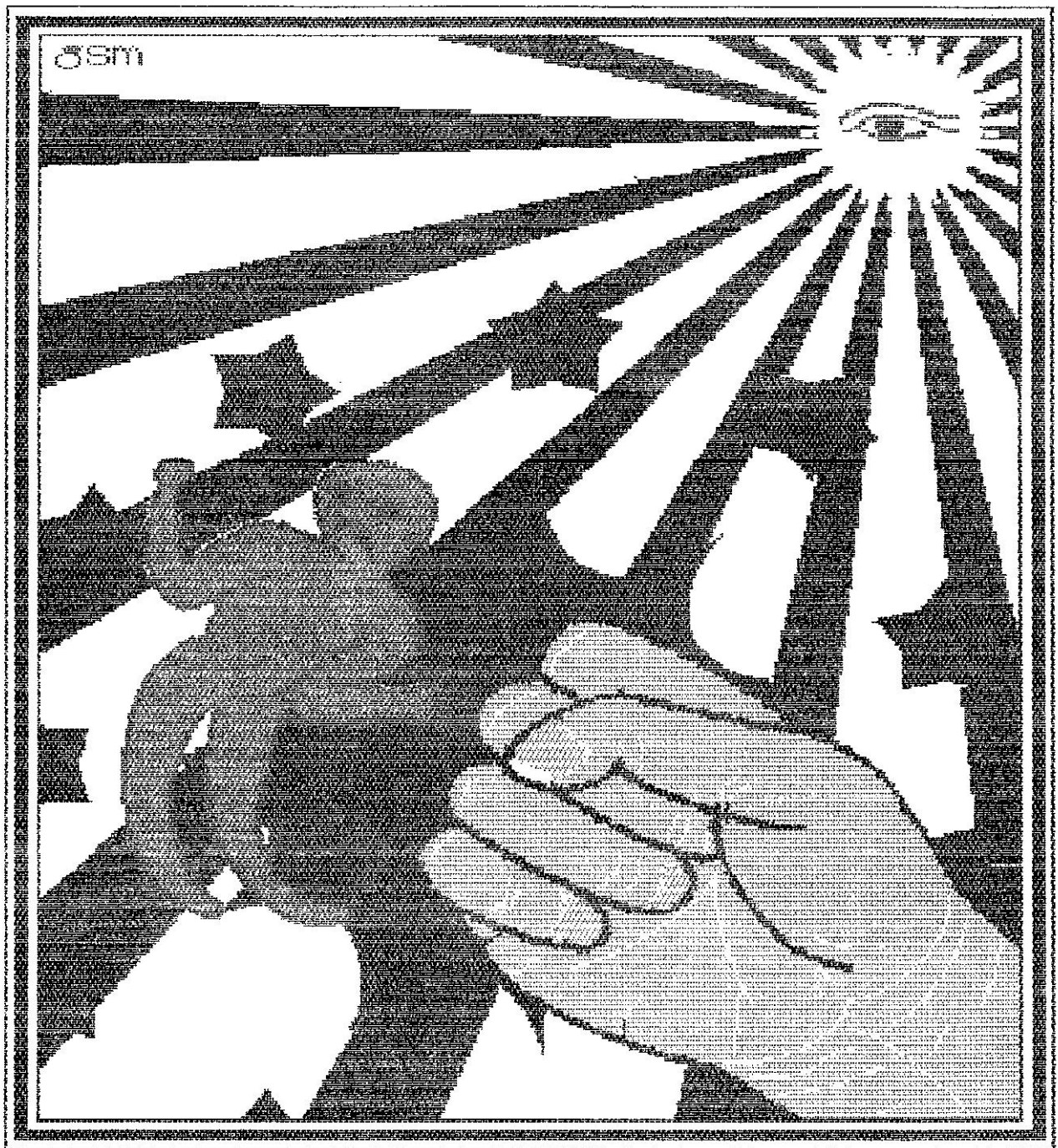


FOR DICKHEADS ONLY

#3



THE COSMIC PUPPETS

Introduction.

Three down and a zillion more to go! What I want to do here is thank all the people who wrote in requesting FDO and also the Philip K. Dick Society for generating that interest. Sorry that it took so long to send the first 2 FDO's to you.

This issue deals with THE COSMIC PUPPETS, a book you wouldn't really think would be much trouble to comment on, but... I will reveal here that both Barb and I went through great effort to bring you the pearls of wisdom presented herein. First I wrote an essay, then Barb wrote an essay. After reading hers I junked mine and wrote another one. She rewrote hers. Then we tore them apart and rewrote them again. Finally, Barb wanted to add an afterword to her essay but at that point we both realised that we'd done enough; the essays were in danger of becoming so mauled over that they would be incomprehensible. Still, we're not satisfied. After all this writing and constant discussion as we argued points back and forth, we feel that there is a lot more to be said about THE COSMIC PUPPETS.

But enough. We're still looking for essays, clippings, cartoons, news, reviews old and new of any PKD books, and artwork, etc. The favorite Philip K. Dick Book survey is still going on, so send in your 3 selections of your favorite PKD books tomorrow.

Subscriptions to FOR DICKHEADS ONLY:

I hate hassling with it but we've decided on a subscription donation of \$5 for four issues of FDO. Which is really pretty cheap. With each new subscription we'll send a complete set of back issues.

Write to me, Dave Hyde

Ganymedeian Slime Mold Prods
POBox 112
New Haven
in 46774

With this issue, we've decided to drop the 'games' page. I'm sure no one will miss it. And, for the record, we *did* go to Ft. Morgan, Colorado, on our search for PKD's grave, and *not* Ft. Collins as I have it in FDO#1 and as was mentioned in PKDS. I made a mistake when I wrote the article. (sheesh!)

Answer to last issues puzzle: "The robot waiter dropped like a metal spider from the ceiling, and Nina turned her attention to ordering. From the bill-of-fare she selected an oral preperation of heroin, then passed the punch sheet to her husband." -- from THE WORLD JONES MADE.

One last item on JONES. I've just discovered that we have a copy of the original JONES Ace double, and have xeroxed its cover (and the covers of other editions we have) to add to your JONES file. These are included with this issue. THE WORLD JONES MADE was backed with Margaret St.Clair's *Agent of the Unknown*.

***** FAVORITE DICK BOOK SURVEY *****
Latest Results!

Ah! The race is livening up a bit! This issue we have three more selections chosen at random from our mail pile.

First out is Patrick Clark of St. Paul who writes:

"For what it's worth, my three favorite PKD novels are SCANNER DARKLY, CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON and (because it's such a great goof) GAMEPLAYERS OF TITAN. But this tends to vary from year to year. You know how it is."

Yup, we do. Thanks for that excellent selection, Patrick.

Next is Geoff Notkin of Hoboken who writes:

"Tough choice. but... First, without doubt is THREE STIGMATA, because it's the most mind-bending time travel, multi-dimensional, drug-induced (I mean that in terms of the characters, not necessarily the author), reality questioning, Earth takeover romp I have ever and no doubt will ever come across.

"Second, I guess is A SCANNER DARKLY, which I love primarily for its hilarious portrayal of the 'stoner's' lifestyle. The passages about the Mylar Microdot Corp., and the attempt to smuggle hash across the border as a mechanised dummy, never fail to get a laugh out of me. In addition, its anti-drug message is very important and moving, and the book also feeds my normal paranoia regarding police and surveillance.

"Third choice, by a whisper is UBIK, and it is the haunting description of the deconstructing world, coupled with the eerie bleeding of "reality" from one "real world" to another that makes it one of the creepiest and most intriguing SF novels ever. The last chapter, when Runciter finds Joe Chip money in his pocket is not only my favorite PKD ending, but I think my favorite actual scene from any of his books. Too bad it wasn't published under the original title of DEATH OF AN ANTI-WATCHER, which is a far more interesting name.

