



PANDEMONIUM

The Pandemic Road to Serfdom

Edited by

CARLOS BELTRAMO, PH.D.
CARLOS POLO

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POPULATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Front Royal, VA

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Cover and interior design by Perceptions Design Studio.

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Paperback ISBN: 978-1-63649-283-4
eBook ISBN: 978-1-63649-284-1
First Edition

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 Pandemonium

An Alternative View



CARLOS BELTRAMO, PH.D.
Editor

The pandemic currently afflicting much of humanity represents the greatest challenge we have faced since the Second World War. We confront it on a medical level, of course, but also on an unprecedented level—a worldwide war to control the narrative. On the one hand we have the Chinese government.

Their story is a tendentious narrative describing a natural—and therefore blameless—transmission of a virus between bats and humans. Meanwhile they routinely refuse to disclose vital information from a suffering world. On the other hand, we have countries like the United States, France, England, Germany, Australia—the list is long—that do not believe this “*official*” version (albeit defended, curiously, by the World Health Organization). These countries expect

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China to assume its responsibility, whatever it may be. At any rate, the narrative and who controls it are crucial to our survival. Thus we must confront the thinly veiled and brazen deception that appears to have seized control of the public discourse.

The demand that China come clean is indeed critical, but it is not the only level on which this new conflict, the most important of the 21st century, is being fought. Intellectuals worldwide, encouraged in part by the confinement, are spreading broader interpretations that not only address the origin of this pandemic, but also offer personal interpretations of the consequences that might result.

From the first moment, the ideological left has attempted to interpret this event as a confirmation of its entire revolutionary and progressive program. Indeed, several governments have taken these views at face value and have implemented them with actions that under any other circumstance would be condemned as the rancid spawn of a totalitarian regime. Moreover, the panic-stricken population, intimidated by a myriad of threatening uncertainties, has virtually ceased all activity and allowed itself to be sequestered in its homes. Clearly these developments do not auger well for freedom.

However, the picture presented by the hegemonic and radical Left might well be flawed, if not worse. We propose that these historic events can be examined from other perspectives as well. As intellectuals, we are obliged to employ the findings of our research and use them to combat the repressive measures imposed by governments. Today many rulers embrace the dream that citizens will believe them without question, even if that dream is actually a nightmare that will deliver entire countries into economic ruin, violate basic human rights, or both—all in the name of their failed ideology.

And, as usual, the problem moves from the realm of ideas to the sphere of political action. Thinkers increasingly warn that the current totalitarian drift could well invite a relationship between power and the public that is dangerously skewed towards those with the capacity to exercise total technological control.

The COVID-19 Pandemonium

Some months ago this warning might have been branded as a radical conspiracy theory, but today it lies well within the realm of possibility. This is the reality that has compelled 17 intellectuals from 8 countries with a variety of backgrounds—in philosophy, law, economics, political science, investigative journalism, and sociology—to speak out loud. Given the critical character of the current crisis, consider these pages to carry a vital warning.

This book represents a collective effort by men and women who are concerned about the immediate future, not because we think the worst is inevitable, but precisely because we know that reflection is the most powerful weapon that individuals and families have to escape the totalitarianism that could easily befall mankind if we do nothing.

It is bad enough to warn of the dire economic crisis that has already befallen us. But the more threatening prospect lies in this: the statist system that led us to the current crisis, is now trying to monopolize the proposed policies designed to resolve it. Predictably, the statist disguise their shopworn proposals as timely, when in fact they amount to miserable retreads that have repeatedly failed in the past. When properly considered, we might find that this novel political and economic virus is more deadly than the biological one.

This book is a team effort. Each author has responded in an original way to our invitation. Some have provided pieces already published in such prestigious newspapers as *ABC* and *OKdiario* in Spain, the *New York Post*, *Le Figaro*, *El Cronista Comercial* in Argentina; others appeared in reference news sites such as *Panampost*, *Actual* or *Fundación Civismo*. Many have chosen to create pieces written specifically for this publication, for which we are indeed grateful.

In any case, the editors are simple facilitators of their combined efforts, convinced that they have a right to be heard. We are the other bell, the voice that has been silenced by the unjustifiable “*moral*

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superiority of the left,” which in many cases serves as a convenient excuse to cover up political outrages and serial violations of basic human rights.

This book flows almost like a story: it begins in a laboratory in Wuhan, China. From there it considers the transnational economic and political interests that are in play, followed by a look at the technological forces that are essential to mounting any strategy that seeks total control. We travel to the US, European Union, Spain, Mexico, and Argentina, each offering concrete examples of the flood that always follows the broken dam.

Finally, considering various proposals with a warning about our future, we aim to convey a vital principle: totalitarian states or international bodies—whether official or transnational companies—will not solve this unprecedented crisis. Rather, we will find the answer in families, small companies, and those among us who seek to generate wealth through work, even though at this precarious moment, we obediently and responsibly suffer a confinement that we understand less with each passing day.

We hope that this effort will serve to broaden the debate. We have chosen to enter the culture war with our humble but potent weapons: our vision, our research, and our creativity—but, above all, our intellectual honesty with which we have endeavored to craft every page.

I am grateful to each of them for their efforts and dedication that has made it possible to bring this work to fruition with such effort and haste. I also thank my wife and my six children who, despite how “close” we have been during these days, have endured me with support and patience. Their efforts to inform these pages: it is for them and for their future, that we have set forth on this adventurous endeavor.

PART I

The Global War of Narratives

“We are on the verge of a global transformation. All we need is the right major crisis, and the nations will accept the New World Order.”

–David Rockefeller, 1994

CHAPTER 1

Don't Buy China's Story

The Coronavirus May Have Leaked From a Lab



STEVEN MOSHER

At an emergency meeting in Beijing held on January 7, 2020, Chinese leader Xi Jinping spoke about the need to contain the coronavirus¹ and set up a system to prevent similar epidemics in the future.

A national system to control biosecurity risks must be put in place “*to protect the people’s health,*” Xi said, because lab safety is a “*national security*” issue.

Xi didn’t actually admit that the coronavirus now devastating large swaths of China had escaped from one of the country’s bioresearch labs. But the very next day, evidence emerged suggesting that

¹ <https://nypost.com/2020/02/15/chinese-leader-reportedly-aware-of-coronavirus-earlier-than-thought/>

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this is exactly what happened, as the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology released a new directive titled: *“Instructions on strengthening biosecurity management in microbiology labs that handle advanced viruses like the novel coronavirus.”*

Read that again. It sure sounds like China has a problem keeping dangerous pathogens in test tubes where they belong, doesn't it? And just how many *“microbiology labs”* are there in China that handle *“advanced viruses like the novel coronavirus”*?

It turns out that in all of China, there is only one. And this one is located in the Chinese city of Wuhan that just happens to be ... the epicenter of the epidemic.

In all of China, there is only one “microbiology lab” handling “advanced viruses like the novel coronavirus” and this is located in Wuhan... the epicenter of the epidemic.

That's right. China's only Level 4 microbiology lab that is equipped to handle deadly coronaviruses, called the National Biosafety Laboratory, is part of the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

What's more, the People's Liberation Army's top expert in biological warfare, a Maj. Gen. Chen Wei, was dispatched to Wuhan at the end of January to help with the effort to contain the outbreak. According to the *PLA Daily*, Chen has been researching coronaviruses since the SARS outbreak of 2003, as well as Ebola and anthrax.

This would not be her first trip to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, either, since it is one of only two bioweapons research labs in all of China.

Does that suggest to you that the novel coronavirus, now known as SARS-CoV-2, may have escaped from that very lab, and that Chen's

Don't Buy China's Story

job is to try to put the genie back in the bottle, as it were? It does to me.

Add to this China's history of similar incidents. Even the deadly SARS virus has escaped — twice — from the Beijing lab where it was (and probably is) being used in experiments. Both “*man-made*” epidemics were quickly contained, but neither would have happened at all if proper safety precautions had been taken.

And then there is this little-known fact: some Chinese researchers are in the habit of selling their laboratory animals to street vendors after they have finished experimenting on them.

You heard me right.

Instead of properly disposing of infected animals by cremation, as the law requires, they sell them on the side to make a little extra cash. Or, in some cases, a lot of extra cash. One Beijing researcher, now in jail, made a million dollars selling his monkeys and rats on the live animal market, where they eventually wound up in someone's stomach. Also, fueling suspicions about SARS-CoV-2's origins is the series of increasingly lame excuses offered by the Chinese authorities as people began to sicken and die.

They first blamed a seafood market not far from the Institute of Virology, even though the first documented cases of COVID-19 (the illness caused by SARS-CoV-2) involved people who had never set foot there. Then they pointed to snakes, bats and even a cute little scaly anteater called a pangolin² as the source of the virus.

I don't buy any of this. It turns out that snakes don't carry coronaviruses and that bats aren't sold at a seafood market. Neither, for that matter, are pangolins, an endangered species valued for their scales as much as for their meat.

The evidence points to SARS-CoV-2 research being carried out at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The virus may have been carried

2 <https://nypost.com/2020/02/07/endangered-delicacy-pangolin-may-have-sparked-coronavirus-outbreak-china-researchers-say/>

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out of the lab by an infected worker or crossed over into humans when they unknowingly dined on a lab animal. Whatever the vector, Beijing authorities are now clearly scrambling to correct the serious problems with the way their labs handle deadly pathogens.

I don't buy any story blaming animals. The evidence points to SARS-CoV-2 research being carried out at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

China has unleashed a plague on its own people. It's too early to say how many in China and other countries will ultimately die for the failures of their country's state-run microbiology labs, but the human cost will be high.

But not to worry; Xi has assured us that he is controlling biosecurity risks “to protect the people's health.” PLA bioweapons experts are in charge.

I doubt the Chinese people will find that very reassuring. Neither should we.

This article was originally published in New York Post, February 22, 2020.

CHAPTER 2

Was the China Virus Engineered in the Lab?



STEVEN MOSHER

The coronavirus was man-made and did not originate from a wet market in Wuhan, says a Chinese whistleblower and one of the first scientists to study COVID-19 in China.

Dr. Li-Meng Yan, a medical doctor and virologist who fled to the US in April to tell the world about the origins of the virus, told me in an interview that, based on her own research, the coronavirus “did not come from nature at all. It was created in a lab.”

And now, scientists around the world say she may be right.

Yan, who is in hiding and fears for her life, said that the Chinese government knew the virus was man-made and knew about the dangers of person-to-person transmission well before it became a global pandemic.

Before she defected, Yan said she worked at Asia’s top virology lab — the P3 Lab at the University of Hong Kong. The lab is the global

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center for coronavirus research where its famous “SARS hunters” cracked the code of the first SARS coronavirus outbreak in 2003.

In late December, her supervisor Dr. Leo Poon asked her to look into a cluster of SARS-like bases that had originated in Wuhan, a city of 11 million in central China. She began to communicate with a network of medical contacts throughout China, and by December 31, learned that there was human-to-human transmission of the new virus — a fact that was suppressed by the Chinese Communist Party, and later by the World Health Organization, she said.

Yan took her concerns to Poon, who repeatedly warned her to “keep silent,” she said. He told her not to criticize the CCP or contradict them on their official line on the origins of the coronavirus, which they said was spread from eating wild animals at a wet market in Wuhan. “If you do, we will get into trouble and be disappeared,” she said he told her.

For three months, Yan took his advice to heart and continued her research, She soon discovered that COVID-19 has two artificial, man-made “insertions” that make it particularly deadly to human beings. The first “insertion” allows it to spread easily from person-to-person, while the second “insertion” allows the virus to infect different kinds of tissue once it is already in the human body.

“Any scientist who has this knowledge will know that it is not from nature,” she said.

Around the world, virologists who are studying the virus are starting to back her claims that the virus is man-made.

“The properties that we now see in the virus, we have yet to discover anywhere in nature,” said Norwegian virologist Birger Sorensen in a July 13 interview with the scientific journal *Minerva*. “We know that these properties make the virus very infectious, so if it came from nature, there should also be many animals infected with this, but we have still not been able to trace the virus in nature”

“When we compare the novel coronavirus with the one that caused SARS, we see that there are altogether six inserts in this

Was the China Virus Engineered in the Lab?

virus that stand out compared to other known SARS viruses,” said Sorensen, who works for Immunor AS, a Norwegian company that researches and develops vaccines.

Nikolai Petrokvsy, the director of endocrinology at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, also said that the virus could be man-made. “Our own research, which is currently under review and was based on rigorous molecular modeling, revealed some highly unexpected findings for a virus postulated to have recently crossed from animal to humans,” he has said. “From the very earliest isolates it was uniquely adapted to infect humans above other species we tested.”

The Western scientist who has done the most exhaustive work on the China Virus also concurs with Dr. Yan’s claims. Professor Joseph Tritto, the president of the World Academy of Biomedical Sciences and Technologies (WABT), believes³ that it was genetically engineered in the Wuhan Institute of Virology’s P4 (high-containment) lab in a program supervised by the Chinese military.

In his book, *China COVID 19: La Chimera che ha cambiato il Mondo (China COVID 19: The chimera that changed the world)*, Prof. Tritto writes that while the effort in the Wuhan lab began as an effort to develop a vaccine against SARS, it gradually morphed into an effort for us “reverse genetics” to build lethal biological weapons. This was the reason that the Wuhan lab became China’s leading center for virology research in recent years, attracting major funding and support from the central government. This came out in the open with the outbreak, when China’s leading expert on bioweapons, People’s Liberation Army Major General Chen Wei, was immediately placed in charge of the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

As Dr. Tritto explained in an interview⁴ with Italian media:

3 <https://www.edizionicantagalli.com/shop/cina-covid-19/>

4 <https://www.sabinopaciolla.com/cina-covid-19-la-chimera-che-ha-cambiato-il-mondo/>

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In 2005, after the SARS epidemic, the Wuhan Institute of Virology was born, headed by Dr. Shi Zheng-Li, who collects coronaviruses from certain bat species and recombines them with other viral components in order to create vaccines. In 2010, she came into contact with American researchers led by Prof. Ralph Baric, who in turn works on recombinant viruses based on coronaviruses. Thanks to the matrix viruses provided by Shi, Baric created in 2015 a mouse Sars-virus chimera, which has a pathogenic effect on human cells analyzed in vitro.

At that point, the China-US collaboration becomes competition. Shi wants to work on a more powerful virus to make a more powerful vaccine: She combines a bat virus with a pangolin virus in vitro and in 2017 publishes the results of these researches in some scientific articles.

Her research attracts the interest of the Chinese military and medical-biological sector which deals with biological weapons used as a deterrent for defensive and offensive purposes. Thus Shi is joined by doctors and biologists who belong to the political-military sphere, such as Guo Deyin, a scholar of anti-AIDS and anti-viral hepatitis vaccines and expert in genetic recombination techniques. The introduction of the new engineered inserts into the virus genome is the result of the collaboration between the Shi team and that of Guo Deyin. The realization of this new chimera, from a scientific point of view, is a success. But Dr. Shi ... did not take into account the risks in terms of [bio]security and the political-military interests that her research would have aroused.

If you ask Dr. Yan why the Chinese government would create such a deadly pathogen, she says she doesn't know. She noted, however, that all labs in China are under the control of the government. And, she confirmed that the Wuhan research into the coronavirus is indeed under the supervision of Chen Wei, an

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epidemiologist who is a bioweapons expert and major general in the Chinese military.

“The Wuhan lab was collecting hundreds of coronaviruses from all over China,” she said. “They claimed it was to better predict future coronavirus epidemics that might emerge from nature. But if they were worried about a coronavirus epidemic, why weren’t they making any effort into vaccine research, as we were doing in our lab in Hong Kong?”

Instead, she believes, they created a deadly pathogen. According to Yan, the Wuhan lab had used a coronavirus owned by the People’s Liberation Army as “the backbone” for their “insertions.” The coronavirus, internationally registered under ZC45 is the only one owned by the People’s Liberation Army biowarfare labs, she said.

“With this ‘backbone’ from the PLA you can make SARS-COV-2 so easy,” she emphasized again. “If you have a good lab and the techniques, you can do it in six months.”

As to how the virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab, Yan said, “It was not an accident. No one in the lab got sick or died. There are always two people in the lab. No live virus would be able to escape.”

Yan said she doesn’t know if the escape was caused by a disgruntled employee or whether a more sinister plot involving the Chinese government was afoot. But she, along with an increasing number of experts around the world, are convinced that it did not come from nature.

As for Dr. Yan herself, she is the object of a continuing campaign of vilification by China. The University of Hong Kong has fired her,⁵ her husband has disowned her, and her parents have publicly called her a “traitor.”

At present, there is no more politically charged topic in domestic or international politics than the origin of the pandemic. But this is

5 <https://www.hku.hk/press/press-releases/detail/21274.html>

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not about politics for Dr. Yan. As she says, “I do this because I am a scientist. I know the truth and I want to tell it to the world.” China, on the other hand, continues to engage in a massive cover-up. To date, no international investigation into the origins of either the pandemic or the coronavirus has been allowed by the Chinese authorities. No outside investigators have been allowed into the Wuhan Institute of Virology. In mid-August, Beijing suddenly invalidated all passports held by the citizens of Wuhan. Clearly, Beijing has decided, in the aftermath of Dr. Yan’s testimony, that there will be no more defectors.

Every day the human cost of the pandemic continues to mount. As of mid-August, there are nearly 19 million cases of the virus and more than 708,000 deaths globally, according to Johns Hopkins University. And, it is increasingly clear that the blame not just for the pandemic, but for the China Virus itself, falls squarely on the Chinese Communist Party.

This article was originally published in Life Site News, August 10, 2020.

CHAPTER 3

(Dis)information Is Power



JAVIER VILLAMOR

The crisis produced by the coronavirus has highlighted even more the battle of the global elites for the control of the narrative. This control has allowed the masters of the world to delve deeper than ever into the pseudo-reality that assures them their quotas of power and to keep the rest in a situation of some latent repose in order to maintain their ignorance.

But with COVID-19 what has happened is that, given the level of weariness of a large part of the population with the quasi-perpetual financial crisis and the corruption of national and international rulers, society is beginning to mistrust the system's propaganda agencies. The crisis of credibility of the media has always been a constant in the postmodern era, but it has skyrocketed especially since the emergence of concepts such as *"fake news"* or *"post truth."*

What is the reason for this? There are multiple factors that explain it, but the most obvious is the crude use of the mass media as smoke-screen generators for the benefit of businessmen, who establish through them a mirror in which they wish society to reflect itself and stop thinking that there is something beyond what is being said.

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The crisis produced by the coronavirus has highlighted even more the battle of the global elites for the control of the narrative.

The way the world, the media, and the most powerful nations on the planet have reacted to the coronavirus crisis has awakened a large number of citizens from their lethargy. The information that reaches us is contradictory, incorrect, falsified, self-serving... Nothing new under the sun, that's true, but in this case something never seen before has happened: there is already open talk of the New World Order.

Yes, what for many years has sounded like something intangible, ethereal or inconcrete—*something that is practically crazy*—has finally turned out to be true. And strange as it may seem, it is the rulers and some multinationals who already speak openly of this concept, of this “*new normality*” as they have called it. Nice euphemism... but it is no more than that, a euphemism.

Recently, we have seen history and statistics distorted to manipulate the classic story of “*oppressors vs. oppressed.*” The devastating effects of this crude manipulation go far beyond what many of us would have imagined, to the point of toppling statues of those who stood up for the rights of Blacks and Indians alike.

The Black Lives Matter leader has recognized that the ideology behind the movement is Marxist. The more radical wing of the Democratic Party also positions itself within that political spectrum... like many other media and multinational leaders who are the result of decades of cultural subversion that preceded political subversion. Everybody against Trump and Trump against everybody.

It is important to make it clear that Donald Trump is not just a person, he is the face of a global patriot project whose mission is to dismantle all the media, political and bureaucratic machinery

created since the implementation of the current post-World War II economic system (Bretton Woods, 1944) that has served to promote all the supranational entities we have today: UN, IMF, World Bank, European Union... Trump's mission is to gradually dismantle this web of power that has been installed as a politically correct dictatorship in our lives and from which, until very recently, nobody believed it was possible to get out.

