, Wilderson argues, is "a positionality against which Humanity establishes . . . its corporeal integrity."[23] Relating this Afropessimist tenet to Heidegger's ontology, King-Ho Leung writes that "if the human . . . has a unique relation to Being itself, and . . . is premised on anti-blackness, then . . . Being itself is . . . [premised on] 'anti-blackness.'"[24]

Reiterating the thesis of blackness as nothingness (the opposite of being) that follows from this, Fred Moten nonetheless posits blackness as "ontologically prior to" what Leung calls "the 'new ontology' of modern slavery."[25] Having a reality before its relegation by modern ontology to nonbeing, blackness, Leung explains, is the "'anti-foundation' that grounds" the ontology—i.e., what must be negated for (human) being to be—and the "underground," as Moten calls it, "that undermines what it is supposed to uphold."[26] Reversing the identification, as Frantz Fanon puts it, of "black in relation to the white man," this ontological turn in black studies thus unravels (the human) being as premised on (the black) nothing—the disavowed condition, indeed the excluded outside, of modernity, with its individualist/humanist ontology that is premised on slavery and its afterlife.[27] In this reading, race (in the form of blackness) is the antithesis of reality (in the sense of being), and racialization, the attribution of race (typically to the other), is the underside of ontology, a means of expropriating value from the other to establish the value of the system (in this case, modernity). Rooted in the history of slavery, this ontological rearticulation of blackness radicalizes it to the extent of turning it into a metaphysical category at the expense of history.[28] In fact, turning racial into ontological difference paradoxically treats blackness as not a (human) race because it is treated as not human, possibly detaching it from the history (of slavery as opposed to of modernity as a whole) on which the ontology rests.[29]

What if we went in the opposite direction? Instead of generalizing history as ontology and then transcending history, what if we analyzed ontology in terms of history? That is, what if we deconstructed what is being defined as real as a codification of historical conditions—i.e., the essentialization of its context, the reification of what is contingent as necessary and final?[30] This would be the first step toward reconstructing history from "reality." In making explicit the installation of a particular, and partial, representation of actual history as alternate reality, *The Man in the High Castle* and *No-No Boy* elicit this decoding of ontology to illuminate its historical basis. In fact, in featuring alternate (versus actual) histories, the two novels raise the question of ontology on its

two levels, provoking inquiry not only into the nature of the realities that they are representing (on the level of *being* focused on by Afropessimism), but also into what realities are being represented (on the level of *existence*), in the first place—more precisely, what histories are being represented through what is being defined as real.

Alternate history inevitably raises the question of the nature of its reality. If the history that we—the reader along with the author—are living is in the mode of the actual, then what defines the alternate—the world of *or* a world in the novel—as also a reality (if in another mode)?[31] Given our grounding in the actual mode, the way that we have of answering this question is to ascertain the alternate reality's relation to what passes for actual reality. This is precisely what is done by critics of *The Man in the High Castle* when they argue that its reality is a reflection, if inverted, of Western history. In what follows, I lay out this criticism along with Dick's reflections on his novel as a theory of alternate history, arguing that the purpose of alternate history is to actualize phantasy, or fantasy in the psychoanalytic sense: "the imaginary staging of an unconscious desire" that has reality for its bearer.[32] Indeed, Dick grasps the reality of desire to the extent that he comes to (mis)take the alternate as actual. Against this confusion, I show that Dick's desire is embedded in his alternate history negatively, as that which may be actual *only if* the alternate is overcome; and reflexively, in a way that marks the alternate *as a reflection*, therefore as having a phantastical, not an actual, reality.

Unlike *The Man in the High Castle*, *No-No Boy* reads as a realist novel, but certain characters—notably, the protagonist's mother—live as if they are in an alternate world, one uncannily similar to Dick's. Unlike Dick, Okada did not leave a theory of this alternate history, but in setting it apart in the novel as an opposite reality of pathologized characters, Okada also posits alternate history as rooted in a desire embedded negatively (in this case, in the "actual" reality in the novel) and reflexively (i.e., pinpointed as pathological rather than conventional). For this reason, I apply Dick's theory of alternate history to the alternate history within Okada's novel. That is, I treat the alternate history that *is* Dick's novel and the alternate history *in* Okada's novel as both realities of the phantastical kind—i.e., a means for actualizing reality other than the actual.

Sorting out modes of reality—not least the phantastical and the actual—in this way entails analysis not only of the alternate as a reflexive reflection of the actual but also of the actual as a historical condition of the alternate. This takes us from the nature of the alternate history to the contents that it designates as real—i.e., from *being* to *existence*.[33] *The Man in the High Castle* and *No-No Boy* intersect further on this level as their alternate histories, as suggested by critics of *No-No Boy*, turn out to be indices of actual racial histories. Specifically,

Dick's alternate history renders literal the paranoid sense of modernity, in its abstraction, as deceptive, thereby Asian—the very racial logic that facilitated Japanese so-called *internment* in America in World War II. Relatedly, against US-centric readings of the mother in *No-No Boy*, her alternate history, I argue, reveals deception to be a constitutive part of the dominant ideology in Japan in World War II—namely, fascism—and indeed of modernity as a whole. In other words, what is ontologized in the alternate histories—in Dick's text and in the mother's text within Okada's novel—derive their phantastical reality from actual, if opposite, tendencies of modernity—abstraction and fascism—that are racialized as other in order to disavow modernity's contradictions as part of its phantastical reification by Western ontology as the reality.

In fact, Dick and Okada unravel racialization as an integral part of the modern act of phantasizing made official by ontology and made explicit by alternate history. Referring to "the processes," as Karim Murji and John Solomos explain, "by which ideas about race are constructed, come to be regarded as meaningful, and are acted upon," *racialization* constructs race just as ontology defines reality.[34] Highlighting the construction of race as a placeholder for nonnormative attributes that render its subjects other, indeed at its limit not human, racialization is depicted in the novels as a negative condition of modern phantasy, and race a (self-)deception that modernity engages in to fulfill phantasy. Like Afropessimism pointing to race as modern ontology's other, alternate history nonetheless expands reality to include phantasy. Rather than ontologizing race as a matter of being, Dick and Okada represent these alternate realities so as to historicize race as an instrument of phantasy.[35]

PHANTASY: THE REALITY OF ALTERNATE HISTORY

Critics read *The Man in the High Castle* as an alternate history that imagines another world that turns out to be a reflection of the actual world. On a basic level, the novel's premise—a world that prima facie is *not* the world in which we live—is depicted as the product of its author's mental world-making. Reading Dick's alternate history as literalizing "the metaphor of reality or the world as a construct of the mind," Singles argues that the alternate history departs from the actual because "what is at stake is not the existence or stability of reality" but "the power of the human mind" to imagine worlds, thus "to construct one different from the present."[36] In contrast to Singles's idealism—i.e., the all-too-modern attribution of powers (not least the power to make the world) to the human imagination—more skeptical accounts unravel the alternate as a

reflection of the actual. Analyzing the evolution of Imperial Japan in the novel from militarism to commercial pacifism as an allusion to the US-led postwar order, Freedman analyzes the Nazi plot in the novel to obliterate the Japanese homeland as the embodiment of the genocidal impulse of Western culture. This impulse, he argues, remains latent in America.[37] Identifying the novel's "Japanese colonizers [as] mirror images" of Western colonizers in actual history and of colonized Americans in the alternate history, Cassie Carter suggests that the novel reflexively "represents an America occupied and 'oppressed' by a simulation of itself."[38]

Putting the novel in the context of the Cold War, decolonization, and civil rights eras, yet other accounts see the alternate history as a symptomatic fantasy. Focusing on the novel within the novel called *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, in which Allied victory in World War II intensifies British imperialism, Fred Bilson zeroes in on how the alternate history (the novel) contains a mirror of itself (the novel within), an alternate history that is closer to but is not actual history.[39] Speculating that "the entire apparatus of the Japanese occupation is a delusion" of Juliana Frink's, the character in the novel who manages to reach Hawthorne Abendsen, author of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* and the so-called *Man in the High Castle*, Bilson posits that delusion as a trope enables readers to reflect on their own fantasies.[40] For his part, David M. Higgins points to Dick as foundational in the rise of reverse colonization narratives that switch "the roles of the perpetrator and victim."[41] This subgenre, he argues, is a product of science fiction's turn from conquest to liberation in the context of the movement of the colonized to the metropole, the literary genre's way of appropriating victimhood for the privileged.[42]

Collectively, these criticisms suggest that Dick's ontology, or definition of reality, includes more than just the actual. In the process, they depict his understanding of reality as adjacent less to idealism—in which the world can be known only through, or is indeed reduced to, the mind—than to psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis, after all, categorizes reality into the conscious and the unconscious, thus pointing to that of which the subject is not conscious not only as also real but indeed as the underpinning of the actual/conscious: the, as it were, deeper reality.[43] The scholarship essentially argues that Dick treats fiction as a reflection of the sense that the world is to be imagined differently, thus ironically reflecting his world (not least the reader and the author, with their fantasies and politics) in his aim to reimagine it. In this way, Dick hints that imagining the actual in alternate form, thereby ontologizing the alternate as real (at least in his fiction), is driven by phantasy *and* that phantasy reflects the reality at its roots.

"The fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality," phantasy, Sigmund Freud claims, departs from child's play, from which it derives, in losing

its "link with real objects."[44] While child's play is motivated by the wish to grow up and be more a part of the real world, phantasies, Freud clarifies, tend to be about what is not permissible and come with the shame of untranscended childhood.[45] In this way, phantasy consists in a certain resistance to reality. The adult can undo "the contrast between play and reality," however, by representing phantasy—e.g., through creative writing—thus making phantasy pleasurable rather than repulsive.[46] Fiction, according to this logic, enables Dick to relate the world in his mind to the world as it is, indeed to render his imagined phantasy into something to which others can relate, thus lending what was but a psychic reality (Dick's phantasy) a social reality (something also recognizable by subjects other than Dick). The alternate realities of fiction, Freud suggests, are rooted in the author's phantasy, with fiction amounting to not only an index of but indeed an attempt to fulfill what the author desires but cannot turn into an actual reality.

