



# **Sociology of the Pandemic and the Paradigm Transformation in the New Normal Period**

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## **Sociology of the Pandemic and the Paradigm Transformation in the New Normal Period<sup>1</sup>**

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*After hopelessness, there is so much hope.  
After darkness, there is so much brighter sun.  
Mevlana*

### **Abstract**

In the 21st century, the COVID-19 pandemic deeply affects the individual, society and state. Individuals and societies live in anxiety, fear and depression spiral in ontological distrust. All pandemics in history have been caused by the virus that has passed from animals to humans. All pandemics have created a change in society. Just as the plague epidemic brought the end of feudalism in the 14th century, the COVID-19 outbreak in the 21st century accelerated the transition to the information society, risk society and surveillance society. In order to protect from the epidemic, family relations have changed in the quarantine period. Education and work are carried out online from home. The practice of staying home changes the daily lives of children, youth, elderly, women, and men. Pandemic accelerated the transition to the information society. Pandemic has revealed the reality of risk society. It builds the Internet-based life surveillance community. Both surveillance society practice and fear of virus produce paranoid-schizoid society. The need for a new paradigm has emerged instead of an individual-based narcissistic culture of neoliberalism. Pandemic will result in the taming of either an authoritarian state, a social state, or liberalism. Countries need to get rid of the paranoid-schizoid mood and re-establish global solidarity.

### **Keywords**

*Pandemic, information society, risk society, surveillance society, paranoid-schizoid society*

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## Introduction

People and societies around the world are in quarantine due to the virus identified as COVID-19 that can only be seen with an electron microscope. Individuals experience shock and trauma in anxiety and depression due to the “ontological distrust” that is always at risk of being infected and confronted with death, with the effect of death and disease statistics shared in the media. In the process of intense globalization, it is natural for a person who believes that it exists with consumption, who thinks that the world is at his fingertips, and who disdains everyone and other creatures with a narcissistic mood, that they may experience psychological and social crisis in the possibility of being destroyed by an invisible virus.

The stages of the individual and society’s responses when faced with a disaster can be described as follows in the example of the COVID-19 pandemic. (a) *Denial*: Nothing serious happens, some irresponsible individuals just spread panic; (b) *Anger*: Usually racist or anti-state: The Chinese are guilty, our state is not productive. (c) *Negotiation*: Okay, there are some victims, but we can limit the damage. (d) *Depression*: We are all doomed to this disaster. (e) *Acceptance*: Accept the effects and reality of the virus outbreak and comply with the measures. Learning to live with the virus (Zizek, 2020: 52). As will be noted at these stages, individuals and societies who encounter a disaster and trauma do not accept the problem first, and the next step is to find blame and scapegoat about the problem. At first, the individual who denies the problem and accuses someone else in anger is considering the problem in the next negotiation stage and is thinking about getting rid of trauma with little damage. After the depression stage created by the trauma, it is adapted to the new normal with the stage of accepting and confronting the problem.

Facing the virus outbreak is as old as human history for humans and societies. However, due to his mental and psychological structure, he forgets negativities.

One cannot understand the situations in which he does not live in or experience. He can not internalize the severity of outbreaks in history. When COVID-19 appeared in Wuhan, China in December 2019, people kept on watching those who died on the streets as if watching a movie until they became aware of the seriousness of the pandemic as the virus spread from China to all countries with the rapid and intense interaction of globalization. The majority of countries have started to implement the measures implemented by China against the pandemic in coordination with the World Health Organization.

In this context, the lives of people and communities have begun to change. Analyzing this change process, understanding the transformation, and analyzing new codes of daily life, which are expressed as new normal, will shed light on both the present and the future. There is a one-to-one relationship between the sociology that is examining the social behavior patterns of people and understanding the society. Since every society has its own cultural codes, the sociological structure of all societies is not uniform. Different socialities are a reality as well as similarities in the context of globalization. Sociological analysis has three dimensions: “micro” on individual basis, “mezzo” on institutional basis and “macro” on society and state. Individual, institution, and society are in interaction and relationship. In this article, the sociology of the global pandemic and the paradigm transformation in the new normal period are examined. Thus, the issue will be described in its historical background, current state and the relationality of its possible future transformations within the context of individual, institution and society.

### **Sociology of Global Pandemic**

Globalization is both a phenomenon, an ideology, and a situation as well. No one can isolate himself from the impact of globalization anymore. There is not an outside in globalization; everyone is either a “subject” or “object” of it.

Sociology, which creates its scientific tradition in order to find a solution to the crises created by the industrial revolution, is defined as a science created by industrial society and modernity. After the “Agricultural Revolution” and “Agricultural Society” stage, “Industrial Revolution” and “Industrial Society” were experienced. Today, the newly formed revolution is called the “Information Revolution” and the newly formed society is called the “Information Society”. While the symbol of the agricultural revolution is “wooden plow”, the symbol of the industrial revolution is “steam machine” and the symbol of the IT revolution is “internet”. Traditional culture has been structured in the agricultural society, modern culture in the industrial society and the postmodern culture in the information society.

