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2022, the post-pandemic world?



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"There is no end to history: every generation. it must affirm its will and its imagination in the face of new threats that force us to re-judge the same cause in each successive epoch."

Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*.

Global capitalism closes the year 2021 with one of the greatest crises that humanity has experienced in its modern history, both for the volume of people involved in the coronavirus pandemic – with more than 5 million deaths, almost 25 million active and a total of about 280 million over almost two years of that disease – and for appearing in the

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vicinity of one of the most important crises. the capitalist system has experienced in its present historical phase of decadence.

The big winners and beneficiaries of the coronavirus pandemic have been the gigantic Western monopolies that monopolize vaccines, own in private property the technological-pharmaceutical-industrial-media complex and dominate the underdeveloped and dependent world under the splint of their intellectual and industrial property that they have refused to socialize to allow peoples, poor countries and communities in Latin America, Asia and Africa, access vaccine devices to protect their populations as insistently demanded by the World Health Organization (WHO). On the contrary, most of these monopolies profit from medical supplies linked to vaccines in order to accumulate capital and obtain profits under the prevailing logic of selling goods at market prices to be used and consumed by those who have the monetary capacity to pay (whether individuals or governments),

We must insist repeatedly that the capitalist crisis is not the product of the coronavirus pandemic, as the main hegemonic media led by the Western powers have proclaimed, but, on the contrary, this disease only deepened the already capitalist crisis that came from the previous period, at least, since the structural and financial crisis of 2008-2009, which had some brief recoveries, but within an acute downward trend that was pronounced, exponentially, during the years 2020 and 2021, causing sharp falls in productive employment, increasing and extending precarious work, overexploitation, informality, mass layoffs by companies as a way to recover from the crisis and reducing the income and wages of workers.

The international panorama for 2022 could not be more complex, variegated and contradictory as is the fact that most experts and projections, propose that, in that year, a fourth wave of the coronavirus disease will be developing commanded by the new strain called Ómicron (also called: B.1.1.529 of SARS-CoV-2), which has already been installed in more than 140 nations of the planet drastically affecting populations, to countries, communities, individuals and economies. Closures or restrictions of various kinds (for example: cancellation of hundreds of flights) are already taking place in some European countries such as the Netherlands, France, Spain or Germany in the face of the expansion of the pathogen and countries that had already obtained some improvement and control of

the pandemic such as Argentina whose government announced the extension of the health emergency until the end of 2022. Only governments in countries such as Mexico or Colombia are determined to reduce – and ignore – the risk and danger posed by Ómicron and refuse to adopt drastic measures to contain it.

The denialist currents insist that it is not necessary to take vaccines, nor measures such as the use of masks or healthy distance, wielding all kinds of fallacious arguments which has done nothing but exacerbate the pernicious effects of the disease. Countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Colombia or even the United States itself – with a daily average of 100,000 new infections – 73% of which correspond to Ómicron – and more than a thousand deaths due to Covid-19 – remain without adequate measures leaving it to be the pseudo thesis of the criminal "herd immunity" and, of course, the capitalist market, those who "solve" the problem of the spread of the coronavirus.

In the context of the capitalist crisis marked by the sharp fall in average economic growth rates, caused by the fall in the average rate of profit — a phenomenon responsible for the dislocation of investments into the sphere of fictitious capital without a drag on production and wealth; the confrontation between the great powers (United States, China, Russia, Iran, North Korea) in the hot spots of the planet (Ukraine, Syria, Yemen, Palestine, Venezuela or Nicaragua) that tends to intensify in the vicinity of an increasingly evident crisis of supremacy-hegemony of US imperialism that does not admit that the twenty-first century is constituted by a world based on multilateral and polycentric international relations; that has left behind the eaten and obsolete American "unilateralism" of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, together with its "exceptionalism" that was flaunted and mocked for decades by its organic intellectuals, the American bourgeoisie, its transnational companies and its armored political bureaucracy in the dominant parties, Democratic and Republican, faithful representatives of American capitalism in decline that is currently experiencing one of the most serious crises economic and social, expressed in the shortage of labor, in the lower inventory of products, the interruption of supply chains and the shortage suffered by the nation and, consequently, in the unusual increase in year-on-year inflation of 6.8% in 2021, not seen since November 1990, with a charge especially in the products that make up the basic basket (food, housing, energy, health, education, transportation, among others) and that most of the population demands.