How does this reading of the novel's reality as a phantasy, however, square with the fact that, as Lawrence Sutin attests, Dick consulted the *I Ching* to write *The Man in the High Castle*, making the ancient Chinese divination text Dick's co-author?[47] As Jake Jakaitis explains, "For Dick, the *I Ching* is a means of narrativizing and externalizing internal conflicts, thereby resolving them."[48] In other words, it is less that Dick shares authorship with the *I Ching* than that his authorship is informed by its reading, which, like all readings, is conditioned by location (Dick's position in the world), thus by phantasy (what Dick imagines the world to and should be). Charting the novel's "permutations of the concept of reality," John Rieder points to the same direction in arguing that *The Man in the High Castle* refers to itself through "a complex set of metafictional possibilities" to show that it is not reality that shapes ethics but the reverse.[49] Even a reading focused on the novel's realities is notably led to its phantasy—the wish to correct reality—if driven by ethics instead of by desire. Rieder thus points to Dick's designation of *what is* in the novel, ultimately to alternate history's ontology, as having as its underlying condition *what ought to be* in the world, or phantasy.

Implied but not explicitly articulated in the scholarship, phantasy explains the novel's sense of reality. Singles refers to Dick's idea of subjectivity as "reality itself" to make sense of the way that *The Man in the High Castle* is structured not by "an 'authorial' narrator" "but rather as a prism of multiple perspectives," including of yet other characters like Frank Frink, a Jewish metalworker and Juliana's ex-husband, and Robert Childan, the antiques shopkeeper who specializes in American artifacts and ends up taking Frink's self-made jewelry on consignment.[50] In contrast to the reading of the novel's ambiguous ending—in which, after making Abendsen admit that he used the *I Ching* to write his alternate history (within the alternate history), Juliana consults the oracle, which yields the hexagram for Inner Truth—as meaning that fiction (*The Grasshopper Lies*

Heavy) is reality and that reality (*The Man in the High Castle*) is fiction, Singles argues that Dick in fact posits not "a unified centre of consciousness" (i.e., Juliana's privileged viewpoint) but rather the reader's "authority to choose his own reality" based on what she wants to see.[51] Understood by Singles exclusively as perspective (the subject's position), subjectivity, however, also entails axiology (the subject's value system). Indeed, just as location grounds perspective, the subject's ideals—libidinal, ethical, or otherwise—direct perspective, setting the course that reality takes in the subject's ideal world. If reality is conditioned by phantasy—i.e., what is valued, but is not real, in the current world—then what is not actual—e.g., the fictional, indeed the alternate—is real in a phantastical sense, amounting to another reality that, for the subject, ought to be, and, internally, is.

Through alternate history, then, Dick expands reality by unraveling it as subjective—i.e., structured by the subject's relation (actual as well as psychic) to the given socially defined as actual. This ontology made up of the actual and of the phantastical that conditions how the subject sees and shapes the actual, is also evident in "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others" (1977).[52] In this speech, Dick posits "a plurality of universes arranged along a sort of lateral axis, . . . at right angles to the flow of linear time."[53] Parallel to "the most actualized, the one that the majority of us . . . agree on," are "pluriform pseudoworlds," like the world of *The Man in the High Castle*.[54] Initially, Dick offers this lateral ontology of parallel realities as "merely a fictional premise," but in the end he claims it as something that he has personally "experienced."[55] Presumed to be the effect of "the subjectivity of the various human viewpoints," the "plural realities" are in fact ultimately understood as objective.[56] Barring the existence of multiple universes, this ontology can only be explained in terms of Dick's perception of the reality of phantasy to the extent that phantasy is (mis)taken as actual.

Potentially (mis)taken as actual, phantastical reality is nonetheless not the same as and may in fact be contrary to actual reality. For this reason, phantasy has to find creative, even circuitous (as opposed to straightforward), means of being conveyed by its medium (e.g., fiction). This is the case with *The Man in the High Castle*, the alternate reality of which turns out to be the opposite, rather than a direct reflection, of its author's desire.[57] Taking great pains to distinguish his lateral ontology from linear time, Dick nonetheless asserts that the "realms . . . contain among them a spectrum of aspects ranging from the unspeakably malignant to the beautiful," with the currently actual world "obliterat[ing]" previous "worse world[s]."[58] Imagining subjects that "inhabit relatively greater amounts of" one world or another and moving "from worst to fair to good to excellent," Dick suggests that action in the previous world, also referred to as an "alternate present," determines if one goes to the next, better world.[59] Given

the ordering of the multiverses in terms ultimately of progress, Dick's ontology has a linear direction, if having as its destination "a past we have lost but a past returning . . . as our future, in which all lost things shall be restored," the best world in which we "mercifully forget" the worst.[60] *The Man in the High Castle*, he explains, is "based on fragmentary residual memories" of a "prior ugly present," and is therefore, like *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* in it, "not fiction—or rather is fiction only *now*, thank God."[61] Once those who did their part in overthrowing the prior world reach the next, memories of the previous, Dick adds, do "not come to the surface" until believed in as fiction.[62]

Fiction, as per this view, is an unconscious record of a formerly actual world that has been overcome, thereby now an alternate, with history ever moving toward "a third alternate present," a world even better than the current.[63] This implies that the alternate and the actual—by extension, fiction and history, phantasy and reality—are not opposites or stages but possibilities lived by subjects, *in reality* if to different degrees. Phantasy, in Freud's theory, is the result of "the wish mak[ing] use of an occasion in the present to construct, on the pattern of the past, a picture of the future."[64] Aroused in the present, a wish that found fulfillment in the past leads the subject to create "a situation relating to the future"—a phantasy—that "represents a fulfillment of the wish," thereby stringing together "past, present and future" "on the thread of the wish."[65] In Dick, past, present, and future—or rather, the alternate, the actual, and the utopian—are synthesized by phantasy based not on past fulfillment but on the sense (memory?), if not fear, of a dystopian past that may well be present again/still. The alternate (i.e., the world of *The Man in the High Castle*) is thus not exactly phantasy itself—the world that Dick is after—but the negative ground on which phantasy lies: *what was that ought* not *to be*, thus the impetus, even roadmap, for *what ought to be*.

As an alternate reality, *The Man in the High Castle* turns out to be distinct not only from the world as it is (actual reality) but also from Dick's imagination of the world as it ought to be (desired/idealized reality). While Dick (mis)takes this alternate reality as actual due to the strength of his phantasy that this alternate reality would be the negative foundation of a better actual reality, he simultaneously evinces consciousness of the novel as phantastical through metafiction. In the novel, Dick hints at his fiction as an internal imitation, thereby a psychic, indeed phantastical, transformation, of external reality. He does this, as the critics note, through doubles within the text: the Japanese that are Americans, the Americans who may become Germans, the colonized colonized by itself, the alternate within the alternate, victims who are in fact perpetrators, reality in its different modes. In dramatizing, thereby self-referentially marking, his mimicry of the actual through copies (if deceptive), Dick must have some sense that the

reality that he creates is not the actual but rather its transposition, the fidelity of which would be not only to actual reality but also to the subject who, if Freud is right, creates out of phantasy.

Synthesizing developments in possible worlds theory in narratology, Marie-Laure Ryan and Alice Bell draw on two propositions—that fictional worlds work according to their own laws that may not abide by the actual world's laws, and that storytelling is an act of doubling by the author as the narrator—to assert fiction's autonomy from *and* relation to actual reality.[66] Depicting the actual as "the center of a particular system of reality" but as not exhaustive of all reality, Ryan and Bell posit fiction as "true of a [possible world]" and as "a playful relocation" of the actual, toward which fiction's truth extends (e.g., in the form of "morals").[67] While Dick's notion of the alternate amounts to a lived possibility, *The Man in the High Castle*'s world, as intimated by its doubles that finally index its author's phantasy, points toward a modality of reality that is not possibility, actuality, or phantasy per se but more like their synthesis—namely, reflexivity.

The alternate in Dick is a double in the sense not only that it is written by a subject, the author, who transports himself into another world, as the narrator making the rules of *a* world that he deems and makes possible to relate a lesson about *his* world as the author. More fundamentally, it is a copy that deviates from the original to reflect this original—the actual—in another guise—e.g., in reverse (with an Axis instead of an Ally world)—as a way of acting on it. Through doubles (as a motif) within the double (the novel)—i.e., unconsciously—this alternate reflects not only the actual but also itself as a reflection of the actual. In this way, *The Man in the High Castle* reveals the genre of alternate history not only as indexing the phantastical—i.e., bearing, if negatively, the reality of the ideal, the best of possibilities—but also as pointing to—i.e., having consciousness, if relayed unconsciously, of—itself as phantastical.

DECEPTION: THE APPEARANCE OF JAPANESE POWER

Dick illustrates alternate history to be a medium for a mode of reality—the reflexive—that reflects, thereby critiquing, the actual in a way that is conscious of itself as a reflection, thus of its phantastical relation to the actual. This consciousness, however, is aesthetically embedded through metafiction rather than made explicit by Dick, who in fact emphasizes the alternate as real without acknowledging the distinction within reality between the actual and the phantastical. This makes it incumbent on the reader to tease out not only how the alternate phantastically imagines the actual but also how the actual historically

conditions the alternate. Tackling alternate history's ontology from this other side entails refocusing from the phantasy to the actual reality being reflected by the alternate. That is, we now need to turn from alternate history's nature as a phantastical reality to alternate history's representations, the contents that it posits as having their own reality, but are in fact derived from the actual.

Significantly, in laying the negative ground for a better world in *The Man in the High Castle*, Dick reiterates a racial representation from his world. This is not to say that Dick subscribes to what he reflects. However, to fulfill the phantasy driving his alternate history—as suggested in "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," a world without oppression—Dick draws on an opposite historical phantasy. The novel's America under Japan's rule literalizes Asian racialization in the West as an irreducibly foreign element that, through some dark perversion of the West's powers, may just conquer the nation, including from within. This Yellow Peril trope is vocalized in the novel by Childan, the petit-bourgeois peddler of "historic objects of American popular civilization" to "wealthy, cultured Japanese."[68] In a world where, as Childan puts it, "whites have to bow to" "yellow people" "because they hold the power," he manages to invite himself to a potential client's home.[69] Admiring the home's "close[ness] to the Tao" while lusting after the client's wife, Betty, Childan feels inferior: after disagreeing with the husband, Paul, about *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, he thinks, "They're so graceful and polite. And I—the white barbarian."[70]

This inferiority complex turns out to be its opposite, as Childan reveals when he starts talking about "Slavic world inundation," a prospect that he takes Paul as failing to consider in Abendsen's book.[71] Repulsed by his "trying to pretend that these Japanese and [he] are alike," Childan comes to conclude—after Betty, as if aware of Yellow Peril discourse, states "in a low voice," "I do not believe any hysterical talk of 'world inundation' by any people, Slavic or Chinese or Japanese"—that Japanese culture is "ersatz" that fools nobody.[72] His musings on how "their brains are different," how "only the white races [are] endowed with creativity," and how the Japanese "powers of imitation are immense" come out in the form of hysteria over Jewish world domination.[73] Afterward, his hosts "shrink" and he views them as "*not exactly human*": "monkeys dolled up in the circus" who are "clever and can learn, *but that is all*."[74]