Different sociologists make different classifications in terms of the transformation of the new social structure, hence the society. For example, Manuel Castells calls this newly structured society as “Network Society”. One of

the other new concepts is the “Risk Society” produced by Ulrich Beck. Anthony Giddens also uses the concept of “Reflective Modernization”, which includes the concept of risk society, too. Another concept is the “Surveillance Society”, first used by Gary T. Marx, developed by David Lyon and also handled by Giddens (Bayhan, 2011a: 207).

The COVID-19 global pandemic serves as a tool that includes both the risk society, the information society and the surveillance society and we experience the practices of these community structures in the context of the social and cultural changes it creates in the society.

The COVID-19 outbreak is not only a health problem, but it is also a social problem. With the definition of the World Health Organization, health is a complete biological, psychological, and social well-being of the individual. The phenomenon of health and illness is not only a disruption of the physiological and biological structure, but also a reality that affects the mental structure and social status of the individual. The geographical environment that everyone lives in builds, cultural and social structure of the health patterns. The prescription of the disease differs from individual to individual, from society to society and from culture to culture.

As seen in history, the risk of pandemic diseases can arise at any time and in any period. Although the risks experienced in each period differ, if we categorize and make the ideal type, it is possible to classify the current and possible risks as follows:

1. *Ecological Risks: Nuclear war threat, global warming, climate change, ozone layer depletion, natural risks (earthquake, flood, fire, pandemics etc.)*
2. *Social Risks: Transformation of the family (postmodern family patterns; increased divorces, single-parent families, loneliness, alienation), unemployment, social interstitial gap, income gap between countries, increased rape of people’s privacy through media and the Internet (designed by George Orwell in his novel “1984” The possibility of the danger of experiencing the similar “Big Brother”).*
3. *Technological Risks: Mass destruction weapons, chemical and biological weapons, magnetic contamination.*
4. *Cultural Risks: Americanization of living spaces (Hollywood culture affecting all countries through media and cinema), cultural conflict, fundamentalism, ethnocentrism, uniformity, homogenization.*
5. *Political Risks: Regional conflict (Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East), war, hegemony of developed countries (economic and political dependence), transnational organizations directing country policies (IMF, World Bank, European Union etc.), terrorism (Bayhan, 2002: 200). Sharing war in Syria and Turkey being forced to be home for nearly 5 million migrants and the risks in Syria today. There is no guarantee that no one will be a refugee at any time. We live in fragile and vague times.*

We live with risks in every aspect of our lives. How many of the natural disasters defined as external risk are natural? We exploit the nature and disturb the balance with the endless greedy consumption habit of human beings. We cause flood, drought, pandemic, and starvation. While wealthy societies produce the risk of obesity (overweight); Poverty and deprivation produce the risk of starvation and social explosion in poor societies. We don't know how pure, and healthy the drinks we drink. Although we are aware of the harm that our food contains, especially the additives in fast foods, and the hormones and fruits, we still consume it. Although mobile phones, televisions and computers emit radiation, they function as an indispensable organ of our lives and we depend on technological devices. In crowded cities, we are always at risk of having a car accident and bombing of terrorists (Bayhan, 2011a). With COVID-19 disease, we also recognized the risk of pandemic disease.

In the context of the reality of the risk society, building houses that are resistant to earthquakes from natural risks, not constructing shelters against the flood to the river bed or obeying the rules against traffic accidents are some of the precautions just like the prevention practices taken against pandemics are similar in the historical process.

*The effects of global pandemics in the context of some examples in history can be expressed as follows. The relationship between outbreaks, people and civilizations goes back to ancient times. There were significant population losses due to pandemic diseases from Babylonians, Hittites, ancient Greek site states to the Great Roman Empire, China and Japan to Europe and America, and accordingly significant economic and social consequences emerged (Şeker et al., 2020: 113). During the Roman plague (161-166), the throne fights increased as a result of the plague pandemic, and Christianity became widespread. Some of the most common diseases such as plague, leprosy, dysentery, syphilis and malaria, etc. were moved to the Islamic geography by the Crusaders armies during the Crusade wars against Muslims for a period of 200 years from the late 11th to the late 13th century.*

*The plague epidemic (Black plague), which started in China in the 14th century and moved to Europe, caused the ten thousand years of feudalism to collapse due to the population decrease. Religious values decreased and doubts about Christian belief increased, reformations started with the spread of Protestantism (Şeker et al., 2020: 113-114). Plague and flower microbes were among the most determining factors in the emergence of the mercantilist (trade capitalism) period and the emergence of modern European-based nation states between 1450-1750. On the basis of the liberal understanding in the period of 1750-1930, microbes had an important effect on the shaping and development of industrial capitalism within the framework of the market mechanism. Keynesian economics, which raised the increasing importance of the state in the 1930-1980 period, continued until the 2020s as the dominant general paradigm, withdrawing the state from the market and the new classical economics, where the private sector would be more effective. It is clear that with the Coronavirus,*



*the importance of the state in the economy will gradually increase and more internalized national approaches will come to the fore instead of globalization (Şeker et al., 2020: 118).*

Another epidemic having affected the world was Spanish Flu, which lasted between 1918 and 1920. It is estimated that 50 million people died from the Spanish Flu, which was effective in ending the First World War. It is known that the source of all epidemic diseases is animals and people who exploit nature for consumption. It is a scientifically proved reality that viruses that pass from domesticated animals, especially wild animals, to humans, mutate and pass from human to human.

