

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND CRIME: THE EXAMPLE OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY AND HISTORY

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic brought a series of changes and problems to modern cities, which were called upon to deal with the new crime scene and take advantage of the emerging difficulties, turning them into opportunities. The present study focuses on the contribution of criminological theory and history and their specific proposals in dealing with the new data brought about by the pandemic to the society and crime. Specific examples of intervention are given based on historical experience.

Keywords: history, criminological theory, crime, prevention, anticrime policy

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Introduction

Covid-19 drastically changed the living conditions in modern societies, reshaped citizens' priorities and brought to the fore new morals and practices, radically affecting diverse areas of individual and collective life. The set of changes and problems that the Covid-19 pandemic brought to modern cities was the starting point for a new era in which the use of new data in the field of society and crime was a one-way street. In the process, the big bet has been to make immediate use of the emerging difficulties for the benefit of societies - at the collective level - and people - at the individual level - turning them into opportunities for development and reconstruction. The role of new technology has been unquestionable in the course of developments, as has the zeal of persons to take advantage of and apply the new possibilities presented at a digital or other level. Successful exploitation of digital capabilities enabled them to continue their activities and work as smoothly as possible in an era when there was not enough time for people to adapt to new conditions. The urban environment of modern cities has been and continues to be tested in various ways as the existing choices during the restrictive measures in rural or semi-rural areas (e.g. adequacy of space for walking and sports, rural outdoor activities, gardens and estates in the courtyard of buildings and houses, etc.), were limited. However, the cities also quickly found their way in the face of the difficulties and problems of the pandemic and developed their reflexes by successfully facing the challenges, which they turned into opportunities for development and creation. History and criminological theory can play an important role to understand modern challenges how to address them.

Therefore, this article focuses on the contribution of history and criminological theories to the management of the above challenges that plague modern cities during the pandemic period, so that the aim of development and improvement at individual and collective level to become realistic with the use of the appropriate tools and strategies. In particular, the first section will first briefly present some of the main consequences of the pandemic on society, while the second will extend it to the field of crime. The central axis in both sections is to identify those points to which criminological lessons learned from the past can make a decisive contribution towards addressing the relevant problems during the pandemic. The relevant argument is supported by the use of concrete examples and the proposed solutions, if implemented, are able to improve

living conditions in cities during the pandemic, with clear implications on the one hand to daily life and citizens' life quality and on the other hand in terms of crime.

Therefore, it could be argued that through the study of criminological theory and thorough examination into history, substantial interventions and policies can emerge, which can ultimately make the pandemic period an excellent opportunity to activate internal awakening, reconstruction and maturation at the individual level and the externalization of emotions, sensitization and activation at the collective level with a view to tackling social problems, including crime. It is emphasized that during the pre-pandemic period, the rhythms of life in modern cities, combined with a number of other factors, sometimes interrupted or limited public awareness and reorganization efforts, in terms of externalizing their emotions and raising their awareness with the appropriate attention and at the right time.

The echo of the pandemic in society

The pandemic radically changed the way of citizens' life and habits in modern cities with a serious impact, not only on cities' economic and social activity but also of the whole world. In short, the aftermath of the pandemic in modern societies could be summed up in consequences at individual and collective level, which affect life in various ways in both region and urban centers. In this article the relevant arguments will focus on the pandemic's consequences in modern cities. Priorities over the given period have been changed radically, with the issue of health monopolizing interest and firmly occupying the first place in some cases.

In an attempt to outline the main features of the new era, which were first confronted by expert scientists, the emergence of the virus created new data in which the contribution of the international bibliography and the current research experience is invaluable. At the same time, however, they were tasked with informing the world community, including the governments of individual countries, about the necessary measures to prevent and reduce the spread of the virus, which had to be taken immediately, despite the fact that the knowledge about the virus was - at least in the first phase - extremely limited and constantly changing. But in the matter of information, doctors had to face an additional difficulty: the spread of false news (O

'Connor, Murphy, 2020) about the pandemic, with known consequences at the international community level.

In such an environment, various disagreements developed among scientists, both during the initial phase of the pandemic regarding the appropriate way of managing it, and later, during the period of vaccination of the citizens in order to achieve the required wall of immunity. These developments have undoubtedly affected the public, as will be seen below, at a critical period of time, when all governments were taking the necessary measures to prevent and deal with the pandemic, according to special committees of experts.

