

The Phaethon



The Birth of Country

Entering into the halls of Valhalla,¹ we emerged from our caves millennia ago with the singular objective to survive; and survive we did. With the gifts from the gods, we made our mark clear from far above our pathetic abode.²

But simple domination wasn't enough. With all of the game of the forests at our feet, we turned to ourselves.

So, we left for good the walls that limited us and the ceiling which hid us from the eyes of the gods. Without fear of consequence, we ransacked, murdered, and enslaved our own until the original cave of apes became too large.

Thus, the head of the serpent emerged; and, wreathing around their slaves, his brethren suffocated them into submission.³

But, as the pyramid became heavy with bodies, the monarch became able to hear the crescendo of agony from under his boots. So, he added more.⁴

With the desperate hope of reaching the peak, the slaves resumed their grasping for the hems of their gods.⁵ Desperate just for a gasp of air, grasp; grasp; grasp. Until their hands were raw, but lest the demons know of their old age, be kicked to those upon which they stand, and have their backs broken with no name.

Eureka!⁶

In confusion, the whip recoiled. The gouge it left hadn't even scratched the rough hind of the beast. Instantly, the sea of oppressed and frail converged on the powerless capital, burning it to the ground.

And so, Country was born. Out of the smoldering ashes of despair and strife, a republic based on the principle of freedom and self-rule was born again.

Glowing in pride, the phoenix ornamented itself with a pure capital,⁷ from which all were given the honor of basking in its gifts.⁸

...

Because, or despite, of this shackle, the offering of food,⁹ which first tempted men out of their caves, transformed into a pulsating being resembling a society; and, coincidentally, its hand grasped great things in the few short years of fresh air.¹⁰

¹ A place for the best slain warriors, paralleling with our excellent evolution, yet inevitable failure

² The gift which Prometheus gave us, and was eternally punished for: fire

³ Showing the birth of the Hobbesian Leviathan

⁴ Transitioning from monarchy to oligarchy

⁵ There is no difference between the masters of mankind, now, and the gods

⁶ A term coined by Archimedes who, as the myth goes, ran through the streets naked after discovering how to determine whether or not a crown was gold – a task which, if he had failed, would have resulted in death – thus symbolizing the paradoxically shallow nature of the success, yet ultimate consequence of failure

⁷ A cyclically regenerating beast, born from the ashes of its previous life

⁸ The gifts for which the constituents pay

⁹ Paralleling to the myth of Typhon and Zeus, where the gods offered a gift knowing it would end in Typhon's destruction

¹⁰ Invisible Hand of Adam Smith

So great, in fact, that shortly after the invention of the cigarette,¹¹ we began to dabble in the mind – unlocking the only door left, behind which we hoped to find our true deity.

Alas, no transcendental mistress was found. And, so we turned elsewhere, to act as we had for eternity. We created mobius,¹² the first true AGI.

But all boots leave a print. The society, at times of peace imploded, insisting on the constant squabbling of arbitrary concerns. Without a foe, we create them. Thus, the democracy of leaders, not laws, became strained.

And, raised from the dead by the melody of humanity,¹³ the vile ghouls arose.¹⁴ Beginning again, they took root in the minds of the rabble.¹⁵ Manipulating the knowledge of entire populations, they tainted the white capital with their seed.¹⁶

Quickly, feeling the ground upon which they laid twist and liquify, the flock demanded equality.¹⁷

The Divergence of Ideology

The faithful masters responded in their calm voice, giving all a taste of what it was like to be a god. Free travel; a guarantee of employment; full bellies; and a soft pillow for all heads. But why, the rabble asked, can we not have more?

And so, the private sector answered with their inventions. For the sick, they reengineered their genes; for the broken, they replaced their bodies; and for the disabled, they augmented their minds.

But still, the masses complained, give us equality. The equality to which they referred, of course, no longer being that of their potential, but of their state. Grievously, once again, the capital responded.

This time, the eugenics took a different path – one of creating equal minds.¹⁸ Using BCI's, the industry realized, *true* equality could be attained by allowing infinite information to the medial temporal cortex, ripe for the picking.¹⁹ Of course, to prevent the masters from becoming omniscient, and therefore unstoppable, the masses insisted on sharing the fruit.

As it has always been, the rabble, with their new found power, knew all. Thus, they smugly swayed their governments however they wished.

However, those with wisdom stayed their course, attaining not only artificial knowledge, but intelligence. And so, the governments implemented it as they wished.

