

Table of Contents

Drill Down	171
Degrees of Connectedness	171
The Collective Consciousness	171
➤ Public	171
➤ Spaces	172
Constructural Elements	172
➤ Concepts	172
➤ Innate Qualities	173
Temporal Constructural Element	173
➤ Creator	174
Epistemological Constructural Element	175
➤ Appearance.....	176
Symbolic Constructural Element	176
➤ Smuggled in a Coffin	178
➤ White Rose	178
Ideological Constructural Element	179
➤ Language & Philosophy	180
Medieval State of Mind	181
➤ Questions of Intelligence	182
Rebels, Romans and Ruins of Religions	182
Framing Collapse	183
Endnotes	184

*“I’ve been tryin’ to get down to the Heart of the Matter
Because the flesh will get weak
And the ashes will scatter
So I’m thinkin’ about forgiveness
Forgiveness
Even if, even if you don’t love me anymore”
– Don Henley, “Heart of the Matter” (1990)*

Drill Down: A person (human or otherwise) has an intellectual interest in a subject when they have found that thing for which they want to drill down to the ‘heart of the matter,’ for which they seek a profound understanding. An intellectual mind might then refer to the habit of thinking deeply about nearly everything. Constructural Elements are the...

Degrees of Connectedness: Any two subjects or things, no matter by how many ‘degrees’ they seem to be separated, are improbably related. Start talking, and over the course of an hour, in an unstructured conversational setting, the 🍄 drifts here and there, until what we are talking about at the end of the hour (to our astonishment) has little or no seeming relation to how or where the conversation began an hour ago. Yet, as the conversation slipped from subject to subject, antecedent to anecdote, everything seemed to flow, seemed to be related...¹

*“Ah, yes – sometimes the Bible is the word of God. Sometimes it’s the word of man. And sometimes, it’s the word of two or more men. Sometimes the Bible’s literal, and sometimes it’s simply symbolic.”
– Penn Jillette (emphasis in original)²*

The Collective Consciousness: Everything, every object, currently placed within a position’s Public Space or Diplomatic Spaces is part of that civilization’s collective consciousness. Things and objects that have been removed will be remembered by the players (and the in-game population) in a historical sense (and possibly in places such as the Star Log, News Events), but are not part of the current consciousness.

- **Public:** Put another way, the Public Space can be characterized as ‘everything we can talk about in any real sense.’ For example, statements such as: “Theories on optimal design of cities, city traffic flows, neighborhoods and demographics were in vogue after World War I.” (copied from Wikipedia), describe in a shorthand way what was in the Public Space at the time, at least among intellectuals and politicians, if not the population.
 - ✓ The Public Space as used in GGDM is thus the phenomenological experience of a civilization (see Avi Sion feature quote, Epistemological Constructural Elements, p. 175, *ut infra*). Notably, well over half of what is in the Public Space has appeared to us *from our own minds*; most of what we call culture has little or no objective reality *beyond us* but is one of the ultimate realities *to us*. In this sense, this discussion has circled back to the definition of reality offered in Spaces, 4 Beginnings, p. 46, *supra*.
 - ✓ In some senses, Public Space may overlap the concept of “noosphere,” but they are probably not congruent.

- **Spaces:** ‘Spaces’ is a term used to denote a significant area of importance to which a civilization devotes real estate and economic and cultural activity, spaces feature prominently in urbanist studies, e.g., Edward Soja. It is not a shallow term of goods and services; once recognized, spaces tend to develop meaning reaching to the core of civilization. For example, each civilization has a ‘dead space’ in terms of real estate dedicated to cemeteries and public monuments to the dead (the subject of Ray Bradbury’s 1948 short story “Pillar of Fire”³), plus all of the material and services related to burial or disposal of the dead, but beyond that, there is also a massive cultural significance and meaning attached to the whole process from individual persons to religion to insurance, civil and criminal legal resolution, to medical and philosophical issues.
 - ✓ Spaces may overlap depending on how they are defined, but the Public Space must necessarily be all inclusive and overlap over all of the other spaces in a civilization, it must be the entire sphere of a civilization. The overlap of ‘spaces’ sometimes results in odd combinations, for example, one could certainly argue that there is a ‘pet space’ in our civilization based on the number of dog and cat pictures on the internet, the number of books, products, movies, videos, medical care, and the overall meaning of pets to humanity (a meaning we do not attach to the animals that are part of our daily meals). Authors frequently find material and inspiration in the combinations; when combined with our care for departed loved ones or significant creatures in our lives, we have, oddly, pet cemeteries and Stephen King’s 1983 book.
 - Public Space and Constructural Elements collectively, in GGDM seem to be somewhat like Gilles Fauconnier’s ‘mental space’ (Mental Spaces: Aspects of meaning construction in natural language (1984), which I have not read) and as a bonus, GGDM also uses Aspects as a form of Cultural Trait piece on the Public Space (see 2 Culture, p. 364, *infra*). Designing GGDM has been a *journey through the Public Space (and language) of our current civilization*; I did not discover Mr. Fauconnier’s ‘mental space’ (nor had I heard of him) until I was rewriting the Reformation sections early in 2019, but Public Space, Aspects, and Constructural Elements have been in GGDM for at least 15 or more years prior to 2019 (though Constructural Elements was completely rewritten around 2015-2016).

“To develop a complete mind: Study the science of art; Study the art of science. Learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else.”

– attributed to Leonardo da Vinci ⁴

Constructural Elements: All *appearances* to an individual consciousness or the collective consciousness of a group, civilization, have four innate/necessary qualities that connect them to everything else within the sphere or realm of consciousness. These are called Constructural Elements. In game terms, this means that *all ships and friendly/naturalized/converted colonies* have four potential innate qualities that ‘fit’ or ‘place’ them within the structure of civilization.

- **Concepts:** “Constructural Element” is a term I invented for the game in 2002; you will not likely find it anywhere else prior to this work (i.e. *Google it*). “Public Spaces” is a term I

adapted from graduate Rhetorical Theory. However, the Public Space meaning that has evolved in this game greatly exceeds the meaning of the term in Rhetorical Theory.

- ✓ “Constructural Elements” is a term of patent law (www.uspto.gov/web/patents/classification/cpc/html/defF16S.html), however, even though I had a college course in Intellectual Property Law, I never heard the term and it is not the origin of Constructural Elements in GGDM. Constructural Elements in GGDM, while building a worldview, also refer more to connectedness by degrees than to unclassified parts.

The original concept of Constructural Elements was similar to a molecular building set, like the one seen in the movie, *Lawmower Man* (1992). It is thus that Constructural Elements were ‘sticks,’ representing bonds, joining the parts of society. This is the reason I first called them Constructural Elements and an entire clunky, vague game system was built on that idea. In a rewrite of the system more than five, probably ten years later, the Constructural Elements became innate and intrinsic qualities from which our worldview is constructed and that connects everyone to each other and our civilization to the universe. Thus the name Constructural Elements remains even as the underlying concept changed perceptively.

- Innate Qualities: The four ‘types’ of Constructural Elements – Temporal, Epistemological, Symbolic and Ideological, each described in a section below – are the intrinsic qualities of all objects within our consciousness (or at least for game purposes), whether active or not.
 - ✓ It would be an interesting study or discussion point as to what extent computers, our pets, and other living creatures possess Constructural Elements. I maintain that they must and that it is only a matter of how.

“Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced – even a proverb is no proverb until your life has illustrated it.” – John Keats

Temporal Constructural Element: Causality is the basic condition shared by all of the universe that we know; the first question we ask of anything in our world, is where did it come from, how did it get there, we want to know its history, its temporal lineage. So the first connection of any ‘other’ thing in our consciousness is to place it in our timeline,⁵ from the date of ‘discovery’ or appearance (p. 175, *ut infra*) to what happened to make it be there (if and when we know) and what has happened since.

It is assumed that time flows in the same direction and at the same rate for everything in the game (as time seems to be related to the expansion of the universe); that is, the ‘arrow of time’ points in the same direction for all, and we are all immersed (drowning) in the same ‘stream.’ An experienced Concierge and players may carefully vary from this, see Temporal Technologies generally, *infra*.

- ✓ Because we are born and we die, and time runs in only one direction, we tend to assume that this is true of the universe and everything in it; that the universe has a finite point at which it began, before which was either nothing or something else, and that it will have a finite point at which it ends, and that is true of everything within the universe as well. At this point in our evolution, we are unable really to grasp the implications of something that has always existed and will always exist (the snake eating

its own tail), without beginning or end; we are limited by the dimensions in which we live.

We are all victims of our childhood memories. The question is, whether that is a good thing or a bad thing. How many times do we act on situations as an adult because of some triggered childhood memory?

Page | 174

None of us have personal memories of our own complete temporal lineage. Like the eternal being in Isaac Asimov's "The Last Answer" (pub. 1980, see First Question & Last Answer excerpt, Information, *infra*) we do not remember coming into existence, we do not know for certain how or when or if our existence will ever end. We assume that we will die at some point because that is the common fate on Earth, and that it will be within the normal human lifespan (what the hell did Adam do for 930 years?); we have only the fact that we exist to suggest that we came into existence at some point. And we (most of us, anyway) have parents who suggest to us that we have not always existed and that accords with the common experience.

➤ Creator: In terms of what is 'real' the things we create or have a part in are more real to us than anything else; it is that we were involved in the establishment of our own Temporal Constructural Element rather than witnessing it or discovering it retroactively for that 'thing.' There is nothing more real to me – in this order – than my life (despite having no memory of being born or of anything before about the age of 3-4 years), my lifetime project (i.e. GGDM), and the cat companions I brought in as feral kittens, or in one case, a rescued adult female, and those that I caretake outside. A sense of this may be why some people like to grow or prepare their own food, or become craft hobbyist or professionals – they value making something with their hands, the special personal engagement with the TCE of that thing. And since Western religion teaches that man was made in the image of God and that God is the benevolent creator...

- ✓ "The late heiress [Gloria Vanderbilt] made it clear throughout her life that she valued making her own money. In a 1985 interview with The New York Times, she said, 'I'm not knocking inherited money, but the money I've made has a reality to me that inherited money doesn't have.'" – Antoinette Bueno, "Why Gloria Vanderbilt Did Not Leave an Inheritance for Son Anderson Cooper," Entertainment Tonight, June 18, 2019.

Now, if God created the universe, as the Christian literalist and fundamentalist argue, then God predates the Temporal Constructural Element that is the universe. It is in this idea that one might find a way to saying that God is eternal, has always been (in terms of this universe), and so on, because God predates the creation of the Temporal Constructural Element. This does not solve the First Cause or Prime Mover problem, however, because we do not know the conditions of the place from whence God originated (Robert Heinlein explores this a bit in Job: A Comedy of Justice (1984)) before creating this universe because we cannot see past the original Temporal Constructural Element event (which is ... The Big Bang); it does not suggest in any way that God created himself, as some have argued.

- ✓ About the only things we know Adam did was talk to God, get tossed out of the Garden – probably for urinating on the trunk of the holographic tree disguising the console that controlled the garden (like Octavia the Octopus who died because it accidentally opened the control to drain the aquarium⁶) but other reasons for the eviction

were made up later – and have a bunch of kids by one or more wives/women. And those kids grew up, intermarried, inbred, and acted just like us. How convenient.

“Phenomenology is the study of appearance as such. It is a branch of both Ontology and Epistemology, since appearing is being known. By an ‘appearance’ is meant any existent which impinges on consciousness, anything cognized, irrespective of any judgment as to whether it be ‘real’ or ‘illusory.’ The evaluation of a particular appearance as a reality or an illusion is a complex process, involving inductive and deductive logical principles and activities. Opinion has to earn the status of strict knowledge. Knowledge develops from appearances, which may be: (a) objects of perception, i.e. concrete phenomena in the physical or mental domains; (b) objects of intuition, i.e. one’s subjective self, cognitions, volitions and valuations (non-phenomenal concretes); and/or (c) objects of conception, i.e. simple or complex abstracts of preceding appearances.

Abstraction relies on apprehensions of sameness and difference between appearances (including received or projected appearances, and projected negations of appearances). Coherence in knowledge (perceptual, intuitive and conceptual) is maintained by apprehensions of compatibility or incompatibility. Words facilitate our construction of conceptual knowledge, thanks to their intentionality. The abstract concepts most words intend are common characters or behaviors of particulars (concrete material, mental or subjective experiences). Granting everything in the world is reducible to waves, ‘universals’ would be equalities or proportionalities in the measures of the features, motions and interrelations of particular waves. Such a theory of universals would elucidate sensation and memory.”

– Avi Sion, from abstract for his book [Phenomenology](#) (2005) ⁷

Epistemological Constructural Element: The next question for any object in our consciousness is how we obtained knowledge of the object, what we can know about it, and how the object fits within the constructed knowledge of our world. Every consciousness must necessarily organize and place knowledge of the world into some sort of structure that is functional, internally consistent, and forms a worldview. In our civilization, this is done by historical narrative, branches of study, college majors, classification, segregation and division.

- ✓ Ontology – the study of existence – is the geeky big brother of epistemology – the study of knowledge. Note that no gender has been assigned to epistemology by the preceding statement.

Throughout GGDM, epistemology is treated as a worldview, with the central question being, how are we going to slice the pie? And the related and broader questions of who, what and when was it determined how the pie was to be sliced? A cursory examination of intellectual history, and the current division of disciplines, study areas, degree programs, and professions and specialization, and of other cultures, shows that the pie might have been sliced much differently.

- ✓ The division of knowledge into professions, disciplines is a *boundary creation and control function*, the same as division by economic class, government power by branches, humanity by national borders, and religious movements by doctrinal fragmentation; nearly all of civilization is a struggle for boundaries and feedback loops.

- Appearance: To appear is to be known, is the axiomatic statement of phenomenology. Looking is the meeting of conscious will with appearance. What are the consequences of denial? That something can be known without appearing to us in some form? Or that which appears to us does not become known to us by appearance?
- ✓ Phenomenology is a relatively modern term, according to Merriam-Webster online dictionary its first use was about 1797. The idea has evolved through several phases to the modern meaning. The process of forming new frameworks to understand that which is not explainable within the preceding framework is the process of reforming worldviews of civilization.
 - ✓ Phenomenology provides a means to explain how non-real things, such as fictional characters or stories (in movies, novels, fairy tales, etc.) can have an impact on our consciousness. How would we discuss these things as ‘real’ if not for the framework of phenomenology? It is the basis of a branch of psychology which holds that our mental reality is formed by perception of phenomenon instead of objective reality.

