COVID-19: The Pandemic That Swept the World:
Its Political and Economic Effects on Human Security

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Abstract: Health Security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities, such as the current Coronavirus Pandemic sweeping through much of the world. This Pandemic causes insecurities in every aspect of our lives. The Covid-19 Virus is affecting our entire world's political, economic, social, and indeed cultural life. The longer this Pandemic lasts, the more dramatic will be the changes. This article explains some of these changes, as well as the origins and development of the Virus through June 2021. The Coronavirus Pandemic is only one example of the lack of Health Security, and of the importance of Health Security in our lives. At the same time, Health Security is only one sub-field of Human Security, a paradigm which developed after World War II. While it is premature to say with certainty that the Axis of Power has shifted to the East from the West, it seems likely we are living in a time of great Human *Insecurity.*

Keywords: Covid-19, Donald Trump, Four Freedoms, Health Security, Human Security, international and political impact, Spanish Flu 1918

1.   Introduction: Health Security and Pandemics

Health Security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities, such as the current Corona Virus Pandemic sweeping through much of the world literally as we speak. The Pandemic causes insecurities in every aspect of our lives in tiny Macau: everyone asks, when can we return to normal? When can we stop wearing these uncomfortable face masks? When will we stop getting our temperatures taken everywhere we go? When can we travel the few kilometers to Hong Kong, and then the thousands of kilometers to the outside world? When can we return to normal? Will it be the same normal as it was prior to the Pandemic? In Macau, where I currently live and teach, we are fairly free of risk from the disease. The last reported local case was last summer, almost a year ago. However, in much of the world, humans feel very insecure about staying healthy, as people around them including family members get sick daily. They face the ultimate in health insecurity.

Throughout history Pandemics have affected, even shaped change—political, economic, and cultural. Often Pandemics have acted as an accelerant, spreading already apparent changes, much more rapidly through society. The Black Death of the mid-14th century almost certainly brought on the Renaissance, particularly in the Italian States. Throughout Europe feudalism collapsed as a shortage of labour aided salaries for Europe's poor (Snowden, 2019, pp. 47-50). Serfdom was doomed as a free peasantry would replace it in Western and Central Europe. The Bubonic Plague in London of 1666 aided the development of limited constitutional government, and shaped the architecture for modern London (MacNeill, 1976). The 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic helped shape the vengeful peace of Versailles in 1919, a settlement that caused an angry Germany to turn to Fascism and Hitler, leading the world to war in 1939. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States, one of the treaty's main negotiators, came down

with the Flu, impacting deliberations, likely in an unfavourable direction toward Germany (Barry, 2004). The *diktat*, as Germans called the Treaty of Versailles, led to the "big lie" of the past century, which claimed that Germany was not defeated on the battlefield, but it was defeated by its allegedly treacherous socialist, communist, and Jewish politicians, who "stabbed Germany in the back." That "big lie" fatally led to the rise of Hitler and National Socialism, which, in turn, led Germany and the World into World War II, with devastating consequences for Germany and the world.

In a similar fashion, the current Covid-19 Virus is affecting our entire world's political, economic, social, and indeed, cultural life. The longer this Pandemic lasts, the more dramatic will be the changes ("The Lost Year...", 2020). This article hopes to explain some of these changes, but will first discuss the origins and development of the Virus that first publicly appeared in the world in January 2020. When crowds gathered in different cities to welcome the New Year, no one forecasted that within eighteen months almost four million people would lie dead; over 178 million people would be infected; countries' economies would lay prostrate, their economic progress would be reversed by decades; world-wide travel and trade would largely cease with repercussions rippling throughout societies and economies; and Globalization, which had developed since 1980 at an accelerating pace, would be reversed (Boseley, 2020). Today the world enters an unknown new era of Deglobalization, one that has affected international trade, politics, and international organization.

2.   The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Short Sketch through June 2021

2.1   A Timeline

The Covid-19 Corona Virus emerged at the end of 2019 in Hubei Province in China, centered around the city of Wuhan. While we are not 100% certain of how it originated, most medical specialists, including doctors within the World Health Organization (WHO), and the US and Chinese Centers of Disease Control (CDC), speculate that it probably began in a wildlife food market in Wuhan. The likely culprit was a bat, whose droppings fell onto a mammal, possibly a pangolin, which became infected, and then was eaten by a man. As the Virus is airborne, it spread throughout the city, and then the province by mid-January 2020. On January 23, during the Lunar New Year holiday, the Chinese government ordered a very strict lockdown of Hubei Province, including Wuhan. But by then it was too late. Many places in China had become infected already. Then, given the rapidity of the global transportation system, most of the world within weeks became infected with the Virus. As of today, June 21, 2021, China, due to its initial very strict lockdowns and border closures, has fared relatively well. China has had a total of 103,540 cases, and a death toll of some 4,846. Hong Kong has also done very well with almost 12,000 cases and 210 deaths. Macau has done exceptionally well with a mere 49 cases and no deaths.[1]

In the early spring of 2020, the Covid-19 Virus hit Europe very hard. Within a few weeks, major tourist centers in Italy, Spain, and then France were in lockdown. Some of us remember the Italian opera singer Andrea Bocelli singing "*Amazing Grace*" outside the historic Milan Cathedral in April 2020 in front of a totally empty square. This hymn

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[1] All figures listed in this article are from the Johns Hopkins University, Coronavirus Resource Center, Global Map, June 21, 2021. This web site lists the most used and accurate listing of cases, fatalities, and recovered people world-wide on the Coronavirus Resource Center Global Covid-19 Dashboard.

became a symbol of lockdowns, empty cities, and suffering everywhere: this white-haired opera star singing as views of empty cities spread before our television screens—Milan, Florence, Rome, Paris, Warsaw, Cape Town, Beijing—all deserted, with no sounds, except the cries of ambulances carrying the sick.[2] Europe recovered well by the summer of 2020, and many Europeans thought they had seen the worst of the Pandemic, and their lives could return to normal.

