

THE DUNE ENCYCLOPEDIA: A FUTURE HISTORY IN THE AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION

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This article investigates the fluctuating bifurcated nature of The Dune Encyclopedia, by Willis E. McNelly, both as a prized pop culture collector's item and as an in-universe critique of God-Emperor Leto II's theocratic totalitarian ersatz monarchy. Marx's concept of the commodity and Walter Benjamin's aesthetic theory about art objects first being cult objects are overlaid on a modern analysis of pop culture fandom and the interconnections between the disruptions of free market capitalism and corporate control of fictional narratives.

History, his work, having become independent of him, exhausts him, devours him, and will not fail to crush him altogether. And he will succumb with it, the ultimate débâcle, just punishment for so many usurpations and follies, rising out of the temptation of Titanism.

E.M. Cioran, *Drawn and Quartered*¹

The Dune Encyclopedia possesses a dual quality, reflecting its status as an in-world relic and as a pop cultural collector's item. Because of the nature of time itself and the interpretive lens of history, *The Dune Encyclopedia* has undergone a canonical metamorphosis from franchise tie-in book to out-of-print pop culture collectible. This article will focus on *The Dune Encyclopedia* (hereafter *DE*) and its multivalent scissions.

¹ E.M. Cioran, *Drawn and Quartered*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1971) 38.

An important valence is *DE*'s importance within the Original Series itself.² Due to the vagaries of the franchise's revival, the publishing industry, and the text itself, *DE* operates as a Borgesian intellectual relic (within the Dune Universe) and coveted collector's item for bibliophile and Dune fan alike.

This article seeks to mine meanings from the twin readings of the *DE*. Is there more that can be investigated beyond the superficial monetary assessment of the *DE*'s fair market value as an exchangeable commodity? Since the *DE* was written as an in-world primary document, the Marxist-materialist reading only goes so far in illuminating the encyclopedia's appeal to the Dune fandom.

The Dune Encyclopedia within The (Original) Dune Series

The *DE* was published in 1984, the same year as *Heretics of Dune*. The series began in 1965, very much a product of an emerging American eco-consciousness and as a counterpoint to the Science Fiction New Wave.³ Frank Herbert continued writing successive volumes up until his death in 1986. During this time the world experienced the political, diplomatic, and military actions of the Cold War.

Below is the publication history of the Original Series, including *DE*. (NB: All novels in the Original Series are penned by Frank Herbert, except for *DE*.)⁴

Dune (1965)

Dune Messiah (1969)

Children of Dune (1976)

God Emperor of Dune (1981)

***DE* (1984)**

Heretics of Dune (1984)

Chapterhouse: Dune (1985)

² The Original Series is my personal name for the novels of the series written by Frank Herbert: *Dune*, *Dune Messiah*, *Children of Dune*, *God Emperor of Dune*, *Heretics of Dune*, and *Chapterhouse: Dune*.

³ The first three novels in the series (*Dune*, *Dune Messiah*, *Children of Dune*) unfold very much as a traditional epic narrative. They focus on court intrigue, military battles, and dynastic struggle.

⁴ "Dune (franchise)," *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dune_\(franchise\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dune_(franchise)), accessed 19 December 2019.

When he died, Frank Herbert left notes for an anticipated sequel to *Chapterhouse: Dune*. Untitled, it is simply referred to as *Dune 7*. The two novels coming out of Herbert's notes were:

Hunters of Dune (2006)

Sandworms of Dune (2007)

Brian Herbert and Kevin J. Anderson revived the Dune franchise with a series of prequels released as interrelated series. As of 2019, the Herbert/Anderson collaborative prequels are:

Prelude to Dune series:

House Atreides (1999)

House Harkonnen (2000)

House Corrino (2001)

Legends of Dune series:

The Butlerian Jihad (2002)

The Machine Crusade (2003)

The Battle of Corrin (2004)

Heroes of Dune series:

Paul of Dune (2008)

The Winds of Dune (2009)

Great Schools of Dune series:

Sisterhood of Dune (2012)

Mentats of Dune (2014)

Navigators of Dune (2016)

The *DE* stands unique in the series because it functions as an archaeology and commentary on the Empire, specifically as administered by Emperor Leto II. The fact that Frank Herbert allowed another author to simultaneously expand and vivisection his imaginative creation also represents a fascinating literary

collaboration. In the process, Herbert, the creator, becomes a common reader like his fans.