“Due to the First Jewish-Roman War, the destruction of the Second Temple ushered in a major time of dramatic reformation in religious leadership, causing the face of Judaism to change. The Second Temple served as the centralized location from which the ruling groups Sadducees and the Pharisees maintained Judaism, with rivaling Essenes and Zealots being largely in opposition. With the destruction of the temple, the major ruling group lost their power – the Sadducees, who were the priests, directly lost their localized power source and were rendered obsolete. Due to this, only one group was left with all the power – the Pharisees, who were the rabbinic group. The rabbinic groups’ power did not derive from the temple or from military prowess, which enabled their power to spread among synagogues to different communities.

This changed the way Judaism was practiced on a daily basis, which included changing from sacrificing animals to praying in order to worship God. Rabbinic Judaism became a religion centered around synagogues, and the Jews themselves dispersed throughout the Roman world and beyond. With the destruction of Jerusalem, important centers of Jewish culture developed in the area of Galilee and in Babylonia and work on the Talmud continued in these locations.

Before Vespasian’s departure, the Pharisaic sage and Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai obtained his permission to establish a Judaic school at Yavne. Zakkai was smuggled away from Jerusalem in a coffin by his students. This school later became a major center of Talmudic study.”

– from Wikipedia article, “Jewish-Roman Wars,” captured September 7, 2019 ⁸

Symbolic Constructural Element: “...but face it, most of the things we call ‘sexy’ are symbolic, you know, except perhaps an exhibitionist’s open fly.” – Frederik Pohl, “Day Million” (1966). Abstraction is a key element of sapience. Experiences and events are reduced (edited) to memories, rules, summaries, points, regulations, codes, idols, icons, and symbols.⁹ Symbols are objects, often idols or icons that represent or stand for something else, an idea, image, belief, action or another person or object.

- ✓ [Interview] “To the French public, this was a great victory. [Fort] Douaumont was a great symbol. It was of no military significance whatsoever, but it was a symbol. It

had to be recaptured. And it was seen in France as being a great victory. In Germany, it was seen as a terrible defeat. The reality is, it didn't matter tactically. It was all about perception." – Major Gordon Corrigan (British Army, Gurkha Rifles), Under Siege television series (2008), Episode 4.

- ✓ [Dialogue in Russian with English Subtitles] “[Lyudmila] Pavlichenko is not just a soldier anymore. With this, she's become a symbol. And no one invalids a symbol. ... The Germans announced her death. [Officer produces a German propaganda hand-out] The third assault wave is coming and my guys are going to battle with her name on their lips.” – Soviet Officer, from Battle for Sevastopol (2015).

She is then forced to get out of the hospital bed, badly wounded along her back and still bleeding, and put on a uniform jacket and hat, hold a rifle and smile for the camera so they can take a photograph to disprove the German propaganda. After the camera flash, she almost faints.

Anything, any place, or anyone is capable of being made a symbol of something else or of a class or category of things, by highlighting certain attributes and dismissing or diminishing others. Cult of personality, hero worship, deification, historical distortion, the victor writes history; all of these highlight or exaggerate some things and diminish or hide others to create the symbol. A symbol therefore, is *an exercise in inequality* (for example, athletes, heroes, political leaders are symbols); true egalitarianism would have no symbols.

- ✓ My neighbor was arguing with his wife because she wanted a red front door. His wife talked about the Chinese and American meanings of a red door. I talked about the meaning of a red door on a Christian church. He then asked why does everything have to have a meaning assigned to it? The answer is because that is what humans do; true egalitarianism would not be human. Because what, other than the void, exists beyond meanings we assign, however silly they are?

The act of choosing one thing over another, making a choice or decision, or elevating anything over another, is an act of discrimination, *an act of inequality*. Even comparing things requires making a judgment about qualities, such that modern cultural anthropology discourages comparisons of cultures. *Discrimination* is, by itself, a *neutral* term of cognizance.

- ✓ “First among equals” – as the Norse god Odin described himself in Robert Heinlein's *Job: A Comedy of Justice* (1984) – is an old ironic phrase in English, its actual meaning is the opposite of its intended meaning: Being first is not being equal. It is often expressed in the title First Citizen; the Latin term for it, Princeps, was a title of the Roman Emperor. As TV Tropes points out, it is often used in fiction to avoid the complications of being called Emperor.

Most *discrimination* is good and necessary (e.g., comparing price, quality of product, choosing a car mechanic, deciding whether to supersize your meal, which movie to watch tonight); however, the term has taken mostly a negative connotation in our current culture because certain acts of discrimination against people (e.g., racism, homophobia), being without rational basis, are considered culturally damaging and illegal or legally actionable.

- ✓ [Narrator] “The uncomfortable truth for [Kim] Philby was that his value to Russia was more symbolic than personal.... but what mattered much more to them was that this old man was a living example of a signal victory over the West at a time when

the skids were under the socialist dream.” – The Spy Who Went into the Cold: Kim Philby, Soviet Super Spy (documentary, 2013).

- Smuggled in a Coffin: What would be more symbolic of the death of Second Temple Judaism than the remaining Rabbi being smuggled out of the city in a coffin by his students? Did it literally happen that way, is it literally true? Who cares? The important underlying elements are the students (the next generation), caring for their master (the old generation authority figure), and exercising ingenuity to insure the survival of the tradition. The idea of leaving the ancient sacred city and going forth may also be important.

Although Rome was the co-seat of Christianity alongside Constantinople, Rome is not the “Second Temple” of Christianity, even if the Vatican acts like Sadducees. Christianity as practiced, followed the format of Rabbinical Judaism, centered on community churches.

Interpretations are built on symbols and symbolic events. For example, Rome was sacked by the Vandals in 455 A.D., and within 35 years, the last traces of the Western Roman Empire had vanished under the wave of migrating ‘barbarian’ tribes. Those tribes slowly became Christianized, mainly between 700 and 1000 A.D. The fall of Constantinople was almost 1000 years after the sack of Rome by the Vandals. One might see in these places and important historical events a grand epic cycle. Macro-history is a bit of interpretation.

- White Rose: *Symbolic acts* are acts lacking in practical utility but that convey to the audience what the actor believes or wants to happen.¹⁰ February 1993 was the 50th Anniversary of the execution of Sophie Scholl, her brother Hans Scholl, and Christoph Probst for passing out anti-Nazi pamphlets. Copies of the sixth White Rose leaflet were dropped over Germany by allied planes in July 1943. *Symbolic act*.
 - ✓ “Playwright Lillian Garrett-Groag stated in Newsday on 22 February 1993, that ‘It is possibly the most spectacular moment of resistance that I can think of in the twentieth century ... The fact that five little kids, in the mouth of the wolf, where it really counted, had the tremendous courage to do what they did, is spectacular to me. *I know that the world is better for them having been there, but I do not know why.*’ In the same issue of Newsday, Holocaust historian Jud Newborn noted that ‘*You cannot really measure the effect of this kind of resistance in whether or not X number of bridges were blown up or a regime fell ... The White Rose really has a more symbolic value, but that’s a very important value.*’” – from Wikipedia article, “Sophie Scholl,” May 20, 2019 (emphasis added).

One of the members of the White Rose group who was executed in July 1943, Alexander Schmorell, has been canonized by the Orthodox Church in 2012 as St. Alexander of Munich (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Alexander_Schmorell). Canonization makes you a symbol.

