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See Appendix KM – Kairotic Moment Example

*“Day after Day
Alone on the Hill
The Man with a Foolish Grin
Is Keeping Perfectly Still
But Nobody Wants to Know Him
They Can See He is Just a Fool
And He Never Gives an Answer”*

– The Beatles, “Fool on the Hill” (1967)

Hallowed Round: Sacred, at least in GGDM terms, refers to an emergent moment in a civilization that is preserved (frozen in time, in the racial memory) and amplified through emergent ripple effects and historical retrospection. It is something not merely remembered, but civilization shaping at the core, defining of a vast track of the civilization’s history.

That Kairotic Moment is not ordinary history, it is earthshaking and profound, mostly in hindsight. It is more than merely saying that history would be vastly altered if the Ottoman Turks had won at Vienna in 1683, if the Franks had lost the Battle of Tours, if the Soviets had captured Warsaw in 1920, or if the Axis had won WWII. No, those are big obvious things. Kairotic Moments are little, profound, often philosophical moments, involving small events, insignificant people, who become the avalanche by which time it is too late for the pebbles to vote (Babylon 5, “Believers” (1994)). This is an important distinction to understand about Kairotic Moments and is borne out by the history of what we think is sacred.

- ✓ With Kairotic Moments, participants have reached the epic emergent storytelling finale of the GGDM simulation game. “...for he is the Kwisatz Haderach!” – Dune.

It is hard to tell if the concept of sacred as I describe it here has been shaped and created by the events in Roman Palestine that gave rise to the current milieu. But I think that is probably the case; e.g., the Native Americans had sacred places and so did the Celts, Saxons and others. Maybe we call them sacred places and so attach to them a meaning they did not have to the original peoples ... but clearly history records that the Saxons, for example, had sacred groves (and so did the ancient Greeks, possibly the Academy might have originated as a sacred grove of Athena) which must have acted as focal points of worship, ritual, veneration, and mystical thought, and that Charlemagne targeted Saxon sacred grove destruction in his conquest of Saxony so that the Saxons would convert to Christianity, by which they could be controlled.

Thus we arrive at the last element of a Kairotic Moment, the Kairotic Moment must have mystical meaning, must be sublime (even in rhetorical theory), which gives it the power that transcends the philosophical arguments and/or propels those arguments to the core reshaping of civilization (despite the cynical power-seeking pettiness, self-aggrandizing that always follows – and the damage they do – of the following generations) into a form of cultural hegemony.

GGDM is able to address this concept at least perfunctorily due to the time periods potentially represented by Regular Turns.

- ✓ Everyone has self-aggrandizing motives, both internal and external. It is only when either become extreme, involved in the processes of civilization and/or affect others that we give them names; this is the normal way that human language handles such

third- and fourth-order of nature phenomenon. John DeLorean, the American automotive industry executive and engineer (e.g., the Pontiac GTO in opposition to Lee Iacocca's Ford Mustang) was widely accused of the peculiar form of modern self-aggrandizement called 'self-promotion' at the expense of others who contributed.

- Kairotic Hindsight: Kairotic Moments in human history are usually marked by death, destruction, loss and sacrifice, and are rather relative. In only one known and notable instance, is a moment of birth arguably a 'kairotic moment' and that was probably *completely constructed in hindsight*; that is, the birth became a kairotic moment to some because of what occurred subsequently and was embellished to that point by additions. The concept of mortal women bearing children of gods or deities or other supernatural beings predates the birth of Jesus by at least a millennia. The cultures around Mare Nostrum, at the latest, would have received these stories by way of the Romans, but probably the concepts circulated much earlier (e.g., see the retro-Hellenization of the story of David and Goliath). In many if not most cases, such stories ended tragically and served as moral lessons, for example, the story of Phaethon who tried to drive his father's chariot that pulls the sun across the sky. It is not surprising then, in this context, that the story of Jesus had to end 'tragically' and that his followers interpreted his death in a 'divinely good' way.
 - ✓ As noted in *Civis Sum*, 3 Order, p. 559, *supra*, had Jesus been a Roman Citizen the entire thing might have turned out much differently. And then there would be no Christianity. If you want a Kairotic Moment in the birth of Jesus, it is that he was not born a Roman. Supernovas, little drummer boys, and wise men from the East have nothing to do with it. Unless Arthur C. Clarke's 1955 short story, "The Star" turns out to be prescient, prophetic.

Do you think the entire story of Christ's miracles cannot have been invented afterward? Collective group storytelling? Most of what is commonly known about King Arthur was invented in the last few centuries by *Christian writers*. It is a Kairotic Moment constructed out of whole cloth in hindsight. There is a distinct and well-studied literary development of the Arthurian legend, things were added, stuck, and were built upon by others later. There is little historical evidence of a King Arthur, and there is just about as much evidence of the existence of Jesus Christ, but unsurprisingly, few Christians asked that question until the Age of Reason. I am surprised that this was not mentioned in the movie *Man from Earth* (2007) in the arguments with the Christian literalist Edith, though what was said about God not being able to get it right the first time was pretty cutting too.

Incidentally, the Christians got their 'second coming' in *Man from Earth* – the man called Jesus in history was allegedly standing right before them – but it was only a disappointing deflation of their 'blood and fables that built churches' and a curt dismissal of millennia of Roman Catholic 'pompous grandstanding' (*Id.*, terms used in the movie dialogue).

