

Caption

Here is the reason why I haven't posted anything for quite a while. In this post, I want to talk about risks. And well, if your schedules are nicely regulated and your day follows orderly paths, then this is definitely a risk of turning everything upside down.

Risk-free?

300,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* developed as the best — and so far last — variant of a process that had begun more than 6 million years earlier. Back then, our ancestors began evolving away from apes. One reason for this development, which would later change the planet, was already climate change.

250,000 years later, *Homo sapiens* left Africa behind and discovered the rest of the globe.

It was a long journey for that little primate who first left the safe protection of the trees and decided that everything essential for its survival would be found more on the ground than in the leaves of treetops.

And what didn't he and his descendants find and invent? What, however, has never been found, is a contract promising us this ground as a safe haven — a risk-free zone. Even in the Bible, this “having dominion” is an order or perhaps merely a suggestion, a potential development. And humanity has still not fulfilled this biblical order, because nature continues to demand its annual tribute in human lives and material. In seven million years, we haven't been able to change that. We don't even know for sure what remains to be discovered on Earth. Gradually we forget that we ourselves are still part of nature — a part that cannot unilaterally override its laws.

We still live in a hostile environment. We may be at the top of the food chain, but our natural enemies still wait for that one careless moment to steal our food or our lives. Not a year passes without a tourist in a safari park, a diver, or a wildlife researcher losing their life.

And yet, in large parts of our society, the desire for a zero-risk contract is growing. But such a thing cannot exist. We are all ridiculously over-insured and often don't even know which risks — real or imagined — are actually covered. We want total protection from diseases, yet we constantly create new ones. Think of mad cow disease, where we definitely know what we caused ourselves.

We want the completely unrealistic goal of zero deaths in road traffic — an activity with high error rates and suicide potential.

We have stockpiled enough ammunition to blow up the planet a thousand times “for safety,” yet haven't prevented a single war.

We shiver at climate change and try for the umpteenth time to push our heads through nature.

In the past, we relied on religion for these kinds of stories; today, the

politicians who restricted religion's influence in society perform rain dances and pretend they have a recipe against climate change.

I still remember a heat wave with deaths from dehydration, especially in care homes for the elderly. Europe responded with billions in investments for air-conditioning and humidifiers. It was money thrown out the window, and the expensive devices are probably all rusting by now. When it gets warmer today, the staff simply pays better attention to ensuring their residents drink enough.

How fanatically we chase total safety can be seen in how companies try to protect themselves from legal consequences. A microwave cannot, of course, be used as a hair dryer for pets — but does that really need to be included in every microwave manual for safety reasons?

Especially in Europe, we respond in an extremely materialistic way to natural challenges and like to throw money at dangers as they appear. And politics reacts maximally, because in a time of social networks everything has to be amplified and exaggerated. This gives politicians the chance to strengthen their position in society and to underline their demands.

This results in citizens becoming a little less free, a little more controlled, because the unpredictable voting public can be kept in check that way and can thank their zero-risk heroes with their ballot. And there are always enough people willing to pay the high price of freedom for this so-called security, which isn't security at all.

And while our environment is still a hostile space, we push our desire for safety to the extreme. Even in human interaction, nothing should disturb the well-being of the individual anymore. No word, no action, no attitude should unsettle the "good people" who believe they possess the truth. Whose truth?

My argument is that the little monkey who climbed down from the tree had different priorities than "absolute" safety — and still does. At the top of his list were the survival of his species and the development of his life. He chose the path into risk.

Paradoxically, in the over-supplied, over-socialized, and over-insured industrial nations, the desire for even more safety is greatest. And safety is a very broad concept here — one that reaches into pure convenience. But when a virus "for our safety" shuts down the factories that feed us; when the fear of warmer weather and rising sea levels brings our industry to a halt; when progress becomes impossible because critical debate no longer occurs; or simply when pigeons in our cities are eradicated because they damage our old stone buildings — then as a society, we have lost the plot.

Because when it comes to replacing our old buildings with concrete blocks, we do not hesitate. When weapons are sold and used, the climate doesn't matter. And when diseases that could be cured with a few dollars spread across Africa, there is no production stop for quarantine.

Honest politics would simply admit that total safety does not exist. That one cannot let millions of migrants onto a continent without importing even more

crime. That there is no answer to Covid except untested experimental injections ... with high risk. That climate change is indeed connected to human activity, but is also part of Earth's natural evolution in the universe. And that responsible politics cannot burden the world with billions in spending for something that has repeated itself for millions of years.

Honest politics also does not try to push citizens into a state of dependency where they can get too comfortable. Every decision carries a certain risk. And the one who takes the risk (and possibly enjoys the benefits of that decision until it goes wrong) bears the responsibility of finding a plan B — not calling for the state.

It is not the state's job to provide a safety net for all our decisions. Because those nets are ultimately paid for by the citizen. And they are not perfect — every net has holes, and one can fall through them easily.

Our primate from 300,000 years ago weighed what would be best for him. His descendants conquered the world. But today, a single virus is enough to bring this world to a standstill.

Homo sapiens has lost the balance between risk, self-responsibility, and necessary state intervention.

The state is the necessary evil that prevents us from strangling each other every day ... but it cannot dictate the daily lives of more than 8 billion people. Nature alone can do that.