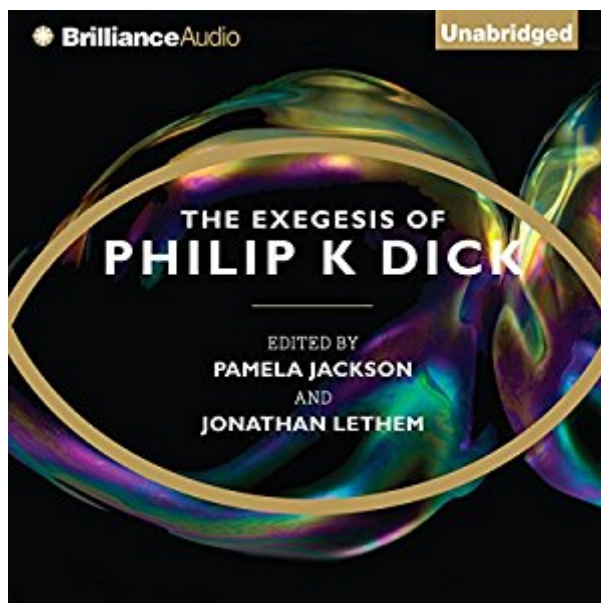


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The Exegesis Of Philip K. Dick



Synopsis

Based on thousands of pages of typed and handwritten notes, journal entries, letters, and story sketches, *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick* is the magnificent and imaginative final work of an author who dedicated his life to questioning the nature of reality and perception, the malleability of space and time, and the relationship between the human and the divine. Edited and introduced by Pamela Jackson and Jonathan Lethem, this is the definitive presentation of Dick's brilliant, and epic, work. In the *Exegesis*, Dick documents his eight-year attempt to fathom what he called "2-3-74", a postmodern visionary experience of the entire universe "transformed into information". In entries that sometimes ran to hundreds of pages, in a freewheeling voice that ranges through personal confession, esoteric scholarship, dream accounts, and fictional fugues, Dick tried to write his way into the heart of a cosmic mystery that tested his powers of imagination and invention to the limit. This volume, the culmination of many years of transcription and archival research, has been annotated by the editors and by a unique group of writers and scholars chosen to offer a range of views into one of the most improbable and mind-altering manuscripts ever brought to light.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Anyone who has read *VALIS* will know that Dick speaks about a very vague purpose hidden far beyond the words of his stories. It is that 'vague purpose' which is here laid bare, in its fullest and richest brilliance, in the author's most personal and undiluted expression. Do not expect to read an average 'journal', scraps of notes, or even 'science fiction' -- be prepared for a deep and exacting examination of Logos and Mind, Christ and Sophia; the philosophies of Heraclitus, Parmenides,

Empedocles, Iamblichus; the Gnosticism of Thomas and Valentinus, and much more besides that will threaten or inspire you, if you can even begin to understand it. The physical presentation is commendable, definitely worthy of the price and perhaps even the 29-year gap between PKD's death and the book's publication: the binding is attractive and gold beneath the dust jacket; the pages are light and crisp with 8 glossy photocopied entries from the Exegesis in the center; the type design is pleasantly minimal and unobtrusive. I found the editorial work to be only average; in particular, I was disappointed with several of the footnotes to the text. Although always historically informative, the editors frequently fail to illuminate any deeper meaning, which is what editorial notes traditionally are meant to do. Still, they have done a great service to PKD and the world by bringing together a lucid and presentable collection of the Exegesis material, a task that I'm sure was incredibly complex. I would not recommend the Exegesis as a starting point for exploring PKD's work. At the very least, you should be familiar with *Ubik*, as its subject and themes are frequently referred to throughout the Exegesis; and PKD's final trilogy, *VALIS*. The Exegesis is connected intimately with the *VALIS* trilogy, both being a result of Dick's infamous '2-3-74' experience; indeed, the Exegesis is basically a 938-page appendix to the *VALIS* trilogy, the novels being mere poetic summaries in comparison (though brilliant, of course, in their own right). The Exegesis, to me, is a philosophical 'tour de force', a cypher blueprint of reality waiting to be understood, a veritable 'feast of the mind', as another reviewer noted; it is an incredible thing to read and behold, something that has impressed me as a work of modern genius possibly more than anything else I have ever read. I would recommend it to anyone interested in PKD and the ideas reflected in his work.

Many of us who have read PKD's visionary novels had been eagerly awaiting the release of this edited version of his magnum opus, *The Exegesis*. We weren't disappointed. The Exegesis is like no other work in the world's mystical literature of which I'm aware. A relentless, probing, moving - and often hilarious - attempt to clarify PKD's profound mystical experiences in February and March of 1974, he created an incredible, encyclopedic discussion of the existing mystical literature of the world - while never committing himself to any one position. That's one of the things that's so incredible about *The Exegesis*. Phil never gives us answers - or, rather, he gives us every possible answer. He could easily have defined his system in existing terms - but he relentlessly sought his own truth - rather than committing to any one approach. That took tremendous courage - I know of no other mystic - with the exception of William Blake - who followed his own vision so honestly - despite the challenges and the loneliness of that course. And PKD's synthesis is profound. Thought provoking. Unique. While much of what he said resonates with earlier traditions, his own vision -

especially of the hidden God he calls Zebra - is unique. And changes the way I've looked at the universe and God. Thanks, Phil.

Having had a breakthrough experience like Phil's I devoured this book and nodded all the way. I think if you haven't had the experience you couldn't understand the honesty, depth and originality that Phil brings to bear in trying to understand what happened. Having extensively read metaphysics I can honestly say I haven't seen this viewpoint anywhere else. Like Phil I too went through many years trying to put it together and his book has no doubt helped speed up that process for me by a number of years. At the end of the day though like Phil 'God' intervened to sort it out for me but only after decades had passed. I think we may be 2 of the lucky ones. To think Phil was writing this back then, the mind boggles to think what metaphors he would call on now to describe his revelation.

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