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Covid-19 and Global Governance

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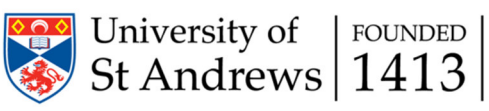

Preface

The last 18 months have been unlike anything experienced in living memory. Readers probably require little reminding of the profound and myriad ways that the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has impacted their lives. While the personal human tolls are rightly front in our minds, Covid-19 has also stressed complex systems including international transportation and supply chains that constitute our modern interconnected world. Responses to a highly transmissible virus led to new—and for many, unprecedented—restrictions on mobility while the development and distribution of vaccines demonstrated both genuinely remarkable ingenuity and significant limitations to cooperation.

Covid-19 is thus one of the defining challenges for contemporary global politics and governance. The pandemic will undoubtedly influence social, political, and economic structures, from local to global scales. Yet the nature and extent of these changes remain unclear. While some effects are already observable, others require longer time spans to identify and assess, and may not ultimately emerge. For some, Covid-19 has highlighted existing fragilities—including systemic inequalities and our abuse of the natural world—and is thus part of the broader ongoing stream of global affairs. Others see a more profound break with past practices and expectations – a genuinely rare transformative event with potential to reorder societies and even the international system itself. How, then, will Covid-19 alter the institutions, practices, and norms that characterise global politics? Will this collective challenge spur renewed global cooperation and the strengthening of governance structures, or retrenchment and a reversal of forms of transnational integration? Will the pandemic lead to a further expansion of private commercial influence in the organisation of our societies, thereby weakening the state, or will the extraordinary interventions of the past year—marked by lockdowns and extensive government interventions in the economy—mark a more permanent condition of centralised control? Perhaps all, or none, of these possibilities will come to pass.

The five essays in this collection represent important voices from young scholars, with their own perspectives on a timely and growing debate. Taken together, they highlight the multifaceted impacts that Covid-19 is already having on global governance and suggest future implications we are only beginning to grapple with. The essays are suitably diverse, exploring the intersection of Covid-19 and the rise of illiberal and populist political movements, securitisation of public health crises, global economic institutions, transnational flows of knowledge and expertise, and the efficacy of "technocratic" forms of governance. As appropriate given the complexity of the subject matter, their findings defy easy categorisation. All are intellectually rich and stimulating interventions in an ongoing event.

The Centre for Global Law and Governance (CGLG) is immensely proud of our internship programme. Each autumn, we hold a competitive selection process open to undergraduate and post-graduate taught students from across the University. Our 2020-21 cohort includes students from the Schools of International Relations, Economics, and Modern Languages, reflecting the kind of interdisciplinarity we seek to cultivate in the Centre. In the first semester, interns complete a paid research assistantship project with a CGLG-affiliated faculty member. In the second semester, they research and write an original essay on some aspect of our annual theme.

The internship programme is a vital part of the CGLG's broader community of scholars. Our PhD Fellows Josephine Jackson, Haley Rice, Simon Taeuber, and Ruoxi Wang served as academic mentors for the individual research projects and provided superb guidance and moral support in the development of the essays. We are grateful for their help as, we are sure, are the interns. Yet the work presented here is the product of our interns' own thinking. They are their own biggest support network, and actively provided peer review on each other's drafts at an internal workshop. We enjoy this process tremendously and are delighted to be part of their learning process.

The ongoing pandemic naturally reshaped Centre events in the 2020-21 academic year. Our public and internal events transitioned to the online environment, with

superb organisational assistance provided by Mrs Jenny Halley, the School of IR's Research and Impact Administrator. Unfortunately, we had to abandon our pre-pandemic annual in-person *JSWPS* launch event. This is always a nice celebration of our interns' achievements and serves to wrap-up our activities for the academic year. In the spirit of our topic, we relied on digital technologies to celebrate together with a virtual launch party.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy the outcome of this scholarly process.

Adam Bower and Mateja Peter
Co-Directors, Centre for Global Law and Governance

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The Return of the Nation-State: The Pandemic's Acceleration to the Illiberal Order

Ella Whitaker [*]

The liberal order of global governance that emerged in the post-cold war era is one that many believed to be absolute (Ikenberry 2005; Mastanduno 2019). Democracies, in particular, understood the cooperative international system, stimulated by multilateral institutions and global interconnectedness, to mark a new stage in history. The geopolitical turmoil of the past was to be substituted for a global order rooted in peace and cooperation under the watchful eye of the US hegemony. The international institutions created by states established a cooperative form of global governance under the anarchy of the international system. This liberal order was considered to be the future of international relations and with it the success of liberalism within IR. Yet, at the turn of the 21st century its dominance started to decline and doubts began to arise surrounding the system's omnipresence. Donald Trump's inward-looking presidency and Britain's decision to leave the European Union (EU) illustrated the intentions of two great powers to neglect the western liberal order and 'go it alone' to chase national interests instead of the pursuit of globalism. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit at the beginning of 2020, the reinstatement of nationalism and the downfall of the liberal order was accelerated. The nationalism present in the international response to the pandemic emphasised the trends of protectionism seen lurking in recent years. The state-centred reaction to the global threat of the century has accelerated the system changes already in motion: a return to the age of the nation state. The success of protectionism and state-centred nationalism indicate a new shift in global governance from the liberal order of the 20th century to the new illiberal order with nation state as the key actor once again.

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The Rise and Fall of the Liberal Order

At the turn of the century, the international system was believed to be 'characterised by regional integration, economic globalization, and permeable borders', which was true (Rudolph 2005, 1; Smith, Solinger and Topik 1999). The post-war integration of Europe was testimony to the success of liberalism and intergovernmental institutions. The rise of globalisation dissolved national borders and connected all corners of the world through global supply chains and compressing the far-reaching nature of an international system, now connected through advanced transport and technology. In addition, the United States' democratic victory over the Soviets resulted in their uncontested military and ideological prosperity; essentially resting the world order on the shoulders of the West. The liberal order created through globalisation and the advancement of liberalism requires a contraction in sovereignty; state control present on previous forms of governance were sacrificed for the post-war liberal order (Zacher 1992; Fowler and Bunk 1995; Rudolph 2005). The transformation from the Westphilian structure of the international system was not taken unbewildering to states: constraints on sovereignty are accepted in order to reap the benefits of international institutions and globalised flows of both goods and people (Rudolph 2005). And so, undeniably, the influence of the nation state weakened to make way for a more diverse range of actors on the international stage.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the liberal order of the 20th century was already beginning to splinter; shifting the international system into a state of flux (Aybet 2020, 303). The institutions and multilateralism created to solve the errors of the past were struggling to solve those of the present: both economic and political. In its conception, Great Britain's referendum to leave the EU appeared as a compromise under domestic politics with little likelihood of success instead of a legitimate call from government to regain sovereignty. Yet, the Leave campaign, rooted in xenophobia and nationalism, prevailed over the regional liberal ideology of the EU in favour of protectionism and greater national sovereignty surrounding Britain's border (Scuira 2017). The departure of such a dominant European partner such as the UK calls into question the longevity of the regional integration of Europe. As the uncertainties of post-1945 Europe fade, so too does the perceived need for a regional

liberal cooperation. The exit of such a fundamental member state questions if great powers are beginning to consider liberalism incompatible with the sovereignty required to survive. The election of President Donald Trump, just months after Brexit, further implies the liberal order's incompatibility with the relative gains in great power politics. Trump openly questioned liberal values and the importance of maintaining international institutions that go beyond US national interest (Schaldlow 2020, 35). In his November 2017 speech to the UN General Council, Trump emphasises sovereignty significantly more than cooperation and humanitarian efforts and stated that America 'reject[s] the ideology of globalism' (Nakasone and Schake 2020; UN 2018). His inclination towards zero-sum, protectionist policies furthers the notion that the US is distancing itself from its commitments of global governance given its position as the hegemon of the 20th century unipolar system. The rise of the East, particularly China, has also contributed to the state of flux within the international system. Much of Trump's protectionism was in retaliation to new economical threats from the East: China offers not only cheaper goods but an untapped pool of consumers, both of which threaten the US economic greatness (Rudd 2020). The increasing domestic interest in regaining national sovereignty and the rise of competing powers within the international system has led to many states to abandon the liberal ideals ingrained in the foundations of the world order.

Pandemic Pandemonium

Despite the rising protectionist policies within the 21st century, the demise of the pre-pandemic liberal order was not inevitable. The US election cycle was looming and Brexit's success had been questioned throughout the negotiation difficulties (Bellamy 2019). In part, it seemed as though those who had favoured protectionism were looking for opportunities to re-join the liberal order. Then the pandemic hit. The international response required to resolve such a global crisis fell far short of expectations. It was clear that the nation-state had executive control over the management of international coronavirus responses and the strengths of nationalism and protectionism clearly triumphed compared to attempted cooperation (Curtis 2021; Basrur and Kliem 2021). China's original apprehension to openly cooperate

with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the state's decision to adopt its own response to the virus' questioned international institutions' abilities to handle the pandemic and foreshadowed much of what was to come (Patrick 2020, 44). Above this, the modern-day umbrella organisation for global governance, the United Nations, has also miscarried successful global leadership throughout the pandemic (Akgun and Celik 2020, 258). The institution's failure to coordinate a united international response to the pandemic and the way in which states deserted their roles in the UN illustrated how the success of cooperation between international organisations relies solely on those that are involved: states.

Most nations opted for an inwards response to the outbreak of coronavirus. The concept of a strict Westphalian style border, with total state control, seemed more desirable than ever; putting into question the borderless world that the international system (particularly Europe) had worked so hard to achieve. The first few months of the pandemic saw state's regain total control of their territorial borders and the boundaries that had begun to fade became prevalent once again. According to Conner (2020), 91% of the world's population were living under border restrictions relating to the pandemic by 1st April 2020. Even the signatories of the Schengen Agreement (abolishing border controls between 26 European countries) abandoned their transnational commitments and closed their borders in pursuit of protectionism and national interest (Alden 2020). One of the most successful pandemic responses to date has been that of New Zealand, who hermetically closed their borders on 16th March 2020 and as a result was quick to eradicate the virus, returning to a sense of normality much faster than the rest of the international system (ibid; Jones 202). This quick and ruthless abandonment of the borderless utopia of the liberal order stands as a testimony to the success of protectionism and the resorting back to the executive nation state.

The global response to the pandemic also highlights the vulnerabilities created by the dependency on global supply chains. Countries placed export controls on medical supplies to secure national supply, leaving those without the competitive advantage in their manufacturing notably vulnerable. Being vulnerable to such

controls on international trade, seen in many aspects of states' response to the pandemic, advocates for the implementation of autarky. President Trump signed an executive order requiring the purchase of solely US manufactured drugs and added 'we must never be reliant on a foreign nation for America's medical or other needs' (Trump White House Archives 2020). Although autarky is appealing in times of crisis, it is not the desired long-term outcome for global supply chains. Instead, countries need to adapt to a resilience-based model, finding a balance between the benefits of cooperation and autarky (Alden 2020). Through this a level of cooperation can be formed without the over-reliant vulnerability that arise in times of crisis.