What does all this have to do with the pandemic? That's what we're going to see.

COVID-19, natural infection or human invention?

The origin of the new coronavirus is itself an example of that battle for narrative to which I referred at the beginning of the text.

Once China confirmed the outbreak at the end of December 2019, we saw the World Health Organization (WHO) minimizing the virus' capacity to harm and recommending not to take any precautions or restrict human trafficking by leaving the borders open. This turned out to be a fatal mistake that thousands of people around the world have paid for with their lives. We have recently learned that Taiwan, on the orders of its minister Tsai Ing-wen, reported shortly after the outbreak in China on the seriousness of the situation, but the WHO, led by declared Marxist Tedros Adhanom, ignored the warning.

As a curiosity, it should be noted that Taiwan is not a member of the WHO due to pressure from China over the diplomatic conflict between the two countries due to the Asian giant's desire for expansion.

After the outbreak, the battle for (dis)information broke out. We are constantly being bombarded with information that does not let us see beyond what we are told: number of dead people and infected in real time as if they were sports statistics, politicians blaming each other... the usual media circus to which we are accustomed, only enhanced.

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Meanwhile, the question we all ask ourselves is: “*where the hell did this virus that has blocked the world overnight come from?*” The answer is not in the usual media, nor is it possible to pinpoint the exact origin, but certain evidence can be traced that will at least help to understand what economic and political interests are behind all this.

Tracking down a strain

There are several lines of investigation regarding this virus. One, let’s say, international, and one, “*made in China.*” One does not exclude the other, as we will see.

The international track begins when WHO notifies a new strain of coronavirus in 2012 in Saudi Arabia that remains active until 2013. At that time, references to it disappear until the new COVID-19 comes to light.

On May 4, 2013, the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg MB, Canada, received the novel coronavirus from the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Dr Frank Plummer, an international expert in the fight against the Ebola virus, confirmed this in an article on 14 May 2013. A couple of Chinese scientists working in the Canadian laboratory stole this strain and others, like Ebola, and took them to China. It is feared that these scientists were actually undercover agents of the Chinese Communist Party.

What is striking is that both Dr. Plummer and Dr. Salama, executive director of the WHO’s Department of Global Health, died just few months ago in the midst of a coronavirus crisis. The first from a heart attack and the second from “*sudden death.*”

There is already open talk of the New World Order. Yes, what for many years has sounded like something intangible, ethereal or inconcrete—something that is practically crazy—has finally turned out to be true.

Let's get on with the time travel. In 2014, a French-Chinese laboratory was built in Wuhan to study infectious viruses. It may or may not be related, but France was one of the first countries to conclude that COVID-19 came from Wuhan in China. Why did they categorically claim it without showing any evidence?

In 2015, the British company Pirbright patented a vaccine against the coronavirus. This company has been funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In the same year, Bill Gates gave a conference at TED in which he warned of the dangers of a possible pandemic that could kill some 30 million people worldwide. In another lecture, he pointed out that population growth could be reduced through the use of vaccines, the health system and "reproductive health" (a euphemism for abortion). Yes, he did.

Both Bill and Melinda Gates are passionate about birth control, as are many other members of the world's business and political elite. Among them is Philip of Edinburgh, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II of England, who said, and I quote, "*if I could be reincarnated, I would like to come back as a deadly virus in order to help solve overpopulation.*" He advocates reducing the world's population to two billion people, which means eliminating five billion.

As we can see, part of the elite who rule the world is an enthusiastic endorser of genocide.

Let's go now to the "*made in China*" trail.

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Chinese Dr. Shi Zhengli is an internationally recognized expert on coronavirus working for years at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The virus we are dealing with is in nature in many animals, including the cattle we feed on, but it did not have the ability to mutate and infect humans. Not, at least, until Zhengli managed between 2010 and 2013 to modify some of the proteins of the wild coronavirus so that it could affect organisms other than bats. As demonstrated in his scientific studies, the tests were positive in chimpanzees, organisms biologically similar to humans.

In 2015, scientist Declan Butler drew attention in the journal *Nature* to how extremely dangerous it is to have modified such a virus in the laboratory with clear potential for military use in biological warfare.

Is it possible that Dr. Zhengli could have finished her work with some of the strains previously treated in Canada from Rotterdam? In fact, she made several trips to countries such as the U.S. and Canada during those years. Who did she meet on those trips? Could there be a link between them?

Soros and China

Everything indicates that the virus we are suffering from has been created in the laboratory, even though we are still being bombarded with news that denies all evidence and insists on the natural transmission of pangolins and bats.

The last to defend this thesis has been the WHO, but its strange relationship with China undermines all credibility to this claim.

In any case, it is clear that behind this virus there are also commercial interests, as usual. And in this case, I would like to look at the figure of the Hungarian-born billionaire George Soros.

According to a U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission report from the first third of 2011, George Soros' fund (Soros Fund Management) invested in Wuxi Pharmatech Cayman, a biotech

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company created in Shanghai in 2000. In 2008, the company bought App Tech.

One year after this investment, Wuxi built a laboratory in the city of Wuhan (specifically at 666 Gaoxin Road East Lake), the same city where the Institute of Virology is located and where, supposedly, everything exploded.

Wuxi App Tech is a company that works, in particular, in three fields: gene and cell therapy, viral vectors, and viral products. In short, it specializes in bioengineering and the production of viral tests.

This company is located very close to a high security P4 laboratory where the current COVID-19 would have been treated. This laboratory belongs to the Institute of Virology in Wuhan, which in turn belongs to the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The director of the laboratory is Yuan Zhiming who was responsible for the creation of the Wuhan Science City. We talked about France before, it turns out that France was the country that designed the P4 laboratory in Wuhan.

Do they deny any relation between COVID-19 and China to eliminate any hypothesis that leads to them? Yuan Zhiming collaborates with Jiang Zhicheng, son of Jiang Mianheng, son of Jiang Zemin, former supreme leader of the Chinese Communist Party. Zhicheng (Zemin's grandson) is the head of Wuxi App Tech, which owns the Fosun pharmaceutical company associated with the American company Gilead in the production of Remdesivir, one of the drugs currently being tested against the coronavirus. Soros invested in it years ago. Did he know about it?

But the billionaire doesn't just have interests in China. In May 2019, he bought shares in Grifols—a Spanish multinational based in Catalonia—for 38 million euros. This company is focused on blood products (blood plasma, etc.). Shortly afterwards, Capital Group entered with an investment of 400 million euros. Genómica (also based in Wuhan) launched the COVID-19 coronavirus test in

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Spain. Genómica belongs to PharmaMar, which is joining forces with Grifols at the international level to combat the coronavirus. Supranational bodies have already signed agreements with both companies. Results? These companies are valued at over 35% by Grifols and over 28% by PharmaMar. A rounded-off business in just over six months of investment for Soros and other investors that followed. Coincidence? Draw your own conclusions.

The political consequences of the coronavirus

The elite's response has not been long in coming; it is as if this pandemic has fallen from the sky.

International bodies such as the WHO, the UN, the European Union and a long etcetera already speak openly of ceding sovereignty to these entities in order to be able to face “the challenges posed to public health” by this virus, as we are told.

Politicians like Spanish President Pedro Sanchez are known to be puppets of globalists like George Soros and the investment funds. Moreover, Sanchez has met with the magnate on numerous occasions without leaving a record despite requests from the Spanish Transparency Committee. He has declared the meetings “secret.” Isn't transparency a key requirement for talking about democracy? We see that it is being increasingly eroded without any control.

But in Soros' orbit is not only Pedro Sanchez. There are also Foreign Minister González Laya, former Industry Minister Miguel Sebastián, journalists from Eldiario.es, freedom of information platforms, organizations, foundations... The network is impossible to detail here but it penetrates all layers of society.

The puppet politicians of the totalitarian globalists have already taken off their masks. In recent weeks, the spokesperson for the Spanish social-communist government has spoken openly about the New World Order. At the April 22 monitoring session, part of the president's speech leaked to journalists by Moncloa said: *“The pandemic aims to accelerate changes that have been going on for*

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years: the shift in teleworking, in consumption, towards digitalization and automation, towards forms of global governance.” Sanchez, on the stand, changed “objective” to “effect,” but the media had already conveyed the original message. They missed the nuance that dismantles their whole story.

The puppet politicians of the totalitarian globalists have already taken off their masks. President Pedro Sanchez said: “The pandemic aims to accelerate changes that have been going on for years: the shift in teleworking, in consumption, towards digitalization and automation, towards forms of global governance.”

Yes, exactly, the leaked speech indicated that the pandemic is targeting all of that. That means that there is a clear intention behind it with the purpose, as they have said, of radically modifying the known world through social engineering.

One of the most enthusiastic of these is, again, Bill Gates, who is funding the ID2020 project for the digital control of all humanity and a kind of tattoo made of polymers and sugars that would serve to identify who has been vaccinated and who has not. This would be implemented in tandem with Bill Gates’ universal vaccine subsidized and promoted by the world’s political and financial elite. Through these devices the State would have absolute control over the population and total access to the records of each individual (labor, health, economic information...).

Humanity is on the edge of a cliff never seen or imagined before where control will be virtually absolute. We are facing a globalist elite that wishes to subjugate the world economy and politics under

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its scepter of command. Together we can avoid this if humanity awakens from the lethargy of individualistic materialism to which we have been subjected for decades. It is not too late to react now. Freedom is well worth it.

CHAPTER 4

United Nations: The Battle for the Story



**MARÍA ORQUÍDEA CABALLERO
MORENO**

In the seven months that have passed since the coronavirus outbreak began, it seems that almost everyone in the international community has had something to say about the situation: experts, ordinary people, politicians, businessmen, Hollywood actors, the G20, the European Union and the African Union. Even the Islamic State made statements asking its members not to make any attacks in Europe.

So why has the UN Security Council, the very body that is supposed to have the main responsibility for maintaining peace and security in the world, remained stubbornly silent? Why has no thinking pink revolutionary realized this? Philosophers like Slavoj Žižek preached, once again, the end of capitalism; however, that apocalypse of capital and the reinvention of communism haven't

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arrived yet. Whether we like it or not, this will be no exception. What is certain is that, if anything is going to be reinvented, it is the capitalist system. Although perhaps, we will begin to glimpse in the Far East a ‘conservative internationalism’ proposed by China.

The official explanations for the United Nations’ passivity consist in arguing that, supposedly, the Security Council deals with security issues, while pandemics are the responsibility of the World Health Organization (WHO).

This is unconvincing. Only a cynic (or a naive one, perhaps) would ignore the obvious connection between the spread of the coronavirus and the growing security threats around the world. For reasons of space, we will not stop here to analyse the catastrophic economic consequences and their possible impact on the increase of violence in different parts of the planet. Without going into the mediocre communication strategy and the suspicious laxity of Tedros Adhanom with China, the role of the WHO is very secondary to the Security Council in terms of its status, effectiveness and influence.

Only a cynic (or a naive one, perhaps) would ignore the obvious connection between the spread of the coronavirus and the growing security threats around the world.

Anyone who takes a look at the recent work of the UN will note that there are precedents for the UN Security Council fighting to counter the spread of dangerous and contagious diseases. We have Resolution 1308, for example, which was adopted 20 years ago to help combat the spread of AIDS. We also have Resolution 2177, which was adopted in 2014, to combat the Ebola epidemic. In both cases, the consensus reached by the Security Council

made it possible to mobilize previously inaccessible financial, administrative and political resources, to establish specific funds and public-private partnerships, to encourage global and regional banks, and to empower the WHO and other relevant UN agencies with additional opportunities.

One gets the impression that the main reason behind the Security Council's silence is the fierce information war that is taking place between Washington and Beijing. It is important to mention that China is currently holding the presidency of the Security Council and that it is also supported by Russia through prudent silence. We also have to bear in mind that the work of the Council is being carried out by video call, which slows down any process and gives China an advantage. All this will make it difficult to reach a resolution on the coronavirus that does not harm or expose the United States.

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For US diplomacy, any Security Council resolution on COVID-19 must be drafted in such a way that the primary blame for the outbreak falls straight on China's shoulders and must also punish Beijing for trying to hide the full scale of the problem from the international community.

However, to what extent is China guilty of the fanaticism of the pink well-meaning westerners and their refusal to cancel demonstrations or close the untouchable borders at the appropriate time?

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China, for its part, sees the spread of the virus as a side effect of Washington's unilateral policies, its propensity to put pressure on its partners to get what it wants and its national selfishness, going so far as to cause the outbreak of the pandemic in the epicentre of the liberal and modern world, namely New York. However, that does not mean that the wording of any preferred Chinese resolution is any easier to implement.

It would be fair to say that the inability of the Security Council to adopt a resolution on the coronavirus is symptomatic of a number of other problems within the agency. We are facing a transitional phase, of phenomena and attitudes that were already dormant and are now simply accelerating, but this is not the advent of a reinvented Communism.

The pandemic has brought to the fore the question, now central, of the limits of national sovereignty in today's closely interconnected world. Any meaningful international cooperation in the fight against the coronavirus would require, at a minimum, maximum transparency and integrity of information on the state of affairs in each country, and most States are simply not prepared to be so open. Here again, the assumptions of the world without borders are called into question. It could be that we are facing a new type of globalization, a new model of 'conservative internationalism' with China and Russia as its greatest supporters. This international conservatism would emphasize the importance of sovereignty in the decision-making of nation states but would also understand the importance of the international community. In this sense, it would be a third way away from the mercantilist approach promoted by Trump, but also away from the democratic internationalism of the *"Greta Thunberg well-thought-out/liberal order."*

And we are not talking here about issues that are difficult for the layman to understand, such as nuclear disarmament or the frozen conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. We are dealing with politically sensitive issues: the management of cross-border migratory flows,

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the introduction of local and national quarantines, restrictions on the internal movement of the population, the use of unilateral sanctions, consumer habits and other restrictions on international trade, etc.

This is not the same as fighting Ebola in some remote territory in Africa, where conflicts between national sovereignty and international cooperation are always resolved through cooperation. The scenario is that supranational regulation could end up invading one of the main symbols of state sovereignty: national health systems. Žižek, in his effort to resurrect a 'revised communism', proposes to create a global health care network. The problem is under what standard or parameters should we shape our national health system. Can we transplant the Korean health system into the population pyramid of a country like Honduras, for example? I suspect not.

In this regard, the recent confrontation between the United Kingdom and the European Union on how to deal with the pandemic is intriguing. Following the success of Brexit and the full restoration of British sovereignty, London has also embarked on its own 'national' strategy: an approach that included minimal social disengagement and a refusal to close restaurants, bars and nightclubs. This was done in the hope that older people would stay at home, while the rest of the country would contract the virus and thus develop an immunity to it. In the end, the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, was forced to point out the real limits of British sovereignty to his counterpart Boris Johnson.

After threatening to close the border between the United Kingdom and France, the European Union (Paris) forced London to stay in tune with other European countries.

The European Union had thus twisted the United Kingdom's arm, forcing it to play by European rules. But who is going to twist the arm of Russia, China or United States? And that is why the UN Security Council remains silent, and this does not seem to change in the short term.

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In the scenario where we finally have a Security Council resolution (because it will come), it will be of a very general nature and will not require anything in particular from the great powers. I could use the non-binding final declaration on combating the coronavirus adopted at the recent G20 virtual summit as a template. Therefore, the underlying problem, the rethinking of the world through Chinese or Russian glasses, will continue in this tug-of-war reflected in the current situation in the Security Council. But the reality is that the world left behind many years ago communism and changed by nationalism.

That is why I am surprised that Žižek (and many others), who preaches atheism through Christianity, has such faith in the resurrection of the dead, especially the resurrection of communism, which is well buried.

The European Union twisted the UK's arm, forcing it to play by European rules. But who is going to twist the arm of Russia, China or the United States? That's why the UN Security Council remains silent.

CHAPTER 5

The Tyranny of the Algorithms



MIKLOS LUKACS DE PERENY, PH.D.

On March 11 of 2020, after reaching 118,000 people infected with COVID-19 in more than 100 countries, the nominal leader of the World Health Organization (WHO), and an Ethiopian communist, Tedros Adhanom declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Since then, different sanitary measures have been implemented—from draconian confinements to complete shutdowns of productive activities—with the purpose of flattening the curve of contagion. Unfortunately, the unjustified economic restrictions have also flattened the wallets and aspirations of millions of people around the world. Due to men’s natural aversion to uncertainty, a number of hypotheses have surfaced to give sense to the Orwellian environment we are currently living in, being Bill Gates’ vaccines, 5G networks and the consolidation of the “New World Order” (NWO) the most popular “conspiracy theories.” Despite the feasibility of these hypotheses—which beyond their definitions and specificities gradually evolve into theses—there is a variable that has been systematically ignored but plays a fundamental role in the current viral pandemonium: Artificial Intelligence (AI).

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The most informed individuals will already be aware of the different initiatives that governments and firms have implemented without citizens' consent to install mobile apps with the purpose of monitoring their behaviour. Alongside the joint Apple-Google tracking tech⁶ and Samsung's CoronApp⁷ in Colombia, several government bulletins in Spain, Argentina and Turkey have been released to enforce 'social distancing' via geolocation. Drones have also been used in Morocco,⁸ France, India and Indonesia⁹ with the same purpose. Intentions appear to be the best and we should not engage in 'conspiracies'; however, if today's excuse is coronavirus, tomorrow's could be our opinions or beliefs which put us in the line of fire of totalitarian technocracies.

Today's excuse is coronavirus, tomorrow's could be our opinions or beliefs which put us in the line of fire of totalitarian technocracies.

But what is AI? Traditionally, the processing power of computers has been used to optimize results. From spreadsheets to industrial design programs, conventional software has been programmed to run specific tasks. However, AI takes a totally different approach: by using algorithms—*precise and finite but more complex instructions than conventional software*—AI systems can process

6 <https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/10/21216484/google-apple-coronavirus-contract-tracking-bluetooth-location-tracking-data-app>

7 <https://news.samsung.com/co/juntos-podemos-actuar-contra-el-coronavirus>

8 <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2020/5/6/morocco-launches-drones-to-fight-coronavirus-from-the-sky>

9 <https://www.france24.com/en/20200327-rise-of-the-drones-unmanned-vehicles-become-key-tool-in-coronavirus-battle>

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a huge amount of data—*Big Data*—to categorize elements, map links and identify patterns that allow them to learn for themselves, gradually improving their predictive capabilities. Artificial Intelligence algorithms can also adapt to different datasets and execute different tasks without the need to be reprogramed. Therefore, we say that AI systems—*specifically Machine Learning*—“*learn*,” “*reason*” and “*make decisions*” independently by imitating human intelligence. This incredible flexibility offers a wide range of potential applications and has led some authors to refer to this technology as humanity’s “final invention.”¹⁰

Governments, firms, and research centers around the world continue to develop AI systems but the global race is clearly led by China and the US. China dominates in technologies such as drones, machine translation, speech recognition and facial recognition, whereas the US shows more advances in robotics, autonomous vehicles, and AI applications for business, namely virtual clerks for customer service and financial technologies or Fintech. But AI systems already intervene in our daily lives. When we search the web, use apps to avoid traffic, and buy products or pay bills online, algorithms optimize these functions. Nevertheless, algorithms could also displace us from our jobs, abolish our privacy and suppress our freedoms¹¹ with absolute impunity.

In *Surveillance Capitalism*,¹² Shoshana Zuboff meticulously describes with substantial evidence how Big Tech companies such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft undermine our fundamental rights for commercial profit. These firms—*which alongside IBM form the acronym GMAFIA*—operate at AI’s technological frontier. By coining the concept “*behavioural surplus*,”

10 <https://jamesbarrat.com/>

11 https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The_Future_of_Employment.pdf

12 <https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Pages/item.aspx?num=56791>

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Zuboff explains how every term that we type into search engines, and every picture and comment we share and like on social media platforms is stored, processed and transformed into information that is sold to third parties for targeted advertisement. Those unsolicited ads are all processed by the vigilant algorithms.

Every term we type into search engines, and every picture and comment we share and like on social media platforms is stored, processed and transformed into information that is sold to third parties for targeted advertisement.

