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*“Still, bogus content on Facebook is arguably a symptom of a bigger problem – the ‘filter bubbles’ created by blogs, social media, and other distribution platforms that help people consume only information that appeals to their existing biases and opinions. These ideological echo chambers thrive on Facebook, where the news feed algorithm is designed to surface the content most relevant and appealing to you. Such personalized news could also undo the tools to curb fake news that Facebook is now rolling out.”*

– Alison Griswold, “Facebook’s fake news tools are no match for the Facebook echo chamber,” Quartz, December 16, 2016<sup>1</sup>

**The FCC Fairness Doctrine:** The elimination of the Fairness Doctrine by the FCC in 1987 created the environment for echo chambers and paved the way for right-wing talk radio programming. To be sure, the Fairness Doctrine only applied to licensed broadcasters in an era of limited channels; it did not apply to printed media and art which already had publications catering to various ideologies. Further, the popular internet had not yet become and it is questionable whether the FCC would have been able to impose the Fairness Doctrine upon the internet. But the beginnings of the filtered news, modern echo chamber can be traced to 1987.<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ “...and he proposed reinstating the so-called ‘Fairness Doctrine’ over the weekend. (A government-mandated ‘fairness doctrine’ is a profoundly unconservative idea, and its repeal in 1987 – championed by the Reagan administration – helped allow for the proliferation of conservative media outlets in the 1990s.)” – James Hohmann, The Washington Post, October 12, 2017.
- **Winnowing the Hot Air:** Whenever you read or hear a statement, comment or argument that you (or others) consider controversial, you should first ask yourself if you can say with certainty that any factual claims contained therein are demonstratively or undeniably false or misleading. Many facts offered in a controversial statement, argument or commentary, are disputable, can be presented in a misleading way, but cannot be definitively proven or said to be either true or false; a fact that cannot be proven false must be in some sense true. There is also a difference – regarding controversies – between disagreeing because some facts are false or misstated, and disagreeing because you don’t like the conclusion.
  - ✓ “Just as a lot of conservatives ignore evidence of climate change, the study shows that many liberals disregard mounting evidence that vaccines and genetically-modified crops are safe. The report faults leaders on both sides of the immigration debate for misusing data and statistics, blurring the line between opinion and fact.... The team at Rand thinks that ‘truth decay’ poses a grave threat to the country’s future. Not only does it lead to the uncertainty that comes from schizophrenic policymaking, it also alienates people from the political process and drives detachment from democracy.” – John Hohmann, The Washington Post, January 18, 2018.

*“The Rashomon effect is a term related to the notorious unreliability of eye witnesses. It describes a situation in which an event is given contradictory interpretations or descriptions by the individuals involved. The effect is named after Akira Kurosawa’s 1950 film Rashomon, in which a murder is described in four contradictory ways by four witnesses. The term addresses the motives, mechanism and occurrences of the reporting on the circumstance and addresses contested interpretations of events, the existence of disagreements regarding the evidence of events and subjectivity versus objectivity in human perception, memory and reporting.*

*The Rashomon effect has been defined in a modern academic context as ‘the naming of an epistemological framework – or ways of thinking, knowing, and remembering – required for understanding complex and ambiguous situations.’ ...*

*A useful demonstration of this principle in scientific understanding can be found in Karl G. Heider’s 1988 journal article on ethnography. Heider used the term to refer to the effect of the subjectivity of perception on recollection, by which observers of an event are able to produce substantially different but equally plausible accounts of it.”*

– from Wikipedia article, “Rashomon Effect,” captured October 27, 2019  
(emphasis added)

**The Absolute Truth:** News Events are absolutely true (or false, depending on the spin assigned to the News Event) at the moment they are published on the forums (and this bears no relationship at all to what players believe is true or false about the game), and their effects are immediate and permanent. From that point on, however, the truth is negotiable as other positions are allowed to modify (but not contradict) the absolute true or false statements of the News Events.

- ✓ **Marge:** You loved Rashomon! **Homer:** That’s not how I remember it. – The Simpsons, “Thirty Minutes Over Tokyo” (1999).
- ✓ By Heider’s definition, a Byzantine Fault is the computer version of a Rashomon Effect: “A Byzantine fault is any fault presenting different symptoms to different observers. A Byzantine failure is the loss of a system service due to a Byzantine fault in systems that require consensus.” – from Wikipedia article, “Byzantine Fault.”
- **And Nothing but the Fuzzy Truth:** Any News Event may be subsequently modified – but not directly contradicted (sort of a Rashomon effect) – by any position, including the source position, however, the source position may not be the first to modify its own News Event (otherwise, it wouldn’t be absolutely true or false at the moment of publication). Positions may modify News Events until such time as all positions have had a turn since the News Event was originally published (i.e. a Turn Cycle), at which time, it is closed and becomes history.
  - ✓ Like a baseball pitch – spinning, curving, dropping – it is what it is when it passes the plate, regardless of the intent of the catcher and pitcher.

