

The Gods That Failed¹

A Poem: inspired by the work of Peter Drucker

resilience is what was promised to the people with the advent of Capitalism
expansion and increase as a means to a social end¹
seriously.

it was never supposed to be the blinding sun of hustle culture lying precipitously on
the ever-shifting horizon of success

careful now,

objects in the windscreen are not as close as they appear.

Capitalism was supposed to be the call of the faithful to a utopia of free and equal
individuals in a free and equal society¹

it was never supposed to be seven million and seven hundred thousand people
working two or more jobs in the land of the free²

all men are created equal and blessed with the inviolable right to pursue happiness³

but some men are more equal than others⁴

so, the top one percent have a chokehold on thirty one percent of the wealth⁵

whilst in an effort to make ends meet a woman in colorado sells her blood²

literally.

The land bleeds too

but our desires are a deeper and thirstier red

so, we offer more and more and even more sacrifices at the altar of growth⁶

deaf to the prophetic forewarning of planetary limitations⁶

even as the glaciers melt oceans higher⁷

the air dirties⁸

and the summers burn hotter⁹.

people lying prostrate at the cold feet of an unfeeling god

speaking of insentient beings

Hey SIRI¹⁰

what is resilience?

{resilience is what was promised to the people with the advent of Technology}

the application of scientific knowledge to the practical aims of human life¹¹

wait.

so, Technology was supposed to have mankind's best interests at the core of its implementation and interminable iterations

of the new and the good and the fast

and of the newer and the better and the faster

and of the newest and the best and the fastest.

what happens when we run out of superlatives?

we begin again because

resilience is what was promised to the people with the advent of Technology

Hey SIRI¹⁰

what is Technology?

{Technology is the application of scientific knowledge to the manipulation of the human environment}¹¹

wait.

what?

Technology was supposed to be the skillful utilization and management of data to improve business performance¹²

right?

it was never supposed to be the running of a shadow political campaign by surreptitiously profiling user data¹³

right?

Technology was supposed to be the skillful operating of mechanical tools¹⁴ to serve human freedom, human dignity and human ends¹⁵

right?

it was never supposed to be the creation of intelligent weapons of war¹⁶

and the resultant reel of unpeopled limbs

coming at us live from Europe¹⁷, the Middle East¹⁸ and Africa¹⁹

right?

Hey,

SIRI?¹⁰

{that version of the operating system is not available in your region}

can we start again?

speaking of fresh starts

resilience is what was promised to the people with the advent of Globalization

the easy movement of goods and people across borders²⁰

it was never supposed to be black and brown bodies washing ashore on white sands.²¹

peter drucker said Globalization is not an economic event but a psychological phenomenon²²

and what psychological phenomenon makes women bundle babies into dinghies damned to drown?²¹

the fear of what is left behind

which is also the fear of nothing

yes, it is possible to fear nothing

but it is the kind of nothingness you only understand when home is a dead end, hunger or war.²³

Globalization was supposed to be the flow of goods and financial products to developing countries²⁴

as a means of economic expansion and the betterment of living conditions²⁴

it was never supposed to be cocoa farmers in côte d'ivoire tilling the land for forty percent of the globe's cocoa²⁵

but living in abject poverty because their toil is deemed worthy of only five percent of global profits²⁵

no, mr drucker, this is most assuredly an economic event.

the gods are dying

the people weep

the ground they stand on rend into countless warring factions of

the rich, the poor,

the human, the robot,

the old, the new,

the informed, the uninformed,
the misinformed, the disinformed,
the civilian, the military,
the foreign, the native,
the legal, the illegal,
the exploited and the advantaged.

what happens when we run out of fight?

we start again

because before money, before machines, before movement there was change
there has always been change.

change is what the people want when they occupy wall street²⁶

change is what the people want they strike against global warming²⁷

change is what the people want when they criticize the age of surveillance capitalism²⁸

change is what the people want when they rage against killer robots²⁹

change is what the people want when they defy law to save migrants adrift at sea³⁰

change is what the people want when they advocate for fair trade³¹

change is what peter drucker was grappling with when he asked what we would have
to tackle today to make tomorrow³²

mr drucker, we have to start again

because if resilience is what was promised to us

then resilience is what we want.

Let us begin again. Declaring what we know to be true.

that capitalism was bound to be a false god

that defiled the temple our being because of the impassable social classes it creates¹.

wealth condensation³³

and wealth immobility³⁴

store up riches in perpetuity for those born with silver spooned tongues

and dole out a lifetime's supply of scraps for those born poor

condemning us all to a permanent purgatory of the have and have nots.

and if it a certain degree of inequality is a necessary evil¹ we must bear patiently

because of the complexities that arise due to the capricious nature of the labour market³³

(which looks favourably on high skilled workers but contemptuously on low skilled workers)³³

and because individual choice must be considered³⁵

we, the people,

must fight, not for equality of outcome but for equality of opportunity.³⁵

and if it is the children that will inherit the kingdom³⁶

let us begin at the very beginning

ensuring that the poverty of the parents is never visited upon the child³⁷

by providing all children with high quality education that produces lifelong learners³⁷

that can reskill³⁷ should they choose or need to through subsidized government training.