Just as the novel renders the actual world dystopian to make possible a better world, Dick personifies in Childan an actual ideology, American racism, that, he implies, has to be unraveled on the way to that better world. Coming out in the form of anti-Semitism, Childan's racial prejudice has as its basis Western discourse on the Orient—in particular, on Japan, which, as Michael Lucken explains, has long been "described as a nation of imitators."[75] Lucken traces the history of this trope: from old perceptions of Japan as owing its

civilization to China; to notions in the eighteenth century, when Japan was closed to foreigners, of Japanese "manual dexterity and intellectual tenacity" as a knack for perfection instead of invention; to representations in the mid-nineteenth century, after Japan's reopening in 1854, of the Japanese as excessive and servile imitators lacking in "taste," "national pride," and learning capacity; to the late-nineteenth-century association of Japan with the Yellow Peril in the form of the counterfeit that defeats the original, amid Japan and China's assertiveness against Western colonialism.[76] Western views of Japan, Lucken concludes, index the shift from "old-style colonization," which, "underpinned by an evangelical mission," "granted imitation an important role," to "modern colonialism," which was based on asymmetrical relations between metropole and colony and disavowed colonial assimilation.[77]

Evincing a further stage of this trope for the geopolitical up-and-comer, Childan displaces his sense of Japanese superiority into the outside realm of appearance—more precisely, aesthetics and manners—to recover a sense of inner racial superiority based on a supposedly unique capacity for creation merely imitated by the other. Clearly, this is a phantasy in keeping, given the position that he occupies in his world, with not only what Childan must believe to be true but also what he thinks the world ought to be.[78] As a phantasy, the racial trope has a reality for Childan, but one that is not so much actual as compensatory, amounting to a reimagining of the actual to make room for its imaginer's desire.

Notably, this racial phantasy, with its ontological, but not actual, status, comes with an epistemology in which the subjected can look past the absurd surface—the "circus"—into reality to see how the rulers are not what they appear to be, are indeed not human.[79] Echoing an American iteration of the trope that represented the Japanese "as threatening gorillas or chimpanzees," this power of the powerless is rooted in a sense of the other's difference, which Childan shows to be basis of the desire to be like them, which in truth is the desire for what they have.[80] Ironically, this phantasized racial difference—the symptom of a desire not for a person, much less for the other, but for power, thus for oneself—is a projection as Childan deals in fake ("historic") artifacts. In fact, as his dealings with Frank show, Childan cannot tell the real from the fake. The source of Childan's phantastical reality, in other words, is himself—specifically, the unsavory parts that he ascribes to the other, which feel real because they are, in himself.

Through Childan, Dick reveals deception to be the content and the mechanism of phantasy. Feeling the world in which he is part of a subjected group ("whites") as unjust, Childan conceives of power as deception, as mere appearance—a show so real that one cannot but pretend to be like those in power.[81] This hollow content of power is racialized as Japanese; indeed, the fake,

or "ersatz," impression of civilization is identified as the essence of Japaneseness.[82] Clearly, this is Childan's means of repudiating those who are in power and of claiming power for his own race—in his mind, the real rather than deceptive subject of power. More precisely, this racial phantasy of the other as deceptive, thereby in power, is Childan's way of defying his world's power relations *and* of deceiving himself in that the fraud that he accuses the other of being is in fact what he is. At once a politics and a projection, or one through the other, the racial phantasy fittingly has as its content—i.e., deception, the supposed meaning of the powerful other race—the reflection of the act of phantasy making—i.e., Childan's self-deception. In this way, racialization, Dick implies, is none other than scapegoating, the imputing to the other of the unacceptable thing that one really, if unconsciously, desires, in fact is, with race as but a copy of the deception that created it.

This is consistent with the way that fears of the Yellow Peril in actual history betray the age-old Western will to colonize the East, and, in particular, the way that imitation is defined as Japanese to displace the fear that creation—not least the invention that is modernity—is not unique to the West and that the West also imitates. Noting that knowledge can also be "cynically used as a means of deception," Ackbar Abbas argues that deception conversely also yields knowledge—namely, of what is resisted, yet persists.[83] In the same way that deception for Abbas is a characteristic of emergent global cultures that do not yet fit into Western or national frames and thereby serves as a symptom that may lead to an understanding of the world's novel (as opposed to already known) conditions, deception for Dick is an index of what is repudiated by, because it does not fit into what is held about, the self.[84] This unravels the preoccupation in the novel with historicity—in which, e.g., Childan's artifacts gain value based on the trace that they contain of their origins—as an expression not of the inherent value of authenticity but, on the contrary, of the centrality and disavowal of deception in the novel's world.[85] As rendered palpable by the omniscient perspective that grants unmediated access to the characters' minds, it is a world built, after all, on phantasy—a mode of reality that, Dick suggests, gains ontological status via a compensatory and reflexive process that creates nothing but itself: deception, in this case in the form of race ("Japaneseness").[86]

Identified in the novel as the essence of Japanese power and unraveled as a compensatory projection of the American self, deception has a basis in actual history (beyond the global trope) to which Dick also alludes. Deception, after all, underpinned Japanese so-called *internment* in the United States in World War II. As Mae M. Ngai puts it, "Presuming all Japanese to be racially inclined to disloyalty, the United States removed 120,000 Japanese Americans . . . from their homes on the Pacific Coast and interned them in concentration

camps in the interior."[87] In contrast to the investigation of Germans and Italians on an individual basis, the Japanese were treated as a race whose inscrutable and definitive otherness rendered them suspect.[88] In this context, *The Man in the High Castle* becomes apparent as a visualization of the world that America feared might come about in the war, a world that it preempted by displacing its residents, mostly citizens. This alternate history is a past world, as Dick claims, in the sense that the war has passed by the time of the novel's writing but not in the sense that it has been superseded by the actual. On the contrary, World War II seemingly made imminent a reality so feared that it could only be posited as an alternate. Revealing the truth in Dick's (mis)taking of the alternate as actual, this makes it apparent that *The Man in the High Castle* is less an alternate than an actual, if imaginary, history (mis)taken as alternate.

White American identity, Toni Morrison argues, has as its condition the negation of "the denotative and connotative blackness that African peoples have come to signify" in the West.[89] America does the same with Asians, except in their case this disavowal of the other to constitute the self is rooted in anxiety over modernity. Focusing on nineteenth-century American literary naturalism, Colleen Lye shows that the damages wrought by monopoly finance capital—summed up as "social abstraction"—were embodied by an "Asiatic racial form."[90] This representation of the unwitting, indeed uncontrollable, aspects of modernity's economic foundation by Asians persists. As the model minority, Asians, as Iyko Day explains, are perceived as more economic than human, as "not merely a form of human capital but a [bad] representation of capital itself."[91] This is a process of personification and racialization as Asians come to signify the abstract, thus alienating, workings of capital, and the abstraction enacted by capital comes to determine Asian identity.[92]

Freedman dissects Dick's description as a paranoid writer in terms of his depiction of "alienating forces beyond [human] control" in the form of commodities, things whose value rests on their capacity to be exchanged, which in Dick's fiction index the workings of a system that is otherwise fetishized.[93] *The Man in the High Castle* is paranoid in this sense, except that it renders capitalism not through its emblematic objects but through its ostensibly paradigmatic subjects. The process and content that sustains phantasy, deception in *The Man in the High Castle*, in other words, takes a racial—i.e., subjective instead of objective—form, and as such brings with it a history of racialization that culminated in World War II and which after the war continues but can only be made explicit in alternate form.

In literalizing his world's paranoid vision of capitalism run amok because run by Asians, Dick embeds in *The Man in the High Castle* the economic basis and cultural endpoint of the sense of Japanese deception through which

internment was explained, thereby the prehistory and feared outcome of World War II. Projected onto power to contest it, deception turns out to be not only an externalization of what is disavowed about the self but also a masking of the other—specifically, of the ways that it is the opposite of what the self is disavowing. Identified as the "essence" of the other, race in this way obscures the other as but a bad version of the self—a self-deception that, Dick shows, cannot but unravel, thus requiring that the deception of race be kept up. In a later encounter, Paul returns the jewelry with which Childan was trying to seduce Betty because it contains not "historicity" but rather the "new."[94] After Paul advises him to produce the jewels for the masses (but not for the Japanese)—a scheme that would make him rich and throws into relief how he would never measure up to the Japanese—Childan is "humiliated."[95] Realizing that Paul attributes to him "moral responsibility" for the actual (versus reified) constituents of American culture, Childan reckons that his "race" has been dismissed by Paul with his assent.[96] "This," he thinks, "was how the Japanese ruled, not crudely but with subtlety, ingenuity, timeless cunning."[97]

Yet again, the Japanese are depicted by Childan as deceptive, and in the specific way of dominating—and, worse, insulting—him without him knowing it. This projection is really an attempt to cover up the fact that Paul can do what Childan cannot: see the jewelry for what it is—not a historic artifact but a commodity, lacking, despite the deceptive impression, distinctive origins but ripe with exchange value.[98] The other's ability to see through deception and know what a commodity is and how capital works gives the other power, which is why Childan attributes deception—his own power, the power of the subject who lacks power—to the other.

In the process, Dick evokes the domestic history of Japanese racialization. In the period of Asian exclusion from land ownership in California that preceded internment, Lye explains that the stereotype of Asians as "cheap labor" expanded, especially in the case of the Japanese, into the specter of "cheap farmers"—i.e., mechanistic owners of land draining it of all value.[99] Against the notion that this economic/Yellow power/Peril was the real reason for internment, Lye clarifies that "forced removal" was made possible by the "smallness" of Japanese farms.[100] Internment, she argues, enacted less economic scapegoating than "the Orientalization of the rural subject"—i.e., the assimilation, even indigenization, of the Japanese as Americans.[101] In the character of Paul, Dick embodies the feared outcome of this history. The Second World War has, in the paranoid American imagination, enabled the Japanese to master economics to the extent that they now exist beyond it, as the nation's rightful, because powerful, inhabitants. This racial fear, a phantasy rooted in deception, that is embodied by Childan in the alternate history lingers in actual postwar history—notably, in Dick's reflection of the American imagination.