Of all the firms covered by Zuboff, Facebook stands as the most invasive, predatory, and unscrupulous of all. By 2016 Facebook had already developed algorithms capable of processing 100,000 data points. All the information naively shared in this platform allows Facebook to build personality and behavioural profiles for each of its 1,400 million active users. In other words, Facebook knows us much better than we know ourselves. Furthermore, its prediction engine FB Learner Flow¹³ can reuse the algorithms for different purposes, including experiments to manipulate the masses.¹⁴

The aim is to “personalize” the user’s experience by generating trends and censoring content that is harmful for Zuckerberg’s non-commercial agenda. However, Zuboff’s most disturbing finding is how these algorithms can predict our behaviour and decisions with

13 <https://engineering.fb.com/core-data/introducing-fblearner-flow-facebook-s-ai-backbone/>

14 <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/29/facebook-users-emotions-news-feeds>

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up to 80-90% of certainty. Clearly, “*reading the future*” is not a utopia anymore.

If oil set the path to wealth in the 20th century, data and information will do so in the 21st. On January of 2020, Alphabet—*Google’s parent firm*—surpassed the trillion dollar market cap¹⁵ joining the exclusive “trillion dollar club” with Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft.¹⁶ Already during the first semester of 2019, these firms placed in the global top 10 in terms of market cap alongside Facebook and Chinese tech giants Ali Baba and Tencent.

All of them led the AI global competition and reached a combined market cap of \$4.9 trillion US. This massive figure represents 20% of the GDP of the United States, 36% of China’s, and 98% of Japan’s¹⁷ and partly explains the incredible political and economic power that individuals like Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Sergey Brin, Larry Page, and Mark Zuckerberg have accumulated. They all exercise their incredible power to defend and promote multiple causes of common interest.

The Brazilian philosopher Olavo de Carvalho refers to them as “metacapitalists”¹⁸ or capitalists with steroids capable of operating beyond formal institutional frameworks.

The vision of AI mediated societies—a *vision portrayed by techno-progressive guru Alex Pentland in his book “Social Physics”*¹⁹—is not only embraced by Big Tech metacapitalists in the US but also by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Relations between both parties can be traced back to Bill Gates’ first visit to China in March of 1994²⁰ when—*with honours dispensed only to heads of*

15 <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/16/alphabet-stock-hits-1-trillion-market-cap-for-first-time.html>

16 <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/audit-services/publications/assets/global-top-100-companies-2019.pdf>

17 <https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf>

18 <https://olavodecarvalho.org/olavo-de-carvalho-answers-the-questions-of-the-editors-of-wydawnictwo-podziemne/>

19 <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/314230/social-physics-by-alex-pentland/>

20 https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/276294.Guanxi_The_Art_of_Relationships_

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state—he met with president Jiang Zemin to explore technological transfer opportunities.

Mutual expectations were materialized in 1998 with the foundation of Microsoft Research²¹ in Beijing which began training the first generation of software engineers and programmers who would later lead the AI revolution in China.

The vision of AI mediated societies is not only embraced by Big Tech metacapitalists in the US but finds in the Chinese Communist Party a surprising ally... both staunch enemies of democracy.

Since then, Gates has met with presidents Hu Jintao, Xi Jinping and other highly ranked officials of the CCP in Seattle,²² Davos,²³ and the Boao Forum for Asia²⁴ developing levels of trust and intimacy unimaginable for any political leader in the West. Gates has really profited from these relationships which even allowed him to co-organize the United States-China Internet Industry Forum (USCIIF),²⁵ a bilateral technological summit of the highest political level. The first of its eight editions took place in 2007 and the last one in 2015 with the attendance of GMAFIA bosses, Chinese peers from Baidu, Ali Baba and Tencent (BAT) and Xi Jinping himself at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, WA.

21 <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/lab/microsoft-research-asia/>

22 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ha2zzVoqH8>

23 <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Development/The-Mood-at-Davos>

24 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEKGgTzjaQI>

25 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisabrownlee/2015/09/10/seattle-u-s-china-internet-industry-forum-2015-unlikely-a-response-to-threatened-cyber-sanctions/#4929daf4069e>

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Although Amazon, Facebook and Google failed to succeed in the Chinese market, this has not precluded them from land lucrative contracts with the communist regime, for example the development of censorship algorithms,²⁶ one of their specialities as all Western conservatives know. Their relationship with CCP leaders is far more fluent (and fruitful) than the one currently maintained with their own president, Donald Trump. There must be no doubt that GMAFIA—*led by Gates*—played a decisive role in China’s spectacular technological development, particularly the AI revolution, which seriously questions the loyalty of these “philanthropists” for their country and Western interests.

But China does not only owe its current technological prominence to GMAFIA but also to Barack Obama, Silicon Valley’s poster boy. It should come to our attention that the former Nobel awardee and the human rights loving meta-capitalists have facilitated the creation and consolidation of the world’s first AI controlled mass surveillance state²⁷ managed by one of the world’s most repressive regimes.

What started a decade ago as a pilot program to reorganize Beijing’s pedestrian traffic through geolocation ended in today’s Skynet Project,²⁸ a mass surveillance system that aspires to control the lives, minds and souls of 1,400 million people. Such dystopia currently operates with 200 million cameras installed throughout the country²⁹—*there will be* 600 million by the end of this year³⁰—manufactured by Chinese firms Dahua and Hickvision. Surveillance algorithms are programmed by Bytedance—*owner of*

26 <https://theintercept.com/2018/08/01/google-china-search-engine-censorship/?comments=1>

27 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qu2dmjg2BI>

28 <https://www.scmp.com/tech/science-research/article/3005733/what-you-need-know-about-sensenets-facial-recognition-firm>

29 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/09/26/china-unveils-500-megapixel-camera-can-identify-every-face-crowd/>

30 <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7379255/China-one-CCTV-camera-TWO-PEOPLE-year.html>

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Tik Tok—and Sensetime, face recognition systems are developed by MEVII and Tencent provides the country’s most popular instant messaging app, WeChat. All these companies operate under de facto control of the CCP and will continue to do so insofar they comply with all the regime’s demands. Skynet is integrated into a “*social credit*” system that transforms Pentland’s sociometric obsession into a terrifying reality. Crossing a red light, throwing rubbish on the street, or playing loud music at night automatically reduce your social and economic reputation score but missing credit payments or committing minor public offenses will carry even heavier penalties that range from the impossibility of purchasing non-essential goods to being denied a passport.

However, if someone is included in the “*blacklist*,” this “*shameful citizen*” will have to wait between two to five years before being removed from it. On the other hand, “*model citizens*” will enjoy discounts for several goods and services and some may even be placed higher in virtual dating platforms, a great incentive in a country with 34 million more men than women³¹ (courtesy of the national demographic control plan suspended in 2015). With nearly 1,200 million active users, Tencent’s WeChat³² saves the CCP enforcement costs.

The app is also an information (indoctrination) platform, virtual wallet, and ID. In fully digitalized cities, remote deactivation of these functions will immediately isolate the individual from the economic and socio-cultural system.

The Chinese surveillance state would not be possible without the infrastructure to transmit massive amounts of data in real time. For this reason, China officially launched its 5G network in November

31 https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr-consent/?next_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fgraphics%2f2018%2fworld%2ftoo-many-men%2f

32 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255778/number-of-active-wechat-messenger-accounts/>

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of last year.³³ With transmission peaks of up to 20GB per second, 5G networks perform 100 times better than 4G networks and are indispensable for implementing the Internet of Things (IoT). They also offer the necessary technical support to monitor the activities of millions of people everyday in real time.

To argue that without the abovementioned technologies and infrastructure it would be impossible to establish a surveillance system for total control is not a “conspiracy theory”; it is a demonstrable fact. The Skynet project confirms that technocratic tyrannies supported by AI systems do not belong to the realm of science fiction anymore.

To argue that without the abovementioned technologies and infrastructure it would be impossible to establish a surveillance system for total control is not a “conspiracy theory”; it is a demonstrable fact.

The information provided in this chapter allows us to elaborate some preliminary conclusions: (i) *Mass surveillance systems backed up by AI are a frightening reality;* (ii) *Technological supremacy is a common interest for Western metacapitalists and the CCP;* (iii) *Both metacapitalists and the CCP understand that any unilateral attempt for global domination would be impossible; by sharing the pie, all (they) win;* (iv) *Both parties repudiate democracy as shown by the Skynet Project in China and the privatization of power through “philanthropy” in the West. Metacapitalists know*

33 <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/01/tech/5g-china/index.html>

that if some political representatives are not for rent, they must and will be destroyed by all available means. For these billionaires with messianic complex, the ideal mode of government is rented government or no government at all; (v) The implementation of a surveillance state demands collectivization of the masses; the CCP has already achieved this, convinced of its ideological supremacy whereas, for metacapitalists, ideological debates are totally irrelevant. Yet, they also understand that hardcore communists and socialists are unbeatable for mass collectivization and standardization. The dominant presence of well-paid socialists and recycled communists in the WHO, United Nations and other multilateral organizations is not a coincidence; (vi) Metacapitalists and the CCP share a utilitarian, materialist, mechanistic vision of progress underpinned by sociometrics (and soon, biometrics); (vii) For both parties, the ideal of progress justifies the sacrifice of millions of people; those doubtful of their twisted morality will find definite responses in the Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen in China and the grotesque abortion agenda of philanthropic progressivism worldwide. Love, compassion, and dignity are useless and will never find space in the tyranny of the algorithms.

Do we really want to transition from technology for the service of humanity to humans at the service of technology? Only a few convinced of their godly condition will agree. However, for the average person living in this world of uncertainty, coincidences and subtleties, it will be absolutely necessary to understand that the distance between apparently inoffensive mobile apps and AI-powered total control systems is much shorter than imagined.

CHAPTER 6

The Awakening of the Leviathan in a Dystopian World



JUAN ÁNGEL SOTO

Millions of pages have been written about the authoritarianism of China, the Russian autocratic regime and even the so-called anti-liberal democracies characterised by the “national-populism” coined by Steve Bannon after Trump’s brilliant rise to power. However, it is not Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin, or Viktor Orbán who have detonated the most recent manifestation of state power, but rather the coronavirus itself. Democratic and dictatorial governments alike have adopted some of the most restrictive controls on rights and freedoms ever seen. These events have sincerely called into question the self-proclaimed moral superiority of liberal democracies. The state is the state, and all of this adversity and uncertainty have only served to highlight its power.

There is no doubt that a wide range exists, from Duterte’s shoot-to-kill order in the Philippines for anyone who bypasses mobility

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restrictions, to the fines to which we are already accustomed to on this side of the world. However, in retrospect, it is evident that we are seeing a crescendo of instances in which the state is interfering in people's lives. Without resorting to exotic conjecture or far-flung examples in different parts of the world, we can see how a vast majority of European countries have forced their citizens to submit to some of the most imposing and supervening conditions not even attempted during the Second World War. It is worth remembering that though London was bombarded by the Luftwaffe for fifty-seven consecutive nights, there was still no order of mandatory closure of local establishments.

On the contrary, in modern-day Spain as in many other Western countries, colleges and universities remain closed, offices and commercial establishments empty, and enclosures accompanied by social distancing are the new status quo. All of this will bring with it a series of economic, social, and political consequences, of which we have still only seen the beginning. It is also needless to mention the psychological ramifications of this situation, or the impact it will have on families and people's personal lives.

However, there will be time when the storm ends for calm analysis based on data and empirical evidence. For the moment, what should occupy our attention (in addition to the pre-eminent priority of defeating this pandemic) is the monitoring of the state's actions. As noted earlier, the unfolding of the Hobbesian Leviathan that we observe today is truly unprecedented, especially in the countries that surround us. These types of measures that are undoubtedly being carried out (which, for the most part are actually seeking the protection and well-being of the people) should also be a cause for concern. This is the case for two reasons.

The first reason is our getting used to the situation. Just as laws give an impression of normality or of legitimacy (which is certainly not always the case, see Nuremberg), each sphere of freedom and privacy that the state confiscates is hardly recoverable later. In the

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current case, the confinement measures to which we are subject constitute, in addition to their obvious consequences, the largest social experiment in the history of humanity. Many lessons will be learned, and even more conclusions will be drawn. It is clear that the state in turn will also draw their own.

It is not Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin, or Viktor Orbán who have detonated the most recent manifestation of state power, but rather the coronavirus itself.

The second is because of the cover-up. The extraordinary powers that governments have been granted to face the crisis that bedevils us is a double-edged sword: their use of that same power for spurious ends or reprehensible procedures. A situation where an executive contravenes the current legal order must be cause for alarm, but even more so because of the salvation discourse that actually brings about the establishment or strengthening of this same power. We can see a perfect example in the Moncloa's constant attacks against freedom of the press.

The claim that the state is dangerous is not a question of ideology, but of history. While the first is capricious, the second is forceful in its verdicts. Thus, two great maxims are observed over time. The first is that while it is unquestionable that the state can position itself to be an effective ally in crisis management and the protection of life, it has historically also presented itself as the greatest threat against life, rights, and freedoms.

It is no coincidence that there has been a rebound in the purchase of weapons in the United States in light of the measures taken by the government to deal with the coronavirus. It is important

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to remember that the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution exists, above all, for the protection of the individual against the state. The second maxim is that whenever the state has received the ability to decide who lives and who dies, either through infamous processes of social engineering or those of medical triage, the consequences have been dire.

It is unquestionable that the state can position itself to be an effective ally in crisis management and the protection of life, it has historically also presented itself as the greatest threat against life, rights, and freedoms.

These are indeed difficult times, but the formidable machine-like beast of the state that is now set in motion for all to see does not indicate a peaceful future either. However, it is important to note that not everything occurs in broad daylight. The list of measures that are being adopted to combat the coronavirus, including the confinement itself, the prohibition on working that is decided at the discretion of the authorities, police controls, geolocation of mobile phones, the transformation of the media into propaganda platforms, the purging of information and users from social networks (which bring them closer and closer to mere editorials instead of a set of personal opinions).

Regardless of whether the current legislation actually allows for them is extremely worrying, since they reveal the vigilance to which we are being subjected. They are features more typical of George Orwell's dystopian world in *1984* than those of open societies like ours. Thus, many voices are beginning to point out with growing alarm that some of these provisions bring us closer to a panorama

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of a modern police state similar to that of the “*Big Brother*” in 1984. In this, we are not only controlled by the authorities vertically from top to bottom, but also horizontally through censorship and a system of denunciation amongst individuals. This last element is of special importance as it attests to the insidiousness and envy of some citizens rather than their actual complicity with the regime. These are attitudes that actually come very close to the latter, since, as Hannah Arendt points out in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the role of the populace in their collaboration or, more simply, with their silence is crucial to ending dissent itself within dictatorships.

We are not only controlled by the authorities vertically from top to bottom, but also horizontally through censorship and a system of denunciation amongst individuals.

It was revealed that the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS) asked the Spanish people the following question:

At this moment, do you think that the dissemination of hoaxes and misleading/unsubstantiated information by networks and social media in regards to the pandemic should be prohibited and that this information should solely be commented upon by official sources, or do you think that total freedom must be maintained in the dissemination of news and information?

This question from the CIS is a crucial part of the debate around the constitutionality of the suspension of rights and freedoms imposed by the State of Alarm. These are restrictions that attest

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to the power of that state, or of the administration (the distinction between the two is less and less perceived), that today finds its number one public enemy in the freedom of the press.

That was what Vice President Pablo Iglesias was referring to when he declared, after being questioned about the previous question, that the objective was that the “*extreme right-wing media and its politics should never be part of the future of our societies.*” That’s right, the politics and the media.

The assessment of what is to be classified as “*far-right,*” of course, will depend on his most august opinion. It will be that same assessment that, when it deems it appropriate, can use any other criteria it wants to exclude new political or ideological positions that “*should*” be outside politics and society. Not even Orwell could have explained it better. We find ourselves before the instruction manual of the totalitarian state that we are already several chapters into.

The Orwellian world, that the socialist-communist coalition government in Spain flirts with, has to be cause for alarm and denunciation. However, given the obvious and blatant nature of this type of drift (or degeneration) of a liberal democracy, it should also be borne in mind that there is another more subtle and equally dangerous source. Namely, the one conceived by Aldous Huxley and described in *Brave New World*. More than just censorship itself (or in our case, in addition to it), what prevails is the saturation of news and disinformation, fuelled by man’s infinite appetite for evasion. What starts as a voracity for authentic information becomes, due to the enclosures, boredom and apathy.

This is what Huxley points out in his text “Propaganda in a Democratic Society,” when he says that the first defenders of the free press only contemplated (with respect to propaganda) that it could be either true or false, without foreseeing what had actually happened, especially in Western capitalist societies. According to his words, “*the development of a vast industry of*

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mass communication that deals neither with the false nor with the true, but with the unreal, which is almost always totally irrelevant.” This was a ruling that he blamed on not taking into account “*man’s almost infinite appetite for distraction.*” The other big problem revealed by the CIS survey (if the statistics turn out to be true, of course) lies in the answer to the question itself: 66.7% answered the question affirmatively, thus supporting the existence of a sole official source charged with transmitting truthful information. I insist that if we are going to take this result seriously, the Orwellian state in which Spain is rapidly degenerating into, is akin to the one described by Huxley in *Brave New World*, in which he portrays a society that puts a price on its happiness. It is the society that is drowsy, controlled, and that possesses no ability to respond or, obviously, rebel.

The Orwellian state in which Spain is rapidly degenerating is akin to the one described by Huxley in Brave New World... drowsy, controlled, and that possesses no ability to respond or, obviously, rebel.

Today’s Spain resembles that “*happy world*” in which we, the citizens, have voluntarily sacrificed our rights with little resistance, and lost interest in information or truth, surrendering ourselves to a trivial culture intoxicated by pleasure. Rather than in a state of alarm (which should definitely “*alarm*” us), we actually find ourselves in a state of drunkenness, from which we will surely, sooner or later, wake up due to the hunger or the economic reality imposed on us. The problem then will be that we may no longer have the ability to react. It may be too late.

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There are some who point out that the Leviathan has now appeared with the emergence of the coronavirus crisis. This is not true. He was already there, but dormant. However, today, its power and our approval of it represents a significant threat against our rights and freedoms. The state has awakened. It is time for us to do the same.

This article is based on two others by the same author: “El despertar del Leviatán” Fundación Civismo, April 3, 2020 and “Ni Huxley ni Orwell: Los dos,” Okdiario, April, 14, 2020.

CHAPTER 7

The Power of the State in Times of Pandemic



AGUSTÍN LAJE

In his book *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault refers to an edict in a city in France at the end of the eighteenth century that put into place a series of measures to be taken in the event of a plague. Among the law's restrictions were “*that the streets shall be under the authority of an administrator who watches over them*”; that “*every person shall be ordered to confine himself in his house and prohibited from leaving*”; that “*each family shall have accumulated its provisions*”; that “*when it is absolutely necessary to leave their houses, it shall be done in turn, and avoiding all possible encounters [with other people]*.” Thus, “*No one shall circulate the streets except officials, the administrators, soldiers, and the ‘crows’ which move among the infected houses, moving from one corpse to another, indifferent to abandon [people] to [their] death.*” In such a scenario, “*the inspection operates without ceasing. The watchful eye of the*

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state is everywhere on the move,” carrying out the exhaustive process of endless searching.

For Foucault, plague is the authoritarian’s dream of a “*disciplinary society*.” The lockdown, the regulations, the red tape, the inspections, the surveillance, the punishment: these are the elements that, according to the French philosopher, underlie the medical, psychiatric, military, industrial, prison and scholastic institutions. Thus, using the plague as a hypothetical model for total state control, it is capable of instituting real models of state control, an example of what Foucault calls “*disciplinary power*.”

This curious introduction brings to mind the following: there has been constant talk of the health consequences, on the one hand, and the economic consequences, on the other, of the plague (i.e. the pandemic) that is presently afflicting the world. Many surveys, even those that have already been published, reveal that most citizens have two primary concerns: one being health (both their own health and the health of others) and the other being the economy (both on the national and individual levels).

