



Multidimensionale Risks in the XXI Century

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Uncertainty virus and social metamorphosis

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The assessment of citizens' perception and understanding of risk is necessary to construct society, to govern and manage security. To make the global world run as it usually is, people have to "code" their lives using the /if then/ command: if I am safe, if everything is fine, then I can act without asking myself why. Just to give the impression of living a dynamic, mercurial life, our reality (globalization, market economy, production...) needs a stable, predictable, riskless environment, even if eliminating risk from our lives involves cutting off complexity and meaning: "The category of risk opens up a world within and beyond the clear distinction between knowledge and non-knowing" (Beck 2007: 5). The risk is always something threatening our lives from the outside: migrants, commercial barriers, climate change. One of the main questions is again what is normal and what is pathological (Canguilhem 1991); the conceptualization of normality is usually too reductive, for the risk of pathology is unbearable. Nowadays risk is related to the proximity of the "other", the sick, so that the only way to protect oneself is isolation: can society survive to distance even in the internet age? The virus (Serres 2010) as a divisive criterion forces to reaffirm limits and borders, to choose who deserves to be saved and part of this new group and who is left behind, but is risk really outside? Right now, liquid fear (Bauman 2008) is drowning our lives, but the expectation of a catastrophe staged as a turning point between the old and the new world might herald the advent of a social metamorphosis (Beck 2017). After the pandemic, several scenarios might be considered, even one in which, after the virtual spell we have lived under until now it is quite possible that new forms of grassroots relationality may emerge.

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