One of the most literal examples of the power of a symbol is the episode of the Holy Lance of Antioch and the strange Battle of Antioch (June 1098 A.D.) in the First Crusade.¹¹ The success at Antioch set the pattern for the use of alleged religious artifacts for morale and motivational purposes during the Crusades.¹² The power of religious symbols¹³ served to make up for the failings of incompetent leadership, poor planning, bad logistics and morale, and strategy based on religious faith instead of realities (e.g., the army of the First Crusade arrived at the walls of Jerusalem in July 1099 without either siege equipment, proper supply or a plan;¹⁴ they just got lucky that ships arrived at Jaffa).¹⁵ Later, in August 1099, a fragment

thought to be of the True Cross, discovered in Jerusalem, was used to lead the Crusader army, outnumbered 2 to 1, to victory at the Battle of Ascalon.

“Hate speech like that proudly employed by those organizing, participating in and discussing the horrifying events ... is unwelcome on many platforms. In fact, discouraging hate speech is an ideological stance common to nearly all internet services, with the marked exception of services created specifically to circumvent that stance.”

– Devin Coldewey, “Discord shuts down alt-right server and accounts for ToS violations,” TechCrunch, August 14, 2017

Ideological Constructural Element: In the final analysis, all things within our consciousness are fitted into a set of ideas, idealized conditions (or the extent to which the object in question departs from ideals and ideal conditions¹⁶) and worldviews, and wishful thinking about our relationships to each other and the real universe around us.

- ✓ “Kant’s argument turns on the view that, while all empirical phenomena must result from determining causes, human thought introduces something seemingly not found elsewhere in nature – the ability to conceive of the world in terms of how it *ought* to be, or how it might otherwise be. For Kant, subjective reasoning is necessarily distinct from how the world is empirically. Because of its capacity to distinguish *is* from *ought*, reasoning can ‘spontaneously’ originate new events without being itself determined by what already exists.” – from Wikipedia article, “Compatibilism,” captured October 27, 2019 (emphasis in original), citing to Immanuel Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason (1781), trans. by Max Mueller (1949), p. 448.

The ideology involved may or may not be overtly political, but nearly all ideology relates to politics, economics or religion (and the entanglements thereof); it would be difficult to imagine otherwise without significantly changing the meaning of the word “ideology.”¹⁷ While ideology can have negative connotations in the normal discourse, it is used in a neutral sense in GGDM.

- ✓ For example, I started trying to understand the American political term, “neocon,” a group upon whom much blame has been heaped for world history since the end of the Cold War. I eventually realized that the neocon movement and individual politicians of the group, were attempting to resist, albeit with limited success, the famous observation, ‘If you are a conservative when you are young, you have no heart, if you are a liberal when you are older, you have no brain’; neocons were trying to be both. Neocon is the current name for what is probably a normal historical process or movement in any civil society culture that has conservative and liberal political elements; there are, for example, “neolibs,” though the term hasn’t gained widespread use here in a society moving toward conservatism.

The process of understanding neocons is a good example of the normal application of Constructural Elements (even if you think my understanding is wrong), as each question was answered in order – temporal, epistemological, ideological and symbolic – and they were fitted snugly into the political spectrum present in the current worldview.

The Ideological Constructural Element is perhaps the hardest to grasp in any concrete way; this is in part because we are all members of the modernity; modernity, starting with Machiavelli's discussion of politics of power in 1532, elevates realism over the idealism that came down through Western civilization from Plato through Hellenized Judaism, and finally, Christianity. Modernity is a worldview *because membership is not the least voluntary*; you were raised in it and it informs your expectations.¹⁸ Even Martin Luther, an ordained clergy in a very religious time, found a streak of realism when writing about what Christians actually do, and the subject of secular authority (see Luther & Charles excerpt, Government Titles, *infra*).¹⁹

Had GGDM been written in another idealist time, the Constructural Elements (a realistic construct of worldviews) – if the concept could even exist – would have been sliced differently, it might have followed, for example, Plato's essences or Luther's two kingdoms doctrine – there might, for example, have been two representing the left hand and two parts for the right hand of God (which would be considered dogmatic and quaint, as my construct will undoubtedly be in 500 years), and they would have been the construct of worldview.²⁰ Or in ancient China:

- ✓ “The first to unite the yin-yang and Five Elements into a single system was apparently Tsou Yen (ca. 305–ca. 240), traditionally regarded as the ‘father’ of Chinese naturalistic thinking. Living as he did during the Warring States period, he gave the elements political significance by correlating each of them with a particular dynasty or reign in an endlessly recurring cycle. In this way he and his followers induced several of the Warring States rulers to institute state cults of the Five Elements in the hope of gaining the support of that particular element destined by its position in the cycle to replace the ebbing element of the Chou dynasty. Before Tsou Yen and perhaps for some time after him as well, the Five Elements seem to have been almost exclusively the concern of court astronomers, physicians, music masters, diviners, and the like, and it was to this class of men that Tsou Yen himself possibly belonged. By contrast, the elements are barely mentioned in sociophilosophical writings before the second half of the third century B.C.” [Derk] Bodde (1991), pp. 101-102. (from University of Washington, text notes for translation of Weilue 魏略 by Yu Huan 魚豢).
- ✓ See continued discussions in Conflagration, 3 Constructural Elements, p. 211 and The Bargain, 5 Culture, p. 426, *infra*.
- Language & Philosophy: Language serves as an ideological archeology; a sedimentary deposit of ideas, silt accumulation in the intellectual stream:
 - ✓ “Resistance to Aristarchus, a kind of geo-centrism in everyday life, is with us still. We still talk about a sun rising and the sun setting. It's 2200 years since Aristarchus and the language still pretends that the Earth does not turn, that the sun is not at the center of the solar system.” – Carl Sagan, Cosmos, Episode 7.

Political philosophy is often, but should not be, confused with ideology:

- ✓ “Let us start by noting that the Austrian School of Economics is not an *ideology*, but a way of scientific thinking. The Austrian theorists never thought in terms of an ideological assumption that ‘the free market is the best, so we have to build a theory around it to integrate this ideology with the general body of science.’ Quite the contrary. Carl Menger, considered to be the founder of the Austrian School, experienced

the real market first hand by talking with entrepreneurs and stock investors, and this inspired him to develop his theory in a way that best suited reality. ...

The reason the Austrian School may be accused of being ideological is probably that it is often associated with libertarianism. These two, however, are separate things. The fact is evident by the existence of libertarian economists who are not Austrians, and Austrian economists who are not libertarians. Libertarianism is a political philosophy. *Philosophy answers a different kind of questions than economics.* Economics, as Ludwig von Mises wrote, does not ask which ends should people desire, but what means they should employ to achieve their desired ends.” – Econclips.com, “The Methodology of the Austrian School,” (undated, no author attributed), captured July 9, 2019 (emphasis added).²¹

The preceding commentary links ideology to epistemology in its description of how ‘knowledge’ is sometimes built in an unscientific way (i.e. backwards, where the conclusion comes first) via ideology and distinguishes between *a priori* science and philosophy.

- ✓ Rhetorical Question: Is the GGDM simulation presenting an ideology or an *a priori* science? Is it more like the U.S. Declaration of Independence (see discussion 1 Beginnings, p. 24, *supra*) or Ludwig von Mises’ Human Action (1949)?