But, at least until now, analysis of the situation in relation to state power, policy, and politics seems to be completely absent. Yet, if any notion has become shared universally, it is precisely the notion that this pandemic will forever change the course of human affairs. Now, if public policy and political power are part of the very foundation of human affairs, it seems absurd then to have nothing to say about them in this regard. Thus, through this column and others that I plan to write in the coming days, I want to address some points that may be relevant given the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

In his “*Postscript on the Societies of Control*,” Gilles Deleuze goes further than Foucault, arguing that, by virtue of the modern modes of production, environments where people are confined and closely surveilled are doomed to perish. It makes a lot of sense. In a world in which production is increasingly based on information and communication, the inflexibility, the rigor, the lockdown that are

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part of the “dream” of the plague is an anachronistic and terribly unproductive dream. Byung-Chul Han in his *Psychopolitics* claims that those in power no longer need lockdowns, nor do they need to rely on coercion these days—at least not to a large extent—because it is not the body but rather the psyche that is now their prized objective.

There has been constant talk of the health and economic consequences of the pandemic. But, at least until now, analysis of the situation in relation to power and politics seems to be completely absent.

How should we think to frame the power of the state? But above all, we should contemplate what the power of the state can become, according to these notions. What can we extract from all this?

First of all, I would say that we are banging our heads up against the wall of an ideological framing of history that is fixated on progress. The events of the last century interfere with the idealized fiction that history moves along a linear track of progressive emancipation. The Second World War was a “wall,” so to speak, in this regard, inspiring *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Adorno and Horkheimer. The nuclear crises of the following decades later exposed this again, making clear the real danger of humanity’s ability to completely destroy itself. But these events are far removed and distant to most people these days, especially for generations accustomed to changing their cellphone every six months for the newest model which is, of course, always better than the previous one. A progressive ideological framing of the history of humanity follows the same trend as the evolution of the Iphone: what is new is always better. But

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despite this, we have today a pandemic which, for now, has become uncontrollable, putting at risk the health millions around the world. We have seen this pandemic bring the economy to a grinding halt. And as I have highlighted here, the pandemic has brought the model of lockdown back to the fore. The authoritarianism of the state, in other words, needs us locked up again.

Meanwhile, psychopolitical mechanisms operate in the background, since the technologies (Big-Data and cyber espionage) on which these mechanisms are based continue to operate. It is a mixture of surveillance and mimesis. On the one hand, the many (i.e. the citizens) are being watched by the few (i.e. the experts in data collection and data analytics), while on the other hand, the many are looking to a select few to get their information (i.e., the “influencers” in society). The use of the Internet will exponentially increase in times of quarantine as everything increasingly takes place online. The data collection mechanisms in place go unnoticed in the background and enable the influencers in society to gain a sort of “power over the psyche.”

When the state and influencers of society attempt to leverage this “power over the psyche” we experience it only subjectively and we feel its effects only because we realize that it is not usually there. This “power over the psyche” is the softest version of soft power but its use during the pandemic is now giving rise to the emergence of what I would call “the pandemic state,” a much firmer and more tangible form of control.

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Forms of political power and control, including “*power over the psyche*” and forms of control being used during the pandemic, have increased significantly and will continue to increase the more as time passes. The West is prepared to implement mechanisms of social control proper to Chinese totalitarianism. The conditions necessary for legitimizing similar forms of control as those seen in China are quickly emerging. This trend can only change course if, at a certain point, the state is left totally defunded and if its apparatus begins to crumble. But for now, the curve is necessarily trending upward. The regulation of personal behavior in the context of the “*plague*” demands such totalitarianism because, like it or not, our society is a state-owned society. That is to say, our society does not know how to define itself or organize itself beyond the State.

Civic values and individual and societal virtues, generally absent in today’s world, are now desperately needed. Since civic values and virtues are communal by nature, the state could have an important role in this regard, but their role cannot be exclusive. It is obvious that the *res publica* has not existed for a long time now. In today’s society there exist only statal relations and mercantile exchanges. The communal ethos necessary for *res publica* falls short in contemporary society, being expressed today—*with a few honorable exceptions of course*—as hollow vestiges that amount to little more than narcissism. ‘Here I am, in my house—as *one “should” be*—exercising to stay in shape, or watching some movie,’ they might say ‘and I want to give you this moral lecture (but not a political lecture, of course), because I am a good citizen.’ In today’s society, the extent of most people’s shallow sense of civic duty does not go much beyond that in general.

The pandemic has evolved into an excuse to invent novel and unprecedented ways to stroke one’s own ego. And because this is not virtue, but narcissism, on display, we will have to see what becomes of all this after a month or two of quarantine and lockdown.

However, if for some reason “*the plague*” strengthens civic virtue, the unbridled growth of the state, might be reduced and put under

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control after the pandemic effectively ends. Society, in a spirit of community, would become a decisive, self-aware, “empowered” social actor, as it is now fashionable to say. On the other hand, we have to prepare ourselves for a government that, after the pandemic, feels more empowered than ever to do whatever it wants. In this case, the excessive growth of the state’s power would survive the pandemic, and whether or not this happens depends on how long this all lasts. Why would the surveillance of private citizens cease once the pandemic is finally overcome? It is well known that when the state grows, it is usually practically impossible to shrink it.

But countless questions remain open that I will try to address in future articles.

Either society becomes a decisive actor in exercising their civic duties or the encroaching power of the state will totally control it.

Originally Published in PanamPost, March 21, 2020.

PART II

When the Narrative Lands in Everyday Life

*“All its life the sheep was afraid of wolves.
But the shepherd ate it.”*

–Georgian Proverb

CHAPTER 8

The World Is Finally Uniting Against China's Bully Tactics



STEVEN MOSHER

Twenty Indian soldiers are murdered³⁴ in a surprise cross-border attack by the People's Liberation Army. A Philippine fishing boat is sunk³⁵ in its own territorial waters by increasingly predatory Chinese ships. Peaceful pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong are beaten bloody by riot police on Beijing's orders. Australia's farmers and miners are hit with trade sanctions³⁶ after Canberra suggests that the virus, which came out of China, may have come from ... China.

34 <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/20-indian-soldiers-killed-in-lacstand-off-with-chinese-troops/story-1qTQWKJjba6xXAKwyMh2aM.html>

35 <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/12/19/chinese-ship-sinks-ph-vessel-abandons-22-pinoy-fishermen>

36 <https://time.com/5835561/china-block-australian-beef-imports/>

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Chinese President Xi Jinping has apparently decided that now is the time to assert dominance over an economically prostrate post-pandemic world. But instead of just rolling over, a growing number of nations are fighting back.

India, for one, is clearly not intimidated. In response to China's unprovoked attack, the largest democracy in the world has moved 30,000 troops to the Himalayan border. Many Indians are now boycotting "Made in China" products, a task made easier because online retailers like Amazon have been ordered by New Delhi to tell buyers where products are made.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also raised tariffs on Chinese goods, restricted Chinese investments and banned TikTok³⁷ and 58 other Chinese apps from Indian phones.

Meanwhile, the people of the Philippines are up in arms over China's expansion into areas of the South China Sea claimed by Manila. When anti-US President Rodrigo Duterte was elected in 2016, he initially ignored popular sentiment and announced a "pivot to Beijing" on the promise of \$24 billion³⁸ in Chinese investments.

Four years later, all that has changed. With the Chinese navy sailing ever closer to Philippine shores and few Chinese projects in progress, Duterte has reversed his earlier decision³⁹ to terminate his country's "Visiting Forces Agreement" with the US. Given a choice between having American or Chinese naval vessels anchored in Subic Bay, the decision was pretty obvious.

The sight of the 7.3 million free people of Hong Kong being crushed under the heel of the Communist boot is one the world will not easily forget. It has already prompted UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson to offer British citizenship to 3 million Hong Kongers,

37 <https://time.com/5861580/china-india-tiktok-wechat-app-ban/>

38 <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/6/8/China-investment-pledges-unlikely-fulfilled-Carpio.html>

39 <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/anti-us-philippine-president-pivots-back-toward-washington-resist-china>

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not to mention taking a tougher line toward China itself. Huawei, for example, can kiss its 5G business in the UK goodbye.

The Australians are also fed up with Beijing's bare-knuckle efforts to spy on and disrupt their country's government, infrastructure and industries. To counter the recent surge in cyberattacks, Canberra has promised to recruit at least 500 cyberwarriors, bolstering the country's online defenses. Meanwhile, an astonishing 94 percent of Australians say they want to begin decoupling⁴⁰ their economy from China's.

The same story is being repeated around the globe. From Sweden to Japan to Czechia, more and more nations are coming to understand China's mortal threat to the postwar democratic, capitalist world order.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has apparently decided to assert dominance over an economically prostrate post-pandemic world. But a growing number of nations are fighting back.

Xi Jinping and the Communist Party that he leads have so badly overplayed their hand that they have, in a mere six months, accomplished what Donald Trump could not in almost four years: They have unified the world against China.

And Communist leader Xi has only himself to blame.

On Wednesday, Congress unanimously voted⁴¹ to sanction China for its new security law that would effectively nullify Hong Kong's legal system and put Beijing in charge. But America cannot fight

40 <https://poll.lowyinstitute.org/charts/australian-government-policies-towards-china/>

41 <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/01/pelosi-hong-kong-security-law-347060>

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China alone. And now, thanks to Xi's aggressive policies, we won't have to.

As someone who has been warning about the China threat for decades, I take grim satisfaction in watching this new alliance crystallize with each new misstep by Beijing.

As Napoleon Bonaparte once remarked, "Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake."

This article was originally published in New York Post, July 4, 2020.

CHAPTER 9

The Future of the European Union in Light of the Coronavirus Crisis



ESZTER PÁRKÁNYI

Let me start by saying this: it is high time to reform the European Union, and if the current crisis doesn't make this evident, nothing ever will. I believe we have reached a point of no return, where it is inevitable to discuss the future of the European Union, if we want to avoid its possible dissolution. For one thing, the epidemic has proven to us that the only swift and effective way to respond to such a crisis is on the national level.

The Treaty on the European Union, which provides the legal framework for the cooperation of the Member States, is about “creating an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe,” which many interpret as meaning that European cooperation must

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transcend the nation state level over time and the EU must become a “super state.”

However, as Europe would not be the same without nation states, since it is based on them, no matter how close cooperation becomes over time, the national level must remain decisive.

Jumping From Crisis to Crisis

If we observe the last two decades of the European Union, we may find that there have been many crises that have hit the continent: the world economic crisis in 2008, the eurozone crisis, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that erupted in 2014 and still has an effect on the EU, the migration crisis in 2015 and the current coronavirus pandemic which will lead to an economic downturn in most Member States. What they all have in common is that they weren't solved by the European Union, in part because the responses were given on a national level, by the nation states, looking at their individual interests. And there is nothing wrong with that, in fact it is a natural reaction on behalf of the governments to think about their own people first. But if this is the case, let's not be hypocritical and go on about a Europe united “for better or worse.”

This may sound strange, but the migration crisis and the coronavirus pandemic are actually quite similar. The reason I say this is that in both cases there was a European agency designated to deal with the issues: Frontex in the case of migration, since it is supposed to deal with the protection of the external borders of the European Union, and the European Center for Disease Control which, as an authority, would have to advise Member States in case of an epidemic. However, in 2015 we didn't see Frontex agents rushing to help national border protection agencies to stop the influx of undocumented migrants, and we couldn't say that the European Center for Disease Control was of much help either. In fact, the latter had issued a statement before the virus appeared in Europe that it would not represent any danger to European citizens and it

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is not likely that it would become a pandemic on the territory of the European Union. A few weeks and tens of thousands of lost lives proved them to be very wrong about that.

The European Commission's communication is hard to follow too: after being silent for weeks, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen talked about unity, having one big heart in Europe instead of many small hearts... Meanwhile, asked about the European response to the pandemic, Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety quoted the Treaty and cynically responded that healthcare belongs under national competence. The only problem is that in the past few years we have seen cherry picking by the Commission when it comes to competences in the EU: internal safety and migration also belong to the nation states, but somehow that didn't seem to bother the executive body of the EU, when they wanted to introduce a mandatory quota system to redistribute undocumented migrants entering the territory of the Union in the name of "solidarity."

The Renaissance of Nation States

In the light of all this, it is no wonder that the Member States didn't wait for the European Union to tell them how to respond to the coronavirus pandemic, how to protect their citizens. Member States acted fast and individually: they recognized the fact that in times of a real and present crisis they can only count on themselves. They didn't waste any time closing down their borders, like the Schengen Treaty never even existed. It is their right to do so, though a bit hypocritical: many of them praise the idea of open borders, but now it seems they don't think it's such a great concept after all.

Because of the economic crisis looming over Europe, it appears, no one will care about keeping their budgetary deficit under 3 percent, which many are so keen on using as a weapon against economically less fortunate countries. France and Germany, otherwise scolding other countries about not showing enough solidarity, almost

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immediately banned the export of key medical supplies—where’s the so often mentioned “European solidarity” now?

This is all normal though. A nation is a community of people who speak the same language, share a history and culture, and have a sense of belonging: they share an identity. It is only a natural reaction to want to protect your own, it’s nothing to be ashamed of, but we must be totally honest about it. There is a common European culture based on our Judeo-Christian heritage, Greek philosophy and Roman law, but there is no such thing as a European nation. So, we shouldn’t act as if it did exist: we can appreciate the culture and history of other Member States without having to feel like it’s our own.

The takeaway from the handling of the crises of the past decades is that the European institutional body is too slow to react to a sudden, unforeseeable event. Swift and effective responses were given on national levels, while the EU was silent and unable to act. Only nation states have the legal means and legitimacy to restrict certain rights and liberties, to adopt measures to deal with the consequences of a crisis, let those be economic or security related. So, instead of heading towards a federalized future, the EU should give the nation states some more credit—they deserve it.

The takeaway from the handling of the crises of the past decades is that the European institutional body is too slow to react to a sudden, unforeseeable event.

Two Sides of the Same Coin: Amending the Treaties

After all the doom and gloom, I would like to assure everyone: there is a way to salvage the situation and save the European Union from its possible future dissolution.

It is not an easy path to take: the Treaties need to be amended. The last time they were opened up for negotiations was more than a decade ago, taken that the Lisbon Treaty was adopted in 2007. A lot has changed since then: the community welcomed two new Member States and unfortunately, had to bid farewell to one as well. The democratic deficit of the current decision-making process, the EU institutions trying to make decisions above the heads of people and the mishandling of crises, are constantly eroding voters' confidence in the EU.

That is one of the reasons why, for example, the citizens of the United Kingdom made an unprecedented move and decided to leave the community in 2016.

If this fact doesn't show that there is a need to introduce reforms, nothing will. These reforms should include institutional changes, but also include the redrawing of the competences of the EU and the Member States.

There are three types of competences granted to EU institutions: "exclusive competence" means that only the EU can adopt legislation in that area (these are mostly related to the common single market, economic policy); "shared competence" means that both the EU and Member States can legislate, but the latter can only exercise their competences if the EU doesn't do so; last but not least, "supporting competences" only let the EU intervene in order to support, coordinate or complement the action of the Member States (for example culture, tourism, education).

The EU competences can only be exercised in accordance with two principles: proportionality and subsidiarity.

It is also really important that the EU competences can only be exercised in accordance with two principles: proportionality and subsidiarity. Proportionality means that the EU can only adopt the measures really necessary in order to reach the objectives set out in the Treaties, while subsidiarity means that except for the “exclusive competences” the EU can only act if a certain objective can’t be effectively met by the Member States, only on an EU level.

First of all, we have to observe an interesting phenomenon in European politics, which is the appearance of a new divide: it very much seems that the “Sovereignist vs. Federalist” rift is becoming more important than the classic “Right or Left” divide among political forces. In fact, the two aforementioned camps have been clashing since the beginning of the history of the European Union. However, regardless of the seemingly irresolvable differences, they mostly agree that reform is necessary and it requires opening the EU treaties up for amendment. They do have different aims in mind, though.

The Sovereignists want an EU made up of strong, independent nation states, and accordingly do not support deeper political integration and an expansion of competences for the EU institutions; they tend to be proud of their national heritage, culture and history. In contrast, the Federalists, who mostly support multiculturalism, open borders and a centralized Europe, dream of a “United States of Europe,” which contrary to its popular name, mostly resembles the federal system of Germany, not a political framework like the United States of America has.

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But even so, while in the United States the federation and the federal power structure that represents it formed organically, the political and economic elites of Europe are trying to force a similar structure on Member States. If they managed to reach their goal, that would mean a tighter political integration, and as a result a loss of national sovereignty for the nation states.

The question is: what should be done? The crises of the past two decades have made it clear what works if you have to act quickly, and that is the national level. It is necessary to specify the areas which, in the absence of specific authorization, should not be covered by any EU legislation. Preferably the exclusive competences of the EU should cover only the most necessary areas to maintain an economic cooperation.

This would be the best-case scenario, since it would mean going “back to the basics” of the European project. Member States on their own wouldn’t have sufficient power to negotiate on a global level, but as a Single Market of almost half a billion people—they can be a global actor.

The Union and its predecessors were created and joined by individual states with the expectation to exercise their sovereignty together with other member states to the extent necessary through the EU institutions. Consequently, the European Union, which has legal personality only since the Treaty of Lisbon that came into force in 2009, has no individual sovereignty, it only exists and operates thanks to the nation states.

We can see that the EU as a supranational organization has a lot of ambition to head towards a deeper integration by trying to broaden EU competences at the expense of the sovereignty of its Member States, but all that does is create conflicts both on a vertical and a horizontal level.

The diversity of the EU, the geopolitical positions and different historical experiences of the Member States prevent the application of uniform standards. Therefore, there is no need to push them to

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form a political union, if you don't want more countries to make the decision to leave the Union.

It is clear that after emerging from the current health crisis followed by an economic recession, things can't go on like this anymore. We can't just act like nothing happened: we need to learn the lesson and decide where we would like to head together. When it comes to the future of the EU, we need to open up the Treaties for institutional reforms and redistribution of competences in order to create a Europe of Nations, working together for our common economic interest.

The EU has a lot of ambition to head towards a deeper integration by trying to broaden its competences at the expense of the sovereignty of its Member States, but all that does is create conflicts both on a vertical and a horizontal level.

CHAPTER 10

After COVID-19

Two Ways To Go



FRANCISCO JOSÉ CONTRERAS PELÁEZ

CCOVID-19 has represented a brutal test of reality for a global Left living in a virtual world where the foremost problems are mansplaining, trans-gender visibility and “climate emergency.”

In Spain, a government whose top priorities were inclusive language and the gender gap in rugby playing suddenly discovered itself facing the Horsemen of Apocalypse: Pestilence, Death, and, most likely, impending Famine.

Alas, those outdated lords are still riding. Three of them seemed to have been defeated by a wealthy, techno-medical, post-war West. The trans-humanist avant-garde was making preparations for a final attack on Death, “the ultimate foe” (1 Cor., 15:26), thus winning the struggle started by the Poem of Gilgamesh 4.000 years ago: Nick Bostrom, Max More and “the death of Death” (Aubrey de Grey: “The first 1000-year-old person is already alive”).

But it was not Xanadu that awaited us in the third decade of the 21st century, but Camus’ Oran, Boccaccio’s Florence, with leper bells on Bluetooth and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, playing

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the role of Poe's Prince Prospero. The Spanish Government is still in a state of shock and denial: its official figures disregard 15,000 casualties in nursing homes; TV channels do not display rows of coffins, but singing shows in balconies.

Douglas Murray has said the world is suddenly filled with self-taught virologists who are convinced that COVID-19 is here to confirm their most cherished preconceptions. I do not deny the Right is also liable to this temptation. As for the Left, it has indulged in a ritual celebration of the excellencies of public health care (private hospitals, it would seem, do not cure COVID: however, they are mysteriously preferred by 80% of Spanish civil servants when given the choice), allegedly undermined by "the Right's cuts in public spending" (the PP governments actually increased the health care investment). At the very moment the medical profession is offering an awesome example of heroic performance of duty, it would be sensible to express our gratitude to all of them, transcending ideological bias.