However, a possible climate of distrust of doctors by a section of the public regarding vaccination and pandemic measures should, in no way, call into question, on the one hand, their crucial role in humanity, not only in times of pandemic but over time, and, on the other, their commitment to the Hippocratic oath,² which ultimately outlines the main lines of their intervention and their availability in times of high risk. Although, until recently, an expressed view was that pandemics are a reminder of the past, the study of which was essentially or and exclusively an expression of historical interest and significance (Lippi, Bianucci, & Donell, 2020), the advent of covid-19 was to overturn the above view in the most painful way, especially if we take into account the losses in human lives. The use of war terminology in private and public debates is indicative of the criticality of the situation, as it is currently being shaped. Developments of this type bring to the fore once again the Monument of the Fallen Doctor in Florence, which was built after the First World War as a minimum tribute to doctors and health care workers who died in the line of duty (Lippi, 2015 & Lippi, Bianucci, & Donell, 2020).

In a pandemic situation, such as the one we are experiencing, the risks posed by the medical world and the nursing staff, who are at the forefront of treating covid-19, with

² It is emphasized that the Oath of Hippocrates remains extremely relevant for more than 2,000 years since its birth and is a foundation stone in the practice of medicine and the application of ethics. For the work of Hippocrates and in particular the oath, see Hippocrates, «Apanta 1, General Medicine», *Archaia Elliniki Grammateia*, Odysseus Chatzopoulos Publications.

its consequences³ (De Sio et al., 2020, Chatterjee et al., 2020) ranging from the mass cancellations of already scheduled medical examinations as a result of the fear of the pandemic, the difficult working conditions in the Intensive Care Units to the loss of human lives of doctors. Regarding the first, it should be noted that in some cases there was a decrease in admissions to the Emergency Department of hospitals (Kastritis et al., 2020) with obvious consequences for the health of patients while, as will be reported below, the decrease was also observed in incidents that were directly or indirectly related to the specific conditions of the pandemic period, such as incidents of sexual assault and domestic violence.

In any case, the crucial contribution of doctors should be emphasized, not only in tackling pandemic situations, but also in the most effective tackling of crime in particular, an argument which has been pointed out and recognized by scientists in the past. Indicatively, we refer to the experience of the 19th century, which laid the basic lines for dealing with specific categories of criminals (e.g. the insane) and remains extremely relevant to this day. Many of the theories that approached the issue of moral insanity and crime were formulated by physicians and had a decisive influence on the treatment of mentally ill criminals at that time, while some of their positions are still well-timed nowadays or provide valuable directions for further research.

Indicatively, we refer to the approaches of Henry Maudsley (Scott, 1972) and Isaac Ray (Overholser, 1972). The former inquired into, inter alia, the relationship between insanity and crime, criminogenesis and the influence of emotional disorders on human behavior, while the latter pointed to the use of doctors' testimony as experts in cases related to insanity and referred to the role of jury. In particular, during the pandemic period, various psychological disorders were observed at individual level, which affected and still affect the individual's behavior and, in some cases, have led to specific criminal behaviors, as will be mentioned below (e.g. increase in incidents of domestic violence). In addition, if we take into account that crime was associated - in the 19th

³ The effects of the pandemic - and on a psychosocial level - on Italian doctors, especially those working in the worst-hit areas, are significant. However, further empirical research is needed in order to draw more detailed conclusions. For more information see S. De Sio, G. Buomprisco, G. La Torre, E. Lapteva, R. Perri, E. Greco, N. Mucci, F. Cedrone (2020), «The impact of COVID-19 on doctors' well-being: results of a web survey during the lockdown in Italy», *Eur Rev Med Pharmacol Sci*, Vol. 24 - N. 14, 7869-7879, DOI: 10.26355 / eurrev_202007_22292.