- ✓ Blood and Fables that Built Churches: "A Christian exclusivity that was also status-blind could look suspicious – so there were occasional pogroms, though surprisingly few: *the pornographic violence of martyrologies, the tormented saints of a million works of Catholic art, were the loving harvest of later centuries, not any ancient reality*. Like all empires, the Roman state hated disorder more than anything, and violence that disturbed the public peace was not encouraged. Technically, for a time, Christianity was illegal (its god had been nailed to a cross like a common bandit after

all). But a ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ policy was easier on everyone, not least the emperors. As the letters of the emperor Trajan make crystal clear, Christians were not to be sought out or persecuted unless they made themselves a conspicuous nuisance, at which point they had no one but themselves to blame for their fates.” – 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).

“Kairos, the opportune moment in rhetoric, is often an elusive element. Very seldom do the circumstances of a situation coincide perfectly; however, certain times are certainly better suited for particular rhetorical arguments than others.”

– from <https://sites.psu.edu/mgeitnerrcl/tag/kairotic-moment/>, (blog), no date or authorship attribution, captured January 26, 2019

An Instant: An instant is the time it takes to die. An instant is the time it takes to destroy a city in a huge flash of light. Instant is a word applied to coffee, hot chocolate, conception and gratification.

Nobody knows what an ‘instant’ is exactly. It’s a philosophical question. Terms like, ‘moment’ and ‘instant,’ seem simple, but are amazingly complicated to explain or pin down, for example, we say, ‘the moment of death.’ What is a moment? What amount of time constitutes a moment of death? Explain that to a jury. Some people think information can travel ‘instantaneously’ to any part of the universe, what is an instant exactly? Some inexact measure less than what a human can comprehend?

- **Instantly Relatable:** Kairotic Moment is a redundancy, like saying “RPG game” (that is “Role-Playing Game game”) or “damned blasted blasting!” near a mining site (the ‘other’ RPG doesn’t have that problem because it is usually followed by a hyphenated number, e.g., RPG-7). Because Kairos is not a common word in English, it is paired with another very common English word to make it instantly relatable to the listener so that the listener doesn’t stumble and lose the thought.
 - ✓ Merriam-Webster online dictionary at *Kairos*: a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment.
 - ✓ I did not invent the term ‘Kairotic Moment,’ a Google search shows a couple of websites that use the term, for example, a Word Hippo page that provides seven example sentences using “Kairotic Moment” or a Yahoo answers page that asks, “What is a Kairotic Moment?” to which user MONK responded in 2010, “A kairotic moment is a crucial juncture, a moment of truth, the turning point.”
- **Ekstasis:** Kairotic Moment began when I started thinking about what makes things sacred. The GGDM section is, at best, *a cursory treatment of the subject*. The catalyst for this thought may have been in two parts:
 - ✓ I remember a news report (possibly ABC Evening News) where a reporter (and I don’t remember which one) commented on how the rest of the world regards (at least at that time) the U.S. Supreme Court as an august body and that the U.S. Constitution has become venerable and taken on some sacred document qualities.¹ By extension

then, I thought that the same is becoming true more generally of the American Revolution and particularly, those studiously studied and documented weeks of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. This linkage is perhaps a small demonstration of ‘emergent’ qualities; from a news report over 30 years ago comes the Kairotic Moment section of GGDM.²

- ✓ Kairotic Moments have been in GGDM at least since the early 2000s; it is not a later invention of the final 2017-2019 edit. I had never heard the term before graduate Rhetorical Theory class at Duquesne University, so the section can be dated the turn of the millennia. It has been difficult to grasp however, because I have never been quite satisfied with the mechanics, and in early 2019, it was rewritten completely along with Reformations into the current (omega) form.

“A developmental task is a task which is learned at a specific point and which makes achievement of succeeding tasks possible. When the timing is right, the ability to learn a particular task will be possible. This is referred to as a ‘teachable moment.’ It is important to keep in mind that unless the time is right, learning will not occur. Hence, it is important to repeat important points whenever possible so that when a student’s teachable moment occurs, s/he can benefit from the knowledge.”

– Robert James Havighurst, Human Development and Education (1952)

Teachable Moment: The modern form of the Kairotic Moment is the ‘teachable moment’; the term was used for example, in relation to the Charlottesville, Virginia riots in August 2017.

- ✓ Merriam-Webster online dictionary at *teachable moment*: a time that is favorable for teaching something, such as proper behavior.
- ✓ Cf. Merriam-Webster online dictionary at *Kairos*: a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment.
- ✓ See also Joseph Tainter feature quote, 3 Culture, p. 386, *supra*.

Rhetoric has always been associated with education, e.g., Plato’s Gorgias (380 B.C.). Propaganda is about teaching the enemy to think what you want them to think; much the same can be said of political spin and public relations. To ‘rule the minds of men’ one must teach them what you want they should know and prevent them from learning otherwise; tyranny in the nursery, it’s a dirty business (not to mention the diapers). But there is also a feel to ‘teachable moment’ in the modern sense that is shallow compared to rhetoric.

This GGDM does both by accident and by design. Like most literary projects, I found years ago that GGDM goes in circles, covering the same ground, touching the same ideas, many times, but in different contexts and resultantly, from different angles. GGDM might accidentally be a teaching tool. But only for those who want to learn, to those for whom it *matters*.

