

The Praise of the Pandemic Biopower Occult Logics Driving the Authoritarian Drift of Neoliberal Democracies

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ABSTRACT

In the book “The praise of the pandemic. Covid crisis: between dystopian drifts and opportunity of change” I try to explore aspects of the covid pandemic, in terms of total social phenomenon, from a personal critical viewpoint and scientific skepticism towards the dominant systemic narration. In particular I wonder how by one hand the side counterproductive effects of Hi-Tech mediated biopower logics converge to stress the “baumanian process” of evaporation of the liquid stage of neoliberal capitalism; by the other hand how the covid-19 pandemic shows how shocks, black swans, wars and disasters in general are a precious opportunity for the recovery of the economic cycle, supported by the absolute supremacy of exchange and market values on human and planetary health. In addition I underline the intricate complex of regressive trends that the covid-induced biopolitics dangerously converge recreating the best historical conditions for the rise of a new era of totalitarianism. In the present opinion paper I just try to condense these topics by addressing relevant sociopolitical dynamics masking the autocratization of democracy and somewhat disturbing scenarios.

Keywords: Covid-19; Biosurveillance; Biosecurity; Platformization; Black Swans; 5g-Based Healtapplications; Authoritarianization of Democracy

Short Communication

In the book “The praise of the pandemic. Covid crisis: between dystopian drifts and opportunity of change” I try to explore aspects of the covid pandemic, in terms of total social phenomenon, from a personal critical viewpoint and scientific skepticism towards the dominant systemic narration. In particular I wonder how by one hand the side counterproductive effects of Hi-Tech mediated biopower logics converge to stress the “baumanian process” of evaporation of the liquid stage of neoliberal capitalism; by the other hand how the covid-19 pandemic shows how shocks, black swans, wars and disasters in general are a precious opportunity for the recovery of the economic cycle, supported by the absolute supremacy of exchange and market values on human and planetary

health. In addition I underline the intricate complex of regressive trends that the covid-induced biopolitics dangerously converge recreating the best historical conditions for the rise of a new era of totalitarianism [1]. In the present opinion paper I just try to condense these topics by addressing relevant sociopolitical dynamics masking the autocratization of democracy and somewhat disturbing scenarios.

Biosocial 5g-Mediated Surveillance and Platformization of the Covid

In a sense the covid pandemic marks the epistemological transition of Medicine, that definitively abandons clinical culture

and human contact to match impersonal videoassisted procedures enhanced by 5G, clouds and web technologies applications, on which our everyday life now depends [2]. In fact by mean of smartphone apps, wearables, sensors, QR-code tokens, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, robotics the post-clinical post-human Hi-Tech medicine makes a big contribution to *platfomization* of covid. In particular now Big Pharma can undisturbed access the everyone's data usable for drug development and recruitment of unaware populations in the clinical trials, even if in reality it is the masses to demand from the State increasing biosecurity in exchange of freedom restrictions and panoptic surveillance. It is also necessary to observe how the covid is dramatically accelerating the incessant atomization process of society by the uncontrollable synergy of digitalization and medicalization.

Following the *baumanian "thermodynamic" metaphor*, a condition in which the inter-monadic ties "evaporate" transforming liquid society into a chaotic world of undifferentiated swarms of video-addicted all resembling differently isolated homologated subjects, is entirely receptive to current nosopolitics [3]. Moreover, by converting the social body into the best source of big *data* the technocratic regimes can even use differential vulnerability parameters dependent on sociomaterial, racial and demographic inequalities, for hyperliberal goals including defunding public institutions, privatizing healthcare, resizing welfare policy. In extreme essence, through the covid biopower occulted strategies allow global governance to plan in what manner people are supposed to live, to die, to be productive. Ultimately, biopower contributes significantly to improve the resilience of Capital, despite an impressive amount of *paradoxal* and counterproductive collateral consequences of the market-centered unsustainable economy (including *infodemic*, *cybercondria*, *pathophobias*, biosphere deterioration, rampant poverty).

Erosion of Democracy, Authocratization, Neoimperialism

Actually, governments try to cope a largely silent or mild flu-like syndrome by mean of decrees, laws, coercive and blackmail measures. A part from draconian lockdown and curfew war-like measures implemented without planning and preparation by mean of a technocratically-assisted top-down approach, we witness in Italy a creeping dictatorship characterized by censorship and legal persecution of scientific inconvenient opinions, cover-up and police repression of protest movements, suspension without salary of the so-called "no-vax" workers, removal from professional associations of dissenting doctors. In an on-line article Prasad and Flier raised the question of whether scientists who express different views on covid should be heard and not attacked, especially when the scientific uncertainty and disputes demand the largest

social debate. But as usual the dominant dogmatic orthodoxy, in a context in which converging forces tend to discourage critical, inconvenient, creative and holistic thinking while schools and universities fit market and competition logics, aims to ridicule and punish the heretics and ascribe "legitimate disagreements to ignorance or questionable non-scientific motivations" [4].

In essence, in a vain attempt to prevent the collapse of mcdonaldized healthcare systems *per se* condemned to be impersonal, ineffective and paradoxically iatrogenic just because of consumerism ontology, as Ivan Illich forecasted in *Nemesi Medica* (1976), the liberticide measures contribute to delete solidarity, democratic participation, active citizenship, while the vaccination obligation definitively expropriates us of our health and suspends the basic right of freedom of choice. Actually riding the covid crisis the cross-fertilization of deideologized populism, machism, judiciary, lawfare and neoliberalism risks to drive the authoritarian drift of technocratic regimes towards a new era of nationalist conservative restoration supported by chaos and mass discontent also due to due to unemployment, underemployment, uncertainty, precariousness, flexibility, lost of solidarity [5].

Final Notes

Black swans, disasters, pandemics unmask all the limits and contradictions of capitalism, that although unable to prevent and cope global risks due to biocidal consumerism-related effects tries to avoid its own collapse also by converting shocks and wars into opportunities for economic recovery [6]. Not at chance Big Pharma and TLC companies benefits from health consumerism keeping todrive the gross global product. Unavoidably the social effects due to a market-oriented hospital-centered Health policy, fitting with deregulation, "rationalization" of public spending, privatization of public services, mcdonaldization of productive processes, are the counterproductive implications of an ontologically unfair and myopic system. Not a chance unpreparedness, laking of monitoring of "sentinel phenomenons" and obsolete national pandemic plans, for healthcare systems already overloaded by seasonal flu, contributed to promote authocratization of democracy and making apparently the new germ particularly aggressive for per se aging and sick populations. From this perspective the current 5G-assisted occult biopower and nosopolitic measures play a crucial role in ensuring the resilience of the capitalist models and making social control more and more pervasive [7].

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