Blade Runner may be considered a postmodern metanarrative in several aspects. One of these aspects is the idea of authorship. The very notion of copy and reproduction disappears in the title of the film. Ridley Scott borrowed the title from William Burroughs’s novel Blade Runner, a Movie. In his turn, Burroughs based his story on Alan Nourse’s novel The Bladerunner. However, the film is based upon Philip Dick’s novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? (DADES), in which the term is not used. So which Bladerunner is the original, Dick’s, Fancher’s, Peoples’s, Scott’s, Burroughs’s, or Nourse’s?

The initial title of Fancher’s draft script was the same title as Dick’s novel. In its second draft, it was shortened to Android, and later changed to Mechanismo. Because they could not get the rights from the art book with the same name, Mechanismo became Dangerous Days (Sammon, 1996, pp. 25–41). The title Blade Runner appeared by accident from Burroughs’s novel, when Fancher was searching for a convincing future name substitute for the word “detective”. Only later did they discover Nourse’s title. For Sammon, the title “describes Deckard’s character, which runs on the knife’s edge between humanity and inhumanity”. (Sammon, 1996, p. 379).

Even if one considers the film itself, whose medium (photography) already blurs the idea of the original, as Walter Benjamin argues in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, the difference is annulled: which is the original, the Director’s Cut or the other different released versions of the movie? Because the Director’s Cut differs from the other versions, meaning and interpretation will also vary, showing, as a result, a polysemic approach. Although originally based on Dick’s science-fiction novel, the film has become a distinct “text” which preserves similarities with the original story.
Elements other than the title of the different “Blade Runner” texts can also be found in the movie. Brian W. Aldiss mentions that part of BR's storyline and “at least one of its characters was roped in from another novel by Dick, We can build you” (qtd. in Kolb, 1990, p. 19). However, this novel has no other relationship with the story in BR apart from the theme of the creation of simulacra (and the philosophical questions implied) and from the fact that one of the characters is called “Pris” as in the movie. The character that interacts with Sebastian in the film and with Isidore in the book is also called Pris but has no similarity with the Pris in We Can Build You, who is a mentally ill person.

Moreover, besides the various versions of the film, Dick's story DADES was republished, adopting the title of the film, re-baptized as Blade Runner, both in the English version and in its Portuguese translation. A video game was created, with an accompanying book of strategies for playing the game, named Official Blade Runner Strategy Guide (Official Strategy Guides), released on December 18, 1997. This was followed by Blade Runner: Unauthorized Game Secrets (Secrets of the Games Series), released on January 7, 1998.

In addition, other books and many essays based on the film have been published, as can be seen in the list of works cited. More recently, the actor Rutger Hauer, who also contributed one of the most important lines to the film, used part of the line to entitle a book on the film, written by himself and Patrick Quinlan: All Those Moments: Stories of Heroes, Villains, Replicants, and Blade Runners (2007). The producer of the film, Michael Deeley, also wrote a book on the film: Blade Runners, Deer Hunters & Blowing the Bloody Doors Off: My life in cult movies (2008). On top of that, in August 2013 a Google web search on essays on Blade Runner listed 201,000 results, whereas 18,900,000 results were listed just on the topic “Blade Runner”, which demonstrates the interest this movie has acquired over time.

A major difference between Dick's text and the film Blade Runner is mentioned by Dick himself, in one of “the Blade Runner interviews” with Sammon, and featured in the documentary Dangerous Days. This difference is related to the way Dick and Scott regarded the replicants, and also to the treatment of esoteric themes (Dick, 2007).

Both BR and DADES depict the idea of Off-world colonies, which imply Hannah Arendt’s description of earth alienation. In her prologue to The Human Condition, she refers to the impact of modern science in the exploration of outer space. For her, this search started in 1957 with the launching of a satellite to circle the earth, which she considers to be the most important event of our time. A contemporary newspaper