- ✓ There are two things you must be convinced of in order to read GGDM: That I actually wrote it (i.e. didn’t plagiarize it, but even if I did, it might not matter as I am not selling anything or promoting myself) and second that it is worth reading (i.e. that it matters to you). I have no idea how to convincingly reach either of those goals, but if you are reading this now, I must have succeeded somehow.

“So much has been lost, so much forgotten. So much pain, so much blood. And for what, I wonder? The past tempts us, the present confuses us, and the future frightens us. And our lives slip away, moment by moment, lost in that vast terrible in-between. But there is still time to seize that one last, fragile moment. To choose something better, to make a difference, as you say. And I intend to do just that.”

– Centauri Emperor Turhan (played by Turhan Bey), *Babylon 5*, “Coming of the Shadows” (1995)³

What Happened in the 1960s?: A Kairotic Moment is whatever a moment is – you know what a moment is, but you don’t know what a moment *is* – as in the ‘I know it when I see it’ (feel it, hear it, experience it, *look when it matters*) colloquial expression. But a Kairotic Moment is in any case or sense, a moment. The GGDM sections about the Kairotic Moment have little to do with the moment – the details of which must be provided by the Concierge and participants (like the TV movie, *Lost Room* (2006))⁴ – but are instead about the before and after the moment. So in this way, GGDM cheats a little on the design, it is not a ‘Role Playing Game game’ (p. 1417, *ut supra*) and due to the turn structure, GGDM does not dwell on ‘moments.’

- ✓ I had a history professor, and this may be a memory of Dr. Paul Mason in one of his ‘historians cheat’ discussions, who commented that nobody really knows what happened in the 1960s, they talk about what happened in the 1950s and the 1970s and they impute the discussion upon the 1960s to create what they think happened. I am not sure I agree, but I get it, in the sense of how we talk about history.
 - ✓ As a game mechanic in the simulation, Kairotic Moments in GGDM are like the read-aloud function on the PC, which I have used hundreds of times in editing GGDM: Flat, emotionless with no hint of breath, and occasionally pronouncing words differently than native English speakers (e.g., ‘retconning’ as ‘re’ instead of ‘ret’ or read vs. read, live vs. live).
 - ✓ The most famous use of the “I know it when I see it” expression comes from a U.S. Supreme Court viewing of the obscene film in the case of *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 378 U.S. 184 (1964), in which Justice Potter Stewart wrote, “I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description [obscenity]; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.”
- **Old News Reels**: News Events have a limited ability or role in relation to Kairotic Moments because of the time periods probably represented by GGDM Regular Turns, see previous discussion of literary characters in GGDM, *A Story Without Characters*, 4 *The Streams of Time*, p. 102, *supra*. A Prose Intervention Special Bulletin may be useful instead.
- ✓ Kairotic Moments are strongly related to Aspects in GGDM. The extent to which Aspects are not congruent with emotion, feeling (see *Affliction of Aspects*, 2 *Culture*, p. 369, *supra*) is the extent to which Kairotic Moments are also not solely descriptive of an emotion, feeling. This is important to remember when participants add color to the game-mechanical outlines of the Kairotic Moment in GGDM.

“King Abdullah had a vested interest in saying such things – more than half his citizens are themselves Palestinians, and he wouldn’t mind if many of them returned to the other side of the Jordan River. Obama was not necessarily naive. The king told him what he wanted to hear, and he left the region as he arrived, a believer that peace and war in the Middle East form a matrix whose epicenter is the holy land.”

– Zev Chafets, “In Trump’s Middle East, Israel Is No Longer the Problem,”
Bloomberg, December 21, 2017

Terra Sancta: A Kairotic Moment in GGDM must occur at a specific place, that is, a colony. While it is possible that it could occur at an uncolonized planet or ship (e.g., Arthur C. Clarke’s “The Star” (1955)), Kairotic Moments are about population and especially, those who are looking for meaning, and that suggests very strongly that a colony (or homeworld) is involved.

Some positions might prefer especially that it occur at their Capital Colony – for purely selfish reasons – possibly making their current government sacred; but the events forming the basis of Christianity (not the later books of the New Testament) did not occur in Rome and thus the idea comes down to us that Kairotic Moments are caused by *oppressed outsiders far from the capital* (in the same way that my college Intro Lit teacher pointed out that poets are outsiders).⁵ However, the *inside-outsider narrative* of Moses does occur in some part at the seat of the Pharaoh of Egypt and while the history of Medina and Mecca may be disputed, the story of Mohammed clearly features emigration and war between two walled tribal trading posts that became cities. Both stories feature movement from the *inside to the outside* of local civilization’s power centers instead of from the *outside to the center*.

A Kairotic Moment is not a Power Activation, and thus cannot fail on a colony or ship due to inactive Constructural Elements. No effect of a Kairotic Moment described in this and following sections can fail due to inactive Constructural Elements.

➤ **Blasphemy:** “Is this the cradle of the disease, That man alone must answer for?” – Apocalypse Orchestra, “The Garden of Earthly Delights” (2017). A poster on YouTube liked the music but wanted the lyrics to be ‘less blasphemous.’ The only thing blasphemous is the use of the word: It is blasphemy against your own intelligence and against all human thought.