century, but also earlier - with the lack of education, we are led to the decisive role of parents and educators in inquiring criminogenic factors. Accordingly, the pandemic period further highlighted the important role of parents in shaping the behavior of their children, because the latter, as a result of restrictive measures, spent more time with them, developed and improved communication and relationships with a positive impact on general behavior of minors. However, the existence in some cases of dysfunctional family relationships in combination with the general conditions during the pandemic period (e.g. stay-at-home orders, etc.), contributed to negative effects on human behavior and sometimes to criminal behaviors, such as domestic violence⁴ (Piquero et al., 2021). At the same time, the pandemic and its consequences have been linked in various ways to mental health and human behavior (Patsali et al., 2020; Fountoulakis et al., 2021),⁵ referring to Maudsley's views on the impact of emotional disorders on behavior (Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos A., 1984). Accordingly, the importance that Ray attached to the crucial role of doctors' testimony as experts in criminal suits, with a view to the more effective treatment of crime and the more appropriate treatment of the criminal, could also apply in the case of the covid-19 pandemic. Experts with their knowledge contribute to solution of various issues. The existence of conflicting expert views about an issue in no way diminishes the usefulness of the evidence, in this case the physician's testimony.

Consequently, as in the 19th century, it was possible for different medical opinions to be expressed in a trial, the overall assessment of which would lead to the revelation of the truth about the commission of a crime, respectively today the diversity of medical

⁴ Regarding incidents of domestic violence, significant conclusions can be drawn by a systematic review, which studies the changes in incidents of domestic violence before and after restrictive measures. The results show an increase in these incidents during the aforementioned period. For more details see Alex R. Piquero, Wesley G. Jennings, Erin Jemison, Catherine Kaukinen, Felicia Marie Knaul (2021), «Domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic - Evidence from a systematic review and meta-analysis», *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol. 74, 101806, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2021.101806>.

⁵ Indicatively for the case of Greece see Mikaella E. Patsali et al. (2020), «University students' changes in mental health status and determinants of behavior during the COVID-19 lockdown in Greece», *Psychiatry Research*, Vol. 292, 113298, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113298> and Konstantinos N. Fountoulakis et al. (2021), «Self-reported changes in anxiety, depression and suicidality during the COVID-19 lockdown in Greece», *Journal of Affective Disorders*, Vol. 279, 624-629, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.10.061>. However, further empirical inquiry is needed to draw conclusions, which will lead to effective interventions.

views regarding covid-19, contributes significantly to pandemic prevention despite differences. Any contradictions or different views do not diminish the role of doctors in dealing with the pandemic. Although the current situation and circumstances are different from those of the past, the potential differences between physicians do not diminish their decisive role in relation to the proposed precautionary measures by covid-19, which should be observed and subjected to ongoing scientific review in order to keep pace with the latest research findings and the international bibliography. Therefore, Ray's views on the role of experts in dealing with serious situations (e.g. crime, pandemics, etc.) are an extremely useful starting point for anticrime policy making.

At the level of society, the conditions have changed drastically, as well as the habits of the people at various levels, with the most characteristic being the mass gatherings outdoors and the non-observance of the prescribed rules by a portion of the citizens. The organization of parties and gatherings in violation of the relevant laws, the non-observance of the required distances between the attendees and the lack of respect for the hours of common silence, were frequent phenomena in some areas. The authorities, controlling the observance of the restrictive measures, are faced with the refusal of some citizens to implement the measures as well as with various situations of lawlessness. In some cases, the reactions of the citizens regarding the observance of the adopted measures and the vaccination, have implications for the cohesion of the society, but also for the arrival of new morals and customs in terms of coexistence and entertainment in modern cities.

Based on the above, Durkheim's theory of anomie (Lunden 1972), which refers to the feelings of deprivation that individuals experience and that can lead to the antisocial or criminal behaviors, appears to be particularly topical. Specifically, during the pandemic period people do not meet their basic needs and are deprived of vital services on multiple levels, from simple handshake and company with their loved ones to daily habits, professional activities, entertainment, live social events etc. The above and many more are too important for human, who during the pandemic is deprived of them. Indicatively, we refer to the decisive importance and the special role of the handshake, which has its roots in Ancient Greece. Historical evidence and more specific references in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey refer to the handshake as a symbol of peace between

people as their greeting made it clear whether someone was carrying a weapon or not. Homer also refers to the handshake as a sign of supplication, mutual trust and an expression of love and solidarity⁶. Apart from the handshake, however, the *Odyssey* makes descriptive references to the embrace, which was accompanied by the expression of emotions and often by tears of joy or sorrow from both the protagonists of each scene and all the participants. The above expressions of everyday life (handshakes, hugs, etc.), especially important for the individual from the time of Homer until today, were been deprived, as noted above by people during the pandemic, with multiple consequences on personality and health (mental and physical), as characteristically reflected in research (Fountoulakis et al., 2021, Dissler, et al., 2020, Jarrahi et al. 2020, Parlapani et al., 2020). Regarding the proposed actions at individual level to address the effects of quarantine on physical and mental health, physical exercise is recommended, inter alia, especially for older people (Jiménez-Pavón, Carbonell-Baeza, Lavie, 2020). At this point, it is necessary to make an important, historical reference to the phrase "orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano"⁷ that is, "healthy mind in healthy body", which highlights in the most brilliant way the connection of mind and body and characterizes not only the positions of the ancient peoples but also of the modern ones.

