

A few thoughts on a new essay

I have long thought that we are living in times of upheaval that can only be compared to the great plague epidemics of the 14th century, roughly from 1345 to 1349. At that time, the orderly world of the High Middle Ages collapsed. William of Ockham (Illustration: portrait sketch of William Ockham, probably one of the first portraits of a philosopher, from an Oxford manuscript [1]) dismantled with his critique the edifice of High Scholasticism as it had been built up by Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, or Bonaventure and others (I have presented this in somewhat more detail in my little introductory textbook [2]).

In brief: Thomas Aquinas, in particular, had developed a very rational worldview, based on Aristotle, in which Christian theology was well embedded. From Ockham's point of view – who was a Franciscan and wanted to promote Franciscan piety – it had a decisive disadvantage: it distanced the soul from a direct contact with God. For in the Thomasian-Aristotelian view there was no direct knowledge of God, only an indirect one, and all that could be learned about the world was mediated through abstractions. The price of the medieval cosmos and its security was thus an insertion of the individual into a system of hierarchies and dependencies, politically as well as philosophically and theologically. It was mainly Franciscan scholars who revolted against this, and among them Ockham was the most profiled, eloquent and influential (a good detailed exposition of all these issues at [3]). For they wanted one thing above all: to secure direct access of the soul to God, conceptually-theologically and practically.

The perfidious thing about historical dialectics, which can be well studied in this example, is this: they succeeded very well, especially Ockham, in bringing down the scholastic edifice of thought. For his criticism was razor-sharp, extremely cleverly formulated, and very difficult to counter. Thomas might have been able to do that, but he was already dead about 40 years when Ockham wrote. Ockham did not succeed to build something new, that is, to secure the omnipotence of God and the direct access of the soul to its Creator theologically-scientifically. The scholastic edifice collapsed. Left behind was a conceptual pile of rubble from which rose, first dustily, then proudly, the two main rubble women of the modern era: individualism and the importance of the individual person, and experiential access to the world, or empiricism as method. And born out of the rubble was the modern scientific approach to the world, from which finally God, then the soul – and with it any access of a soul to him – were banished.

Ockham was rebuked for some of his thesis, and the Pope summoned him to Avignon, where

his doctrine was to be examined, incidentally at quite the same time as Meister Eckhart. While Eckhart, convinced of himself and of ecclesiastical justice, traveled to Avignon but – good for him – died on the way so that he did not have to witness his condemnation, Ockham smelled danger. He went to join Louis the Bavarian, who had also been banished, in Munich, where he fell victim to the plague sometime around 1346.

The plague, along with scholars such as Ockham, ushered in perhaps the greatest restructuring of the ancient world that Europe had experienced since the fall of the Roman Empire, some 800 years before. Not only was Europe depopulated – it is estimated that in many areas, one-third to one-half of the population fell victim to the Black Death. The economy changed, as labor became more expensive. Politics changed. A bourgeois class of craftsmen, merchants, artisans developed, adding to the already existing class of breadless intellectuals and wandering religious zealots. The old feudal order was slowly but surely crumbling, just as the scholastic edifice of thought was in decay.

Pestilence and Covid-19

The plague of the 14th century was a threshold event that had a physical-physical impact and visibility, primarily due to demographic changes, but possibly also due to climatic changes. The consequences were visible at the level of population, economy, politics, culture. They were already ongoing. The plague accelerated this development.

Covid-19, in my view, also marks such a transition. Only it is of a different nature. Whereas the plague was primarily external – dead people, empty lands, economies that were in ruins, cities that were depopulated or barricaded or both – Covid-19 was most notable for the changes that took place within people. Apart from the fact that it was the first time that an artificially laboratory-created chimera virus had been around, the effect was primarily a psychological-political-cultural one. It took place mainly first in people's minds, hearts, and imaginations, and politics instrumentalized this panic.

In the democracies of the West, this situation led to unprecedented restrictions on civil liberties that were accepted without objection by large segments of the population. Starting with the freedom of assembly, through the freedom of movement, to the restriction of the freedom to practice religion – because churches were closed and even later could operate only with conditions – and finally almost to the abolition of the right to the integrity of the body through the discussion about compulsory vaccination. It was prevented at the last moment, but for some occupational groups, such as soldiers, employees in the health sector, this was a reality, and the widespread social exclusion created unprecedented pressure. The lawyer André Kruschke analyzes this very lucidly in his contribution („Institutionalized Fear – A Legal Look at the Corona Pandemic“) in the new book edited by Thomas A. Seidel and

Sebastian Kleinschmidt „Angst, Politik, Zivilcourage – Rückschau auf die Corona-Krise“ (Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Leipzig 2023), which I can only recommend [4].