A position may only modify each News Event or a modification of a News Event once.

- ✓ In the fandom terminology of certain large, well-established video science-fiction franchises, News Events and all modifications become *canon/canonical* in the current game universe, and should not be retconned.
  - See retcon discussion, Things That Are True, 2 The Big Bang, p. 6, *supra*.

- The Modified Truth: Modifications to News Events by any position that is eligible to and desires to modify the News Event are posted on the forum by the Concierge in the thread for the News Event. The modification to the News Event must be submitted with the position's next turn actions, is considered a News Event for Power Activation purposes, must bear some reasonable relation to the News Event or the most recent modification, and may not directly contradict the original News Event or most recent modification (the Concierge exercises ultimate discretion). Like the original News Event, the modified News Event is absolutely true or false (for game purposes) at the time of the modification and the effects are immediate and permanent. Modifications can be legally modified, *ad nauseam*, until they become history.

- ✓ Modifications can only be submitted with turn actions, so opportunities are limited.

A modification cannot be used to 'undo' a Power Activation (which would then undo the News Event based on the Power Activation) or manipulate, nullify, return, or reduce Acts and Scenes required for a Power Activation; News Events should (but are not prohibited from), for game sanity, avoid giving free Acts and Scenes. Don't ever wish for more wishes.

- ✓ This is probably the reason why there are no more genies in lamps; some greedy human knave wished for more wishes, tore a hole in the fabric of the universe, and now there are no genies left to fix it.

- Forms of Truth: *A modification News Event is a News Event in its own right.* Like the original News Event, all modifications to the News Event must contain the required elements and must specify which posted News Event is being modified. For the purpose of modification only, the prior News Event on which the modification is based replaces the Power Activation requirement, for all purposes, in the News Event that modifies a prior News Event.

- ✓ Modifications of adverse News Events are automatically adverse News Events even if intended to help the original target position. The game makes no distinction. A non-adverse News Event cannot modify an adverse News Event, but must be its own top thread. Modifications of non-adverse News Events may be adverse News Events.

- Subplots and Twists: Because a News Event is an Interpretation, a modification of a News Event may not modify or destroy the original News Event in the sense that it cannot directly contradict the original News Event or completely nullify the game effects of the News Event. However, since the 'modification' is itself a News Event, it carries its own equal force, it is a 'modification' of the original News Event in the sense that it is a continuation of the News Event upon which it is based.

- ✓ Playing GGDM is like editing on Wikipedia: If you are concerned about others modifying or even using your perfect idea, expressed in perfectly written text, if you need to own your literature, then this probably isn't for you.

- See Dis-claim-UR discussion, 3 The Big Bang, p. 18, *supra*.

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*“Fake news doesn't get retracted or corrected because it's specifically designed to deceive; detachment from fact is a feature, not a bug, as the saying goes.”*

– Robert Schlesinger, “The Maestros of Fake News,” U.S. News & World Report, July 7, 2017

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**Red Purge:** Modification of News Events is not as complicated as it may seem, a historical example may help: In 1936 (the year of the Berlin Olympics), German intelligence learned of a plot by a top-ranking Red Army officer to topple Stalin.

Reinhard Heydrich (of later Wansee Conference fame), then the head of the Security Police, which included the Gestapo that he created, and head of counterintelligence, presented a plan to Himmler and then to Hitler, to expose the plotter to Stalin so that Stalin would purge the Red Army and/or create an air of suspicion in the relationship between Stalin and the Red Army. Hitler approved the plan and Heydrich then had his services create forged documents implicating the officers alleged to be plotting the overthrow of Stalin. These documents were provided to the Soviets. *Heydrich was played by Stalin.* In fact, Stalin had ordered his NKVD agent General Nikolai Skoblin to pass the false information to Heydrich expecting the Germans to do exactly what they did, thus manufacturing evidence for the Red Army Purge of 1936-1938.<sup>3</sup>

- ✓ Information for this example was taken from Wikipedia articles, “Reinhard Heydrich” and “Great Purge,” September 27, 2018. Whatever reservations you may have about information from Wikipedia, please just accept these as absolutely true facts for the purpose of this example.