It is laughable the idea that players in GGDM – representing the government and society of civilizations – should be able to create or determine when Kairotic Moments occur, but GGDM also has in it the modern gaming premise of players as godlike beings guiding a civilization and GGDM’s Public Space, Matrix, etc. represent a ‘god view’ of the civilization.

- ✓ Most certainly the Romans didn’t intentionally set out to create Christianity! Rather, the forces in play at the time each played their part, did what they would naturally do given their position, powers, abilities, duties, beliefs and *willingness to act on them*. The resulting transformative echo is the emergence.
 - Just as the Byzantine Empire wasn’t there to protect Europe from invasion across the Bosphorus for 800 years, it was just there, and whatever ‘benefit’ of isolation chaotic and impoverished Europe received from it was incidental, for which the West is still thankful to the extent that we understand it matters.

- ✓ Dune is an attempt to recreate the Kairotic Moment (through an ‘Emperor of Everything’ story, Norman Spinrad), the Padishah Emperor, the Harkonnens, and the Bene Gesserit did not intend the end result of Dune (which is the point of it!).
- ✓ The Babylon 5 station, through the events of the series, became a special fictional place to the viewers and, as shown in “The Deconstruction of Falling Stars” (1997) a holy place to following generations.

Kairotic Moments are not a ‘tool’ of the players but instead, a storytelling ‘tool’ of the game. The Concierge initiates and creates the Kairotic Moment at *opportune times* and the players deal with the consequences, and perhaps try to exploit them (because players will try to exploit anything), during the game.

- ✓ **Merlin to Arthur at Camelot:** I can tell you nothing more. My days are ending. The gods of once are gone forever. It’s a time for men, it is your time Arthur. ... No, this is the moment you must face at last, to be king alone. ... There are other worlds. This one is done with me. – Excalibur (1981).⁶
 - **Arthur to Guinevere at the Convent:** I was not born to live a man’s life, but to be the stuff of future memory. The fellowship was a brief beginning, a fair time that cannot be forgotten, and because it will not be forgotten, that fair time may come again. Now once more, I must ride with my knights to defend what was and the dream of what could be. ... I have often thought that in the hereafter of our lives, when I owe no more to the future, and can be just a man, that we may meet, you’ll come to me and claim me yours, and know that I am your husband. It is a dream I have.⁷
 - Cf. **Beowulf:** We men are the monsters now. The time of heroes is dead, Wiglaf – the Christ God has killed it, leaving humankind with nothing but weeping martyrs, fear, and shame. – Beowulf (2007).
- **Biblical Blurbs:** It would be considered good form if the Concierge would issue a Special Bulletin (Intervention) when the Kairotic Moment is officially triggered (see Critical Mass, 3 Kairotic Moment, p. 1438, *infra*). The Special Bulletin should include the key Aspect that is associated with the Kairotic Moment and perhaps something to give it context; the game mechanics of the Kairotic Moment need something to give them context in the story. It is possible that the Concierge could also use a Prose Intervention (see 2 Entropy, p. 236, *supra*), but in whatever form it is given, it is not an official ‘interpretation’ in that it does not create or govern any game mechanic in the game, i.e. the statement by the Concierge did not create the Kairotic Moment. The statement is merely to provide the Aspects for the Kairotic Moment and something of a story for the players to work off of as the Moment runs its course.
- **Equilibrium Epiphany:** Although the concept of a ‘teachable moment’ might be characterized as the modern cousin to the ancient rhetorical concept of the kairotic moment (*ut supra*), participants should not be fooled into thinking that kairotic (or even emergent) moments are always positive. A kairotic moment is just an opportune moment in a conflict, argument, debate where something important may occur. But opportune for whom? Even teachable moments are rather neutral despite their association with positive pedagogy; the teachable moment depends on what you are trying to teach, e.g., racism or anti-racism, nationalism or anarchy? The terms in which James Havinghurst (feature quote, p. 1418, *ut supra*) described

the teachable moment can (and does) also apply equally to advertising, propaganda, politics and public relations, not just pedagogy (see *Pedagogy of Propaganda*, p. 1424, *ut infra*).

Thus kairotic moments should not be assumed to be *positive* (in our sense): In the previous discussion of the assassination of Julius Caesar and political murder (see *Bitterness & Murder*, 6 Government Titles, p. 657, *supra*), *the moment was one in which the political leadership of the Roman civilization could either repudiate political murder or allow it to become the norm* and the Second Triumvirate decided to embrace it, legitimize it by their state authority (by reviving the discarded practice of *proscription*), to consolidate their power and eliminate political opposition. If you construe kairotic moments as ‘teachable moments’ in the positive, wisdom-building sense, then that moment in 36 B.C. was an opportunity missed. But *something* happened during that moment whichever way you construe it, whether you think it was an opportunity missed or not, and that is the Kairotic Moment in GGDM.

- ✓ In this sense of *something happened*, Kairotic Moments in GGDM are similar to the famous answer of “42” in the Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy: The answer to everything is 42 but what is the question? The question is what the story fills in ... or not.

In the story of a GGDM game, a Kairotic Moment does not need to be religious, but does need to be a core experience, opportune moment for *something* to happen to *or* in a civilization. The story is what that is.

