


January 2022 Entry (The GGDM Wholism Project)

This month I have completed what I termed the “GGDM Wholism Project” – an adjunct to Gestalt-Genesis/Day Million’s main text. You can find the [GGDM Wholism Project Document in PDF here](#) .

Wanna Play!? This document is not a ‘GGDM for Dummies’ document, there are no ‘dummies’ in GGDM, GGDM is not to be ‘dumbed-down’ for anyone. Rather, GGDM is a [wholism](#) – or, more accurately, manages to be several things at once (at a length of 1,590 pages!) – and the GGDM game rules themselves are intended as a demonstration of the axiomatic macrosocial structural arguments and approach of GGDM. Ok, that aside, because I don’t want to go there in this document, the GGDM wholism project is a bullet outline of the GGDM rules – sans extensive commentary – for those who just want the rules. The comparative size of this document to the full GGDM text is an admission that approximately 75% of the original GGDM text (not including appendices and tables) consists of quotes, commentaries and asides, a cardinal sin in game-rules writing but wholly (or ‘holy’ maybe) necessary to what GGDM is...

But why would I not include the commentaries and quotes and asides? Consider for a moment the entire 30-year adjunct industry of game-hobby magazines filled in part by designer notes and commentaries, articles on every topic imaginable; consider the [AD&D Dungeon Master’s Guide \(DMG\)](#) – which I recall being something in excess of 300 pages long and consider the sometimes quite voluminous play example booklets that accompany complex modern hobby board games. But GGDM was not that sort of enterprise – it was free to mankind and alienkind alike and even catkind if they jumped out of their cardboard boxes – and GGDM wasn’t strictly or narrowly a game even, so why not let the commentaries fly and spin through the work? I am mortal also.

A reader may or may not be surprised to find that the combat rules in GGDM are quite extensive. The reason for this is debatable, it may be that the game designer started as a wargamer in the early 1980s, it may be attributable to the military dominance of simulation gaming for so long, it may also be an expected consequence of the prevalence of militant-power-domination fantasy in science fiction and fantasy literature (à la [Spinrad](#)). It may be that any faithful simulation of civilization (at least human civilization) must include war-making mechanics. But GGDM is not a ‘wargame’ – it is at the least a ‘wargame plus’ (sort of like ‘apostasy plus’ in the rules); wholism is at the core of GGDM, the game development was a rebellion against wargaming and the non-wargame parts of GGDM are more impressive and greater than the wargame parts. Like civilization.

In some cases, I found it necessary to slightly rearrange the presentation of the rules here because this outline format demands a different flow than the original text (or more likely, my original presentation of the rules was suboptimal). The corollary of this outline is that it is not the full thing, detail and commentary were sacrificed for brevity in many places; when in doubt, [gobsmacked](#) or wonderstruck, consult the full GGDM text!

Copyright January 2022, this blog entry is from the Periodic Public Space blog that is published in relation to Gestalt Genesis/Day Million, a macrosocial simulation game. The blog entry can be found at <http://gestaltgenesis-daymillion.net/#pps>; this PDF is for convenience of the reader.

Extraction and reduction are the poison to wholism – that one, in reading these rules, would regard GGDM as ‘just a silly space game’ to which the remaining 80% of GGDM is ‘just commentary’ is the risk I take here.

This outline is sort of writing GGDM backwards, this outline is how GGDM would have been written if I had written it without commentary! But that would not have been possible because the thinking-commentary shaped the rules, the process cannot be segregated moving in a forward direction; like history, that only works in hindsight. The point remains that whatever you think of my sociological and philosophical arguments, GGDM is a game, a simulation, with rules, procedures, player positions, scarcity of means, a definite beginning and ending condition, and the rules are original to a large extent, filled with surprising organic-grown developments such as Reformations, Constructural Elements, Kairotic Moments, and Expose’, and the like of which you will find nowhere else on [Earth](#). It would, on its own merits as a dynamic game, be fascinating to play.

I have debated throughout whether GGDM as a whole constitutes a [treatise](#)? But the first question is a treatise on what? The same could be asked of the Bible. I am not objectively capable of answering, I suspect that my contemplations of the question are an exercise in [self-puffery](#) more than anything else. Like genius, the answer to that question will be determined by the audience, not the author. But also, I note that the definition of ‘[treatise](#)’ seems to be a fuzzy concept; we know what it is, but the more it is defined, the less useful it is conceptually.

(on being an overachiever)

“The tall poppy syndrome is a cultural phenomenon in which people hold back, criticise, or sabotage those who have or are believed to have achieved notable success in one or more aspects of life, particularly intellectual or cultural wealth – ‘cutting down the tall poppy.’ It describes a draw towards mediocrity and conformity. Commonly in Australia and New Zealand, ‘cutting down the tall poppy’ is used to describe those who deliberately put down another for their success and achievements.” – from Wikipedia article, [“Tall Poppy Syndrome.”](#)

Raise your hand if you are an overachiever! There was a fellow at the game club, I think he was an IT professional, who wanted to design a game. He was fascinated with board games, owned well over a thousand board games, so naturally the game that he designed and that I played probably twice at the game club, was a board game. If I recall, it was about travelling across the country and collecting license plates from every state; he was very into the mathematical structure of the game. It was a straightforward board game for commercial publication someday, it had no meaning or thought outside the game rules and game board and the underlying math structure, and the pieces he and his spouse handmade... It was just for play and was engaging to the extent it was amusing while being played.

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Yours truly, however, started to design an extension to a published board game (that is, the 1970s game [Stellar Conquest](#)) in the early 1990s, and almost 30 years later emerged with a macrostructural or macrosocial theory, wrapped in a game which had morphed into some sort of internet and computer game, which I have struggled to unwrap for any potential readers. I have nothing against the fellow at the game club and by most practical measures, he is a better game designer than I will ever be – it would be fair to say in game design terms that I way overdid it, that I went way over the top in GGDM as a game design, to the point perhaps of incomprehensibility as a game design. I do not feel my game is incomprehensible, though most wouldn't even try to read it, but in my latest effort to 'unwrap' the game, I have extracted just the rules sans commentary, into a new supplementary document that I have titled The Wholism.

“Crab mentality, also known as crab theory, crabs in a bucket ... mentality ... is a way of thinking best described by the phrase ‘if I can't have it, neither can you.’ The metaphor is derived from a pattern of behavior noted in crabs when they are trapped in a bucket.

While any one crab could easily escape, its efforts will be undermined by others, ensuring the group's collective demise. As such, the crab mentality shares some features in common with a similar phenomenon of human behaviour called tall poppy syndrome.

The analogy in human behavior is claimed to be that members of a group will attempt to reduce the self-confidence of any member who achieves success beyond the others, out of envy, resentment, spite, conspiracy, or competitive feelings, to halt their progress.

Crab mentality affects performance in an organization as humans behave in similar manner as the crabs particularly within social teams. The impact of crab mentality on performance was quantified by a New Zealand study in 2015 which demonstrated up to an 18% average exam result improvement for students when their grades were reported in a way that prevented others from knowing their position in published rankings.” – from Wikipedia article, “[Crab Mentality](#).”

By Charles W. Phillips