These events might play out as follows in terms of GGDM adverse News Events:

- ✓ *Initial News Event* issued by Red Blok states that the UNA have carried out a purge of their top officers after discovering a plot to overthrow their supreme leader. The effect of the News Event is that the UNA lose one half of the faculties from the Combat College.
  - It is possible that this News Event might have no effect; Red Blok may not actually know if the UNA has a Combat College, that is, many News Events might be ‘shooting in the dark.’ Red Blok and UNA may not have had First Contact. However, adverse News Events that have no effect may still cost the target a Maintenance Shield, see 4 Order, pp. 566-567 *et seq.*, *infra*. Whether an adverse News Event has any effect is never revealed.
- ✓ *First modification* of the News Event issued by the Therians, the eternal scheming trouble makers, adds that the evidence used by UNA against the alleged plotters was entirely fabricated and passed to them by ONI Corporation (a position, not a GGDM Corporation or MegaCorporation), who is seeking business from Red Blok. The effect of this is that an Intervention Potential Plus (IP+) is assessed against UNA. This mod is not a contradiction of the initial News Event and is a News Event in its own right.
  - Whether IP or IP+ can be assessed in a News Event is unclear and up to the Concierge, but once the precedent is established, it must be followed consistently. It is in effect saying, there will be trouble later because of this, passing the buck (in the historical example, the Red Army lost many of their best officers to the Purge and suffered later in 1941). The Concierge is in no way required to use the IP+ in relation to the News Event, but can use it freely, emergent narrative can fill the linkage later if necessary.
- ✓ *Second modification* of the News Event issued by the UNA states that the evidence against the plotters was solid and that the falsified evidence was irrelevant. The result

- is that the Intervention Potential Plus (IP+) is reduced to a regular Intervention Potential. Note that this does not directly contradict the Therians' News Event, which is still absolutely true (sort of...). It also does not contradict the initial News Event (which may be irrelevant if UNA doesn't have a Combat College).
- Hair splitting time: The UNA News Event is not a direct contradiction to the initial News Event by Red Blok because it does not say that the purge never happened, or entirely abrogate the results. It also does not contradict the Therians' News Event because it does not say the falsified documents don't exist and it does not abrogate the results. Neither event then is entirely erased by the Second Modification.
- ✓ Finally, the Karmans issue a *third modification* to the News Event stating that the Therians secretly control part of ONI Corporation and their plot has been discovered, causing the Therians to lose one Diplomatic Space with ONI Corporation.
- Since ONI Corporation is a position in the game, it is not literally true that the Therians control ONI Corporation, here is an example of how the News Event is absolutely true, regardless of what the players in the game know or believe to be the truth. Additionally, the Karmans may not know if the Therians and ONI Corporation share Diplomatic Spaces or anything else, so again, there is possibly no effect. Like IP and IP+ assessments, the game participants will need to decide if Diplomatic Space can be created or lost by News Events, and once the precedent is set, must follow it consistently and try not to abuse it.
- ✓ At this point, it's all becoming kind of convoluted and conspiratorial and the situation has played itself out, UNA has possibly lost some faculties from the Combat College, an Intervention Potential has been added to the game, and the Therians may have lost a Diplomatic Space with ONI Corporation. Other News Events have posted, the players get distracted or move on, eventually posting to this News Event is closed by the end of the Turn Cycle, having become part of the Absolutely True history.
- Note that each position modified the News Event once on their Regular Turns as described above in The Modified Truth, *ut supra*.
  - Yes, these faction names were all borrowed from the tabletop miniatures wargame, AT-43, solely for amusement purposes. Both AT-43 and its publisher, Rackham Entertainment, are defunct since 2010.

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*“In quantum mechanics, wave function collapse is said to occur when a wave function – initially in a superposition of several eigenstates – appears to reduce to a single eigenstate due to interaction with the external world; this is called an ‘observation.’ It is the essence of measurement in quantum mechanics and connects the wave function with classical observables like position and momentum.”*

– from Wikipedia article, “Wave Function Collapse,” captured August 25, 2019 <sup>4</sup>

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**Eigenstates:** News Events are eigenstates in the game. A die roll result or blind card draw is also an eigenstate in whatever game is being played. It creates a value that *is for that moment*, the known, determining value/state in the game. The state of the game changes on the next action taken by the players. Before that, it is a cloud of probabilities. Humans have been playing with eigenstates since the beginning, sometimes it's been part of religious-mystic ritual. GGDM just does something a little different, News Events inject conscious choice into the eigenstate.

- ✓ Eigenstate is achieved in chess and non-random games as well. Each move by a player is an eigenstate of the game in that instance, until the next move. Each move changes the state of the game, and projects a cloud of probabilities of direction, momentum, position, and spin. Your life, your move!

