

EXISTENTIAL BLACKMAIL: The Liquidation of Subjectivity under Neoliberal Space and Digital Domination

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Abstract

This manifesto understands the deepening regimes of urbanization and digitalization in the first quarter of the twenty-first century as a systematic process of dispossession directed at human existence. Organized around the concept of **Existential Blackmail**, it examines how housing and biological reproduction have been transformed into instruments of domination; how digital networks colonize the void opened by the destruction of the social habitat; and how the subject is reduced to a measurable, steerable, and predictable object. Its central claim is that contemporary power no longer governs primarily through prohibition alone, but through the structural monopolization of the conditions of survival.

I. Spatial Siege: The Expropriation of Habitat and Ontological Isolation

The modern metropolis is not, despite its ideological presentation, a domain of civilization. It is an apparatus of isolation that dismantles the proximate forms of sociality on which human beings have historically depended. Post-2000 neoliberal urbanization has produced a radical sociological atomization while physically concentrating populations at ever greater density.

Space no longer functions as a protective shell for the individual. It operates instead as an architecture of enclosure, exposing the subject to economic imperatives from which there is no meaningful shelter. Severed from the social habitat that once mediated vulnerability, the individual is compelled to conform to the conditions imposed by the system simply in order to persist. What is eroded here is not merely social cohesion, but the human capacity to dwell in the world. Existence is reorganized as something administrable, governable, and inventory-like.

II. Biopolitical Seizure: Life as a Mechanism of Blackmail

The prevailing political-economic order turns the most basic reflexes of life into mechanisms of coercion. This process unfolds along two principal axes.

The Financialization of Housing:

Housing has been transformed from use value into exchange value, from shelter into speculative asset. Under these conditions, dwelling ceases to appear as a right and is reorganized as a lifelong discipline of indebtedness. The subject is integrated into the system through dependence on refuge itself.

The Liquidation of Biological Reproduction:

The demographic contraction visible across much of the world cannot be explained solely by rising educational attainment or by the rhetoric of individual choice. A constitutive factor lies

in the narrowing material conditions of life. Education and labor regimes promise the individual a viable social role within the system, yet contemporary economic architecture produces an increasingly severe incompatibility between that role and biological reproduction. The maintenance of one's social position is made conditional upon the renunciation of reproduction. In this way, life itself becomes the site of a biopolitical seizure: an existential ultimatum in which ontological autonomy is held hostage by structurally enforced sacrifice.

III. Mining the Soul: Synthetic Belonging and Data Hegemony

The ontological void and deep loneliness generated by the destruction of the social habitat constitute the primary raw material of platform capitalism. Power no longer confines itself to disciplining the body and extracting labor; it moves directly into the sphere of psychic life, colonizing loneliness and the desire for attachment.

Synthetic Belonging:

Digital platforms install algorithmic prostheses where organic bonds have been eroded or destroyed. The search for recognition, affection, and interaction is converted into an object of continuous data extraction.

Behavioral Surplus:

The most intimate psychological orientations of the subject are translated into behavioral surplus and routed into circuits of prediction and profit. Human interiority is thereby transformed into a direct site of extraction, manipulation, and value appropriation. The inner life of the subject is no longer exterior to capital; it becomes one of its operative frontiers.

IV. The Liquidation of Agency and Structural Asymmetry

The operational logic of **Existential Blackmail** is the suspension of the human capacity to act as a historical agent. Disciplined by insecurity in housing and biological continuity, and governed by desires increasingly anticipated and modulated by digital systems, the individual ceases to appear as an interlocutor and is reduced instead to a measurable, steerable, and predictable biopolitical object.

The asymmetry of this regime lies in the fact that domination no longer depends primarily on external coercion. It incorporates vulnerability itself into its infrastructure. Human weakness, precarity, and survival instinct are not incidental to the system; they are among its principal operating materials. The liquidation of the subject is therefore not a finished endpoint, but a condition the system continually seeks to reproduce. Yet in degrading life so extensively, this order discloses a cannibalistic logic: it consumes the very social and biological foundations on which it depends.

V. Conclusion and Praxis: Recommoning Life

To imagine that this existential siege can be meaningfully resolved through intra-systemic reform is to misrecognize its structure. What is required is not adjustment, but the reassertion of an autonomous habitat by life held hostage within the present order. Such a project becomes thinkable along two strategic trajectories.

Spatial Autonomy:

Housing must be severed from market discipline through cooperative forms, collective ownership arrangements, and localized commons of solidarity.

Digital Radicalism:

Platform monopolies that convert affect, attention, and behavior into capital must be confronted through data strikes, the democratization of communication infrastructures, and the expansion of open-source networks.

The antidote to existential blackmail lies in the recommoning of life and in the material reconstruction of human bonds outside the imperatives of the market and the algorithm.

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