The Dune Encyclopedia as a Lost Text: The “Tlön” of the Dune Franchise

I owe the discovery of Uqbar to the conjunction of a mirror and an encyclopedia.

Jorge Luis Borges, “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius”⁵

Despite the *DE* being out of print and its status as a non-canonical text, it is still important to the overarching narrative of the Dune series. This significance becomes reified by its “lost” status, itself a reflection of the *DE* as a product of archaeological discovery.

It now remains “lost,” known only to collectors and canonical fundamentalists. While the Expanded Dune novels have worked to grow another generation of fandom, older fans of the series will pursue the purchase of the *DE*.⁶ Otherwise the *DE* will seem like nothing more than a curious footnote in a stubbornly analog format.

The changing media landscape has also made purchasing this pop culture artifact unnecessary. For certain entries, the Dune Wikia has a section devoted to the *DE* entry and another to the Expanded Dune continuity. Although, to be fair, this dual-entry encyclopedic practice is far from comprehensive, complete, or consistent. Even with a properly administered Wikia, the *DE* has not been uploaded in its entirety. The Wikia itself divides the Dune canon into three sections: Original Dune, Expanded Dune, and the *DE*.⁷

The *DE* acts as a kind of narrative bridge between the Original Dune and Expanded Dune. Much of the raw material for the Expanded Dune can be found in the *DE*, albeit in a perfunctory, embryonic form.

Because of time’s effect on the interpretation of the Dune canon, the *DE* can be seen as a *ghola*.

⁵ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin Books, 1998) 68.

⁶ In its own way, the Brian Herbert/Kevin J. Anderson collaborations of the Expanded Dune franchise functions as a kind of “historical fiction” to the *DE*’s intellectual mission. The new novels have focused on the Great Houses, the Butlerian Jihad, and the Mentats (among other topics). These same subjects have major entries in the *DE*.

⁷ Dune Wikia homepage, https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Main_Page, accessed 19 December 2019.

The Dune Encyclopedia as Gholia Text: From Series Tie-in to Dune Wikia Supplement

If we say that, as values, commodities are simply congealed quantities of human labor, our analysis reduces them, it is true, to the level of abstract value, but does not give them a form of value distinct from their natural forms.

Karl Marx, *Capital*⁸

Over the course of the ensuing decades since its initial publication, the *DE* has undergone a series of transformations. Time acts as the grain of sand upon this “simple congealed quantity of human labor.” The book itself has remained the same in terms of textual content, but the surrounding changes in the pop cultural landscape have altered its importance and market value.

The *DE* resembles one of the franchise’s major character(s), Duncan Idaho. Idaho underwent countless biological incarnations as a *ghola*, the *Dune* equivalent of a clone, serving different regimes and factions. Whether each *ghola* represented the true Duncan Idaho or was a unique individual is a topic best left to armchair philosophers and technicians of identity.⁹ (In the case of this article, the Duncan Idaho *ghola* serves as a metaphorical concept; a vessel for an extended thought experiment.)

From 1984 to 1999, the *DE* was a franchise tie-in. In 1999, Herbert and Anderson began fleshing out the prequels. From 1999 to the present, the *DE* was a non-canonical anomaly. When the Dune Wikia went online in August 2005, the *DE* metamorphosed into a supplementary repository of knowledge. Still irrelevant in the Herbert/Anderson timeline, the *DE* functioned more as alternate history.¹⁰

⁸ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. I, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin Books, 1990) 141.

⁹ Like the *DE* itself, Duncan Idaho ceased being reproduced after the Fall of Leto and the collapse of the Empire. He became, as it were, “out of print.” (Disallowing any reproductions seen in the Brian Herbert/Kevin J. Anderson sequels based on Frank Herbert’s *Dune 7* notes.)