Spanish Flu, which started in the USA in 1918 and lasted two years, was a virus disease that passes from birds to pigs and from pigs to humans. Spanish Flu, which moved to Europe with American soldiers, has spread all over the world. COVID-19 is also thought to have passed from a wild animal called pangolin a kind of bat in China to people and spread among people. It is already stated that COVID-19 has spread from the wildlife market in Wuhan, China. It is thought that the SARS virus that emerged in 2002 was related to the lifestyle and food culture of China, such as COVID-19, and spread to other countries. Like the COVID-19 in 2020, Spanish Flu in 1918 caused pneumonia and led to death. The similarity between two pandemics that occur 100 years apart is not only the biological and medical aspect of the disease; but it also has a lot in common in respect of using mask to protect against pandemic, holiday schools, closure of places of worship, physical and social isolation etc.

Today, compulsory changes in people's daily lives negatively affect human relations. Economically, both countries and individuals are negatively affected. In order to be protected from the pandemic, those who have the opportunity to work in their homes and those who have the opportunity to work through the internet can protect themselves from pandemics. However, employees providing health, market, safety, food and distribution services continue their work despite the risk of infection. In addition, those who have to work without social security in flexible jobs are also unemployed due to the closure of their workplaces. The education is carried out in digital environment via internet and creates adjustment problems for students and teachers who are used to formal education. Live at home unvoluntarily causes depression as it causes restriction of the social environment for individuals.

It is seen that the ways of protection from pandemics are the same until medically resolved. The methods used to protect from the Spanish Flu 100 years ago are the same as the ways to protect against the COVID-19 virus outbreak today. It is also interesting that during the plague pandemic 1000 years ago, Ibn Sina's solution suggestions against those pandemic diseases that spread from person to person were implemented in 2020 as well; "Do the cleaning with vinegar. Always wash your hands, dishes and clothes with vinegar. Don't wander together. Do not create crowds by gathering five to ten people. Leave

the markets. Do not use money. Do not worship collectively. Do not be afraid of the pandemic, avoid the disease, do not leave your patients. Stay at your home and be joyful. The disease escapes from joy” (Şeker et al., 2020: 5). Until vaccine or drug is found, the ways to prevent pandemic diseases are seen to be the same 100 years ago, 1000 years ago and nowadays. The necessity to clean hands and pay attention to hygiene during the pandemic is a positive gain since it became a habit due to COVID-19. While this situation has the potential to rehabilitate the people who are psychologically obsessive-compulsive and constantly washes hands, it also poses a risk for some individuals developing obsessive-compulsive behaviors.

The consequences of historical outbreaks can be categorized as follows:

**Health Effects:** *Mass illness, mass death and disability, insufficient service due to the extraordinary increase in the need for health care, inadequate supply of materials and medicines, negatively affected people in need of care, increase in health expenditures, healthcare personnel and patient-intensive care insufficiency, deterioration of individual and community psychology.*

**Demographic Effects:** *Population decrease, population density decrease, decrease in child-young-old population, etc.*

**Economic Effects:** *Decrease in production, not cultivating agricultural land, increase in inflation, decrease in growth, increase in unemployment, affected economic instruments, lack of basic needs, etc*

**Social Effects:** *Panic, negative effects on human relations, decreased social activities, discrimination, negative effects on city life, negative effects on education, removal of public personnel permits, increased social turmoil, etc.*

**Political Effects:** *The collapse of some civilizations, the negative impact of feudalism in the Middle Ages, decreased trust in church-religious structures, Reform and Renaissance movements, change of dynasties-administrations, rebellions, increased restlessness, triggering or ending wars, etc. (Şeker et al., 2020: 31).*

Global outbreaks have also transformed medical paradigms. Just as it shaped a new medical paradigm by understanding the plague pandemic in the Middle Ages, enlightenment and accepting that the answers were in nature; Just as it laid the foundation of modern public health by establishing the quarantine establishment of the cholera epidemic in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire; COVID-19 should also demonstrate that epidemics and pandemics do not fit within the framework of neoliberal medicine, and should be able to bring the paradigm evolved from “bedside” medicine to “hospital medicine” with society and to isolate it from profit ambition (Elbek, 2020).

The COVID-19 outbreak caused not only negative consequences but also an environmentally positive outcome. As a result of the halt in mandatory industrial production, especially in China, air and environmental pollution decreased. The researches clearly indicate that the ozone layer, which was

drilled, has fixed itself. Dolphins started swimming again on the seashores when people were forced to stay at home and get away from nature.