"Bubbling close after those three would be TIME OUT OF JOINT and CLANS."

Thanks for your selection, Geoff. Thirdly is Sam Field of Forest Hills, NY who can't choose 3 favorites because he loves them all.

So thanks, Sam, that means 4 first place points for every one!

And tabulating the results so far on a 4 points for first, 3 for second, 2 for third and 1 for any other mentions, the race shapes up as follows:

A SCANNER DARKLY leads with 11 points, closely followed by a tightly packed field of WE CAN BUILD YOU, CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON, and THE THREE STIGMATA with 8 points each. But on their heels is THE BROKEN BUBBLE with 7 points then CRAP ARTIST, UBIK and THE GAME PLAYERS OF TITAN with 6 points apiece. Bringing up the rear is TIME OUT OF JOINT with 5 points trailed by the rest of the field with 4 points each. And to complete the field with 1 point is Lew Shiner's SLAM (a dark horse indeed).

Tune in next time to see how this exciting horse race develops.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS

1. We Scour The Minutae So You Don't Have To.

We are fortunate to have in our otherwise rather skimpy collection of Phildickiana a copy of the Dec 1956 *Satellite*, the magazine with the short story that ended up as THE COSMIC PUPPETS.

So, for lack of a brighter idea I thought I'd do a comparison. But first a look at the story's publishing history, which is an interesting one.

A GLASS OF DARKNESS was written probably in early 1953, inspired by Dick's love for the magazine *Unknown*. In 1981 he told interviewer Gregg Rickman that "one day he decided to try and write an *Unknown*-style fantasy, 'a fantasy novel for a publication which I loved, which no longer existed.'" *Unknown* hadn't existed since 1943.

The title for the story was taken from 1 *Corinthians* 13, the paragraph that goes:

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Which is a part of a lecture on the supreme virtue of charity.

The manuscript was received at the Scott Meredith Literary Agency on 8-19-53. This as Paul Williams noted means that the story was probably written before SOLAR LOTTERY, the manuscript of which was received at SMLA on 3-23-54. It was therefore, when expanded into THE COSMIC PUPPETS, the first science fiction or fantasy novel Philip K. Dick wrote.

After reception at SMLA the story presumably went the rounds. Dick by this time was a prolific appearer in the sf magazines, in 1953 having, according to the Paul Williams chronology, 30 published stories! His peak year.

So, A GLASS OF DARKNESS should've popped up in late 1953 or early 1954 in one or other of these magazines. That it didn't Rickman attributes to the fact that it was a 'fantasy', and though the science fiction market was booming at the time, there was little room for fantasy. A distinction that at this later date is none too clear.

However, it finally landed in the second issue of *Satellite Science Fiction* (1956-1959) in December 1956.

The story, at 92 pages, filled the bulk of the magazine, pushing much shorter efforts by Arthur C. Clarke, Frank Bryning, Michael Shaara, Dal Stevens, Algys Budrys and Gordon R. Dickson into the last 30 pages. The cover is as xeroxed somewhere near here and was painted by Kelly Freas. The internal art was by Arnold Arlow. Dick was paid \$400.

This initial appearance of A GLASS OF DARKNESS apparantly stirred little critical comment. None that I can find anyway. It did though, in March of 1957, spur Donald Wollheim to write to PKD wondering why Scott Meredith had not submitted the story to Ace.



On being informed of this the SMLA immediately sold the story to Ace for an advance of, presumably, \$1000 dollars. Few flies on Scott.

And just in the nick of time, too, as Ballantine Press, in the person of Tony Boucher, also showed interest. In a letter dated June 5, 1957, Boucher stated that if he'd've liked GLASS OF DARKNESS he'd've paid "exactly twice *Satellite's* \$400".

But... too late for Ballantine. A GLASS OF DARKNESS, newly retitled THE COSMIC PUPPETS by Ace, was published in late 1957 as one half of an Ace double, backed with I know not what as I have been unable to find an original copy.

Dick -- again presumably -- expanded A GLASS OF DARKNESS into what would become THE COSMIC PUPPETS in between the time he got Wollheim's letter (early April 1957) and the time the SMLA has noted down for the reception of the manuscript on May 1, 1957. In other words he rewrote it in a month -- I'd guess in one sitting.

And there the story lies for the next 22 years. Until January 1979 when Russ Galen at Berkley Books purchased THE COSMIC PUPPETS together with DR. FUTURITY and THE UNTELEPORTED MAN as part of a package deal that paid Dick \$14,000 (though whether Dick got \$14,000 for each of these three novels or for the lot is unclear). The novel was reissued by Berkley in October 1983 as a paperback, after, I guess, they had canned plans to issue an illustrated version.

Asked by Rickman why it had fallen out of print, Wollheim of Ace said "I don't even recall the story. It was not reprinted because I forgot it."

So, a big tip of the hat to the folks at Berkley Books for making this Philip Dick story available to us. Now, of course, the novel is known worldwide with editions in Italy and Germany. There may be others. And filmmaker J.B.Reynolds has written a screenplay.

2. Through A Magnifying Glass Idly.

Now it's time to turn to the comparison of A GLASS OF DARKNESS with THE COSMIC PUPPETS, as promised above.

From a page by page comparison of the early half of the two stories it is certain that PKD totally rewrote the story; there are few paragraphs where something has not been changed. Usually these changes are not significant, just a rewording of a sentence, the disqualification of an adjective, a more economic word choice. In the early part of the story I have looked at these changes to see if there has been an effort by Dick to alter the nature of his characters -- make, say, Dr. Meade a softer personality, Peter Trilling more mysterious. Or to make other meaningful changes that would somehow slant the story in the revised directions that Dick would want it to go. Again, nothing you could really put your finger on.

Basically, the typical update in the early part of the story is as follows:

A HANDFUL OF DARKNESS (p 14): His tousled, sandy hair hung in a ragged fringe around his wide forehead...

THE COSMIC PUPPETS (p 2 Berkley): His tousled, sandy-coloured hair hung down around his wide forehead...

Or:

A GLASS OF DARKNESS: Noaks regarded it with awe; then drew back unhappily, one hand on his airplane. Then he lifted it and, hesitantly, tossed it through the air. It fell heavily to the grass, knocking one of its wings loose in the process...

THE COSMIC PUPPETS (p 2): Noaks saw it with awe; he drew back unhappily, one hand on his airplane. Then he lifted it up and soared it plaintively...

It does seem, though, that with changes such as these the updated version would not be an expansion but a contraction. Or, at least, stay the same.

Well guess what: An average word count for the Berkley COSMIC PUPPETS comes out at 44,032 while A GLASS OF DARKNESS comes in at 44,772. A difference of a mere 740 words but nevertheless a definite contraction. (Which might make it rather awkward for future bibliographers: A GLASS OF DARKNESS, 1953 p1956, short story. Contracted to THE COSMIC PUPPETS, p1957, novel...)

Whatever. What we've actually got here with the Berkley COSMIC PUPPETS is a tremendous puff job. A masterpiece of the publishers art: 44,000 words physically blown up to fill 186 pages! Thus fullfilling in the consumers eye the minimum size requirements for a paperback novel, I guess.

But to return. There are a couple of minor changes, cuts merely, that could be interpreted as slightly altering the readers' perception of the characters: In the early scene where Mary is playing with the clay, the original has (on page 14):

Mary got reluctantly to her feet. "Can't I stay?" She asked eagerly.

Doctor Meade put an affectionate arm around his daughter. "Get going, you little Wanderer," he said with mock-sternness. Into the car with you."

and later in the same scene:

Then, more sharply, "Mary. I told you to get in the car."