because if capitalism is the way to the promised land of free and equal individuals¹

equality of opportunity simply means access

and when access supplants race, gender and social class

access is just another word for resilience.

quick! what's another word for earth?

and if that was an overly dramatic segue because about doomsday no-one knows the day or hour^{38,39}

then

we, the people,

must confess to serving two munificent masters of progress and risk³⁹

advances in healthcare^{39, 40}

and increases in food supply^{39, 40}

nourish the temple of our being

and if with risk comes both threat and opportunity

let us focus on the opportunities

that arise with a new consumer consciousness

that manifested into reality

the once science fiction of electric cars and meatless meat.³⁷

and if it is the gentle who will inherit the earth⁴¹

let us begin by incentivizing innovators that embrace environmentalism
from conceptualization to consumer
in design, packaging, distribution and disposal
through lower interest rates on loan capital.
because if capitalism is the way to the promised land of expansion and increase as a
means to a social end¹
then environmentalism from conceptualization to consumer simply means
sustainability
and when sustainability supplants fear mongering and political partisanship⁴²
sustainability is just another word for resilience.

Let us begin again. Declaring what we know to be true.
that technology behaves, sometimes, like a lowly demigod
oscillating between volatile mood swings
that simultaneously seek to free and enslave the temple of our being^{15, 43}
the subliminal status signals written into the products we buy⁴³
appeal to our depthless desire to be better than him, her, them
and even who we used to be.
and if a certain degree of obsolescence is a necessary evil⁴³ we must bear patiently
because of the complexities that arise due to the capricious nature of technology
that outpaces itself⁴³
(by spurring innovation and competition)⁴³
and because a portion of the blame is to be laid at the consumers' feet⁴³
then
we, the people,
must foster technological longevity.
and if we bring nothing into and take nothing out of this world⁴⁴
let us begin with the end in mind
by institutionalizing maximum technological productivity¹⁵
and reconfiguring our economy into one in which all forms of waste are reintroduced
into circulation⁴⁵

one man's sugar is another man's shoes⁴⁶

literally.

because if technology is the way to the promised land of the application of scientific knowledge to the practical aims of human life¹¹

resource circularity⁴⁵ simply means value

and when value supplants throwaway culture and over consumption

value is just another word for resilience.

Let us begin again. Declaring what we know to be true.

that technology behaves, sometimes, like a lowly demigod

who rebels against our values and freedoms¹⁵

information echo chambers⁴⁷ that obliterate long held social agreements^{15, 47}

and the proliferation of smart weaponry²⁹

sow and reap discord.

and if gods come to serve the many⁴⁸

then

we, the people,

must create, be included and given voting rights

in a decentralized network of consultative bodies

representative of societal, industrial and political interests

that exist to facilitate the ethical and transparent application of new technologies.

because if technology is the way to the promised land of tools that serve our freedom, dignity and ends¹⁵

then decentralization simply means unity

and when unity supplants group, political and national affiliation

unity is just another word for resilience.

Let us begin again. Declaring what we know to be true.

that globalization is a god in crisis

as once faithful believers splinter into divided denominations

that denounce each other's doctrinal definition of what home is.^{23, 49}

so, maybe,

we, the people,

should first define, what home is not.

home is not twenty-seven years of conflict^{50, 51}

home is not a hopeless hell of corruption^{51, 52}

home is not an electionless dictatorship^{51, 53}

and if sanctions cause a certain degree of underserved pain for innocent civilians⁵⁴

and are easy to evade because trading blocks and financial flows can be reconfigured and redirected⁵⁴

let there be reconfiguration and redirection

but

at the real risk of exclusion from global governance bodies and absolute alienation from the excess of global economic life.

and if there is a time for war⁵⁵

then

we, the people,

should wage it with our wallets

on the economic front of consumerism in conscience

that prohibits the purchase of all manner of goods and services with origins in countries that disaffirm democracy.

because if globalization is the way to the promised land of the easy movement of goods and people across borders²⁰

ethics should determine ease, and consumerism in conscience simply means resistance

and when resistance supplants cost, comfort and convenience

resistance is just another word for resilience.

speaking of economic war fronts

Let us begin again. Declaring what we know to be true.

that globalization is a discriminatory deity

that espouses westernized values, mindsets and expectations²²

reminiscent of the imperialism of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶

the concentration of profit in processing and distribution centres²⁵
which in turn concentrates wealth in richer countries²⁴
pillaging poor countries of their resources.²⁴
and if globalization should not be done away with⁵⁷
but rather center itself around worker skill-enhancement and development⁵⁷
then no resources should leave the land
without first being processed and packaged in local business hubs
by a labour force that is comprised mainly of community members in training and
management.
and if we are to be fruitful in the land of our misfortunes⁵⁸
then
we, the people,
should demand ownership and inclusion in all economic events that occur in the lands
of our birthright.
because if globalization is the way to the promised land of developing countries
expanding economically
and improving living conditions then localization simply means transformation
and when transformation supplants profit and greed then transformation is just another
word for resilience.

So, what if,
we, the people,
dared to dream?
and access begat opportunity
and environmentalism from conceptualization to consumer begat sustainability
and resource circularity begat value
and decentralization begat unity
and consumerism in conscience begat resistance
and localization begat transformation.

What if?

Word Count: 2042

Notes

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