¹⁰ A real world parallel would be the schisms between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS, a.k.a. the Mormons), the Reorganized Latter-day Saints (RLDS), and the Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints (FLDS). In terms of public perception in the United States and the world, the LDS is the “official church” originating in the prophecies of Joseph Smith, Jr. and forward to the present Prophet, Seer, and Revelator of the Mormons. The LDS abandoned polygamy in the 1890s and

The non-canon status illuminates the differences between a pop-cultural product owned by a corporate entity and historical interpretation of non-fictional events. Does the non-canonical status imply an inherent incorrectness? It is wrong to interpret events in the Dune Universe with the *DE*? By way of contrast, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, by William L. Shirer gained fame as the first historical account of the Third Reich. Despite the vast cottage industry of Third Reich history, Shirer's book still holds value, in part because of his status as journalist-historian and witness to several of the events. New developments in Third Reich historiography do not invalidate the book, although certain premises forwarded by Shirer have been disproved or discredited. The *DE*'s status as corporate-owned commodity complicates the picture. Is historical interpretation bound by the singular valence of who (or what) owns it?¹¹

The Dune Encyclopedia as Forensic Reconstruction of History and an Institutional Critique of Theocratic Tyranny

L'état c'est moi.

Louis XIV [attributed]

accepted African Americans into the priesthood in 1979. The RLDS accepts a different prophetic lineage. The FLDS still practices polygamy (illegally in the United States). But which schism of the Mormons represents the 'real' Latter-day Saints? Which version is deemed acceptable? And acceptable by whom? The same kind of schisms occur within pop cultural fandom. This can occur with conflicts between fandom and the 'official' corporate licensed property. Because of corporate imprimatur and the capital (and legal teams) to back it up, the corporate property becomes the 'official' content. Capital and corporate power alters the lens of public perception. How pop is pop culture?

¹¹ A different situation occurred when the Disney Corporation acquired Lucasfilm in 2012 (the corporate entity responsible for Star Wars and its associated cinematic and merchandising content). After the acquisition, Disney decided to abandon the Star Wars Extended Universe. Disney has also acquired additional pop-cultural properties including Marvel (2009), Pixar (2006), and the Muppets (2004). This presents an ethical and economic challenge to fans. On the plus side, all the characters are now under one corporate umbrella. On the negative, do you really want the Disney Corporation making all your entertainment decisions for you? Then again, citizens of the United States should be used to the silver-tongued promises of monopoly capitalism and corporate oligarchy. This is merely the economics of American healthcare translated to the vagaries of pop culture.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1

As an in-world primary document, the *DE* can be read as an institutional critique against the theocratic tyranny of Emperor Leto II. Published after *God Emperor of Dune* (1981) and concurrently with *Heretics of Dune* (1984), it functions as a caesura within the series. With the *DE*, Herbert pivoted his space opera into newer and stranger narrative trajectories.

Unlike a novel, an encyclopedia need not be read in linear fashion. It served as a repudiation of Emperor Leto II's tyrannical rule, albeit from the perspectives of archaeologists and encyclopedists. The chronology states that "The publication of THE DUNE ENCYCLOPEDIA" occurred in 15540.¹² Emperor Leto II reigned from 10219 to 13724. Prior to the *DE* publication, there was the discovery of the Rakis Hoard in 15525.

Despite the series taking place in a far future, the *DE*'s perspective of Leto II's reign is from that of the ancient past. It is equivalent to writing an encyclopedia of the Roman Empire from the perspective of the present.

Due to the sheer volume of recorded matter to translate, classify, and interpret, the *DE* is *not* the final word on the Dune Universe.¹³ Mainly because no final word had been written at the time of publication. The task was simply too huge.

Additionally, the practice of history is not about establishing the final word so much as supporting an interpretation with evidence. The *DE*'s encyclopedic form makes it possible to arrive at multiple valid interpretations.

It was apparent that scholars faced an archaeological discovery unparalleled in magnitude in the history of mankind. The First Discovery Conference, held on Geidi Prime, met only to establish an agenda for the

¹² A note on chronology: The Dune franchise does not use BCE/CE but B.G. and A.G. meaning "Before Guild" and "After Guild." The creation of the Spacing Guild with their monopoly on space travels serves as the epochal moment for a new system of reckoning. The Guild existed before the Empire and is entirely dependent on the spice *mélange*, which only exists on Arrakis. Unlike other systems of reckoning like BC and AD, it is entirely economic in nature and an economics whose commodity dependence acts as both a stabilizing factor and as a fulcrum for conflict. If the Guild does not have a reliable source for spice, then there is a very real possibility that the Empire could collapse.