- ✓ Back to our favorite agent of analogies: baseball. There are two outs in a half-inning and the bases are loaded. There are opportunities for both teams – for the at-bat team, a grand slam, or even a base hit; for the pitcher, a chance to escape a bases-loaded jam with no damage (other than an elevated pitch count). *Something* is going to happen. What is great for one team – a grand slam or a final out – is a disaster or at least a failure of opportunity for the other. Even if it suddenly rains like Noah’s flood and the game is called, or the players all just leave and go home (or maybe the recess bell rings), or the Supreme Being rolls up the map (as in *Time Bandits* (1981)), *something* will have happened in relation to that instance – even if outside the context of the system where the opportune moment exists. Humans (and life), by accident or design, create those instances where something must happen.

“Any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

– John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (1624)

Opportune for Whom?: Uh-oh, there’s that word ‘emergent’ again! In the 17th Century! When constructing or resolving a Kairotic Moment, one question might be ‘opportune for whom?’ That is, who is the actor? Some considerations include:

- ✓ What opportunity exists or what is opportune about that moment in that place?
- ✓ What is the issue?
- ✓ Who is this moment *opportune for* and what are they trying to accomplish?
- ✓ What situation created the opportunity?

The example most familiar to those of Western civilization (which is why I am using it, I and my probable audience are not familiar enough with anything else) is Roman-occupied Palestine, so let's ask those questions of Christianity. For whom was the moment opportune and in what way? And was the opportunity they saw realized or sidetracked? Certainly, the Romans didn't see anything opportune in it, or if they did, it was the ability to gain favor with certain elements in the occupied territory by executing a wild heretic peasant preacher. How did it result in such a complete change of worldview of Western civilization? Page | 1423

➤ The Core of Christianity: The mystic core of Christianity is in fact, answering those questions, because it is really difficult if you understand the history and the sociopolitical milieu of the time and place to see how the moment was opportune for anything but being run through by a Roman sword or crucified. Yet clearly, something emergent came from it, and this seems to be the core issue: Palestine Judaism was being forcefully Hellenized by the Romans (there had been internecine strife over that issue previously, e.g., the Maccabean Revolt) and the early Christians were considered to be a Hellenized Jewish sect or cult.

- ✓ But Palestine appears to be the cultural crossroads of the time, being between Egypt and Syria, between Rome and the East. This is what made it Terra Sancta to two offshoot Abrahamic religions and strategically vital to the Roman Empire. In modern times, early Christianity has been characterized as an obscure 'oriental cult' (e.g., Prof. Michael Kulikowski, and the movie *The Man from Earth* (2007)) acknowledging finally its relationship to Buddhism which spread along the Silk Road.⁸

It is from this Hellenization in fact, that the early Christians got the sense of the Kairotic Moment in history and built it into a separate religion based on questionable opportunities in Palestine and penetrated all the way to the center of the Roman Empire.

Separated entirely from the religion, *this phenomenon alone is a stunning historical turn that demands explanation, the macro-process – and not the religion – is sublime.*⁹

- ✓ “Christianity itself can be seen as originating in a millenarian movement among Jewish people living under Roman rule, *although its characteristics as a social movement quickly changed* as it spread through the Roman Empire.” – from Wikipedia article, “Millenarianism in colonial societies,” captured June 14, 2019 (emphasis added).
- ✓ “Apart from the small and ethnically circumscribed exception of the Jews, the ancient world had never known an exclusivist faith, so the rapid success of early Christianity is *a historical anomaly*. Moreover, because some form of Christianity is a foundational part of so many peoples' lives and identities, the Christianisation of the Roman empire feels perennially relevant – something that is 'about us' in a way a lot of ancient history simply is not. Of course, this apparent relevance also obscures as much as it reveals, especially just how *strange* Rome's Christianisation really was.” – 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).¹⁰
- ✓ “The Roman Empire became Christian during the fourth century CE. At the century's start, Christians were – at most – a substantial minority of the population. By its end, Christians (or nominal Christians) indisputably constituted a majority in the empire. Tellingly, at the beginning of the century, the imperial government launched

the only sustained and concerted effort to suppress Christianity in ancient history – and yet by the century’s end, the emperors themselves were Christians, Christianity enjoyed exclusive support from the state and was, in principle, the only religion the state permitted.” *Id.*

By 395 A.D., Emperor Theodosius I dissolved the Vestal Virgins, allowed the final destruction of the remainder of the Library of Alexandria and established Christianity as the official state religion of Rome (if you like, this is an example consistent with the gradual change in worldview discussed in *Artifice*, 2 Constructural Elements, pp. 191-192, *supra*).

- ✓ The Vestal Virgins were the strangest of Roman creatures, difficult for modern Westerners to conceptualize. I suppose that some argument has been made that the Virgin Mary story was inspired by the Vestal Virgins (it would kind of make sense), but the importance of their dissolution in 395 A.D. cannot be understated. In order to have been dissolved, the entire underlying worldview must have changed, such that they appeared a quaint, odd appendage to the Roman State. Virgin Mary defeated the Vestal Virgins by birthing upon the world a sublime movement the like of which the Vestal priestesses had never imagined, the Virgin Mary had done one thing the Vestal Virgins were impliedly never allowed to do: give birth.¹¹

The Western Roman Empire was gone in three generations, a receding shadow in the fourth.