THE COSMIC PUPPETS is different (page 2-3):

Mary got reluctantly to her feet. "Can't I stay?"
Doctor Meade put his arm around his daughter affectionately. "Get going, you little Wanderer. Into the car."

and later:

"Mary. I told you to get in the car."

So the sternness and anger is slightly removed from the character of Doctor Meade. But to what purpose?

Or, consider these alterations:

A GLASS OF DARKNESS (p18): "What do you want?" he demanded. "What's the idea of coming in here without knocking?" For some reason, Barton felt oddly on the defensive.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS (p25): "What do you want?" he demanded. "What's the idea of coming in here?"

And earlier in the same scene:

A GLASS OF DARKNESS (p 18): A boy stood there, small and thin, regarding him with immense questing brown eyes.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS (p 25): A boy stood there, small and thin, with immense brown eyes.

The 'questing' is gone and so is Barton's literal defensiveness, though it remains implied. And throughout this whole scene where Barton meets Peter the intensity of their duel is lessened, becomes more subtle in THE COSMIC PUPPETS. Now this could be just a matter of style. I can imagine Dick as he reads his original manuscript -- or perhaps a copy of the self-same *Satellite* that is now crumbling into dust on my desk -- thinking as many writers do when they read over their own work that, boy! this is pretty obvious, maybe I should tone it down... and there goes another adjective.

The overall effect, though slight, of these changes is to reduce the dramatic tension between the characters as they interact. It is early in the story; although Barton has just discovered that he's dead, he's still relating fairly normally to the other characters. Peter Trilling is, for him, just a little boy, bugging him when he's tired. Why should he be defensive?

Well, perhaps I'm grabbing at straws but later as Dick gets into the rewrite his changes do become more significant. But, before that, there is one error that must be pointed out. And one interesting cut.

On page 19 of the short story is written:

A boy living in Southwestern Virginia.

On page 26 of the novel:

A boy living in Southeastern Virginia.

The likely correct one is Southeastern Virginia as Richmond is mentioned a few times in the story.

As for the cut, this occurs on page 26 of the short story:

He puffed angrily on his cigar, a man who hated illness and its causes as other men hate Germans, or Negroes, or Japanese, or just foreigners.

It is replaced in the novel with:

He puffed on his cigar angrily. "I remember that..."

After 3 years the memory of the War must have faded some more in Philip Dick's mind.

The next change of interest occurs on page 104 of the novel. Dick added the paragraph about the Wanderer emerging in the wall, as remembered by Mary. He probably added it as he went along, not noticing that he'd accomplished the same effect a few sentences later in the original. Which meant, rather than go back and redo it again, he had to write this later part out. Which he did.

It's hard to remember that back in the old days of the Fifties word-processors were unheard of and electric typewriters an expensive rarity. Dick, though a master typist, probably had to crank his work out on one of those old manuals, like a 'Royal' or 'Olivetti'. If you made a mistake, you either 'x'-ed it out or used a prehistoric version of "White-Out".

This technical angle probably also accounts for what is, really, the second major change between the short story and the novel: nearly all of the italicized words have been changed to normal type. It's quicker that way. The convention was that italicized words should be underlined, which meant backing the platen back the necessary number of spaces and banging away with the right forefinger on the 'underline' key. A laborious process, thankfully now part of history. One can imagine Dick not wanting to go through that chore on a quick rewrite.

But as Dick gets into the heart of the story the rewrite becomes more of a write, the changes more involved with the action. His story is exciting him again. The whole scene of the recreation of the park is considerably rewritten. Dick adds a paragraph beginning, "What next? She examined herself..." on page 110. Which adds a little detail to our knowledge of how a golem works and of Mary's make-up.

A few pages later on page 115 we encounter the problem of the cannonballs. How many cannonballs should there be beside the old cannon in Will and Ted's recreation? Five or Fourteen? In the short story there are 14 but in the novel there are 5. Hmmm. Well how many would there be in a pile of cannonballs? A pile of 5 would be 4 and one in the middle. A pile of 14 would be 4 and one in the middle on a base of 9. The last making a more impressive pile three cannonballs high. So, perhaps Dick thought that as this was a small town they would only have a small pile.

I think in this section -- because immediately following the bit with the cannonballs is the bit with the flagpole -- Dick was shoring up the stability of his characters' recreation of the park, solidifying it in the readers' mind.

Loose ends are tied up. Close to the cannon with its balls is the flagpole. In the short story the question of its whereabouts is discussed and then dropped. The flagpole is left hanging. Dick must've noticed this for on the rewrite he finally locates it through a brief argument between Barton and Christopher. Then the two worry about the flag itself. Is it the Stars and Bars of the South or the Stars and Stripes of the North? This the two drunks resolve by noticing that it's dark and therefore the flag must be *inside*.

And that's the most rewriting so far. Later on PKD will rewrite the climactic battle scene. But before that he delayed the identification of Ormazd with the cosmic figure in the sky until

later in the novel. On a handful of occasions where 'Ormazd' is instanced in the short story, it is replaced by 'He' in the novel until the identification is made by Dr. Meade in the scene where the cosmic battle is discussed. (p132 Berkley)

As for the final textual changes of significance, these occur in the novel's climax and serve to deliver a heightened drama to this scene.

First, the description of Ahriman's filthy, decaying condition is added to the novel:

It fed constantly. It was bloating itself on the things it caught. Its tentacles swept up Wanderers, golems, rats, and snakes indiscriminately. He could see a rubbish heap of cadavers littered through its jelly, in all stages of decomposition. It swept up and absorbed everything, all life, whatever it touched. It turned life into a barren path of filth and ruin and death.

Certainly a dramatic description. And one that is shortly followed by the added material of Barton rolling down the slope fighting off the spiders. Just a slight touch here.

Then, to move this essay towards its conclusion, in the scene where Dr. Meade flees in panic in his station wagon (p165 Berkley) Dick has changed the nature of Meade's coming to a halt from merely stopping in front of the boulder that Barton rolled toward him to actually crashing into same boulder. And he adds a short scene of Ahriman getting larger in all his disgusting proportions. This is quickly followed by the rearranging and rewriting of the scene where Barton explodes into the universe. But to no different effect other than, perhaps, more heightened tension.

It's difficult for me to see these changes as essentially effectual: when a scene is already so well written that it's at it's dramatic peak any rewriting only keeps it there. Perhaps it becomes more rounded with the additional material. The added description of Ahriman serves to set the scale, define the background against which Dr. Meade and Ted Barton have their taut discussion. And the effect of the added changes to the Ted exploding scene is to draw it out, make time pass more slowly, fill in a little more information. I guess you can't gild a lily, but you can give it better lighting.

Now to the end. The most significant alterations of all! This is the scene where Mary (Armaiti) fades away. Here are the relevant passages:

A GLASS OF DARKNESS (p 92): That was the last he saw of her -- already, she was going. Once, he heard her laugh, rich and mellow. It lingered, but she was dissolving rapidly. He blinked, rubbed his eyes, and for a moment turned away.

When he looked again, she was gone.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS (p 178): That was the last he saw of her. Already, she was going. Once, he heard her laugh, rich and mellow. It lingered, but she was dissolving rapidly. Melding with the

ground, the trees, the sparkling bushes and vines. She flowed quickly to them, a liquid river of pure life, absorbing herself into the moist soil. He blinked, rubbed his eyes, and for a moment turned away.

When he looked again she was gone.

The manner of her going away is here completely described. No longer does she just dissolve. She now dissolves into the ground, the trees, the bushes and vines, the soil itself.

But the significance of this to my understanding of the novel is such that I will have to defer its explication to the third section of this essay. Ahem.