How well this system of News Events and modifications works is critical to the game and dependent on the systems available to and the diligence of the participants in implementing the game story. During the preceding Red Purge fracas, positions may have processed Regular Turns which were both influenced by the data and changed the data in a dynamic flux of the game (and added new News Events, followed by modifications); Regular Turn submissions may be timed on the effects of the News Event modifications depending on how the game data modification process is implemented. There are two possibilities:

- ✓ The original concept of the News Events was a forum, like a normal online forum used by discussion boards and game clubs, but if the forum were internalized to the game program, it might be possible to implement a system where the effects on game data from News Events and modifications can be implemented instantly by the posting if accompanied by either Deep Learning AI or some sort of quasi-programming language. This then creates a need for position data to be updated constantly and to be downloaded to the players, checked by the players, constantly, daily, during the game, even when it is not time for submission of their position's Regular Turn actions. There are pros and cons to this depending on the group; it is very engaging but also possibly very tiring, like the current ongoing 24-hour news cycle (or like a RTS game or never-ending MMORPG world).
  - I can be a bit of a news junkie – maybe the quotes included in GGDM would provide a hint – but even I burned out.
- ✓ If an online forum system, as originally envisioned, is used, then the Concierge will need to manually and regularly input the changes, possibly with a few Interventions tossed in while doing the task (see 2 Entropy, *infra*), and how the dynamic of Regular Turn timing and News Events and modifications plays out will depend on the Concierge's schedule (again, like group DMing, the Concierge position may require two or three duty officers), regularity, and dedication. A position's data may still change in important, if small, ways during the Turn Cycle and this will either need to be tracked by the players on their own until their next Regular Turn is processed and new results received or they will need to have the ability to get updated information at any time.

In short, I admit – and have admitted throughout – that the implementation of this game is problematic and complex and that even reading the rules is a considerable effort.<sup>5</sup>

- ✓ Merriam-Webster online dictionary at *eigenstate*: a state of a quantized dynamic system (such as an atom, molecule, or crystal) in which one of the variables defining the state (such as energy or angular momentum) has a determinate fixed value.

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*“And this, YouTube does incredibly well. ‘YouTube recommends right-wing videos to people watching similar right-wing videos,’ Zack Exley ... writes in a recent study of a prominent alt-right YouTuber. In the same way, YouTube sends left-wingers into a bubble of left-wing videos, fundamentalist Christians into a fundamentalist Christian bubble, and people who love to knit into a vast universe of fellow knitters. Among other things, that’s made it easy for the platform to host tons of content that some would find deeply offensive, and elude controversy – because YouTube only recommends what it thinks you want.*

*And if you don’t go looking for neo-Nazism, or videos of decapitations, you won’t be directed to them. You’d never know they’re there. But those videos were there, all the time, ready for any 15-year-old alienated white boy to find with a couple of key-strokes. He gets what he thinks he wants, too – and then some. This was part of the bargain of an open internet, but it wasn’t one that most of us had given much thought to – even if we’d stumbled onto some of the ugly stuff from time to time.”*

– Bob Moser, “How YouTube Became the World Wide Leader in White Supremacy,”  
New Republic, August 21, 2017

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**Expose’ and Special Bulletin:** A Special Bulletin is a News Event posted by the Concierge with an Intervention (see 2 Entropy, p. 235, *infra*).<sup>6</sup> A Special Bulletin may be in any form desired, and may have any effect, or no effect; and may not be altered by the players.

- **The Expose’:** An Expose’ is an inviolate News Event posted by a position that is the result of the Reification of a Zeitice (see 4 Writs generally, *infra*). An Expose’ may not be changed or altered in any way by other positions, and the Expose’ may only affect the position posting it in reasonable relationship to the Zeitice that was reified. An Expose’ does not require a Power Activation and does not report on a Power Activation. Expose’ and Special Bulletins are both considered singular Absolute Truths in the game.

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*“Aristotle cited the laws of contradiction and of excluded middle as examples of axioms. He partly exempted future contingents, or statements about unsure future events, from the law of excluded middle, holding that it is not (now) either true or false that there will be a naval battle tomorrow but that the complex proposition that either there will be a naval battle tomorrow or that there will not is (now) true.”*

– Encyclopedia Britannica online article, “Laws of Thought,” captured April 20, 2018  
(<https://www.britannica.com/topic/laws-of-thought>)

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**Aristotle Sidestep:** The fundamental problem of interpretations is this: If I *felt or thought* x yesterday about A (wrote it down, have living memory of it, know the reasons) and it seemed/felt true to me yesterday, but today I no longer *feel or think* x about A, was it not true yesterday?

- ✓ Among humans, interpretations are both thought and feeling at the same moment. Treating them as thought only is untenable, and treating them as feelings only is dismissive.



- See related Work of the Mind discussion, 3 The Big Bang, p. 9, *supra*.

Many, if not most, would answer that if I have changed my mind overnight regarding A, or no longer feel that way about A, then what I felt about A yesterday must not have been true or correct (i.e. emotional, irrational, uninformed, ill-conceived, mistaken). Or the old Aristotle side-step that, well it was true that I felt that way yesterday (factually speaking), but it is not true that I feel that way today – without committing to whether what I thought/felt about A yesterday had any objective truth (in this, I am applying Aristotle’s ‘future contingents’ in ‘reverse’).