The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic has confirmed the finite lifetime of the liberal order. The need for states to 'go it alone' and the success of border closures and action based on self-interest has confirmed its decline within the international system. The cooperation and interdependence generated by the liberal world order is no longer commonplace within bureaucracy. The assumptions that this world order would be omnipresent was incorrect and International Relations must find an approach to re-evaluate the interests and capabilities of different actors in the international system. The return of the nation state as the international system's key actor requires reconsideration about what this new world order could be.

The Fall of the Hegemon

Trump's decision to ostracise the US from its allies and the cut ties with international organisations has generated inadequacies surrounding its role within global leadership (Basrur and Kliem 2021; Patrick 2020). The 'America First' foreign policy displayed before and throughout the pandemic has caused severe reputational damage for the US within the international system. The US's nationalist policy has disassociated the state as the leader of the West by cutting ties with its western institutions and allies. In a similar vein, western states have distanced *themselves* from the erratic, xenophobic and self-serving foreign policy of the US. Washington's response to the pandemic has emphasised these hostilities between the West even

further; with differing interests and the unity of democracy dissipating the hierarchy that upheld the US hegemony, leaving it to crumble.

More significantly, the demise of the US western leadership and the rise of other great powers, partly as a result of the pandemic, has further altered the balance of global order. Despite being the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic, China has the potential to relatively gain from the international disorder caused by the pandemic. (Curtis 2021; Fukuyama 2020). There will of course be economic and political consequences: for the first time since Mao Zedong's death, the Chinese economy shrank for three consecutive months (Wall Street Recovers 2020) and the unaccountable and uncooperative Chinese response to the discovery of the virus has had reputational consequences for China as a great power (Basrur and Kliem). Patrick (2020) argues that the damage done by both the US and China has resulted in a 'vacuum [within global governance] left by Washington's delinquency and Beijing's obfuscation' (Paul 2020, 46). China has made a conscious effort to reframe the COVID-19 narrative and remove themselves from the epicentre of the pandemic. When liberal institutions and EU allies failed to assist Italy at the beginning of Europe's battle with coronavirus, China enthusiastically assisted with medical supplies and experts (Basrur and Kliem 2021, 3). Battling in a zero-sum game, China has seen the global experience with the pandemic as an opportunity to come out of this geopolitical minefield with the US on top (Rudd 2020). Navigating the reshuffling of the global order as a result of the pandemic is critical for great powers. Being able to maintain global leadership while also participating in heated great power competition is more critical than ever during the return of the nation state (Basrur and Kliem 2021).

Anarchy of the Nation State

The return to the Westphalian order, with the nation state at the centre, has troubling consequences for scholars and policymakers who saw the liberal order as the end to international anarchy. Liberalism has failed to generate a cooperative international response to the pandemic and the explanatory power of realists' calls for self-interest and security gain substance. Realism argues that states act, as

primary actors, in a self-interested way to secure survival and/ or power in an anarchic system that is void of any higher-level global governance; a mirror to the response to the pandemic (Basrur and Kliem 2021). The fallout of the pandemic has revealed that the international organisations held at the core of liberalist theory are simply used as figureheads for the self-interest and zero-sum gains of the states of which control them (ibid, 2).

The anarchy of the international system, a perpetrating factor of realism, is seen in the disarray of a united global response and the performance of institutions formed as a mechanism of global governance. The failure of governance at global and regional levels has led states to establish themselves as the primary players in what has resulted in a global order of great power competition. States now cooperate on a needs-based level, on issues that transcends politics, finding a balance between autarky and dependency to best serve national interests without sacrificing excessive power and security (Aybet 2020, 304). Assuming the liberal cooperation predating the pandemic was a result of realist self-interest and zero-sum politics, the failure of a coordinated global response can be explained. Given the tumultuous nature of great power competition, while going through a global crisis of such magnitude as a pandemic, states would be compelled to swindle to achieve relative gains over others and as a result cooperation becomes impractical. Finding balance within the chasm of power defined by pandemic responses and security threats can help determine where the next global order of the international system will land.

New World Order

Being able to perceive how global power might balance between the US, China and other great powers is increasingly perplexing given the ambiguity of future global threats. The uncertainty caused by the power imbalance of the pandemic will, at least, 'pose a serious concern and anxiety to the world in terms of the future of global peace and security' (Akgun and Celik 2020, 367). Inferring how this unknown could develop the zero-sum game of relative power politics is premature: the US hegemony could resurface; a new bipolar system could emerge or the anarchy under which realism strives could result in a multipolar system of total great power

competition (Cooley and Nexon 2020; Ikenberry 2020; Rudd 2020). Evaluating how this anarchy will resolve itself within global leadership cannot be answered at current times under any certainty. What is important to current post-pandemic global governance analysis is the *type* of order under which balance is struck. The liberal order, valuing international and cooperation resting under the control of democratic western-US influence, could remain even distancing itself from a total unipolar system. Alternatively, the success of authoritarian nationalism and protectionism seen within the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic could allow for a state centred illiberal order to emerge, changing the very structure of how the international system strives (Curtis 2021, 34).

The success of the nationalist response to the pandemic, with nation states as primary actors, will likely divert future international efforts of bureaucracy away from cooperation and continue the populist agenda with regards to confronting international issues (Basrur and Kliem 2021, 8). If the rebalance of the international system in the post-pandemic era is to reflect the change needed in post-cold war global governance, it is clear that the liberal order is no longer most efficient at governing the self-interested nature of states. The US's protectionist policies have allowed developed and developing countries alike to seek patronage from other great powers and move away from the reliance on the western liberal order. This being said, multilateralism can still be present but now instead of in the spirit of cooperation and liberalism, it can be used by states to balance autarky and interdependency directly in line with self-interest (Patrick 2020, 40). It seems that the international system has the potential to now be upheld under the rule of national interest instead of the mutually beneficial cooperation seen in post-cold war global politics (Layne 2020, 42).

Conclusion

The COVID pandemic has accelerated the shift in world order that had gained momentum since the turn of the 21st century. Not only this, but it has cemented this change for the future. The pandemic has highlighted the possibility of future threats where the liberal order of the international system is ill-equipped to successfully

overcome the uncertainties through cooperation. The failure of the liberal order, experienced throughout the pandemic, questions the security of states and emphasises the anarchical nature of the international. In the pursuit of survival, both from the pandemic and in the international system as a whole, protectionism and authoritarianism have successfully guided states' responses and the abandonment of international institutions has left actors with few regrets. The return of the nation state as the primary actor in international relations signifies the transition from the liberal global order to the illiberal. The outcome for the anarchic system might remain unclear but what is certain is that the global order under which it prevails has changed.

This new period of international relations, and the explanatory shift from liberalism to realism, also calls for the reconsideration of theory. The survival mechanism understandably in place in countries' pandemic responses leaves 'little place for prescriptive critical theories' while all action is required to be tactical (Aybet 2020). Exploring this evolved international system requires problem solving theory of a new type: one that does not seek to preserve the order as it stands, but instead seeks to understand its purpose (ibid). The shift to a new illiberal order creates an international system that is obscure to states that have become accustomed to the hierarchical governance of international institution in the past. It generates new ground for states to discover through relative gain and zero-sum politics, as well as dynamics that requires innovative analysis from International Relations scholars.

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The War on Coronavirus: The Politics of Securitisation in the Global Governance of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Reilly Wacyk [*]

As the COVID-19 crisis spreads around the globe, a consistent thread through the political communication of national leaders and international organization alike has been the militaristic language of warfare and battle. From Xi Jinping's vow to wage a "people's war" against the coronavirus, to UN Secretary-General António Guterres' assertion that "this war needs a war-time plan to fight it," to US President Donald Trump's self-fashioning as a "war-time president," the global response to COVID-19 has been characterized by militarized narratives and imaginaries (Tian 2020; Guterres 2020; Trump 2020a). In many cases, the discursive politics of the COVID-19 outbreak have increasingly reflected the politics of securitization, "the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue […] as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 23).

In a global emergency as far-reaching and complex as the COVID-19 pandemic, communication and discourse are central to the formulation of policy. This essay first considers the construction of the 'war on COVID' in (and by) the Trump administration's political communications in the United States, drawing in particular on the Copenhagen School's theory of securitization to examine the discursive strategies evoked in these communications. In doing so, I argue that by defining the nation-state as the object which policy aims to protect and foreign countries as an enemy-Other which must be combatted, this discourse serves to naturalize militaristic and nationalistic strategies and policies, often to the detriment of public health management. However, in examining the politics of securitization across various actors in global politics, an alternate view of war discourse emerges. The politics of securitization across actors in global politics are not straightforward and unpacking the logic of the metaphors employed by international organizations, in particular the United Nations and World Health Organization, reveals a

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significant shift the grammar of the discourse, which has influenced the formulation and enactment of crisis management policy. Ultimately, by critically examining the politics and nuances of securitized discursive strategies across various actors in international relations, this essay demonstrates the ways in which discourse serves as a fundamentally constitute aspect of the policy and practice of global politics, and — for better or for worse — has the ability to critically reshape global governance in the post-pandemic landscape.

Theoretical Framework: Securitization, Metaphor and Global Health Governance

The Copenhagen School's theory of securitization, as delineated in Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998), identifies the process by which actors can transform subjects from regular political issues into matters of 'security,' thereby enabling extraordinary means to be used in the name of survival. Characterized as a speech-act, this process has two parts: first, the securitizing move, wherein a 'securitizing actor' — "someone, or a group who performs the security speech act" — presents an issue that is typically outside the remit of security as a 'security threat'; second, there is the acceptance of this framing by an audience. By implying that an existential threat looms over a certain 'referent object,' the securitizing actor is able to remove the issue from the normal sphere of politics and thus "justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle [it]", including the suspension of normal democratic procedures in the name of security (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 40, 21).

Securitization has become an appropriate lens for interpreting global health given the longstanding use of militaristic metaphors in the political and media communication of health crises. Understood as "one of the standard metaphor systems for disease in the West" (Wallis and Nerlich 2005, 2632), the comparison of illness to battle can be observed in communications about AIDS, cancer, Avian flu, SARS, H1N1, Zika, Ebola and others (see: Ross 1989; Chiang and Duann 2007; Stibbe 1997; Sontag 2013; Hodgkin 1985). Given that the representation of an illness is "crucial to understanding the phenomenon as a whole" and functions to "heighten expectations of pandemic and perpetuate perceptions of risk" (Abeysinghe and

White 2010, 371), critical analysis of the securitization process is essential to understanding responses to the pandemic as well as the impacts of the virus on the international system more generally.

Much of the literature of disease metaphors problematizes their usage: Reisfield and Wilson (2004, 4025) contend that these metaphors are "inherently masculine, power-based, paternalistic and violent"; Sontag's seminal *AIDS and its Metaphors* (2013) asserts that metaphor adds further anxiety and stigmatization by blaming victims when they are not able to figuratively 'win the battle'; Ross (1989) explores the ways in which this framing may pave the way for the acceptance of violence and the potential for collateral damage. Indeed, for Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998), the process of securitization may be inherently problematic, as it allows for the erosion of democratic processes, often irreversibly, through enabling the justification of 'extraordinary measures.'

