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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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14.09.2020

## ***Banana Strings and the Military-Industrial Complex***

How did we ever arrive at this unfamiliar destination with a strangely morphing reality—writhing and shifting at an ever-accelerating pace? 8 months ago, the notion that a pandemic could alter our social interactions to this extent was not really considered to be a possibility. Now it feels as if life was always this way. Added to this massive change is an undeniable new reality associated with climate change. The warnings for severe and unpredictable weather that would ensue without appreciable change in human-carbon interactions—well it politely knocked on the door ever so quietly the last few decades, a loud rap here and there, but overall, something ignorable for the vast majority. The denialists shrugged and turned up their television to drown out the knock. Now climate change has opted for a battering ram to the door—just this last week we had record highs in places like San Francisco along with 90+ weather giving way to snow the next very next day in Colorado. It's enough to make one feel like the fabric of reality is unraveling, and really it is. The concept that we live in a somewhat static environment is being challenged daily. The bizarre nature of the Trump presidency only adds to the Salvador Dali-esque atmosphere, but instead of clocks melting, we have Andy Warhol's soup cans shifting about, the deadly weapon of choice for the new

anarchist. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf3b1AJNAR8>

How much more can we all handle without going irreversibly insane?

This may be the moment before the crack in the ego—the moment that all notion of personal control freakery ends. The instant the insane cackling begins, hopefully followed by relief that others feel the same way. The moment to connect with others and create anew. There's going to be a realization that if all this absurdity can have an official stamp

on it, then this by no means needs to be our reality going forward. Why should such a system be protected, coddled, and advanced? The answer is that it should not.

The unwritten contract that a government must provide something of value to its citizens and the citizens will diligently prop up the government has been shown to be a farce. It always has been, but we've played our parts in this crappy grade school level theatrical production since the start of feudalism and the new names we've called it over the ages. We have been infantilized, bickered with our brothers and sisters, basically surrendered agency to groups of individuals that couldn't even be trusted to feed your pets or not molest your kids. They play the populace for fools and the populace does not disappoint. We need to become the vessels of decency and kindness that our leaders are not. And they need to no longer be our leaders.

In the United States, we have a military the likes of which would make Odin blush. But our government refuses to make any legitimate attempts to protect us from something around 0.125 microns in size. What is the use of such expensive "protection"? The truth of it is that the military industrial complex is nothing but a sham and I think deep down we all know it, even those who thump their chests the loudest. The priest who questions a god's existence, the soldier that wonders what it's all for..... those moments of doubt need to be nurtured to arrive at a truth beyond the level of magical thinking and jingoism. Our holy is this earth; our protection is each other and empathy.

The fact that we are all deemed to be a commodity with those of advanced age being even more expendable.....where is the social contract in that? The nation was held together somewhat with a notion of caring for those who "put in their time", but even that is now gone. It's a vicious situation and it will only get worse if we allow the current trajectory to continue. I think of a time back in the 80's. I was a horribly nerdy junior high age kid with a summer of a lot of nothing to do planned. I decided to become an intellectual. I went to the library and opted for two very thick books. Because, hey "intellectual"! Those books were *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. I left that summer more awkward and nerdy, socially unfit– not an intellectual, but with a firm notion that one of those books had value. The other was a recipe for disaster. If an idiot kid in the 80's could figure that out.... I think humans that do not want to go extinct can arrive at the same conclusions. The truth is like clean, fresh water. *Atlas Shrugged* is like swallowing poison. That weird summer experiment in reading fat books changed me as a person and we need to never underestimate what art, story-telling and appeals to kindness can achieve. I know we are facing literal Neo-Nazis. But for every single one of those who may be lost for good, there

is also a confused majority with shifting alliances and perhaps less intellectual curiosity, but the ability to be steered to the light.

But our present reality....all those damn leaders read *Atlas Shrugged*....and they internalized its poison. It fuels the parasitism, not democracy or any other nifty term that boils down to mean nothing. Such is the ludicrous nature of this predatory relationship between the average citizen and the state. We are hearing the old refrain, that the anarchists are the danger. This happens when the veil is lifting because they know it's a sham and the most dangerous individuals are the ones who have cleared the toxic belief system from their minds. The poison that tells them rules and police guide and save society, but somehow humans have lived their vast majority of time on earth without such constraints. In fact, the most lethal times have come sprung out of "civilization". Large scale wars, plagues caused by filthy living conditions and the mistreatment of animals, the pyromaniac treatment of the world's sequestered carbon—all from these civilized times. They know this system is artificial and is in existence to unnaturally prop up a ruling class who knows nothing but plunder. It takes a lot of work to keep something so patently illogical and evil chugging along. Lots of firepower and lots of propaganda.

And almost always, this works, the majority of the population being veterans of "The Battle of Who Could Care Less". General Apathy and Major Boredom serving with distinction, thank you Ben Folds Five. This disregard for the large questions can't continue. The current situation is going to force everyone to take notice.

We have so much more in common with each other than anyone fully realizes. Other than the personality disorder riddled ruling classes, we all want love, safety, and meaning in our life. We have connections to all living things and it's an artificial existence that's been foisted upon us. We're Vitamin D deficient because we're walled up in buildings, doing Bullshit Jobs (RIP David Graeber) and this incongruity with what we need wells up in toxic anger that we place on each other.

If you want to consider how we are all connected (the animal kingdom too, of which we are obviously a part) consider this clip that says more about our similarities than words ever could.

**CounterPunch 11.09.2020**