COVID-19 has also created changes in the sociology of everyday life. Due to the distinction of public space and private (intimate) space in social life, men spend most of their lives in public spaces (workplace, city square, coffeehouse, cafes, sports events, etc.) in terms of gender; whereas women mostly spend their time in private and at homes. Women are responsible for the whole household chores. While the children go to school early in the morning, the old men spent most of their time in public places such as coffee shops, parks, etc. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, all the members of the house started to spend all the time at home with the “stay at home” order. While this situation has caused role conflicts and adaptation problems for some people, it helped to increase social solidarity and awareness for those who managed the crisis well. People who do household chores jointly, who make bread at home and share it on social media are examples of this integration. Although eating outside is a common way of living in modern societies, families started to cook and eat at home due to the closure of all restaurants and cafes during the quarantine process. In fact, the stay at home order leads to a return to traditional and natural life.

In normal times, the fast and competitive lifestyle required by the capitalist economy-politics forced family members to leave the house without breakfast together before going to work or school early in the morning. Before the pandemic, especially in big cities, due to the traffic density, family members were arriving home very late, having dinner separately and using the houses like a hotel. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic, the time spent by family members at home increased considerably. This period created an opportunity for the family members to get to know and discover the house, realize and understand each other. However, the process of staying at home turns into depression for disagreeable spouses. There has been an increase in cases of domestic violence in all countries.

In the quarantine process in China, domestic violence has increased by 300 percent and there has been an intense increase in divorce rates (Euronews, 11.03.2020). Domestic violence increased by 30 percent in France and 38 percent in Turkey during the quarantine period (Erem, 2020).

According to Bozkurt’s research, women’s productivity decline is much higher than men’s. As the number of people living at home increases, women’s productivity decreases much more. The quarantine brought by the pandemic has eliminated the possibility of outsourcing for childcare, cleaning and food for women working online. This greatly increased the burden on the working woman (Bozkurt, 2020: 280). The rate of depression is higher in women who continue both their household chores and keep on working from home online.

As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, those who have the opportunity to work from home via the Internet with the “stay at home” order continued to work online. Online education started for the primary, secondary, high school, and university students via the internet. Education and working style in the information (informatics) society are experienced.

In the context of the information society, with the use of communication tools and computing techniques in education, the structure of education has been changing. In this context, the teacher will act as a coordinator in the computerized education process. Teaching learning will become important. Education will not be limited to schools. In our rapidly changing age, the information learned at school is not sufficient. For this, it is important for the person to constantly renew himself, to follow the developments in his profession. In this framework, the internet will have an effective function (Bayhan, 1992: 187). Every process from production to consumption is structured digitally in our living spaces. E-state and e-societies are the reality of our age.

Turkey has already had the distant teaching by letters in the 1970s and had ongoing distant training experience with Anadolu University Open Education application after 1980. Transition to online education was fast, as most universities already had distance education infrastructure and programs. Primary, secondary and high school education has also been initiated interns of distance education model, which has also been carried out over the internet, especially via television. In this context, the system has already been converted to e-state and e-society applications in the last two years in Turkey and this has provided an important infrastructure and hardware. The banking system was also ready for this new IT society with its online applications. Therefore, the pandemic has been instrumental in the implementation of important transformations of the transition to the informatics society throughout the society. Even if the virus has been vaccinated and medicated, the online education and online working patterns of the informatics society, which is the new social structure, will be maintained together with the old working and education form. In this process, although students and teachers are not used to distance education and they have adaptation problems, an important experience has been gained as a transition process. Homework and project-based online platforms will continue to be used even if normal face-to-face teaching starts. While the widespread use of internet-based distance education model is a reality in education, on the other hand, internet, and social media addiction, especially for children and adolescents, it is also a risk in terms of psychiatric diseases. Apart from the educational function, children and young people who spend all their time with digital games on the internet experience violent behavior due to playing digital addiction and violent games. When virtual social communication replaces real social communication, introvert and nerdy individuals emerge. Generation Z, born after 2000, grew up in the life as the “digital native” where the internet is fundamental. The digital individual of the digital age produces new codes of behavior.

The same adaptation process is also applicable for the knowledge-based sectors that have the opportunity of working online from home. At the first phase, some conflicts regarding the roles at home life and in the business, life may occur besides the decrease in terms of efficiency, yet the new home office system will be adapted. Traffic problems will decrease and time spent in traffic will be saved by working from home, air pollution and environmental pollution arising from the cars on the way to work will be prevented and it will be possible to save from the food and office expenses at the workplace. Even if it is not entirely applicable to work online from home, perhaps it will be possible to switch to hybrid work patterns by working at the office on some certain days and by working from home on some certain days of the week. This transformation may be convenient for knowledge-based sectors; however standard working procedures of other service and production sectors will continue. Also, online teaching may not be available for all social classes of the society. Even in the quarantine process, there were students who could not participate to online teaching from home because they did not have internet connection and computer. The state's Internet provision to all students and families is seen as an important public service of the future.