- ✓ The trick, device, quality of Christianity in particular and of the Abrahamic religions in general, that separates them from all preceding (polytheistic) religions is the Kairotic Moment which must have developed over a millennia time in the north and western Mediterranean and the Israelites received it from contact with the Hittites, Phoenicians, and possibly even Greek traders. Monotheism focused the many and diverse into the one, singular, powerful, the moment in eternity.
- It Tolls for Thee: In the *Cosmos* television series, Carl Sagan shrewdly goes about the task of *sanctifying* certain scientific historical figures of ancient times, the Enlightenment and modern scientific age in the process of putting forth his own belief system; he recognizes, without saying so, *the power of sanctification of constructed memories* of early Church figures that was the foundation of the Church’s authority for a millennia.

His Kairotic Moment for *Cosmos* was the *existential threat* of the Cold War – existential threats are considered very good teachable moments! Just like the existential threat to traditional Jewish culture and religion in Roman occupied Palestine (as opposed to how the Romans allowed the Egyptians to continue mostly unaffected).

“Our soldiers learned to think the way the enemy wanted them to think.”

– Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1925)

Pedagogy of Propaganda: That propaganda, psychological warfare and advertising (discussed in various places through GGDM) can all be likened to learning and share similar principles – including teachable moments – with pedagogy should not be surprising, they are all seeking to have the target audience ‘learn’ something favorable to the sender.

There are always kairotic moments in any conflict, whether armed or not, in which opponents can be trained or taught to think they are wrong, they are going to lose, or whatever suits the sender's purpose.

- ✓ Allied propaganda in WWI promoted the idea that Germans were Huns. They didn't invent it. Guess the source? On July 27, 1900, Kaiser Wilhelm II made a fiery, chauvinistic, poorly-received speech to German troops departing for a European expeditionary force to China in which he implored them to be merciless like the Huns.

Consider the following:

- ✓ “In the sphere of leaflet propaganda the enemy has defeated us ... The enemy has defeated us, not as man against man in the field of battle, bayonet against bayonet; no, bad contents poorly printed on poor paper have paralyzed our strength.” – German Army report, WWI.
- ✓ “We were as hypnotized by the enemy's propaganda as a rabbit is by a snake.” – General Eric Von Ludendorf, German General Staff, 1918.
 - The German military leadership in the aftermath of WWI, convinced themselves that they had been defeated by propaganda, not man to man. They and the political leadership used political propaganda to *teach the nation* – especially the generation then coming of age – that this was the cause of their defeat, cushioning the blow to national psychology and deflecting blame. Fascist ideology added allegations of racial or ethnic treason to the story. On this basis then, groups such as White Rose, could be arrested, tried, and executed for distributing leaflets on the allegation that they were spreading ‘defeatist’ propaganda during WWII, making them a ‘danger’ to the state. The students involved in White Rose did not understand the extent to which their parents had voted away their civil liberties.
- ✓ “To seduce the enemy's soldiers from their allegiance and encourage them to surrender is of special service, for an adversary is more hurt by desertion than by slaughter.” – Flavius Vegetius Renuatus, about 378 A.D.
 - Note that this may refer more specifically to Rome's interminable civil wars of succession where legions were political power for the aspiring usurper. This is a case of taking context.
- ✓ “Psychological Warfare has always rested as an uneasy activity in democracies, even in wartime. It is partly to do with the suspicion that using the mind to influence the mind is somehow unacceptable. But is it more unacceptable to shoot someone's brains out rather than to persuade that brain to drop down their weapon and live?” – Prof. Phillip M. Taylor (University of Leeds).
- ✓ “If you give a man the correct information for seven years, he may believe the incorrect information on the first day of the eighth year when it is necessary, from your point of view, that he should do so. Your first job is to build the credibility and the authenticity of your propaganda, and persuade the enemy to trust you although you are his enemy.” – Psychological Warfare Casebook, Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University Baltimore (1958).¹²

“The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of a mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one.”

– Wilhelm Stekel

“The tyrant dies and his rule is over; the martyr dies and his rule begins.”

– Søren Kierkegaard, Journals, 1848

Endnotes.

¹ Commentary & Citation: I have heard since I was young that the U.S. Government had some plan to preserve the U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence in case of nuclear attack (for national government continuity).

- ✓ “Despite [David] Ferriero’s best efforts to conceal the government’s plan from America’s citizens ... we do have a pretty good idea of how the Charters would be protected.... Line of defense No. 1: the ‘Charters Vault.’ In 1953, during the Cold War, a ‘Charters Vault’ was built and installed at the National Archives. ‘At the closing of the building each night, the documents and their protective display cases were lowered into the vault,’ according to Atomic Audit: The Costs and Consequences of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Since 1940. ‘This was also done in the event of a nuclear attack.’” – Dan Amira, “How the Government Would Protect the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence During a Zombie Apocalypse,” *Intelligencer*, June 25, 2013.
 - Although this article was written in relation to the release of the movie *World War Z* (as the tongue-in-cheek title suggests) it is clearly talking about a Nuclear Holocaust. I had heard there was a subterranean vault when I was young. I was an intensely strange youth, things that others would hear and immediately forget, stuck in my mind, national continuity was important to me.
- ✓ “As *Time* reported in 1992: ‘One of the most difficult challenges facing doomsday planners was deciding what cultural treasures should be saved ... Between 1979 and 1981, a government task force called the Cultural Heritage Preservation Group met to draw up priority lists. The Library of Congress’s ‘Top Treasures Inventory’ includes a Gutenberg Bible, the Gettysburg Address and various papers of James Madison, Thomas Jefferson and George Mason. For the National Archives, which is seven blocks from the White House, the single most precious item would be the Declaration of Independence, followed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Though the National Archives building has a 55-ton steel-and-concrete vault on the premises, the scenario calls for the evacuation of these and other documents, probably by helicopter, to an underground facility, if there is adequate warning time.’ According to *Time*, the art, at least – and presumably the Charters as well – would be sent to Mount Weather, a Virginia complex known to include a bunker that would serve as one of the sites the government would retreat to in the case of a nuclear strike. Whether this is still the plan, we can’t say for sure. ‘When I was at the Archives in the eighties and first half of the nineties, we had a list of the highest-priority items (including the ‘Charters’) that would be protected in case of a national emergency,’ Trudy Huskamp, a former Archivist of the United States from 1993 to 1995, e-mailed from the Marshall Islands. ‘I assume there is still such a list; however, I don’t know where the items would be relocated.’” *Id.* – citing Ted Gup, “Grab that Leonardo!” *Time*, August 10, 1992.