However, in the late fall of 2020, the Pandemic came roaring back, this time, bolstered by variants from the UK, South Africa, Brazil, and other places, such as the current deadly "delta" variant, reported to have originated in India. For a second time, several European countries had to lock down, including the United Kingdom, which was ravaged very hard, having at one point among the highest daily case count and death toll in the world. Almost nowhere in Europe escaped this second wave. It spread from Western Europe and the Mediterranean world to Eastern and Northern Europe. Even remote areas, such as Iceland, suffered outbreaks. As of today (June 2021), France has some 5.8 million cases, Turkey over 5.3 million, Russia 5.2 million, UK some 4.6 million, Italy 4.2 million, Spain 3.7 million, Germany some 3.7 million. They rank numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 11th, respectively, in the world's case numbers; numbers 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, and 12th in deaths. The reasons for such catastrophic case and death numbers vary from country to country, but include misgovernment—governments acting late or incompetently; popular resistance to lockdown (Pandemic fatigue); and a failure to vaccinate populations early enough, and widely enough.

At the same time—in spring 2020, the Virus hit the US very hard. The United States, due to the incompetence of its former President Donald Trump, his sheer inaction, and lack of any national policy, became a case in point of what not-to-do in a Pandemic. The Virus went from cities in the Northeast to cities throughout the country, to rural areas everywhere in the country by the late summer. Currently (early summer 2021), the US has gone through some four waves. It has a staggering 33.5 million cases, or roughly one-sixth the total, which is currently 178.6 million cases. The death toll in the US is over 600,000, almost one-fifth the world's death toll of 3.8 million as of June 2021. Almost certainly due to his total incompetence and likely criminal negligence, Donald Trump lost his bid for re-election in 2020, the first US President to lose re-election since 1992, and only the fourth President in the past 100 years to lose (Allen & Parnes, 2021, pp. 283-285). His political party, the Republicans, also lost control of the legislative branch as well — the US Congress.

Despite vaccines and treatments, the Pandemic is a global threat of staggering proportions. The Virus has already infected much of the Earth. From the United States, the Virus hit Latin America very, very hard. While almost no country was immune from the Virus, a number became epicenters, producing the world's highest case numbers. Here I would include the following countries: Brazil has the third highest number of cases with almost 18 million, and no. 2 in deaths at over 500,000; Mexico is next at 2.4 million cases, and no. 4 in the world at some 231,000 deaths. Below those countries are other Latin American countries, such as Peru, Columbia, Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay. Tiny Uruguay has the highest number of cases in the world per capita. In Columbia, nearly 500 people a day have died of the Coronavirus over the past several weeks (Turkewitz & Bengali, 2021). Argentina is going through the "worst moment

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[2] Andrea Bocelli. *Amazing Grace. YouTube,* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0l5dGiaXCo , April 13, 2020.

since the Pandemic began", according to its President. Contributing factors have included Presidents, particularly in Brazil and Mexico, who did not take the Virus seriously, in fact even mocked the disease and its deadliness; refused to wear masks or practice basic social distancing; countries whose people are too poor to lock down as people were able to do in Europe and the US; a lack of PPEs (personal protective equipment), oxygen, ventilators, medications, and a lack of vaccinations. The *New York Times* article notes, "The world is dividing along a powerful and painful line: Those who have vaccines, and those who do not." (Turkewitz & Bengali, 2021).

A recent epicenter is India, where scenes of hospitals on the evening news are apocalyptic. For months, India's President and many of its people had thought the country and its 1.4 billion people had largely escaped the Pandemic. A year ago, when it was hit, the country locked down, and did well after it emerged out of the lockdown. However, the Modi government rejected advice from its doctors and scientists that the Virus was coming back. Instead, in the past few months, it held huge election rallies and religious festivals, and refused to practice mask wearing and practice basic social distancing (Gettleman, Kumar, Singh, & Yasir, 2021). Instead of vaccinating its population, India exported its huge stocks of vaccines. When the Virus hit as it has done in the past six weeks, it hit hard, very hard. During much of May 2021, India saw over 400,000 new cases per day, and some 3,600 deaths per day. As of now, June 22, 2021, India has almost 30 million cases, no. 2 in the world after the USA, and some 388,000 deaths, also no. 2 in the world after the United States. No end is in sight. Scientists declare the peak of the Virus only arrived in late May, as the country ran out of oxygen, ventilators, PPEs, etc. Its hospitals are still overwhelmed, its doctors and nurses remain exhausted. The Pandemic migrated from teeming Indian cities to the countryside and villages, where most Indians live. "Dozens of bodies washed up on the banks of the Ganges River." (Gettleman & Raj, 2021). From India, the Virus spread at a rapid rate throughout South Asia, embroiling countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Now the Virus has spread into Southeast Asia, impacting hitherto fortunate Malaysia, Vietnam, and Taiwan, which had kept cases very low, due to strict quarantines and contact tracing. Barely 1% of Vietnam's population has received even one shot, and the country is experiencing its worst outbreak yet. The world still does not know whether the World Olympics scheduled for July in Japan will take place as the country endures some 5,000 cases per day.

We should be especially concerned as the Virus has hit Africa, as millions will die there because their health systems cannot deal with what will be a sudden explosion of cases. There are currently about 100,000 cases throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are already seriously impacted. Ten countries in Africa lack any ventilators, crucial for treating this Virus, which prevents people from breathing.