COVID-19 has represented a brutal test of reality for a global Left living in a virtual world where the foremost problems are mansplaining, transgender visibility and "climate emergency."

Reading Wuhan Soup—the best seller where progressive intellectuals expound the supposed root causes and solutions for the COVID crisis—one realizes the Left actually needs no further data about the origin (Was it a zoonosis, or did the virus leak from a Chinese bacteriological lab?) or the unfolding of the pandemic (What is the ratio of asymptomatics among the infected? How far away is "herd immunity"? What is the real fatality rate?)

Was lockdown unavoidable, or would have Swedish style mild measures or Korean style mass testing sufficed to flatten the curve? Is such a flattening a mere deferral of the death toll COVID-19 is in any case due to claim, as argued by epidemiologist Johan Giesecke? The Left actually needs no further data about the origin or the unfolding of the pandemic, since its conclusions are fixed in advance: capitalism is to blame; the way out of the crisis should be sought in the direction of a “reinvented” socialism and progress towards a world government.

The Left actually needs no further data about the origin or the unfolding of the pandemic since its conclusions are fixed in advance: capitalism is to blame; the way out of the crisis, a “reinvented” socialism and progress towards a world government.

Slavoj Zizek: “Coronavirus will compell us to reinvent a communism based on confidence among people and science [...]. Does all of this not clearly indicate the need of an urgent reshaping of the global economy which will not be subordinate to market mechanisms?” Judith Butler, celebrated gender ideology theorist, believes the virus has created an opportunity for “reimagining our world as if it were ordered by a collective longing for radical equality.” And Alain Badiou: “The global market [...] inevitably produces new and disastrous epidemics.”

From 1848 onwards, the Left never ceased to anticipate the end of capitalism. Sometimes its collapse would result from “the sharpening of contradictions of the productive system,” or else, from the two world wars (the First, in fact, created a window of

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opportunity for the Bolshevik putsch, whereas the Second left Eastern Europe under Soviet control), the financial cracks of 1929 and 2008, the “environmental crisis,” and now the Chinese pest.

Believers in this ever belated parousia do not seem to have noticed that it was the disfunctions and lies of the Chinese Communist Party—from the lack of hygiene in the “wet markets” or the security failures of the Wuhan lab to the minimization of casualties in the official figures resulting in “just-a-flu” frivolity on the part of Western governments—that brought this nightmare to the world.

To be sure, Pablo Iglesias keeps Lenin’s “April Theses” in his bedside table: he believes he must seize this once-in-a-century opportunity (the previous one came up in 1936-39, also in the wake of a horseman of Apocalypse’s ride). In the cabinet meeting held on March 13, Iglesias proposed the immediate nationalization of the entire private medical sector. Apparently, it was Minister of Economy Nadia Calviño who withstood him on that occasion. Her influence has diminished subsequently.

The management of the crisis by this Government has shown that socialism is as inefficient in achieving tests, ventilators or protection equipment as it was in providing bread back in 1933 USSR. The Government’s reaction came way too late, in spite of recurrent warnings sent by WHO and national and international experts since late January, and in spite of an explosive contagion curve in the first days of March. Pedro Sánchez and Pablo Iglesias did not implement serious measures until March 14, presumably because they did not want to interfere in the massive feminist demonstration of March 8, which must have produced thousands of infections. Thereafter, bureaucratic control and price intervention yielded the same effects as usual: shortage of tests, ventilators, gloves and masks.

Moreover, a variety of private labs (for example, those assembled in the “Alianza COVID-19,” activated in early March, when the Government still remained passive, to produce PCR tests and sell

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them to nursing homes which were in desperate need of them) were beginning to respond to the emergency with swiftness and efficiency.

Alas, the centralizing decrees passed by the Government paralyzed that initiative: everything had to be under Government control. The state stifled the market once again. The Government's priority, rather than a fast provision of tests, seemed to lie in preventing "anyone from making a profit out of this."

And today, Spain is approaching the end of lockdown—the toughest in the world—without the means that should ensure a safe reopening of the economy, namely, tests, contact tracing apps, masks for everyone. The risk of a resurgence of infections is not to be ruled out.

Civil society was more agile also in the sector of private beneficence. From the generous donations by Amancio Ortega and other businessmen to the silent work of untold charities such as "Juntossalimos," private citizens rushed to provide tests and protective material to nurse homes, convents, prisons, bypassing a slow and incompetent Government. But the Left hates voluntary charity: it prefers extortion. Iglesias' scorn of Amancio Ortega's donations is famous. And socialist, former politician, José Blanco tweeted: "More rights, less charity."

"Social rights": so goes the magic spell. Socialists and communists dream of a post-COVID era dominated by "social rights," namely, the irreversible welfare dependency of citizens vis-a-vis a state that will (mal)nourish them by drawing resources from nobody knows where. The Government's mantras during the crisis reflect that spirit: "No one will be left behind," "The crisis burden will not be born by the usual victims," "Layoffs will not be permitted" (that is, thousands of companies will go broke, unable to adapt their labor force to new, harsher circumstances). A "basic income benefit" has been announced; no doubt, Pablo Iglesias will do his utmost to make it unconditional and irreversible. The Government priority is not the

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preservation of entrepreneurial fabric, but rather the protection of workers vis-a-vis ruthless employers.

COVID-19 is about to generate an economic crisis of unprecedented scale (in Spain, GDP is expected to plummet down by as much as 10%). This crisis will require radical measures, whether Singaporean or Venezuelan style. It could mean an opportunity to reduce state weight, get rid of public subsidies and superfluous agencies, reconsider the ruinous Spanish regional government system. The spending thus saved would be invested in credits and tax reliefs designed to save as much corporate fabric and jobs as possible. The proposals put forward by the VOX party are directed to this purpose. Normative simplification and the flexibilization of the labor market would facilitate a fast reshaping of the post-COVID economic model, where some sectors will be inevitably weakened, and new alternatives will have to be found.

But a second scenario is unfortunately also envisageable, the Argentinian-Venezuelan one: allow the destruction of the bulk of the productive system, and bind the whole of society with the chains of Chavista survival subsidies (the “poverty trap,” as indicated by Domingo Soriano). No doubt, this would be the path the Spanish government would rather walk: it is a very “social” scenario, the pipedream of the Left.

But it is a Government supported by just 155 congressmen, in a Parliament made up of 350. We can still hope the Sánchez-Iglesias cabinet will be overrun by the economic tsunami, and then a more competent team would possibly take over, making more sensible choices.

And a final remark on existential matters. The fact that Governments all over the world have succeeded so easily in keeping half of mankind under house arrest indicates that fear of death is nowadays stronger than ever, perhaps because never had so many people believed that worldly life is all we'll have. Given that 90% of COVID fatal victims are elderly people, we are witnessing, it would

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seem, a moving phenomenon: a society is destroying its economy and condemning itself to a future of hardship in order to extend for a few years the lives of old people.

But, while we pay this tribute to the sanctity of human life, the Government is pushing a law of euthanasia and includes abortion clinics among the “essential services” to remain active through the lockdown. This is one of those “objective contradictions” Marxism is so fond of. But you will find no mention of it in Wuhan Soup.

It could mean an opportunity to reduce state weight, get rid of public subsidies and superfluous agencies, reconsider the ruinous Spanish regional government system...

Originally published in Actual May 8, 2020.

CHAPTER 11

Global Pandemic Crisis to the “4Tragic” Pandemonium

The global pandemic crisis
and key benchmarks



RODRIGO IVÁN CORTÉS JIMÉNEZ

The current pandemic crisis opens up an unusual range of threats and opportunities, both global and local. It is crucial for any society to distinguish between both. At least three key benchmarks stand out due to their current importance: life, the family and our fundamental freedoms. When a virus like COVID-19 puts at risk the very existence of so many people in so many countries, the need and the commitment to save people’s lives make everything so clear.

When the measures to “*flatten the curve*” of infected people make people protect themselves and take refuge in their homes

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with their families, we are called to re-evaluate, no doubt, the importance of the basic cell of society; the family. It has rightly been called an “*irreplaceable institution*” both for its contributions as the “*natural habitat*” for the generation of new human beings, and for the protection and care it affords at all stages of our life cycle. Its contribution cannot be replaced by any government, and it is more than evident that, in the face of generalized quarantines and social distancing policies, sometimes coercive, the importance of our fundamental freedoms is obvious. Even more valuable when fundamental freedoms such as those of thought, expression, belief, as well as civic politics have been canceled during confinement.

The link is evident. Without respect and care for other people’s lives, there can be no peace in a society. Without respect and support for the family, there can be no development, and without respect for fundamental freedoms, there can be no democracy.

There can be no peace in a society without respect for and care for people’s lives, no development without family support, and no democracy without respect for fundamental freedoms.

This pandemic has served to showcase to see the true colors of both international and national entities. The use of power in these special circumstances reveals to us the profile of those who direct them.

These groups are not interested in saving lives but are using the pandemic to cover up or accelerate authoritative and ideological agendas.

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The Chinese communist regime and the World Health Organization (WHO) have maintained a very close relationship. Support from the WHO led to the concealment of China’s responsibility for what was happening with the pandemic. It reached proportions of criminal negligence. Costs in lives and jobs—*while not completely quantified*—are colossal. It is noteworthy that countries that did not believe the Chinese regime and did not heed the WHO’s statements, such as Taiwan and South Korea, have had such good results, both in controlling the infection and in preventing deaths among their populations. In addition, they never locked down their economies so they did not experience massive unemployment and diminished productivity.

Indeed, freedom of religion, belief and even expression in China is even more serious in times of pandemic crisis, as shown by the report “Repressed, Removed, Re-educated: The stranglehold on religious life in China.”⁴²

Instead of saving lives, some prefer to intensify deadly agendas, as in New Zealand. In Northern Ireland, it was aggravated by going against consultations and surveys, imposing anti-birth laws in the middle of a pandemic. In Spain, the government promoted euthanasia through laws and public policies. The Mexican government, also promoted “*Bioethical Guides*” questioning the value of caring for seniors, saying it is better to use medical resources for young people. It seems that progressive technocrats want to close the clamp, a virus that is ravaging the elderly with policies and laws aimed at euthanasia and legislation that targets those who are about to be born...

Some like Leonardo Boff go even further and say that the virus is the human being himself, that we are parasites, cancer, Satan on earth, and the one who is going to be eliminated by Mother Earth, this new living being who already thinks and wants, who is higher up in evolution and who is being damaged now.

42 <https://www.csw.org.uk/2020-china-report>

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Progressives ask for death and death is what they get. They will certainly arrive at the Argentinean paradox, where some women put on a white scarf for their missing sons or daughters and then they put on a green one to get rid of them. In the first case they accuse politicians for the crime and in the second they ask politicians to turn that crime into a human right.

One might wonder how prominent businessmen associated with the Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations or the Rockefeller Brothers Fund are investing funds to generate a social impact in pandemic times. These three foundations curiously concur in funding the Open Democracy platform (Open Democracy Home Page)⁴³ which promotes, in a somewhat paradoxical way, positions of “*queer communism*,” “*marxist anti-family feminism*” and actions “*against oppressive capitalism*” in publications like “The coronavirus crisis shows it’s time to abolish the family”⁴⁴ or “Family abolition isn’t about ending love and care. It’s about extending it to everyone.”⁴⁵ It is clear that the pandemic allows us to see even the starkest contradictions.

Members of the same metacapitalist club are funding groups highly active during the pandemic, not to address health or economic needs but to promote their agendas. Two examples of this, linked not only by their funding sources but also by what they promote their agendas are the International Planned Parenthood Federation — IPPF and the Black Lives Matter Movement — BLM.

43 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/>

44 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/coronavirus-crisis-shows-its-time-abolish-family/>

45 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/family-abolition-isnt-about-ending-love-and-care-its-about-extending-it-to-everyone/>

Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations and Rockefeller Brothers Fund concur in funding positions of “queer communism,” “marxist anti-family feminism” and actions “against oppressive capitalism”

IPPF advocates to declare abortion an essential “health” service,⁴⁶ as if it were especially “essential” to annihilate the lives of human beings in their first stages “especially” during the pandemic. At the same time, IPPF gives its “full” support to the candidacy of Democrat Joe Biden for being a champion on the abortion issue.

For its part, BLM quotes on its own website the statements of its founders⁴⁷ describing themselves as a marxist movement dedicated to the struggle of classes, sexes and races to end hetero-patriarchy. They have set out to establish a new version of the dictatorship of the proletariat but now in a queer racial version. They unambiguously say that abortion must be legalized and Trump removed from the presidency. BLM also promotes — *not surprisingly* — Biden who said to blacks that “*you are not black if you do not vote for Biden.*” And of course, BLM is trying to cut funding for all the police while they vandalize, murder and assault family properties of black communities which they claim to protect.

The 4Tragic week for Mexico

In Mexico we are living a tragic pandemic crisis. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador likes to label his regime as the 4th Transformation after Independence (1810), Reform (1861) and

46 <https://www.ippf.org/news>

47 BLM has removed the webpage, but you can view the archive here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200829013157/https://blacklivesmatter.com/what-we-believe/>

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Revolution (1910), the three preceding transformations. However, the week of April 19-25 resembles Mexico's most tragic periods. For instance, the Tragic Ten, 10 days in which Mexican democracy was aborted right at birth with the presidency of Madero; or the Tragic Dozen, the two six-year periods that collapsed the Mexican economy and increased presidential authoritarianism, with Luis Echeverría and José Lopez Portillo.

The 4Tragic Week is what we have just lived through, the one that showed us the true colors of the Mexican regime, the one in which we were told we had entered Phase 3 of the Pandemic, but without guidelines to address it. Instead, from Sunday to Thursday, we witnessed truly tragic days.

- On Sunday 19, starting with the A for ASSASSINATION. Official statements told us that we reached more than 100 murders per day. Crime and death prevail in the country without government response. These are the most violent times and with more deaths in the recent history of the country.
- On Monday 20, the A for AMNESTY. The president's initiative to free criminals rather than providing resources to address the pandemic crisis or to change the government's null response against crime. In addition, the A continued with a request to review the criminal law on abortion by giving a 180-day deadline and then try to impose this law on the states.
- On Tuesday 21, the double A of the ASSAULT of retirement funds, with an initiative from MORENA party allowing the government to sack the savings of Mexican workers and make them available to the regime.
- On Wednesday 22, the first A of AUTHORITARIANISM, another MORENA initiative to empower the executive power to unilaterally declare the suspension of individual guarantees.
- On Thursday 23, the second A of AUTHORITARIANISM, with the president's initiative for unilateral redirection of the federal

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budget, removing the democratic counterweights and going over the constitution.

President Lopez Obrador said the pandemic fits to him “like a glove on the hand,” since he uses the pandemic as a pretext to remove Congress powers, returning to the Imperial Presidency and transforming Mexico into a one-man country.

The 4Tragic Week showed why the president said the pandemic fits him “like a glove on the hand,” since he uses the pandemic as a pretext to attack democracy trying to curtail the legislative power. This means removing the counterweight of Congress and returning to the imperial presidency, transforming Mexico into a one-man country.

It seems we have the worst government during the worst moment, the Lopez Obrador 4T administration which does not:

- Fight, nor contain or either stop crime, but releases criminals with amnesty proceedings.
- Encourage nor attract productive investment, but scares off foreign investors with illegal pseudo-consultations;
- Improve health services to care for the population in the face of the coronavirus pandemic;
- Aim the budget to address the health and economic crisis but funds useless mega projects for the nation.

And now he pretends to go over the constitution, to erase the division of powers and to remove the democratic counterweight of Congress. It is so clear; he is taking advantage of the pandemic situation to accelerate his agenda. It will be key for the opposition to

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reject these authoritarian attempts and for the legislative power not to give up its power of popular representation and counterbalance the executive power. The adoption of such initiatives would mean a self-mutilation of their role, power and responsibility.

In Mexico, we do not want to live in a one-man country. We need division of powers, democratic checks and balances, transparency and accountability that generate sensible measures through dialogue and public debates to face current challenges. We do not want authoritarian populism in which life, family and fundamental freedoms are not respected. What we need is to reassess the key benchmarks of society and fully realize that without democracy there is no republic.

CHAPTER 12

Authoritarianism Advanced While We Stayed Home

The political and ideological strategy of the Mexican government in the context of COVID-19



GUILLERMO VELASCO BARRERA

“We are going to get stronger. Put it this way, this crisis came to us like a ring on the finger to strengthen the purpose of the transformation.” This statement by Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador came at the most critical moments of the COVID-19 crisis in Mexico. It demonstrates that the pandemic, beyond its impact on the health and economy of countries throughout the world, has offered an extraordinary and unfortunate opportunity. Many governments with a hierarchical authoritarian profile have

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used it to increase their hegemonic power under the cover of chaos, confusion, paralysis and fear.

Like Mexico, left-wing governments in many Latin American countries once promised to end neoliberal models and eradicate the corrupt practices of previous regimes. They promised to replace them with prosperous and egalitarian societies, and they failed miserably. Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Ecuador, are just a few examples. There, populist warlords made “*redemptive*” promises that once permeated the spirit of societies living in poverty, corruption and insecurity. Inevitably, they brought forth more painful and distressing conditions than those they sought to eradicate.

The historic cry, “*Mejor que Somoza cualquier cosa*” (“*anything is better than Somoza*”) led the Sandinista revolution to triumph in Nicaragua. There, the Sandinistas plunged that sister nation into a nightmare that brought not only poverty and insecurity, but the eradication of all freedoms.

This article does not intend to offer a profound analysis of the lack of results that many of these revolutionary regimes have had. Rather, we intend to show that, under the cover of global crises, these regimes tend to expand their top-down hegemonic power. The result is the eradication of civil liberties, sometimes in a subtle way, but more often in a blatant, ham-handed fashion.

The pandemic has offered an extraordinary opportunity to governments with a hierarchical authoritarian profile to increase their hegemonic power under the cover of chaos, confusion, paralysis and fear.

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In the case of Mexico, even before the existence of the coronavirus was known, the country had traveled a troubled path in economic matters. The dismal security situation was due not only to the government of López Obrador, but also to the triumph of the so-called “*Fourth Transformation*.”

Mexico had zero economic growth in 2019, and the most optimistic forecasts estimate that the country will decline from economic stagnation to a clear recession in the coming months. In terms of security, the situation is similar. According to official figures, last year was the most violent year on record in Mexico, with nearly 36,000 intentional homicides. 2020 doesn't look any better. On May 3 and 4 alone, 200 people were killed in the country in various criminal incidents.

This reality conflicts with the triumphalist narrative of President López Obrador. His popularity has fallen in recent months, going from more than 80% approval at the beginning of his term to levels on the order of 50%, according to various surveys. His administration, oriented more toward the construction of a political-ideological project than to obtaining results, has generated disappointment in important sectors of the population. There, many had envisioned a positive change of direction for Mexico with the “*Obradorista*” alternative.

The vulnerable sectors of the population had bought into the promise of a genuine fight against corruption and believed in this Mexican politician who was not a member of the elites. Nonetheless, they have suffered in areas as sensitive and fundamental as health.

Never before in this country has there been such a great shortage of medicines as we suffer today. Even low-income children with cancer have been left without medicine in the face of government inefficiency and the new Mexican political hegemony. This policy led to dismantling the social institutions of previous governments, despite the fact that in many cases they had operated efficiently. As a

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result, the people have suffered because of the government's desire for political revenge, as well as because of its pervasive arrogance.

Lack of results has led to this adverse scenario for the Mexican government, but things may begin to change in coming days. The COVID 19 crisis has bestowed on the Mexican president a new opportunity to relaunch his "*Fourth Transformation*" project. López Obrador's attitude to the pandemic was initially criticized by broad sectors of the Mexican population who called the president ignorant and irresponsible in the face of the risk of contagion. However, in recent days the percentage of Mexicans who approve the government's actions at this juncture has begun to grow.

Phrases like "*don't stop hugging*" or "*we Mexicans are made of good wood*" have already become anecdotal. The number of infections of the virus in the country remains a mystery, due to the lack of solid evidence and the opacity with which the government has handled data, especially regarding the number of those infected and those who have died of the virus. Notably, while health remains a central issue in the global narrative of the virus with the cry "*Stay at Home,*" health is not the central issue for the Mexican government today.