² Citation: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) has a deep and doctrinal devotion to the U.S. Constitution, which it considers to be divinely inspired.” – Max Perry Mueller, “Mitt Romney’s Mormon Mission,” *Slate*, February 20, 2018 (see 3 Government Titles, EN 5, p. 622, *supra*, for full quote).

³ Commentary & Citation: In the *Babylon 5* episode, “The Long Night,” (1997), future Centauri Emperor Vir Cotto muses, “What was it all for, I wonder? What was any of it for?” as the Centauri evacuate Narn, ending their destructive occupation. This comment ideologically links Vir Cotto to Emperor Turhan and separates him from his predecessors Emperor Cartagia and future Emperor Londo.

⁴ Citation: “The Event is a shorthand term given to the moment in time that the Lost Room was created. It occurred at 1:20:44 p.m. on May 4, 1961, and erased the room and all of its contents from history. The reason behind this and the ultimate purpose of the Objects is unknown, though two primary hypotheses have been postulated. Even the

man occupying the room at the time of the event doesn't seem to know what happened, so the truth remains a mystery. Both hypotheses essentially lead to the same conclusion, but attribute the event to different causes." – from Wikipedia article, "The Lost Room," February 5, 2019.

✓ Would like to see a movie about the man who was in the room when the Event happened, *is he lying?*

⁵ Commentary: This line of thought also relates to something I read that alleged that change comes from the desert; possibly relating to either the story of Moses or that Jesus hailed from semi-arid lands, or that the cultural accumulation of ancient invaders of Mesopotamia, Mexico, and the Indus, Nile and Yellow River valleys came from the deserts and mountains.

⁶ Commentary: In the movie *Excalibur* (1981), Arthur pulled the sword from the stone without anyone noticing. When he was required to demonstrate it again, the hurried official blessing of the priest made no difference, because he had already done it once! Thus, at the beginning of the story, Christianity had little power (or perhaps this was just a general comment on ritual religion by the writers) but by the end of the story, it was all powerful.

✓ In fact, the entire jousting to 'win' the right to try to draw the sword from the stone turned out to be an amusing farce (but it gave the warriors something to do and cleverly kept anyone from claiming to be king as long as that was the sole measure of legitimacy in that place); like modern quantum physics, they were perhaps asking questions in the wrong framework of understanding (i.e. physical strength vs. destiny).

⁷ Commentary: Guinevere had no children by Arthur, perhaps she was barren, she also did not become pregnant by her tryst with Lancelot (that would have complicated matters!). Arthur, like Napoleon, had children – an heir, Mordred – by another woman, Morgana, his half-sister. Or perhaps it was because an age of the world was ending – as the film told us several times – and everyone had to die at the end, Arthur and his son killed each other, Morgana was killed by her son, all the knights were dead, Lancelot forgiven and reinstated for his eternal salvation, Guinevere forgiven and queened again, Merlin was imprisoned but escaped in dreams, and the sword was returned to the water spirit. Only the widow Guinevere survived in a convent and Perceval, the last, most faithful knight, rode away.

⁸ Commentary: One does wonder what might have happened if early cult-like commune Christianity, especially monastic Christianity, had been held to the same standards as NXIVM? Do you think there aren't similarities?

✓ "That a world religion should have emerged from an oriental cult in a tiny and peculiar corner of Roman Palestine is nothing short of extraordinary. Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew, though an eccentric one, and here the concern is not what the historical Jesus did or did not believe. We know that he was executed for disturbing the Roman peace during the reign of the emperor Tiberius, and that some of his followers then decided that Jesus was not merely another regular prophet, common in the region. Rather, he was the son of the one true god, and he had died to bring salvation to those who would follow him.

Jesus's disciples began to preach the virtues of their wonderworker. Quite a few people believed them, including Saul of Tarsus, who took the message on the road, changing his name to Paul as a token of his conversion. Paul ignored the hardscrabble villages of the Galilee region, looking instead to the cities full of Greeks and Greek-speaking Jews all around the eastern Mediterranean littoral. He travelled to the Levant, Asia Minor and mainland Greece, where he delivered his famous address to the Corinthians." – 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.