We see a completely new power structure at work here. Who is exercising this power? Of course, ostensibly the parliaments that have given power to the executive branch via emergency decrees. But, as other contributions in the work just mentioned analyze, that is only the political layer. Actually, it was the media that drove politics forward and conjured up this crisis in the first place with their irresponsible and, in large part, factually incorrect information policy. This is brilliantly and linguistically ingeniously explained in the article by Heimo Schwilk („Angst und Auflage – Deutsche Medien im Panikmodus“), also published in the above-mentioned book. Schwilk, a journalist and author – former editor at Rheinischer Merkur and later at Welt am Sonntag – knows the business. He shows how media work, especially that they operate completely in a control-free political space. Only the market determines how they can afford to act, and the only supervision of the public media is ultimately a published opinion of political correctness, thus – again – the media themselves.

The plague was a veritable death wave. The corona wave was a media wave that became so high through communal undercurrents, that hardly anyone who wanted to „belong“ could escape it. And who wouldn't want to belong, except for a few crazies and renitents?

The rule of elites

At the same time, this shows the disempowerment of conventionally and constitutionally defined power, which is tantamount to abrogating the constitution in an emergency. This was last seen with the Nazi „Act to Enable the Government of Germany to Issue Regulatory Decrees without the Consent of the Reichstag“ (Reichsermächtigungsgesetz), which put absolute power in the hands of Hitler and his clique. The same mechanism has struck here: in order to ward off a supposedly great danger, Parliament disempowered itself, handed over the power to act and the responsibility to the executive. And the executive got the inspiration and the guidelines on how to act – well, where, actually? From a small clique of hand-picked scientists and specialists who were dependent on the government because they wanted to belong. And who they were was determined by a few people through opaque channels, and of course by the media, which gave some people a permanent presence on talk shows and news programs. The others were „gushers,“ „deniers,“ „conspiracy theorists,“ „right-wing radicals,“ „scumbags,“ and so on.

By the way, the publishers of the aforementioned book recently [held a disputation](#) at which the actress [Philine Conrad](#) gave a remarkable introductory speech naming these linguistic aberrations. Highly recommended.

At that time, in May 2020, together with Prof. Hockertz, I offered our expertise in a short letter (on paper, with stamp, signed by hand) to all state secretaries in the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Interior. Only one of them answered. And said: thank you, not needed.

So who determined how the executive branch acts? A very small clique of more or less self-appointed experts. Not democratically legitimized. Only scientifically legitimized within limits (for instance, one main author of the famous panic paper was a perpetual PhD student. How he came to write something like that for the government, probably not even the gods know). And professionally biased.

Thus, de facto a more or less self-appointed elite ruled. Praised and steered by the press – also a self-appointed elite. Elites that direct and produce themselves. A postmodern example of a creatio continua (continuous creation) ex nihilo (from nothing). The secularization, so to speak, of scholastic theology perfected.

And who defined this course of events? Now it becomes really interesting, because here the spirits divide. Some say: coincidence. Some say: the self-organizing forces of complex systems [5]. Some say: other elites. Namely, those who finance the press, at least in part, and who, through multiple networks in large elite circles, say where the music plays [6]. Some say: the elites who have financial interests.

Actually, it doesn't matter for the course of my argument. What we can note as an interim conclusion is: the Corona crisis marks a decisive political-cultural transition to a pseudo-democratic constitution in which a new form of rule was more or less cavalierly and obviously established, the rule of elites. The Greeks called this oligarchy. The rule of a few, which is always more or less arbitrary.

The plague of the 14th century marked the beginning of the end of feudal systems of rule, at least of the salvaging form of feudalism in which everyone had his order and his place. It took until the French Revolution and actually until World War I for this form of rule to be over once and for all, another 550 years or so later.

Feudalism was an open form of rule by elites, an oligarchy. These elites were legitimized by birth, origin, and thereby secondarily by education and ability, as well as by religious ideologies.

But ultimately oligarchy, the rule of elites, never ceased. In the post-feudalist period, all sorts of groups have posed as elites. In the U.S., too, it can be argued, it is the old elites of the financial nobility who call the shots and pull the strings behind the scenes, in spite of the republican democratic constitutionality [7, 8]. I well remember an encounter with Lord Richmond during my time in England, at his country estate in Chichester. He is a member of

the English high aristocracy and has immense landholdings in the south of England and west London. He told me then that the old English aristocracy still calls the shots.

The Corona Crisis of 2020 marks the visible transition to global oligarchies. It is possible that in our country (Germany) even the years before that were already determined by elites, as some think [9-13]. But in the Corona crisis it became obvious.

While Europe flourished after the plague of the 14th century – the Renaissance was born, sailors discovered new trade routes, the urban bourgeoisie grew to new influence – the Corona Crisis seems more likely to herald further crises, at least in the short run. We can't get out of crisis mode at all, with climate, Ukraine, refugee, energy, and whatever else crises ravaging our Western countries.

Toward a fascistoid future?

