

## February 2022 Entry (The Great Rupty Gupty - Cosmicism in GGDM)

“Not to be confused with Cosmism. Cosmicism is the literary philosophy developed and used by the American writer H. P. Lovecraft in his weird fiction. Lovecraft was a writer of philosophically intense horror stories that involve occult phenomena like astral possession and alien miscegenation, and the themes of his fiction over time contributed to the development of this philosophy. The philosophy of cosmicism states ‘that there is no recognizable divine presence, such as a god, in the universe, and that humans are particularly insignificant in the larger scheme of intergalactic existence.’ The most prominent theme is humanity’s fear of their insignificance in the face of an incomprehensibly large universe: a fear of the cosmic void.” – from Wikipedia article, “[Cosmicism](#).”

The Blue Fleet commander was very concerned as they approached the destination starsystem; a vast piece of cosmic darkness had been following and gaining on them at faster-than-light speed for several days. And since ships moving between stars are effectively [faster than light missiles](#), there was nothing she could do to avoid the approaching pursuer who seemed timed to arrive in the destination system with the Blue Fleet.

It was time, the combat crew was awakened from their long slumber and plugged into their battle stations. A crack in the universe opened and the Blue Fleet spilled into the destination system moving toward the target Red Colony. They were met almost immediately by two large Red Fleet [Carriers](#) moving to [intercept](#), when suddenly, the living darkness caught them and passing the Blue Fleet, it inhaled the two Red Carriers. The [self-destruct](#) on one of the Red Carriers exploded in a flash of light a moment before it disappeared into the Great Rupty Gupty.

The Blue Fleet evaded and turned to port as sensors showed the gross creature moving directly toward the Red Colony which was the target of the Blue Fleet’s combat movement. The commanders and combat crew watched in helpless horror as the Great Rupty Gupty slowly enveloped the colony planet, consuming it, while the Blue Fleet took up position for what would probably be a futile defense of the Blue Colony in the system, should the creature desire a dessert after its meal.

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The Great Rupty Gupty rested contentedly in the light of a sun that its kind had never visited. It watched with amusement as the orbital configuration of the system descended into chaos in the absence of two former colonized planets and the gravitational effect of its’ great body mass. As it rested, drifting in and out of

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awareness, the Great Rupty Gupty re-dreamt of how it was sent into the wilderness, alone from its own kind, because the priests of its kind feared that the Rupty Gupty was so attractive to others of its kind that it would cause others to commit inproprieties of trespass. Yet, for all their imposturing, none followed Rupty into exile on account of attractiveness.

Tiny creatures of the sort which inhabited the planets Gupty had consumed were unknown to Rupty's kin – they didn't get out much in the universe, being tightly woven around the One and Only to which they were bound and borne. The discovery of the tiny creatures and their ships would alone make Gupty an extraordinary explorer among its kind, to be remembered long after the asinine Priests had been consumed by the One and Only, forgotten. Yet Rupty was trapped in this system and growing restless; something about this system prevented Gupty from opening an escape to the next star.

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Generations later, a Green [Scout Ship](#) opened a rift arriving in search of the fate of the isolated and long-lost to orbital-disintegraton chaos Green Colony located on a small planet that Rupty thought was not consumable. The Scout Ship was destroyed as it was rudely shoved aside by Gupty's frenzied escape from the system.

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“Though personally irreligious, Lovecraft used various ‘gods’ in his stories, particularly the Cthulhu-related tales, to expound cosmicism. However, Lovecraft never conceived of them as supernatural, but extraterrestrials who understand and obey a set of natural laws which to human understanding seem magical. These beings (the Great Old Ones, Outer Gods and others) – though dangerous to humankind – are portrayed as neither good nor evil, and human notions of morality have no significance for these beings. Indeed, they exist in cosmic realms beyond human understanding. As a symbol, this is representative of the kind of universe that Lovecraft believed in. Though some of these beings have – and in some cases create – cults to honor them, to the vast majority of these beings the human race is so insignificant that they aren't given any consideration whatsoever.” – from Wikipedia article, “Cosmicism.”