While these criticisms are relevant, it is essential to examine the specificities of the discourse and how they differ across actors; examination of which actors are being *securitized,* which actors are performing the *securitization* and *to what effect*, is critical to understanding the impacts of the resulting discourse on policy. Given the very real stakes of coronavirus policy, this essay will challenge the classical Copenhagen school's assumption that all securitization is fundamentally problematic; the focus of analysis will be on the *functionality* of the discourse. The goal is to elucidate how different actors (re)construct conceptions of COVID-19 through securitizing speech-acts and what different pathways of response are enacted, accepted or closed off as a result, critically impacting the lives of millions across the world.

'The Toughest Enemy' - Exploring Trump's War on COVID-19

The World Health Organization officially recognized the coronavirus as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 (Adhanom Ghebreyesus 2020a). While President Donald Trump's initial response consisted of downplaying the outbreak to reduce potential economic fallout, his administration soon shifted their rhetoric to one of outright war, relying on militaristic metaphors to 'mobilize' citizens in the 'fight' against the virus. A

week after the World Health Organization's declaration of pandemic status, Trump asserted:

> *Every generation of Americans has been called to make shared sacrifices for the good of the nation. In World War Two, young people in their teenage years volunteered to fight […] and now it's our turn. We must sacrifice together because we are all in this together and we'll come through together.* (Trump 2020a)

And so the war metaphor explicitly entered the United States coronavirus rhetoric, a consistent theme in the Trump administration's COVID-19 communications. Drawing on the Copenhagen School's theory of securitization, two key aspects of this framing should be noted. First is the framing of the nation-state as the referent-object which must be protected, evident in Trump's declaration by Executive Order that the pandemic posed a threat to "national security" (Trump 2020b). The most immediate danger of the coronavirus pandemic is that it poses to individual human lives, and yet the Trump administration has taken the nation-state -- 'national security' -- as the referent object which is under threat, and the nation-state – 'the American people' -- as the actor which should 'mobilize against it.

The second rhetorical line of note is the framing of other countries as sources of threat, reflected in the description of the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" (Trump 2020b). By conceiving of the pandemic as an aggressive, geopolitical enemy, embodied in foreign nation-states, the Trump administration continues to construct the nation-state as the referent object which must be defended, but the enemy is no longer seen as 'invisible' nor even the potential threat to human life, but as an external Other.

Both threads of this securitized discourse are evident not only in the communication of the Trump administration, but in their formulation of COVID-19 policy; in the case of the Trump regime, security discourse was very quickly translated into security practice. As early as 15 March 2020, Trump publicly relayed that the United States had "deployed over a thousand officers in support of the coronavirus

missions," later reinforcing that the United States' "great military [was] operating at 100 per cent during [the pandemic] and thousands of troops [were] deployed alongside civilians in the COVID hotspots" (Trump 2020c; Trump 2020b). At his 18 March press briefing, Trump opened his statement by saying:

> *I would like to begin by announcing some important developments in our war against the Chinese virus […] We'll be invoking the Defense Production Act, just in case we need it. In other words, I think you all know what it is, and it can do a lot of good things if we need it.* (Trump 2020b)

What does it mean to view the virus as a security threat to the nation-state? By presenting the military as the protector of national security, Trump has naturalized the 'America First' response built into inward-looking vaccine policies and economic nationalism, constructing an imagining of the pandemic that necessitates militaristic policy and encourages isolationism, often to the detriment of the protection of public health (Lewis 2020). Moreover, by promoting representations of the pandemic as an 'unknown' Other in terms of a referential enemy and location — specifically China — Trump has enabled a rise in nationalist sentiment and xenophobia that has motivated ethnically-motivated violence against East Asian communities. Indeed, Rafi (2020) finds that the discourses and politics of fear, like that postulated by the Trump administration, are directly linked to increase in Sinophobia; Prasad (2020) extends these ideological constructions of fear to increase in violence against Muslims in India. The rhetorical trajectory of war metaphors frames COVID-19 in terms of the imaginative geographies of war in a situation where the domain of public health should be centralized, the Trump administration has inhibited a policy response that foregrounds human security, instead legitimizing a highly militarized and nationalistic response which protects 'America' and those imagined as 'American people' to the detriment of movements for solidarity, cooperation and global public health.

While the scope of this paper is limited to the United States' early foreign policy response, the Trump administration was not unique in their use of war metaphors in pandemic discourse; responses from national leaders and international

organizations alike have utilized coronavirus-as-war imagery in their communications as the pandemic continues to unfold. National foreign policy leaders have relied heavily on this discourse, following the nation-as-referent-actor trajectory utilized by Trump in the United States. French President Emmanuel Macron, for example, called for "our [France's] general mobilization against an "invisible enemy," using the word 'war' seven times in his televised speech on 16 March 2020 preceding the announcement of specific measures to fight the pandemic (Macron 2020). These measures included the suspension of all undergoing reforms, a new bill which would allow "the government to respond to emergencies and, where necessary, to legislate by ordinance," and the decision to close the border with the EU and the Schengen area. In Australia, Prime Minister Scott Morrison spoke of "summoning the spirit of [...] those who won the great peace of the Second World War and defended Australia" before affirming that they would not allow the pandemic "to change who [they] are as Australians" (Morrison 2020). Similar militaristic framings have emerged from countries across the world, including Brazil, Hungary, Slovakia, and Russia (see: Hoffman Pfrimer and Barbosa 2020, on Brazil; Lukacovic 2020 on Slovakia, Russia and the United States; Molnár, Takács, and Jakusné Harnos, 2020 on Hungary).

In many of these countries, 'strongman politics' have been the norm of pandemic leadership, with authoritarian or populist governance with hierarchical leadership leading to the crisis being ignored, downplayed or politicized at key points, which ultimately endangers collective wellbeing (Lewis 2020). According to Piaget et al. (2020, 4), these policies appear to "prioritize economic growth and mass consumption over the wellbeing of people, the advancement of social justice among communities and the protection of the environment." Such policies are inevitable conclusions of the securitized COVID-19 framing. When beginning with the assumption that the nation-state is the referent object which is both threatened by and mobilizing against the virus, nationalistic responses are naturalized as the proper strategy for 'winning the war.' Given the politics of this securitization, the notion that the pandemic "will strengthen the state and reinforce nationalism" seems inevitable (Allen et Al. 2020); the pessimistic predictions that war-framings are

inherently negative are validated by examining their use by national leaders. However, it is difficult to imagine that these inward-looking policy priorities would prevail if the driving force behind them was the collective mitigation of a global health crisis rather than the protection of national security; alternate framings of COVID-19 must be considered.

Reframing COVID-19: International Organizations and Securitization

At first glance, the language of international organizations does not seem to constitute a significant departure from the securitized language employed by national leaders. The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced in March 2020 that the world was "at war with a virus"; soon after the World Health Organization called for "countries to take urgent and aggressive action" with Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus reminding leaders that the world is "at war with a virus that threatens to tear us apart – if we let it" (United Nations 2020; WHO 2020; Adhanom Ghebreyesus 2020b).

However, drawing on the close analysis of Trump's securitizing discourse reveals a dichotomy in these two discourses that is critical to understanding the politics of securitization. The critical difference lies in the referent object which is being securitized. For international organizations, no longer is the *nation* conceived of as the object under threat; instead, the pandemic is framed as dangerous to the '*citizens of the world*,' a common enemy that requires international cooperation and policy coordination to combat. For instance, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, has stated that "all of us face a common threat" and that "no country can address it alone" (Guterres 2020a). Similarly, WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros, has said that COVID-19 represents "an unprecedented threat," but that it is also "an unprecedented opportunity to come together as one against a *common enemy*" (WHO 2020b, emphasis mine). This is contrastive to the referent object proposed by Trump and other national leaders, who consistently evoke the nation-state as the referent object of securitization discourse. This inconsistency between how policymakers frame the pandemic is small but significant; in asking both actors 'security' for whom, we arrive at alternate answers — 'nation' versus 'humanity.'

This conceptualization has had a stark impact on policymaking. Through the pandemic, international organizations have consistently focused their policymaking on the protection of individual lives, not only from the health crisis, but from economic, social and political problems that the pandemic has exposed. The United Nations' Comprehensive Response to COVID-19, for example, claims that:

> *The crisis has highlighted fragilities within and among nations, as well as in our systems for mounting a coordinated global response to shared threats. Our response will therefore also need to engender a deep reflection on the very structures of societies, both nationally and internationally, and the ways in which countries cooperate for the common good.* (United Nations 2020b, 5)

The report highlights that "instead of going back to unsustainable systems and approaches," the pandemic requires a "transformative recovery process that leads to a better post-COVID-19 world by addressing the underlying fragilities and identifying opportunities for transformative change towards more just, equal and resilient societies and economies" (Ibid, 6). In shifting the referent object from the nation-state to individual lives, and by recognizing that within nations the impacts of the pandemic have not been equally distributed, international organizations have changed the policy objectives away from securitization and military actions. While these documents still do call on 'mobilization' and focus on the 'battle' against the virus, the politics of this securitization are markedly different from that of national leaders.

Does this shift in the referent object of securitization discourse have the potential to reverse the negative effects of war discourse? In many ways, the war-framings employed by international organizations seem to not only provide a counterargument to the notion that war metaphors are inherently violent and universally encourage inward-looking policy, but also have the potential to effectuate a similar shift in referent object in other actors. For example, on 30 March 2021, the WHO published a statement signed by more than 20 national leaders and WHO chief Dr Ghebreyesus calling for a new treaty to help prepare the world for

future pandemics in a warning against vaccine nationalism. The statement, which included signatures from France's Emmanuel Macron, Britain's Boris Johnson and Germany's Angela Merkel, warned that "no single government or multilateral agency can address this threat alone" and cemented commitment to "ensuring universal and equitable access to safe, efficacious and affordable vaccines, medicines and diagnostics for this and future pandemics" (World Health Organization 2021). While many of these national leaders had previously employed similar militaristic metaphors in their COVID-19 discourse, the staunch attempts of international organizations to reframe the pandemic in terms of human security have seemingly altered governmental orientation towards this cooperative stance. In acknowledging that the current architecture has been insufficient in mitigating the virus and encouraging solidarity and multilateralism in order to bridge these gaps, the statement confirms the ways in which a shift in the referent object of securitization can have a significant impact on policy. By recognizing that human security is the ultimate goal in global health policy, rather than the protection of the nation-state, global governance can be reconfigured towards a more multilateral and cooperative response, prioritizing the survival and wellbeing of human lives around the world.

Conclusion: post-conflict reconstruction and the impact of the 'war on COVID'

Discourse surrounding the coronavirus pandemic is playing a critical role in the formulation of knowledge, dialogue and ultimately policy in global politics; it helps frame particular stories, interpretations and conversations while at the same time closing off alternative perspectives. It reinforces particular theories about how the world works, and sidelines others. Ultimately, it will have a profound influence on outcomes in the post-pandemic landscape.