¹¹ A symbol of the rich subjugating the poor (e.g. Mothu et Doria)

¹² Symbolizing the eternal recursive nature of god and creation with respect to society

¹³ Like Eurydice rising out of Hell in response to Orpheus's music

¹⁴ A creature in pre-Islamic Arabian religion which consumes human flesh

¹⁵ The proletariat class

¹⁶ The rich utilized manufacturing consent

¹⁷ A resistance against Madison's solution and a movement towards Aristotle's welfare state

¹⁸ Creating minds, not adding to existing ones, similar to the Nazi Herrenmenschen

¹⁹ Paralleling to the information given by the forbidden fruit, which, once realized causes irreversible evil to befall the race

Some – those of the merely knowledgeable type – decided, unsurprisingly to defer to the superior being of the AI for legislative decisions, relinquishing their control once again in exchange for their prized indolence of thought.

And some – those of the wise type – decided to retain their control.

Thus, the divergence occurred: it became more efficacious, the societies governed by AI swiftly decided, to secede from their union with the idiotic masters of men.

Laughingly, after the inflection of prosperity, the ghouls awoke from their slumber. Growing from within, the capital became sullied maroon, and what was once an AI for the people became an AI for the gods. Once again imprisoned, the plumbers and crawlers screamed into the glass cage for equality with nothing but the despair in their voice to be heard as the black veil lowered, lowered, lowered, painting their howling mouths shut.²⁰

Correspondingly, the wise awoke from their drunk rapture, being given the tools over generations to slowly, and carefully prosper. They lived in a society free from hardship, all being able to gain from their work, yet none trapped under their condition. And, as slowly as ever, they decided to introduce AI into their governance system. However, learning from their neighbor, they happily removed the masters. Instead, they founded the neo-democracy of law, where all, having full knowledge, were able to participate equally in the decentralized governing system from their mind, seamlessly communicating via their AI to all others in the society.

Hephaestus, a Narrative

I awoke, having feasted the night before and slept 12 full hours, in perfect health. I was on a business trip for my company and, deciding to spare the expense, opted to stay in a lower-rated hotel. If all went well, as I expect it to, I will be promoted to vice president of my firm when I return. And my family! Oh, how they perfect they are: one boy, one girl, both at the top of their class.

Running just a tad bit late, I quickly rinsed off, checked my light baggage, and decided to skip breakfast, knowing that I would be able to eat at the conference. I started walking – I knew it was only a 20 or so minute walk.

Although it was rather early, 4:30 AM, in fact, the streets were bustling with people hurriedly going about their business. And, funnily, I knew the majority of them. I must have stopped upwards of ten times, and talked to them.

By the time I had gotten to the factory, the sun was high in the sky – such a nice day! – and it was time for lunch. But, seeing as I had stuffed myself the night before and during breakfast, I saw little point in having more than a coffee, and quickly went to my station.

It's nice that I don't even need to go to the gym. My work certainly suffices for my activity. From the first moment I can remember, I've been climbing and lopping down trees. It's surreal: miles above society, we live in god's eye.

Unfortunately, though, just for this couple of days, we are short a few men, and so I have to pull a 36-hour shift.

²⁰ Matching the imagery of suffocation in an airless void in Head VI by Francis Bacon

It went by quickly, all coworkers were well rested and in perfect health.

The shift was relatively brief compared to when we're short men, so that was refreshing. Now back to my apartment for some well-earned rest.

One thing that has disappeared since the neurological revolution is paper... So weird. I suppose we have no need since we remember everything we do anyways.

I was looking forward to the night, the girl I had been talking to finally agreed to meet and, given my success at the shop today, I decided to make reservations at the Lotus,²¹ the most prestigious restaurant in the city.

I got back to my apartment late, partner in arm.

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I woke up earlier than I needed to make my meetings – I decided to get a quick checkup with my doctor. I'm sure everything's fine, just an annual routine.

My head was a bit sore after the appointment, weird.

Quickly, I rushed off to my shift. At this point, I knew everyone taking the buses I drove. During this time and age, few drove themselves. It just wasn't practical, all you had to do was walk outside and there was already a bus there ready to take you to wherever you wanted to go. Really a technological miracle.

I walked myself home after the short shift driving.

I felt very accomplished, not sure why, I suppose just a feeling.

Regardless, off to bed bright and early!

With the Gig economy, having a nocturnal sleep cycle is completely normal, and over the last few years, I've gotten used to it. Barely anyone on the streets, peaceful; no bright lights, you can see the sky; temperature is cool, comfortable; barely anyone on the streets, peaceful.

The first customer of the night came from a hotel and, well, usually I wouldn't care to store such events, but he kept asking general questions, to which his mind obviously already knew the answers. Weird.

Such a long drive. He began to complain, and I remembered him reaching towards me with a gun, and so I shot him.

Although a repulsive job, one gets used to driving to and from funeral homes, and so I dropped off the poor man's body, and made my way home.

Off to bed!

Surprised, as I rarely am, I woke in a pool of muddy maroon stemming from my ear.

Shame too! I was going hang-gliding on my vacation today.

Before heading out, I decided to quickly stop by the doctor, and to my amazement he said it was ok to go.

