Covid-19 Pandemic: Socio-Economic, Psychological and Philosophical Issues on Security

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Abstract:

Security vs. Pandemic or vice versa? These two concepts interact in a unilateral way in both the personal and social becoming. They, both, focus on the survival instinct; survival could be considered as the eternal and universal force to living.

For the purpose of the present article, the meaning of security is extrapolated to many aspects of life and structures, such as State, society, humans. The analysis is performed under the scope of structural parameters of the society, such as safety, State strategic management, globalization, economy, stress, ethos, self-existence and co-existence, social identity, regulatory framework, technology, strategic information and communication.

Furthermore, there is reference on the vital concept of self-presence throughout the paper as part of the framework of "Istamology". In conclusion, there are questions for further consideration on the issue of security and pandemic.

Keywords: *Pandemic, security, safety, Istamology, ethos, economy, psychology, philosophy, technology, utopia, dystopia, eutopia, management, strategy, syntactics, globalization, self-existence, co-existence, social identity, SWOT, communication.*

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1. Introduction

Finally, pandemic crisis originates from security crisis as survival instinct? Should safety and security be considered the same or should there be a differentiation between them? And if there was a differentiation which one originates from the other? What is the case: "I want to be safe and I search for security" or "I want to be secure and I search for safety?" And who is going to provide security and/or safety in times of pandemic? Individual vs. State responsibility or State vs. Individual responsibility or both equally and simultaneously?

It is exactly where self-existence interacts with co-existence creating a safe and secure framework in pandemic times and not only. It is apparent that States should/could/would organise this unification of self-existence with co-existence; but could it be possible to be seen as a State or global exercise given on one side the cultural and historic differences and on the other globalization.

After all, is pandemic an opportunity for all of us to unite or to differentiate? Humanity, freedom, democracy, rights, duties, safety, security. In pandemic, all these concepts interact with each other, sometimes in a volatile way, and raise critical questions.

The present article discusses, throughout, these issues incorporating a reference on self-presence as explained by Istamology, a unique theoretical approach, with practical applications, that aims to advance the business culture and increase the effectiveness and productivity of an organization (Tachmatzidis and Malama, 2011, Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press).

The term "Istamology" is derived from the ancient Greek word "ίσταμαι" broadly meaning the way someone exists/is present. It focuses on the interaction between psychological and business factors in the areas of strategic management and communication, organizational culture as well as decision making and investment behavior.

Istamology uses psychological/psychotherapeutic models and quantum-mechanic principles to better analyze and enhance the operational dynamics, motivation, sustainability and self-esteem of both individuals and organizations. It proposes the term "syntactics" (syn+tactics from the Greek word "syntactiki") rather than strategy from planning to implementation and feedback to evaluation and offers a working framework to consider multiple interactions and processes in structures and systems in business environment, society.

2. On Pandemic and Security: U-topia, Eu-topia or Dys-topia?

"U-topia" (Greek origin for "no land": "ου-τοπία") tend to challenge the limits of reality. U-topias are stories of the present, of every specific present. With all due respect to linguistics and philosophy, it could be noted that the same could be argued for "Eu-topia" (Greek origin for "good land": "ευ-τοπία") and "Dys-topia" (Greek origin for "bad land": "δυσ-τοπία"). How relevant are these terms to describe every reality? It could be argued that in pandemic times we live within a dys-topia reality where security is seriously questioned. We look forward to overcoming the pandemic and live to an eu-topia reality.

Though, to avoid u-topic expectations, it is better to consider eu-topia as a driving force for eternal advancement. Where and how security, personal and State, exists or is placed in these three types of land?

Especially, studying these terms within the framework of societal formations and structures or better, States, the u-topic society serves as a motivating factor or process or even as destination. The question arises of who will define security in a society if not its members, the citizens? Citizens constitute the important participating factors for their State at a given time to create u-topia – good society or dys-topia – insecure society. Thus, it is important to carefully consider the intervention of the State in solving crises such as pandemic.

It is the dialectic dynamic relationship between u-topia and dys-topia that needs the concept of eu-topia as a balancing factor; it could be argued that safety and security are embedded in the "eu", the first term of eu-topia. The question then is how the States could take care and ensure security, in the means of economic development, regulatory frameworks, diplomacy, armed forces. Of course, in pandemic times medical advancement plays a crucial role in returning to the "usual" normality.