In many ways, the predictions of the Copenhagen School — that securitization is dangerous, often precluding democratic and cooperative solutions to crises — seem validated by the pandemic. The war-framings espoused by national leaders have reinforced the oft-repeated notion that "COVID-19 is the last nail in the coffin for globalization" (Ward, 2020), as the conception of the virus as a national security threat has (re)produced an environment where aggressive, militarized action is

accepted as necessary in mitigating the crisis. However, closer examination of alternate conceptions of securitization — namely those of international organizations — reveals the ways in which this discourse can be appropriated and utilized to reshape global governance towards cooperation and multilateralism. By shifting the referent object from the nation state to the well-being of humanity, international organizations have shifted discourse towards a more cohesive and ambitious international regime, successfully 'mobilizing' national leaders not toward battle but towards reconfiguration of their foreign policy. If nothing else, the specificities of these differing logics and the impact they have on policy is a strong incentive for scholars to critically examine how (public health) crises are framed in order to elucidate a comprehensive understanding of how policy formulation.

Ultimately, I would like to conclude with the (perhaps optimistic) sentiment that there is hope to be found in extending the war-time metaphor to its natural conclusion: postwar reconstruction. Historically, crises and human progress, especially on the institutional front, have been mutually reinforcing; the extraordinary losses the pandemic has seen will necessitate a reexamination of the problems that were created and exploited by the public health crisis. However, doing so requires moving beyond an understanding of the pandemic as a war to be won. While a 'conflict' implies an enemy threat that necessitates militarized policy and the exclusion of those imagined as enemy-Others (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998), alternate framings – such as a 'crisis' as suggested by Kay and Williams (2009) -- which encourage a similar urgency without restricting participation, allowing for transparency and collective engagement. By reframing the war on COVID-19 in terms of the threat it poses to humanity and recognizing the crisis for what it is — a public health emergency exacerbated by the existing gaps in the international system — global governance can be reconfigured towards a more international and equitable system.

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Renewed Challenges for the WTO: Economic Governance Post Pandemic

Dhruv Shah [*]

Taking much of the world by surprise, the Covid-19 pandemic has overwhelmed many developed and developing states and presents significant economic challenges globally. The pandemic has been abating in recent months, however; its impact on economic governance is likely to remain long lasting and significant. Economic governance encompasses the totality of economic institutions and policies, used by states to protect trade rules and regulations in order to promote stability and tackle transnational challenges (Dixit 2008). The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is used as the starting point to analyse the implications the pandemic has played on economic governance. This is because of its established presence internationally, and interesting imperfections linked to governance. A key argument posed, is that promoting and protecting the principles of free trade will become more challenging post pandemic given that the WTO are struggling to address sources of disorder. These sources of 'disorder' are not new; historically, manifesting through failures in the Doha round of negotiations to curb the rising use of tariffs and subsidies, and the deadlock of the Appellate Body within the WTO, which has inhibited rules-based trade. Yet, the recent pandemic has brought with it renewed challenges for the WTO, exacerbating economic nationalism and competition between Western states and posing new challenges for the WTO. In this sense, the pandemic can be seen as accelerating the decline in in liberal rules-based order, weakening the support for global economic governance. Given that it remains too early to assess the overall impact from the pandemic, the objective of this paper is limited to a critical analysis focusing on existing and new problems facing the WTO. However, short term solutions such as the formation of a Trade Compact are considered briefly below.

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Introduction: Economic Governance & The WTO

The international system has been characterised by a Western led liberal order for seven decades. Emerging from the wreckage of the Second World War, a vast international order was set up by the US and European allies; defined by economic openness, rules-based relations and security cooperation (Ikenberry 2018). The liberal order is largely preserved through global institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN) along with the United States – the hegemonic leader. The expansion of the post-war liberal order has paved the way for international economic governance, as seen today. Trade governance can be traced back to the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, which laid the foundations for a post-war rules based financial system. The first successful step towards formalising economic governance was reached in 1948, with the formation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); the first multilateral free trade agreement between 23 countries. GATT had the core aim of discouraging "discriminatory economic blocs which fragmented the world in the 1930s." (Capling and Higgot 2009) It was particularly significant in reducing trade protectionism and increasing global trade, culminating in several decades of flourishing interstate trade and impressive economic gains.

The EU and US, later heavily contributed to the formation of the World Trade Organisation in 1995, with a key goal of formalising the rules laid forth in GATT and creating a binding dispute settlement system. Promoting a system of rules, the WTO has remained central pillar in upholding liberal economic governance. Integration within the world economy has remained a powerful means for states to accelerate economic growth and development. The system of rules which underpin economic governance have provided remarkable progress within the world economy, with the last two decades being characterised by an average of 6% growth in trade annually, twice as fast as world output (IMF 2001). Rules based free trade has provided significant advantages for developing states who are unable to afford protectionist measures applied on trade. In fact, there is significant evidence that states which embrace more open rules-based trade, grow at consistently higher rates relative to more inward-looking states (Srinivasan and Bhagwati 1997). For example, states

such as India reflect the advantages that free and open trade can bring, experiencing higher rates of growth following its shift away from protectionism and tariffs on imports (Dollar 2001).

However, in recent years, the liberal order, championed by the West, and the resulting mechanisms of economic governance have been in crisis (Lee 2019). The WTO has faced significant pressure in enforcing free trade, highlighted through the collapse of the Development Round of negotiations in 2003. These negotiations have remained ongoing since 2001 and have remained at an impasse given that both developing and developed countries have been unable to lift any of the tariffs on agricultural and industrial goods. The inability of the WTO to resolve the use of tariffs – seen as barriers to free trade – highlights the difficulty the organisation faces in promoting liberal notions of economic governance. These problems have continued to grow over time. The US has now become the most outspoken critic of the WTO, arguing its rules are not adequate at enforcing China's controversial and often unfair trade practices (Swanson 2019). For example, the WTO's mechanisms for governance are ineffective in covering Chinese subsidies involving state owned enterprises, which largely distort the market. The US has responded by crippling the organisation – blocking the appointment of any judges to the appellate body and rendering it useless. While this is occurring, John Ikenberry (2011) notes of the rise in authoritarianism and populism within China and Russia; increasingly seen as a viable alternative to democracy.

The recent coronavirus pandemic has put significant pressure on the liberal order, especially on matters of economic governance. States will not only emerge post pandemic with ballooning debt but with growing incentives to enshrine protectionism and economic nationalism in order to promote their own interests. The US-China trade war not only threatens economic decoupling but has threatened to force states to choose sides. Indeed, the recent shock by the coronavirus pandemic has led many scholars to reconsider the failures and direction of economic governance post pandemic (Allen 2020). This paper similarly considers the sources of discontent within the area of international trade. While the WTO may be

considered to be the "steward of the system," its three basic pillars – dispute resolution, transparency and negotiation – remain in disarray and unable to promote economic governance (CSIS 2021). The recent pandemic has only further exacerbated challenges which undermine economic governance. These problems are considered in the following section.

Post Pandemic Challenges Towards Economic Governance

The arrival of the coronavirus pandemic has brought with it significant shocks towards economic governance. With economies shutting down, the pandemic has disrupted commerce and trade to a large extent. In 2020, the global economy faced the most severe downturn since the Great Depression (Solis 2020). With public debt ballooning and unemployment rising, many have questioned how the pandemic will influence economic governance and present challenges for proponents of the liberal order. The WTO Secretariat has reacted to these challenges brought on by the pandemic by highlighting the need for open trade. However, the pandemic has compounded two key challenges for the WTO and rules-based trade. Firstly, the pandemic has intensified economic nationalism. Given that the WTO is unable to enforce rules-based trade, many countries have resorted to tariffs and protectionism, marginalising economic governance. This is particularly notable through rising export protectionism, which has increased in regard to essential medical supplies such as personal protective equipment and vaccines. Secondly, domestic subsidies – an area poorly governed by WTO - is likely to become a flashpoint which may magnify disputes and competition between states as many states aim to support stuttering economies. This is already seen between the US and China.

Economic Nationalism

The challenges brought about by the pandemic have been of notable concern for economists, who predict a sharp rise in protectionist measures and greater opportunities for states to become more nationalistic. Huang (2020) notes that "nationalism is a tool for modern states to improve their position in the international arena." In this sense, the pandemic proves to be a harbinger for global cooperation in

trade. While there has been a temporary truce between the US-China trade war, most of the trade tariffs remain. Four years after Donald Trump unilaterally imposed 25% tariffs on China regarding unfair trade practices, many of the tariffs remain despite Phase One of the trade deal being signed between both states. Many have expressed hope that President Biden, would reverse many of the tariffs against China, in a first step towards achieving a mutually favourable outcome for both sides. Instead, the Biden administration has reinforced a similarly tough stance towards China. Ambassador Robert Lighthizer, the US's top trade negotiator, argues that "the US must be allowed to defend itself against unfair trade practices […] and that the WTO is completely inadequate at confronting China (BBC 2020). The US's rejection of WTO rules presents serious concerns for the WTO; cementing the idea that larger states can unilaterally circumvent important trading rules.

Other states have reacted with similar protectionist measures of their own. Integration has been lacking since the early days of the pandemic within Europe. The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on European states has led to an asymmetry regarding the economic brunt faced from the pandemic. According to data published by Eurostat, the EU's statistical office, the largest declines in GDP was within France and Italy at 5.3% and Spain and Slovakia at 5.2% (Eurostat 2021). As such, the EU's proposal to use fiscal instruments, 'corona bonds', to collectively share debt was rejected by many wealthier Northern European states on the grounds that it remained unfair. States have instead prioritised nationalist responses such as protection on important domestic industries and a stronger screening of foreign investment (Pop 2020). Other problems within the EU include, trade barriers, which were quickly raised early on during the pandemic by France and Germany - blocking the sales of hospital equipment from leaving their borders (Dahinten and Wabl 2020). While the European Commission resolved the issue by compromising – allowing limited export restrictions to persist – the reputation of the EU as a promoter of free and open trade has been damaged. This trend, however, has not been purely restricted to the West, with South Korea, Brazil and India similarly invoking early trade barriers on vital medical supplies during the pandemic (Douglas 2020).

The WTO's current conditions for levying tariffs remain accommodating, allowing states to engage in limited export protectionism, provided the measures are temporary and transparent. However, despite this, export protectionism has been a notable concern for the WTO to enforce, with many states deciding to forego compliance. A recent report by the WTO (2020) finds that only 13 members have submitted information on tariffs which are in line with WTO rules. These countries include the US and several EU countries. For example, a major source of contention is vaccine nationalism. The WTO has recently criticised the EU on its decision to impose restrictions on vaccines being exported due to slow rollout regionally.

Subsidies: A Flashpoint

With rising economic nationalism, many envision a "renationalised world economy," post pandemic (Solis 2020). The pandemic has been blamed on overly extensive global supply chains and dependency on China. As a consequence, states have begun facing pressure to increase domestic production and reduce dependencies on other countries. In order to achieve supply chain resiliency, many states have begun to use trade restrictions and subsidies to reduce dependence on foreign states and become more self-reliant. For example, President Biden has proposed reducing foreign dependence by focusing on producing American sourced and manufactured pharmaceutical and medical products (Lincicome 2021).

