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The Invention of an Epidemic

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Faced with the frenetic, irrational and entirely unfounded emergency measures adopted against an alleged epidemic of coronavirus, we should begin from the declaration issued by the National Research Council (CNR), which states not only that "there is no SARS-CoV2 epidemic in Italy", but also that "the infection, according to the epidemiologic data available as of today and based on tens of thousands of cases, causes mild/moderate symptoms (a sort of influenza) in 80-90% of cases. In 10-15% of cases a pneumonia may develop, but one with a benign outcome in the large majority of cases. It has been estimated that only 4% of patients require intensive therapy".
If this is the real situation, why do the media and the authorities do their utmost to spread a state of panic, thus provoking an authentic state of exception with serious limitations on movement and a suspension of daily life in entire regions?
Two factors can help explain such a disproportionate response. First and foremost, what is once again manifest is the tendency to use a state of exception as a normal paradigm for government. The legislative decree immediately approved by the government "for hygiene and public safety reasons" actually produces an authentic militarization "of the municipalities and areas with the presence of at least one person who tests positive and for whom the source of transmission is unknown, or in which there is at least one case that is not ascribable to a person who recently returned from an area already affected by the virus". Such a vague and undetermined definition will make it possible to rapidly extend the state of exception to all regions, as it's almost impossible that other such cases will not appear elsewhere. Let's consider the serious limitations of freedom the decree contains: a) a prohibition against any individuals leaving the affected municipality or area; b) a prohibition against anyone from outside accessing the affected municipality or area; c) the suspension of events or initiatives of any nature and of any form of gatherings in public or private places, including those of a cultural, recreational, sporting and religious nature, including enclosed spaces if they are open to the public; d) the closure of kindergartens, childcare services and schools of all levels, as well as the attendance of school, higher education activities and professional courses, except for distance learning; e) the closure to the public of museums and other cultural institutions and spaces as listed in article 101 of the code of cultural and landscape heritage, pursuant to Legislative Decree 22 January 2004, no. 42. All regulations on free access to those institutions and spaces are also suspended; f) suspension of all educational trips both in Italy and abroad; g) suspension of all public examination procedures and all activities of public offices, without prejudice to the provision of essential and public utility services; h) the enforcement of quarantine measures and active surveillance of individuals who have had close contacts with confirmed cases of infection.
The disproportionate reaction to what according to the CNR is something not too different from the normal flus that affect us every year is quite blatant. It is almost as if with terrorism

exhausted as a cause for exceptional measures, the invention of an epidemic offered the ideal pretext for scaling them up beyond any limitation.

The other no less disturbing factor is the state of fear that in recent years has evidently spread among individual consciences and that translates into an authentic need for situations of collective panic for which the epidemic provides once again the ideal pretext. Therefore, in a perverse vicious circle, the limitations of freedom imposed by governments are accepted in the name of a desire for safety that was created by the same governments that are now intervening to satisfy it.