

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS PHILOSOPHICAL ADMONITIONS

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Nowadays, it can be very hard to glimpse the day in which the coronavirus pandemic may become a blurry memory of the past. The consequences of this global crisis, which affects everyone and does not discriminate against nationalities, ethnic groups, convictions or wealth, are difficult to imagine. However, when that day comes: will we have changed our habits substantially or will we still be trapped in our current inertias? Considering its egalitarian nature, a potentially more instructive social danger than the incomparable threat of Covid-19 may be of difficult grasping. It is a global issue that cannot be tackled effectively by resorting to local formulae, since it requires universal cooperation from a cosmopolitan mindset.

Despite this time not being the right one for ideological and social demands, at least not until we defeat the adversary, this crisis can help us change our mind on certain issues of great importance. For instance, it can alter the hegemonic mentality of it's every man for himself, which has prevailed since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War: <https://theconversation.com/un-recorrido-de-cine-por-berlin-emblema-politico-del-siglo-xx-129251>

Could this global pandemic lead to a kind of social revolution? A revolution as unprecedented as the pandemic itself, undertaken without shrillness and consummated through reforms of great importance. A revolution which contemplated a different set of rules, not determined strictly by economic interests; and which generated a new social contract, presided over by the vital priorities of all citizens.

Extreme Inequality is not Tenable

<https://theconversation.com/como-prevenir-la-injusticia-social-132069>

This unprecedented crisis can make us understand that the current social inequality, increasingly pronounced these days, is neither sustainable nor tenable in the medium and long term. The boundless profits of speculation must not represent the only social model to follow and have to drift toward moderation. Income from work must be appreciated as deserved, so as to reactivate an abated consumption in which the superfluous is not that much requested.

This critical situation can also make us review our dejected appreciation for the effort morale, also helping us raise awareness of climate change problems. Does it make sense to have the airspace collapsed by planes or our roads unable to cope with a gargantuan number of cars?

Perhaps we may discover that there is no point in simply getting around because new technologies allow us to communicate from our usual headquarters for work reasons. We may also discover that pleasure trips become more pleasant when we reach our destination without haste, admiring the scenery from the window of a train and therefore, enjoying the road itself. It can also show that many chores can be attended through teleworking, inasmuch as that the mere physical presence does not improve per se the fulfilment of certain objectives, or the necessary motivation to carry them out. There will remain the statistics for its comparative study.

Rethinking Investments and Priorities

<https://theconversation.com/quienes-son-los-verdaderos-parasitos-la-ganadora-de-los-oscar-y-la-lucha-de-clases-131522>

Perhaps we may realize that the exorbitant investments in military spending and weaponry are quite purposeless. It is much more profitable and beneficial for everyone to invest in science and innovation, culture and education, as well as in providing the public health system with the appropriate resources. Now we notice that those who work in healthcare provide a precious and priceless service, after budget cuts for the sake of a more or less concealed privatization. The emotional applause from the balconies is great, but it is obvious that these qualified professionals deserve much better treatment from now on. Starting with having the appropriate means to carry out their essential work.

Aligning Personal and Collective Interest

<https://theconversation.com/costa-gavras-y-los-destinos-de-europa-126532>

We have been asked to stay at home for as long as it is needed and not to panic. We must do a simultaneous exercise of individual and social responsibility, in order not to get infected and spreading the epidemic. Saving our own lives is an indisputable priority, being a condition of possibility for anything else. Rarely has such a challenge told us all to risk everything at the same time.

There will be those who experience the temptation to take advantage of this calamity to profit themselves. Indeed, some have already thought that the interests of the financial, banking and economic system should prevail for those who manage to survive the epidemic, keeping the current lifestyle unaltered. It crossed the mind of the British Prime Minister, just as the President of the United States continues to do so.

However, the coronavirus crisis could generate a collective catharsis conducive to very significant changes in the social order, in which personal and collective interests are more complementary.

A Golden Opportunity for Reflection

<https://theconversation.com/joker-o-las-mascaras-del-descontento-126235>

The impregnable walls of Troy were not able to contain the cunning plan conceived by Ulysses, and its unsuspecting population paid a high price for trusting its mythical walls. Let us take advantage of this unexpected conjuncture to reflect on our true interests and to review our scale of values. Let us make this ill-fated siege fruitful by meditating on how to sign a new social pact, beyond periclitated and obsolete formulae that seem increasingly dysfunctional each time.

Paradoxically considered as a beneficial Trojan Horse, the pandemic that is now ravaging us could generate a renewed social contract whose hinge would revolve around the most fundamental things. An unprecedented social pact whose inventive game rules confronted those new horsemen of the Apocalypse, who have now joined the traditional quartet: extreme inequality and aggravated disunity.

Solidarity and Interdependence

<https://theconversation.com/macron-los-privilegios-y-la-desigualdad-128685>

Hopefully we can rediscover the immense revenues of solidarity on behalf of a crisis that Macron has compared to a warfare state and that is according to Merkel “the greatest challenge since World War One”. Our mutual interdependence in globalization cannot be ignored, another lesson that should remain very clear. Will efforts be made to find a vaccine without thinking about the commercial exploitation of its patent? Here can the first touchstone be found.

Can the rule of law be sustained for a long time without at the same time being subscribed to a welfare state in accordance with the principles of the former? It is a good time to ask ourselves such questions and other of similar tenor. As the Prime Minister of Spain has pointed out, only those thinking they know everything will learn absolutely nothing from this traumatic experience. The rest of us should take advantage of confinement to see how a common future could be structured, presided over by more attentive values to ordinary citizens. Even if that means that macroeconomic indicators come to play second fiddle.

It is very unlikely for things to remain as they were known before because we are doubtlessly facing a turning point from a social perspective, faced with one of those great milestones that mark history. It can provide us with a lot to think about and the time to reflect calmly.

Philosophical Reflections against Ominous Self-fulfilling Prophecies

<https://theconversation.com/el-futuro-de-la-robotica-en-las-distopias-cinematograficas-129052>

<https://theconversation.com/es-una-quimera-imaginar-un-politico-moral-127837>

We should not rule out the possibility that a terrible social catastrophe of this calibre, such as the coronavirus pandemic declared in 2020, could lead us to pleasant surprises for our future coexistence in the medium term. As long as his teachings encourage us to better guide the social direction of our vital priorities, this crisis can invite us to reconnect with nature and to enjoy interpersonal relationships as we used to. It can make us see that - to paraphrase Kant - things can always be exchanged for something equivalent and therefore have a market price. People, however, should never be a mere instrument for one purpose or another because their unrepeatable character simply makes them irreplaceable. This grants them that inseparable dignity of the human being.

Although it may seem very obvious, it would look like that we tend to forget the most evident things. Let us draw positive lessons from the pandemic. The catastrophic readings tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies and that is a risk we can avoid. It is that precise purpose the one of philosophy, to make us look far away and explore new horizons from which we can glimpse new perspectives. This collective shock can terminate certain dogmas considered indisputable and usher a new era in. It is worth meditating on it together, and thus alleviating the tremendous psychological impact that is taking hold of us right now.