¹³ The Dune Universe means the pre-Imperial, Imperial, and post-Imperial worlds, their inhabitants, technology, etc. On a materialist level, the very stuff of culture.

planning of the investigation of the find. The Second Discovery Conference, held on Rakis itself, spent a full two years in deciding on procedure and a cataloging system, and, as it turned out, that system was not without flaws.¹⁴

What we have here is like finding the Library of Alexandria, except several times larger in sheer size. The *DE* is the first fruits of this labor. Like the Terran explorers of the early modern era, what they discovered were not continents, but continents of raw data. Even the survey and inventory of aforementioned data would be a heroic task.

As the editor Hadi Benotto states in her Introduction, “[I]t [the *DE*] is not designed as a definitive study of the entire era encompassed by the Atréides Imperium. [...] In addition, we must also consider something of the eccentricities of Lord Leto, who was solely responsible for accumulating, assembling, and secreting what is now known as the Rakis Hoard.”¹⁵

While the Empire had its share of benevolent and despotic emperors, Lord Leto puts a new fold on the concept of imperial rule. The history of the Dune Universe is bracketed by two jihads: the Butlerian Jihad and the Fremen Jihad. The Butlerian Jihad waged war against the thinking machines with mankind triumphant. The Fremen Jihad occurred following the accession of Paul Muad'Dib to the throne. What follows was a war of genocide, political consolidation, and religious uniformity. As Emperor Paul Muad'Dib himself records, “Statistics: at a conservative estimate, I've killed sixty-one billion, sterilized ninety planets, completely demoralized five hundred others. I've wiped out the followers of forty religions[...].”¹⁶

Between the reign of Paul Muad'Dib and his son Leto, Paul abandons the throne and exiles himself. His sister Alia acts as regent until the future Leto II can come of age. Her reign ends in disaster and Leto himself wanders into the desert after attaching sandworms to his body.

Paul and Alia ruled with the all the foibles and weaknesses endemic of humans. Even though both possessed remarkable mental abilities (in large part due to the psychotropic effect of the spice melange), they were still bound by the

¹⁴ Willis E. McNelly, “Bibliography,” *The Dune Encyclopedia* (New York: Berkley Books, 1984) 517 – hereafter referenced as *DE*.

¹⁵ Hadi Benotto, “Introduction,” *DE* vi.

¹⁶ “Fremen Jihad,” *DE* 232.

restrictions of a human body and a human mind. Paul's son Leto upended these restrictions, going on to rule the Empire for 3500 years.¹⁷

Due to his hybrid nature (part-human, part-sandworm), Lord Leto possessed an inherited collective consciousness and psychic abilities. In *God Emperor of Dune*, he kills off historians,¹⁸ since their power to interpret the past posed a threat to his rule. Only he could interpret the past, since he was in direct communication with ancestral figures stretching back thousands of years. The *DE* attempts to repair these tyrannical acts. Replete with multiple interpretations and multiple perspectives, the *DE* does its best to comprehend an incomprehensible ruler.

Reading the *DE* invites free-associative narrative journeys, one entry leading to another entry, etc. A narrative is constructed, but it is Heraclitean, amorphous, and subjective.¹⁹ This stands in opposition to Lord Leto's rule. His long rule, intimidating biological form, and charismatic personality further sharpened the Imperial concept of tyranny. Paul Muad'Dib's theocracy evolved into Lord Leto's monomaniacal dictatorship.

In most cases tyrants and dictators die. With Lord Leto there is not even dynastic succession, since he outlives everybody. He combines this by turning the Fremen Buddhislamic religion into his own Cult of Personality. He is not the vicarious representative of god, as are absolute monarchs, but *he is god*. In the process, he creates a corpus of female bodyguards and he begins a breeding program.²⁰ His authoritarian activity is all done in the name of achieving the Golden Path, a mystical concept whereby humanity will be freed of psychic

¹⁷ Emperor Leto II remains one of the most fascinating characters in literature. While this article is limited in its scope and length, it would be worthwhile to devote a monograph-length exploration to Lord Leto. Briefly, Lord Leto blurs the distinction between self and other, individual and collective, and human and animal. The dramatic nature of his reign alters the narrative trajectory of the Dune series and his prolonged rule annihilated a political system that had stood for 10,000 years.