The recent shift towards shortening global supply chains presents challenges towards maintaining liberal economic governance for the WTO. While supply chain resiliency has exacerbated economic nationalism, competition between states is likely to rise. Many states like China have responded by protecting domestic industries through subsidies. Unlike industrial policy – which is more clearly governed – protectionist measures such as subsidies has been a historical thorn for the WTO to resolve, with states disagreeing on the precise definition of a subsidy (Stojanovic 2020). Subsidies are defined as a "financial contribution by a government which provides a benefit." (International Trade Administration 2020) Under the WTO's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, states are allowed to

use subsidies as long as it does not harm another state's trade. The WTO prevents states from imposing subsidies if they 'distort' international trade by providing financial incentives to buy domestically produced goods as opposed to imports. A definitional problem underpins subsidies, which centres around its narrow definition on 'public bodies.' This tight definition means that state owned enterprises (SOEs) are unregulated (Bown and Hillman 2019). Subsidies have become a larger problem for the WTO to govern after the pandemic. Many states, post pandemic, have begun recoveries at different rates, leading to states asymmetrically removing subsides. Petsinger (2020) argues that this removal could spark a barrage of disputes between states. This is already a major source of contention between both the US and China. The vague rules surrounding this trade instrument is likely to enflame tensions in the future and undermine economic governance.

China is already seen by many other members as "violating the spirit" of WTO rules: its reliance on domestic subsidies seen as distorting competition between domestic and international markets (Fabry 2020; Petsinger 2020; Steenblik 1998). The US has thus responded with unilateral measures which undermine China's policies domestically out with the framework of the WTO and exacerbating existing tensions. So far, the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures has been ineffective at coming to terms of agreement on subsidy use domestically between the EU and China (Brown and Hillman 2019). With economic nationalism gaining favour with politicians, a desire to gain strategic autonomy will likely lead to renewed focus on subsidies in the coming months. China's brazen protection of domestic industries could further encourage other states to ditch any adherence towards rules based free trade and undermine economic governance. However, with the WTO Appellate Body hamstrung, and unable to react to new developments, its ability to regulate trade rules and enforce disputes between states is seriously degraded. Many states have already ignored submitting voluntary notifications of subsidies to the WTO. India has been challenged by the US for 'violating' international trade rules through its $7bn annual export subsidies to its rapidly expanding steel and technology sectors (The Financial Times 2019).

Recalibrating Economic Governance

The WTO remains today the primary institution in enforcing and upholding liberal rules-based trade. However, with its dispute resolution system under attack, and facing mounting pressures from the pandemic, it is clear that reforming the WTO and trade rules is important towards sustaining free and open economic governance. Weak trade rules have magnified the US-China rivalry, which presents obstacles towards achieving this goal. This rivalry undermines the cohesiveness of the WTO while threatening to drag member states into opposing alliances. Moreover, rising economic nationalism internationally may undermine the legitimacy of the WTO – as states reject the authority of the WTO and its economic governance framework. However, reforming the WTO remains a considerable complex process, and ultimately beyond the scope of this paper. However, this paper puts forth a short-term solution which can mitigate the damage the pandemic has played on the WTO, ultimately supporting economic governance.

Current solutions put forth to reform the WTO have been proposed by the EU and its allies; however, they notably exclude US and their concerns. Following the deadlock of the Appellate Body, the EU and 18 other members set up a multi-party interim appeal arrangement which utilises the WTO's Article 25 of the Dispute Settlement Understanding to temporary replicate the dispute resolution system (EU Commission 2020). However, this solution does not include the US, who comprises of over 70% of trade dispute cases (WTO 2021). Moreover, some states have recommended appointing a new appellate body in order to pacify the US. While this solution is legally ambiguous, it misses the larger problem (CIGI 2019). Any long-term solution towards resolving the Appellate Body and reinvigorating the WTO requires engagement with the US in regard to its concerns towards China and international trade rules. Chatham House's (2021) recent report into the WTO concluded that many of the US's concerns were mostly legitimate. This has been reinforced by the fact that President Biden has taken a similarly hard stance towards the WTO as Trump once did, blocking any new members from joining the Appellate Body (Baschuk 2021). In this sense, true reform of the WTO, requires a solution

which includes the US as a key partner, and not as a mere free rider as contemporary solutions have tried.

One solution which could support global governance, is creating a Trade Compact. A Compact, a group of likeminded states, provides an important platform to address challenges facing the WTO. The Compact builds on the concept of plurilateral agreements; trade agreements between a restricted number of states. Plurilateral agreements provide one important advantage over the current situation: they can make decisions and quickly move forward on trade issues without being held back by the WTO's requirement for consensus. As such, a Compact will allow states – who aim to promote rules-based trade – to reassert the core principles of the WTO and rules-based trade, including the centrality of "open market-oriented policies and commitments" stipulated in the Marrakesh Declaration of 1994 (WTO 1994). Establishing a trade compact has potential to "reset many states' approaches to globalisation," in a manner which is predicated on cooperation (Reinsch and Caporal 2021). A Compact can provide a forum to discuss new trade laws; however, it is important to stress that a Trade Compact does not imply replacing the WTO, but instead, as supplementing the organisation. Moreover, while the new administration in the US, has taken a similar hard-line approach towards the Appellate Body, it is likely that Biden's approach is not as entrenched. Reforming the WTO Appellate Body, has greater chances of succeeding under a Compact if it is used as a forum to discuss many of the US's concerns. The resulting Compact could thus be used to establish basic trade rules and reshape the dispute settlement system.

This approach has practical limitations in reality. The concept of a Trade Compact raises further problems about who is included within the framework and will drive decision making. Many states will likely reject the legitimacy of a Compact, and dismiss any decisions made unless they are included. Including China within any plurilateral agreement is important, given China's economic and political sway globally. However, many of the problems facing the WTO is likely to extend to any plurilateral agreement which includes China – who is likely to oppose any dramatic transformation of international trade rules.

Conclusion

Economic governance has faced many challenges in recent years. Notably, the WTO, seen as the crucial institution in upholding trade governance, has struggled to deal with sources of disorder. However, it is now more vital than ever to consider how to reform the WTO. As we begin to emerge out of the pandemic, states will have less incentives to abide by rules-based trade. The recent shift towards protectionism and poor trade governance in industrial subsidies are two key problems the WTO will struggle to enforce in its current state. However, reforms will be slow and not easy, requiring a multitude of various actors and processes involved. A Trade Compact provides a potential platform by which to begin to address these issues. In theory, the idea of a Compact remains viable, but in reality, this solution is likely to face resistance from many states, who will question the legitimacy of any decision. As such, given that many of the challenges facing the WTO post pandemic are likely to remain and compound, economic governance is likely to worsen. Reforming the WTO and upholding liberal conceptions of rules-based trade is important and vital towards sustaining international cooperation and mutual beneficial trade. This paper has taken a passing glance at the problems facing economic governance post pandemic; however, more sustained analysis is required within this area of focus.

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Tracing International Knowledge Flows During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Qayyum Bin Mohamed Fazil [*]

The claim that the COVID-19 pandemic has turned the world upside-down has become an unsurprising and over-repeated truism. Indeed, this pandemic has exposed many assumptions about the world order as we saw the shocking reversal of expectations when it came to pandemic preparedness and response. While some might suggest that "no country was truly prepared to manage a pandemic", the 2019 Global Health Security Index suggests a clear hierarchy (LePan 2021; Cameron, Nuzzo, and Bell 2019). The United States and other western powers including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Australia and Canada ranked proudly in the top 5 whilst Vietnam, Russia, China and Singapore are perched comfortably in the middle. However, if the ongoing pandemic is a test, the results are the converse of what is expected for the countries on the top and middle rows. The mentioned "middle" countries have experienced much lower death and case rates, which when contrasted with the constant "waves" of cases flooding the US and the UK, has raised what some have termed an "epidemiological mystery" (Mukherjee 2021). With this in mind, this essay traces the knowledge flows of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the year 2020. In previous health emergencies, we might expect countries of the global north to send their expertise to those of the global south either through their own accord or through international organisations (Ekpenyong and Pacheco 2020). What might the current pandemic's networks of knowledge flows look like, especially given the reversal in performance?

To shed light on this question, the essay at hand will focus on the three specific cases of China, the European office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). China's prominence in its global outreach during the pandemic makes it a player worth noting alongside the two international organisations, which are themselves chosen as they offer interesting

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contrasts. This essay first explains the concept of "knowledge flows" within a health crisis context and presents a general overview of knowledge flows during previous health crises. It then addresses the nature and directionality of the knowledge flows of the chosen cases, and finds that firstly, on the global level, China features prominently as the most active and far-reaching source of expertise and knowledge. Secondly, the WHO features as a regional centre of knowledge and expertise, and its European office projects unidirectional flows from Western Europe to Eastern Europe and beyond. Thirdly, that ASEAN is an example of a group of states who exercised more multidirectional exchanges of knowledge and expertise. The final section of the essay argues for the varying applicability of performance and ability in explaining the nature of the three knowledge flows presented.

Knowledge Flows

The concept of knowledge is one that is frequently reframed and restructured in the discipline of International Relations. Knowledge has been understood to be objective and universal facts by conventional IR theorists, and is later understood to be subjective projections of reality and power by critical IR theorists (Allan 2017). Thus, what constitutes knowledge has heavy implications on understanding knowledge transmission. This essay will focus on the flow of expertise on pandemic preparedness and response from one international actor to another, which includes both states and international organisations. This essay will utilise the understanding of knowledge as expertise or professional guidance in a pandemic setting which is thought of to be objective and apolitical by its constructors. However, it recognises that the transmission of such knowledge is not free from power dynamics and political agendas. In mapping out knowledge flows, this essay will take into the account the origin and directionality of knowledge.

The role of knowledge flows has been written extensively on contexts other than pandemics, such as in non-emergency settings, with some challenging power hierarchies within the international system (Feierman et al. 2010; Gertler and Levitte 2005; Mir and Mir 2009). Critical theorists draw heavily from such an impetus, mapping out knowledge to be a constructed weapon of power to subjugate the rest

of the world. There has also been writing on international communication and knowledge transmission within a development perspective, with focus on international organisations (Littoz-Monnet 2017, 93). Writing on emergency contexts however seems to assume a more objective and apolitical view on knowledge. Modelling knowledge management during natural disaster situations, for example, proposes specific operational "best-practices" for pre-disaster preparedness and post-disaster recovery (Ammirato, Linzalone, and Felicetti 2020, 2).

Scholarship on knowledge flows within a health emergency setting is existent though focused on the realms of scientific knowledge and data sharing (Tambo et al. 2017; Yozwiak et al. 2015; Rourke et al. 2020). This included studies on institutional frameworks which enabled knowledge updates through data sharing clouds or programs. Two examples of health emergencies which have been written about are 2009 H1N1 pandemic and the 2013-2016 West African Ebola epidemic. The former case saw a slower response in knowledge production than the 2020 pandemic, afforded to the lateness in WHO declaring the crisis as a pandemic (Khanali, Malekpour, and Kolahi 2021). Despite that, much is written about how the world benefited from advancements in information technology such as through the HealthMap system, which facilitates real-time updates on disease-tracking across borders (Brownstein et al. 2010). In the realm of global governance, the WHO states that information sharing was best guided by the International Health Regulations (US Institute of Medicine 2010). The Ebola outbreak saw similar data-sharing mechanisms launched by the WHO, mainly **OpenWho.org** which is an online learning platform for disease outbreaks that localises technical knowledge for the field usage (Utunen et al. 2018, 22). The overall direction of knowledge transmission for both pandemics originated from international organisations or transnational actors of the global north, and are directed to afflicted areas in the global south. We see largely unidirectional flows, more so for the Ebola epidemic than the H1N1 pandemic. This fact has been highlighted before, especially on how reciprocity between the global north and south was non-existent in those cases (Goldacre et al. 2015, 5). Thus, it bears investigating whether knowledge transmission in the current pandemic has been rectified after previous experiences, especially given the reverse

performances of the global north and south. The main method of knowledge transmission is also note-worthy. Data sharing, while featuring heavily in the current pandemic, is partnered by the travel of actual professionals from China and the WHO to other areas.