And that's it for the textual changes. The only other change of note is in the positioning of the early chapters. Originally the short story begins with Ted Barton and his wife driving through Virginia and continues up to Ted's discovery that his lucky compass has been changed into a piece of dry bread. Followed by the scene of the children playing with the clay in its entirety.

In the novel this is rearranged. First comes one half of the children playing scene, then the material on Barton and his wife, and then the remainder of the children's scene. After this initial repositioning the chapters, despite different breaks, follow each other in tandem.

I think Dick, in *A GLASS OF DARKNESS*, intended the story to sort of slowly drift into weirdness by starting off with this normal couple driving on vacation and follow it with the goleming of the clay by Peter Trilling. But split in two the impact of the clay scene is lost until it is completed. In other words, I can't see that this repositioning had much of an effect. Of course, it introduces the children to the reader first and s/he must keep them in mind. Perhaps on rewriting Dick thought the story needed a teaser.

But, then again, in word-processor retrospect, the prime position of the scene where Mary, watched by Peter, fashions her golems makes me think of the idea that a short story should in its beginning encapsulate the essence of its theme. And taken together the two linked though separate goleming scenes do do this. Mary, who is later identified as the good goddess Armaiti, daughter of Ormazd, first picks up the clay and creates a tiny cow. The watchful Peter, later to be discovered as the evil god Ahriman, then picks up the clay and molds a man. The echoes of this in light of Dick's later religious speculation are what this story is all about. The idea that mankind was created by an evil intelligence that, looking ahead, will occupy Dick in many of his later books, finds its first consideration here.

And that's it! *THE COSMIC PUPPETS* is another draft of the story with Dick filling in the gaps, correcting errors, adding color and tension. Rounding off the rough edges of a work that, until the appearance of this *Satellite*, had likely sat unread for a few years. We can imagine him, as I've done, planning on a mere retype of the story and making small changes as he goes along and then getting caught up in the story and intervening occasionally to make it better, most notably in the scenes of high drama.

Still, such changes as there are do make a difference.

The question in A GLASS OF DARKNESS is who, exactly, is Ted Barton? But at the end of the short story this is none too clear. At the end of THE COSMIC PUPPETS it is more so. And to that we'll turn our attention next.

3. The Cosmic Puppets

For the purposes of writing an essay for this FDO, picking up THE COSMIC PUPPETS is like opening a can of worms. Seemingly innocuous at first glance, this novel when seen backwards from the knowledge of Philip K. Dick's brilliant literary career, takes on, well, the aspect of a can of worms! You pry the thing open and there's all these wiggling ideas that you just *know* will in time, through many coils, lead you straight to VALIS -- the Dicklean Sword hanging over the head of all latter-day reviewers...

But let's ignore VALIS for a while and poke at these wiggles, note at least one of the familiar ideas that Dick employs in THE COSMIC PUPPETS for the first time at 'novel' length.

The golems made by Mary Meade and Peter Trilling at the start of the book prefigure, of course, the androids and simulacra of Dick's later novels. Simple clay figures in composition they are imbued with a fierce aliveness, they don't want to die. For me the early scene where Peter makes two golems, sets them down and they flee in opposite directions, is the most memorable in the book. I'll quote it in part here (p21 Berkley):

"Get it!" Peter ordered sharply. He snatched up the first one, jumped quickly to his feet and hurried after the other. It ran desperately -- straight toward Doctor Meade's station wagon.

As the station wagon started up, the tiny clay figure made a frantic leap. Its tiny arms groped wildly as it tried to find purchase on the smooth metal fender. Unconcerned, the station wagon moved out into traffic, and the tiny figure was left behind, still waving its arms futilely, trying to climb and catch hold of a surface already gone.

Peter caught up with it. His foot came down and the clay man was squashed into a shapeless blob of moist clay.

Walter and Dave and Noaks came slowly over; they approached in a wide, cautious circle. "You got him?" Noaks demanded hoarsely.

"Sure," Peter said. He was already scraping the clay off his shoe, his small face calm and smooth. "Of course I got him. He belonged to me, didn't he?"

Whew! talk about your *Deus* caught in the act of absconding! This image in the profane knowledge of hindsight sums up all the humanity that Dick ever put into any of his stories. These figures are alive -- and immediately know they're in trouble! But let's look at what's happening here in light of our knowledge of PKD's later religious speculation, though realising, naturally, that if we were to have read A GLASS OF DARKNESS back in 1956, we'd have had only the evidence of the short stories to clue us in to what's going on.

After reading many of his novels, we know, if only dimly on my part at least, that Dick was concerned with the meaning of *created*

life. The relationship between a thing and its creator, it's god. For Dick, the conventional idea that the Creator is good and its creation divine was not enough. the fact of evil must be explained.

In THE COSMIC PUPPETS he first gives us the idea, later much worried on, that we are the product of an evil god, a demiurge. Let's look closely at the goleming scene at the start of the book.

We have a group of children playing with clay. One, Mary, is far ahead of the rest and rapidly fashions a clay goat, a horse, a cow, all animals and all inert. She is watched by Peter who, once she leaves says, "I'll play" and picks up Mary's discarded cow. Affronted by his action one of the other children asks him, "Who said you could play?" Peter responds, "It's my yard." He then molds a tiny figure. "What is it?" Walter demanded. "It's a man." said Peter.

This can be taken analogously with the Biblical account of creation where God first made the animals and then man out of clay. He then breathed life into man and gave him free will. In THE COSMIC PUPPETS, though, we have *children* doing the creating -- the offspring of something else. And, although it is Mary who molds the first inanimate objects, it is Peter who brings them to life and imbues them with a spurious free will. Significantly, this act of creation occurs in his own back yard.

We find out later that Peter is evil personified and is actually fighting it out at various levels with Mary, who personifies good.

So what we have then, with Mary and Peter as the demiurges, is a creative originator -- Mary -- who fashions only inanimate matter, watched by Peter who copies her, takes her idea and brings it to life. But this creation is always in Peter's control: it's his yard, he made them, so therefore he can do as he wills with his own products.

I'm not sure how this notion of creation would be defined, but the idea that life is created in the realm of an evil demiurge -- as indeed the fake town of Millgate was created -- is an unsettling one, and one Dick sorted out in several ways. In VALIS and THE DIVINE INVASION and probably other novels, he works this out happily by having a saviour god break in to this warped creation and bail his characters out -- maybe. But in yet other novels, notably A MAZE OF DEATH and PALMER ELDRITCH, the future of the characters is more ambiguous.

Structurally the novel is an analogy in three parts. On the upper level we have the antique deities locked in their cosmic struggle. In the middle there's all the Wanderers and humans trying to figure out what's going on. On the bottom there's the insects, golems and vermin, minnions of the two human analogs of the gods: Peter Trilling and Mary Meade. And to bring this analogy to life, Dick introduces the dynamics of intelligent creation, as mentioned above.

As for the plot it hinges on the mystery of who Ted Barton is and what exactly are those frozen deities doing in the sky.

All is resolved, satisfactorily enough, by identification: Dr. Meade is the god Ormazd who is asleep, unconscious of his true

nature. Peter Trilling is the god Ahriman, Ormazd's evil opposite, malignantly aware but limited to the consciousness of a small boy. Mary Meade is Armaiti, Ormazd's daughter, also aware but limited by being alone. The children, really, face identical problems -- each other. The dualist standoff. The Wanderers turn out to be the old inhabitants of the occluded town. Ted Barton. Well. Ted Barton... is Ted Barton. There's nothing changed about him. He stays the same.

But why? Everything is changed around him. Even the nature of the cosmic struggle. Why isn't Ted Barton changed? *Who is Ted Barton?*

There's at least two possibilities.