- ✓ For example, one might be asked in a court deposition what was their initial impression upon meeting a specific person or hearing of a specific event, and then whether they still held the same opinion or view now? Their answers under oath establish as *fact* – in the absence of contrary evidence, such as acts or implausibility – their state of mind for the purpose of determining the case at issue.
- ✓ “At first we all felt he was frightfully exaggerating and even offensive in tone. You see, he hurt all our deepest feelings, but gradually he won us around, although for a long time I had to – I just learned he was usually right in his conclusions, but I was not completely satisfied with his argument.” – Friedrich Hayek speaking about Ludwig von Mises, UCLA Oral History: Interview with Friedrich Hayek (1983), pp. 12-13 (searchable, free online at <https://archive.org/details/nobelprizewinnin00haye>).

*Every evolution of GGDM faced this question.* Aspects in GGDM (see 2 Culture, *infra*) can be said to hold that many truths can exist that are perhaps, seemingly contradictory, and that while the world may move onto the next day, what seemed (subjectively?) true yesterday remains (i.e. has persistence) and may come to the surface again under the right circumstances. Those who think that there is one objective reality and any failure to perceive it is human fallacy find this explanation wishy-washy and useless; while those who embrace less objective standards of reality, find the objective insistence both overly simplistic and not useful as a standard of human reality. It is the line that essentially divides empirical science, religion and math (who must insist that their truth is the whole of objective reality) from literary fiction, mental and social sciences.

- ✓ The same problem attaches to assessing the reliability of historical sources. Is some source to be considered not impartial because their overall view is negative, e.g., “Evagrius is mostly negative in his account of Justin and Sophia, so should not be taken as an impartial source.” (from Wikipedia article, “Sophia (empress),” April 30, 2019)? All historical sources present their interpretation of events, sometimes long after the events, and frequently of events they didn’t personally witness. Does a negative interpretation hold less truth value than sources who present a more favorable interpretation? Is that sufficient to condemn by itself, guilt by negativity? Depends on your politics. How many times have we gone around this cycle in historiography?

At the base of this discussion, and of the question with which this section began, is the interminable debate about what is knowledge? The problem has neither been solved, nor was it ‘cast aside’ as an unprofitable effort with the late advent of empirical sciences.<sup>7[quote]</sup>

Rephrased in that way, the question might be ‘is what I felt about A yesterday considered knowledge?’ Was it a justified true belief (‘JTB’ in the language of epistemologists)? It is thus likely that Interpretations and Aspects as presented in GGDM could (and should) be subjected to epistemological analysis, e.g., Gettier Problem, Lightweight Knowledge, Infallibilism/Fallibilism;

that Interpretations here are intertwined between our current worldview (i.e. modernity) and epistemological arguments about knowledge.

- ✓ Shifting to the ‘objective’ universe, Matt O’Dowd states, “Prior to Boltzmann, entropy was understood as...” (See 2 Taxation & Census, EN 3, p. 312, *supra*). Does this automatically mean that physicist were dead wrong before Boltzmann set them straight? No. Prof. O’Dowd goes on to demonstrate how their explanation works for a car piston. And then why Boltzmann’s explanation is better when applied to the universe generally.
- ✓ “As an indication of exactly how good the Ptolemaic model is, modern planetariums are built using gears and motors that essentially reproduce the Ptolemaic model for the appearance of the sky as viewed from a stationary Earth.” – Polaris Project, Evening Star, Unit 2, Iowa State University, “The Ptolemaic Model” (undated, author unattributed).<sup>8</sup>
- ✓ Thus, a ‘paradigm shift’ is like civilization waking up the next morning with a change of mind; what was true yesterday remains true within the framework in which the interpretation was created, but today, we have another frame which suits our understanding better.

I highly recommend the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy article, “The Analysis of Knowledge.” I should probably re-read it myself.<sup>9</sup> It is thus that the question is presented here for both completeness (one of my virtues as a tendentious pedant) and as an educational hook (as is most of GGDM) to look it up and think about it.

- ✓ I admit that in writing GGDM, I have strained the limits of the purpose of GGDM as described above; this is attested to by the sheer size (and range) of the work.
- ✓ Whether or not GGDM is accepted as any sort of macro-sociological argument is dependent in large part (but not entirely) on the standards of knowledge applied; I would not present GGDM to a physicist even with the caveat that it is a ‘literary game’ and a work of macrosociology.