“Alienated from the present. There are great advantages in for once removing ourselves distinctly from our time and letting ourselves be driven from its shore back into the ocean of former worldviews. Looking at the coast from that perspective, we survey for the first time its entire shape, and when we near it again, we have the advantage of understanding it better on the whole than do those who have never left it.” – Friedrich Nietzsche

Medieval State of Mind: It is very difficult to step outside your time’s worldview; medieval people are alien to us, we are more like the Romans (and also not very much like the Romans) than people of what were later called the Middle Ages. Most characters in modern-written medieval fantasy, docudrama, or historical fiction and costume epics, are modern or nearly modern people in medieval costume, and most of them are lords and ladies (i.e. ‘important people’), and not peasants (like in the SCA²²). This was a point that stood out most noticeably in the failed – it lasted one month – 1992 television series, Covington Cross, the characters were modern people in medieval costumes: The pilot opening scene was ridiculous and the rest didn’t get better.

- ✓ Conversely, sometimes a true effort is rewarded: “After researching about old pagan beliefs and folklore about witches, that were supposed to roam the mountain woods in those times, my interest was to develop a character that these folk tales would have branded as a witch, but to dig deeper into her psyche and see her as the traumatized, mistreated and finally delusional person that society constructed. As well as to understand what utterly evil things people were lead to do while suffering from psychosis in the middle ages and being surrounded by superstition and religious prosecution. The film tries to depict a very personal and empathetic mental image of a nightmarish and sick mind.” – Lukas Feigelfeld discussing his movie, Hagazussa – A Heathen’s Curse (2018), from Brad Miska, “‘Hagazussa’ Poster Evokes a Heathen’s Curse,” September 13, 2017.

- **Questions of Intelligence:** Let's become a dog for a moment, and since I am a male, and obviously male biased... In the case of a male dog meeting another dog, the first question asked is whether the other dog is a male or female? The second question is, if it is a male, am I the alpha in this case, and if it is a female, is she ready to mate? This is not to make fun of dogs (humans quietly do the same, just watch them), but to point out that the questions asked (i.e. the Constructural Elements) in any situation depend on intelligence. Dogs ask questions that fit a dog's world and pre-interstellar races ask questions that fit a pre-interstellar planet-bound world. Time is only a very vague concept to dogs, the now is paramount (notably less so for intelligences that have foresight and legacy consciousness), epistemology/ontology is non-existent for dogs as far as we can determine, and their only ideology is 'loyalty to a fault,' an anthropomorphic trait we identify and treasure in dogs (and supporters of President Trump, see Charlie Sykes comment, Red Guards, 1 Order, p. 517, *infra*).
- ✓ The Constructural Elements presented here are thus the questions asked by a planet-bound, pre-interstellar race, as are all of the other questions asked in GGDM. This is so because we cannot yet imagine the questions that a real interstellar or trans-dimensional culture will ask when they understand FTL technology, have passed the Technological Singularity, for example or can penetrate black holes. Yet, fragments of worldviews linger from the past, we still have mythopoeic elements in our thoughts and flat earth phrases in our language, so likely these questions will remain in some form as artifacts in future civilizations.

“For Egypt, the greatest horror was the destruction or abduction of the cult images. In the eyes of the Israelites, the erection of images meant the destruction of divine presence; in the eyes of the Egyptians, this same effect was attained by the destruction of images. In Egypt, iconoclasm was the most terrible religious crime; in Israel, the most terrible religious crime was idolatry. In this respect Osarseph alias Akhenaten, the iconoclast, and the Golden Calf, the paragon of idolatry, correspond to each other inversely, and it is strange that Aaron could so easily avoid the role of the religious criminal. It is more than probable that these traditions evolved under mutual influence. In this respect, Moses and Akhenaten became, after all, closely related.”

– Jan Assmann, [From Akhenaten to Moses: Ancient Egypt and Religious Change](#), (2014), p. 76

Rebels, Romans and Ruins of Religions: Or as Dr. Stephen Griffith (Lycoming College, Dept. of Philosophy) pointed out, rebels are not really 'free,' as being a rebel requires them to be the opposite of what they oppose, therefore, they cannot ever be what they want to be or could be. A very existentialist thought!; sometimes we make our own boxes and live in them. In the context of the ancient Egyptians and Israelites, the Jewish culture developed religion to symbolize their opposition to the other. This opposition religion then was redirected toward the Romans who conquered Egypt and, eventually, Palestine.

- ✓ In a sense, everyone is a rebel against something, just as Erasmus maintained that there wasn't a sane human, it was just a matter of degrees. Many people are confused about this, consider for example, the 1971 hit song by Lobo, "Me and You and a dog named Boo." The hitchhiking character in the song is clearly rebelling against attachment and being settled (against urbanization and suburbia), and declares, "How I love being a free man." The song appealed to the wishful thinking of the public and thus

was a hit. But the song confuses freedom to travel (freedom from employment, education, family, home ownership) and “livin’ off the land” with being free. The character in fact is caught stealing eggs and forced to work on the farm. Freedom in this sense is just the opportunity to rebel against something and we are all equally free and insane inside our minds.

- If after reading GGDM, you want to be the opposite of whatever you perceive I am, go right ahead, but I feel bad for the people around you. But that is the way we often react to our parents, elders, society.

The collapse of the Roman Empire eternally fascinates us for three reasons: 1) it was considered in its early form, the pinnacle of Classical Euro-Mediterranean civilization, 2) the collapse was tragically long and slow (and at the receiving end of the Great Migration, an epic in its own right) and 3) the collapse took an entire stage of civilization into the history books along with the Empire. And the Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire was an almost, but not quite, equally impressive second season that protected post-Roman, post-Great Migration, Christianized Europe from additional impacts and also absorbed some of the remaining warlike entropic energy of the tribes as they settled down at the end point of the Migration.

- ✓ The collapse of the First Intermediate Period of Egypt (or any period of ancient Egypt) is probably nearly as epic, in different ways, but we do not identify with it. Possibly because Egypt recovered and had later greatness, but more likely, because Christianity emphasized the collapse of Rome and because the Roman and Byzantine Empire occupied and influenced over 1,400 years of history in Europe (from which Western culture sprang forth to 500 years of colonial hegemony) on the other side of the New Testament.

“This argument is strongly reminiscent of that of Shephard Clough, who suggested that weakness and collapse can be caused by diverting resources from investment in capital to expenditures on art and knowledge. As more resources are devoted to artistic achievement, the share available for creating economic well-being diminishes, as does the society’s strength. Thus the elements that define ‘civilization’ lead to its demise. The collapses of Egypt in the First Intermediate Period, and of Rome, are explained accordingly (Clough, 1951: 3-7, 52-53, 143-59, 261).”

– Joseph Tainter, [The Collapse of Complex Societies](#) (1988), pp. 55-56

Framing Collapse: Martin Luther in 1517 complained in the 95 Thesis about the Church’s lavish expenditures on cathedrals rather than using the money to help the poor. Through his own filter, he perceived this in the current state of German culture, beset by corruption, plague, and desperately poor, restless peasantry. The widespread peasant revolts, which Luther vehemently condemned (he needed the support and protection of the hereditary Electors and magnates), started in 1524 and evolved into the devastating German Peasant’s War (1524-1525).

This argument suggests that modern technological, global civilization may suffer from excessive investment in technology research and specialized education. The suspicion that this might be the case, or cause of problems, has long been harbored in the West and expresses itself in arguments about universal college access, narrow specialization, student loan debt, credentialism, and

government investments in (or lack of investment in) infrastructure, deterioration of infrastructure (usually by raising the debt ceiling) and loss of jobs through regulation.