The first is that he is exactly what he is, an ordinary man who remains so. In this case he has significantly lost his identity. He's been stripped of his societal ties and can only truly say of himself that he exists. He is alone. His wife he has lost along with his past. He is any man, every man, and like most of the rest of us he doesn't know what's going on. The common condition; Dick's standard protagonist. Yet it's interesting to note that of all the characters in the book he's the only one that isn't someone else. I find this interesting because it makes me think of the other Dick protagonists in the later novels. Are they all one character? Is Ted Barton Nemo, the man who is no one and everyone?

For the second possibility we must now return to the latter part of the second part of this awkward tripart essay. To where I said that by the end of COSMIC PUPPETS the matter of Ted Barton's identity would be clearer. The reason for this being the added material on Armaiti's dissolution where she melds into the fields, the trees, the earth.

From this material we learn more about Armaiti and by default more about Barton. For she can now be identified with the religious archetype best represented by the Egyptian sky goddess 'Nut' whose arching body is the vault of the sky bent over her brother 'Geb', the earth. The two are locked in intimate embrace. She represents the infinite sphere, the thing to be experienced, while he is the winged heart, the experiencing point. Thus Barton's realisation and regret at the end of the novel that Armaiti, with whom he's falling in love, is unattainable. Yet he can never forget her, reminders are everywhere. In a sense, due to his innocence, Barton is like a god himself, the counterpart of Armaiti.

As to which of these possibilities I prefer, well, I'm not sure. I appreciate a balanced structure so the second choice is attractive but, then again, I'm intrigued by the possibilities of the first possibility... It all depends where you want to take it. I'm not sure a choice even applies. I feel I do PKD slight service analyzing his novels in this fashion. Egyptian gods. Arcane references! But, still, he's the one who dragged in Zoroastrianism!

So. One wiggle of this many-wormed monster stomped down squirming and too many more to go. It only remains to refer to Barb's essay which follows to note that THE COSMIC PUPPETS can be approached in a more fruitful light, that of philosophical proving ground.

Note: All the information for the first part of the above essay was gleaned from the Philip K. Dick Society Newsletter, Paul Williams' *Only Apparentlly Real*, Lawrence Sutin's *Divine Invasion*, Gregg Rickman's *To The high Castle* and Lester Del Rey's *The World of Science Fiction: The History of a Subculture*. Any errors are probably mine.

Dave Hyde.

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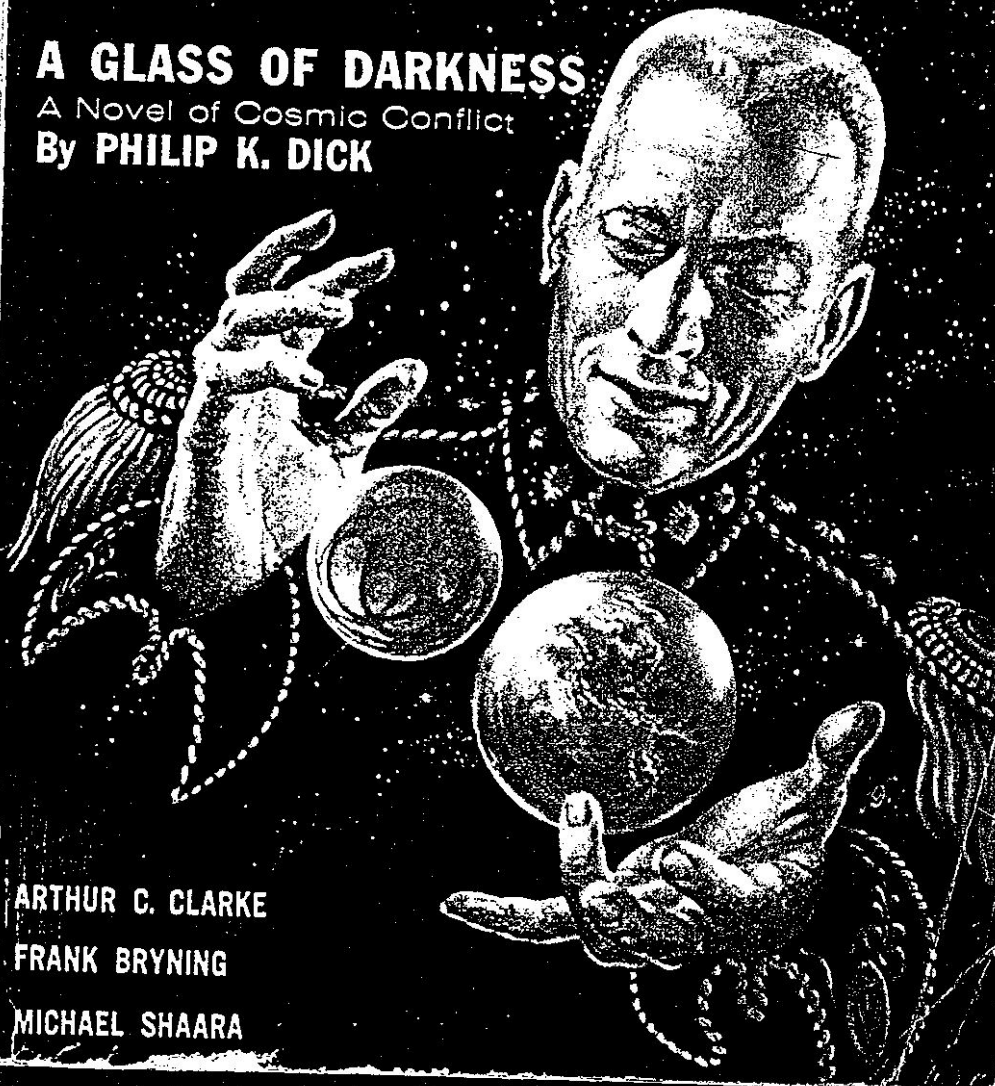
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THE COSMIC PUPPETS

by

Barb Mourning Child

When I first read THE COSMIC PUPPETS a few years ago I thought it lacked the depth of Dick's later novels. And when I was given the task of writing a critique, I wondered if I could come up with anything beyond the obvious. I read it again a few weeks ago, this time with more scrutiny. Dick had blown my mind with what I discovered in THE WORLD JONES MADE so I knew not to take this book lightly. THE COSMIC PUPPETS proved to be a mind boggler too. Once again I had to put my mind through calisthenics to find a deeper meaning in the novel.

His first novel! I thought, this being his first book, it would contain less intellectual diversions and hidden symbolism. I was wrong. It turned out to be a philosophical maze! The story depicts the history of Western dualist thought from its origins in ancient Zoroastrianism to the modern day dialectical theories. Dick creates a story that reflects the religions and ideologies of our society, a story of our reality as it would be if the ideologies were taken literally and objectively.

Luckily he gave us some clues. The most obvious being the names of the predominant spirits, Ormazd and Ahriman. This gives us the connection to the Zoroastrian myth. I think Dick hoped that once we had acknowledged this association we'd realise the rest -- the whole story is based on the dialectic dualism of Western civilization.

Structurally, the book is hinged on the Zoroastrian myth of two archetypal beings, one good and the other evil. The myth expresses the dual nature of human perception and includes our persistent hope for a Saviour who will abolish evil and make a heaven on earth. The Judeo-Christian theology may have been greatly influenced by Zoroastrianism which arose in ancient Baghdad when it was a major center of commerce. I believe Philip K. Dick felt Zoroastrianism to be the origin of dualistic ideology because THE COSMIC PUPPETS, being the effigy of dualism, is rooted in this myth.

We know that Dick meant for us to compare the story with the myth because he had Dr. Meade give a brief summary of the myth when he described his interpretation and understanding of the situation in Millgate on page 132 of the Berkley edition: There are two opposing spirits, Ormazd is the spirit of light and good -- the builder. Ahriman is the spirit of darkness and evil -- the wrecker. Ormazd creates and Ahriman distorts. These two entities have agreed to spend thousands of years fighting each other for control of Creation.