If I think I made a mistake playing Mahjonn (a puzzle solving exercise) but I solve the puzzle (i.e. remove all of the pieces), then it wasn’t a mistake. But that I believed it was is still a *fact* (see facts discussion generally, 1 Dreamtime, *supra*), so facts and knowledge are not the same apparently? Because it wasn’t true (i.e. knowledge) that I made a mistake, but it was a fact that I believed that I did? Or was it a mistake if I still succeeded in removing all of the pieces but it took more time to do so because of the alleged mistake?<sup>10</sup>

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*“Most modern calendars mar the sweet simplicity of our lives by reminding us that each day that passes is the anniversary of some perfectly uninteresting event.” – Oscar Wilde*

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*“Tomorrow is only found in the calendar of fools.” – Og Mandino*

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**Calendar Civilization:** Calendars (and holidays) are in a way, the ultimate human interpretation; this should not be confused with seasons, tides, Lunar eclipses or any of the other objective measures that we think happen whether humans are looking or not.

But once you decide, for whatever reason, that a circle is divided into 360 degrees (or a compass has 6400 mils), and that the full rotation of the Earth should be divided into 15 degree arcs, you get a 24 hour day. Why 15 degree arcs; why not 10 degree arcs which match the number of fingers humans naturally possess and is the base of our numbering system? A 36 hour day? How about the answer I received when I asked in my youth: “Because that’s the way it is.” Great answer, really informative and inspiring, haven’t we all heard it once or many times? And why 60 minutes per hour? Does it matter to the universe, is it a natural law?

No, and the Republic period Roman leadership understood this well, while the farmers necessarily continued to plant and harvest with the seasons. It has seemed then that the further cultures move from an agrarian base, the less the march of the seasons matters in calendar interpretations, would it bother you or matter if January were in the autumn? January is summer in Australia; the European colonization of the Southern Hemisphere demonstrated once again that the calendar is an interpretation, regardless of whether it was the Republican Calendar, the Julian Calendar, the Gregorian Calendar, or the French Revolutionary Calendar. The Romans got around to fixing their calendar and re-synching it with the seasons in 46 B.C. with the introduction of the Julian Calendar and later adjustments under Augustus Caesar, because the wide-ranging empire was still largely or mostly agrarian. What cognitive dissonance happens when humans move into space, colonize other worlds?

- ✓ What is meant when scientists say a planet has a rotation period of 9 or 10 hours (Jupiter/Saturn) or 58 days (Mercury) or 243 days (Venus)? It means that the planet in question makes a full rotation in that much *Earth time*. Earth time is the only standard, objective measure that we have, and that is what we use, but it is only objective in our framework. The planet in question, however, has rotated the same 360 degrees as the Earth or any other rotating body, and its arc could be divided into 24 hours in 15 degree sweeps, just like the Earth. Those hours would not, objectively (e.g., in total vibrations of an atom), be the same length of time as ours, but could be divided into 60 very long minutes, if we wanted to – clearly colonizing such places (notably Mars has a rotation period very close to that of Earth (and is spinning a lot faster than the Moon) *would require some other form of time interpretation to keep us sane with our Earth-evolved circadian clock.*<sup>11</sup>

- See further Crossing the Rubicon, 1 Temporal Technology, p. 801, *infra*.

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*“The need for instant analysis, or at least the demand for it, is every week increasing the profile of individuals who feel no sense of embarrassment at having, as we used to say, ‘no unpublished thoughts.’”*

– Christopher Hitchens, “How to be a Public Intellectual,” Prospect Magazine, May 24, 2008

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**Who Are You?:** A man may think of a thousand things in a work day or an idle afternoon; 999 of them are not worth printing or even repeating. Yet we repeat the same thought cycles over and over, no matter how reprehensible those thoughts would be in the light of day. Twitter, Facebook, and all of the other forms of social media, provide an opportunistic megaphone and instant print gratification for thoughts that cycle in our heads.

- ✓ “It may be that attacks on expertise are more obvious due to the ubiquity of the Internet, the undisciplined nature of conversation on social media, or the demands of the twenty-four-hour news cycle.” – Tom Nichols (U.S. Naval War College) as quoted in the Washington Times, July 24, 2017.

Social media has indeed been a useful invention, but probably not in the way its creators intended; social media (and camera phones) has shown us who we really are, humanity as it really is, the thoughts that course among the anonymous masses of humanity, blared with a megaphone across social media for all to see.

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And we recoil at the fury of it.

- ✓ “Trump defines the word ‘presidential’ negatively. For him, acting in a way consistent with the men who have held the nation’s highest office before him is just a media construct. There’s not really any such thing as ‘acting presidential’ in Trump’s world. If you’re the president, you can act however you want because, well, you’re the president. Might makes right. The president is presidential by default.