WORLD: THE ACTUALIZATION OF PHANTASTICAL REALITY

As the lived reality of the characters, *The Man in the High Castle*'s alternate world is an index of a racialized global and domestic history that Dick phantastically posits as the negative condition of his desired/ideal world. Set in the actual postwar world, *No-No Boy* seemingly stands in contrast, except some characters in the novel live in an alternate world. Unlike Dick, Okada did not theorize the relation between this alternate world (within the otherwise realist novel) and actual reality. In setting this alternate history apart as, in effect, a text within the text, however, Okada metafictionally distinguishes its mode of reality from the supposedly actual mode of the novel itself. In fact, Okada does not only, like Dick, situate the alternate in the reflexive mode but also, in imputing it only to alienated, indeed pathologized, characters, consciously points to its phantastical nature. Since this alternate history is, moreover, portrayed as the opposite of the reality with which the protagonist has to come to terms, like Dick's alternate world it is posited as the negative condition of Okada's desired/ideal world.

This alternate history is attributed in particular to Ichiro's mother, a character whose stubborn location at the edges of US society Okada conveys via science fiction. In the novel, mother and son reunite once Ichiro has come home from prison upon her own return from the bakery. "A small, flat-chested, shapeless woman" with "her hair pulled back into a tight bun" and "the awkward, skinny body of a thirteen-year-old," the mother greets Ichiro by declaring, "I am proud to call you my son."[102] Expecting Ichiro to go back to school so that his "opportunities in Japan will be unlimited," she responds to his pronouncement that he is "not going to Japan," "the war is over. Japan lost," with, "You believe that?"[103] She proceeds to show Ichiro a letter from Brazil, the contents of which she relays by memory. She explains that Allied victory in the war is a lie propagated by the mass media and by their "traitorous countrymen who have turned their backs on the country of their birth."[104] She adds that "what we have done, we have done only as Japanese, but the government is grateful," and that they should "make ready for the journey, for the ships are coming."[105]

This view is shared by the Ashidas, a family "from the same village in Japan" to whose house Ichiro is then taken for a "customary" visit.[106] At his mother's prompting, Mrs. Ashida tells Ichiro about the son of the Watanabes who had taken photos of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a US serviceman, explaining that "he could not have been in Japan to take pictures because, if he were in Japan, he would not have been permitted to remain alive," and "that the army only told him he was in Japan when he was someplace else."[107] Noting that "if his mother

had not made him leave the room, he might even have struck me," Mrs. Ashida concludes, "It is not enough that they must willingly take up arms against their uncles and cousins and even brothers and sisters, but they no longer have respect for the old ones."[108] This contrasts with the visit to the Kumasakas, another family from the same village. Told by Mr. Kumasaka that "we finally decided that America is not so bad" in response to his praise for their home, Ichiro learns, amid Mrs. Kumasaka's weeping, that their son died in the war.[109] He then realizes his mother's intent for the visit: "to say to [Mrs. Kumasaka] you are with shame and grief because you were not Japanese and thereby killed your son but mine is big and strong and full of life because I . . . would not let my son destroy himself uselessly and treacherously."[110]

The critical scholarship reads Ichiro's mother as the embodiment of the failure of American assimilation, implying that her alternate world is the negative product of America. Seeing through Ichiro's eyes, Dorothy Ritsuo McDonald, for instance, views the mother as an alien subject unable and unwilling to assimilate.[111] As opposed to Emi, who, in ascribing "equal blame" to the citizen and to the state, functions as a "model of reconciliation," the mother, Sokolowski likewise contends, "represents a completely ruptured relationship between the individual and the state."[112] Holding onto "her Japaneseness because . . . the United States has rejected her," the mother, Im argues, is a double that Ichiro must disavow to become American.[113] Given her failure to abide by the state's Americanizing mandate, the mother, Bryn Gribben suggests, is the Other from which the child must separate and onto which the lacking self assigned by the state to its racialized subjects is displaced.[114] While rightly tracing the mother's symptomatic existence in the novel to racialization as the disavowed, indeed pathologized, obverse of assimilation, these critics assume that the state that matters to the mother is the United States. Even when she is read, for example by Fu-jen Chen, as embodying "Japanese fanatic nationalism," she signifies in the end "a threat to the [American] national body".[115]

While the United States does provide the immediate context for the mother's existence and mentality, it is not her instinctive reference point, much less the collective with which she affiliates. A case in point is the letter that she has committed to memory: the nouns in which she is invested—the country, the government, the ships—all have Japanese, not US, referents. Park comes closer to the point in depicting the mother not only as loyal to but also as an allegory for Japan—which, given her US location and Japan's loss in the war, explains her eventual madness and then death.[116] While this reading attuned to geopolitics calls attention to Japan both within and without America, Japan requires a further look.[117] Given Japan's personification by the mother and the extremism of her mentality, she all too easily serves as a racialized embodiment

of deception. In fact, through an American lens she reads as an agent of Yellow Peril—a malevolent other in the nation—except her allegiance to Japan proves to be not an undercover threat to America but a self-deception that endangers at most her family and ultimately herself.

In portraying the Asian subject in its segregated nationalism as a risk first of all to itself, Okada goes beyond Dick's representation of the Yellow Peril as foreign conqueror (including from within) to depict it as a degeneracy at the margins that may infect the body politic.[118] Either way, whether as intentional thus transgressive power or as isolationist but infectious weakness, the Yellow Peril consists in otherness defined by deception (of others or of the self). *The Man in the High Castle*, as I illustrate above, unravels such racial(ized self-)deception as a means for the West to rationalize the undermining of a rival power. In containing the Yellow Peril within an alternate history that applies only to subjects unreachable by US assimilation, *No-No Boy* goes beyond *The Man in the High Castle* to America's outside to follow the logic of the otherness racialized as Yellow Peril to its conclusion.

To begin with, alternate history in *No-No Boy* is more directly an index of Japanese fascism than of US minoritization. Alan Tansman explains that *fascism* and related terms have been around in Japan since at least 1931 and that Japan was part of the "exchange of ideas—modernist and fascist"—that gave rise in the interwar world to German Nazism and Italian Fascism.[119] Fascism's "inflection in Japan," he writes, was of a kind with other fascisms in the world."[120] As in Europe, fascism in Japan was "a reaction to the threats of social and political divisions created in the crisis of capitalism in the years following the First World War" that fell back on "a myth of a state and a nation unified by the natural bonds of its people."[121] A Romantic backlash against the Enlightenment's making of the modern world, fascism countered alienation, fragmentation, and abstraction by both simulating "an experience of immediacy and unity" and invoking a cohesive and "timeless culture" through "a language of faith that appealed, through images and myths, to feelings rather than ideas."[122] Binding the people to the nation "in the name of a myth of nature"—whether it be a natural community or an authentic identity—fascism sacrificed the individual of liberal modernity to "absolute order" or to a "liberating moment of violence" in the context of a sense of "eternal crisis."[123]

Ichiro's mother has fallen prey to the fascism that took hold in her mother nation before the war. As such, she determines truth not objectively but collectively, through recourse to a community—the nation of origin—that she can relate with better the smaller it is. Indeed, fascism explains the way that the nation (or its "authentic" part) is rendered concrete for her by the village as well as by her reversal of truth and lie, which, from her perspective, would

seem reversed, indeed. The disregard for life, if not sadistic aggression, for the sake of ideological fidelity is but a consequence of the fashioning of ideas and language—indeed, as Tansman notes, of "the imagination itself"—for the purposes of the state, to which no individual can amount.[124] Temporality, if not history and reality, is abolished, change and actuality supplanted by a timeless notion of Japan—with its sacred values, such as the "respect for the old ones"—that one invokes as if immediately accessible, with its singular meaning: greatness, hence victory.[125] Put in this context of fascism, as Harry Harootunian asserts, as an attempt to resolve capitalist crisis "on a global scale," the mother's self-deceptions become apparent as rooted not only in minoritization—an attribution that may just lead to further racialization (say, the racialization of deception as Japanese)—but also in a reaction to modernity to which all nations, and not only the Japanese or the minor, may resort.[126]

If alternate history in *No-No Boy* is an index of fascism and fascism is a tendency not only of Japanese but of all modernity, then even as Okada embodies the deception that enables the phantasy of fascism in Ichiro's mother, this racialized embodiment makes explicit what is true of modernity at large. Okada racializes deception, in other words, not, as Childan does, to project self-deception onto the other but to show that modern subjects in general are implicated in deception. A mechanism of disavowal in Dick, racial deception in Okada is a means of representation in which the racialized serves as a representative rather than a scapegoat of modernity. In the process, the Yellow Peril is unraveled as the peril of modernity—i.e., a racialization, or attribution to the other, of modernity's perverse tendency to have capitalist development lead to nationalist degeneracy.

In the same way that fascism is not only a reaction to but also an integral part of modernity, the mother in *No-No Boy* betrays not just a worldview but indeed a world. Harootunian explains that rapid modernization took place in Japan in the interwar period, the same time that it saw the rise of fascism, as a byproduct of World War I.[127] In response to this, modernism both attacked tradition in accord with the "ceaseless change" wrought by modernity and "appealed to older historical representations of the authentic cultural object as a way to replace abstraction and fragmentation with concreteness and wholeness."[128] Fascism, in Harootunian's reading, pushes to the extreme the latter part of this tendency in fetishizing tradition/culture as nature—a further step, he argues, in the inversion of the commodity, thus of capitalist modernity of which it is the paradigmatic object.[129] Against capitalism's abstraction from history to found relations on exchange, fascism falls back on history "as timeless and frozen" and embodies it in the allegedly authentic subject who is supposed to counteract the commodity.[130]

Ichiro's mother, it can be inferred, is a victim of capitalist unevenness in modernizing Japan, thus led to migrate halfway across the globe and to a world that impossibly reverses capitalist transformation (i.e., the world of fascism). She likely absorbed fascism in the diaspora, which would be consistent with her letter coming from Brazil, home to the largest Japanese population outside Japan. "Fascism in Japan, and elsewhere," Harootunian continues, took shape as "gemeinschaft capitalism," which promised capitalism without alienation—a necessary effect of capitalism embodied in America, as I discuss above, by Asians.[131] Of a piece with this ideal is the mother's desire to return to Japan, where she would no longer be abstract/Asian (a false notion given that this state induced by capitalism is why she left) and could instead be concrete/Japanese (an all-too-fascist comfort). If in *The Man in the High Castle* the rival/husband has mastered the commodity to become the rightful, if deceptive, resident of the nation, in *No-No Boy* the first-generation mother is the subject the resists abstraction through something more (deceptively) real. Either way, the perversions of modernity are contained through race—i.e., Japaneseness—a deception by means of which modernity keeps up its phantasy of development amid the reality of its degeneracy.