Like in many other countries, the crisis Mexico really faces is the coming economic crisis. Thousands of Mexican companies have closed down. As a result, unemployment has risen alarmingly. For many, staying home has been simply impossible. After all, an important sector of the population lives day-to-day, and such work does not allow working from home. The need to eat has proven more critical than fear of the virus. Lack of food in Mexico is growing by leaps and bounds. In the near future we will see the emergence of a newly-impooverished population.

How is authoritarianism imposed in the face of this difficult situation?

The so-called Fourth Transformation has found in this global crisis an extraordinary opportunity to promote social polarization and generate deep divisions among the Mexican people. The dialectics

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promoted by the President and his spokesmen have reached irrational extremes. Take Governor Miguel Barbosa of the Mexican state of Puebla. Barbosa supports the President unconditionally. He recently declared that the coronavirus is a disease that “affects only the rich, because the poor are immune.”

The self-described Fourth Transformation has found in this global crisis an extraordinary opportunity to promote social polarization and generate a deep division among Mexicans.

In the Mexican state of Jalisco, some journalists gave extensive coverage to a Jalisco high society family trip to a Vail ski resort. Apparently, some on that trip had been infected with virus. They reportedly introduced the virus for the first time upon their return to Mexico. This was nothing more than a sick lie, but it harmonized with the Left’s intention of promoting conflict between the rich and the poor in the context of the pandemic.

But the promotion of social anger in the wake of the health emergency has gone further. In spite of the complex scenario facing many companies, the Mexican government has floundered. Not only has it failed to inaugurate a strategy to revitalize production and preserve jobs, it has also constructed a narrative that blames business owners. They are responsible, so the story goes, for the layoffs, the adjustments in wages, and the other dire measures that had to be taken to keep companies afloat at all.

The Minister of Labor of López Obrador, Luisa María Alcalde, has busied herself using press conferences to lambaste companies that have laid off workers. The strategy aims to place the blame for the coming economic disaster on the employers. That will, in

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turn, encourage the conflict between workers and management. The charade is designed solely to relieve the president of any responsibility for the deep economic crisis that is brewing.

The strategy aims to place the blame for the coming economic disaster on the businessmen. The charade is designed solely to relieve the president of any responsibility for the deep economic crisis that is brewing.

Meanwhile, the Mexican government distributes “aid” to sectors of the population that constitute its most important electoral base. The programs focus on young people who receive grants, scholarships, and gifts designed to enhance their loyalty to the government’s agenda. But there are many among the young whose future has been erased because of the government’s imposition of political indoctrination in schools that had once been improving due to earlier reforms. But like the fortunate few among the young who were favored, other sectors of the population have also received gifts and patronage in the context of the pandemic. Of course, they are all a mirage, designed to benefit the president’s political project, especially in the short term. There the government’s sole priority is gaining an absolute majority in the Mexican Congress in the 2021 elections.

As the anticipated unemployment and hunger grow, looting and other forms of social revolt are expected to begin. This will play into the hands of the Mexican government and allow it to exert its power with a firm hand. Authoritarianism will grow. Organized crime syndicates, which have already been operating with total impunity, will enjoy an even greater freedom in a scenario of social

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instability. The role of the military will increase, not in its duty to eradicate the drug cartels, which have been untouchable, but as a form of political control. A state of emergency may arise. Then, if the scenario worsens, the President may well consolidate his power absolutely through engineering a coup d'état. He has already privileged the military in recent months, granting them contracts for extensive infrastructure projects that include the participation of large business enterprises.

So the pandemic is not the same for everybody. Yes, for many it has certainly meant pain and death, for others the loss of employment and the entry into a path of poverty. Still others have experienced the pandemic as a social anesthetic, that has kept them in a profound lethargy, unaware of totalitarian attempts by their governments to increase their power, defying institutional frameworks, constitutional restrictions, and democratic principles.

The government of Mexico may have lost some popularity, but it has increased its power in the face of a society that is divided, poorly organized, and bereft of an articulate voice to confront the claw of authoritarian populism. The real and abiding virus is the virus of polarization, confrontation, and conflict.

This turmoil has allowed broad sectors of the Mexican population to be blinded by resentment and hatred that is fomented by the government. The growth of the tyrant's expansive power has caught them unawares. What is really at stake is the health of democratic life, the flourishing of institutions and freedoms. Mexico is a clear example, but not the only one, of what is brewing behind the pandemic. It is really a matter of life and death.

CHAPTER 13

The Post-Pandemic, More State or More Society?



ERICK KAMMERATH

We are attending another chapter of the search for some to overcome national identities, what we have always known as Homeland. A process triggered decades ago, but which the global and totalizing pandemic, has come to intensify (or at least, that is what those same people are trying to make us believe).

Such are the pretended consequences of the COVID-19, which is strategically seeking to guide a left which, in the absence of a true “*agent of the revolution*,” has become today, with the use of the virus, quite evident.

Indeed, the undisguised enthusiasm that the plague aroused in a large part of the leftist intelligentsia is due, at least, to three characteristics inherent in the pandemic. Namely: its propensity towards egalitarianism, social atomization, and the conviction that the virus will lead to a radical change in the world.

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The pandemic supposedly exercised egalitarianism. As is known, the virus, in just a matter of weeks, managed to spread across the globe, affecting individuals from the most diverse social, economic and cultural contexts. Whether it is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, one of the many Hollywood “stars”—whose health conditions the media have not stopped reporting—an anonymous heroic doctor, or a peasant lost in some undeveloped country. An “invisible enemy” subjected us all to a feeling of vulnerability in a virtually indiscriminate way.

We are all equal (at least, as it has become used to repeat) as far as we all face the permanent threat of being infected and, in the worst case, of being dragged to the most egalitarian result of all: death.

On the other hand, mandatory quarantines. The preventive ways chosen by the vast majority of governments around the globe, would have developed social atomization. In effect, isolation brings with it the impossibility of resorting to those intermediate institutions that serve as moral, spiritual, and psychological support to individuals who (in many cases) are already in themselves struggling to deal with the insignificance of the current world.

Extensive family gatherings, gatherings with friends, church attendance, or the possibility of participating in foundations and NGOs were banned in pursuit of alleged general well-being that, of course, aims to include us all as atomized individuals. Thus, without mediation of any kind, in a few days, the State became the only entity capable of guiding us, no matter if we want it or not, in our daily *modus vivendi*.

Finally, the promise of a “radical change,” which Zizek himself has branded as “necessary” in his recent article published in *Russia Today* (and republished in *Wuhan Soup*). For this author, it is necessary to “think an alternative society, a society beyond the nation-state, a society that updates itself in forms of solidarity and global cooperation.” Then the “radical change” would cover up what

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should be called, simply, “*revolution*.” In other words, the “*radical change*” to which Zizek finally alludes as the “*only thing that can save us*,” would become the equivalent of the old “*period of revolutionary transformation*.”

The corollary of this profound change would no longer be identical to that of post-capitalist society, understood as synonymous with communism or socialism, but rather with that of a very similar society, which would allow us to effectively overcome capitalism, “*reinvent communism*,” and “*Limit the sovereignty of nations*.” In short, create a politically globalized society, or, simply, globalist.

The agenda of the ideologues of “*equality*” and “*progressivism*” takes then a new impetus. The political effects of the 2008 financial crisis, added to the predictions of catastrophic environmental scenarios that never came (both phenomena with global impact), were insufficient for the projects of world governance. The pandemic situation represents a new opportunity to apply a simple but effective logic: in a globalized world, to global problems, global solutions.

The projections of the left regarding the future of post-pandemic society come to insist on a development that in fact began some time ago, but that now seeks to promote it more strongly. Offshoring processes, which had started with the spontaneous drive of economic globalization thanks to the revolution in the media and transportation, weakened localism, and the already “*old*” national loyalties. The identities of modernity, founded on the nation, began to be replaced by new postmodern identities, of a subnational nature, which, in turn, are articulated supranationally. At the same time, the ideology of multiculturalism began to blur national borders, granting increasing power to the centralism of International Organizations such as the UN and its derivatives, thus putting even more in question the sovereignty of nation-states.

But the reactions were not long in coming. Trump’s American first, together with the growth of Vox in Spain, and Brexit in the United

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Kingdom, not to mention the role of Eastern European countries, symbolize, without a doubt, an important brake on globalism without a flag. Cultural homogenization, evident for example, in massive and totally uncontrolled immigration to Europe, found a brake in new expressions of patriotism that tries to avoid falling into the current crisis of belonging. As Alain de Benoist would say, this weakness is generated by the postmodern identities “*blurred, fragmented and confused,*” and not so much by the humanitarian challenge of immigration.

A sort of cultural nationalism in full swing postmodern begins to occupy with increasing relevance the Western scene, in clear rejection of those who consider that individuals are interchangeable. And of course we are not referring to the divisive nationalisms of some European regions that rather respond to modernity schemes: for this reason there is a notable difference between Hungarian patriotism and Catalan secessionist nationalism, no matter how much the left wants to reverse the roles.

Despite, then, the renewed attempt to advance towards a “*post-national*” and globalized society, there are strictly speaking, no reasons to lean towards a world government as the only way out of the crisis that afflicts us. Recall, among other things, that the closure of national borders was one of the first precautionary measures taken in order to more effectively combat the spread of the virus.

The post-pandemic dialectic is thus posed. The synthesis is debated between a new form of statism, of proportions never seen before, with uprooted and atomized individuals ruled by an elite whom they do not know; or his alternative, that of an armored individual who, far from being “*thrown naked*” before a colossal supranational state, finds shelter in the mentioned intermediate institutions, among which the family stands out. A reaction, finally, to the possibility of world government, only depends on us.

PART III

A Crossroads Ahead

In Chinese the word crisis is translated as (危机) (WeiJi). In Chinese this word is formed by two characters. The first is Wei, which means danger, and the second is Ji which means crucial point.

–Victor H. Mair

CHAPTER 14

Coronavirus: The End of Capitalism?



AGUSTÍN LAJE

Wide sectors of the left are at present delightfully predicting the imminent end of capitalism. The cause of this phenomenon, of course, is not due to the grievances of any revolutionary social class. The social classes are no longer the subject of the tangled discourse which left-wing intellectuals are accustomed to today. The factory has long been replaced by the university classroom. Nor could the cause for this phenomenon be found even in feminist activism or in the actions of some pro-LGBT group. Let us be honest, gender ideology is not able to revolutionize anything except hormones and hysteria. Where do we find, then, the cause of these predictions of the “*end of capitalism?*” We find them in the coronavirus pandemic which has been ‘*enthroned,*’ of sorts, as the new vehicle for the anti-capitalist revolution.

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It's no joke. The left has reached rock-bottom, finding itself completely unable to define itself or to find a revolutionary cause. So instead it has placed all its revolutionary hopes on the coronavirus pandemic. I arrive at this not from a moral opinion but rather from a political one. The leading voice on this charge that capitalism is at its end has been the philosopher Slavoj Žižek who a few days ago had a column published in Russia Today in which he redefined capitalism as a virus and prophesied that the capitalist system would end as a result of the current pandemic.

He calls for us to “*imagine*” a new system “*and so on, and so on,*” as the “*rockstar*” philosopher is accustomed to saying when there is not much more to add, nor anything substantial really worth saying.

We find them in the coronavirus pandemic which has been ‘enthroned,’ of sorts, as the new vehicle for the anti-capitalist revolution.

In short, there is nothing really new under the sun. Since the 1960s, the left has been “*imagining*” without anyone really understanding what vision they truly had in mind. That is, no one knows what they envision beyond the “*sexual revolution*” which capitalist multinational corporations enthusiastically abetted and supported through their marketing and profiteering. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, leader of the May 1968 student uprising in France, when asked by a journalist what system the French students were proposing, even back then hid behind those now famous words: “*you have to imagine something else.*” “*All power to the imagination*” had already by then become the celebrated slogan.

And even more than ten years earlier, in 1955, the leftist notion of so-called “*imagination*” permeated the “*Eros and Civilization*” of

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Herbert Marcuse, the “rockstar” philosopher of the 1968 movement and the Žižek of those times. So, as you can see, there is nothing new under the sun. The call to “*imagine alternatives*” has been a rallying cry of the left for decades without proposing any alternatives to actually imagine. The only thing they have been able to imagine is the imperative to imagine—an imagination that calls upon us to imagine, an imagination in turn that can only imagine that the imagination must be summoned for no other purpose than for summoning it. And when in reality the imagination has not been able, for over six decades, to imagine clearly what it is looking for, their cause has become tired and worn out.

The call to “imagine alternatives” has been a rallying cry of the left for decades without having any alternatives to actually imagine.

But Žižek’s column has caused a sensation. The left is easily excited. In Argentina for example, the hashtag #ElCapitalismoEsElVirus (“*Capitalism is the Virus*”) quickly began trending on Twitter. Several intellectuals began discussing “is the coronavirus the proletariat of the 21st century?” In this context, Žižek took the opportunity to launch his new 120-page book written at warp speed, entitled “*Pandemic! COVID-19 Shakes the World.*” Indeed, Žižek has not needed to “*imagine*” any alternative for his book which has since enjoyed mass distribution. Rather, Žižek has surrendered to the capitalist market.

In fact, the book can be purchased online from the publisher or in paper-back for €13. And if you are among the first 10,000 customers, you can get the digital version for free—otherwise, you’ll have to pay €10 for it. The merchants of the revolution are everything but stupid—who said being a revolutionary couldn’t be good business?

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Finally, let's get down to the main issue here: capitalism. We definitely are not going through a revolution right now in the strict sense. Revolutions unfold over specific historical events and circumstances (what Marxist-Leninism called "*objective conditions*"), but also with the aid of the collective agents and movers of history (what was called "*subjective conditions*"). This means that a revolution is not simply brought about by context, but rather by someone who in a certain context becomes revolutionary. There is no revolution without agency and agency is a human faculty. In other words, there is no revolution apart from human action.

"A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism." Marx and Engels began the Communist Manifesto with these words. Marx had this brilliance. His astuteness for metaphors laden with political meaning perhaps has no equal. But the spectre in reality was not simply communism, but rather the dynamic agent of history which through the evolution of the law over subsequent generations has brought our economic system to the threshold of communism. As we know, this historical agent was none other than the proletariat. It was the revolutionary collective action of the proletariat that would put an end to capitalism by pointing out the inequalities and contradictions in the economic system.

The spectre that now is haunting the world, on the other hand, is neither an ideology nor a revolutionary agent. It is simply a virus. In this sense, the hopes of those who light candles to the "*anti-capitalist virus*" are not revolutionary, but merely awaiting with hopeful expectation that the catastrophic fallout from the pandemic will produce public policy changes on a systemic level. They envision policy change from the pandemic and are excited about the opportunity, but they lack the revolutionary spirit to drive any real historic change. And what's worse, it doesn't even matter to them. All their hopes rely on the catastrophe caused by the pandemic. And the changes they hope to seek are not dependent on pointing out the flaws in the economic system but are rather on actions taken due to the virus. In this sense, Byung-Chul

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Han, is much wiser than Žižek pointing out that the lockdown does not generate a sense of “we-ness” and therefore cannot provide the foundation for a revolution at all.

The hopes of those who light candles to the “anti-capitalist virus” are not revolutionary, but merely awaiting with hopeful expectation that the catastrophic fallout from the pandemic will produce public policy changes on a systemic level.

The virus, it had been quickly argued, would be laying bare the weaknesses and deficiencies of the free market system, that one would have to surrender to the power of the state, to the power of international organizations, as if these institutions of social control have not also demonstrated their weaknesses and deficiencies to manage a pandemic such as the one we are presently suffering. In fact, they are mostly to blame for this tragedy. Just think of the culpability the Chinese government has in all this when it attempted to hide the virus from the world for weeks. Had the Chinese government not suppressed the press and doctors who were trying to warn people about the outbreak before it occurred, a study from the University of Southampton estimates that the virus would have been reduced by 86%.

Think as well about the complicity of the WHO, which protected and allied itself with the Chinese regime. Or if you want an example of a Western state, think of the socialist government of Spain which called upon the people to participate in the multitudes in the feminist demonstrations on March 8th, when it was already known that Spain had several people infected with the coronavirus. The number of infections in Spain has climbed exponentially since that day.

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Despite this, states seem to believe that the most important thing they can do for themselves, as institutions which hold a monopoly on policing and the use of force, is to use force to ensure massive lockdowns. International bodies seem to believe that the most important thing they can do is to globally coordinate the use of force by those states against their citizens. But both the nation-state and international bodies structurally depend on capitalism which provides the financial backing that sets in motion the cogs of the machinery on which the state's power is based.

Though the state may intervene at various levels, the state's power is fundamentally derived from the power of the free market. States and international bodies do not produce capital, they live off of it as a parasite.

In this sense, the sudden and fatal economic crisis that is destined to come on a global scale will not be a crisis produced by the capitalist system, but rather one caused precisely by its temporary absence. What the virus has abruptly stopped is, in effect, capitalist investment, production, and exchange. And, like it or not, the state is tied to this fate as well. Without capitalism there is no “welfare state.” European states are keenly aware of this. And what is left for the Third World? Failed states—unable to avoid the “war of all against all” that Hobbes feared so much—will operate with all the authoritarianism that a struggling Leviathan is capable of. And this scenario, depending on the severity and extent of the economic and humanitarian crisis, is also plausible in those states which, at least until now, we had called “developed countries.”

In this sense, the sudden and fatal economic crisis that is destined to come on a global scale will not be a crisis produced by the capitalist system, but rather one caused precisely by its temporary absence.

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While we are probably facing the first truly global crisis in history, the nations which are still intact and that are still politically and economically relevant will emerge from this crisis in different ways. To believe in an “*end to capitalism*” on a global scale, as certain people on the left like Žižek think, is completely absurd. Depending on the extent of the economic and public health damage the virus causes, what it will come down to fundamentally will be failed states on the one hand, and states strengthened bureaucratically and technologically in their capacity to intervene and surveil over their citizens in the Asian style on the other hand. There is no “*end of capitalism*” in sight, except in the dampened and outdated dreams of some. At best, all there could be is an extension of capitalism under the form of an authoritarian state and more powerful global institutions.

Originally published in PanamPost March 30, 2020.

CHAPTER 14

“Exceptional Circumstances”

How Communists Are Exploiting the Coronavirus Pandemic to Create Their “Paradise”



BY VANESSA VALLEJO

The crisis has matured! Indecisiveness is a crime! The revolution must be now, and power taken; otherwise, all will be lost!” Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. 1917.

Socialists and communists have always been clear that crises are, in many cases, the only chance they have to stay in power. It is in these “*exceptional circumstances*”—as Pablo Iglesias calls them—when a large number of people feel abandoned, anguished by an uncertain future, or trapped in a difficult economic situation, that the leftist discourse is the most effective. Now, let us note that we are not merely experiencing a crisis. The coronavirus—albeit in a different form and for different reasons—has also pushed many

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governments around the world to take, in record time, the first and very important steps that leftists enact as soon as they have some degree of power.

The coronavirus has, in record time, pushed many governments around the world to take the first and very important steps that leftists enact as soon as they have some degree of power.

Whenever they come to power, communists work hard to create a clientele network that will vote for them and support them in the future. So instead of looking for real solutions to lift people out of poverty altogether, they offer them subsidies or useless jobs where citizens are dependent on politicians. At the same time, they make life difficult for entrepreneurs, resulting in more and more unemployed people who can be hooked into their clientele network. Many of them will not be able to get subsidies, but plunging them into poverty will make them easy prey to convince so long as the government offers them aid and blames right-wing entrepreneurs and politicians for their misery.

In a normal situation, it takes the left years of work, organization, and a lot of money to get through this process. Because of the coronavirus, in a matter of weeks, countries have “advanced” several steps on that road to communism. In other words, they have descended several meters into the abyss of communism. Companies have been forced to close, people cannot leave their homes so they can not “seek” income on their own, many are sick or have sick relatives, and in this crisis, they have no way to pay the expenses raised by the calamity. In just a few weeks, government spending and the people who need help have both increased dramatically because people have lost their jobs.