Finally, these three concepts of "u/dys/eu/topia" are connected with the study of the past, the present and the future having in common the most basic concept of survival that is appeared in the form of security provided by the State in question. It appears that u-topia approaches the ideal, but it is stopped by reality, the dys-topia includes internal vulnerabilities, whilst eu-topia, simply, cannot afford its eternal evolution of itself. In any case, the terms show structural level State organization, as well as political, legal, economic, and cultural processes.

3. On Pandemic and Security: Ethos and/or Economy?

Plato in his 380 BC book "Πολιτεία" (Politia – State) writes the characteristics of an organized State that takes care of the happiness of its citizens. A model of such welfare State may include justice, economic prosperity, social connectivity, and solidarity and allows to its citizens the advancement of their personality and well-being. Of course, these cannot be met in times of insecurity and lack of safety.

In pandemic, the ethos of both the State and its citizens is challenged since survival may become the main driving force of cause and reason, creating a crisis that could, in turn, produce structural changes (Tachmatzidis, 2020). There are many such occasions in history, but it could be argued that most times, the crisis became an opportunity. However, the ethos of the new society and/or State may have undergone through crucial mentality changes.

Moreover, in times of a globalized world it is important to consider and acknowledge that there may be a dynamic bipolar between safety and security as seen through different cultural angles. There may be a variety of demographic, economic, geo-strategic backgrounds as well as historic memories that do not make one solution to a problem that apparent. Such differences may become more fragile in times of crises such as in pandemic. Then security of a human, State, society may need extra consideration in order to achieve a desirable outcome.

Economy is an important parameter of societal processes and State becoming. Basic frameworks of economic processes may include moral processes and mention wild instincts. But if economics are moral science and they make reference to the psychology of the market, then they deal with motives, wishes, expectations, insecurities. Consequently, crises should be handled to protect human relationships, cultural bonds, and State relations.

Relevant to the market psychology is the psychology of SWOT analysis, an important tool of strategic management. It is interesting that in times of crisis, the SWOT structure gets skewed and the factors move each other at an opposite direction (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press).   In concern with the internal factors, strengths are seriously challenged and shrink, whereas weaknesses become enlarged like seeing them through magnified glasses.

As regards the external factors, opportunities are extremely limited and may relate, mainly, with potential solutions of the crisis, whilst threats are all over the issues. Especially, in pandemic that directly relates to public health in an extremely direct way, the SWOT is critically skewed, and it may take some time to recover and return to a more normal presence.

And this is where it the concept of expectations comes into consideration. Does expectation precede security or security precedes expectation? Whose expectations? The individual's or the society's or the State's? It is rather that they refer to "flowing expectations" for "flowing security" and vice versa within the path of the social becoming of the evolution and development of the history (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press).

Thus, it is required and suggested to consider the rich and multidimensional blend of significant factors and issues within an enlarged field of cooperation; is it

economics or socio-economics or psycho-economics or better, proposed for first time as far as the present author is aware, "Philosophical Socio-Psycho-Economics or "Philoso-Socio-Psycho-Economics - PSPE" to clearer understand the principles and processes of the latest and future complex and accelerating battleground of the market and the society?

4. On Pandemic and Security: Self and/or Social Identity?

Is social identity based on survival and security? The participation and interpersonal relationships in a social setting are based, mainly, on factors such as social comparison, self-categorization, development of a self-definition with elements of the social whole in which the individual participates. Thus, the individual develops his/her own "Social Identity Membership" (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press). Throughout life, a society member forms specific perceptions about expectations, rights, duties.

Though, given that there is no absolute truth, the critical factor on such processes is the development of the "common sense" in a safe and sound environment that, supposedly, is offered by the State. This common sense becomes the internal regulatory framework of the citizen used to evaluate cognitive entities and pleasant or unpleasant emotions.

The consequences of pandemic may seriously challenge the protective role of the State and its common sense, especially regarding safety, security as well as posing serious dilemmas in other means of social life such as health vs. illness, work vs. unemployment, lockdown vs. freedom of movement.

Such a reality becomes more and more apparent in the present pandemic because of the change in working mode. The entry of remote work brings a significant trend for people to move out of the big cities looking for a safer and less expensive way of living. Consequently, the question arises; is this the end of megacities? (Tachmatzidis, 2020).