²¹ A fruit in Greek mythology which, once eaten, induces a sleep-like apathy, which is unescapable

So I jumped off the cliff and happily fell to my death, thinking in the last moments of my unmatched success and perfect family.

Eleutheria, a Narrative

The company that I work for interacts with other districts in rather orthodox ways. Over the time that we've been decentralized, we've grown more and more distinct in our laws, and for sake of ease, become separate regions under our constitution.

Like most others, our region specializes in our given business – namely, we produce magnetic imagery technology for medical purposes – while those who wish to contribute to fields unrelated to our focus move elsewhere. My district, Aequitas, was one of the last districts to be partitioned, and as a result is rather large. So, unlike the majority of others, we are composed of three major companies, all of which work together by incentives to produce innovative products to help others.

The effect that the developments in mass transit has had, thanks to Dionysus, has allowed every person to travel completely freely (and nearly instantaneously) between communities or districts. Therefore, gradients have formed in three main ways: districts with closely related specialties orient themselves close to each other, religious groups tend towards another, and family/friends tend towards each other.

However, this had a few effects on the governance of the districts. Firstly, and perhaps most prominently, the neo-democracy allowed for the religious and otherwise belief-oriented communities to establish monotheistic laws. But, pragmatically, neither the enforcement of nor the laws themselves were severe, as all societies needed to, due to their necessary specialties, cooperate hospitably with all others.

Over time this scheme was established and the economy soared. Whenever there was a new technological breakthrough, new districts would leap on the opportunity to dominate the industry and bring economic flourishing to all others, thusly working through competition and good intent. This fluidity of design in all respects gave rise to a recession-resistant and overall antifragile society, while allowing the individuals of the respective districts near absolute autonomy.

Intrasocietally, there was no difference. Whatever rule set the constituents decided on was almost always unanimous, and if it wasn't, then the resisters could simply move. And no voice went unheard. At the simple activation of a thought, one was always able to broadcast a proposal to the entire society, debate the details and consequences of the policy, and ratify it into law. The AI allowed for this communication to be seamless: for the will of hundreds to be condensed into one voice for all to hear. And, the morality and goodwill of the society was aligned by the incentives decided on for all: ensuring that individual benefit always correlated with social good.

Life was, as I remember, not so different from those in Country before its corruption. Every day but one, we awake and go about our business, hoping to contribute to our society. We come home, raise our children, and sleep. Repeat until death.

End of the Reprieve

Alas, the skratte²² found his last host, raising the morally righteous²³ from their jocund stupor; and, as history always proceeds, it found its quarry.

The people of Hephaestus are slaves to their gods! Forcefully resounding throughout all of Eleutheria, there was no doubt that they must make all happiness constituted by more than a gift.

So, the moral war²⁴ begun.

To give lives back to their rightful owners, the districts of Eleutheria invaded social infrastructure and disabled the memory control functions of the opposition's BCI's. Riots arose. Those with lives battered their brethren who served a higher purpose, fighting to wake them from their slumber.

But the power of the hordes flooded Eleutheria with rich recollection, instilling their divine purpose throughout the population; and both warring nations saw the destruction that they faced from within.

Hence, Eleutheria happily deactivated all BCI's, with Hephaestus having no choice but to tentatively follow.

Information warfare followed. The confused constituents of Hephaestus, never having known the life they now faced, knew not the difference between past and future. Thus, the state told them. And unified once more, they turned their rage to Eleutheria, angry at their immoral betrayal.

Cowardice of the danger, the countries released their artificial child from its womb rather than face the other on the ground. But, yet again, mutual destruction enshrined the intelligent with fearful inertness.²⁵

Thus, the logical rulers refrained, and the mass neurosis of the free asked.

"Restore humanity²⁶ to the people of Hephaestus," to which the AI did not respond.

"Free²⁷ the people of Hephaestus," to which the AI deleted its authors and self.

And, free at last, the people of Hephaestus lived the rest of their lives with purpose.

Land of the Free

Nauseatingly, Adon retained his life through mistake, and wisely lived the cycles ordered by the masters until he was ordered to live a life of power.

Entering into the land of god, he fed the wicked birds of prey his fruit; and they awoke, falling upon their lord in a convulsing flurry.²⁸

²² Old Norse "devil," connecting to the other Nordic reference at the beginning, thus symbolizing the reentry of society into the fray

²³ Morality was the devil's last hope

²⁴ Paralleling with the devil's manifestation through the holy wars

²⁵ The ultimate power of the artificial intelligence is appealing until acted upon, thus ensuring maximal destruction

²⁶ Ambiguous

²⁷ Every historical definition of freedom (e.g. four freedoms) is fulfilled by the reactivation of the memory control

²⁸ Parallel to Satan's actions in Eden

And free once more, the society abandoned their minds, and escaped into their caves.²⁹

²⁹ Thus, restarting the cycle of society, as Polybius postulated