¹⁸ In 12335 there is "The execution of THE NINE HISTORIANS"; see "A Chronology of Some Important Events in Human History," *DE* ix.

¹⁹ A similar reading experience occurs in Chris Ware's *Building Stories* (2012). Comprised of several mini comics of various sizes and formats, the multiple narratives revolve around the inhabitants of a building in Chicago. No guide or sequence is provided for the various mini comics. The reader must choose and no two readers will choose the same order.

²⁰ His female bodyguards, the Fish Speakers, echo Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's cadre of female bodyguards. Regarding his breeding program, he usurped this power from the Bene Gesserit.

manipulation.²¹ But his attempts at breeding spontaneity within humanity collapses because it is an intellectual paradox. Humans cannot be free to think for themselves when the Emperor does all the thinking for them.

Lord Leto is eventually assassinated and the Empire collapses along with him.²² The Post-Imperial epoch involves the Starvation and the Scattering. The *DE* is an attempt to assemble the fragments of a shattered system that had ruled for thirteen millennia.

The *Dune Encyclopedia* as Collector's Item: Canon and Commodity Fetishism

A commodity appears at first sight an extremely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties.

Karl Marx, *Capital*²³

The *DE*'s permanent out-of-print status has made the *DE* an appealing item to bibliophiles and *Dune* fans. After the revival of the *Dune* franchise, the publication of the prequel books made the *DE* more and more narratively irrelevant, albeit more financially valuable. The friction generated from opposing valences (worthless vs. valuable) is echoed by another opposing set of valences (in-word document vs. real world pop culture tie-in product).

Another important consideration is *Dune*'s status as an adult science fiction franchise.²⁴ Since the franchise is not aimed primarily at a juvenile market (cf. *Star Wars*), the commercial output lacks in sheer metric tonnage. Lacking tie-in toys, action figures, and other related merchandise, *any* item relating to *Dune* accrues added value.²⁵

²¹ "You cannot plan to breed humanity into some higher type and at the same time give humanity the essential freedom which is supposedly at the heart of the Golden Path," *DE* 68.

²² However, even death cannot defeat Lord Leto. Rumors abound about how the post-Letan sandworms each contain a part of Lord Leto's ego, new beings created via interspecies metempsychosis.

²³ Marx 163.

²⁴ We may add a third set of opposing valences (obscure vs. well-known) when set against other pop culture franchises.

²⁵ *Star Wars* is the most egregious exemplar of this trend, especially in light of Disney's acquisition of the creative property, and the much-touted release of films relating to the conclusion of the original trilogy. While the entertainment business is still a business, the

In addition to these real world market considerations,²⁶ we can't ignore the *bookishness* of the *DE*. The Dune franchise's uniqueness also lay in its world-building. One of the major historical events in the Dune Universe was the Butlerian Jihad. This crusade sought to destroy "thinking machines" resulting in a *technophobic*²⁷ interstellar political empire.

As time has crept by, the world has become entranced with "thinking machines," be they smartphones, satellite navigation, eBooks, Alexa, and Amazon algorithms. Amid all these glowing rectangles and soothing voices guiding us along the road or towards the next purchase, it becomes a challenge to remember the value of a book. Not merely its monetary value, but its *material value*: its weight, feel, look, and smell. While print is assuredly not dead, its life is threatened in an age of over-abundant choice and maximum distraction.

The book's monetary value can be set against the sensualism and intellectual stimulation aroused by this unique pop cultural artifact. As stated above, the appreciation of the *DE* involves an applied sensuality, not simply the satisfaction of owning something of high monetary value. Its price point is merely a materialist quantum, a set of numbers on a constantly changing grid of value and demand. Focusing on how much it costs only exemplifies the utter emptiness of pricing. The *DE* is much more than that.