I do not know how the Rupty story ends, I dreamt it or it occurred to me in a semi-conscious state while I was quarantined at home due to COVID. But the story does not need an ending, perhaps none know how it ends. It is offered here as an example of what a Concierge might be able to do with Intervention Potentials to inject something weird into a game that is perhaps dragging.

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Hopefully the Concierge of that game is a much more gifted writer than I, who tend to be rather plain and direct.

Why is Gupty called great, praytell? Listen to [Megadeth](#):

When you kill a man, you're a murderer,  
Kill many and you're a conqueror,  
Kill them all, and you're a god!  
- "[Captive Honor](#)" (1992).

The players won't be happy about it, but Gupty doesn't need their permission! In fact, doesn't even care or comprehend. And neither did the Concierge; players must allow that bad things – sometimes really big bad things – must happen in the game to make a story as discussed at length throughout GGDM. This might be a Pull or Prose Intervention if the Concierge wants to tell a story of something past, create a background and a looming threat or mystery in the game. This story might also be applied through the use of several Poke Interventions (timing is key, depending on the order of Red, Blue and Green's turns in the cycle and whether the ships in question are actually en route or arriving) to interrupt the potential combat, and create the destruction of two colony planets (the game's Starlog will need to be adjusted as well).

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“Though cosmicism appears deeply pessimistic, H.P. Lovecraft thought of himself as neither a pessimist nor an optimist but rather a ‘scientific’ or ‘cosmic’ indifferentist, a theme expressed in his fiction. In Lovecraft’s work, human beings are often subject to powerful beings and other cosmic forces, but these forces are not so much malevolent as they are indifferent toward humanity. This indifference is an important theme in cosmicism. The noted Lovecraft scholar S. T. Joshi asserts that ‘Lovecraft constantly engaged in (more or less) genial debates on religion with several colleagues, notably the pious writer and teacher Maurice W. Moe. Lovecraft was a strong and antireligious atheist; he considered religion not merely false but dangerous to social and political progress.’ As such, Lovecraft’s cosmicism is not religious at all, but rather a version of his mechanistic materialism. Lovecraft thus embraced a philosophy of cosmic indifferentism. He believed in a meaningless, mechanical, and uncaring universe that human beings, with their naturally limited faculties, could never fully understand. His viewpoint made no allowance for religious beliefs which could not be supported scientifically. The incomprehensible, cosmic forces of his tales have as little regard for humanity as humans have for insects.” – from Wikipedia article, “Cosmicism.”

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There is a thread of cosmicism winding through GGDM (along with anti-natalism and terror management theory) and certainly could seep into a game depending on the mood and preferences of the participants; GGDM provides plenty of playspace for whatever may come. It would be truly strange and horrifying if I were somehow a 'reincarnation' of [H.P. Lovecraft](#), but GGDM in both gameplay and macrosociology (or macrosocial philosophy if you like), seems to have situated at some point between [Ludwig Mises](#)' axiomatic approach and [methodological dualism](#) (via Prof. Clarence Marsh Case) and Lovecraftian cosmicism in macrosocially describing human reality.

Oddly, I was never a Lovecraft fan; in my youth, I am sure that I read one or two Lovecraft stories, but I don't particularly remember any of them. I never went looking for them, the horror or weird tales genre never appealed to me; contrast this with, for example, the way I consumed [Bradbury](#), [Asimov](#), [May](#), [Sheckley](#), [Smith](#) ([Cordwainer](#) or [George Oliver](#), take your pick), [Heinlein](#), [Bear](#) and even [Donaldson](#) in my youth. Attending a [STEM-oriented](#) high school (we had a planetarium and a botanical garden!), I was a first-order science-fiction [nerd](#) of [humanist](#), science-centered [Golden Age](#) and [New Wave](#) sci-fi, captained by Isaac Asimov (who allegedly disliked Lovecraft stories) and Void Piloted by Norman Spinrad through a human-centric, human-comprehensible universe. I frequently remember science fiction stories I have read, but do not specifically recall any Lovecraft stories I read, I remember [Stephen King](#) stories even (Lovecraft '[dumbed down](#)' perhaps), and did I mention that I read most of Bradbury's works? While I liked Bradbury's science-fiction short stories very much, I tended to not like or understand ('get' in my teen years) Bradbury's more surreal stories such as [Dandelion Wine](#) (1957).