Tendency of urbanization has increased with the industrialization. Industrial society is the urban society in a sense. However, today cities have become uninhabitable. Although there has been no progress in terms social and material conditions of the city, density of population has increased in the urban life. Problems from settlement to transportation and from environmental pollution to health have increased. In the information society, people move away from the city by means of communication tools and computers, depending on the work locations where the difference of space is not important. Satellite cities are being established near the city and the rate of settlement increases within smaller cities, towns and rural areas (Bayhan, 1992: 188). Those who have the opportunity to work from home by means of internet have moved to settlements in rural areas to avoid from the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who have moved to the rural areas both in order to get rid of the risk of intense human and environmental pollution and virus transmission and to stay in quarantine in a clean and natural environment are the wealthy ones. However, those who are poor and obliged to work had to live in big cities. Therefore, discourse of an egalitarian virus is an illusion since it is transmitted to everyone rich or poor. It is a reality that upper social classes are more privileged and luckier in terms of protection against the virus and treatment of the disease because wealthy ones have financial power to purchase the health services.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, mortality rate is higher among the elderly people since they have weaker immune system and more chronic diseases. Therefore, the first measure to protect the elderly people was to quarantine citizens over 65 years old through the "stay at home" process. However, at the beginning of the application, this situation was misunderstood, and the elderly ones were stigmatized as if they were spreading the disease. In the Turkey case, later the quarantine was extended to the children and young people under 20 years

old by applying the curfew. In this case, the aim was to prevent the risk of young ones' carrying the virus from outside to inside and transmitting to the elderly ones whose immunity was not resistant. Not only are the elderly ones exposed to the risk of stigma. As the virus spreads from China, Chinese and people from Far East, who are similar to the Chinese, have also faced the risk of marginalization and violence and they will be exposed to such treatments. Also, minorities in all pandemic processes have always been stamped as scapegoats. In the COVID-19 pandemic, it is monitored that Muslims in India are marginalized, stigmatized, and exposed to violence on the ground that they spread the epidemic. Migrants constitute the accused and stigmatized groups in each country. The stigmatization and marginalization of the elderly ones is experienced in the way by taking the respirator from the elderly patient and wearing it to the young one when there is only one respirator left in intensive care in Italy and Spain cases. In fact, this situation dates to Darwin's theory of "natural selection." Within the context of the theory of the survival of the strong ones, the practice of "herd immunity" in the first period was abandoned in England when the severity of the pandemic appeared. After Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prince Charles suffered the COVID-19 pandemic, quarantine measures were begun to be applied.

Turkey has been among the best countries in managing the pandemic process. In order to overcome the crisis with less damage, Minister of Health's working in coordination with the scientific committee, which was established within the Ministry of Health, has gone down in history as exemplary governance practices. Despite the privatization in the health sector with the neoliberal practices, the importance of making public investments in health throughout the country has emerged positively in pandemic. Number of the tomography devices which was seen as waste and more than European countries before also played an important role in diagnosis and treatment of the pandemic. It is possible to say the same thing about the modern and fully equipped city hospitals. Both the USA and developed European countries failed in the management of the pandemic. The crisis has been observed more in the USA where the health investment is left to the private sector with neoliberal practices. The same is true for England, Italy, Spain and France, as well. Turkey has donated health and hygiene supplies to 80 countries, mainly masks and gloves. Britain and Europe, where the industrial revolution started, have become unable to find the enough amounts of masks during the pandemic process as they have carried industrial production to Bangladesh, India and China through globalization and privatization practices. After the pandemic, the neoliberal political economy implemented for the past 30 years will need to be revised.

While the global COVID-19 pandemic allows us to face the reality of the risk society; it has also enforced the implementation of the information society structure. Information society's e-government and e-society applications with the social media usage patterns constitute the transition to surveillance society by evolving into a new society.

In our age, “surveillance society” is the name of the society organized by using surveillance-based techniques. To be under surveillance means recording the movements and activities of the person by using technology on behalf of the organizations and management units that make up the society. These recorded data are sorted, categorized and used to make many decisions that will affect our lives (Report on the Surveillance Society, 2006: 5).

Surveillance is becoming increasingly global. Surveillance in the city is constantly experienced, from the first phone call in the morning, to the camera on the street, to the retina scanner on the bank machine, to the trace cookie on the computer, to the barcode in the office key, to the automated highway toll, to mobile phone connections, to the camera in the shop, to the station and finally to the bar at the end of the night (Lyon, 2006: 111). Our life spaces transform into “One is Watching Us” reality inspired by the television program format.

Since the internet and social media are the basic means of the global surveillance society, it is now a reality that we are constantly observed in all our life spaces. Globalization is not outside. It is a utopia to live in a closed society. We are unable to maintain our daily lives without e-government and e-society. It is impossible to think of a life other than ATMs, where the pensioner or employee withdraws salaries, the fact of shopping by the credit card, and immediate communication by e-mail and social media. We always leave our digital footprints on social media. Social media networks that friends or family members communicate with are almost a part of our lives and bodies. Social media where we share our sadness and joys at any moment actually mirrors us. Our projection is our posts on social media accounts (Bayhan, 2018: 1044). It is anticipated that some technological practices will rapidly spread after the pandemic. Artificial intelligence; storage and sharing of personal data; monitoring the individuals is one of these leading application areas (Taştan, 2020: 6).