According to official reports from the US government, the crisis has reached the Food Banks that are insufficient to meet the growing food demand of the population in the context in which their prices have doubled in the last year, in part, due to the insufficiency of supply derived from the *hypertrophy* of the *food chains*. r in ports, roads and factories, as well as the lack of labor and transport that distribute goods in a timely manner. In such a way that, in 2020, around 60 million people had to resort to the food charity system in the face of the shortage that has doubled or tripled its prices without any regulation by a capitalist state structured to attend and defend, in the first instance, the interests of the bourgeoisie and the big capitalists who operate inside and outside the country. The result is disastrous for the popular majorities: family debts have increased in 2021, the cost of mortgage loans for the purchase of housing, the purchase of cars and for student loans, as well as credit card debts due to defaults and / or increases in interest rates.

The system's paid longliners are hardly able to hide the existence of empty shelves in U.S. supermarkets, the ever-longer queues for basic necessities, and the scarcity that threatens families' livelihoods. Of course, they prefer to transfer these negative images as if they did not occur in "the best of all possible worlds" (USA), but in other latitudes, for example, in Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, or in any other country that is not to the liking of the representatives who command the political and media power of Washington and do not fit into their so-called "Monroe Doctrine". As is known, the response has been aggressions in the form of "sanctions", coups d'état, blockades and constant threats of military intervention with the aim of subduing these nations and seizing their natural resources to put them at the service of capital accumulation and their geostrategic confrontation with the emerging powers in the international space.

The coronavirus pandemic, first announced by the Chinese government in December 2019, has served as an incentive – and a pretext – for big international capital to restructure the depleted pre-pandemic world economy and give a new twist to *disaster capitalism* (Klein) and *surveillance* (Zuboff) based on what has been called revolution 4.0 or digital revolution, that has in artificial intelligence its common thread. It is the *boom* and *expansion* of virtual platforms, of the internet network with its algorithms, and its infinitesimal boxes of information (Big Data), social networks and smartphones, machine learning of machines, digital factories connected through computers directed by business management, design in triple dimension, the "intelligent connection of things"

(Internet of Things) and the dissemination, in real time, of facts and events that occur in the world.

Todo ello está diseñando una nueva división internacional del trabajo y del capital que pretende superar la crisis del «modelo toyotista» de origen japonés que se extendió luego del agotamiento y entrada en crisis, a mediados de la década de los setenta del siglo XX, del anterior fordismo-taylorismo de producción en masa. El nuevo paradigma, presumiblemente sustentado en la inteligencia artificial, tiene por objetivo incrementar la explotación de la fuerza de trabajo, tanto psíquica como física, elevar la productividad social del trabajo con cargo en la superexplotación de la fuerza de trabajo, combinando preferentemente intensificación con bajos salarios, tanto en el capitalismo dependiente como en el avanzado e intentar resarcir la caída de la tasa media de rentabilidad en un nivel que posibilite la acumulación de capital, sea en la esfera productiva o en la del capital ficticio que sigue siendo hegemónico en sociedad contemporánea.

This is the strategic and geopolitical basis of the current rivalry and offensive (of diplomatic and commercial principle) of US imperialism, which commands NATO troops, against the Asian giant and Russia, the two powers capable of responding, even in an eventual nuclear scenario, to such an offensive in case the increasingly diminished US power, Commanded by an imperial president who confuses Putin with Donald Trump or this with Obama, decides to take the first step of military aggression.

But, it seems that all this will have an outcome in 2022, both at the level of class struggles at the international, global and national levels, and in the trajectory adopted by the great crossroads and contradictory tendencies – such as the migratory hecatomb experienced by the nations expelling labor power – marked by the prevalence and deepening of the global crisis of world capitalism, of the irruption of the fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic under the Ómicron strain, or of any other modality that arises in the course of the coming weeks or months, and of the increasingly intense confrontation between the great powers.

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