In short, this argument encapsulates generally elements of the conservative position in America, including the usual sorts of anti-immigration arguments. Because of the development of radicalism and hostility between conservatives and liberals in the U.S., and the vagaries of unpredicted events in the 24-hour news cycle, the conservatives have not been able to sell this argument in any long-lasting manner. And as Joseph Tainter stated, the technological optimist argument has been hard to counter because so far they have been right:

- ✓ “The second problem ... is that technological optimists argue that we don’t really [need] to worry about resources, that all we need are free markets and the price mechanism. That as long as there are free markets that whenever resources start to become scarce, the market signals that it’s time to innovate, that there will be rewards to innovation. And so the assumption is that as a resource becomes scarce, people develop – put effort into developing a new resource or finding more efficient ways of using the existing resource or developing new technologies and so forth. This is a hard argument to counter because up until this point, the technological – excuse me – the technological optimists have been correct. We have maintained the most complex society humanity has ever known, and we have maintained it up to this point.... I have argued that technological innovation and other kinds of innovation evolve like any other aspect of complexity. The investments in research and development grow increasingly complex and reach diminishing returns.” – Joseph Tainter, podcast interview on PeakProsperity.com, by Adam Taggart, June 25, 2017.

“Among Europe’s Catholic peasantry, religion was all consuming and laden with folk custom. Believers sacrificed animals to the Virgin, prayed to the new moon, and worshiped the sources of streams. They made curative pilgrimages to the sites of miracles... The faithful believed in the necessity of witch hunts and resisted the Church’s attempt to stamp them out. Satan was everywhere and his creatures had to be eradicated....

After 1650 the Church made a supreme effort to spiritualize peasant Catholicism by attacking its magical content. A better educated clergy was sent to rural parishes, emphasizing scriptural teaching, the sacraments, and the catechism. The Church attacked semi-pagan folk festivals and declared war on the veneration of accumulated bric-a-brac that had transformed Churches into sacred warehouses.”

– Raymond Birn, Crisis, Absolutism, Revolution: Europe 1648 to 1789 (2nd Ed., 1992), pp. 171-172 ²³

Endnotes.

¹ Citation: See, for example, The Life of a Flea discussion in I Information, p. 1334, *infra*, of pets in space-opera fiction, which leads to commentary about Muffit in the original Battlestar Galactica series, which in turn, becomes a backdoor to a discussion of standard tropes in 1970s television.

² Citation: cf. “As David said, ‘Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, so that thou art justified in thy sentence’ [Ps. 51:4]. As a matter of fact, true Christians willingly accept the rebuke and judgment that is in the preaching of God’s word. But those who won’t receive this judgment show plainly that they are really damnable knaves. They are sinning against the Holy Spirit when they refuse to accept the rebuke of the preachers through whom he speaks. Or

they are so far gone that they regard our preaching as nothing more than man's word and so won't tolerate it." – Martin Luther, "Appeal for Prayer Against the Turks" (1541) *Luther's Works*, Volume 43 (1968).

³ **Citation:** Originally published in Planet Stories, summer 1948 issue (information from the ISFDB), also reprinted in S is for Space (1966) of which I have had a hard copy since I was a teenager (along with R is for Rocket), I think I got them from my mother who probably bought the books in the 1970s.

⁴ **Commentary & Citation:** This quote attributed to Leonardo da Vinci has been bouncing around the internet for decades, in various versions, e.g., "Principles for the Development of a Complete Mind: Study the science of art. Study the art of science. Develop your senses – especially learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else" and "Leonardo Da Vinci's principles of learning are: Study the art of science, study the science of art, use all your senses, and know that everything connects to everything else." According to the Talk Page discussion on Wikiquote, it does not appear anywhere in his writings, but may have been derived from something he actually wrote, "*Studia prima la scienza, e poi la practice bata da essa sceinza. (Libro di Pittura, 32r)*" (Wikiquote Talk Page). This is a common situation with quotes of questionable attribution or accuracy on the internet. However, the *more important* fact is that people like the bits of wisdom contained in the alleged Leonardo da Vinci quote and have enough respect for da Vinci as a polymath to attribute it to him without question, a form of internet nexialism.

⁵ **Commentary:** Imagine how profoundly the invention of names for objects and concepts affected our ancestors? Conversely, imagine a conversation in a world where nothing has any formal name? Is it possible? Who are you without a name? Helen Keller relates that the 'breakthrough' came on the day at the water fountain, when she finally grasped that sounds represented objects. Afterward, she wanted to know the names of everything.

⁶ **Citation:** J. Michael Kennedy, "Octavia the Octopus Dies as Tank Empties: Animals: The sea creature at San Pedro aquarium apparently tore off a drain pipe with her tentacles overnight. The death intensifies controversy over her captivity." Los Angeles Times, April 12, 1994.

- ✓ Octopi seem to particularly detest captivity. There are many stories of them escaping tanks, trying to crawl away, go down drains, etc. The one at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium disassembled a valve and flooded the exhibit and offices with 200 gallons of water. See, Bob Pool, "Did this mollusk open a bivalve?" Los Angeles Times, February 27, 2009. According to PETA, another octopus in Germany shorted out lights by squirting water, and also redecorates his tank, throws rocks, etc.
- ✓ Unlike other sea creatures who may be unhappy in captivity, Octopi have manipulative appendages and some sort of intelligence to manipulate their surroundings, including some human technology. See related Hox Genes discussion, 1 Technology, p. 685, *infra*.

⁷ **Citation:** "Before the French philosopher Descartes (1596–1650) pointed out the existence of the conscious self as a turning point in epistemology, using the phrase 'Cogito ergo sum,' the 11th century Iranian philosopher Avicenna had referred to the existence of consciousness in the flying man argument. Thus, long before Descartes, Avicenna had established an argument for the existence of knowledge by presence without any need for the existence of the body. There are two stances on the relationship between the arguments of Avicenna and Descartes. Some scholars believe that there are apparent similarities between the floating man and Descartes' cogito. Others consider these similarities trivial and superficial. Both Avicenna and Descartes believed that the soul and self are something other than sense data. Also, Avicenna believed that there is no relation logically between the self and the body. In other words, there is no logical dependency between them." – from Wikipedia article, "Floating Man," May 21, 2020.

⁸ **Citation:** "It is around this time that the gravest of omens took place. This spiritual crisis involved the daily sacrifice of lambs to Yahweh. Like clockwork, the priests [Sadducees] had upheld the Holy Rite of Talmud amidst the bloodshed and starvation of the siege. But on the 5th of August, the last of the sacrificial lambs ran out. Now, at the height of the siege with the Romans advancing, the Jews lost their connection to God." – from "The Siege of Jerusalem (70 AD) – The Great Jewish Revolt [FULL DOCUMENTARY]" Invicta YouTube Channel, August 11, 2019.

- ✓ The triumph of the Pharisees and rabbinic Judaism is proved thus: It is inconceivable to us – silly and shallow seeming even – to hold that the inability to sacrifice a lamb daily severs a people's connection to God. It also seems an unnecessary cruelty to animals and a terrible waste of food. Sadducee Judaism seems to hinge faith on the *neurotic paradox* of a daily *symbolic act*: The ritual sacrifice of animals to God.

⁹ **Commentary:** One busy summer workday, we were walking along Grant Street in the mid-afternoon carrying boxes from one office to another. We noticed that people would look at us briefly and smile, some a little, some more obviously. After a few moments of wondering, we realized that people were smiling at the large image of Kermit the Frog that was on the box I was carrying. Kermit the Frog is a symbol of something to those who showed a reaction; perhaps a symbol of their childhood, a memory of fun and innocence on a sunny summer workday.