Most of my exposure to Lovecraft came haphazardly through [hobby tabletop gaming](#) which has an endless *faux* fascination with Lovecraftian Horror. I know I have played the [Arkham Horror board game](#) many times, though it is not one of my favorites, I recognize it as the *avant-garde* of [cooperative board game mechanics](#). Rarely however, do hobby tabletop games really approach Cosmicism which is rather inconsistent on several points with the general '[empowerment](#)' premise of hobby tabletop gaming but it is uniquely suited for cooperative game mechanics.

Whatever the intellectual lineage or spectrum between Lovecraft and GGDM, he and I seem to have arrived at the same place by different routes perhaps; Lovecraft was a literary writer and not a philosopher or sociologist, while I took the more 'scientific' approach of applying the Existential Void to a science-fiction setting simulation of human macrosocial processes.

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## Continuing Thoughts March 2022:

“Russian cosmism, also cosmism, is a philosophical and cultural movement that emerged in Russia at the turn of the 19th century, and again, at the beginning of the 20th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a burst of scientific investigation into interplanetary travel, largely driven by fiction writers such as Jules Verne and H. G. Wells as well as philosophical movements like the Russian cosmism.

Cosmism entailed a broad theory of natural philosophy, combining elements of religion and ethics with a history and philosophy of the origin, evolution, and future existence of the cosmos and humankind. It combined elements from both Eastern and Western philosophic traditions as well as from the Russian Orthodox Church.

Cosmism was one of the influences on Proletkult, and after the October Revolution, the term came to be applied to ‘...the poetry of such writers as Mikhail Gerasimov and Vladimir Kirillov...: emotional paeans to physical labor, machines, and the collective of industrial workers ... organized around the image of the universal ‘Proletarian,’ who strides forth from the earth to conquer planets and stars.’ This form of cosmism, along with the writings of Nikolai Fyodorov, was a strong influence on Andrei Platonov.

Many ideas of the Russian cosmists were later developed by those in the transhumanist movement. Victor Skumin argues that the Culture of Health will play an important role in the creation of a human spiritual society into the Solar System.” – from Wikipedia article, “[Cosmism](#).”

Although Cosmism and Cosmicism are opposite philosophies (or maybe call them ‘interpretations’ in a generic sense), in terms of optimism vs. pessimism for example, they are not mutually exclusive in an operational sense: It could both be true that humans are insignificant and limited in a vast and strange cosmos, and that humans can continue evolving perhaps to an ‘angelic’ state occupying a place on the sidereal stage (cosmism is an ancestor of transhumanism) where we will be the Cthulhu to some other creatures (are we not already to lower animals in Earth?). The contrast in interstellar, space opera terms between Cosmism and Cosmicism would be the seed for great emergent science fiction in the right (write) hands.

Regarding the evolution of the story of Rupty Gupty as a COVID-inspired feverish dream that became the vehicle for the discussion of Cosmicism in GGDM, a

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religions person might be inspired to comment, 'God works in mysterious ways.' Rubbish it is to attribute the emergent result of a proximate set of events to some clever, mysterious scheme by the Abrahamic God! Like when an alleged dark conspiracy upon investigation is revealed to be a combination of circumstances and profound human ignorance and carelessness without conscious collusion or thought, perhaps spurred by our basest desires and fondest wishful thinking.

By Charles W. Phillips