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Moreover, there is another frightening issue: the government can ban people from going out. Then, in most countries, it is forbidden to protest, to react to the advances of the left.

The only thing that can really help the economy recover from this blow is to eliminate taxes so that as many companies as possible can stay afloat, to liberalize the labor market so that employers and employees can negotiate working conditions freely and to minimize layoffs, while, at the same time, reducing rules and regulations for the business sector to make rapid progress in all areas that make a country conducive to creating new businesses and generating value.

Now, that is clearly not going to happen in countries with leftist governments, and it will definitely not happen in a country like Spain where some communists and partners of international drug traffickers are fighting to establish their *“paradise.”*

So, what will they do? How will they take advantage of a pandemic to achieve the communist *“paradise?”*

The first thing is to stop economic activity from resuming in any significant way. We must keep a good number of people without income, so they need the help of the government and who support politicians who offer state subsidies and health care.

We will have to take care of appearances to some degree and allow some activity. Giving confusing instructions is a good starting point. Many people will not open their businesses because of fear; many will not go out.

At the same time, we must work on buying or *“neutralizing”* those who might impede their perpetuation in power. So communist governments take control of the judicial system, establish links with the military and the police, intimidate and persecute legitimate opposition parties, take control of the media, and try to censor and persecute people who are bothersome on social media.

While all this is going on, where the left has power, people will be locked up in their homes. Because of the pandemic, they are prohibited from protesting, maybe they don't want to get infected,

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and many don't even have time to reflect on these political issues, they are worried, trying to cope with the economic crisis or helping a sick family member.

Then, while they have everyone locked up, they destroy the economy using the coronavirus as an excuse and make millions of people dependent on subsidies because there is no other option. No protest, no work, no earning your own money. Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state. What is happening in the United States is a novelty that, once again, shows us how strong and important are the values and ideas on which this great country was built.

While they have everyone locked up, they destroy the economy using the coronavirus as an excuse and make millions of people dependent on subsidies

In different parts of the U.S., there have been protests, including armed ones. In Michigan, protesters entered the Capitol with their guns, demanding an end to the lockdown enacted by the Democratic governor. Open-carry is legal in the state of Michigan. The police, knowing the right of Americans to protest and have weapons⁴⁸, allowed the demonstration even inside the Capitol. Also, in different parts of the U.S., police have declared that they will not comply with orders to keep people completely confined by preventing activities that do not represent any danger and are necessary for the survival of many people.

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The declarations that we are seeing in the United States these days on this matter are shocking to those of us who come from countries where people have simply become accustomed to obeying any nonsense spouted by the ruler of the day. To see a policeman telling the media that he will always “*put constitutional rights before political opinions*” and that therefore, he will not abide by draconian measures that go against common sense is encouraging for those of us who defend freedom. But these wonders only happen in the United States for now. In Spain, for example, the coalition government between socialists and communists has banned a demonstration that would take place as a caravan: each person from their car, no danger of contagion. But the government prohibits it, and there are neither statements like those of the American police nor demonstrations with armed citizens, making it clear that they will fight the moment they want to take away people’s freedom.

The coronavirus has cleared the field for communists. It is an opportune moment for the left in general, but above all, for those who already wield a certain amount of power and want to perpetuate themselves and implant their totalitarian paradise once and for all. It will depend primarily on two things that achieve their task: first, the reaction of society, and second, the reaction of the police and military.

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It is fundamental that where the communists advance, society understands this as a matter of life and death. In Venezuela, people die of hunger and of any disease that is easily curable in a normal country. In Cuba, they have lived like dogs for decades.

There is still time for many to react. The first thing is not to let them lock us up with irrational quarantines and destroy the economy. Once they have ruined us, we will no longer have the strength or resources to face them. They are not playing games.

CHAPTER 15

Women Out of Control



BY BIRGIT KELLE

The family is dead; long live the family! We might well be at a turning point, and the longer the coronavirus crisis lasts, the more likely that is to be true. For the first time, families have been left to their own devices, because the proverbial nanny state is on hiatus. Schools, daycares and preschools closed, everyone homeschooling (though with little choice in the matter), families opting or having to self-isolate: A situation like this has never existed before, particularly not in free Western societies.

Hadn't we slowly but surely grown used to the steady dissolution of the family, to giving over more and more family time to institutions? Lately, politicians had shied away from even trying to define what "family" meant. Everything was family and nothing was. For fear of leaving anyone out of the fiesta of family diversity, it had become a political near-impossibility to refer to the traditional family, with its lineage and bonds of kinship perpetuated through heterosexual, monogamous relationships, as the natural family form, without getting branded a bigot or homophobe.

For some, the function of the family had boiled down to shared meals, shared housing and the division of more or less tiresome chores in the roommates-with-children setup: who takes out the

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trash, who drops the kids off at their all-day school, who does the cleaning. And at the end of the day, everyone comes together again in front of the TV, the collective campfire of the modern family, for an episode or two of Netflix.

And at the end of the day, everyone comes together again in front of the TV, the collective campfire of the modern family, for an episode or two of Netflix.

And now the radical shift. The family is experiencing an unexpected and undreamt-of rebirth, a development that has come seemingly out of nowhere. But thinking back to when the socialist model of life was sprung on us, we didn't get much say in that either, did we? Rather than a conscious decision, it was a product of government interference. What was sold as the "*modern family policy*," particularly in Germany, could be described as a remarkably thorough implementation of an ideology straight out of the Communist Manifesto: Mother and Father in production, the children in the nursery. A "*family policy*" in which the state-provided care and upbringing of children is heavily subsidized by taxes, while familial, home-based childrearing is left financially high and dry, and parents who raise their own children are relentlessly vilified.

All of a sudden, we need the family, because nobody else is stepping up. We need the family because the state is overburdened and unable to provide all the family services it is normally so quick to take over. We even need homeschooling, which is otherwise explicitly forbidden in Germany—so much so that it has cost some parents who attempted it the custody of their children. The crisis reveals the fragility of the system and the shaky ground on which families

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stand when they rely too much on the support and ministrations of the state. Nothing can be relied on at the moment except the people with whom you share a fridge, bed and Wi-Fi.

While families are busy with themselves, others are desperately fighting for visibility and attention, as the crisis has laid bare what is relevant and what is not. Nowhere in the world are the death statistics broken down by imaginary genders; everywhere it is only men and women who are dying. The reason is not that the rainbow-genders turn out to possess an unexpected resistance to the coronavirus, but rather that politically correct gender language is wholly irrelevant in the life-and-death struggle of the intensive care unit. All the third, fourth and LGBTQ genders are suddenly off the air, because absolutely no one cares right now how anyone self-defines or self-identifies. People are worried about their jobs, about paying the rent, about whether they will survive the crisis. There are now voices calling for the fanciful field of Gender Studies to be defunded, so that those millions can be spent on real research instead. After all, who is more likely to save the day: those who look at our world through rainbow-colored glasses, or those who do it through a microscope in a laboratory?

After all, who is more likely to save the day: those who look at our world through rainbow-colored glasses, or those who do it through a microscope in a laboratory?

Parents, too, are concerned less about whether enough unisex toilets are being built for transsexual first-graders, and more about when schools will finally provide soap, disinfectant and towels in the girls' and boys' restrooms, and whether regular classes will

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ever resume at some point this century. Gender Studies is a luxury problem for oversaturated, affluent societies. The world has other problems right now.

The family is at home, and, unsurprisingly, alarm bells are going off in the halls of organized feminism. The millions of women worldwide who are no longer at the office, but at home and hearth, are seen to be catapulting the emancipation project back to the Middle Ages. The German daily *Die Welt* frets whether the coronavirus may even “undo the already difficult and delayed emancipation of the German mother,” concluding with concern that the prospect is “not unthinkable.”

At prime time on state television, a sociologist paints a fearful picture of a “terrible re-traditionalization” of women and a setback of at least 30 years that can never be recovered. Were the 1990s really all that backward from a female perspective (and I don’t mean the fashions and hairstyles)? The show closes with the gloomy statement that the patriarchy is back and that women are once again becoming invisible in society. An almost perfect summary of the current apocalyptic mood among feminists. What on earth are these people talking about? Never has a woman been more visible than today, just not where the feminist movement wanted her to be.

Women are out of control right now, families are out of control—outside the state control system, that is. Like birds pushed from their nests, some are taking their first steps away from the watchful eye of the nanny state. And some are even amazed to find that this situation has its upsides. In the left-wing magazine *Der Spiegel*, a hard-working editor tentatively recounts her astonishing experiences working from home and comes to the wide-eyed conclusion that her son has never been happier, now that she isn’t having to drag him out of bed every morning to take him to daycare. Who knew?

The possibility that children raised by their own mother rather than a stranger do not suffer, but actually thrive, is an everlasting

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truth that is now, by first-hand experience, getting through to those who had allowed themselves to be convinced otherwise.

Women are out of control right now... outside the state control system, that is. Like birds pushed from their nests, some are taking their first steps away from the watchful eye of the nanny state. And some are even amazed to find that this situation has its upsides.

This “terrible re-traditionalization,” or the “backlash” facing emancipation, is in fact the entire feminist movement’s greatest fear. That women can be quite useful managing the home, and that they are capable of a great deal, especially in times of crisis, is not the biggest problem. From a feminist point of view, something else is much worse: the sneaking suspicion that many women might even enjoy it. That they might find it fulfilling. That it might not be an emancipatory setback at all, but a homecoming. That the traditional family model might represent not a new female enslavement, but rather a new liberty. The fear is spreading that even those who used to believe that you had to sacrifice yourself on the job market and hand your children over to someone else as quickly as possible have now tasted blood, because they see that life as a woman and as a mother is not as lacking in alternatives as is often claimed.

Motherhood in particular remains the biggest bugbear of a women’s movement that continues to see female emancipation as a success only when women’s lives become indistinguishable from men’s, with gender-neutral career paths as the ultimate goal. This illusion of parity in all areas of life can often be maintained as long as a woman is childless. It is only with motherhood, at least in free

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Western societies, that women find their lives turned upside down, because something fundamental has changed.

The child you bring into the world cannot be stashed away in the basement like a household item when it is inconvenient, or put off when you don't have time. Children come to stay, and they bind our attention, our time, our money, our emotions. Some families are only just now discovering what they may not have noticed for years, and are getting to know their children in a whole new way—or even “*seeing*” them for the first time.

Times of crisis always force societies to focus on what is essential. Millions of families are just now realizing that when the state fails, the center of the household shifts back to the family and, yes, the mother. The notion that mothers can be replaced is a feminist myth. An ideological hypothesis that has never been tested against reality, it has only ever sprung from the wish to “*deliver*” the mother of the child as quickly and completely as possible.

The moment the state order and its artificially generated pressure on mothers collapses, they slip back with great ease into a role that some never voluntarily gave up in the first place, but were drummed out of.

The fact that old role models are flourishing again, now that families are suddenly forced to spend the whole day together, can be interpreted in different ways: While some lament the regression into antiquated roles and see a new subjugation of women, one could also make the case that the moment the state order and its artificially generated pressure on mothers collapses, they slip back with great ease into a role that some never voluntarily gave up in the

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first place, but were drummed out of. When the state loses its grip, the woman and the family regain control. The state is getting wind of this. Alarms are sounding, especially among left-wing and Green politicians, who are bemoaning the threat and danger to children at home. The Minister for Family Affairs is worried because child welfare offices, schools and daycares are no longer able to lay eyes on kids. The head of the Green Party warns that children need “*the care of the state,*” that children have no lobby. But they do, they always have: throughout the ages, without any state involvement whatsoever, they have had their own parents as their biggest and most natural champions. Only those who see the parental home not as the natural habitat for children but as their greatest threat, are now in a state of alarm simply because children are where they belong: at home, with their own parents, who have conceived and born them.

In these coronavirus times, the definition of family, too, has become very simple and essential again. Those who are now worried because children are with their own parents have for years been fighting for “*children’s rights*” to be included in the constitution—not to help children, of course, because children, as human beings, already enjoy full human-rights protections in Germany and elsewhere. No, the point is to gain a de facto right to determine the “*best interests of the child,*” in order to play themselves up as children’s advocates—against the child’s own parents, if need be. The longer the crisis lasts, the more this claim to representation by the state slips away. How is it supposed to spring into action and get hold of children when it is telling them to stay home?

The family is out of control, and for those who have long been working to destroy it, it is a frightening loss of control. Back in 1975, Simone de Beauvoir expressed what she really thought about women’s liberation and freedom of choice in general, and childrearing and motherhood in particular: “*No woman should be authorized to stay home to raise her children. Society should be*

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totally different. Women should not have that choice, precisely because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that choice.” She added: “Until the maternal instinct is destroyed, women will continue to be oppressed.”

The icon of the women’s movement never had children and a family of her own, but was filled with communist ideological potential instead. When the coronavirus crisis is over, it will be interesting to see how many mothers still believe that there is no alternative to having even their babies cared for by others. The current slowdown is making room for new experiences and emotions that women may have previously denied themselves. How many mothers have been hearing for years now, especially from other women, about all the things they are allegedly not able, not allowed and not supposed to do? Right now, millions of them are proving that they are capable of amazing things. May they never again let themselves be talked out of it and never again hand over control of their lives, their children and their families. Yes, women these days are at home and out of control—and perhaps this is the best news to come out of the coronavirus pandemic.

Translation into English by Kathrin Enke.

CHAPTER 16

Faith, Politics and Pandemic



BY FERNANDO SIMÓN YARZA

There is a variety of attitudes the State can take towards religion, ranging from hostility to attempts to impose authority over it, attitudes ranging from being more or less tolerant of public religiosity to being irreligious in their approach. None of these attitudes towards religion, however, is considered hostile, imposing or tolerant, or as just or unjust, simply because they are carried out from a position that “*neutrally abstains*” from taking sides. I’ll try to explain myself in more detail.

The ethical implications of an act of omission—that is, the ethical implications of a failure to act—are not independent of the context in which the act occurs. Letting an old man die in peace whose time has come, without resorting to overly aggressive medical treatment, is an act of respect. In contrast, allowing a little girl to die who is crying from the pain of hunger is tantamount to killing her. Viewed in the abstract, the conduct in both cases presupposes an omission, a “*neutral*” position. However, in neither of these two cases is the morality of the action determined solely by “*neutrality*.”

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The qualification of an act as just or unjust comes, respectively, through the relation of the act of neutrally abstaining to a reality which, in one case, requires one to neutrally abstain, and, in the other case, demands action.

In the religious sphere, the establishment in our society has promoted an erroneous view of neutrality—*synonymous with the total exclusion of God from the institutional sphere*—as the most equitable political attitude, *semper et ad semper*, towards religion. It is, in my view and that of many, a trap into which, unfortunately, we have long since fallen as a society. For so many citizens, today more than ever it is clear how, strictly speaking, we are facing a form of imposed political irreligiosity that does violence to man's religious nature, fosters indifference to his destiny, and engulfs peoples.

[W]e are facing a form of imposed political irreligiosity that does violence to man's religious nature...

Since time immemorial, the natural religious inclinations of man have led nations to public prayer and penance in times of adversity. Imbued with modern superstition par excellence—*scientism, that is, religious faith in scientific progress*—there are those who excessively hasten to associate such reactions, in general, with superstition. And I am not saying that there have never been traces of pathological superstition among the ancients, but let us not deceive ourselves: *abusus non tollit usum*.

The abuse of a practice does not invalidate its legitimate meaning. Just as there are realities in secular life that demand our compassion and our active help, in the same way hardships and misfortunes demand from peoples in their neediness intimate

prayers and conversion, both individually and collectively. The fact that Christianity is precisely the religious faith that has given deeper and more sublime meaning to this natural inner sign in man, to its salvific meaning, and to its redeeming value, is not a sufficient reason to ignore it. Rather, it is an incentive to question whether it is perhaps true what a great teacher from antiquity, Tertullian of Carthage, said: *anima humana naturaliter christiana*.

We are faced with an elementary anthropological phenomenon which, in recent days, many are trying to silence in vain with words that, coming from some, sound like a presumption: “*this virus will be stopped by us!*” It is true that, in many cases, this sentiment is not expressed as any more than a noble call for solidarity. In others, however, it is the call for collusive conspiring—*sculpted for posterity by Psalm 2*—of those who insist on doing without God.

In fact, we all realize that even though we may put an end to this tragic plague—*thanks to the heroic and humble efforts of so many professionals who deserve our full admiration*—painfully, death has been placed before our very eyes, and none of us will ultimately escape the final reality that the plague has brought close to us. Ironically, the penitential exercises and prayers of our forefathers showed a far superior degree of enlightenment and good sense compared to the superstitious obscurantism of scientism—*the true opiate of the masses*—that tries to ignore this patent reality. In situations such as the present, shunning, as a people, any invocation of God is a form of impiety and makes it difficult to receive this inner sign.

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It seems that, in recent decades, the establishment of our European society has favored a sort of mystifying and shameless conspiracy against the Christian faith of our peoples. In Spain, lately we have seen presidents who correct Jesus Christ—with “*freedom will make you true*,” instead of “*the truth will set you free*”—or who remove the crucifix from the president’s inaugural oath of office. Whether by action or omission, by public expression or symbolic “*neutrality*,” both behaviors have tangible significance. In situations such as the present—and I say this from the heart, without any bitterness—a total abstaining from religious expression in the public sphere would lead to levels of impiety greater than ever before. May God permeate this message through Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Square.

Article originally appeared in ABC (Madrid), Saturday, April 11, 2020.

CHAPTER 17

The Message of Life Is Alive Wherever Death Lurks



AN INTERVIEW WITH REMI BRAGUE

When interviewed by “Le Figaro,” the philosopher reflects on the turmoil caused by the virtual suspension of religious rites as a result of an epidemic. We are in the process of deconstructing the unwritten laws that are the foundation of our civilization, he says, but in the enforced confinement that has descended upon the whole of Europe like a long Holy Saturday, hope saves us. Here is the complete version of the interview given to Eugénie Bastié by Rémi Brague, extracts of which were published on April 13, 2020, Easter Eve.

And suddenly, we have the whole of Western Modernity paralysed by a virus, a scourge that was described as medieval, the epidemic. Shouldn't the current situation lead us to put the notion of Progress into perspective?

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The Middle Ages, since Modernity invented it, is for many of our demi-savants a convenient dustbin in which they would like to throw everything they don't like. When these unpleasant things reappear, they imagine that it had been the medieval dustbin that managed to lift its lid.

The twentieth century, this low point of human history, has brought a bloody contradiction to progressive dreams... Will a pandemic be able to cure us ? Personally, I strongly doubt it.

This is a consequence of faith in progress, which has been poisoning us since the mid-18th century. 1750 was the year of two speeches: Turgot's, a hymn to progress, and Rousseau's first speech, which put a serious damper on it. The belief in progress is based on two indisputable facts: advances in our scientific knowledge of nature and those in our technological mastery of it. But it extrapolates from them an idea that cannot be guaranteed, namely that these accomplishments will automatically produce an improvement in laws and government practices, and through them a boost to the morals of their citizens. The whole thing has to happen automatically, on a kind of conveyor belt. Some anticipated by going in the right direction, while a few "reactionaries" made the ridiculous mistake of walking the wrong way. In a completely different, pre-human domain, the idea of a global drift towards the better also distorts popular understanding of the idea of evolution. We imagine that its engines, natural selection, survival of the fittest, etc. lead to a greater good, which Darwin never said. This "fittest" that survives and reproduces is not necessarily the most enlightened or virtuous.

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The twentieth century, this low point of human history, has brought a bloody contradiction to progressive dreams: two world wars, multiple genocides, artificial famines (the Ukrainian Holodomor) or caused by the stupidity of dictators (the Chinese “Great Leap Forward”), and so on. However, it was not sufficient to deny some, who continue to dub as “advances” any innovation, even when it is dangerous, even when it is stupid. Will a pandemic be able to cure us? Personally, I strongly doubt it.

Are our de-Christianized societies helpless in the face of the resurgence of death in our lives, in such numbers, such daily carnage?