¹⁰ **Commentary & Citation:** I have wondered if the original concept of being 'turned to stone' was a reference to being immortalized, rendered in statuary form? Thus, being turned to stone was a symbolic act, demonstrating what

the subject or the people desired of that particular person – and it kind of worked, people see the statue and assuming it must have been a great one, ask, who is that? They rarely ask who was the artist-sculptor. Being ‘turned to stone’ comes down to us, however, as an ‘evil,’ horrific, literal event thanks to Greek mythology; do you suppose that Medusa might have been originally an especially skilled and prolific, and rival, Minoan sculptor, perhaps making statues of women? Might the monster Medusa have represented the extreme of symbolic acts, or of clear memory, or a time-travelling tourist with a Polaroid camera? We do not view statues in the same way now, or not even in the same way as a couple of centuries ago, the symbolic of most things has been lost out to the literal, the commercialized, and the cheap, but our language is still loaded with symbolic act references.

- ✓ This trend continued from classical sculpture into Renaissance painting; it is not a coincidence that some of the most famous Renaissance painters were also sculptors in stone, and this is the reason for the Mona Lisa.
- ✓ In the TV miniseries Masada (1981), the Roman commander had a miniature bust sculpture of his wife in a sort of temple in his tent. It is not certain – as is the case with husbands and wives – whether this is symbolic of his wife being there with him or symbolic of his joy that she was not there with him – like Londo’s three wives in Babylon 5, whom he symbolically called war, pestilence and famine.

¹¹ Commentary: Peter Bartholomew, the purported discoverer of the Holy Lance of Antioch in 1098 A.D., went through an ordeal by fire in April 1099 A.D. to prove himself as an authentic prophet or holy man. He survived, but was probably severely burned (beyond what medieval medicine could help), he died less than two weeks later (organ shutdown? infection?). There were vocal skeptics at the time of how the relic was allegedly discovered and his claims of visions.

¹² Commentary & Citation: In this, the Crusaders had classical Christian inspiration – however, alleged religious artifacts can be more reliably produced than celestial phenomenon, to wit:

- ✓ “Always sympathetic to Christians, he claimed to have had a divine vision that helped lead his troops, flying Christian symbols on their standards, to victory in civil war in 312. The most reductionist reading of the evidence would say that, in 310, Constantine saw a solar halo, a rare but well-documented celestial phenomenon, in the south of France and in the company of his army, but Constantine’s account of events changed over the years and we can’t be sure. We can say with greater certainty that for several years he wavered between Christian and non-Christian *interpretations of the sign*. He eventually decided, to the delight of the Christian leaders in his entourage, that he had been sent a sign by the Christian God. He became a Christian, as a matter of belief and perhaps policy too.” – Prof. Michael Kulikowski (Pennsylvania State University), “Christians were Strangers: How an obscure oriental cult in a corner of Roman Palestine grew to become the dominant religion of the Western world,” Aeon, January 30, 2017 (emphasis added).

¹³ Commentary: Most of Western vaguely Christian humanity tends to think of “angels” as deceased souls who have gone to heavenly afterlife. At least that’s how it seemed when I was growing up, probably the priesthood has encouraged the idea. If so, that makes angels simply eternally dead people with wings and halos and chordophones...one can imagine Jimi Hendrix’ impenitent utterance when they tried to issue him a lyre or harp. Yet the same is not said of those condemned to Hell in the afterlife, most generally do not equate that with souls of the damned becoming demons or devils, being issued pitchforks; instead, most imagery features souls as being tortured and consumed by the hellish host. And the clergy certainly had something to do with constructing that image from the pulpit! So we are not willing to have it both ways equally, otherwise the hosts of Hell would grow exponentially and overwhelm Heaven.

- ✓ The holy lore seems to support the Hellish vision of the afterlife more than the common posthumous angels, because what little is said on the subject suggests that the two hosts existed before humanity and thus would not be recruited from the souls of the deceased, but came from another origin (they must have had an origin because in the way it is told, they could not have existed before God, who some contend always existed). And in my youth, I would occasionally hear, “He/She [the deceased person] is with the angels now,” certainly suggesting that deceased souls are different than angels (though I never made that distinction because of Saturday-morning cartoons and other television shows) – a point that Robert Heinlein exploits comically and satirically in Job: A Comedy of Justice (1984).

¹⁴ Commentary: Some crusaders were informed via a vision that they would capture the city in nine days if they paraded around the walls of Jerusalem. On July 10, 1099, twenty thousand crusaders marched barefoot in a religious procession over sharp stones and rubble, singing hymns, following priests carrying holy relics. This may have been repeated for a few days. The defenders could only watch in amazement from the walls. What a great plan!

¹⁵ Commentary: An argument has been advanced that media reporting of the Siege of Kobanî in 2014 forced the hand of the U.S. commanders who were indifferent to the capture of Kobanî by the Islamic State. The U.S. com-

manders were focused on their campaign of depriving the Islamic State of revenues and infrastructure, but with intense media reporting, the fate of Kobanî became too symbolic to risk loss and they were drawn into the battle. It seems also that the Islamic State sensed the symbolic value of a victory there, and committed their last reserves.

¹⁶ Commentary: I read a scathingly negative review of the Banner of the Stars series on MyAnimeList written by user Mister Gibbon (https://myanimelist.net/anime/396/Seikai_no_Senki). I have seen both Crest of the Stars and Banner of the Stars I & II. Mister Gibbon is a very sensitive and observant intellectual, and I found it refreshing that he saw and deconstructed all of those things in the show's characters, story arc and background. But in the end, it seemed mainly that his complaints were the fact that the show's political and cultural milieu offended his ideological sensibilities and that the writers presented the story consistently from the Abh Empire's view, without cutting out to show the other side's story. Who knows, maybe the show writers were Abh nobles? I took the show more neutrally; I know that the Humankind Empire of Abh is an empire – it's in the title – and a monarchy, expansionist and authoritarian – it is implicit in the term “empire” with hereditary nobility, restricted upward social mobility and of course, restricted access to starships. And it's not surprising that the characters don't see that they have other options or don't see that they are trapped in the system. But for what Mister Gibbon criticizes about the show, I applaud the writers for being able to construct and maintain consistently, even down to the personal quiet time conversations of the characters, a worldview that is really from another time, but in a space-opera setting. The point of this asymmetric response to a review I read online is not to pick a fight with anime fandom, but rather, as with all of my commentary, to illustrate a point within GGDM, in this case worldviews and storytelling.

- ✓ I do not dislike anime and have watched some entire series, but I pick my spots. I could have become an anime fan, maybe even *otaku* (but am instead, GGDM *otaku*), but I find that so much of it is juvenile, eye-rolling (not to mention the anime fanboys I knew in college or at my friend's comic book shop); the art is usually good or gorgeous, the story may have been a good, potentially fascinating idea, but poorly executed and the characters are frequently unlikeable, inconsistent, silly, pointless or flat. Examples of this include Geneshaft and Kabaneri of the Iron Fortress. My favorite anime series to date are Boogiepop Phantom and Serial Experiments: Lain, while Banner of the Stars/Crest of the Stars and The Last Exile were also good.