We are also concerned that there might be another large wave of cases this fall, in October and November 2021. We have vaccines, yes. They were developed in record time. The previous record for a vaccine was the mumps vaccine, and that took some four years to develop. They work. Most of the vaccines have 90% or better efficacy or effectiveness. Currently, several types of vaccines are being administered, but very simply not fast enough. For example, only 2% of India's population has been vaccinated. Only 20% of Brazilians. Most Europeans have not been vaccinated. While half or more of Americans, British, and Israelis have been vaccinated, they are a small minority of the world's 7 billion people. As the WHO has stated, vaccinations have

divided the world into the rich countries, which have vaccinated their people, and the poor countries, which have not. The *New York Times* reported on May 5: "As of mid-April, wealthy countries have secured more than 87% of the more than 700 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines dispensed worldwide, while poor countries have received only 0.2%, according to the WHO.[3]" For this disease to be wiped out, for the world to achieve herd immunity, the rich countries must share with the poor. Again, keep in mind that there are some 7.8 billion people in the world. "Deep into the second year of the Pandemic, the world is dividing along a powerful, and painful, line: Those who have vaccines and those who do not." (Turkewitz & Bengali, 2021).

The demographics of new case numbers have also shifted dramatically. Throughout 2020, most new cases were in the rich countries: Europe had 30%, US 33%, and the rest of the world the other third. Today it is very different: The US has declined to 6%, Europe 15%, while India has 43% and South America 15%. The death toll has similarly shifted from 90% in rich countries one year ago in April 2020 to 20% today (early summer 2021). Middle and poor countries have most of the world's deaths today—India, Brazil and other South Asian and Latin American countries.[4] Governments that have had authoritarian-minded, populist leaders who neglected the Virus, or were incompetent, such as US President Trump, Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro, Mexican President Obrador, Hungarian Premier Victor Orban, and Indian Prime Minister Modi have caused millions of needless deaths through their policies or lack of policies (Wintour, 2020).

2.2   Historical Parallel: The Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918-20

The only parallel in modern times to the current Covid-19 Pandemic is the Spanish Flu Pandemic in 1918, which did come in three distinct waves: April and May, October and November, and the following spring 1919. Before the flu virus suddenly departed in early 1920, an estimated 50 million people died, and 500 million had become infected, then about one third the Earth's population. 660,000 perished in the United States, as President Woodrow Wilson was more concerned with prosecuting World War I, and shipping sick-boys to Europe to fight. He took no action, did not even make one speech addressing the Pandemic, as Wilson feared alarmed Americans would not allow their boys to go overseas (Bristow, 2012, pp. 1-3). An estimated 5 to 10 million people died in China at that time; the exact figures are unknown due to the chaos the Warlords instilled throughout the country. The then British and Portuguese colonies of Hong Kong and Macau, adjacent to the Chinese mainland, took stronger measures to fight that historic pandemic, keeping their case numbers fairly low. The 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic was a precedent that taught us to wear face masks, maintain distances from each other, impose quarantines, etc. (Langford, 2005, pp. 473-475).

2.3   Health Security as an Area of Human Security

Health Security, as a paradigm, prevents us from suffering the fate of tens of millions of sick, dying, and dead people from this current Covid-19 Pandemic, and from future pandemics. Due to the horrible prospect — sickness, and deaths — of the current

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[3] New York Times, May 5, 2021.
[4] New York Times, May 5, 2021

Pandemic, huge regions, cities, entire countries, even continents have been, or are in lockdowns — Hubei Province, Italy, Spain, France, UK, most of the US, several countries in South America, and India, have all suffered crushing and cruel lockdowns during the past 18 months. Which cities, regions and countries will be next? Governments need to work together; instead, they seem at war with one another, just like they had been literally in 1918. Instead of leaders standing up and taking responsibility for their lack of action at critical times, they find scapegoats, such as the former US President who called the Virus "the Chinese Virus", deflecting from the fact that Trump was warned about the Virus in January 2020, and did nothing for two months, except calling it a "Democratic hoax", or the racist "China Virus".   The consequences of the lack of Health Security are unfolding before our very eyes.

Proponents of the Human Security paradigm challenge the traditional idea of National Security, arguing that the proper referent for security should be at the human, rather than the national level. Human Security reveals a people-centered and multi-disciplinary understanding of security.   It involves a number of research fields, including medicine, science, statistics, development studies, international relations, strategic studies, and human rights (D'Anieri, 2012, pp. 403-403). The United Nations Development Program's *1994 Human Development Report* is considered a milestone publication in the field of human security, with its argument that insuring "freedom from want", and "freedom from fear" for all persons is the best path to tackle the problem of global insecurity (United Nations Development Programme, 1994). The Corona Virus Pandemic has brought both of these freedoms to the forefront. People throughout the world fear that if the Covid-19 Virus should attack them, they cannot provide for themselves and their families. The Pandemic has huge political, economic, and social consequences. For example, the WHO warns of a global famine this year in 2021 due to the Virus, as people will be too sick to cultivate the soil, or too poor to buy food ("Amid Threat of Catastrophic Global Famine...", 2020). Likewise, we all fear this Virus, and what it could mean, as one's health is probably the greatest thing we can possess. Fear of the Virus causes us to fear our neighbors, who could infect us. Fears of people who come from a Pandemic epicenter, can lead and has led to discrimination against people from that area or city. For example, flights from India are banned, and people from India are currently prevented from entering numerous countries, as people from China were one year ago.

Critics of the concept of Human Security, who are mostly political conservatives, argue that its vagueness undermines its effectiveness. They argue that Human Security has become little more than a vehicle for activists wishing to promote certain causes, what critics call "an agenda". They complain that Human Security does not help the research community understand what security means, or help decision makers formulate good policies (Tadjbakhsh, & Chenoy, 2006). Other scholars have argued that the concept of human security should be broadened to encompass military security. Human security would no longer be the vague amorphous add-on to harder edged areas of security, such as military security, or state security. Perhaps the Corona Virus crisis will remove some of this "amorphous" quality, when it has become part of our daily lives (Paris, 2001). The fact that cities, regions, entire countries, and even continents are locked down indicates that Human Security has become very real and tangible.