Because of the technophobic nature of the Dune Universe, the *DE* would have to exist as a print book. Even the illustrations are hand-drawn and have a charming simplicity. The *DE* hearkens back not only to an analog mentality, but one that values to manual production. In its own idiosyncratic way, the *DE* possesses a quality akin to artisanal handicrafts.

near-infinite amount of price points has become fuel for both comedians and cultural commentators. "*Spaceballs*: the breakfast cereal, *Spaceballs*: the flame thrower ... the kids love this one."

²⁶ As of 14 August 2019, the *DE* represents this value in American dollars (\$) on these three popular websites: Amazon.com: \$245.55 – \$912.89; Abebooks.com: \$150.00 – \$878.35; Ebay.com: \$75.00 – \$143.95 (softcover) [Cheapest to most expensive of hardcover edition. For the sake of general illustration, the condition is not being considered.]. NB: Prices are listed for demonstration purposes only. The point is to confirm the commonly accepted fair market value of the book as an exchangeable commodity.

²⁷ The Imperial technophobia is specifically targeted at *sentient* technology, not necessarily all technology. The Empire ruled with an indirect hand in most matters, leaving it to the noble houses of the Landsraad to administer their planets in a governor-like capacity. Unafraid to use atomic weapons, the Empire possesses the intellectual know-how to use advanced weapons of mass destruction. While fearful of artificial intelligence, the elites of the Empire were not Luddites.

Walter Benjamin states: “Originally the contextual integration of art in tradition found its expression in the cult. We know that the earliest art works originated in the service of a ritual – first the magical, then the religious kind.”²⁸ Extrapolating Benjamin’s assertion, pop-cultural fandoms operate as cults. Shared rituals and traditions dominate fandom discourse, each with their own schisms, fanatics, and toxic elements.

Because of its limited production, the *DE* has become a *cult object* “abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties.”

Irony of ironies is that the *DE* has acquired the status as a cult relic among the Dune fandom. Ironic because the *DE* existed in the realm of mass market publishing. A hardcover and paperback edition were issued. The skyrocketing prices as an out-of-print book further accentuate its cult object status. Yet, at the same time, the Dune Wikia has short-circuited an otherwise the exclusionary economics in the world of book collecting.

Once prices inhibit swaths of socioeconomic strata, is the object simply a White Whale to be captured, or has the object lost its meaning as a vehicle for individual enjoyment? Contemporary fandom discourse has debated the concept of “gatekeepers.” The term usually refers to white males who still think they own everything. Could this term also be applied to pop-cultural productions that can exclude fans, new or otherwise, simply because it is too expensive?²⁹

Conclusion: A History in Fragments

As a concept, the encyclopedia is a work that holds an institutional imprimatur. The size and scope of encyclopedias evoke the construct of an organizational authority. A repository of knowledge and a storehouse of data, the encyclopedia invites reactions ranging from curiosity to awe. In the case of the *DE*, it represents a first attempt at interpreting a monumental storehouse of knowledge. It attempts to scaffold a voice of authority in an era of decentralized chaos and fragility. It attempts to answer the question, “How did we get into this mess?”

²⁸ Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969) 223.

²⁹ As a means of comparison, the current 5th Edition of *Dungeons & Dragons* seeks to appeal to a public, vocal, and diverse fan base. The base price for game elements like manuals and rulebooks are set at \$50.00 each. Or, to use a Simpson’s sight gag, “Our Prices Discriminate Because We Can’t.” The sign from the Springfield Heights Promenade, an upscale mall in Springfield Heights; *Springfield_Heights_Promenade*, *Simpsons Wikia*, <https://simpsons.fandom.com/wiki/>, accessed 14 August 2019.

Beyond its function as an in-world publication, the *DE* has been relegated to the dustbin of history due to the revival of the Dune franchise. It won't be published again, although it lives on in entries on the Dune Wikia and in the hands of a bibliophilic elect.

Because it will never again be published, a Benjaminian aura halos the books. Due to its non-reproducibility, it becomes a target for commodity fetishism and cultist adoration. The book radiates a different kind of material specialness, this time in the hands of pop culture aficionados and Dune fans.