China is a concrete example of the surveillance society. There are 200 million security cameras in China and most of them are equipped with highly effective facial recognition technology. They can even distinguish the moles on faces. It is not possible to escape from the security cameras. These cameras are equipped with artificial intelligence and they are able to observe and evaluate every citizen in public spaces, shops, streets, stations and airports. All this digital surveillance infrastructure is now proven to be extremely effective in controlling the pandemic. When someone leaves Beijing station, it is automatically detected by a camera that measures the body temperature. If this temperature is worrying, a notification goes to everyone’s mobile phone that is in the same wagon. It is not in vain that the system knows who sits where on the train (Han, 2020). A transparent prison, described by Foucault as Panopticon, is realized by means of today’s digital applications and extended to the whole society.



Physical surveillance systems track what we do in the outside world, where we go, with whom we meet, what we watch on TV or which website we visit on the Internet. It has no connection with our body. However, subcutaneous-surveillance systems follow what is happening in our body. It started by measuring values such as temperature. But it can also control blood pressure, heart rhythm or brain activities. Thanks to those, it is possible to learn more about people than ever before. In this way, totalitarian regimes can emerge, which have never been seen before (Harari, 2020).

Due to the protection of the personal information, it is not possible to carry out a similar digital fight against the virus in Europe as it is done in Asia. Chinese mobile phone and internet providers share customers' sensitive information with the security forces and the ministry of health. Therefore, the state knows everything from where I am to who I meet, what I do, what I seek, what I think, what I eat, what I buy and where I go. In the future, it is also possible for the state to control body temperature, weight, blood sugar level etc. A digital bio-politics accompanying digital psycho-politics which actively controls people (Han, 2020). With the chip that is planned to be placed in each individual, it is possible to evolve into the surveillance and control society described in George Orwell's 1984 novel, where there will be no personal privacy.

As it can be seen, the COVID-19 global pandemic is not only a medical problem but a problem having some psychological and sociological dimensions and effects. If there has been a change in the social structure after each global pandemic, just as the feudality resolved after the plague in the 14th century, it can be predicted that societies may turn into surveillance society in the 21st century after the COVID-19 global pandemic.

### **Paradigm Transformation in the New Normal Period**

The statement of "Nothing will be the same anymore" means that new normals will be constructed in our life spaces. New normal period rules are being structured in order to protect against the pandemic that occurs in the period expressed as normal and affects the social and cultural structure. It is the daily life practices of the new normal to wear a mask, to pay attention to physical and social distance and to apply hygiene rules until the medicine and vaccine is found for COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, there is a possibility that the pandemic could lead to a new paradigm transformation in the social system. Kuhn explains the changes in science with the process of changing paradigms. A science is dominated by a valid paradigm at a certain time. In this process, normal science operates. Scientists work to expand the dominant paradigm in this accumulation period of the knowledge. Such scientific work inevitably produces abnormalities or findings that the dominant paradigm cannot explain. If the abnormalities increase, a crisis stage emerges, and this crisis may result in a scientific revolution. As a new paradigm is placed at the centre of science, the dominant



paradigm is overturned. A new sovereign paradigm is born, and the ground is prepared for the repeat of the cycle.

Inspired by Kuhn's paradigm shift, while normal life continued in the pre-COVID-19 period in its normal fluidity, the whole life was shocked by the COVID-19 pandemic and an abnormal situation caused a crisis. Since the old paradigm (health, state, politics and etc.) has become insufficient, the transition to a new paradigm with revolution and the establishment of a new normal are in question. In this context, the renewal and transformation of the system worn by anomaly in the new normal period comes to the agenda.

After the neoliberal economic-political structure faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, discussions about the new economic-political system started. In this sense, this question is asked: "Will the post-pandemic states turn into authoritarian states or social states, or will the liberalism be tamed?"

### ***Authoritarian State***

The question of whether the states after the pandemic will evolve into authoritarian structure was put forward by Giorgio Agamben. He claims that the rights restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic are at the risk of turning from an exception to authoritarian rule. According to Agamben, the tendency to use the exception as a normal management paradigm is increasing. The situation of fear, which turns into a real need for collective panic states of the epidemic, also provides the ideal excuse (Agamben, 2020).

According to Byung-Chul Han, China will now be able to sell the digital police state as a successful model against the pandemic. Moreover, it will show the superiority of its system even more proudly. And after the pandemic, capitalism will continue even stronger. The virus will not defeat the capitalism. The viral revolution will not come true. No virus can make a revolution. The virus isolates and individualizes us. It does not produce a strong collective feeling. Somehow, everyone just tries to survive. Solidarity established by maintaining mutual distances is not solidarity that allows us to imagine a different, more peaceful and fair society (Han, 2020).