Certain aspects and characteristics in modern societies such as signs of closeness and solidarity contribute, among other things, to understanding phenomena that arose as a result of their lack due to the pandemic. For example, Durkheim's approach contributes to the understanding of modern lawlessness that occurred during the pandemic period. More specifically, in periods of turmoil, he says, situations of lawlessness may arise where individuals become independent and orientated towards the satisfaction of their own interests and not towards the achievement of the collective good. Such developments occurred during the pandemic period, as well as the various feelings of deprivation that individuals have experienced and continue to experience, with high

⁶ Indicatively see Homer, *Iliad*, Rhapsody IV, pp. 151-157.

⁷ The phrase comes from the satirical poet Decimus Junius Juvenalis (60 - 127 AD) and especially from his work entitled "Satires". However, it is claimed that it is also connected with the ancient Greek philosopher, Thales the Milesian. The latter, when asked "who is the happiest man" (Diogenes Laertius I 37) showed the answer: " whose the body is healthy, the soul is prosperous, the nature is educated". Moreover, this saying is the ideal for the Ancient Greeks which focuses on the development of body and mind.

possibility of deviant behaviors, which according to Durkheim, may have an impact on crime (Farsedakis, 1990, Vlachou, 2017).

Pandemic's influences on the field of crime

Undoubtedly, the effects of the pandemic on crime are multiple. In the context of the present study, some of them will be briefly presented and an attempt will be made to highlight the contribution of both criminological theory and history to the environment of modern cities against the background of pandemics and crime.

Some types of crimes such as domestic violence and cybercrime showed particularly increasing trends during the pandemic period. The vertical increase of fraud in various ways (e.g. via phone calls, messages, fake websites, etc.)⁸ in cities and the countryside was directly linked to the implementation of pandemic protection measures and in particular to stay-at-home orders and commercial activity operation without physical presence of the consumer. The widespread use of the internet by people unfamiliar with its applications has contributed to the flourishing of various cybercrime techniques, such as "Phishing" (Ramzan, 2010) etc. Internet users have been confronted with various acts of deception by cybercriminals who aimed at the illegal acquisition of personal data (such as passwords), taking advantage of the lack of protection of electronic means and the limited knowledge or ignorance of users. Respectively, there was an increase in incidents of domestic violence (Piquero et al., 2021, Johnston, 2020, Piquero et al. 2020), as a result of restrictive measures in travel, compulsory home confinement and cohabitation, for a long time, families' members facing various problems. However, this outbreak was not accompanied by a corresponding increase in hospital admissions in order for the relevant cases to be adequately addressed by the competent medical and nursing staff (Muldoon et al., 2021).

The special circumstances that took place during the pandemic and which led to the rise of certain forms of criminal behavior, make it imperative to approach these phenomena and deal with them immediately. In this context, there are several theories that can

⁸ For Greece in particular, see relevant Press Release, available at http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=93647&Itemid=2425&lang= (in Greek).

successfully interpret the above upward trend during the pandemic period. Indicatively, we can refer to the theories of exchange and resources (Gelles, 1976), frustration-aggression (Dollard et al., 1939), social networks (Milardo, 1988) etc. In particular, during the period of the pandemic and the consequent restrictive measures, the use of violence and criminality functioned as a powerful tool for meeting needs and fulfilling desires as the means and resources available to that were limited (Goode, 1971). In addition, individuals in the given time period experience on the one hand deprivation situations, which are associated with aggressive behavior's sign and on the other hand isolation from important support networks as a result of restrictive measures to limit the spread of covid-19. For the above reasons, if societies focus on the improvement of individuals and families, with an emphasis on primary and secondary prevention, they will be able to effectively control the growing violence within the family. Of course, socialization vehicles, with an emphasis on the family and educators, can play a decisive role. According to that, Plato's position regarding crime as a result of inadequate education and upbringing during his childhood is particularly topical (Plato, 854e). During the pandemic, however, there were cases of strained family relationships as a result of more and sometimes better time that individuals devoted to their family members.