Based on the knowledge flows of previous health crises and the current pandemic, this paper makes two arguments. Firstly, states which have fared better in a given pandemic will transfer its knowledge to other states which fared worse. This performance-based dynamic was seen in previous crises. For instance, states which are generally unaffected or have successful experiences combatting previous health crises contributed expertise needed in affected West African countries during the Ebola outbreak. Secondly, states which have the ability and resources to send out expertise are those that do. This also means that states which have a stronger position within international organisations and global apparatus would have better operational capabilities, making them the primary producers of knowledge. This was seen in the cases of H1N1 and the Ebola crisis as the WHO played the primary role as knowledge producer. The bulk of medical expertise in West Africa were from the Western countries, and a unidirectional north to south transfer of knowledge can be drawn (Azuine 2015, 4; Ali 2016, 161). Most significantly, this essay finds that both factors, performance and ability, are significant in explaining the nature of knowledge flows in the current pandemic, though the extent to which they are varies across the three cases.

The Mapping Out of Knowledge Flows During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This essay will focus on three main knowledge networks of the COVID-19 pandemic: China, WHO and ASEAN. China and the WHO stand out the most in sending out medical expertise on a global level during this pandemic, owing to the virus originating in China and the WHO's early role in tracking it. In previous health crises, the main disseminators of expertise were international organisations. The WHO featured heavily in creating data-sharing infrastructure as exemplified earlier, with the US being a major funder. However, the COVID-19 pandemic saw a dissimilar experience. The US was a largely absent player though the WHO

remained active. More interestingly, China has emerged as an intensely wide-reaching transmitter of operational expertise, comparable to the role of the WHO despite it being one state. In fact, China's outreach has been direct, whilst the WHO worked through its many regional offices. Thus, China should be analysed as a primary origin of expertise.

In analysing China's knowledge flows, one finds that it is extremely centralised in origin. The flow of expertise in the form of doctors and medical professionals, experienced in their handling of local outbreaks, stretches outwards from China directly to destination countries, as in figure 1. These countries are diverse and distant with no clear geographic preference, with a common thread being that they were all hit hard by the virus initially. In February 2020, a team of Chinese medical experts arrived in Iran to help combat the outbreak (Rasmussen and Eqbali 2020). In March, China sent medical supplies and specialist doctors who had experience in Hubei province to Italy (Wood 2020). Later in the same month, China sent seven specialists from the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention to Iraq (Xie 2020). The list grows to include Algeria, Nigeria and the Philippines (Olander 2020). By April 2020, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian claims that China has sent 13 medical teams to 11 countries and have conducted video conferences sharing experience and data to more than 150 countries (China Global Television Network 2020). Among states, China has had the most presence in sending expertise overseas physically or virtually, contrasting with US absence. This scale of knowledge transmission from a single country was not seen in the previous health crises as international organisations were the main players. One should note that the flow of knowledge, while far-reaching, is also unidirectional. In all the surfaced cases, China has sent teams and expertise abroad seemingly without expecting much in return. The only case of expertise coming from outside of China into China was in the case of the WHO mission to Wuhan to investigate the origins of the virus, where Chinese and WHO professionals were reported to have been friendly and cooperative with each other (Nebehay and Skydsgaard 2020).

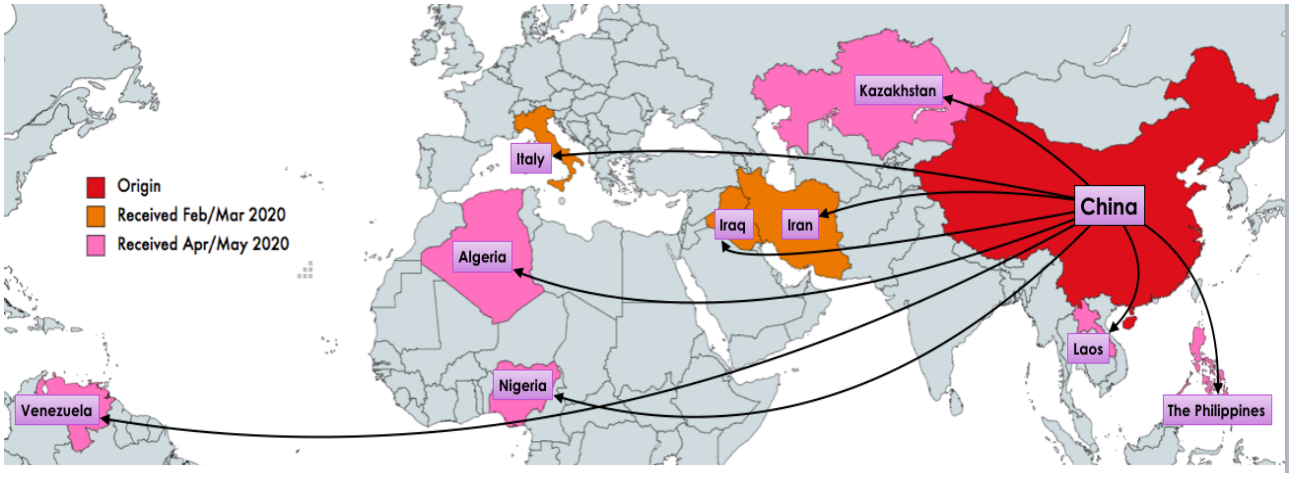

Figure 1: China's Widespread Knowledge Flows

Another key global transmitter of expertise was the WHO. The WHO however has a less direct line of knowledge transmission than China, since it is an international organisation. The WHO functions through six regional offices such as WHO/Europe in Copenhagen or WHO/EMRO in Cairo. Among the six, these two feature country missions the most with teams being sent for training and operational expertise. The other 4 offices (Western Pacific, South-East Asia, Americas and Africa) focused more on sending medical supplies and later, vaccine rollouts. This essay focuses on WHO/Europe. On the onset of the outbreak in Wuhan, WHO/Europe collaborated with the European CDC to launch surveillance databases and establish countries which require priority in the future. In February 2020, the WHO deployed its first mission to Kyrgyzstan with experts tasked with operations planning, laboratory support and hospital preparedness. Throughout 2020, WHO/Europe has conducted 165 missions (physical and virtual) to 22 countries and territories. This includes Serbia and Tajikistan shortly after the Kyrgyzstan mission, and would later include Italy, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Georgia and Uzbekistan, among others (WHO Office for Europe 2020). The outreach is much more widespread than WHO/EMRO which deployed multidisciplinary technical teams to Iran, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Egypt (WHO Office for the Eastern Mediterranean 2020). The main difference between the WHO and China's network of dissemination is that the WHO transmits through its regional offices. Another note-worthy difference is

WHO/Europe has a clear geographical slant to its transmission, as seen in Figure 2. While like China, the transmission of expertise is unidirectional, WHO/Europe saw a predominantly West European origin of knowledge flowing eastward to what is effectively the Caucasus region and West-Central Asia. With the exceptions of Italy and Spain, the vast majority of destination countries were arguably European only in its geographical jurisdiction under the WHO/Europe office.

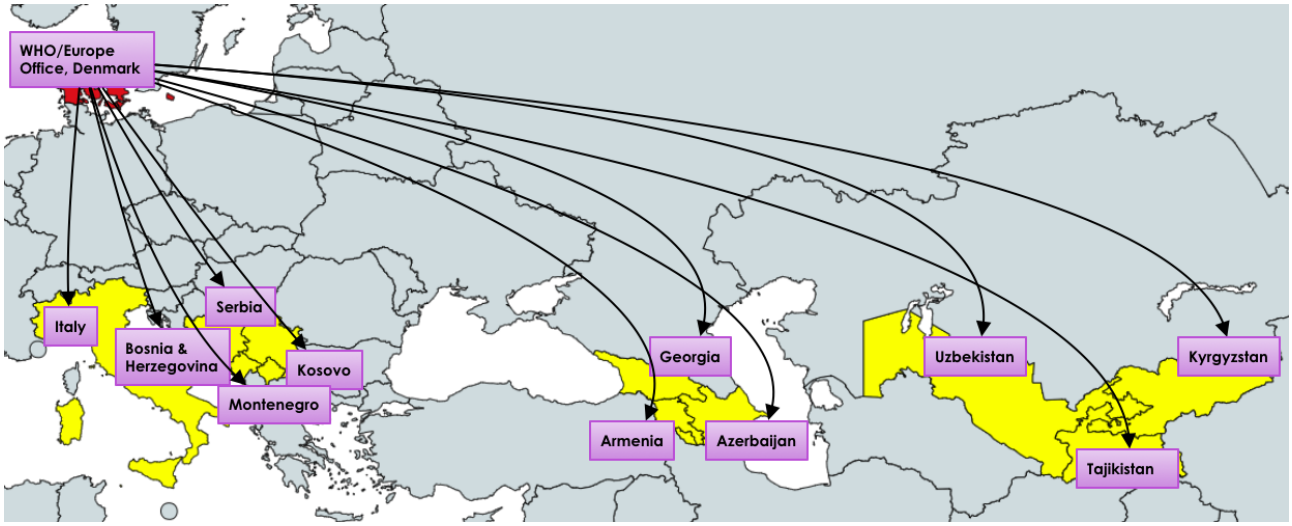

Figure 2: WHO/Europe Foreign Expertise Missions in February 2020

While China and the WHO are more global actors in expertise transmission, it is worth analysing what regional organisations have done in terms of knowledge sharing. ASEAN proves to be a note-worthy case due to its previous experience in the H1N1 pandemic and the SARS outbreak, as well as how states within it have varying degrees of performance. As a contrast to the unidirectional flow of knowledge transmissions of China and the WHO, some regional networks have seen a more multidirectional exchange of knowledge and expertise. This was seen most prominently in ASEAN's approach to knowledge sharing. Within ASEAN, there are clearly states that have performed better in pandemic response than others. Vietnam emerged as a clear leader in response while other states succeeded in initial control of the virus which eventually erupted into second waves, with Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines being notable victims (Djalante et al. 2020). Despite that, ASEAN has seen no clear unidirectional transmission of knowledge and has instead

experienced multidirectional sharing of expertise through various virtual summits. These summits include objectives such as confirming regional health and economic measures to fight the pandemic and agreeing on an ASEAN medical supply stockpile (Caballero-Anthony 2021). Some meetings have been solely dedicated to sharing governmental policy experience, which includes countries who have fared less successfully (ASEAN Secretariat News 2020). In all instances, expertise is exchanged rather than sent, and shared rather than bestowed, which affords an interesting dynamic in comparison to the cases of China and WHO. No country is seen, at least obviously, to be the main transmitter of expertise. The case can be said even when ASEAN engages external expertise, as with the ASEAN+3 summit which includes China, Japan and South Korea (ASEAN 2020). While China is seen as collaborative in this instance, one should note that the unidirectional Chinese transmission of expertise is still being carried out parallel to its engagements with ASEAN as a whole.