After all, phantasy, as Dick's alternate history shows, is also a mode of reality. Okada makes this palpable through the mother—namely, in the way that her alternate world is not only a mentality but more fundamentally a reality. Rather than reflecting reality, her thoughts enact reality—e.g., in getting Ichiro to say *no, no*, with their very real consequences. Indeed, her mental life is symptomatic of her desired mode of being—i.e., of a world, if as groundless as the commodity that it aims to vanquish. This, then, Okada implies, is why modernity insists on its phantasy, no matter if built on deception: because phantasy is also a reality that, even if not actual, brings with it a world—if a world that is not actual (development), but also a world that is (modernity).

The thesis, also found in *The Man in the High Castle*, that alternate worlds are ontological, referring to what is defined and lived as real, is taken to its conclusion in *No-No Boy* as a phantasy no less real for its deception. Neither referential nor performative, the mother's thoughts are too consistent to be anything but attempts to hold together a preexisting reality, or a reality assumed or desired to (pre)exist, that has to be more dogmatically defended the more it becomes untenable, and which can only be so at the site of fascist origin (i.e., in the Japan of her mind). This alternate world manifests not only in the mother's mentality but also, from the first, in how she appears. In this regard, her contrast with Emi, who looks like a white woman, is often read in relation to their functions in the plot as betraying Okada's subscription to white gender norms.[132] This reading does not, however, explain how the mother's desire not to be abstract/Asian

fits with her stereotypically Asian description as almost a boy. Reading the novel in a transnational context replaces this irony (itself ripe with critical potential) with stark consistency once the mother's depiction becomes seen as an allusion less to the arrested development attributed to Asians in America than to the nation's degeneration into a fascist state.

The nostalgic fixation on an idealized past is literalized by Okada, as it were, in the mother's wish not to grow up, a wish that she fulfills in part with her appearance. Her madness, otherwise treated as a given, and death also make sense in this light. Over time, the mother finds it harder and harder to maintain her reality, until eventually, "when she was not lying or sitting almost as if dead in her open-eyed immobility, she was doing crazy things."[133] Finally, Ichiro finds that she has killed herself in the bathroom, her hair "damming up the outlet [of the tub] and causing the flooding, just as her mind, long shut off from reality, had sought and found its erratic release."[134] It is easy to read this fate as the succumbing of desire to reality; a closer look, however, reveals the destiny of phantasy. The "crazy thing" that the mother had been doing is the obsessive reordering of the cans in their store "over and over again"—an instance of repetition compulsion.[135]

Initially distinguishing it from the pleasure and reality principles, Freud posits repetition as a herald of the death instinct, in which pleasure and reality (typically treated as expressions of the life instinct) paradoxically end. Motivated by the decrease of excitation, pleasure ultimately leads to death, the restoration of an earlier state presumably without tension.[136] Consistent with the flooding in the bathroom that signifies rupture from reality, the mother's death, according to this theory, represents not the triumph of reality but the persistence of phantasy, which she pursues through regression all the way (back) to death—a cautionary tale of fascism as phantasy gone fatally awry. Taking account of the external world, or of reality, the ego, Freud continues, is also an object of desire, thus, to the extent that desire is for pleasure, led to death.[137] In turning her ego into her desired world's embodiment, the mother, upon realizing that this phantastical reality is not actual reality, has to destroy that ego in line with phantasy's destruction. In this way, her world becomes unraveled as an attempt to actualize phantasy, at the cost of death.

ALTERNATE: THE DECEPTION OF MODERNITY

Grounded in a break from tradition and the centering of the self, modernity is in profound ways a regime of phantasy. Departing from, and in fact running

counter to, what is firmly established, modernity instead anchors the world theoretically speaking to the abstract individual, in practice to the subject of representation, thus rendering the world the site not only onto which the subject's desires are projected but also in which they are expected to be realized. The modern world, as it were, is the world of the subject's desire, thus a world of realities that inevitably includes phantasy, as much a world as the making of one. In this regard, alternate history is a paradigmatically modern genre, one that symptomatizes or exaggerates modernity's workings.

In *The Man in the High Castle*, Dick literalizes the racialization of deception as Asian in the form of an alternate Japanese reality, reiterating a trope rooted in modern abstraction to paradoxically perform a quintessentially modern act—namely, to attempt to realize the phantasy of a better world. In contrast, in *No-No Boy*, Okada illustrates through the mother's alternate Japanese reality the ways that modern abstraction is countered by pushing modern phantasizing to the extreme—namely, through regression to some supposedly concrete origin. In both cases, the undesirable aspects of modernity are represented in a racial form, a deception in which, as Dick shows, the self projects what threatens the realization of its phantasy onto another race, which, as Okada shows, ironically becomes a representative of the modern self's phantastical tendencies. In the process, the alternate is shown to be a reflection of the actual in a way that aims to turn a phantasy into an actual reality.[138] In phantasizing in these differently oriented but continuous ways, Dick and Okada's alternate histories throw deception—the content and mechanism of phantasy—into relief not as the opposite but as a condition of reality, as a fiction necessary to engender an alternate reality through the scapegoating of difference—in this case, race—that itself turns out to be a (self-)deception.

Hegemonic narratives situate World War II as the culmination of modernity, its end as inaugurating postmodernity in which the United States becomes *the* world power. Against the reinforcement of US victory in the war and hegemony after it, Dick and Okada's alternate histories uncover not only this history's underside—i.e., the racialization of abstraction and of fascism—but the deception of modernity—namely, its phantasy of an alternate world made possible by the racial containment of its perverse realities. While the official history turns out to be a continuation of war after the war, the alternate histories unravel race as a weapon in a longer war in which modernity fulfills the phantasy of the Western self. In this war in which the self deceptively makes itself through the other, modernity, as illustrated by the racial embodiment of the modern genre of phantasy known as alternate history, phantastically slouches toward the ultimate reality: death.

NOTES

Special thanks to the reviewers and editors.

1. Karen Hellekson, *The Alternate History* (Kent State University Press, 2001), 2, 1.
2. Robert H. Canary, "Science Fiction as Fictive History," in *Many Futures, Many Worlds: Theme and Form in Science Fiction*, ed. Thomas D. Clareson (Kent State University Press 1977), 166. Hellekson, *The Alternate History*, 3. Darko Suvin, *Positions and Presuppositions in Science Fiction* (Kent State University Press, 1988), 7–8, 34.
3. Carl Howard Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction* (Wesleyan University Press, 2000), xvi.
4. Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction*, 165.
5. Kathleen Singles, *Alternate History: Playing with Contingency and Necessity* (De Gruyter, 2013), 148, 149, 157–60.
6. Ichiro made these refusals by answering "no" twice—hence the term "no-no boy"—to the Leave Clearance Application Form, also known as the loyalty questionnaire, administered by the War Relocation Authority in the internment camps in 1943. Notably, *No-No Boy* is *not* autobiographical. Wenxin Li points out that "Okada himself was a yes-yes boy who had actually served in a US Air Force reconnaissance regiment with operations close to Japan during the war." Wenxin Li, "An Untenable Dichotomy: The Idea of Home in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Asiatic* 9, no. 1 (2015): 84. Citing Frank Chin, "Afterword," in *No-No Boy* (University of Washington Press, 1998), Gary Storhoff explains that "*No-No Boy* was based on an actual 'no-no boy' named Hajiime Jim Akutsu, whom Okada interviewed and came to know well." Gary Storhoff, "'A Prisoner of Forever': Cognitive Distortions and Depression in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 6, no. 1 (2004): 1.
7. Stan Yogi, "Japanese American Literature," in *An Interethnic Companion to Asian American Literature*, ed. King-Kok Cheung (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 126.
8. Yogi, "Japanese American Literature," 133–34.
9. Christopher Douglas, *A Genealogy of Literary Multiculturalism* (Cornell University Press, 2009), 28; Suzanne Arakawa, "Suffering Male Bodies: Representations of Dissent and Displacement in the Internment-Themed Narratives of John Okada and Toshio Mori," in *Recovered Legacies: Authority and Identity in Early Asian American Literature*, ed. Keith Lawrence and Floyd Cheung (Temple University Press, 2005); Daniel Y. Kim, "Once More, with Feeling: Cold War Masculinity and the Sentiment of Patriotism in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Criticism* 47, no. 1 (2005). Dorothy Ritsuo McDonald relatedly argues that, in desiring to disappear his difference, Ichiro ultimately finds his place in an "imperfect world." Dorothy Ritsuo McDonald, "After Imprisonment: Ichiro's Search for Redemption in *No-No Boy*," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 6, no. 3 (1979): 26. Such redemption by assimilation, Fu-jen Chen argues, enacts masculine recovery and national integration through dissociation from disability and assumption of responsibility. Fu-jen Chen, "The National Body: Gender, Race, and Disability in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *ARIEL: A Review of International*

English Literature 50, no. 4 (2019): 32. Observing that the novel is structured by the "contrast of the disabled and the abled," Chen elaborates that redemption in it is premised on the ableist myth of wholeness located "in a reconstructed, idealized past or an anticipated, promising future." Chen, "The National Body," 28, 29.

10. Jane Im, "Racial Melancholia, the Divided Self, and the Affect Alien in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Studies in American Fiction* 48, no. 2 (2021): 232.

11. Drawing on David L. Eng, and Shinhee Han, *Racial Melancholia, Racial Dissociation: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans* (Duke University Press, 2019); Anne Anlin Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race* (Oxford University Press, 2001); and Erin Suzuki, "Consuming Desires: Melancholia and Consumption in *Blu's Hanging*," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 31, no. 1 (2006); Im describes racial melancholia as resulting from the unattainability of whiteness, which lends racialized minorities a "ghostly presence" in the nation and also, possibly, agency. Im, "Racial Melancholia, the Divided Self, and the Affect Alien in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," 221. Drawing on Gayle K. Fujita Sato, "Momotaro's Exile: John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Reading the Literatures of Asian America*, ed. Shirley Geok-lin Lim and Amy Ling (Temple University Press, 1992), which argues that Ichiro's rejection of Japaneseness leads to ethnic self-destruction, Im adds that Ichiro also rejects whiteness. Im, "Racial Melancholia, the Divided Self, and the Affect Alien in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," 222. This is in contrast to Jinqi Ling, who argues that Ichiro adopts Emi's assimilationist viewpoint. Jinqi Ling, "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's No-No Boy," in *American Literature* 67, no. 2 (1995): 48. Such double negation is premised, as Yogi notes, on the positing of Japanese and American as opposites, a binary that fails to account for the Japanese American. Stan Yogi, "'You Had to Be One or the Other': Oppositions and Reconciliation in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 21, no. 2 (1996). Ultimately, instead of the affirmative or the negative (both of which assume the retrieval of American identity), Ichiro, Im concludes, is led to "silent resistance." Im, "Racial Melancholia, the Divided Self, and the Affect Alien in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," 233–37. Reframing the argument somewhat, Li suggests that Ichiro's quest is not for identity but rather for a "stable home," which nonetheless serves as a marker of his negotiation of assimilation and foreignness. Li, "An Untenable Dichotomy," 82, 83.