In order for the Human Security paradigm to challenge global inequalities, there has to be cooperation between a country's foreign policy, and its approach to global health (Spiegel & Huish, 2009). Consider how the trade war between the US and China has

impacted on global health. China makes most of the world's gowns, face masks, ventilators, and other crucial tools to aid doctors. Yet, despite suffering millions of cases and over 600,000 deaths, the US government refused to remove the tariffs on those critically needed items. The former US President Donald Trump refused to accept offers of help from the Chinese government and individuals, such as Jack Ma of Alibaba. Fortunately, individual Governors, such as Gavin Newson of California, and Andrew Cuomo of New York did. This is an example, before our eyes, of an anti-Chinese foreign policy allowing needless deaths and suffering. The foreign policy interest of the US federal government overshadowed the Health Security interest of the US people.

3.   The International and Political Impact of the Virus

What is the international and political impact of the Virus? There is an excellent article by Patrick Wintour (2020) discussing this aspect of the Pandemic. It discusses the question: "Are state responses to the virus shifting the balance of power between China and the West?" It considers the political and economic consequences of the Pandemic, an event so momentous that it is likely the most significant global event since 1945. In other words, for the first time since World War II, the entire world is experiencing the same event at the same time. It is likely the biggest event of all our lives. I will summarize this very important article here. Competing ideologies, power blocs, leaders, and systems are being stress-tested in the court of world opinion. President Emmanuel Macron of France stated: "This period will have taught us a lot. Many certainties and convictions will be swept away. Many things that we thought impossible are happening." In Hong Kong, graffiti reads: "There can be no return to normal because normal was the problem in the first place." The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said: "The relationship between the biggest powers has never been as dysfunctional. Covid-19 is showing dramatically, either we join together, or we can be defeated.[5]"

Discussion rages as to whether China or the US will emerge as leaders of the post-Coronavirus world. Everything is up for debate — the trade-off between human lives or the economy; the trade-off between a trashed economy and public health; the exposed fragilities of globalization; the future of the European Union; populism; the inherent advantage of authoritarianism vs. democracy. The article declares: "The pandemic has turned into a competition for global leadership, and it will be the countries that most effectively respond to the crisis that will gain traction." The *Crisis Group Thinktank* suggests: "For now, we can discern two competing narratives gaining currency—one in which the lesson is that countries ought to come together to better defeat Covid-19, and one in which the lesson is that countries need to stand apart in order to better protect themselves from it. The crisis also represents a stark test of the competing claims of liberal (democratic) and illiberal (authoritarian) states to better manage extreme social distress." (quoted in Wintour, 2020).

Many are already claiming the East has won this war of competing narratives. The South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han in an influential essay in the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* argued the victors are the "Asian states like Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Singapore, that have an authoritarian mentality, which comes

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[5] All the preceding quotes are taken from the Wintour article "Who will be Winners and Losers...", *The Guardian,* April 11, 2020.

from their cultural tradition of Confucianism. People are less rebellious and more obedient than in Europe (or the USA). They trust the state more. To confront the virus, Asians are strongly committed to digital surveillance." (Han, 2020). The author believes China has very cleverly repositioned itself from being the culprit to becoming the world savior by shipping supplies, medicines, vaccines, and knowledge about the virus to newly afflicted countries, and cities. China has shipped scarce masks, gowns, and ventilators to Italy, Spain, the US, UK, Africa, and now India.

Harvard International Relations theorist Stephen Walt thinks China may succeed. In the journal *Foreign Policy* he declared: "Coronavirus will accelerate the shift of power from West to East. South Korea and Singapore have shown the best response and China has managed well in the aftermath of its initial mistakes. The governments' response in Europe and the US has been very skeptical, and likely to weaken the power of the western brand." (Walt, 2020). Yet, an Indian political scientist says: "Experience, so far, shows that authoritarians or populists are no better at handling the Pandemic. Indeed the countries that responded early and successfully, with some limitations today, such as Korea and Taiwan, have been democracies—not those run by populist or authoritarian leaders." Let me point out that authoritarian Singapore faced a deadly second wave, as new cases rose by the thousands several months ago. Singapore now has over 61,000 cases. Taiwan, which did so well for so long combatting the Virus, has just suffered through a crushing second wave, and currently has some 14,260 cases and almost 600 deaths. While low in comparison with so many nations, these figures have occurred largely in the past few weeks, bringing the Virus home to a people that thought it had escaped the Pandemic. The case of Taiwan illustrated that no country or territory is immune from this insidious Virus. Let me also point out, as we know, that once largely politically-free Hong Kong and Macau have done very well containing the virus. Stanford University Political Economist Francis Fukuyama agrees: "The major dividing line in effective crisis response will not place autocracies on one side, and democracies on the other. The crucial determinant in performance will not be the type of regime, but the state's capacity, and above all, trust in government." He has praised Germany and South Korea, both democratic states. South Korea is in fact selling itself as the democratic power that has best handled the crisis. South Korea has over 124,000 cases, but only 1,847 fatalities. Yet, two of the worst performers are the US and the UK where there also has been little trust in the central government, which had been inept, slow acting, and seemingly lacking any empathy for the thousands of victims (in the US case, up to January 20, 2021, when Donald Trump finally left office).[6]

One of the biggest losers from the Virus is the European Union (EU), which also was unprepared, powerless, and timid in dealing with the crisis. Their first instinct was to close borders, hoard equipment, and assemble national responses. Every country was left to itself, including badly-hit Spain, France, and Italy. The dispute has widened into an ugly battle between north and south Europe over the issuance of common debt. The Dutch and the Germans suspected that Italy used the crisis to get its debts paid by the richer North. The very popular Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said that if the "EU fails, it could fall apart". A former Portuguese Prime Minister called comments by a Dutch leader "disgusting and petty". The Spanish Foreign Minister commented whether the Dutch understood that a "first class cabin will not protect you when the whole ship sinks." Certainly attitudes in the South toward the Netherlands and Germany

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[6] All the preceding quotes were taken from Wintour (2020).

have changed for the worse. During the second wave during the winter and spring 2020-2021, both Germany and the Netherlands have fared badly. Germany has had some 3.7 million cases, and small Netherlands some 1.7 million cases. The post-Coronavirus world might well see the collapse of the EU, at least its unity and common purpose.