That view is consistent with this moment in our culture. The Kardashians have made being famous a goal in and of itself. It doesn’t matter what you do with the fame. What matters is that you are famous. YouTube has convinced every person that theirs is a voice – and a set of opinions – that need to be heard. Twitter – and social media more broadly – rewards takedowns of people; the bigger the person (in terms of number of followers) you dunk on, the brighter your star theoretically shines.” – Chris Cillizza, “Donald Trump’s Unpresidential Presidency keeps hitting new lows,” CNN, September 18, 2017.

- ✓ “It’s that same mentality that led sports radio personality Clay Travis – in a live CNN interview about ESPN’s Jemele Hill on Friday – to say: ‘I believe in the First Amendment and boobs.’ Travis, as his smirk made clear, believed he was being edgy and giving the middle finger to the political correctness police with his ‘take.’ He was sticking it to the liberal media! He was a hero of free speech! But here’s the thing: He wasn’t any of those things. Travis was just being a bro. He was expressing a misogynistic sentiment in a totally inappropriate setting. Like, why does the subject of boobs come up in an interview about whether or not Hill should be allowed to refer to Trump as a white supremacist? That’s like me shouting ‘boobs’ in mid-air of a cross-country flight and congratulating myself for my bravery. Opposing societal norms that are inherently unfair or misguided is one thing. Flouting conventions of good behavior ... is something totally different.” *Id.*

Wonderful thing about the Freedom of Speech: every fool and knave has a right to speak, even if on social media. So that the world has an opportunity to see them as fools and knaves as soon as they open their mouths and they can be banished to the kid’s table. We have a lot of din currently coming from the kid’s table, like all newness, it will take time to whac the moles of social media into some decent arrangement.

- ✓ “Wise men speak because they have something to say; Fools because they have to say something.” – Plato.

Eventually, most fools and knaves recognize what they are, but some never do. And a bunch of the latter have social media accounts or public media access. It sells advertising.

- ✓ “It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.” – Mark Twain.

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*“What Spicer’s Emmy appearance proved is that in our culture, fame and infamy are indistinguishable. All that matters is that you are famous. How you got there doesn’t matter. It doesn’t even matter whether people are saying bad things or good things about you. It just matters that they are talking about you.”*

– Chris Cillizza, “Hollywood just enabled Sean Spicer, and that’s not funny,”  
September 18, 2017, CNN Politics

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**Internet Advertising:** This seems to be true in internet advertising as well (and has been true of billboard advertising for a long time): It matters only that you see the advertisement apparently, even if you are annoyed by the fact that it popped up when you are trying to read a web page, or that it’s in the middle of an article, or that the flashing and movement are distracting, or that adverts are constantly reloading making the text on the page jump around while you are trying to read the stupid article, or that it popped up behind the page and hangs there until you notice it, or that it covers the entire screen when you first visit the web page – in other words, it’s apparently not considered important that the viewer remember the ad favorably, or even at all, only page impressions, hits, and rotations matter in internet advertising.

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*“We live in a different world now (or at least those of us in the ‘West’ do); a world of social media, where anyone can have a view and disseminate it for anyone else to see relatively cheaply and with relatively little technical proficiency. Potentially everyone could be an expert on anything, or at least have a view on everything for anybody else to see. There is no longer a strict division between the controllers of communication and the consumers of communication, nor necessarily such a formalised relationship between the producers of knowledge and disseminators of knowledge. Does this have the potential to mean that everyone in the West can be a public intellectual? And further could one’s success on Facebook and Twitter indicate your status as a public intellectual?”*

– John Issitt and Duncan Jackson, “What does it mean to be a public intellectual?” March 2013

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## Endnotes.

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<sup>1</sup> **Citation:** “‘Facebook does not know what its own algorithm is doing,’ said Susan Benesch, a faculty associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society and the director of the Dangerous Speech Project. ‘It is not the case that somebody at Facebook is sitting in a dark room cackling, and said, ‘Let’s encourage people to sell Nazi ads to Nazi sympathizers.’ She continued: ‘In some ways, that would be much easier to correct, because there would be some intention, some bad person doing this on purpose somewhere. The algorithm doesn’t have a bad intention.’” – Robinson Meyer, “Could Facebook have caught its Jew Hater ad targeting,” The Atlantic, September 15, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> **Citation & Commentary:** “Most Trumpists are not going to buy a book of several hundred pages and read it. Most Trumpists are going to see what Fox News, and Breitbart, and OAN and you know, Mark Lavin, say about the book, and that will be what they believe.” – David Pakman, David Pakman Show, June 18, 2020.

- ✓ That’s pretty astute, but don’t throw stones in glass houses. The same can and will be said by the other side about viewers of MSNBC and CNN. The fact is that most people, on both sides, don’t read books that are

several hundred pages; instead they tune into their favorite network echo chamber on cable or YouTube to see what they say about it.