Regarding the widespread use of the internet and the development of cybercrime, it is argued that this is the most profitable activity for criminals, as according to experts, its profits exceed those of the drug trade (Farsedakis, 2011). If we take into account, on the one hand, the distinctive feature of this category of crimes, which is computers and, on the other hand, the huge dark number of criminality in combination with the special conditions of the pandemic and the forms of cybercrime that flourished during it - with the predominant search for easy money - we can rely on various theories of motivation to approach and interpret them (Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, 1974; Courakis, 1982). In the given period of time, financial incentives played a dominant role, while the expected benefit from the commission of cybercrimes can be material, moral or even social (Alexiadis, 2011). In addition to the above, there has been an increase in juvenile victimization on the Internet and an attempt has been made to scientific approach of the factors that underpin it with particular reference to the use of Routine Activity Theory (Marcum, Higgins, Ricketts, 2010).

However, older people also experienced more significant losses from fraud cases compared to younger ones (Payne, 2020), with obvious effects on the lives of themselves, their families, and society. The elderly, however, were also confronted with other criminal behaviors, such as abuse as a result of measures of social distance and economic situation due to the pandemic (Du, Chen, 2021). Undoubtedly, the economic and social support of the latter, and especially those who lived in cities during the pandemic period, is among the most appropriate measures to address the problem. Such initiatives, of social support and solidarity, have developed to a large extent in the cities voluntarily and have contributed effectively not only to reducing the spread of the virus to this more vulnerable population, but also to reducing their victimization. Baker's theory, who is the first described the term "granny bashing" (Baker, 1975), Eastman's (Eastman, 1989, 1994) and Steinmetz's (Steinmetz, 1978), play an important role in reinforcing the above measures. The special conditions of the pandemic make it imperative to highlight on the one hand the forms of abuse experienced by the elderly mainly in modern big cities⁹ and on the other the most common of them. Raising public awareness on this issue is undoubtedly the first step in dealing effectively by the State.

In addition, the pandemic increased the risk of aggressive behavior in countries such as the United States against categories of the population of Asian origin, as these populations were on the one hand linked to the country of origin of the virus and on the other, because they were always considered "foreigners" regardless of their time of residence in the country. With the advent of the pandemic, attacks and discrimination against Asian Americans increased as an attempt to channel societal anger and fear about the virus into a population associated with the country that the latter originally appeared (Tessler, Choi, Kao, 2020). It is also noteworthy that there are several historical examples that underscore the launch of attacks on populations considered "foreign" after specific events, such as the 9th September attack (Perry, 2003). In fact, if we take into account the historical data on the basis of which some populations have experienced incidents of violence, motivated by xenophobia and racism from the time of their settlement in the host country until today (e.g. Asian Americans from the late

⁹ It is argued that during the pandemic period the situations experienced by the elderly outside the big cities were better due to the rural environment, which provided them with a greater freedom of movement due to work e.g. in fields etc.

1700s until today), we understand the severity and extent of the problem that the virus brought back to the fore (Gover, Harper, Langton, 2020). Similar increases in hate crime against the Chinese during the pandemic were also observed in other countries and cities, such as London (Gray, Hansen, 2021), suggesting that Covid-19 contributed to the change in behavior towards this population in order to reinforce the view that there is a link between Covid-19 and racism.

Although the spread of the virus and its effects have affected and changed the daily lives of people around the world in various ways, the impact of stay-at-home measures in cities internationally is not clear enough. Particularly enlightening in this direction is research conducted in 23 countries and in 27 cities in Europe, America and Asia (Nivette, Zahnow, Aguilar et al. 2021). Its findings suggested linking restrictive stay-at-home measures to declining crime in cities, but with differences between cities and crime categories. Undoubtedly, the findings of this study are extremely important and although they need to be supplemented by further empirical research, it is assumed that they will influence anticrime policy at international level (Boman, Mowen, 2021). Of course, interpreting this type of empirical data is just as vital to their overall usefulness, with the Balkin-McDonald model (McDonald, Balkin, 2020) as a characteristic example, which attempts to interpret changes - reductions - in crime in five major cities (New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago (Campedelli, Favarin, Aziani et al., 2020) and Philadelphia). Respectively, available empirical data from Los Angeles and Indianapolis (Mohler, Bertozzi, Carter et al., 2020) support the view that social distance had a statistically significant impact on certain types of crime, with the overall result being significantly less than what would be expected. Consequently, crimes such as burglary may decrease as a result of increased surveillance of individuals' property and increased stay on the premises, and crimes such as domestic violence are likely to increase due to long periods of contact between potential offenders and victims.