It is important to mention the importance of the dynamic interaction between the citizen and the State. Within this societal system, the citizen informs and is informed, influences and is influenced, determines and is determined, lives with changing thoughts and emotions.

Moreover, sometimes such as nowadays in pandemic, citizens may experience fearful forces for compliance and self-regulation according to the needed regulatory framework and needed procedures. Important parameters may include safety, independence, socialization. However, is insecurity the potential discrepancy between reality and expectations, rights and duties, thoughts, and emotions? This is at the core of the debate during pandemic, affecting core values and, of course, challenging further the so much needed security.

5. On Pandemic and Security: Regulatory Influences vs. Influences?

An important factor for the formation of the social identity is the "Regulatory Influence" that constitutes the main reason for compliance (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press). The behavior of a citizen is influenced by the evaluation of the other members of the whole where he/she belongs.

However, the creation of u-topic realities is, maybe, a crucial request of the State's prevailing principle because no clear stimuli, no clear reality allows space for the use of others' estimations in order to establish the insecurity of an individual. Thus, the individual may develop a weak version of the importance and the role that he/she could play in societal processes (Tachmatzidis, 2020).

This is a serious issue because it influences common sense and, unfortunately, sometimes it could lead to the handling or even the manipulation of ideas. Such processes, hopefully rarely, may include mass media information and their important role in regulatory influence, especially nowadays that there are opportunities for worldwide dissemination of information that may be objective or subjective, true, or fake. In any case, the role of mass media is of paramount importance in overcoming mass difficulties such as pandemic.

6. On Pandemic and Security: Self-Existence and/or Co-Existence?

The interpersonal interaction consists of a series of processes that may include, firstly, the individual's internal representations, such as attitudes, perceptions, roles, motives, self-esteem, secondly, the internal state of the moment, such as calmness, stress, anxiety, and thirdly, the individual's externalization, such as the behavior. It should be noted that these same processes are present for all the participants, highlighting the complex and multi-factorial process of the interpersonal interaction.

It could be argued that it regards the debate between self-presence and co-presence, or even with more conspiracy, the eternal battle for survival between self-existence and co-existence (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press).

Is the search of survival and security of an individual a defensive or an attacking act? Risk factors for the consideration of this issue may include antisocial behavior, misperceptions, lack or unsuccessful communication, lack of effective regulatory frameworks, dysfunctional disciplinary procedures or even traumas. Extrapolating this methodology, the same process could be applied in the case of States, including further factors such lack of democracy, lack of diplomacy, lack of recourses or even past historic events. In any case, a main cause of aggression is the lack of functional socialization, lack of trust, negative influences.

The emotional instability is the result of a threatening stimulus that causes insecurity. Thus, persisting anxiety turns into fear and may, consequently, bring panic. In case that these psychological states remain for some time they lead to an emotional confinement that produces negative automatic thoughts and scenarios, generalization of the stressful and fearful stimuli accompanied by a reduction of self-esteem. The concept of self-esteem may refer to an individual as well as to the societal entity through the collective consciousness. Thus, with such processes the States renegotiate their self-image continuously (Tachmatzidis, 2020).

The emotional management stands out as a crucial variable of the normality classification, regardless how this is defined in a given society and State. A prerequisite of this emotional management is the development of a psychological culture that allows the development of trust, the reduction of stress and fear as well as the advancement of the personal wellbeing.

However, is it the case that everyone shares the same understanding of an eu-topic state? It could be considered that every member has a unique perception of the ideal eu-topia. Someone's eu-topia could be someone else's dys-topia. How these potential discrepancies relate to wealth, education, social stratification? Thus, one or many u-topic realities? Generalised or individualized eu-topic reality?

7. On Pandemic and Security: Information and/or Communication?

Communication as a mean of psychological regulation may include various strategies. For instance, punishment uses a negative reaction to a negative stimulus, whereas consequence is the withdrawal of a positive stimulus. Both punishment and consequence focus on the reduction of the negative stimulus. Of course, another mode is the reward that concerns with a positive reaction to a positive stimulus.

Though, there is a scenario that seems to occur quite often and is considered as dysfunctional communication (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press). According to this mode, a negative stimulus receives a negative reaction but in the receiver's evaluation it is considered as positive and, consequently, repeats the negative stimulus in order to continue profiting from the situation. Such communication is dysfunctional because the information, messages and intentions are not clear, thus, leading to further confinement and psychological unrest.