<sup>3</sup> Commentary: Arguments have been advanced that the German fake documents made no difference, they were not used as evidence during the Moscow Trials. That is beside the point for the purposes of this example.

<sup>4</sup> Citation: See Peek-a-Boo discussion in 2 Expansion, p. 893, *infra*.

<sup>5</sup> Commentary: This is a continuing thread; my first big game design as a young teen (called “Machines & Mercenaries”), more than a decade before the internet and years before PCs became ubiquitous, had the same problem based on the technology available at the time, it wasn’t clear how it would have been actually playable then – though most big online games – I am thinking of the RTS/MMOG Achron for example (discussed in 1 Temporal Technology, EN 7, p. 815, *infra*) – have reached or exceeded what I envisioned in my pre-internet teenage efforts. I call it my ‘forward simulation problem.’ Or tripping over my own feet.

<sup>6</sup> Commentary: When I was young, I watched Special Bulletin (1983), about a group of terrorists who had a nuclear bomb on a tugboat docked at Charleston, SC, who were demanding all 900 nuclear detonators in the Charleston area (an ideological paradox not lost on the participants). The bomb detonates. It was shot as a newscast; I had grown up hearing the urban legend of the panic reaction to the newscast like the radio broadcast of War of the Worlds.

- ✓ One of the most haunting bomb detonation scenes (I have been unable to identify the show) showed a normal-looking man sitting calmly in the early morning on a bench in Central Park, NYC with a suitcase on his lap. The suitcase contains a nuclear bomb. Which detonates at ground level in New York City.
  - “Suitcase Nukes” have been available since the late 1950s. Most have yield of less than 1 Kt.; the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima was 15 Kt. By the 1970s, their potential use in terrorism was realized and slowly filtered into the public consciousness. But that genie won’t go back in the bottle.

<sup>7</sup> Citation: “We know that every age has its own problems, which the following age either solves or casts aside as profitless and replaces by new ones.” – David Hilbert, “Mathematical Problems,” an address to the International Congress of Mathematicians at Paris (1900), translated by Maby Winton Newson for the Bulletin of the American Mathematical Society 8 (1902).

- ✓ In the Hilbert analysis, humanity is in the same age, epistemologically, that we were 3,000 years ago. The question of what is knowledge has neither been solved nor cast aside.

<sup>8</sup> Citation: “It is beyond the scope of this course to discuss all the complex social and historical implications of an Earth-centered versus a Sun-centered model of the solar system. ... Ptolemy’s fame comes partly from what he figured out, but his influence was largely because he wrote a great summary of everything known about astronomy.” *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Commentary: No human, other than those who are illiterate, can claim that they immediately fully understood everything they have ever read on the first reading, or that they never had a different understanding after re-reading.

<sup>10</sup> Commentary & Citation: One favorite literary gimmick is the situation where the fraudster inadvertently turns out to be right. For example, in the gloomy Twilight Zone episode “Dust” (1961) a travelling fraudster sells ‘magic dust’ to the father of a young man who is about to be hanged for murder, taking advantage of his distressed state. The fraudster is shocked when the ‘magic dust’ seems to work as advertised; and then it starts to work on him too.

- ✓ This scheme was repeated – albeit in a lighter tone – in Bednobs and Broomsticks (1971) where Miss Price is taking a correspondence course in how to become a witch (considering the dreadful history of that particular subject, one wonders at the sanity of it?). The fraudster is shocked that the spells actually work. So were the Nazis.

<sup>11</sup> Commentary & Citation: I watched a report long ago about a man in a deep underground cave for a year without clocks or daylight. Researchers were trying to discover the natural circadian rhythm of humans. The conclusion was that the natural internal clock of humans is close to 25 hours. This presented a puzzle. Had the Earth’s rotation sped up (implying it moved closer to the sun) during human evolution? This would not be entirely unprecedented as we know the Moon is apparently moving farther away from the Earth (Mattias Green, “Why the Moon is Moving Away from the Earth,” Newsweek, April 29, 2019) – at 3.8 cm per year. According to Wikipedia article, “Circadian Rhythms,” the study I recall watching as news report or documentary was faulty, and a later Harvard study established that the human circadian rhythm is 24 hours and 11 minutes, close to the solar day.

- ✓ “This distance, and the use of moon rocks to date the moon’s formation to 4.51 billion years ago, are the basis for the giant impact hypothesis (the theory that the moon formed from debris after a collision early in Earth’s history). But if we assume that lunar recession has always been 3.8cm/year, we have to go back 13 billion years to find a time when the Earth and moon were close together (for the moon to form). This is much too long ago – but the mismatch is not surprising, and it might be explained by the world’s ancient continents and tides.” *Id.*

3 Dreamtime – The Absolute Truth