The above constitute an important vaulting bar for thinking in order to highlight corresponding historical examples, from different regions and time periods, which are related to the decrease of criminality in different cities and which ultimately emphasize on the one hand the decisive role of History in the study of crime and on the other hand to indicate effective ways of anticrime policy for these societies and to set the guidelines of respective policies internationally.

However, there were also cases of crimes, which occurred during the pandemic, and referred to new forms of fraud and forgery. These are the cases of fake certificates' production about vaccination or illness during the last period of time where the above certificates are necessary for work, educational and other purposes. Also, in some cases, the possibility of an organized crime is investigated. In order to understand the above behaviors, it is enough to refer on the one hand to the theories of motives in order to identify the motive of the offenders and on the other hand to the benefits (materials, ethics, etc.). The theories of Sutherland, Cloward and Ohlin are particularly useful, but also in terms of disincentives from the criminal justice system, the theories of Beccaria and Bentham. In particular, during the pandemic, various forms of criminal behavior, including the above, were the subject of learning procedure through socializing with other people, while learning the appropriate "techniques" offered opportunities to join gangs or organized activities. At the level of treatment, Beccaria's deterrence theory and the importance he attached to the crime prevention role of education are still topical. Similarly, Bentham's utilitarian approach inherent in several issues of preventing and facing delinquent behavior during the pandemic, with an emphasis on the State's attempt to enact laws that offer "greatest happiness in a larger number of individuals".

The influences of the pandemic on the field of anticrime policy are varied, as are its effects on cities and metropolitan areas, with imminent changes in the structure and morphology of cities (Florida, Rodríguez-Pose & Storper, 2021). The final assessment of the above changes depends on the pandemic's duration and course. Historical data can undoubtedly contribute positively to tackling such issues as cities are diversified and transformed appropriately in order to address existing health and safety threats (Ka Yan Lai et al., 2020). Typical examples are cases of bubonic plague in the 18th century, cholera in the 19th century and Spanish flu in the 20th. The advent of covid-19 in late 2019 highlighted, among other things, the usefulness of historical examples, not only in terms of the contribution of medicine to prevention and treatment, but also in terms of city planning and interventions in the field of anticrime policy in order to deal adequately with the effects of the pandemic on crime.

In an effort to highlight the importance of history and criminological theory in facing the effects of the covid-19 pandemic on crime, there could be no lack of reference to prevention at individual and collective level. As prevention is divided into primary,

secondary and tertiary, at this point an indicative reference will be made to specific measures in order to make clear the contribution of historical examples and criminological theory.

In particular, at the level of primary prevention and in the context of measures for the general population, we could distinguish between social, family and specific policy measures, with an emphasis on employment support - which was affected in various ways during the pandemic and changed form (work by distance) - in family allowances, tax breaks, entertainment, appropriate information of citizens, education, etc. Regarding the latter, Beccaria points out, as mentioned above, the education's crime preventive role and Plato, in his attempt to determine the genesis of crime, emphasizes that this is the result of a lack of education (Farsedakis, 1990). In addition to the above and in the direction of prevention, especially important are the information campaigns of the citizens by the Cybercrime Prosecution Services regarding attempts to defraud and spread fake news via the internet and due to Covid-19.¹⁰ In this context and starting from the concept of criminal personality, which according to Aristotle, is created by the action and interaction of environmental and individual factors, the above initiatives and measures can work preventively both individually and collectively.

Regarding to secondary intervention could include, inter alia, helplines for dealing with mental health problems (Peppou, et al., 2021) but also for dealing with incidents of violence in conjunction with international initiatives, such as the use of the international code "Mask-19" during the conversation of the victims of domestic violence with their pharmacist.