12. Josephine Nock-Hee Park, "Nobody Knows: *Invisible Man* and John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Analyzing World Fiction: New Horizons in Narrative Theory*, ed. Frederick Luis Aldama (University of Texas Press, 2011), 232, 238.

13. Jeanne Sokolowski, "Internment and Post-War Japanese American Literature: Toward a Theory of Divine Citizenship," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 34, no. 1 (2009): 70, 90.

14. Storhoff, "'A Prisoner of Forever,'" 2. Yet other sources read *no-no* as defining not only Ichiro's response but also the novel's aesthetics. See Elda Tsou, "A Little Bit of Form Goes a Long Way: *No-No Boy* and the Ruse of Empire," in *Asian American Literature in Transition, 1930–1965*, ed. Victor Bascara and Josephine Nock-Hee Park (Cambridge University Press, 2021); and Joseph Entin, "'A Terribly Incomplete Thing': *No-No Boy* and the Ugly Feelings of Noir," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 35, no. 3 (2010).

15. Park, "Nobody Knows: *Invisible Man* and John Okada's *No-No Boy*" goes beyond the US national frame, but its emphasis is still on the American scene.

16. Thomas Hofweber, "Logic and Ontology," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman (2023), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2023/entries/logic-ontology/. In philosophy, Hofweber notes that ontology raises questions of "how to settle questions about what there is," indeed of "what an ontological question really is." In contrast, literature displaces these questions given its imaginative character. In defining reality (what there is in the story) within an imaginative frame (the creative writing of the author), literature avoids getting caught up in the metaphysical concerns of ontology to instead examine how reality is designated and what such designation implies.

17. I mean *radical* more in a philosophical than a political sense to refer to the questioning of foundations, the return to roots. See Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground," in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge University Press, 1998); Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge University Press, 1998); Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, ed. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008); Charles B. Guignon, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, (Cambridge University Press, 2006); and *Wikipedia,* "Fundamental Ontology," accessed July 16, 2025, last modified January 11, 2026, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamental_ontology. My understanding of Heidegger is mediated by Greg Schufreider's course on existentialism. Heideggerians would probably not agree, but *mode* is of course just a more generic *type*—which is to say that *ontological* is just like *ontic*, but on a different level.

18. The centering of the subject in Western thought was, of course, inaugurated by Descartes and reached its zenith in Kant's idealist synthesis of empiricist and rationalist philosophies. In contrast, Heidegger's move of going "back to the things themselves"—the signature move of phenomenology—derives from Husserl, who, Heidegger argues, himself ended up positing the modern/idealist fallacy of the transcendental ego. See Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Indiana University Press, 2009).

19. Heidegger's focus on the nature of a thing's existence rather than of the thing differentiates his notion of *being* from the traditional and more static notion of *essence*. Needless to say, Heidegger's "ontology" has exerted much influence and generated much debate, of which this reading represents but one part.

20. In fact, that man has these two attributes is what enables Heidegger, a (hu)man (being), to posit his ontology in the first place.

21. The formulation in Karl, Marx, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" (1848) *Marxists.Org*, accessed August 7, 2024, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm that "all that is solid melts into air" has been taken as emblematic of the first part of this definition of modernity while the second part may be interpreted as a modern version of Protagoras's dictum that "man is the measure of all things." Emphasizing that the term denotes "a change" not only in "attitude" but also "the very composition of society," Ian Buchanan notes that modernity "can refer to any period of radical change," but that it has traditionally been used to refer to either "the end of the 'dark ages' and the start of the industrial

revolution," and usually to "the Victorian era, particularly the latter half, i.e. from the 1870s onwards." Ian Buchanan, "Modernity," in *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2018), https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198794790.001.0001/acref-9780198794790-e-456. More concretely, as laid out in "Modernity," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4837544359, the new values with which modernity is associated contra tradition are scientific rationalism and liberalism, with the former defined by the scientific/critical method and the latter by the conjunction of a capitalist economy with representative democracy.

22. Frank B. Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy: Violence, Freedom Struggles, and the Death of Black Desire," in *Antiblackness*, ed. Moon-Kie Jung and João H. Costa Vargas (Duke University Press, 2021), 39.

23. Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy," 39, 41. I follow Wilderson's capitalization of *Black* and other terms (e.g. *Human* and *White*) when referring to his theory, but otherwise capitalize only proper names, following grammar and mechanics rather than philosophical or political emphases. Some Heideggerians, like Leung in this same paragraph, also capitalize *Being* but not *beings*—which I follow when discussing him but do not follow in my own discussion; Fred Moten, another source I discuss in this paragraph, does not capitalize *black*—a choice that I follow when discussing his argument. I do the same for *antiblackness*, which Leung hyphenates and which Jung and Vargas below do not. Noting that "violence is necessary to initiate and sustain the ontological capacity of constructed categories," Wilderson depicts the difference between the Black and the Human as an ontological difference in a way that the difference between other categories is not (or is, in Heideggerian terms, merely ontic), but he treats ontic difference as also ontological as when, with regard to feminism, he asks, "What is the ontological status of the word 'woman' and the word 'man' and how does that ontological status (or lack thereof in the case of 'woman') structure [society]?" Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy," 39. In fact, Wilderson's Black-Human binary is an ontic difference in Heidegger's sense, consisting in a difference in beings that exist (not all of which are Human) rather than in modes of being: the Black/Slave is not a type of human but a type different from Human. He does read it as though it were ontological, having to do with mode of being rather than the fact of existence. (Surely he is not saying that the Black/Slave is actually not human and does not literally exist? Instead, what he seems to mean is that the Black/Slave is relegated to a mode in which their humanity and being are negated.) In this way, Wilderson's ontology is less phenomenological than performative, focused on how discourse (i.e., the construction of categories) has ontological implications (i.e., enacts reality)—a common tendency in postcolonial and queer theories. Wilderson elaborates his Black-Human binary—the signature move of Afropessimism—by arguing that while "degraded forms of Humans are positioned and oppressed by a grammar of suffering known as exploitation and alienation," "Blacks are objects and implements to be possessed (accumulated) and exchanged (made fungible) in the material and psychic life of Human subjects." Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy," 41. Note the slippage between what has been done to and said of slaves (a *history* or a *discourse* that was, moreover, *not* their choice) and what they are (an ontology—i.e., a claim about their *being* and their *existence*, about what they in fact

are)—which Moten counters by positing blackness as "prior to ontology." Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (2013): 739. Wilderson's point of comparison is obviously Marxism. What about other critical paradigms—e.g., feminism, postcolonialism, and queer theory, which he also mentions, or psychoanalysis or, for that matter, other race theories? Might these paradigms' understanding of the antagonism that structures society really be reduced to Marxist terms? Wilderson's summation—"The socially dead or fungible [these two attributes are, of course, not the same] Slave is a necessary foil for the construction of the socially alive Human"—is more on point, but it assumes that only the Slave has occupied such a position. Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy," (2021, 41). See Claire Jean Kim, *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) for a less binaristic analysis of race and Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Harvard University Press, 2018) for a more comparative study of slavery as social death.

24. King-Ho Leung, "Nothingness Without Reserve: Fred Moten Contra Heidegger, Sartre, and Schelling," *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 15, no. 1–2 (2023), 45. Leung cites Frank B. Wilderson, *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Duke University Press, 2010) to make the claim of the human as anti-black, which he notes has its origins in the assertion in Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (Grove Press, 2008) that "the black is not a man" and "ontology does not permit us to understand the being of the black man" (cited in Leung, "Nothingness Without Reserve," 45).

25. Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," 739; Leung, "Nothingness Without Reserve," 47.

26. Leung, "Nothingness Without Reserve," 52; Fred Moten, *Stolen Life* (Duke University Press, 2018), 14. While Leung specifies anti-black ontology as modern ontology, Moten simply refers to ontology. In describing blackness as anti-foundation, Leung relates Moten to F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations Into the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt (State University of New York Press, 2006). Moten's depiction of the black underground as possibly undermining the humanist modernity that consigns it there distances him from Afropessimism toward what he reticently calls "*black optimism*." Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," 738, italics in the original.

27. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 90. Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2013) also points toward the nothing as foundational. Needless to say, the association of blackness with nothingness is hateful discourse—one that Afropessimism risks reiterating, not exactly as parody (as in queer theory or in postmodernism) but seemingly without irony. The disavowed condition and the excluded outside are, of course, not exactly the same. Against Afropessimism's "positioning [of] Blackness outside of humanist material relations and as a condition of ontological death," Iyko Day draws on a Marxist framework to show that "Black women's labor and [in particular their] reproductive labor was precisely a 'constituent element' of slavery and its afterlife." Iyko Day, "Afro-Feminism before Afropessimism: Meditations

on Gender and Ontology," in *Antiblackness*, ed. Moon-Kie Jung and João H. Costa Vargas (Duke University Press, 2021) 62, 78. Far from being outside, Blackness (as embodied by Black women), in other words, is a condition that modernity disavows—is indeed, Day argues, the one such condition (among others—e.g., wage labor) that is most disavowed—because of its value for modernity. Day, "Afro-Feminism before Afropessimism," 73. Modernity excludes the Black/Slave precisely because the latter is a part, is indeed constitutive, of it. Afropessimism's exaggeration of disavowal/exclusion as ontology to the point that Blackness is posited as not only *disavowed as* but as *actually* the opposite of being or the outside of modernity risks, Day implies, reiterating capitalism's relegation to a "structural position outside of normative labor and kinship relations" of the Black/woman on which it relies. Day, "Afro-Feminism before Afropessimism," 67.