But, adding to what Dr. Meade said, there is a saviour in the old Zoroastrian myth called Gayomart, or the Blessed Man. Gayomart was the one who would help Ormazd destroy Ahriman. He is also the judeo-Christian Saviour, the holy one who will come and save the world, the Christ.

At some point in their struggle Ahriman rent the sky and came to earth. The sky closed and he found himself trapped in the material universe until the end of time: Ormazd, following, had cast Ahriman and his demons into a hell in the center of the earth. But it was too late, Creation was already corrupt and distorted by Ahriman. He remains, in the myth, within the material realm to continue his abominable work until the resurrection of the Final Body when all is made good once more. This myth, which is similar to the Christian Book of Revelation, is the basic plot of THE COSMIC PUPPETS.

The Creation myth is shown at the beginning of the book where Mary created animals out of clay. Then Peter comes along and distorts her creation. This is how the Zoroastrian myth starts with the Creator creating and the Distorter distorting.

There is a daughter in the myth, but this daughter just didn't seem to match the character of Mary in THE COSMIC PUPPETS. So I figured Dick must not have stuck too close to the original myth. But there is another female character, Spandarmatis, who is Ormazd's wife and who has a multifaceted role of wife, mother and daughter. Spand-Armatis or Mary also represents the typical feminine attributes of nature or Mother Earth; the regenerative force. She is the Vay or Void, the instrument of creation for the god Ormazd. Her like can be found in many myths; she is the Christian mother, the Virgin Mary and Pallas Athene, the Greek goddess of wisdom and war, the protector of heroes.

Mary is versatile. In the end she becomes fluid and everlasting. Dick gave much to this character, making her encompass all facets of the female essence. He eliminated any negative connotations completely. He was kind to woman in this book, giving her image respect.

The myth tells about the whore who lures Ahriman into the final battle with Ormazd. Unfortunately, in their appropriation of the myth, the Judeo-Christians gave the term whore a negative connotation. This led, inevitably, to woman being blamed for starting the battle between good and evil. Instead of questioning the existence of evil these short-sighted theologians stopped short at the translation of the word whore and made Eve guilty of the Fall of man. They did not go on to acknowledge the eventual outcome of the cosmic battle which brought about the resurrection of the Final Body, the heaven on Earth.

Dick, with the character of Mary, changes this image of woman, going beyond the biases of the predominant Western ideals. He saw that although the woman was called the whore in the Zoroastrian myth, she was a positive force for the eventual outcome of humanity. Without her Ahriman never would have been defeated, he would have remained in the material realm and continued to distort everything. In realising this, Dick removed the burden placed on woman by the Judeo-Christian ideology which blamed her for the

Fall. Dick set woman free from original sin and put her in a more proper perspective. Instead of giving the whore a negative connotation, he made her righteous. He made the noble and virtuous Mary play the whore when she provoked Peter into battle. Instead of woman being responsible for the downfall of humanity, she plays a significant role in its redemption.

One final point before I leave the Zoroastrian myth to go on to other philosophical ideologies depicted in THE COSMIC PUPPETS. As you have probably realised by now, Ted Barton is Gayomart, the Blessed Man, Christ. But he is also something else. He is the natural man, the man who is not contaminated by the change that reified Millgate. He is man before the Fall. The non-reified man who was not present when the change or reification took place. He is free from the assumptions and biases of those who are distorted.

As can be expected, Dick expressed other philosophical and sociological ideas in this work. The main theme of the book is the history of the dualist concept. The Zoroastrian myth is used as the basic skeleton of the book and expresses the dualistic ideology of Western religions. Religious dualism between good and evil is shown with the myth itself as the overall structure. The philosophical dualism, the dialectic theories, emerge with the interactions of the story. Just as our philosophical thought has expanded from its origins, the storyline changes to encompass and address the dualism of today.

There are many dualist and dialectic theorists. Dick probably studied them all. I have chosen Hegel as my reference because he is the one with whom I am most familiar. Hegel developed a method which he applied to the mind whereby consciousness in realizing itself abolishes itself by creating its own negation, and as a result passes into a higher mode of unity with its opposite. Eventually the human spirit and the world spirit, out of the act of definite negation, will evolve to a state of absolute knowledge or pure truth. Absolute knowledge is the truth of all modes of consciousness because it is only reached when the object of its knowledge and the subject of certainty are completely resolved.

The dialectic method by which an idea (thesis) is challenged by its opposite (antithesis) then reconciled into a new idea (synthesis) is applied by Hegel to both the human spirit and the world spirit. He believed the human spirit and the world spirit evolved together through a dialectical history of conflict and synthesis. In essence, this is the same as the Judeo-Christian and Zoroastrian belief in two opposing forces battling until a new and better world evolves. When consciousness realises absolute knowledge it enters the realm of pure thought, which is ultimate truth stripped of the husk of ego. Here is God in His eternal essence before the creation of nature and finite spirit.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS is symbolic of this process of dialectic history. It represents the struggle of consciousness as it tries to transcend the objective false reality to replace it with the ideal subjective reality. Ormazd is the thesis, Ahriman the antithesis and the Millgate that Ted Barton remembers is the synthesis. The definite negation is all the action in Millgate which leads to the realisation of the pure truth when Dr. Meade transformed into the symbol of absolute knowledge, Ormazd. When Dick describes this

transformation. he mentions the husk of Meade's human form left behind. Meade has transformed into the God of Light and has become the essence of absolute knowledge. And by having Ormazd take Barton up with him, he takes our consciousness into this realm of pure thought where it dangles in the ultimate creative space.

At this point, held by his heel in space, Barton experiences Christ consciousness. He is become the Hanged Man, the crucified Christ. He is made aware of the sacred energy that pulses through all existence. The unconscious is now made conscious. In doing this, Dick has awakened both the human spirit and the world spirit to true consciousness. He has turned around society's values and brought equilibrium to the duality in reality. Out of the negation came the true reality as it should have been if it had not been distorted.

Dick depicts the conflict we experience between subjective and objective reality most clearly when Ted Barton first entered Millgate and found that his subjective memory was different from the Millgate he experienced in the objective reality. The characters are continually faced with this dilemma. Especially the Wanderers! They are outcast from Ahriman's distortion and spend their lives trying to bring back the memory of their objective reality. They have a lot of trouble living in the distortion, they must close their eyes to blot it out and count their steps. The Wanderers represent the thought processes of our mind. They are lost, confused and distorted. They search in a blind void for absolute knowledge, the true reality, but they just can't remember it.

Now we come to the part of the book where Dick addresses the philosophy of Marx, the next step in the history of dualist thought.

The resemblance to Marxism in THE COSMIC PUPPETS is apparant and may be what first raised the ears of the Thought Police and provoked them to use SS-type spying harassment on him later. But Dick was no pinko. He went far beyond that level of argument; he knew it wouldn't end there. Although he does not address the socio-economic class conflict as the dialectic force at work in our reality, he doesn't ignore the economic factor altogether. He uses it in the setting as part of the distortion.

The part of the real town that Ted missed most was the park. This has significance as it is the symbol of the Garden of Eden, the paradise before the Fall. In the distorted Millgate the park was replaced by old, rotting and deserted stores: the symbols of the old structure of capitalism. To bring back the park was an important step in bringing back the true reality. It was the first step. Dick felt we should replace the old rotting capitalist structure with something natural. And with this symbolic transformation he acknowledges the part capitalism plays in distorting reality and the importance of replacing it. But he knows that the larger conflict is between our ideal of what reality should be and the objective reality we experience.