However, pandemics such as that of Covid-19 have highlighted a variety of obstacles at various stages, such as the law enforcement phase, which related to issues of public communication, implementation and control of restrictive measures and changes in the field of crime, and of its management (Jennings, Perez, 2020). For this reason, the interdisciplinary approach and the cooperation of the competent professionals (doctors, representatives of the criminal justice system, etc.) become imperative in order to

¹⁰ Especially for the Press Release of the Greek Police, see http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=93647&Itemid=2425&lang= (in Greek).

reduce the pandemic and its effects in the field of crime. The example of the interdisciplinary approach and criminological synthesis, as reflected in the geometric allegory of Mendes Correa (Farsedakis, 1990), proves to be particularly useful in highlighting the key elements of criminal act during the pandemic. The contribution of the natural environment, the personality, the pre-criminal situations and the mental process of the transition to the criminal act are issues that took place and created great concern during the above period. Their study, especially in the urban environment, can contribute to the approach of primary questions regarding the type of crimes that flourish in cities during the pandemic period, sparks efforts to criminal's personality study and highlights the importance of pre-crime situations, with final purpose the implementation of each criminal behavior (e.g. cybercrime, domestic violence, etc.).

Similar difficulties have arisen with regard to tertiary prevention and the area of the courts (Baldwin, Eassey, & Brooke, 2020), crime¹¹ reports, etc. Of course, this is not the first time that such problems have appeared, as similar phenomena have been recorded in the past on the occasion of events, such as diseases, wars, etc. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted, among other things, the need for structural changes in the field of criminal justice, the acceleration of proceedings, the introduction of innovations not only in criminal trial, but also in the field of penitentiary treatment (Nowotny, et al. 2020), in order to limit the spread of covid-19. Of course, the ideas of reforming the penal system and improving the criminal in the light of penitentiary reforms and architectural interventions are not the result of the pandemic, but have occupied societies for a long time ago. To the above ideas, characteristic are the interventions of John Haviland (Johnston, 1972) at the level of the construction of penitentiaries and Alexander Maconochie (Barry, 1972) at the level of revision of the penitentiary system.

The advent of the pandemic essentially highlighted the necessary reforms, which had already been identified, and accelerated the process of their implementation. Typical

¹¹ Indicatively for the reports of domestic violence during the period of stay at home due to covid-19 and the reduction of such reports in Chicago during the above period, see Baidoo L, Zakrison TL, Feldmeth G, Lindau ST, Tung EL. (2021), «Domestic Violence Police Reporting and Resources During the 2020 COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order in Chicago, Illinois», *JAMA Netw Open*, 4(9): e2122260. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.22260.

examples are the need of crime prevention, the victim's restoration, the faster administration of justice, the reform of the penal system, etc.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic, which has had a negative impact on the world as a whole, is both directly and indirectly linked to positive developments to the extent that it has created significant challenges, which with the right interventions and policies can be turned into exceptional opportunities at city level as well as at country level. Institutional organizations and special professionals, who have been at the forefront of managing the problem, despite being called upon to overcome seemingly insurmountable difficulties and obstacles, have taken effective action, which, thanks to the contribution of market participants and community representatives, had remarkable results. Assistants in this endeavor are history and criminological theory, as the arguments that come from their scientific field offer clear answers to questions about the management of serious social phenomena, directly related to the pandemic, including crime.

The emergence of necessary reforms and good practices through the use of historical experience and scientific knowledge (theoretical and empirical) bring to the fore the value of prevention and the role of improvement at the individual and collective level. These situations during the pandemic period, with the help of the individual and society, can contribute to the activation of inner awakening, reconstruction and maturation at the individual level and the externalization of emotions, the sensitization and activation at the collective level, with a view to dealing more effectively with crime-related issues. The big bet, which modern cities will soon face in the post-covid era, will be the utilization of the tools and achievements of the pandemic period, such as the use of new technologies, the care of the individual and the care of ourselves, the strengthening of family relationships, proper management of free time etc. for the benefit of humans and their prosperity. And in this case, however, the contribution of previous experience can work beneficially and stop the role of situations - e.g. intensive rhythms of life in modern cities - which before the pandemic sometimes limited efforts to awaken individuals and rebuild and evolve societies. The 21st century, ending the first twenty years, has posed significant dilemmas for societies and placed individuals before their

actions and responsibilities. It is up to the future and history to judge on the one hand whether cities will follow the path of progress and development with the help of education and knowledge and on the other hand whether the results will be in line with their expectations.

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