Our attitude towards death is ambivalent. We are doing everything we can to avoid it by adopting cautious behaviour, and by seeking cures for diseases—which is all well and good. But we also seek to drive it out of our minds, to forget it, to act as if it will never happen to us. This on the one hand. And on the other, more secretly, we see it as something ultimate. Look at Nietzsche’s famous quote, “*God is dead.*” If this is true, it means that death has overcome the highest and holiest things, and has proved to be stronger than Him. And if power is the measure of divinity, it implies that death is more divine than the God it defeated. In this way, “*God is dead*” logically turns into “*death is God.*” This quasi-divinisation of death would explain quite well why it is kept silent: a deity is one whose name is not uttered in vain. Finally, punks and other satanists at least have the honesty to confess what they worship.

The death figures are impressive, or at least designed to be impressive, although it is never easy to say exactly what someone died of... I would like to compare them to the demographic collapse due to voluntary birth control.

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One of the lessons of this crisis is that the reign of the economy has been frozen to make way for concern for the most vulnerable. Isn't it a sign that we are still Catholics, despite everything?

In any case, the fact that we are marked by a Christian culture is in great evidence, even for those who regret it. The Hindus, when they still believe in reincarnation, think that all misfortune is deserved, that it punishes faults committed in a previous life, that it also makes it possible to atone. Mother Teresa, who sought to relieve the suffering of the dying, was frowned upon by the upper caste Hindus.

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In their eyes, she took away the chance of a better incarnation next time. Believing that victims should be rescued, regardless of who they are, and in particular regardless of their religion, their role in society, their age, simply because these people are “*my neighbour,*” is a belief of Christian origin. It is shown in the parable of the “*Good Samaritan.*”

All religious rites have been suspended for believers as a means of preventing the spread of the virus. Doesn't this suspension of communion and the virtualization of our rites (televised masses) make us feel the true price of churches?

We live in a world where the virtual tends to replace the real. This applies to all areas. There was one exception, which was specifically the religious rites. Not because they concern the ethereal dimension of our experience, the “*spirit,*” as we say in an unfortunately all too common misunderstanding. But quite the contrary, because they

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bear it on their body. Mass is a meal, and you can't eat at a distance. Churches are the refectories, kind of soup kitchens or *Restos du (sacré-) cœur* where everyone is welcomed without any kind of check at the entrance. Of course, the food that is given at Mass is not just any food. Of course, the ultimate goal of the sacraments is not to make us remember that we have a body. But they might be able to help us there as well. They inextricably associate the Most High with that which is most humble, most elementary in our state of being: to feed oneself, to reproduce (marriage is also a sacrament), to die. This paradoxical alliance gives our poor and fragile species an extraordinary dignity.

Funeral ceremonies have been reduced to the bare minimum. What should we think of this unprecedented suspension of the “unwritten laws” on which civilization is based?

What underpins civilization, indeed what constitutes the very humanity of human beings, lies in a small number of rules. But what W. R. Gibbons calls “*our beautiful Western civilization*” seems to have set about the noble task of destroying them. To begin with, she discredits them by calling them “*taboos.*” What a beautiful word! How useful it is! Ever Since Captain Cook brought it back from Tahiti, it has made it possible to lump together the most imperious moral commandments and the most futile routines, murder and the wearing of a tie from a college of which one was not a fellow, bestiality and the buttoning-up of the last button of the jacket...

Among these basic rules, there is one that deals with funeral rites. The famous passage from *Antigone* where Sophocles brings up the notion of “*unwritten law*” precisely relates to the honours to be paid to a body, even if it is that of a rebel. In a word, we do not do just anything with the corpse of the dearly departed. We bury him, embalm him before putting him in a sarcophagus, burn him at the stake, deliver him to the birds of prey at the top of a tower, or even his family devours him in a solemn meal. But we certainly don't

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treat it as just another object to be tossed into the dump. Among all the famous last words, you know those of the ecologist on his deathbed: “*Don’t worry, I’m biodegradable!*”

Palaeontologists stress the extreme importance of the presence of fossil pollen in prehistoric tombs from 300,000 years before our era. Our distant ancestors used to lay flowers on corpses. We’ll never know what their intentions were. But at any rate, they had a kind of respect for corpses. We are losing it. Remember that travelling exhibition, *Körperwelten* (1988) which became *Bodies: The Exhibition*, which presents corpses cast in a transparent resin and thereby rendered statues. The bodies were probably those of people who came from China and were condemned to death—China was already exporting all kinds of joy!

So I hope that this funeral blitz will only last for a short time, because it could lead us into bad habits.

Another basic rule is that you don’t marry just anybody, that which we call the prohibition of incest. We are in the process of deconstructing it, starting with a rule so elementary that it remained implicit, unwritten: one only marries a person of the opposite sex, with whom one can, if all goes well, procreate and give birth to offspring. If we continue along this path, other so-called “taboos” will inevitably arise: polygamy, incest, etc. when “*society is ready*,” i.e. when the preparation of the media artillery has been sufficient.

Holy Saturday is a day without celebrations for Christians. Isn’t this imposed confinement a long Holy Saturday? Can this particular situation we are living through help us to think better on this day of spiritual barrenness?

Holy Saturday, on which one of the greatest theologians of the last century, Hans Urs von Balthasar, reflected at length, is a very special day: once every three hundred and sixty five, those who say that “*God is dead*” are right. The formula comes from a 17th century

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Lutheran chorale on Holy Saturday, and it is there that Hegel, John Paul, and perhaps Nietzsche himself, son of a pastor, found it. The difference being that the latter is added by the “madman” (toll) that he stages in the Gai Savaïr: “*God remains dead.*”

Christians, for their part, see in Holy Saturday the anticipation of the Resurrection on Easter Day. Holy Saturday, however, is not an empty day, a dead time. It is not insignificant that Christ was not removed from death, replaced by a stand-in, taken up to heaven, gone to Kashmir or exiled to the Blessed Islands, etc., but that he lived our condition to the end and thus passed through all its stages, including the last, thus sharing our common lot.

According to the fundamental thought of the Fathers of the Church, only that which has been assumed by Christ, the Word of God who became man, and all that has been assumed by him, is sanctified: Christ had to pass through death (“*descended into hell*”) so that it too could become the opportunity for an encounter with God. Saint Paul says: “*if Christ is not risen, our faith is empty.*” But it must also be said: it is the same if Christ did not die. Death loses nothing of its tragedy, but it is also a place where God can be found: “*if I lie down in sheol, you are there*” (Psalm 139:8). God never forsakes us.

Saint Paul says: “if Christ is not risen, our faith is empty.” But it must also be said: it is the same if Christ did not die. Death loses nothing of its tragedy, but it is also a place where God can be found...” This message of life is relevant wherever death lurks.

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As a result, death ceases to be that ultimate reality to which punks have the frankness to make visible worship, and all our hypocritical culture, an un-avowed worship. This message of life is relevant wherever death lurks, as is the case at the moment. And it's basically a chance, as you say, that this confinement extends until we don't know when, that one day. It could act like a magnifying glass that would magnify it enormously. May it give us a better, closer look at what it means. It's up to us to seize the opportunity.

For Christians, we are in the time of the ascent towards Easter. What message can the resurrection deliver in these tragic times? What hopes do you have for our civilization as we emerge from this crisis?

For our civilization, I have little hope. But you're right to talk about hope. Only hope can help us. It is one of the three so-called "theological" virtues, along with faith and charity. These virtues are in themselves not excessive. What distinguishes them from the other virtues, where excess in one hinders the practice of the others. For example, excessive caution can make us forget our duty to help our fellow man. On the other hand, you can't believe too much, love too much, hope too much. The last object of these virtues is in fact infinite: God who, out of pure charity, prepares for us "that which the eye has not seen, that which has not ascended into the heart of man."

Specifically, as they say, it is possible to hope, this time from a very human expectation, a small awareness of the limits of our condition, of "our scope," as Pascal said.

Interview conducted on behalf of Le Figaro by Eugénie Bastié. Originally published in Le Figaro, April 13, 2020 and then also reproduced in English in One of Us platform.

APPENDIX

Letter to the President

May 3, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Subject: Recommendations for Dealing with COVID-19 Going Forward

Dear Mr. President:

We appreciate your untiring efforts (and the work of the Coronavirus Task Force under Vice-President Pence), which have resulted in great strides being made in dealing with COVID-19, under difficult circumstances. It's easy for others to do Monday-morning quarterbacking, and we regret that you are in the unenviable position of being damned if you do, and damned if you don't.

While you have many experts who are advising you on the Herculean decisions of how to further mitigate the virus and reopen America, there are numerous others who would like to assist you in this endeavor, to improve the likelihood of success. We are all in the same fight, so we need to work together.

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The undersigned US scientists, medical professionals, economists and other technical experts are united by a belief that genuine science should be the basis of our technical public policies and subsequent actions. Unfortunately, far too often real science has been replaced by political science. In this case, some of the complaints relating to COVID-19 appear to be from those who see this pandemic as a political opportunity.

We would like to offer our non-political perspective and recommendations on the way forward with COVID-19. The signers of this letter have diverse backgrounds and expertise representing a cross-section of specialties and skills in a number of fields, ranging from health care to the physical sciences to economics. We hope that our constructive suggestions prove useful to you, as you continue to lead us in the battle against this invisible scourge.

Appendix 1 has ten (10) specific recommendations, brief and to the point. (Some are about maintaining the current course, others are newer ideas.)

Appendix 2 consists of slightly more detailed explanations for each suggestion.

Appendix 3 is a list of some sample parties who support the gist of these key recommendations, and agree with the premise of this letter. (Please note that this is a bi-partisan submission as there are Republicans, Independents and Democrats who are signees.)

We are pleased to be of service in any way we can to assist you in these trying times.

Very respectfully,
The undersigned

Attachments: Recommended Suggestions
Additional Details
Signers to the Letter

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Attachment 1: Recommended Suggestions

Here are the top ten (10) recommendations of the signing parties. Following these is a slightly more detailed explanation of each item (see Appendix 2). The green items are newer suggestions, or matters that don't seem to have been fully implemented yet.

- 1** - Federal government put businesses into four categories, based on the frequency and duration of close personal contact.
- 2** - Federal government recommend a normalization plan, but states decide on what businesses are in each category, timing, and what protocols to be used in each category, etc.
- 3** - Immediately add a professional statistician to the COVID-19 team.
- 4** - Continue to advise taking actions that will flatten the curve — and explain why.
- 5** - Require more accurate reporting of COVID-19 complications and deaths.
- 6** - Regarding prevention, the federal government and the states:
 - a)** Aggressively work to increase COVID-19 testing capability.
 - b)** Educate citizens regarding optimizing their immune system.
 - c)** Encourage social distancing, use of masks, washing hands, etc.
 - d)** Actively support first-responders and healthcare providers.
 - e)** Support efforts to develop a vaccine, but as a secondary matter.
- 7** - Regarding therapies, the federal government and the states:
 - a)** FDA approve doctor-supervised HCQ+Z-Pak+Zn plus Remdesivir protocols.
 - b)** Aggressively support studies into pharmaceutical therapeutic options.
 - c)** FDA recommend steam inhalation as an initial treatment.
 - d)** Lessen talk about ventilators.

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8 - Congress should refrain from additional COVID-19 outlays, as an economically problematic amount has already been authorized.

9 - Continue to exhaustively investigate the origin of COVID-19.

10 - Thoroughly analyze the objectivity, competence and timeliness of all major UN agencies.

For more information on any of these suggestions, please contact NC/NY physicist John Droz.

Attachment 2: Additional Details

1 - The federal government will divide all business into four (4) categories (A thru D), based on the frequency and duration of close contact. (E.g. an “A” business might be golf courses, while “D” businesses might be restaurants). Having the federal government do this will help with uniformity from state to state. (Note the four groups do not have to be of equal size.)

2 - Since states should have a better understanding of their own situation, the federal government should avoid imposing one-size-fits-all mandates. The plan recommended for states to follow would be:

a) It would be each state governor’s responsibility to make changes they see fit to the business categorizations in their state.

b) Wait until their medical professionals determine that each state has passed the peak in the COVID-19 infection curve.

c) At that point the state starts opening businesses, one category at a time, each group separated by 1-2 weeks.

d) If during any re-opening segment, there is an unacceptable increase in COVID-19 cases in that state (as determined by the Governor and his medical advisors), then the next business category openings would be delayed a week or more, until the situation is under control.

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e) During all openings, citizens would continue to: wear masks, maintain social distancing (as much as practical), frequently wash their hands, work at optimizing their immune system, etc.

3 - Having an expert statistician as a key part of the President's team is an urgent matter. Such an immediate addition will reduce the chances of being misled by speculative computer models and other data. Good examples of competent statisticians are Dr. Stan Young and Dr. Matt Briggs. If neither of them is available additional names can be provided.

4 - Flattening the curve is extremely important — but for a reason not well articulated. The main benefit is that it will enable higher efficacy COVID-19 therapies to come online (which will happen considerably sooner than vaccines will). The public needs to be much better advised as to this rationale for short-term flattening.

5 - There is disturbing evidence that some medical professionals are using COVID-19 as a convenient catchall category. The federal government needs to put an immediate stop to that, as such a practice will seriously undermine the accuracy of data analysis. Inaccurate data results in inaccurate policies. It would be informative if deaths related to lock-downs, higher prices, reduced incomes was kept track of.

6-A - The government's decision-making capability is severely handicapped when actual numbers are not known. Accurate, quick COVID-19 virus testing plus antibody test capability needs to be increased by one to two orders of magnitude. Testing protocols must be random and stratified, and should include those with symptoms and those without.

6-B - Since we are all going to be inevitably faced with increased exposure to COVID-19, the CDC should immediately post the urgency and specifics of everyone optimizing their own immune system.⁴⁹ An

⁴⁹ <https://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/immune-system-function#1>

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optimized innate immune system: i) would reduce the likelihood of catching COVID-19, and (if someone does catch it), ii) would likely result in fewer complications and deaths.

Some simple, inexpensive ways to optimize our immune system are provided by three credible sources: Harvard Health,⁵⁰ *Prevention* magazine,⁵¹ and the prior head of the CDC.⁵²

The fact that the CDC's main COVID-19 webpage⁵³ does not even mention the innate immune system is an egregious oversight, and this major error should be fixed immediately. An example of some reasonable words to expand on are on the NC Department of Health & Human Services COVID-19 page.⁵⁴

Note: Since the majority of the population has herd immunity from the influenza virus, there may be some transfer⁵⁵ of this to COVID-19.

6-C - Continue what is being currently communicated on social distancing, etc.

6-D - Actively support first-responders and health care providers—e.g. by making more PPEs (e.g. N-95 respirators) available. If not already done, the federal government should also widely distribute something like the excellent Michigan document on supporting first-responders.⁵⁶

6-E - Tamp down expectations regarding a COVID-19 vaccine⁵⁷ as: i) it is many months away, so has little current value, and ii) by the time a

50 <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system>

51 <https://www.prevention.com/health/a31286522/how-to-boost-immune-system/>

52 <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/former-cdc-chief-tom-frieden-coronavirus-risk-may-be-reduced-with-vitamin-d>

53 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

54 <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/about-covid-19/managing-overall-health>

55 <https://www.foxnews.com/science/scientists-map-immune-system-fights-back-against-covid-19>

56 https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/First_Responders_Final_685545_7.pdf

57 <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41573-020-00073-5>

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vaccine is available, it is possible that the SARS-CoV-2⁵⁸ virus will have mutated—which means that the vaccine effectiveness may be low.

7-A - The FDA should immediately update their position to allow physicians to prescribe HCQ⁵⁹ plus Z-Pak⁶⁰ plus Zinc⁶¹ or Remdesivir⁶² to any COVID-19 patient that the physician is actively monitoring—not just in a hospital as the FDA position currently is. Case studies back up the effectiveness of these two therapies.^{63, 64}

What sense does it make for the FDA to be pushing COVID-19 patients into hospitals: i) which increases the likelihood that those facilities will become overloaded, and ii) that statistically increase the chances that patients may end up with some other medical complications?⁶⁵

7-B - To encourage effective therapies (of all types) consider offering a major cash award to the public for the most effective scientifically proven COVID-19 therapy.

7-C - It is documented that COVID-19 is initially a respiratory ailment, and that the virus can be deactivated by heat (165°F⁶⁶). A simple, low-cost, low-downside initial treatment for an individual who has COVID-19 is to carefully inhale steam⁶⁷ from boiling water. The FDA should quickly investigate this and if it works, endorse it.

58 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0820-9>

59 <https://www.webmd.com/drugs/2/drug-5482/hydroxychloroquine-oral/details>

60 <https://www.drugwatch.com/zithromax-z-pak/>

61 <https://www.livestrong.com/article/409076-which-form-of-zinc-is-best/>

62 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Remdesivir>

63 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1545C_dJWMIAgqeLEsfo2U8Kq5WprDuARXrJl-6N1aDjY/preview?pru=AAABcevaHso*wl-olE54xujKNIM6mnOjsA

64 <https://www.gilead.com/purpose/advancing-global-health/covid-19/remdesivir-clinical-trials>

65 https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2013/09000/A_New_Evidence_based_Estimate_of_Patient_Harms.2.aspx

66 <https://www.reference.com/science/temperature-viruses-die-604d2a531fb11268>

67 <https://www.healthline.com/health/steam-inhalation>

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7-D - Ventilators should not be considered a cure, but as providing a bridge. There is some evidence that they are not effective.⁶⁸ It also may be likely that proper therapy (see above) will alleviate the need for ventilators.

8 - Almost all political decisions ultimately come down to “What is the price?” It makes little sense to try to solve one major problem by creating another major problem. The federal government has already likely allocated too much money to this issue, and doing more will be adding to an unsustainable debt. The only new expenditures should be specifically tied to dealing with COVID-19 as a disease (e.g. PPEs).

9 - If China is implicated for releasing SARS-CoV-2⁶⁹ due to carelessness or by intent, there should be a proportionate response.

10 - UN agencies that need special investigations are WHO⁷⁰ and IPCC.⁷¹ Any UN agencies that fail any of the criteria of objectivity, competence and timeliness should be defunded until they are proven to be fixed.

Attachment 3: Signers to the Letter

Note: These signers represent themselves, and not any organizations to which they belong.

Patti J. Adair, County Comm (OR)

Dr. Robert J. Adair, Physician (OR)

Dr. Steven J. Allen, esq, Biodefense (DC)

Douglas Barclay, Attorney (NY)

Dr. Calvin Beisner, Social Scientist (TN)

Dr. Jonathan Bernstein, Immunologist (OH)

68 <https://www.statnews.com/2020/04/08/doctors-say-ventilators-overused-for-covid-19/>

69 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0820-9>

70 <https://www.newsmax.com/larrybell/who-ghebreyesus/2020/04/27/id/964770/>

71 <https://nofrackingconsensus.com/2015/09/01/3-things-scientists-need-to-know-about-the-ipcc/>

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Dr. Jared L. Black, Prof. Engineer (OR)
Brad Blake, LT Care Consultant (ME)
Dr. Daniel B. Botkin, Biologist (CA)
Dr. Jan Breslow, Physician/Scientist (NY)
Dr. Matt Briggs, Statistician (NY)
Dr. Jim Buell, Biologist (OR)
Dr. Sharon R. Camp, Chemist (GA)
Sam Carpenter, businessman (OR)
Loren Carroll-Perry, RN (retired) (CA)
Dr. Dustin Chambers, Economics (MD)
Thomas Chaudoin, CWO4, USN (Ret) (CA)
Dr. Bonner Cohen, Sr Fellow NCPPR (VA)
Stuart J. Cvrk, Captain USN (ret) (SD)
Karl Denison, Biologist (OR)
Dr. Arthur Desrosiers, Physicist (FL)
Paul deWitt, Captain USNR (ret) (OR)
John Droz, jr, Physicist (NC)
Dr. James Enstrom, Epidemiologist (CA)
Dr. Irv Forbing, Oral Surgeon (CA)
Dennis C. Galluzzo, RPh (NY)
Dr. Ron Heiniger, Agronomist (NC)
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