28. An example of this tendency is João H. Costa Vargas and Moon-Kie Jung's distinction of antiblackness from racism (including antiblack racism) as not about "social and institutional practices" but about "the Social and the Human underlying these practices and their constitutive rejection of Blackness." João H. Costa Vargas and Moon-Kie Jung, "Introduction: Antiblackness of the Social and the Human," in *Antiblackness*, ed. Moon-Kie Jung and João H. Costa Vargas (Duke University Press 2021), 8. By *the Social* and *the Human*, I assume that they mean modern social relations and definition of the human since their emphasis on slavery as the "*antisocial* condition" of the Social that makes "Black people's dehumanization" "the source" of "the globally shared notion of the Human" is based on their definition of modern slavery as the enslavement in particular of Black people at a time when slavery was being abolished for everyone else. Vargas and Jung, "Introduction," 3, 9, 4, italics in the original. Either way, (anti)blackness becomes an ontological condition rather than a historical reality. "The Human, the modern human," they write, "defines itself in opposition to the Black (alleged) nonbeing," "a difference in kind that is continually misrecognized as a difference in degree." Vargas and Jung, "Introduction," 5, 8. In positing Blackness as the radical other/outside of modernity, Vargas and Jung suggest that what is called for is the replacement of modernity with "a radically different world altogether." Vargas and Jung, "Introduction," 7. In contrast, the radicalization of Black difference leads, Wilderson claims, to no prescription, "for who can say what liberation looks like on the other side of Humanity?" Wilderson, "Afropessimism and the Ruse of Analogy, 42. As Vargas and Jung show, however, it is entirely possible to prescribe movement toward an outcome even if the outcome is unknown.

29. This is another way of saying that the ontologization of blackness is as grand as the narrative to which it is supposed to be a response—namely, modernity. Indeed, it is the other side—which is to say a part, not outside—of modernity's grand narrative. That is, in ontologizing modernity's definition of blackness, Afropessimism accepts the terms of its object of critique to the point of mimicking it (as opposed to mimicking it in order to critique it).

30. Rather than treating ontology as a structural condition underlying history, thus as a level prior to or more fundamental than history, this would read ontology as a reflection of history, thus as constructed at the same time and on the same level as history.

31. In alternate history criticism, the difference between the alternate and the actual is often referred to as the difference between two timelines. The reality itself (and not only its nature) of alternate history may, of course, also be questioned, such as when we decide that such history is not real, thereby not worth reading. Serious engagement with alternate history, however, entails that we question the nature, rather than the reality, of alternate reality. In my designations of *actual* versus *alternate*, I am, of course, assuming that the reality that we are living is the actual.

32. Ian Buchanan, "Fantasy," in *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2018), https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198794790.001.0001/acref-9780198794790-e-242. The term that Buchanan defines is spelled as *fantasy*. I retain the spelling *phantasy* to signal that I specifically mean fantasy *that has psychic or unconscious reality*.

33. This second question raised by alternate history in fact precedes the first. After all, prior to validation (being), there is, to begin with, recognition of there-ness (existence).

34. Karim Murji, and John Solomos, "Introduction: Racialization in Theory and Practice," in *Racialization: Studies in Theory and Practice*, ed. Karim Murji and John Solomos (Oxford University Press, 2005), 1. Murji and Solomos suggest that the primary utility of *racialization* as a concept is the "emphasis on the construction of race," which is consistent with its origins in the United Kingdom "in the sense of deracialization." Murji, and Solomos, "Introduction," 4, 6. Adding that *racialization* has been "used as a synonym for racism," "racial categorization," or "racial or racist meanings" and historically applied to the other rather than the self, they note that "it is not always clear what the race in racialization refers to," especially given its association, confusion, and contrast with *ethnicity* and its relation with "other instances of 'othering.'" Murji, and Solomos, "Introduction," 7, 10, 21, 9, 19, 4, 13, 14. In this regard, they cite Robert Miles, *Racism* (Routledge, 1989), which defines *race* as the "signification of human biological characteristics," usually "visible somatic features [but also] other non-visible (alleged and real) biological features" (75; cited in Murji and Solomos, "Introduction," 11). Mentioning *racial formation* as the more common concept in the United States, Murji and Solomos explain that *racialization* does also appear in "U.S. academic literature" to refer to "a lens or a perspective through which issues and debates become racially marked or signified." Murji, and Solomos, "Introduction," 21. An attempt to center race as a structural condition of the United States but without reinforcing the historical use of race for the purposes of white domination, *racial formation* is Michael Omi and Howard Winant's concept for the ways that "race and racial meanings" are constructed "as part of a universal phenomenon of classifying people on the basis of real or imagined attributes." Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (Routledge, 2014), 8, 3, 12. Omi and Winant conceive of *racial formation* as broader than *racialization*. While both concepts emphasize the construction of race and while Omi and Winant also mention "othering," *racialization* more than *racial formation* connotes something that is done to someone being othered rather than something that one does; hence my choice of the term. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 12.

35. In contrasting Afropessimism's ontologization of race (a historical construction) as being (a metaphysical category) to Dick's and Okada's illustration of Asian/American histories as the actual reality behind their alternate ontologies, I do not mean to suggest that there is an African American versus an Asian American ontology. Indeed, I would hesitate to posit that there is such a thing as "African American ontology," since Afropessimism is but one way of theorizing race within African American studies. The difference that I am positing is not between two racial ontologies—which would essentialize the connection between an ontology and a race, not to mention race itself—but rather Afropessimism's ontologization of race and my attempt to read ontology instead as an index of history. That the ontologization of race happened within black studies is, I would argue, contingent rather than essential, just as the fact that I am uncovering Asian/American histories behind the ontology of alternate history is contingent on my choice of Dick and Okada. One can imagine that other histories—of other races, indeed racial and otherwise—can similarly be recovered from ontology.
36. Singles, *Alternate History*, 164–65.
37. Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction*, 168–69, 171, 175.
38. Cassie Carter, "The Metacolonization of Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*: Mimicry, Parasitism, and Americanism in the PSA," *Science Fiction Studies* 22, no. 3 (1995): 333.
39. Fred Bilson, "The Colonialists' Fear of Colonisation and the Alternate Worlds of Ward Moore, Philip K. Dick and Keith Roberts," in *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* (2005) (I cannot find volume and issue number for this source): 55.
40. Bilson, "The Colonialists' Fear of Colonisation and the Alternate Worlds of Ward Moore, Philip K. Dick and Keith Roberts," 55, 52–3.
41. David M. Higgins, *Reverse Colonization: Science Fiction, Imperial Fantasy, and Alt-Victimhood* (University of Iowa Press, 2021), 1.
42. Higgins, *Reverse Colonization*, 2, 15–17, 3–4.
43. On psychoanalytic ontology, see Ryan Ku, "The Failure and Reality of Sublimation: Psychoanalytic Ontology and Revolution," *American Imago* 78, no. 1 (2021). Psychoanalysis is, of course, simultaneously a science and a critique of modernity.
44. Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* IX (1906–1908), ed. James Strachey (1959), 146, 145.
45. Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," 146.
46. Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," 144, 153.
47. Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (Carol Publishing Group, 1989), 112. According to Higgins, Dick "notes that during moments when the characters [in *The Man in the High Castle*] used the oracle to ask for advice, he himself consulted the *I Ching* and had the characters discover the same results." Higgins, *Reverse Colonization*, 78. For her part, Ursula K. Le Guin, describes the novel as "literally plotted by the chance fall of coins or yarrow sticks, yet ultimately controlled and driven by

rational, moral purpose." Ursula K. Le Guin, "Introduction," in *The Man in the High Castle* (Folio Society, 2015) (ix).

48. Jake Jakaitis, "The Idea of the Asian in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*," in *World Weavers: Globalization, Science Fiction, and the Cybernetic Revolution*, ed. Kin Yuen Wong, Gary Westfahl, and Amy Kit-sze Chan (Hong Kong University Press, 2005), 160.

49. John Rieder, "The Metafictive World of *The Man in the High Castle*: Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Political Ideology," *Science Fiction Studies* 15, no. 2 (1988), 219, 217, 222. Charting the novel's different realities—actual reality (the historical context), estranged reality (the text's alternate history), fictional reality (the text within the text), and uncanny reality (the oracular *I Ching*)—Rieder argues that *The Man in the High Castle* reveals "reality as metafictional." Rieder, "The Metafictive World of *The Man in the High Castle*," 218–19, 220.

50. Singles, *Alternate History*, 164, 161, 164.

51. Singles, *Alternate History*, 168. Singles associates Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, "Why Do We Ask 'What If?': Reflections on the Function of Alternate History," in *History and Theory*, no. 41 (December 2002); and Patricia Warrick, "The Encounter of Taoism and Fascism in *The Man in the High Castle*," in *Philip K. Dick*, ed. Martin Harry Greenberg and Joseph D. Olander (Taplinger Publishing Co., 1983) with the earlier reading and John Rieder, "The Metafictive World of *The Man in the High Castle*: Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Political Ideology," in *Science Fiction Studies* 15, no. 2 (1988); Edgar Vernon, McKnight, Jr., *Alternative History: The Development of a Literary Genre* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 1994); and Giampaolo Spedo, *The Plot Against the Past: An Exploration of Alternate History in British and American Fiction* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Padua, 2009) with her own, which is a further development of the proposal by Hellekson that "truth (and history) is created inside the individual. Inner Truth indeed." Hellekson, *The Alternate History*, 70.

52. Critics of *The Man in the High Castle* have tended to focus on Dick's other critical writings like "Schizophrenia and *The Book of Changes*" (1965) and "Naziism and *The High Castle*" (1964).

53. Philip K. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," in *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick: Selected Literary and Philosophical Writings*, ed. Lawrence Sutin (Vintage Books, 1995), 234.

54. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 240, 234.

55. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 237, 240.

56. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 240.

57. This implies that one can phantasize negatively—e.g., in the form of what is feared rather than what is desired—that, in other words, phantasy includes not only desire but also what threatens it.

58. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 238, 244.

59. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 238, 242, 251.

60. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 258.
61. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 245, italics in the original.
62. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 250. The goal of fiction, Dick goes on to say, is to "stir subliminal memories in readers back to dim life," with the writer serving as a bridge between theory and experience. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 250, 254. In psychoanalytic terms, the recognition of these common memories, it might be said, is the basis of the transformation of a psychic reality into a social reality. Toward the end of this text, Dick speaks of being visited by a female reader who told him "exactly what Juliana told Abendsen" in the novel. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 255. He takes this as an independent confirmation of his theory and concludes, "My book, like his, was in a certain real, literal, and physical sense not fiction but the truth." Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 255.
63. Dick, "If You Find This World Bad, You Should See Some of the Others," 256.
64. Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," 148.
65. Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," 147, 148.
66. Alice Bell and Marie-Laure Ryan, "Introduction: Possible Worlds Theory Revisited," in *Possible Worlds Theory and Contemporary Narratology*, ed. Marie-Laure Ryan and Alice Bell (University of Nebraska Press, 2019), 9, 10.
67. Bell and Ryan, "Introduction," 8, 10, 16, 17.
68. Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 26. "Rooted in medieval fears of Genghis Khan and Mongolian invasions of Europe, the yellow peril," Gina Marchetti explains, "combines racist terror of alien cultures, sexual anxieties, and the belief that the West will be overpowered and enveloped by the irresistible, dark, occult forces of the East"—"a fantasy that projects Euroamerican desires and dreads on the alien other." Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the "Yellow Peril": Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (University of California Press, 1993), 2. Amy J. Ransom adds that some Yellow Peril narratives "adher[e] to the conventions of the future war subgenre," draw on racist theories about how "the so-called yellow race is the only potential rival for white planetary supremacy," and serve as the negative condition for Western—i.e., white—supremacy. Amy J. Ransom, "Yellow Perils: M. P. Shiel, Race, and the Far East Menace," in *Dis-Orienting Planets: Racial Representations of Asia in Science Fiction*, ed. Isiah Lavender (University Press of Mississippi, 2017), 73–74, 78, 76. See also Jeannie N. Shinozuka, *Biotic Borders: Transpacific Plant and Insect Migration and the Rise of Anti-Asian Racism in America, 1890–1950* (University of Chicago Press, 2022).
69. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 25, 4.
70. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 111, 113.
71. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 116.
72. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 117, 116, 117.

73. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 117, 118.
74. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 119, italics in the original.
75. Michael Lucken, *Imitation and Creativity in Japanese Arts: From Kishida Ryūsei to Miyazaki Hayao*, trans. Francesca Simkin (Columbia University Press, 2016), 1.
76. Lucken, *Imitation and Creativity in Japanese Arts*, 10, 12, 13.
77. Lucken, *Imitation and Creativity in Japanese Arts*, 14.
78. In this way, Childan is a double, if negative, of Dick, given Dick's opposite phantasy of a world without oppression, thereby presumably without racism.
79. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 119.
80. Lucken, *Imitation and Creativity in Japanese Arts*, 13.
81. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 25.
82. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 117.
83. Ackbar Abbas, "Dialectic of Deception," in *Public Culture* 11. No. 2 (1999): 351, 357–58.
84. Abbas, "Dialectic of Deception," 360.
85. In contrast, Timothy H. Evans reads authenticity in the novel as a gateway to reality and as a means of denying the reality of others in order to subject them. Timothy H. Evans, "Authenticity, Ethnography, and Colonialism in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*," in *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 21, no. 3 (2010): 367, 375. The relation between the self and the other indexed by the suspicion of deception is perhaps the basis of Carter's observation that imperialism in the novel is ersatz (as opposed to authentic). Carter, "The Metacolonization of Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*," 335.
86. Notably, the deceptive workings of phantasy and the negative operations of deception in Childan's case mirrors Dick's attempt to fulfill his phantasy through its opposite (the novel's alternate reality). It is possible that the character's mirroring of the author, or the author's mirroring of himself through his character, is yet another metafictional, hence reflexive, hint that Dick is conscious that his novel's alternate reality is a product of his phantasy. Might Dick even be mocking himself through Childan?
87. Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 175.
88. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 175–76.
89. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Vintage Books, 1992), 6.
90. Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893–1945* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 70.
91. Iyko Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism* (Duke University Press, 2016), 6. Both Lye and Day point to the two roles to which Asians are relegated in global capitalism: as especially exploitable laborers or as especially exploitative holders of capital. These are the two sides of the same

fear—namely, the fear of what might happen to and of who might be in control of white labor under capitalism. That the model minority is not only an admired but also a feared subject intimates that it is a form of the Yellow Peril.

92. Day, *Alien Capital*, 6, 8.
93. Carl Freedman, "Towards a Theory of Paranoia: The Science Fiction of Philip K. Dick," in *Science Fiction Studies* 11, no. 1 (1984): 18.
94. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 185, 186.
95. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 192. This jewelry is made by Frank, Juliana's Jewish ex-husband who has to hide his Jewishness. Unlike the "historic" objects that he has sold to Childan, these pieces are new rather than fake, but, according to the standard of historicity, they are treated as if fake. In this way, the novel associates the Asian with the Jew and both with the new/fake.
96. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 187, 192.
97. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 192.
98. As a Japanese bureaucrat, Paul has no use for this exchange value, which becomes assigned as American culture's contemporary value and, as an American contemporary, Childan's authentic value. Contradictorily, Childan feels injured by Paul's positing of contemporary American culture as having exchange rather than "historic" value—i.e., as abstract (as if this value belongs only to Asian, and not American, objects/subjects)—at the same time that he feels insecure about not knowing, unlike Paul, how abstraction works (because alas, despite his pretensions, he is not Japanese).
99. Lye, *America's Asia*, 134, 119.
100. Lye, *America's Asia*, 138.
101. Lye, *America's Asia*, 173. The two parts of this history of Asian racialization is also signified by the ways that Asians were, as Lye points out, represented both as machine and as animal—an index of Asian American assimilation's location between hyper-efficiency and indigeneity. Lye, *America's Asia*, 175–76.
102. John Okada, *No-No Boy* (Penguin Books, 2019), 11.
103. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 13, 14.
104. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 14.
105. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 14.
106. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 20.
107. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 21, 22.
108. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 22.
109. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 25.
110. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 28.
111. McDonald, "After Imprisonment," 22.
112. Sokolowski, "Internment and Post-War Japanese American Literature," 87, 84.

113. Im, "Racial Melancholia, the Divided Self, and the Affect Alien in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," 222–24.

114. Bryn Gribben, "The Mother That Won't Reflect Back: Situating Psychoanalysis and the Japanese Mother in *No-No Boy*," in *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 28, no. 2 (2003): 35–36, 44, 39.

115. Chen, "The National Body," 31, 32. Contrasting the mother with Emi as the "able-bodied woman in the melodrama of heterosexual romance" who heals masculinity, Chen, moreover, reads the mother's eventual madness as a symptom of racial oppression rather than disability. Chen, "The National Body," 31, 35–36.

116. Park, "Nobody Knows," 234–35.

117. As important as it is to point out that the mother's (self-)deceptive/destructive mentality derives from her position in America, with its deceptive/destructive imperative of assimilation, this critique remains fixated on America, minimizing Japan in a way reminiscent of racialization's reduction of the other to but a version of the same/self.

118. Calling the Yellow Peril the "pestilential menace," Kim details Asian representation in nineteenth-century California "as a degenerate race encroaching on and invading white spaces, posing a moral, medical, and economic threat to the nation." Kim, *Dangerous Crossings*, 52, 53. She traces this representation to the sense of Asian civilization as having "peaked and degenerated" and of Chinatown's historically squalid conditions as due not to "white exclusionary practices" but to "immutable Chinese traits." Kim, *Dangerous Crossings*, 53, 54. As Kim suggests, this version of the trope was historically attributed to the domestic presence of the Chinese, not the geopolitical threat of the Japanese, yet it is what Okada seems to have embodied in Ichiro's mother.

119. Alan Tansman, "Introduction: The Culture of Japanese Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Duke University Press, 2009), 2, 8.

120. Tansman, "Introduction," 2. Tansman cites Richard Torrance, "The People's Library: The Spirit of Prose Literature Versus Fascism," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Duke University Press, 2009); Jun Tosaka, *Tosaka Jun Zenshū*, Vol. 3 (Keisō Shobō, 1934–37); and Masao Maruyama, "The Ideology and Dynamics of Japanese Fascism," in *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics*, ed. Ivan Morris, trans. Andrew Fraser (Oxford University Press, 1969). Harootunian deconstructs the naming of Japanese fascism as "militarism." Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton University Press, 2000), xxviii.

121. Tansman, "Introduction," 7.

122. Tansman, "Introduction," 6, 4, 7. Tansman cites the classic studies of fascism Mark, Neocleous, *Fascism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997); and Roger Griffin, ed., *Fascism* (Oxford University Press, 1995).

123. Tansman, "Introduction," 7, 4, 9.

124. Tansman, "Introduction," 13.

125. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 22.

126. Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton University Press, 2000), xxvii.

127. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, x, xi. Harootunian clarifies that modernization, by which he primarily means industrialization and urbanization, began under the Meiji government in the nineteenth century, but it was in World War I that Japan saw the shift from light to heavy industries. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xi. Against the attribution of Japanese fascism to Japan's late development, Harootunian argues that fascism was emerging in "virtually every country in the West" at the time—a function of the "unevenness [not] *between* [but] . . . *within* societies" created by capitalism. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xii, xv, italics in the original. This coheres with fascism's theorization not as that which supplants liberal modernity but as a set of "shifting class alliances" ostensibly aiming at the end of "class itself" even as they advance big business interests—as the outcome, that is, of petty-bourgeois jockeying for power in the liberal order. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xiii.

128. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xx, xxi.

129. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xxiii.

130. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xxvi.

131. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xxx.

132. Citing Sheng-mei Ma, *Immigrant Subjectivities in Asian American and Asian Diaspora Literatures* (State University of New York Press, 1988); Gayle K. Fujita Sato, "Momotaro's Exile: John Okada's *No-No Boy*," in *Reading the Literatures of Asian America*, ed. Shirley Geok-lin Lim and Amy Ling (Temple University Press, 1992); and Paul R. Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Li explains that "feminist scholars have objected to . . . Okada's implicit racist bias in marking Emi's attractiveness with white features." Li, "An Untenable Dichotomy," 90.

133. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 147. In two episodes, in particular, it seems that the mother's reality would break: when Ichiro's brother enlists in the US army and when her husband reads her a letter from Japan. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 59, 95. In a way, these episodes constitute the incursion of America into her reality against the way that she had always, as Ichiro thinks, been "denying the existence of America." Okada, *No-No Boy*, 173.

134. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 156.

135. Okada, *No-No Boy*, 147.

136. Sigmund, Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud XVIII (1920–1922)*, ed. James Strachey (1964), 8, 36.

137. Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 51, 52, 44. By *pleasure* and *reality* in this sentence, I mean Freud's senses of these terms. Freud also ascribes repetition to an "unconscious repressed" over which the subject is trying (through repetition) to gain mastery, which in the case of trauma is the prerequisite of pleasure. Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 20, 29, 32. He names the theory of pleasure he continues to advance in this piece toward its end as the "Nirvana principle." Freud,

"Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 56. I am simplifying the very contradictory, indeed speculative, theory that Freud is developing here, one that he continues in Sigmund Freud, "The Ego and the Id," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud XIX (1923–1925)*, ed. James Strachey (1964).

138. That phantasy is integral to modernity implies that so is deception. This is made apparent by the projection not only of modernity's negative aspects onto the racialized other (an obvious self-deception) but also of a world other than what is—i.e., an alternate world—as the purpose, even endpoint, of modernity (surely also deceptive).