A eu-topia State consists of citizens that aim to manage their needs and be motivated to advance their multi-dimensional development, including concepts such as achievement, bond, solidarity, power. Important parameters for the presence of these concepts constitute the cooperation and competition that may be governed by a bipolar equilibrium (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press).

Motivation is a predisposition force for action but the more the pressure and the threat the less the motivation. Moreover, individuals with motivation to succeed tend to be cooperative all the time, whilst those with motivation for bonding cooperate when there is low risk, but they become defensive and/or aggressive in case of high risk.

Thus, within the pandemic framework, information and communication strategy are vital for the choice and implementation of relevant procedures because they heavily influence the reasoning for compliance, and consequently the motivation. Also, the length of the pandemic time is crucial for the successful management of the situation and the outcome.

Communication and decision making are multidimensional processes, especially under pressure. There are interactive factors that could be described as bipolar (Tachmatzidis *et al.,* in press). Such factors may include trust vs. suspicion, protection vs. dare, sovereignty vs. submission. These bipolar concepts are unique mental and psychological influences on a given situation. It is worth mentioning the potential deception or even falsification of the individual as well as of the reality.

Thus, it is not only the development of the best procedures in order to deal with the pandemic, but it is the importance of the communication strategy as well that could play a decisive role in the whole management. Moreover, the angle of an individual's consideration on how he/she evaluates the pandemic may complicate further the analysis of what is safety and security.

8. On Pandemic and Security: Humans and/or Technology?

Security appears to rely heavily on technology progress, including artificial intelligence and automation. These advancements have developed a branch that almost all security systems rely on and are controlled. Most of the times the information to be processed is so huge that only an advanced technological tool can consider, evaluate and, why not, execute. Undoubtedly, such powerful progress has significantly facilitated all aspects of life and has made achievement possible in all domains of human activity. Is it like there are two parallel systems working together to achieve the better outcome or they both constitute one integrated system?

Though, in any case and in a positive evaluation rather than critique, there may be some issues to be addressed in order to further refine such progress, a clear invitation to a continued advancement framework. First, is it that easy to answer the question of who has the control, the human, or the information technology systems? Is information technology an ever-ending progressive tool, and what is the cost of that, for instance in the environment? Third, humans can get stressed; is

it the case that artificial intelligence could be stressed and how is that? Specialized scientists, surely, have the answers; though, are there any mid- and long-term consequences of the "contract of trust" humans have signed with artificial intelligence?

These questions become even more relevant especially when dealing with crises, such as nowadays in pandemic that create significant anxiety. People get stressed and there is a variety of tests to offer assessment and evaluation. There are even stress tests to the Banks in order to check their endurance. Of course, hopefully, there are stress tests for the technological automation that ensure their correct, good use whichever is that, and safe functioning; is that right? Because security, especially in crises is even further crucial.

Since the present paper of this Special Issue is concerned with security in an extrapolated way, an example could refer to modern structures of information and communication such as the internet sites. Quite often, in order to allow the user to access their services and even to his/her sensitive personal data of the user, demand from the user to prove that "I am not a robot". Is there an issue of control and power in such a process, and if yes, who has it? Is the security controlled by the subject in question or by a principle that is easily enforced to the subject for its own good? Is this security in u-topia, dys-topia or eu-topia? It is suggested to answer these questions in a convergent rather than divergent way in order to advance further the knowledge and the progress.

9. Conclusion

The relationship between pandemic and security within the framework of socio-economic, psychological, and philosophical issues offers the opportunity to highlight important processes that occur in individuals, societies, States. Such debates may refer to concepts such as ethos, social identity as self-definition, regulatory compliance to social influences as parameter of the self-evaluation, analysis on self-existence and co-existence, the interactive communication in social and State becoming.

Also, the topic may generate discussion on the cooperation between humans and technology; this issue is so sensitive that even the way to express a simple title may change the focus and the meaning, for instance, "The latest technological revolution and the human resources" vs. "The human resources and the latest technological revolution"; it is a question of who should fit to the other...just for security!

Finally, by whom, how, when, where is security defined? Does the pandemic challenge security or the drive for security exaggerate the pandemic? How security relates to u-topia, dys-topia, eu-topia? How does the State relate to u-topia, dys-

topia, eu-topia? Does the State need security or security needs the State or both, especially in crises such as pandemic?

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