In her book, *The Shock Doctrine - The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, Naomi Klein states that political powers may benefit from the public's shock state after some shocking events such as war, coups, terrorist attacks, market disruption or natural disasters. Powers may suspend the democracy and implement radical "free market" policies which are disadvantageous to lower-middle class but prospers the 1% of the population after such shocks. However, she states that shocks and crises do not necessarily have to move forward in this way since it is possible that a crisis can also lead to an evolutionary leap (Klein, 2020).

### ***Social State***

According to Žižek, as the COVID-19 pandemic panic spreads, we now have to make a final choice: either we will accept the wildest logic of the survival

principle of the strongest, or we will invent a new communism in a global coordination and cooperation and choose to implement it. The COVID-19 outbreak not only points to the limits of globalization based on market economy, but also shows that the limits of nationalist populism, which insist on the full independence of the state, are more deadly: the slogan of ‘America first!’ is now over, because America can only be saved thanks to global cooperation and coordination (Zizek, 2020b). When Zizek states about communism, he certainly does not mean old style communism, but mentions that it is a global type of organization that can not only control and regulate the economy, but also restrict the sovereignty of nation-states when needed. Countries could do this in the context of war in the past, and now we are approaching a medical war together (Zizek, 2020a).

### ***Liberal State***

According to Henry Kissinger, responses against to the COVID-19 global pandemic at the national level should be replaced by the global cooperation and preparations should be made for the post-epidemic. The USA should prepare a new Marshall Plan in this process, and Europe should not be left alone in the economic sense against the pandemic. In this process, the USA can follow three paths. Global struggle against the pandemic should be supported and resistance should be increased; steps should be taken and pioneered to help eliminate the damage caused by the virus to the world economy; the liberal market should be protected and improved. However, while many old institutions are in a heavy defeat against the virus, someone should also stand out for the leadership. Liberal democracies, which will lead the fight against the crisis, can preserve their superiority and adapt to the new order (Kissinger, 2020 cited by İstikbal, 2020).

Political scientist Joseph S. Nye, Jr. states that the crisis has grown as a result of the wrong decisions made by the leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Nye, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic was an opportunity for transformational leaders. A transformational leader would have realized earlier that the crisis cannot be solved by country acting lonely because it is global by nature. US president Trump and Chinese president Shi missed this opportunity. In a globalizing world, connections are an important source of power. And in an increasingly sophisticated world, the most connected states are the strongest states (Şimşek, 2020, cited by Nye, 2020).

If looked closely, global cooperation and solidarity among countries are emphasized by all intellectuals in order to overcome the pandemic crisis. The problem is that which leader will launch it. In the midst of a global economic, social and ontological crisis, finding a solution seems difficult when there are US and Chinese leaders who still accuse each other of the conspiracy theories that “the pandemic was artificially produced in the lab environment and it was spread”.

According to Fukuyama, two different factors emerge critically if one looks at different degrees of success in the countries that are fighting the pandemic. The first is the degree of public capacity related to health workers, emergency teams, infrastructure, and the number of available resources; the second critical factor concerns the degree of citizens' trust in their governments. Whether democratic or authoritative, all people must ensure a high degree of voluntary compliance with the rules of the state. Germany and South Korea are democracies with this degree of trust, and as a result they outperformed most of their neighbours (Fukuyama, 2020). Turkey's achievements and performance during the crisis have also been proven. The World Health Organization has stressed Turkey's success during the pandemic process. Turkey's success stems from science committee and Ministry of Health that manages the crisis, the president's charismatic leadership and though polarized the spirit of solidarity and resistance of the Turkish people in times of disaster and crisis. Turkey, during the crisis gave medical aid to 80 countries and set a global example of solidarity

Showing causality in social behaviour has always been difficult, even for social scientists working with statistics. Even today many conservatives claim that the pandemic "only" killed tens of thousands of people and this situation is comparable to other influenza mortality rates and it is not worth the economic damage caused by measures and restrictions. However, public health experts say that the number of deaths and infections would be much higher, and hospitals would be filled with patients without restrictions. The problem is that we cannot prove the counter factuality/view while many other factors that can clearly explain the outcome are evident (Fukuyama, 2020).

The problem of trust is now in every space of our lives. States do not trust each other. They close their airports to passengers from other countries or quarantine and follow them for a long time. Global solidarity and trust are replaced by the reactions that countries try to solve their problems on their own (Şeker, et al., 2020: 119).

The pandemic is expected to have profound effects on international organizations. For instance, the existence and functions of the World Health Organization seriously began to be questioned; The USA, which provides significant financial resources to WHO, announced that it stopped this resource in April 2020. This situation can be seen as the first sign of the transition towards a new and more functional global health organization (Taştan, 2020: 6). WHO was an international organization established in 1919 during the Spanish Flu. With the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, its function began to be questioned.