Analysis of the Nature of Knowledge Flows

With reference to the earlier discussion, this essay argues that performance-based and ability-based dynamics play a large role in shaping the nature of knowledge flows in the current pandemic, similar to the dynamics of previous health crises. However, when analysed, the three cases demonstrate varying degrees to which performance and ability were significant.

There are two characteristics of the Chinese case which invite analysis, its unidirectionality and its far outreach. Performance and ability provide a relevant starting point for analysing China's knowledge flows. For instance, China has performed well in controlling the virus despite it having the initial outbreak, and it only sent out medical experts to other countries after it has established a degree of control in Hubei province. In fact, the doctors and medical advisors that were sent off by China had first-hand experience in Hubei province, showing that performance was key in explaining China's role as an origin of expertise. Ability is also significant, as China is a resource-rich country with existing connections to various parts of the world. A further dynamic is the role of the withdrawing US in leaving a

leadership vacuum which China, being a rising power, filled (Ikenberry 2008, 25). China's rise has been discussed as a harbinger of the decline of the global liberal order as it challenges Western dominance, and analysing China's active role in expertise-transmission within this context would be a fruitful effort which future research can undertake.

The case of WHO/Europe offers an interesting contrast. As observed earlier, the knowledge flow for WHO/Europe consists of mainly west-to-east unidirectional flows. This is because the majority of countries who were recipients of WHO's operational missions were in Eastern Europe and beyond. In some senses, the unidirectionality is similar to China's. However, while China has performed better than its recipient countries, it is harder to tell if there is a similar performance disparity between Western and Eastern Europe. What plays a larger role here is the ability of Western Europe to help its Eastern counterparts in the sense that it has more resources. This is aptly demonstrated by the fact that countries requested for operational assistance from the WHO/Europe office in Copenhagen based on their own gaps in expertise. For example, the first WHO/Europe mission to Kyrgyzstan was made on request to provide operational planning, laboratory support and hospital preparedness (WHO Office for Europe 2020). For WHO/Europe's case then, the flow is directed more by a resource flow from countries who have them to countries who do not.

The ASEAN case saw multidirectional exchange rather than unidirectional flows. Performance, like with the WHO/Europe case, is less of a factor here. Countries who struggled shared their fair share in policy experience, and summits were not necessarily led by countries who fared better. Ability and resources are also not as significant as the mode of knowledge transmission for ASEAN was less about sending experts and resources, and more about multilateral sharing through digital platforms. What played a heavier role in the ASEAN case would be its prior experiences in previous pandemics. The ASEAN response was built upon existing health security infrastructure which were implemented during the 2003 SARS crisis and the 2009 H1N1 pandemic (Djalante et al. 2020, 2). Further, diplomatic norms

such as "the ASEAN way", prioritise non-interference. This might explain why ASEAN efforts did not manifest as the sending of professional aid to each other, and more as digital knowledge-sharing summits.

Conclusion

This essay has attempted to give a preliminary picture of what global knowledge flows during the COVID-19 pandemic have looked like for the year 2020. In summary, China is the dominant state in originating expertise. Further, the case of China saw widespread, direct, and unidirectional flows of expertise. The WHO likewise had unidirectional flows of knowledge transmission, with the case of WHO/Europe originating in West Europe and flowing towards the East. The WHO also uses regional offices to transmit knowledge, 2 of 6 of which carry out country missions. Finally, the case of ASEAN saw a more multidirectional flow of knowledge with no clear hierarchy, though expertise transmission was more through virtual means than physical visits.

In analysing the nature of such knowledge flows, this essay has offered two arguments, that of performance and ability, based on their applicability towards previous health crises. However, the extent to which the two factors played in the three cases differed. In China's case, performance and ability both explain its primacy in originating expertise. This contrasts with that of WHO/Europe, whose west-to-east unidirectionality is more a function of the ability of the west to supply the east, and less of performance disparity. For ASEAN's case, performance and ability are less significant due to it being a regional intergovernmental organisation. With multidirectional knowledge flows, expertise is more "shared" and less "transmitted". Thus, to explain the ASEAN case, we need to look at its norms and historical experience in previous pandemics.

Lastly, the findings and arguments presented in this essay are not necessarily generalisable to all health crises. If the undoing of assumptions regarding the performances of the global north and south during the current pandemic has shown anything, it is that every health crisis is different. The varying applicability of

performance and ability in the three cases alone demonstrate that each flow is a product of very different dynamics. Thus, the findings of this paper are limited to the three cases presented. As the purpose of this essay was to give a general overview, the three cases chosen were of different types of international actors. What might be a relevant starting point for further research is to find the difference between states' and international organisations' knowledge flows, including that of regional intergovernmental organisations. Hence, further research may offer the mappings of knowledge flows within other regional organisations or between other states to provide a clearer and more comparative picture of how these types of actors behaved as knowledge transmitters. A further gap that can be addressed is a comparison of knowledge flows across time within the single pandemic. As the COVID-19 pandemic is still persisting, dynamics of performance and ability has not remained constant, and an investigation as to whether the network of knowledge flows has changed accordingly is a worthy future endeavour.

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The Future of Technocratic Forms of Governance in the Age of Covid-19

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The challenges of the 21st Century – the significant and the seemingly insignificant – have profoundly shaped, influenced, and reformed the processes through which global governance is maintained and coordinated. Confronting such challenges has necessitated worldwide cooperation, immediate policymaking, and unparalleled access to sources of expertise. The Coronavirus pandemic, which began in 2019, has presented an unforeseen global challenge, one that serves as a stark contrast to the archetypal challenges of the modern age. It has resulted in the destabilisation of economies, the near collapse of healthcare systems, and the cultivation of political hostilities. The difficulties in constraining the multitude of impacts resulting from the pandemic have been exacerbated by the evolving nature of the virus itself, with politicians ill-equipped to predict the trajectory of the pandemic and simultaneously, authorize effective legislation to curtail its spread while limiting the economic fallout. Easing such difficulties is aided by the utilisation of expert knowledge, which informs and advises political decision-making. The success of intertwining expertise with governance is depicted unambiguously in the case of New Zealand, a state that curbed Covid-19 through a rigorous and prompt response.

Consequently, I examine the utility of expertise in managing the current pandemic and ultimately, analyse the extent to which incorporating experts into systems of domestic and global governance has been shaped and may continue to be shaped by the Coronavirus pandemic. This will be considered in three components: firstly, I compare the extent to which expert knowledge was consulted in the initial responses of the United Kingdom and New Zealand in order to determine whether consulting experts and indeed, *a certain type of expert*, contributed towards a more effective management response; secondly, I address how the pandemic has reshaped prevailing assumptions of technocracies by questioning the dominating belief regarding the incompatibility of technocracy co-existing with democracy; and

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finally, I assess how the pandemic has highlighted the utility of expertise in future global governance to manage transnational issues requiring well-informed and timely policymaking. Fundamentally, this essay questions whether the Coronavirus pandemic has underscored technocracies as a superior form of global governance in an international system where challenges have increased in their scale and complexity.

Technocracy and Expertise

Massimiano Bucchi asserts that technocracy is a significant governing system due to the prevalence of misinformation regarding technical and scientific issues that consequently shape policymaking and public opinion (2006, 1). Subsequently, a technocratic governing system surrenders complex and technical decision-making to experts in an effort to lessen, if not diminish, the dilemma of misinformation (ibid., 2). The underlying principle of technocracy therefore rests on expertise which can be conceived as a "social status accorded to actors for their superior command of specialist knowledge relative to other actors making similar claims" (Kranke 2020, 4). However, the following essay acknowledges that the advice and influence of experts is not all-encompassing. Rather, their impact in determining policy measures is dependent on several conditionalities. Pier Tortola and Silvana Tarlea created a series of hypotheses where they theorize that experts possess more influence in four circumstances: firstly, in an existing technocratic governing system; secondly, where the negotiating setting benefits the experts either through their close contact with politicians or the general rules of the setting itself; thirdly, within a situation requiring technical expertise; and fourthly, if the issue lacks prominence in public opinion or is less "politically salient" (2020, 7). In effect, the authority conferred to experts is not simply bestowed due to their expertise but occurs and is fought within a political space comprising of recalcitrant actors, shrewd bargaining, and conflicting tensions.

This leads to the following question: within the framework proposed by Tortola and Tarlea, where does the unique instance of the Coronavirus pandemic fall? Beginning with the first hypothesis, no state strictly defines itself as a technocracy therefore

experts are not automatically conferred authority to make decisions on behalf of the state. The second hypothesis holds merit within the situation of the pandemic whereby advisory groups comprised of scientific experts work closely with governments to shape policies managing the spread of Covid-19. This hypothesis can be analysed in conjunction with the third hypothesis where the negotiating setting has benefited the experts *as a result* of the technical nature of the pandemic, such that decision-making requires informed and scientific knowledge.

The intertwinement of Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3 can be exhibited in several instances: the Scottish government formulated a Covid-19 advisory group in an effort to support and advise the government and health services through providing statistical modelling, scientific expertise, and to act as an intermediary between the government and larger expert bodies (GovScot 2020, 1). Similarly, a report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute emphasised the need for a group of experts or a "national bio-threat advisory group" to collaborate with the Australian government in the prevention and management of future pandemics. Most significantly, the report highlights the future utility of such groups to advise on transnational issues relating to bioterrorism and climate change (2020, 62). Evidently, in the case of the Coronavirus pandemic, Tortola and Tarlea's third hypothesis *facilitates* the second hypothesis. In effect, the scientific knowledge required to manage Covid-19 has facilitated close contact between experts and governmental bodies.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the role of experts during the Coronavirus pandemic seems to refute the fourth hypothesis. While Tortola and Tarlea theorize that the influence of experts is lessened when the issue is more politically salient, the Coronavirus pandemic has reshaped the contribution of experts as more influential in what is undoubtedly a politically salient issue, to the extent that the legitimacy of policies in the eyes of public opinion depends on the level of expertise consulted in their development. This notion will be developed later within this essay examining the shift in British public opinion in regard to utilising technical expertise in political decision-making. Nonetheless, Tortola and Tarlea's hypotheses provide a useful lens

through which to ascertain how the pandemic has fostered an environment that privileges the role and contributions of experts.

Responses and Measures to Covid-19

United Kingdom

The first case of Covid-19 in the UK was reported on 29th January 2020 (Wright, 2021). The initial[1] responses of the government were marked by an economic focus. A press release by the UK National Audit Office depicts that within this time period, £117.7 billion was spent supporting public services and individuals. Of £117.7 billion, £82.2 billion was spent supporting businesses, including furlough payments and loans (NAO 2020, 1). In addition to £117.7 billion, a further £6.6 billion was spent on healthcare, testing and vaccine development (ibid., 1). The first rigorous measure impacting daily life was implemented on the 23rd March 2020 in the form of a national lockdown (GovUK, 2020), where non-essential shops were closed, and large gatherings and social events were prohibited. Restrictions on international travellers entering the United Kingdom and the implementation of hotel quarantine were imposed on 15th February 2021 (Mullens-Burgess and Nickson 2021, 1). To date,[2] the UK has recorded 4,350,226 cases and 126,764 deaths (GovUK, 2021) and has enforced three lockdowns to curb the spread of Covid-19.