The major similarity of THE COSMIC PUPPETS to Marxism is that what Philip Dick did with Zoroastrianism, Marx did with Hegel. He brought the myth into reality. Where Hegel used abstract and historical ideas to support his dialectic method, Marx applied the

method to the reality of capitalist industrialization. He turned Hegel's ideological theory from abstract concepts of spirit and thought into the experienced reality of capitalism. He brought the idea into reality. When Dick made the gods human and alive, he brought the Zoroastrian myth into the reality of the story. When the gods became real, the subjective united with the objective, the abstract became concrete. The myth now existed, was real!

This is where Dick was exceptionally creative in his scenario -- the gods existed on one level as omnipotent deities and on another level as humans, therefore we have a clear rendition of our own experiencing psyche: We all have an overwhelming feeling that there are mysterious, external omnipotent forces of good and evil controlling our reality. We also experience good and evil influences through social interaction. They appear as character traits in ourselves and in others. When we think about it we realise that our myths are reflections of our realities.

At first Ted Barton was not aware of what had happened to Millgate. He even questioned his own sanity and true identity. In the distorted reality he had died when he was a boy. It was Peter who took Ted up to his secret place where he revealed to Ted the reason for the distortion. Peter enlightened Ted to the dual between good and evil, he brought the abstract into concrete reality showing the true proportion of the conflict. This scene, on pages 58-61 of the novel, brings to mind the image of Satan tempting Christ on the mountain top. This is where Satan revealed the truth of the world to Christ, offering the world as his Kingdom, because once the truth is known you have the power to rule. Ted, like Jesus, was repulsed by what Peter showed him. He was determined to leave Peter behind. Like Christ, Ted became aware of the dimensions of evil and turned away from it.

The deity Ahriman is Peter Trilling, in the book a small boy. He is afraid. He creates things that harm others. He has no self-realization, he is just there to distort. Although he seems harmless and vulnerable he is very powerful. This character represents the existing social structure. He is the monster that nips at our heels while we are fighting to free ourselves from its domain. He is humanity not yet aware of absolute knowledge or true consciousness; the distortion he created is the false reality of false consciousness. The townspeople of Millgate whose reality is this distortion are the bourgeois who perpetuate the illusion of false consciousness.

We have come to the point where I feel I should explain the sociological conflict according to Georg Lukacs and show the profound similarity of this Philip Dick story to Lukacs ideological theory as set forth in his book *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*.

Western society experienced a dramatic reification during the Industrial Revolution. This change caused a separation of man from nature. Because we are separated from nature we are estranged from our natural selves and God. We live in a false reality created by capitalism, a reality of commodities and fetishes, and a distorted idea of the meaning of life.

There are three forms of consciousness in Lukacs' theory: false consciousness, class consciousness, and true consciousness. False consciousness is the conscious awareness of only the false reality and the acceptance of this false reality as being true. Those who have class consciousness realise that a contradiction in reality exists but are unaware of the solution, they cannot go beyond the false reality and try to work within it. Those who have true consciousness transcend the barriers of the false reality, they realise true consciousness and create a new true reality.

In the story Millgate is a place where there is an objective reality which is not the true reality because something had come along and changed it. The only hope for the characters in the story is to realise that the real Millgate had been distorted and to remember what the true town was really like. This reification of Millgate represents the change to humanity when capitalist socialization evolved. A false reality was created and humanity faced the problem of transcending the reified reality. The only way to transcend this false reality is to obtain true consciousness; the awareness of the falseness of reality and the ability to realise the absolute truth.

True consciousness is difficult to obtain. Most people are socialized to have narrow prejudices and strict biases concerning the accepted reality. Like the stalled lumber truck, the maze where Peter twisted Ted up in time, consciousness is twisted up in time. Our history and institutions hold our consciousness in a maze of time in the form of expected behaviour, customs and traditions. So time is a barrier to obtaining true consciousness. It holds consciousness inside the false reality with imposed institutions and a static social structure.

It is essential to acquire true consciousness. To do this we must transcend the limitations imposed by society and redefine the nature of reality. Social and behavioural scientists believe that the way to acquire true consciousness can be found in the non-reified man -- the natural man before the capitalist reification.

Dick shows this ideology clearly. Millgate had undergone a reification and the reality was distorted. Millgate had changed while Ted Barton was away, he had moved before the change occurred and was not distorted. Barton is the non-reified man, the missing link to self-knowledge.

Since it is so difficult to obtain true consciousness, the major struggle for most people is to obtain class consciousness. Lukacs points out that the term 'class consciousness' implies a class-conditioned unconsciousness of one's own socio-economic condition. The term 'class' is a false-conscious idea supporting the class structure. So class consciousness is tainted with false consciousness because it is a consciousness arrived at within the social structure of a false reality.

This is the level of consciousness the Wanderers express. They knew that there had been a change and that they were different from the distorted townspeople. But they continued to live within the fringes of the distortion as outcasts. The Wanderers have class consciousness. They are aware of the false reality but are not fully enlightened with true consciousness. They only have vague

memories of how the true reality used to be. They want to control Peter rather than get rid of him completely. Conscious of the distortion, they don't know how to change it and can no longer function normally in this false reality. The Wanderers are Marx's ghosts, they show how phantom objectivity works. The relationship between the distorted townspeople and the Wanderers is one of phantom objectivity. The Wanderers are seen as things rather than people.

Lukacs described the reified consciousness as hopelessly trapped at the two extremes of crude empiricism and abstract utopianism. A person with the consciousness of crude empiricism would be a completely passive observer moving in obedience to laws over which he has no control. To exist in a consciousness of abstract utopianism is to regard oneself as a power able to master the essentially meaningless motion of objects. Dick shows both of these types of reified consciousness in the story. Dr. Meade, the rest of the distortions, Will Christopher, and the Wanderers are crude empiricists trying to live and adjust to the distortion. Peter is the abstract utopian. He, along with his golems, rats, spiders and snakes represent the capitalists of Big Business, their politicians and their enforcers. Strangely enough, Mary too is an abstract utopian, only her power to master the motion of objects is not meaningless. This reveals a quality in the nature of abstract utopianism that Lukacs had missed.

Will Christopher represents both the will of the workers and the lumpenproletariat -- Marx's "refuse of all classes", the unemployed, the displaced and dispossessed. Will used to have his own business before the change and is, then, one of the petty bourgeoisie who've lost their small businesses due to Big Business predation. He was also an electrician, a skilled worker, before the change and represents all the unemployed workers. He then becomes one of the homeless, degenerating as he tries to live in the distorted society.

Will, although a drunken bum living in a cardboard box, knows that his world is distorted and that he is too. He has class consciousness: he lives within the false reality of false consciousness. Aware of the distortion he is unable to create the true reality. He tries to reconstruct it by his labor but the distortion deteriorates all his work. He develops the Spell Remover, a device to bring back the true reality. Then finds that it doesn't work either. With this example Dick is telling us that our technologies are useless in effecting the complete change.

Ted Barton had to work with Will before he could bring back a substantial part of the old, non-reified reality. Together they brought back the park. The symbol of the working force and the lumpenproletariat. Will Christopher, must unite with true consciousness. Ted Barton, before it can turn back capitalism. Will had the desire to bring back the true Millgate, he just needed true consciousness to help him to do it.

Ted and Will solved the materialist dilemma which questions whether the objective is or can be independent of the subjective. In THE COSMIC PUPPETS the will of humanity and true consciousness, both subjective concepts, bring back the true objective reality. The subjective thoughts of Ted and Will were in unity with the objective reality.

Ted Barton as a saviour? The Wanderers mistrust of Barton brings us face to face with the problem of following a proposed Christ. Can we trust him? Many are those who trusted in false prophets and were led to death or futility. Is Ted Barton a false prophet and how do we tell? Dick points out that even Barton doesn't know. He wasn't campaigning for any god. He doesn't even know his god. All he can say for himself is that he is honestly seeking for the true Millgate and for his own identity. We do know that Barton brought back the park, he replaced the old rotting stores with a garden of Eden. Perhaps we should judge a prophet by his deeds, by the fruit of his labor. It's like looking in a glass darkly. Life is a riddle.