The United States' lack of preparedness and national policy provided the world with a picture of absolute chaos last year, as its death toll rose by the day. One EU foreign policy adviser declared that it is likely a "Suez moment" for the United States. This expression refers to the 1956 Suez crisis, which symbolized the ultimate decay of the UK as a global power.[7] We are witnessing very possibly the end of the United States as the sole superpower, even a global power, due to its incompetence, its unpreparedness, and more importantly, its refusal to play any leadership role in helping to lead the world out of this huge crisis last year. One thing that is very clear is the post-Coronavirus world will be very different than the pre-Coronavirus world.

The prospect of a prolonged worldwide impact from the Coronavirus Pandemic has hardened. Some business leaders have warned of a drawn-out recession, or worse, a 1930s-style economic depression with high unemployment, financial chaos, and little consumer demand. Financial markets staggered under fresh blows to the global oil industry, that had, at one point, reached negative value. In other words, the price of a barrel of oil went into negative territory for the first time in history. Many companies, particularly in the air and hospitality industries, will likely not survive the onslaught. Most economists and business leaders (particularly in Europe) expect a U-shaped recovery — a long period between recession and an upturn. Others think it could even be L-shaped — meaning a depression with no recovery for an indefinite period. If there is another wave of infections this fall (2021), as many scientists fear, that will only compound the horrors. To add to that, the UN food relief agency has warned that the world is facing a widespread famine of "biblical proportions", that could kill hundreds of millions of people, mostly in Africa. The director of the World Food Program said: "We are talking about extreme conditions, people literally marching to the brink of starvation." ("Amid Threat of Catastrophic Global Famine...", 2020). Currently, famine has stricken areas of Ethiopia and Madagascar.

We are currently facing cascading waves of disasters: first a health catastrophe, then an economic recession or depression, then a financial crisis, then a famine. What will come next: political crises, social unrest? Stay tuned. The world has entered uncharted territory.

4.   The Origins of Human Security

The emergence of the human security discussion is the result of a convergence of factors at the end of the Cold War. These challenged the dominance of the neorealist paradigm's focus on states, "mutually assured destruction (MAD)", and military security. This enabled a broader concept of security to emerge (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2006). These factors include: the increasingly rapid pace of globalization (at least up to 2016, which saw the Brexit referendum in the UK and the victory of Donald Trump in

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[7] In 1956, the new nationalist government of Gamal Nasser of Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal, which was run by Great Britain, and was a critical lifeline for shipping from Europe to Asia. As a result, Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt to take back the Canal. In a huge humiliation, the United States forced the three countries to withdraw their forces. Their defeat symbolized the end of Great Britain and France as great, global powers.

the US Presidential Election), the failure of liberal democracy to tackle current problems, the reduced threat of nuclear war between the superpowers, and a great rise in the spread of international human-rights norms opening a space for the development of human security. The large number of internal violent conflicts in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe (Balkans during the 1990s and the Ukraine today) resulted in concepts of national and international security failing to reflect the challenges of the post-Cold War security environment. The failure of neo-liberal (*laisse-faire* capitalist) development models to generate growth, particularly in Africa, or to deal with the consequences of complex new threats (such as the Corona Virus or Climate Change) reinforced the sense that international institutions and states are not organized to address such problems in an integrated way (Macfarlane & Khong, 2006). The principal possible indicators of movement toward an individualized conception of security lie, in the first place, in the evolution of international society's consideration of the rights of individuals in the face of potential threats from states. Examples to examine include the *UN Charter*, the *UN Declaration of Human Rights*, and its associated covenants, conventions related to particular crimes (genocide), and the rights of particular groups (women, racial groups, and refugees) (Macfarlane & Khong, 2006).

5. Forms of Human Security

The United Nations Development Program's *Human Development Report* (1994) definition of human security argues that the scope of global security should be expanded to include threats in **seven areas**.

   5.1. Economic Security. Economic security requires an assured basic income for individuals, usually from paid work, or as a last resort, from a state-financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's people are presently economically secure. While the economic security problem may be more serious in developing countries, concern also arises in developed countries as well. For example, due to the Coronavirus and policies of countries to "lock down", millions of people have lost or are losing their jobs. In the US alone, some 22 million people lost their jobs in spring 2020. The US government gave each person a total of US $3,200 to tide them over during this crisis. One leading, Senator, Bernie Sanders, proposed giving each person US $2,000 *each month* until the crisis passes to give people real economic security. Obviously, unemployment and the resulting economic insecurity causes political tensions and ethnic violence, as minorities are often scapegoated.[8] Today, roughly 10 million people remain unemployed as international travel remains largely paralyzed.
   5.2. Food Security. Food security requires that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food. It is what President Franklin Roosevelt referred to in the *Atlantic Charter* in 1941 as "freedom from Want" (Brinkley & Facey-Crowther, 1994). According to the United Nations, the overall availability of food is not the problem; instead, the problem is often the poor distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power. In the past, food security problems have been dealt with at both national and global levels. However, their impacts are limited. Even though governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations have all

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[8] *Human Development Report 1994*, "Sustainable Development and Economic Growth", pp. 17-18, pp. 25-26.

attempted with varying results to take on the issue of the lack of food security, famines still break out in countries or regions. People still go to bed at night hungry. Wars, such as in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, do not help. Wars prevent necessary food from being distributed, and transportation networks are destroyed.