The COVID-19 pandemic makes it impossible to plan long-term political reform and policies. If something is seen in the long term, it is the fact that nothing is clear in the long term. National emergencies caused by war, invasion, financial crisis or pandemic in human history have allowed for major political

reforms. Welfare state policies started to be implemented with the New Deal applied in the period of Roosevelt who came to power in the USA in 1932 at the end of the Great Depression in 1929 (Fukuyama, 2020). Understanding that low income groups, unemployed and poor are completely unprotected against pandemic and suddenly remembering Keynesian interventions and explaining many economic packages move simultaneously (Arlı, 2020). The pandemic will bring changes in the understanding and practices of social security. With the COVID-19 pandemic, it was seen that lack of social security individuals without economic means is not actually an individual issue, but can easily turn into a systemic problem that concerns the whole society, especially in countries like the USA where individualism is at the forefront (Taştan, 2020: 6). It can be predicted that the ongoing process will force states to take more active roles and take initiatives in health, economy and security; the planner social state implementations will come to the fore in managerial terms (İmga & Ayhan, 2020: 6).

In this context, will the COVID-19 crisis reconstruct the social policies by updating, like the social welfare state practices implemented after the 1929 economic crisis? Or will it be used only as a temporary dressing in the crisis? Time will show that. It is necessary to take human-oriented positive dimensions of every political-economic system and produce hybrid solutions. Pragmatic transitions between paradigms are collage policies of postmodern times. Instead of the motto of the modernity “neither that nor this”, “both that and this” approach of postmodernism is to adopt the “anything goes” motto for a livable world. Against the “monist and rigid” policy of modernity, the “plural and fluid” model of postmodernism will be more functional.

### **Conclusion: Is That A Move Towards A Paranoid-Schizoid Society?**

We are going through a traumatic period in which COVID-19 global pandemic affects all contexts within the framework of the individual, institution, state, and society. Daily life practices of the individual will evolve into new normal rules after the pandemic. To protect against the pandemic, it is observed that social isolation, wearing mask and hygiene will be the basis of our life, as it was in the past like the cases in plague and Spanish Flu. Stay at home process has had both positive and negative effects on our family relationships. The transition of the employees working in knowledge-based jobs to the online working order via internet at home and the transition of the students to the online education because of the school closures were the concrete examples of the transition to the IT society which is the society model of the 21st century. Just as the plague caused the end of feudalism in the 14th century, the global pandemic of COVID-19 in the 21st century is filled with concrete indicators of the fact that we are experiencing both the risk society and the surveillance society with the transition to the informatics society.

The relationship between neo-liberalism and the capitalist political-economic structure that is indexed to consumption and exploiting the environment and the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic is an undeniable fact. The fact that developed countries implementing neoliberal policies could not manage the crisis in the global pandemic and their alienations in anomy in the context of normlessness, anomaly and insecurity brought the paradigm transformation into their agenda regarding their economic policies. In this context, it is argued that states will continue their way either remaining as authoritarian and social state or by taming liberalism.

The surveillance society constructed by pure digitalization based on the internet in our life spaces also produces the paranoid-schizoid society. Internet is the main backbone and icon of globalization and we live with “anxiety”, “distrust” and “fear” in our personality since we know that every communication and every transaction on the Internet is “watched”, “supervised” and “monitored” by others. This situation leads schizophrenic fragmentations and paranoid-schizoid personality disorder (Bayhan, 2011a: 215-216). In this context, anomy is reproduced in the surveillance society on the basis of distrust, anxiety and meaninglessness. With global terrorist attacks we live in a period when no one has confidence in anyone, and everyone looks at each other with suspicion. For the sake of security, we are turning into a “horror society” where human privacy is neglected, and in all cities, especially in London and New York, everyone is monitored by cameras every moment. We are entering the process of Panopticon inspired by Jeremy Bentham and developed by Foucault (a transparent prison where the observer is not seen, but the prisoners are monitored at all times), where human rights can also be violated paradoxically for the sake of security (Bayhan, 2011b: 154-155). In the period of global pandemic, we are not only confronted with the fact that the state, intelligence services and companies usurped our personal privacy through the internet, but also we face the reality of turning into a paranoid-schizoid society between trust and fear with the risk that everybody may be a virus carrier.

The fact that states close their borders, cancel global relations and transportation to protect from global pandemic has already brought scepticism and introversion. Conspiracy theories and the perception that the virus is produced in the laboratory environment by either China or the USA due to the economic war between the USA and China cause individuals and communities to feel ontological insecurity, fear, anxiety and depression. As in all pandemic periods, a scapegoat is found that spreads the virus. This is usually minorities, refugees and disadvantaged groups in all countries.

With an ambiguous future perception, individuals and governments are constantly marginalizing each other owing to the trauma and shock created by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is high time they transferred into a new nature-friendly production and consumption model with a new contract and also constructed a global solidarity. We must get rid of the illusion that the human being is in the centre of the world and the universe and get rid of the narcissistic

mood and we should produce a new world and universe imagination. If we say with Mevlana's lines:

*How wonderful to migrate from one place to another every day  
How beautiful to settle in a new location every day  
How pleasant to flow without getting icy and murky  
Whatever you said, yesterday, my dear  
Has gone passed by with yesterday  
Right now, you must say new things...*

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