At this point, I would like to draw attention to an important new essay. It was written by [David Bell](#) of the Brownstone Institute. [The Institute](#) caught my eye during the Corona Crisis as a place where thinkers, scholars, policymakers, economists critical of the official narrative of the Corona Crisis came together.

The essay „[Pandemic Preparedness and the Road to International Fascism](#)“ just appeared in the „American Journal of Economics and Sociology“ [14]. It traces the path of the WHO from an organization that Western countries with colonial possessions used to keep the diseases of their colonies at bay to the egalitarian international association of the postwar years beginning in 1946. From 2000 on, the situation changes. Bell shows this with a few documents and examples. This change is accompanied by the increasing influence of private sponsors on WHO. First the Wellcome Trust appears, later mainly the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), but also others. All these foundations exert influence in different ways because they support WHO in very convoluted ways. The BMGF, for example, by funding the GAVI Immunization Alliance, which in turn is one of WHO's sponsors and also directly co-funds WHO, or the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI), which was established at the 2017 World Economic Forum meeting. Others support key institutions such as the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, among others. Graduates of these institutions then join international organizations, work in roles in Africa and Asia, and carry forward the thinking of their sponsors and supporters.

And what happens? The private sponsors successfully achieve the centralization of their ideas by leveraging private-public partnerships, thereby gaining increasing influence. If a foundation sponsors a department at WHO, it will strive to carry out the will of the donor, Bell says. Because people want to keep their jobs, their staff, their sinecures.

We've already seen the result in action. The working groups that provided the Covid-19 horror scenarios and later the modeling to confirm the official narrative, Ferguson's working group at Imperial College [15, 16], they were and are funded by the BMGF. He who pays the piper calls the tune...

In the meantime, the WHO has changed the pandemic definition. Now exorbitantly high numbers of deaths no longer have to occur; the risk of infectiousness alone, the appearance of new variants, is enough. Therefore, it was possible that the Secretary General of the WHO, incidentally against the advice of his advisory board, declared monkeypox a pandemic. Therefore, it is likely that this will happen more often in the future.

The secretary-general of WHO? An executive puppet in the hands of his panel of experts, and ultimately in the hands of those who fund him. We see the same mechanism at work that I described above: Power has moved into the hands of a small elite. Oligarchy. For all these bodies have little democratic legitimacy and are ultimately accountable to no one, except for the original elections at the World Health Assembly.

If the new pandemic treaties are approved next May, then we will indeed be threatened with a health fascism that will probably be just one facet of a global fascism. This will then reveal what has been happening in secret for several years: Namely, that an elite of super-rich and highly influential individuals, under the guise of philanthropy and do-gooderism, want to impose on the world their version of what good life, health and welfare should look like.

Our parliamentarians have nodded off this development in an unprecedented political self-marginalization. Therefore, it makes sense that Uwe Kranz, a former head of a state criminal investigation office, has filed a criminal complaint against the entire government for treason. I think he is quite serious. But I can't imagine that this complaint will be taken up by any prosecutor, no matter how well-founded it may be. Because prosecutors also want to keep their jobs or get promoted. And their superior is the Minister of Justice. Of the state, or of the federal government. And the superior of the Minister of Justice? Is exactly the one who is accused of treason: the chancellor. Thus, the supposed independence paradoxically undermines its own integrity, or, to be more precise, is less likely to uphold it. And so the rule of the elites will continue.

Did this Chancellor Scholz not get into the headlines because of a banking scandal of a Hamburg bank, which belongs to some rich people? Did he not just in time lose his memories of this event? Hadn't Merkel already thanked Bill Gates for his commitment and, together with him, had launched the Antimicrobial Resistance Hub, a research and development platform used to develop mRNA „vaccines,“ among other things? And called him „my friend“ in the English version of her speech? A wonderful example of public-private partnership. And was it this friendly relationship that enabled Gates to spend 7 minutes on

German TV news on Easter Sunday 2020, when no one yet knew anything about a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, preaching his gospel of the liberating effect of vaccinating everyone?

We can only do our best to resist such a development, for example, through the participatory campaign by the Hippocratic Oath Medical Association against the WHO pandemic treaty. Bell is skeptical that this trend can be stopped. In the past, he says, it was possible to end fascist regimes through violence. But what if this fascism becomes endemic, is everywhere, becomes the norm through silent consent, even majority consent?

Then we can only hope that the egalitarian structure of the WHO, where each country has a voice, will lead those countries not yet in the grip of the elites, small countries of Africa, Asia, South America to gather their wits and their natural aversion to colonialism and reject the pandemic treaties next May. When then Africa, the former colony of Europe, will have saved the old democracies of the former colonial powers from their own elites, then we will know that this fascism was indeed narrowly averted. If, in that case, the elites of our press begin to sing the lament of ungrateful Africa, which does not want to be saved from all the evil epidemics, then we will know that a temporary barrier has been placed against the oligarchy. Perhaps then we will awaken. To a real democracy. That would be my hope.

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