- Characterization of Christianity's origin as an 'oriental cult' seems to have gained acceptance in the late 20th Century (e.g., Jerome Bixby's *The Man from the Earth* (2007) but the script was begun in the late-1960s and finished in 1998 just before he died) – which first required the West to accept that a major part of their cultural heritage originated in the East. *East is East and West is West and the twain did meet*, when East slipped in through the side door and changed costumes!

⁹ Citation & Commentary: The 2017 crowd-funded, faith-based movie *Testament* (dir. Tom Ritter – not to be confused with the 1983 nuclear holocaust mini-series) attempts to recreate the post-Crucifixion slow ascent of Christianity in a near-future dystopian setting. I watched the entire movie in several tries over two days. I am not sure the writers and directors understood what they were trying to emulate; they may not have seen the movie in the same lens through which I viewed it. The movie implies that the 'Second Coming' has occurred recently (he was killed again, by a rival gang), but spends most of the screen time on the main character's faith, doubts, and tribulations, it never really explains why 'The Movement' might succeed (the movie did not have any miracles or wonders) or why

everyone opposes it. The writers seem to assume that the martyrdom of the main character at the end was both divinely required/orchestrated and important to the success of ‘The Movement.’ But the movie ended there because they had no clue and were out of screen time.

- ✓ I think this is probably symptomatic of the larger problem: For those who know the New Testament and have the faith, the meaning of the main character’s death in the end and the expected wondrous results stemming therefrom are obvious. And do not need to be stated or shown, which is fortunate for the movie writers. *It has the symptoms of magical thinking.* But for the rest of us, there is no connect. This is why Christianity is treading water and slowly drowning in the West; their attempts at spreading the faith are trite (give the filmmaker credit for trying something-sort-of new) and increasingly disconnected from the worldview of the population. They are either engaging in magical thinking or ‘faith’ in some unseeable dynamic process through a lens we cannot see (i.e. Albert Camus’ ‘philosophical suicide’).

¹⁰ Citation: “Paul was a Christian, perhaps indeed the first Christian, but he was also a Roman. That was new. Even if the occasional Jew gained Roman citizenship, Jews weren’t Romans. As a religion, Judaism was ethnic, which gave Jews some privileged exemptions unavailable to any other Roman subjects, but it also meant they were perpetually aliens. In contrast, Christianity was not ethnic. Although Christian leaders were intent on separating themselves physically and ideologically from the Jewish communities out of which they’d grown, they also accepted newcomers to their congregations without regard for ethnic origin or social class. In the socially stratified world of antiquity, the egalitarianism of Christianity was unusual and, to many, appealing.” *Id.*

- ✓ “The promise of salvation, vouchsafed in the miracles of Jesus and/or his divine father also drew in followers. Miracles and the immanence of the supernatural abounded in the Roman world. Powerful miracles were powerfully persuasive. Stories circulated about the Christian god (or the son of god – theology was a work in progress for a very long time), far more stories than today’s canon acknowledges. It used to be said that women, slaves and the working classes took to Christianity first but, in fact, the miracle stories and the promises of salvation attracted a wide cross-section of society. Christianity offered eternal life in exchange for belief – no complex initiation rituals, no hieratic pyramid of occult revelation.” *Id.*
- ✓ “By the third century, Christian communities had grown. One would have been hard-pressed to find even a modest town without a Christian household or three. From a fringe movement, Christianity had become a central fact of urban life. Yet the religion’s normalisation made it suddenly vulnerable in the middle of the third century, when – thanks to dynastic instability, epidemic disease and military incompetence – imperial government went into a potentially terminal decline.” *Id.*
- ✓ “His son and successor Gallienus immediately ended persecution and restored the legal rights of Christian churches. That legal measure demonstrates something significant. Churches had become prosperous, socially integrated corporate entities, able to possess and dispose of property. Christianity was no longer a clandestine and minority religion.” *Id.*
 - As commented previously in GGDM, generally, knowledge of the Roman Empire and classical and ancient history has declined in the West with the decline of Christianity or secularization – which indicates, in agreement with Prof. Kulikowski’s opinion above, that it has lost relevance. Not much is taught in public schools because at first they assumed that what was needed would be learned through youthful religious attendance; now not much is taught because it is not important.

¹¹ Commentary & Citation: As usual, Rome had the last laugh, long after the last vestiges of the Western Empire were erased: Medieval Christianity developed an Anchorite tradition that mimicked the Vestal Virgins. According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the first use of the word *Anchorite* in English is in the 15th Century but the word ‘anchor’ for a religious hermit was being used almost 450 years before then. Several articles on the subject place the first *Anchorites* in the 11th or 12th Centuries, so the tradition may have developed over time in stages before being officially recognized and defined. And although the records are incomplete, it appears that female Anchorites vastly outnumbered male Anchorites, especially during the peak period of the practice. Probably the term wasn’t genderized in English (e.g., anchoress/anchorite) until modern times, and that may explain why the gender of many anchorites is unknown. Within 700 years, the Vestal Virgins had returned in a Christian-acceptable guise.

¹² Commentary: This is why it is a problem when the enemy’s propaganda is more truthful than the information the troops are receiving from their own command or politicians. It is taught in contact sports that the ‘low man wins,’ that is, the one who can go lower to the ground can out-leverage their opponent; in propaganda, this can be analogized to the ground being the truth, he who stays closer to the truth can out-leverage his opponent.