

# The Doom Scroll of History Undone in Poetry

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They are fighting for the sovereignty of capital. Warlike adumance, pressurized plunder. Capitalism has always been war, but this sadism is evangelism in the name of their only belief. Fully activated and pushed to its furthest limits, this version ends in pure nihilism: everything is value, therefore, nothing has value. This time, we are inside the machine. The weapon is technological enclosure. Inside this nightless regime, language is code.

The euphemisms of our era transition seem benign, everyone has accepted the metaphors. But a webpage is not a page, nor is it even a site. The words are placeholders that obscure a process, a process which requires stilling one's body, turning one's human presence non-relationally to face a machine. The words ferry us away from the object world toward *immateriality*. It is that realm of immateriality— which does not concretely exist, which must be imagined—at which their force is aimed.

The digital world gets conflated with this realm, or stands in for it. The early “web” was imagined as connectivity, a benign telephonic complexity. It was optional. But now, digital life is an increasingly complex weapon turned upon us. There, the social world is rationalized by algorithm. Enscreened and touching something misimagined as the world, we are alone with language, but not really writing.

Human language evolves inside the heat of relationships, amid play, among the particularity of places with unmappable streets—word of mouth, flirtation, sparring, love, sex, jokes, misused words, secrets, appropriation, mispronunciation, slang.

These kinds of speech birth new forms, new language, new ways of inhabiting the world. If language is how we conceptualize the world, this linguistic birthing reshapes the world. Language is a social malleability that constantly expands what is thinkable by expanding what is sayable. It creates what is recognized and recognizable.

Research shows that young girls are at the forefront of this social generativity, and Black young girls at its avant-garde. The vitality is carried by social pollination. Evolving linguistic intelligence contradicts the belief that the world is known, finite, mappable. Language is not a virus, it is the sustenance of Eros. It is what comes through us, keeping us together.

Technological enclosure uses language against language's emergence. Exploiting language to convert it to code is the ontology of artificial intelligence, now premised on large “golem” language models. We love the internet sometimes, but human rights are being dismantled with reactionary internet logic, assisted by Palantir.

The tech company started after 9/11 to “find terrorists” and has garnered recent attention for enabling the Trump administration to merge vast and varying types of personal information in a conglomeration not previously possible.

Writes Giorgio Agamben, “in the spectacle, our linguistic nature comes back to us inverted.” Surveillance has always been tech's visible shadow. The industry is parasitical now on human connectivity. It abuses the primary medium of human social life: language.

Increasingly, arguments about technology's make-believe ‘neutrality’ are fully abandoned inside the industry for concepts like meritocracy. In various online interviews, Palantir's CEO Alex Karp espouses the need to dominate the AI market, mixing anti-China zealotry with declarations of the ‘superiority’ of Western civilization.

The rhetoric consistently devolves into anti-immigrant, white supremacist dog whistles. Karp responded to alarms sounded in the *New York Times* by vigorously defending the company's profit model. This non sequitur is an active ideological argument. Karp evangelizes to reshape the immaterial toward the inevitability of capitalist world war. In the physical world AI catalyzes natural resource drain, ecological destruction and human rights abuses. Said Benito Mussolini, "Fascism should more properly be called corporatism because it is the merger of state and corporate power."

Creative power is different from semiotic power, that one-upmanship developed in the internet's depthless binaries. AI is entirely outside of actual growth, it is only capable of representational growth. AI cannot think what has not already been.

Fighting this form of fascism is, among other things, a fight to keep language open. It is a fight for the open body, for human creativity, for emergent, a-capitalist social life. It is a fight for the capability to create new life in language.

"The only war is the war against the imagination," Diane Di Prima says, "all other wars are subsumed within it." Locating power outside of the logic of this grid points back to the maintenance of the beloved world—for repair, and also play.

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