5.3. Health Security. The Covid-19 virus gives us an example of Health *Insecurity*. We all fear getting the Coronavirus, with all of its consequences. Health Security aims to guarantee a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. In developing countries, the major causes of death traditionally were infectious diseases (e.g. influenza), and parasitic diseases (e.g. malaria); whereas in industrialized countries, the major killers were diseases of the circulatory system (heart disease) and cancers. Today lifestyle-related chronic diseases are leading killers world-wide, with 80% of deaths from chronic diseases occurring in low- and middle-income countries. According to the United Nations, in both developing and industrialized countries, threats to Health Security are usually greater for poor people in rural areas, particularly children. This is due to malnutrition, and insufficient access to health services, clean water, and other basic necessities. In the United States, during this Pandemic, poor people and minorities — blacks and Hispanics — are suffering from the virus at a much greater rate than middle-class white people. The American network NBC reported on June 24, 2021, that "Average life expectancy in the United States plummeted in 2020, widening the life expectancy gap between the U.S. and other high income countries. The decline was particularly sharp among Hispanic and Black Americans." (Sullivan, 2021). We also see the deadly consequences as the epicenters of the Virus shift from high-income countries to low and middle-income countries.

5.4. Environmental Security. Environmental security aims to protect people from the short- and long-term ravages of nature (floods, hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, fires, etc.), man-made threats (fires), and a deterioration in their natural environment. In developing countries, lack of access to clean water is one of the greatest environmental threats. In industrialized countries, one of the major threats is air pollution, as well as other forms of pollution—water and light. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue. By early 2020, prior to the worldwide spread of the Coronavirus, global warming was one of the most discussed issues, as Australia and California faced unprecedented fires; the UK and other areas in the US faced terrible flooding; Europe had had its warmest winter on record; and the Arctic icecap had been melting at an unprecedented rate. The world is now facing rising seas, which could inundate coastal cities, such as London, New York, Miami, Hong Kong, New Orleans, and numerous other cities by 2100, if not sooner.[9]

5.5. Personal Security. Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state or external states, from violent individuals and sub-state actors, from domestic abuse, or from criminals. For many people, their greatest source of fear is from crime, particularly violent crime. Within the United States the threat to personal security has been a hot-button issue. The issue of gun violence, and how to tackle it has divided Americans, even families, as one gun atrocity after another afflicts Americans. School-children learn to "shelter-in-place" as part of their educational programs.

5.6. Community Security. Community security aims to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships and values, and from sectarian and ethnic violence.

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[9] *Human Development Report 1994*, pp. 28-30.

Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups, are often threatened. About half of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. For example, millions of Indians died when the subcontinent was divided into a Moslem Pakistan and a Hindu India in 1947 (Ankit, 2016). Recently, Moslems were attacked in a series of *pogroms* by their Hindu neighbors in New Delhi, while the police watched and did nothing. Other attacks have occurred in numerous African countries, as one tribal group has warred on another. The worst example was in 1994 when Hutus attacked their Tutsi neighbors, killing 500,000 to 1 million Hutus, in Rwanda (Dallaire, 2005). In 2003, the President of the Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, launched a terrible war of ethnic cleansing using paramilitary forces. Hundreds of thousands of non-Arab civilians in the Darfur region were killed. For that genocide, al-Bashir was indicted as a war criminal, and is currently sitting in a prison cell in the Sudan (*ICC Prosecutor Presents Case...*, 2008). Sadly, inter-ethnic violence will likely occur until the end of time.

5.7. Political Security. Political security is concerned with whether people live in a society that honors their basic human rights. According to a survey conducted by *Amnesty International*, political repression, systematic torture, ill-treatment, or disappearances are still practiced in over 100 countries. [10] (There are roughly 200 countries in the world.) Human rights violations are most frequent during periods of political unrest. Along with repressing individuals and groups, governments may try to exercise control over ideas and information by censoring the internet or social media outlets. According to *Freedom House*, following a wave of democratization after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, in our current world, we have had a revival of authoritarianism and serious decline in democracy in established democracies, such as the United States, Hungary, Poland, India, Turkey, and other countries (Csaky, 2021). Many fear that the "distance-controlling" measures enacted during this Coronavirus crisis will cause a loss of political and personal freedoms as cities, regions, and countries are locked down. We have witnessed this development already in Hong Kong, which has suffered through an unprecedented political crackdown since July 2020.

6.   Freedom from Fear vs. Freedom from Want

In an ideal world, which this is not, each of the United Nations Development Program's seven categories of threats (as described above) would receive adequate global attention and resources. Yet attempts to implement this Human Security agenda have led to the emergence of two major schools of thought on how to best practice Human Security: "Freedom from Fear" and "Freedom from Want". While the *UNDP 1994 Human Development Repor*t originally argued that Human Security requires attention to both Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want, divisions have gradually emerged over the proper scope of that protection (What threats should individuals be protected from?), and over the appropriate mechanisms for responding to these threats.

6.1. Freedom from Fear. This school seeks to limit the practice of Human Security to protecting individuals from violent conflicts. It also recognizes that these violent threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of a strong or effective central government, and other forms of inequities—income, class, racial, religious. This approach argues that limiting the focus to preventing violence is a realistic and

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[10] Each year Amnesty International conducts its *Annual Report on the State of the World's Human Rights,* such as 2015-2016 (February 24, 2016).

manageable approach to Human Security. Emergency assistance, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, peace-building are the main concerns of this approach. For example, Canada was a critical player in the efforts to ban landmines. Canada has incorporated the "Freedom from Fear" agenda as a primary component in its own foreign policy.[11] However, whether such a "narrow" approach can truly serve its purpose in guaranteeing more fruitful results remains an issue.