New Zealand

The first case of Covid-19 in New Zealand was reported on 28th February 2020 (New Zealand Government 2020, 1). New Zealand was one of the first countries to implement rigid policy measures to control the spread of the Coronavirus. Its initial responses included a full closure of borders to international arrivals and on 16th March 2020, hotel quarantine for residents and citizens arriving to New Zealand was implemented (Jones 2020, 1). The first rigorous measure impacting daily life was implemented on the 26th March in the form of a national lockdown (Baker et al 2020,

[1] 'Initial' refers to the period beginning 31st January 2020 to 4th May 2020. These dates correspond to the monetary figures provided by the National Audit Office.

[2] As of 1st April 2021.

1). To date,[3] New Zealand has recorded 2501 cases and 26 deaths (New Zealand Government 2021, 1) and while the country has removed all domestic restrictions, its international borders have remained closed.

Comparing the initial responses of New Zealand and the United Kingdom, it is evident that the policy measures and indeed, the consequences of the policy measures demonstrate a stark difference. New Zealand pursued a strategy of elimination exemplified through a lockdown and border closures whereas the United Kingdom pursued an initial strategy of mitigating the effects of the virus and cushioning potential blows to its economy. It should be clarified that this essay does not seek to critique the measures of either state and rather, acknowledges that both measures possess their trade-offs and payoffs. Analysing the initial responses above, it is evident that the UK was driven by economic expert opinion while New Zealand was driven by scientific expert opinion. The disparity in the responses of these states begs the question: *who is the right expert*? Given the scale of the Coronavirus pandemic, its effects were far-reaching and contributed towards the debilitation of the physical health of people and the economic health of states. It is therefore logical that states such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand relied on economic and scientific expert opinion. However, within this circumstance, the data outlined above clearly demonstrates that the consultation of scientific expert opinion utilised by New Zealand facilitated an effective and rapid recovery response from both the health and economic impacts of Covid-19. This finding contributes towards an important conclusion: the utilisation of expert knowledge or rather, *a type of expert knowledge*, must be defined by the nature of the situation itself. In the case of a highly scientific issue such as a global pandemic, the initial responses of a state increase in their effectiveness when the issue itself is primarily elucidated through scientific opinion. Similarly, if the technical issue under examination was a global recession, it is undoubtable that economic expert knowledge would hold primacy given the economic nature of the situation. Although other types of expert knowledge may be consulted, they would serve as secondary sources of opinion. Consequently, while the Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted expert opinion as a necessary component

[3] As of 1st April 2021.

in managing technical matters, it has showcased the significance of discerning which experts are appropriate depending on the nature of the technical matter.

Public Opinion

The transformation of public attitudes regarding the legitimacy and appropriateness of expertise within the political domain represents a wider debate concerning perceptions of 'acceptable' policymaking. The above section denotes the significant pressure placed on the UK government by the British public to adhere to the recommendations of experts. However, I note that such sentiments starkly contrast those prior to the Coronavirus pandemic. This disparity is most evident when considering public opinion of experts during the Brexit process. Brexit, in itself, was fuelled by the conviction that Britons wanted to determine their own future (Rosamond 2021, 1093). This conviction was undergirded by anti-intellectualist sentiments and driven by the paramount belief that expert knowledge and policymakers who grounded their claims in expert knowledge, were increasingly 'out of touch' with the difficulties and pressures of everyday life (ibid., 1092).

While the Remain Campaign buttressed their statements through statistics and expert opinions, the prevailing idea that such statistics were inadequate to reflect the hardships of everyday life ultimately contributed to the support for the Leave Campaign. A Guardian article quotes a woman at a lecture where an expert discussed the potential disastrous economic impact of leaving the European Union to which she responded from the audience: "that's your bloody GDP, not ours" (Chakrabortty 2017, 1). Regardless of the truth and veracity of the claims highlighted by the Remain Campaign, Brexit illustrated public disgruntlement towards expert knowledge utilised as a political instrument. Applying Tortola and Tarlea's four hypothesis framework to the Brexit process, it is apparent that the fourth hypothesis holds merit within this circumstance: the highly politically salient issue of Brexit weakened the influence of experts. Consequently, this leads to the following question: why did the political salience of Brexit diminish the influence of experts, yet the political salience of the Coronavirus pandemic has elevated the influence of experts? Differing from Brexit, the Coronavirus pandemic has been fuelled by a

demand for politicians to adhere to the recommendations of scientific experts (Ward 2020, 1). In this context, comprehending and consulting those who possess technical knowledge of the virus is the sole means through which it can be contained and managed.

Tortola and Tarlea's third hypothesis is therefore most appropriate to the Coronavirus pandemic: the technical nature of the issue has increased the influence of experts. However, this essay seeks to further Tortola and Tarlea's four-hypothesis model to propose a fifth hypothesis: the influence of experts increases as the universality of the technical issue is amplified. In the case of Brexit, the reductionist nature of statistics (Mügge 2020, 4) simply did not allow for the multitude of individual realities to be captured. The repercussions of leaving the European Union and the consequences of remaining within the European Union were too vast and could not be trivialized into a single figure such as GDP. Hence, experts were perceived as inappropriate channels to voice or showcase information. In contrast, the recommendations of experts in the Coronavirus pandemic were based on a *universal* reality rather than in the pursuit of a political gain i.e., certain acts will undoubtedly increase the transmission of Covid-19 while certain measures will certainly reduce its transmission. Subsequently, the nature of the pandemic has reframed expert knowledge as depoliticized and asserted its legitimacy as an integral component in decision-making.

Democracy Versus Technocracy

When examining the merits of technocratic processes of governance, the debates regarding its inherent tensions with democracy are essential to consider. A technocratic regime has three central tenets: it is comprised of elite individuals possessing extensive technical knowledge, decision-making is rational and apolitical, and the regime is motivated by a scientific rigour (Centeno 1993, 314). These tenets are underpinned with the understanding that "experts are themselves special interest groups whose perspectives and self-interests render them nonrepresentative of the *demos* as a whole" (Shapiro 2005, 343). In effect, the goals pursued by a technocratic regime may serve an instrumental purpose, yet the goal or indeed, the

mechanisms through which this goal is achieved can deviate from public opinion. The pursuit of a specific objective that disavows public opinion and is based on a specialized form of knowledge is a controversial system of governance, yet it encapsulates the nature of a technocracy. Consequently, the emphasis of technocracies on instrumentalism and advocating for a governmental structure that privileges elite individuals is perceived to reflect more authoritarian forms of governance (Centeno 1993, 308).

However, this does not signify that technocracies and democracies are incompatible or cannot co-exist within the same governing structure. Miguel Centeno argues that technocratic democracies are possible although certain conditions must exist for their effective functioning: firstly, there must be agreement amongst the population on the policies of the state, including the mechanisms through which such policies are attained; secondly, the population must be prepared to "endure individual sacrifices for the long term good of the collective;" and finally, the objectives must be achieved promptly and effectively (1993, 326). The case of New Zealand during the Coronavirus pandemic supports Centeno's assertion. First and foremost, it should be noted that New Zealand is a democratic state and in 2021, it was ranked as the fourth highest country in the world in regard to its democratic index (The Economist 2021, 1). While maintaining a stable and effective democratic structure, it has utilised technocratic processes of governance in its management of Covid-19. The New Zealand government implemented a technical advisory group which directs the government on policy measures, monitors and reviews existing measures, and analyses communications conveyed to the public (New Zealand Government 2021, 1). Considering Centeno's conditions for a functioning technocratic democracy, it is evident that New Zealand fulfils the criteria; Brookings, an American-based think tank, confirms that the population of New Zealand supported the measures enforced by the government, accepted and conformed to the rules imposed, and ultimately, the measures were proven successful within a short period of time (Dyer 2021, 1). Subsequently, the Coronavirus pandemic has showcased New Zealand as a technocratic democracy and reshaped assumptions vis-à-vis the incompatibility of technocracy and democracy existing within the same governmental structure.

Applying Tortola and Tarlea's framework within this case study, it can be argued that the second hypothesis (experts possess more influence when they are favoured by the negotiating setting) is affirmed as the negotiating setting i.e., the state itself and the support of the New Zealand population, favoured the position of the experts and facilitated a greater degree of influence over decision-making.

The Future of Technocracies

The above sections have examined the influence of experts within governing structures during the Coronavirus pandemic and the extent to which the pandemic has reshaped understandings of experts operating within the political domain. However, it is crucial to question whether the pandemic has reshaped such understandings provisionally or if the pandemic has transformed global governance irrevocably. Miles Kahler outlined three possible futures he envisioned for global governance prior to the pandemic: fragmentation, stagnation, and transformation (2018, 240). While arguments could be proposed for the contribution of Covid-19 in facilitating each of Kahler's visions, this essay asserts that the lessons learnt in managing the Coronavirus pandemic and acknowledging the role of experts in addressing global issues that require collective action, will ultimately transform global governance. This is augmented by the inevitable increase in transnational issues which require well-informed policymaking and scientific expertise. Such issues may likely include the prevention and preparation for future pandemics, combatting the threat of bioterrorism, and tackling climate change. Ultimately, governing systems which incorporate technocratic processes may fundamentally be better equipped at confronting such complex challenges.

The parallels between the Coronavirus pandemic and climate change indicate that measures rooted in scientific expertise are indispensable in their management. Botzen et al emphasises that both the pandemic and climate change carry severe risks to health, adversely and disproportionately impact vulnerable communities, and are sustained and intensified through processes of globalization (2020, 1). The report further highlights that the Coronavirus pandemic and climate change can be categorized as Low-Probability—High-Consequence risks (ibid., 1) where

preparation for such events is deficient due to the low likelihood that such an event will occur. However, in the case of the event's occurrence, the consequences are far-reaching, catastrophic, and potentially irreversible. Regardless of such consequences, its low probability facilitates a situation whereby politicians fail to implement policy measures to prepare for such events based on the understanding that such events are unlikely to occur whilst they are in office (ibid., 2). The Coronavirus pandemic has underscored the consequences of such mentalities and depicted the significance of involving experts in preparing and managing for situations where politicians tend to fall short.

Consequently, what is the future for experts within governing systems? It can be argued that the rhetoric of retaining experts "on tap, but not on top" (Shapiro 2005, 343) may persist. Within this circumstance, experts are invited to provide their opinions and expertise however they are not incorporated into positions or systems of power. Alternatively, states may embrace the technocratic approach and elect leaders based on their expertise. This essay asserts that a middle approach resembling the case of New Zealand is the likeliest scenario whereby experts co-exist with the government and continually advise and inform political decision-making.

Conclusion

This essay has sought to analyse the influence of experts in policymaking during the Coronavirus pandemic through examining the success of consulting experts in controlling the spread of Covid-19, the transformation in public attitudes regarding notions of 'acceptable' decision-making, and the emergence of technocratic democracies. Ultimately, this essay demonstrates that within an international system, any local issue can become a global issue, and therefore an effective governing system is pivotal in confronting the challenges of the modern age.

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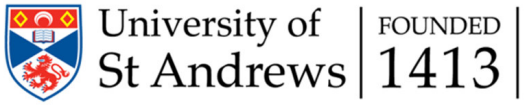
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