

PAPER TOPICS TIME AND MEANING

Due Date December 11th

Length Five pages apiece

Guidelines As before (see the topics list for the first paper).

Topics Pick your questions for the third paper from the following. Or answer a question from the list of topics for the second paper.

1. How is authenticity an issue in *The Man and the High Castle*? How does the book play with the idea that one possible history of the world might be more authentic than another?
2. What is the role of the *I Ching* in *The Man and the High Castle*? (Pick one particular role and go into it in depth, rather than surveying several.)
3. In what sense is the EdFrank jewelry "the new life of my country", as Robert Childan says in *The Man in the High Castle* (four or five pages into chapter 14)? Relate your answer to the novel's wider concerns.
4. Suppose that evolutionary history had gone differently, and that intelligent life had evolved in something other than hominid form. What form might it have taken? How might things have been different for this life form (compared to us), and/or how might things have been the same?
5. Sketch the state that the human race will be in in, say, 50,000 years' time. Justify your answer. Describe an interesting consequence of your future history.
6. Could you go back in time and prevent your birth? If not, why not? If so, what would happen to you?
7. Write your own time travel story. Make it philosophically interesting.
8. Consider the time travel chase, in which a villain goes back into the past to change things and the hero must follow the villain back as quickly as possible to prevent the misdeed. On the face of it, this looks absurd: why should the hero hurry when she or he can just as well have a couple of drinks, read a book, then travel back in time to the point ten minutes before the villain's arrival? Explain the apparent absurdity in more detail. On what conception of time does the chase nevertheless make sense?

9. Eternity; decay; recurrence: for each, find an appearance in *Arcadia* (thus, up to three distinct passages). How do the appearances of these abstract notions contribute to the play? If possible, relate your answers to one another.