6.2. Freedom from Want. This school advocates a holistic approach to achieving Human Security. It argues that the threat agenda should be broadened to include hunger, disease, and natural disasters because they are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity. They (hunger, disease, and natural disasters) kill far more people than genocide, war and terrorism combined. For example, the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic killed 50 million people, more than died in World War I and World War II combined (Barry, 2004, pp. 15-16). Different from "Freedom from Fear", the school that advocates "Freedom from Want" expands the focus beyond the prevention of violence with emphasis on development and security goals.

Despite their differences, these two approaches to human security can be considered complementary, rather than contradictory. Expressions to this effect include Franklin D. Roosevelt's famous *Four Freedoms Speech* in 1941, in which "Freedom from Want" is characterized as the third, and "Freedom from Fear" is the fourth such fundamental, universal, freedom.

7.   Relationships of the Human Security Paradigm

7.1.   Relationship with Traditional Security

Relationship with Traditional Security. Coined in the early 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the term Human Security has been used by thinkers (Macfarlane & Khong, 2006) who have sought to shift the discussion of security away from its traditional state-centered orientation to the protection and advancement of individuals within societies. Human Security emerged as a challenge to ideas of traditional security. But human and traditional or international and national security are not mutually exclusive concepts. It has been argued that, without Human Security, traditional (international and national) state security cannot be attained and vice versa. Traditional security is about a state's ability to defend itself against external threats. Traditional security has described the philosophy of international security predominance ever since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and the rise of the nation-states (Patton, 2019). While international relations theory includes many variants of traditional security, from realism to liberalism, the fundamental trait that these schools share is their focus on the primacy of the nation state. In the following paragraphs, traditional security is compared and contrasted to Human Security in terms of their referent, scope, actors, and means.

Referent. The **referent** of traditional security is that traditional security policies are designed to promote demands ascribed to the state. Other interests are subordinated to those of the state. Traditional security protects a state's boundaries, people, institutions,

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[11] For example, Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction (Ottawa Treaty) or Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

and values. By contrast, Human Security is people-centered. Its focus shifts to protecting individuals. The important dimensions are to entail the well-being of individuals, and respond to ordinary people's needs in dealing with sources of threats.

Scope. The **scope** of traditional security is that traditional security seeks to defend states from external aggression. State security is about a state's ability to deter or defeat an attack. It makes use of deterrence strategies to maintain the integrity of the state, and protect the state from external threats. By contrast, in addition to protecting the state from external aggression, Human Security would expand the scope of protection to include a broader range of threats, including environmental pollution, infectious diseases (such as the Covid-19 Virus), and economic deprivation.

Actors. The **actors** differ between traditional security and Human Security. In traditional security, the state is the sole actor. Decision making is centralized in the government. Traditional security assumes that a sovereign state is operating in an anarchical international environment, in which there is no world-governing-body to enforce international rules of conduct. By contrast, the realization of Human Security involves not only governments, but a broader participation of different actors, regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and local communities.

Means. In terms of the **means** it uses, traditional security relies upon building up national power and military defense. The common forms it takes are armament races, alliances, strategic boundaries, etc. By contrast, Human Security not only protects, but also empowers people and societies as a means of security. People contribute by identifying and implementing solutions to insecurity (Tadjbakhsh, 2007).

7.2.   Relationship with Development

Relationship with development. Traditionally, embracing liberal market economics (*laisse-faire capitalism*) was considered to be the universal path for economic growth, and thus development for all humanity. However, continuing conflict and human rights abuses following the end of the Cold War thirty years ago, and the fact that two-thirds of the world's population seemed to have gained little from the economic gains of globalization, led to fundamental questions about the way development was practiced. Accordingly, human development emerged in the 1990s to challenge the dominant paradigm of a capitalist economy in the development community [12]. Human development proponents argue that economic growth is insufficient to expand people's choice or capabilities. Areas such as health, education, technology, the environment, and employment should not be neglected. *Human Security could be said to further enlarge the scope for examining the causes and consequences of underdevelopment, by seeking to bridge the divide between development and security.* Too often, militaries did not address or factor in the underlying causes of violence and insecurity. Instead, development workers often underplayed the vulnerability of development models to violent conflict. Human Security springs from a growing consensus that these two fields need to be more fully integrated in order to enhance security for all (Stewart, 2004; Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2006).

In brief**,** the practice of human development and human security share three fundamental elements. 1. Human Security and human development are both people-

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[12] *Financial Times*. December 24, 1994.

centered. They challenge the orthodox approach to security and development. Both emphasize people to be the ultimate ends but not means. Both treat humans as agents who should be empowered to participate in the course. 2. Both perspectives are multi-dimensional. Both address people's dignity, as well as their material and physical concerns. 3. Both schools of thought consider poverty and inequality as the root causes of individual vulnerability.