¹⁷ Citation & Commentary: Excerpt from a 2009 Marxist review of the 1955 movie, *Strategic Air Command*:

- ✓ “How many miles of celluloid have been exposed in the business of glorifying the men and planes that dropped the bombs that burned the cities? ‘Too many’ is not a flippant answer. *Strategic Air Command* (1955) is the supreme ideological example of the (for want of a better word) ‘USAF genre’ movie. Washington's defeat in the Korean War thwarted plans to overturn socialism in the USSR and curb anti-colonial struggles via atomic intimidation, and created the stalemate between imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat we have come to call the Cold War. And in the Cold War, so far as Washington and its Madison Avenue and Hollywood drum-beaters were concerned, the newly inaugurated USAF had center stage.... It was beside the point that the organization they ran, and still run, is an international murder machine pushing the violent rule of the world's final empire. *Strategic Air Command* is no sensitive treatment of such ‘organization’ men, the men in the ‘gray flannel suit.’ It is, instead, about the satisfaction to be found when men (and their wives) embrace the shipwreck of their lives and careers on the rocks of a necessity called National Security.... [The movie] espouses ‘professional military conformity’ writ very large. If anyone other than the Pentagon can be identified as the film's ‘auteur.’... The dramatic spine of both movies is the education of a husband and wife in their responsibilities as cogs in the great engine of national war-making.... It all has to do with what we came to call deterrent and mutual assured destruction. Eventually the stifling moral cynicism of imperialists like General Hawks would be rejected, but until the Wall Street barons and the state that defends their rule is finally removed from power, the real SAC will thrive.” – Jay Rothermel, “How James Stewart Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb: Anthony Mann's *Strategic Air Command*,” *Bright Lights Film Journal*, October 31, 2009.

This review, which actually makes several very good points, is so loaded with extreme ideological language that it is choking on its own vomit. It is intended to placate and reinforce those who are already convinced, and offend anyone who is not already convinced: It is not seriously attempting to convince anyone who is not already convinced.

- ✓ The elephant in the room for any 21st Century Marxist, communist or socialist argument is the failure of the Soviet Union. For the aspiring 21st Century Maoist, it's in the name – the Great Leap Forward, the Great Chinese Famine, the Red Guards, and the Kámer Rogue travesty. For future Islamic extremist or idealist, it is the Islamic State. How do you get around that elephant without being trampled or sat on?

¹⁸ Commentary & Citation: This is the problem with neo-paganism and ‘goddess’ New Age religions: Can we really go back there? Our view of and scientific knowledge of the universe, and of the natural world on Earth, is so

much different than our ancestors, we simply cannot ‘forget’ it and adopt the worldview of our pre-Christian ancestors. It’s the same problem as the one with anarcho-primitivism, we can’t go back even if they have great and convincing arguments, it’s too late. These movements generally reflect the human wish to be children again, to revisit the golden halo of our childhood memories, but you can’t be a child again, it’s wishful thinking (and it wasn’t really as good as we remember it anyway). See further mythopoeic thinking discussion, *More Than a Feeling*, 1 Temporal Technology, p. 808 *et seq.*, *infra*.

- ✓ Undoubtedly, one of the oddest musical performances I have ever seen is the group Heilung. Live performance videos from their 2017 album *Lifa* are available on YouTube. I spent an hour or two being mesmerized by their performances of “Krigsgaldr,” “Fylgija Ear,” “Hamrer Hippyer,” and “Othan,” etc. Frankly, I have no idea what they were singing, some part of it was in English, and still I couldn’t follow it all, but their performance is quite impressive, elaborate, and novel and on some level, is language independent. A lady I know called them creepy. Later in the evening, I listened to the entire *Lifa* concert (the opening pagan prayer is in English) to get the continuity which is lost by watching the parts. A very creative group, I wonder how long they can do this gig before the novelty wears off or they get tired? Can they be healed?

¹⁹ Citation: See Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority excerpt in Luther & Charles, *Government Titles*, *infra*.

²⁰ Commentary: I often don’t understand why a movie is branded as terrible; I guess I am a sucker for suspension of disbelief in sci-fi and fantasy movies, until the moment when I see something that I think is just stupid.

- ✓ Consider the following reception of the film *Open Windows* (2014): “John DeFore of *The Hollywood Reporter* wrote that only genre diehards are likely to accept the level of suspension of disbelief necessary to enjoy the film.” – from Wikipedia article, “*Open Windows* (film).” I have watched some low budget, borderline bad-awful movies, e.g., *Somnus* (2016) to the end, but like *Sorceress* (1982), *Open Windows* was the rare movie that I could not finish, about halfway through I felt it was so ridiculous that I turned it off.

I like when movies show us a surprising glimpse of another worldview, something that tells me the writers have thought it through. One example is *Waterworld* (1995) where dialogue reveals that the people believe that the world was made that way and that they envision the mythical “Dryland” as sort of an island of dirt floating on the sea. The captain of the *Valdez* has a suburban development picture and speaks in awe about “acreage.” The various adaptations of religion and the reverence for a few remaining artifacts are amusing, especially the burial ritual at the atoll. Or when the *Smokers* celebrated the *Mariner* killing *Smitty*, an opposite of the expected reaction. Yes, I know it’s a *Mad Max* formula movie, but the ending leaves an interesting question; it is clear that the waters are not going to recede anytime soon, so the island (Dryland) will only support so many humans before overpopulation becomes an issue (disease killed the original inhabitants), there is also the issue of whether or not there are any other *Mariners* out there, who will probably inherit the world. If so, the land-dwelling humans on Dryland are just another artifact.

²¹ Commentary: Given that praxeology flies apparently in the face of empiricism and positivism, I was curious if any colleges offered degree programs or courses in praxeology. I did first a Google search for courses in praxeology; of course the first hits are related to the *Misus Institute*’s virtual academy online courses. I also found a Ph.D. seminar research course at the University of Bergen titled with praxeology, but appears to be really a course in academic publishing in health science and social science journals, thus it is difficult to discern what it has to do with praxeology other than the human conduct in peer reviews and manipulating editors! There were, of course, many articles on praxeology from free intro articles, libertarian encyclopedia articles, a *Research Gate* article on praxeology and epistemology, to an article related to economics education of engineering students. I found no schools offering a degree in praxeology. Yet it appears from Google search that one can take courses and obtain degrees in homeopathy, a medical practice that is at best viewed with great skepticism, doesn’t line up empirically with the rest of medical science, and in worse cases, is far more dangerous than praxeology in terms of possible life, death, health, and lawsuits; homeopathy is regulated in all countries, one does not need a license to ‘practice’ praxeology.

- ✓ Am I comparing apples and oranges? But this does point to a ‘second layer’ of epistemology in our civilization; homeopathy and praxeology are subject to disputations, disdain, dismissal, and are not considered of such use that one can get a degree (or a respectable degree) in those fields, but they hang around in the substrata because they cannot be absolutely proven or disproven, and they provide useful ideas to include in discussions in more respectably-established disciplines. Positivism, empiricism and inductive reasoning have also not yet managed to banish either religion or philosophy for the same reasons.

²² Commentary: SCA is the Society for Creative Anachronism. I was a member of the *Shire of the Isle of the Blue Mists*, *Barony of the Far West*, in 1986 and 1988, before falling away into the abyss.

²³ Citation: On the subject of religion and European witch hunts, see also the *Little Ice Age* feature quote, bottom p. 230 and *Sands & Seas* discussion, p. 231, 1 *Entropy*, *infra*.