Mary as Mother Earth, the natural objective reality, plays a significant role in the Dick dialectic model. Peter or Ahriman is allowed to distort reality but when he attacks Mary, the battle rages forth. This attack on Mary is symbolic of the attack of industrialization on Mother Earth. With this symbology Dick shows us an important factor in our own distorted reality: the pollution and environmental destruction caused by the modern capitalist society affects us too. Only the unity of our ideal reality with nature, the wholistic approach, will save humanity.

Mary becomes a golem. She became one of Peter's creatures, but she did not turn evil, she was still Mary. This point is essential: she must become one of his creatures. The golems are Peter's army. Mary, in this instance, represents empathy and love, essential motivators for humanity to take control and create a better reality. In essence, Dick is telling us that the soldiers and enforcers of the false reality must become human and fight for humanity instead of against it. But to do this they need empathy and love. Mary, again symbolising the infusion of love, must save Ted Barton at the crisis of the book. Ted, the symbol of true consciousness, was just about defeated in his recreation -- even the tire iron had turned back to a ball of string -- but was saved by Mary's intervention.

The existentialist idea that we have made our own history and are responsible for our reality puts us in a position where reality can be understood as our own action. We question our reality. It sparks a new consciousness. Dick clearly understood this view of reality and made it a major theme in his other works. In THE COSMIC PUPPETS this concept comes through with his characters: their actions brought back the true reality. The unity of their thoughts and actions upon the objective reality made the true Millgate reappear.

One major definite negation in the book is the contradiction of the Wanderers. They are the proletariat, the political force that would accomplish the downfall of capitalism. They experience a different reality than the simulated reality of the distortions and contradict that reality. They are the evidence of its distortion.

According to Lukacs, the true reality can be brought about with the conscious deeds of the proletariat. But until the proletariat has achieved true consciousness and the ability to understand the crisis fully, it cannot go beyond mere criticism of the reification. The conscious acts of the Wanderers helped to return the true reality. When Ted Barton came and gave them true consciousness of their reality, he told them the truth. It was then that the Wanderers went beyond the reified world and became a positive force.

On page 149 of the novel, Dick describes an archaic, timeless process of magic called M-Kinetics. This is sympathetic magic and consists of making an accurate representation of an object and considering it to be the object itself. Any difference between them is purely logical. The Wanderers use symbolic representation and a lot of hard work keeping records of all that they can remember of their reality before the change. Yet it is not enough, all their efforts fail.

Dick is pointing out that academic theorizing and scientific method will still fail. All efforts fail until Mary as the golem stimulates Barton to wake up her father, Dr. Meade, to realisation of his true self.

Dr. Meade represents the intelligentsia. He knows about the change but does nothing to turn it back. He recognizes the contradiction and he tries to help the victims of the false reality, the Wanderers, but he does not want to change the social structure which created the Wanderers in the first place. He accepts the false reality because he lives comfortably within it.

Dick shows us that the intelligentsia are the most important agent of the change. He makes them the god of light. He places human destiny in their hands. There comes a point in the story where everything is failing. Even Ted Barton, the non-reified man, was losing control of reality. They were all being defeated. Their only hope was that Dr. Meade would realise who he really was, otherwise the battle was lost. Meade did not want to become aware of his true identity because it meant his own demise. The intelligentsia do not want to realise their role in bringing about a new reality because they fear a loss of status. The catalyst that made Meade realise that he must give up the false reality was the death of Mary (Mother Earth). Then when Ted Barton confronted him with his true identity he could not deny it. When the intelligentsia are confronted with true consciousness, they will no longer be able to cling to the false reality.

When the true reality was realised and the old distortion abolished, things changed to the way they would have been if the reification had not taken place. Will Christopher does not remember anything at the end of the book. Consciousness, in eliminating Ahriman or evil, has no memory of it even existing. Evil is no longer a conscious memory to us.

THE COSMIC PUPPETS was written to show historical dialectics in action. In a sense our ideology is a definite negation of our civilization. Our reality contradicts the democratic ideals of freedom and equality. In essence Dick shows how philosophical ideologies fit in with our modern reality. The battle between good and evil occurs in human and abstract forms. Although socio-economic conflict theory is similar, Dick depicts the conflict as being between a distorted social structure and true consciousness. When the war is fought for control of the Earth, and the battle is won, the Earth will be rejuvenated and society reconstructed. And like Will Christopher we won't be aware of it ever having happened.

One last point before I finish this critique. I cannot stress enough the importance of Dick's decision to change the image of woman. During my own studies of Western dualism I have found myself becoming defensive. I felt it was unjust to make woman the symbol

of the negative pole of dualism. The duality is between good and evil/ positive and negative/ spirit and matter. Man is the good, positive, and spiritual aspect. Woman is the evil, negative, and material aspect. I asked myself: Why is woman made the symbol of evil or the negative force? Because she is the bearer of children? Because she reminds man that he is not a spiritual entity, he is an animal with animalistic drives?

It seems that Dick may have tripped over this same stumbling block and solved the dilemma. He realized that the problem was with the transference of the dualism of religion to the dualism of science. The opposites of good and evil do not fit the opposites of spirit and matter. The subjective reality and the objective reality cannot be completely good or evil, only actions can be so. The sacred and profane are ideas of the human mind. So Dick expelled the two gods from the consciousness of his characters, eliminating the flaw of dualist ideology. When evil is removed the subjective unites with the objective, the objective reality is no longer seen as something evil opposing man. Matter loses it's profanity!

To sum it all up, THE COSMIC PUPPETS is an exploration of dualist thought from Zoroastrianism to Marxism and beyond. The Zoroastrian myth served as the skeletal structure and reflected the religious dualism between God and Satan. The scientific dualism of mind and matter is shown in the story with the problems the characters face trying to adjust the objective reality to their subjective ideals.

Hegel's dialectic method has been incorporated in the story as the struggle of the characters to bring themselves and the world spirit to the realm of pure thought. Then Dick turns Zoroastrianism upside down as Marx turned Hegel upside down, he brought the myth to life, making the abstract concrete. As he does this, he also expresses the Marxist theory according to Lukacs. Millgate is a miniature replica of our social reality. It has been reified by an omnipotent force and has become a false reality. Some of the inhabitants are a part of the distortion and perpetuate it. Others live in it but know it is distorted. All exhibit some form of false consciousness; they have not achieved a true conscious state. People are alienated from nature and each other. The earth is being attacked by industry's pollution. Lives are being destroyed. But all is not lost! There is a way.

Dick outlines the solution in THE COSMIC PUPPETS. First we must make the abstract concrete. We cannot ignore the distortion but we can change it with true consciousness. The petty bourgeoisie, the workers, and the lumpenproletariats must strive for true consciousness and express a strong will to bring about the change. The old rotting structure of the commodity regime must be replaced with a more natural reality. The image of woman must change, she must become a righteous comrade and the driving force in the battle to resurrect humanity. Those who wander aimlessly in false consciousness and know there is a distortion must realize the true reality and actively change the false reality. Unfortunately, as in THE COSMIC PUPPETS, it may take the destruction of Mother Earth to spark this change.

When the true reality begins to appear we can expect the Beast to become insecure and angry. The Beast will use all of its power to keep reality distorted. All will seem lost. Then the human emotions of love and caritas will enter the soldiers of the Beast, the tide will turn. The intelligensia will realize true consciousness, they will realize that they hold the answer - humanity is God. We are the creators of reality.

— Barb, 7-92