8.   Conclusion

In the decades following World War II, governments around the world neglected their public health. Public hospitals, doctors, nurses, supplies, such as PPEs, as well as strategies for fighting an inevitable Pandemic were all neglected, in rich and poor countries alike. Needed funding went to other areas. Warnings, such as the SARS epidemic in 2002-2004 and MERS a few years later, were forgotten. Thus, when the Coronavirus disease first hit in January 2020, the world was totally unprepared. There were no treatments, insufficient public hospitals, equipment (PPEs), oxygen, ventilators, and perhaps worst of all, no international strategy, and few national strategies. While China's initial response was insufficient, allowing the disease to escape into the wider world, once China acted, its government conducted a national strategy, and a very tough one, one that curbed the disease within months. The countries within the European Union never enacted an EU-wide strategy to fight the Pandemic until it was too late. Instead, they leveled accusations at one another, and the EU came out of the crisis weakened and divided. The United States, once renowned for its medical care, did especially poorly. Its President Donald Trump politicized the Pandemic right from the beginning. He sought to deny the Pandemic, then minimize its devastating effects, and thought only of his re-election campaign. The result was that the United States ended up with the highest case and death count in the world. The one international agency set up to combat Pandemics, the World Health Organization, was attacked by Donald Trump, who made the renowned organization a scapegoat for his own incompetence. The result was that political divisions hindered any development of an international strategy to fight the greatest Pandemic to hit the world in over 100 years.

   From the developed, first world, the Virus quickly traveled to the developing world, which was just as unprepared. Virtually all of Latin America, from Mexico all the way south to the tip of Chile and Argentina, were devastated. Several of its leaders, notably Presidents Bolsonaro of Brazil and Obrador of Mexico adopted from the playbook of Donald Trump—deny, minimize and even ridicule the Virus. The Virus does not take kindly to ridicule. Its response was that Brazil today has some 18 million cases and over 500,000 deaths. Argentina, Mexico, and Columbia are not much better. Russia, spanning the huge Eurasian landmass, is facing yet another upsurge in cases as today Moscow has over 9000 cases out of a total 18,000, in a country where distrust of the Russian Vaccine *Sputnik* runs rampant. Africa is also currently being hit very hard, with worse days ahead as the continent faces the deadly Virus with insufficient vaccines, hospitals, doctors, oxygen, ventilators, and PPEs. India is only now emerging from a crippling second wave, again lacking vaccines, oxygen, hospitals , PPEs, etc., as its casualties mounted to the point where India became sadly the no. 2 in the world in case numbers. India's authoritarian know-it-all Prime Minister Modi totally mishandled the crisis, conducting huge rallies that became super-spreader events, and encouraging his people to attend huge religious celebrations.

One of the few bright spots throughout this Pandemic was the development of vaccines in record time, vaccines which have a very high efficacy up to 95%. Yet, this powerful weapon also became politicized. For some unknown and irrational reason, right-wing authoritarian leaders, such as the American and Brazilian Presidents, claimed it did not work, or would even harm its recipients. The result was that their followers refused to be vaccinated, only causing them to fall prey to the Virus. Just as disturbingly, wealthy nations bought up the scarce initial dosages of the vaccines, preventing the developing nations in Latin America, Asia, and Latin America from becoming vaccinated, which is causing its peoples' falling sick and dying in huge numbers. Thus, the Pandemic has shown to everyone the stark divisions that exist in our world today.

The Coronavirus Pandemic is only one illustration of the lack of Health Security that exists today. Despite all the advances of modern medicine, the Pandemic has shown that public health has barely advanced from the days of the Spanish Flu Pandemic some 100 years ago. Regardless of where we are, we see the limitations of Health Security in the lack of hospitals, doctors, PPEs, nurses, testing, vaccines, basic oxygen and advanced ventilators. Health Security requires international cooperation, sorely lacking in fighting this Pandemic. Instead of being bolstered to fight the Pandemic with an international strategy, the World Health Organization has become a useful scapegoat for failing, stupid authoritarian leaders, who think solely of retaining their personal power, at the cost of millions of their peoples. As a result, Health Insecurity has become the byword in today's world.

Health Security, in turn, is only one division of Human Security, which is a much broader aspect of International Security. For decades, International Security was solely concerned with military security in all its forms. In the aftermath of World War II, Human Security emerged as a definite part of International Security. Human Security includes the following fields besides Health Security: Economic Security (a basic income for all), Food Security (sufficient food for all people), Environmental Security (protection from natural disasters, and end of pollution), Personal Security (protection from personal violence), Community Security (protection for minority groups from repression), and Political Security (protection of personal and political freedoms).

In sum, the Coronavirus Pandemic is likely the greatest global event to hit the world since 1945, the end of World War II. Almost nowhere on the entire planet was untouched by the Virus. Even small isolated islands with no cases suffered hugely economically from a loss of tourist income, and complete isolation. The Pandemic had huge consequences—politically, socially and economically. Economically, the world suffered its greatest depression since the 1930s. While some countries are recovering, other countries, mostly in the developing world, are still tremendously economically depressed. The gap between rich nations and poor nations has widened. Socially, in almost all countries, the gap between the rich and poor people has widened, in some cases greatly. This widened gap has had huge social repercussions, such as a growth in crime and violence, which we have witnessed in numerous countries. Food insecurity, personal insecurity, and economic insecurity have all increased.

Politically, the Wintour article "Coronavirus: Who will be the winners and losers in the new world order?" that appeared in *The Guardian* in April 2020 proved highly prescient for much of 2020. It forecast that the global axis of power has shifted from the West to the East, from democracies to authoritarian states, which handled the Pandemic better than the Western democracies. It is true that China handled the Pandemic well,

keeping its total cases and death toll relatively low, considering China has 1.4 billion people, and the Pandemic originated in China. Yet, other large countries with authoritarian-minded leaders handled the Pandemic very poorly, notably the United States, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, and India, all suffering huge casualties and cases. While several states in Asia, besides China, handled the Pandemic well, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Singapore; all have suffered recent waves, and some nations in Asia have had recent huge case numbers and deaths, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, just to name a few. Since the defeat of Donald Trump in November 2016, the United States and to a lesser extent Western Europe, are recovering politically. Thus, it is premature to say with certainty that the axis of power has shifted to the East from the West. In light of the Pandemic and related political, economic and social events, it seems likely we are living at a time of great Human *Insecurity.*

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