



CENTER FOR THE
STUDY OF THE
FORCE
MAJEURE

A MANIFESTO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

CENTERFORFORCEMAJEURE.ORG

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A MANIFESTO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

We, of the Harrison Studio, believe
As do others, although differently
That a series of events have come into being
Beginning in the time of Gilgamesh and before
Beginning with agriculture and the first genetic manipulation
Beginning with culture of animals and ongoing genetic manipulation
Beginning with globalization six thousand years ago with the Salt Route
A little later, the Silk Route
And later and later...
Especially with science informed by Descartes' clock
And with modernity recreating the cultural landscape
And deconstructing nature thereby
From the Industrial Revolution to the present
Until all at once a new force has become apparent
We reframe a legal meaning ecologically
And name it the Force Majeure

We, of the Harrison Studio assert
As do others somewhat differently
That the Force Majeure, framed ecologically
Enacts in physical terms outcomes on the ground
Everything we have created in the global landscape
Bringing together the conditions that have accelerated global warming
Acting in concert
With the massive industrial processes of extraction, production and consumption
That have subtracted forests and depleted top soil
Profoundly reduced ocean productivity
While creating a vast chemical outpouring into the atmosphere
Onto the lands and within the waters
That altogether comprise this Force Majeure

We, of the Harrison studio, are grateful
For the opportunity to join in this perilous conversation
Where the discourse in general
Is about time, money, power, justice, sex, politics
Personal well-being and survival
In many combinations and re-combinations
Attending somewhat to social injustice
And somewhat less to ecosystems' injustice

This discourse points to human consciousness
Every day continuously attending to itself
With little attention paid to that which is not itself
Leading to intrinsic value switched for extrinsic value
With human creativity generating technologies
That appear not to like that which are not themselves
Sometimes becoming the reverse of their original intention

There is modest conversation drifting toward green
As industry and people think about doing well by doing good
Good being green roofs green cars
Green manufacturing processes
Green transformation of material
Green production of all kinds
expanding green markets
Green in everyday life
in the frame of sustainability

We, of the Harrison Studio, assert
As do others, as yet, not many
That in the face of multiple tipping points
Passed and near passed
From CO₂/methane to nitrates/nitrites
And more and more
All of these efforts and all of this work
Altruistic from the best of people
Greedy and mean spirited from the worst of people
Is better to be doing than not to be doing
But on balance, insufficient
Endlessly insufficient

The Force Majeure, so obvious, even in the now
Is generating ocean rise
Forcing the ocean's food chains to simplify
Compelling glaciers and snow pack to melt
Creating flood and drought at continental scale
Which is the outcome for rivers
As they flow down through Asia from the Tibetan Plateau
And true for many parts of the Americas

The outcomes for the Peninsula of Europe are unfortunate
The numbers have been crunched
Revealing the trajectory of drought predicted to proceed

From Portugal to the southern parts of Germany and beyond
Reducing 2.4 million square kilometers of farmland
That now feeds over 450 million Europeans by almost a third within 50 years
The population will grow the food supply will shrink
The waters will rise
People will need to move upward
The rich will continue to do well
Not true for the middle class
And devastating for the poor

We, of the Harrison Studio conclude
That a counter force is available
But unless put in place well within the next fifty years
Civil society in many places will experience perturbation then collapse
Keeping company with the ecosystems
experiencing perturbation and simplification

A counterforce that is comprised of understandings
Waiting to be internalized and then enacted
They are

First understanding

*Nature's economic system stores the energy that it does not immediately need
mostly in carbon formations*

Second understanding

Nature does not charge a profit as do culture's economic systems

Third understanding

*All natural systems are dissipative structures with individuals that form them living,
reproducing then dying with indeterminacy as a norm*

Fourth understanding

*All natural systems have learned to nest within each other; and, within a context of
symbiosis contribute to collective systems survival, sometimes with abundance*

Fifth understanding

*Human constructed artifacts particularly legal, political, economic as well as
production and consumption systems seek constancy but are often in violation of the
laws of conservation of energy pointing toward systems entropy*

*When the first four understandings are internalized and integrated into all parts of the
fifth understating. A transformation can happen that will open pathways for human
created systems to yield autonomy and accept limitations. An acceptance that will permit
the formation of processes of nesting within nesting that will enable nature's ways of
invention and human ways of invention presently so oppositional to co-join.*

The counterforce we envision will permit
A culturally generated acceleration of adaptation behaviors at great scale
Operating at a parallel rate to the climate forcing generated by human activity
setting the stage for adapting strategies that will assist the migration of our own species
And those who are not ourselves
Who are co-equally endangered by the threat of mass extinction
Into zones of greater safety
Tuning to and over time in concert with the Force Majeure