



PAX ROMANA
JOURNAL

BEYOND COVID-19

A COMPREHENSIVE
PERSPECTIVE

2020

Poorest of the Poor in the Midst of Pandemic

Helen Grace M. Udtuhan - Philippines

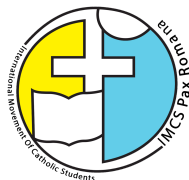


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About Pax Romana

Pax Romana is the name for a family of Catholic lay movements engaging students, intellectuals and professionals since 1921. The two main international branches are:

The International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS-Pax Romana)



brings together Catholic university students and national student movements with a shared mission of mobilizing for faith and action. As a youth-led youth movement, IMCS promotes student leadership and responsibility in life, the Church's mission and in the world. While the name and structure of each national movement within IMCS often differs from country to country, IMCS members are united by our spirituality of action and a shared commitment to the option for the poor, the marginalized and creation, our common home. Currently IMCS has

more than 88 national member movements and federations coordinated by six regional secretariats and the international office based in Paris, France. IMCS has regional offices in four continents: IMCS Africa (Nairobi, Kenya); IMCS Asia Pacific (Manila, Philippines); JECI-MIEC Europe (Brussels, Belgium); and MIEC-JECI Latin America (Quito, Ecuador).
www.imcs-miec.org

The International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA-Pax Romana)



Romana) is a global community of Catholic intellectuals and professionals engaged in the world with a spirituality of action. Since 1947, ICMICA has united a wide range of individuals, small communities, national movements, and international networks with a shared commitment to support one another across borders and to integrate faith and action for a more just world. Inspired by the Gospel and the Catholic social tradition, ICMICA members are

committed to the option for the poor, integral human development, interreligious dialogue, and the empowerment of women and young professionals. In Africa, Europe, and Latin America, the movement is served by regional teams. ICMICA includes several networks of specific professions, including The International Secretariat of the Catholic Lawyers (MIJC); The International Secretariat of the Catholic Engineers, Agronomists and Industrialists (SIIAEC); and The International Secretariat of Catholic High School Teachers (SIESC).
www.icmica-miic.org



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About the Journal

The Pax Romana Journal

The Pax Romana Journal is an interdisciplinary annual publication for literature reviews, research and opinion pieces on specific contemporary social issues. Key themes, include but are not limited to: Human rights; Democracy, good governance and global governance; Themes on the United Nations agenda; Faith, church reform, synodality, and lay participation; Youth participation and advocacy; Climate change and ecological justice; Intercultural/interreligious dialogue.

Each of these themes is approached from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching with the goal of promoting peace, justice and mercy, in service of the common good of the poor and the Earth.

La Revista Pax Romana

La Revista Pax Romana es una publicación anual interdisciplinaria revisada por pares del movimiento para revisiones de literatura, investigaciones y artículos de opinión sobre temas sociales contemporáneos específicos. Entre los temas claves a trabajar se encuentran (no de forma excluyente) los siguientes: Derechos humanos; Democracia, buen gobierno y gobernanza global; Temas en la agenda de Naciones Unidas; Reforma de la iglesia, sinodalidad y participación laica; Participación e incidencia juvenil; Cambio climático y justicia ecológica; Diálogo intercultural/interreligioso.

ada uno de estos temas abordados desde la perspectiva de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, con el objetivo de promover la paz, la justicia y la misericordia, al servicio del bien común de los pobres y de la Tierra.

La Revue Pax Romana

La revue Pax Romana est une publication annuelle interdisciplinaire avec un contrôle collégial du mouvement, qui propose des publications, des recherches et des articles d'opinion sur des questions sociales contemporaines particulières. Les principaux thèmes clés comprennent, sans s'y limiter: droits de l'homme; démocratie, bonne gouvernance et gouvernance mondiale; thèmes à l'ordre du jour des Nations Unies; réforme de l'église, synodalité et participation des laïcs; participation et plaidoyer des jeunes; changement climatique et justice écologique; dialogue interculturel / interreligieux.

Chacun de ces thèmes est abordé sous l'angle de l'enseignement social catholique dans le but de promouvoir la paix, la justice et la miséricorde, au service du bien commun des pauvres et de la Terre.

The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Pax Romana IMCS or ICMICA.

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Introduction

On March 27 as the coronavirus ranged in many parts of the world with unprecedented lockdowns put into place, Pope Francis entered a dark, rainy and empty St. Peter's Square to deliver an extraordinary "Urbi et Orbi" message before a crucifix used for prayer during the plague in 1522, Pope Francis.

In one of the most profound moments of this past year, Francis speaks to the heart of the crisis unfolding around the pandemic:

Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets and our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void, that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people's gestures, their glances give them away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying "We are perishing" (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this.

Months later, Francis reiterated this message in his latest encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*. The pandemic, as he reflects, has revealed and in some cases exacerbated divisions and polarizations. In confronting the pandemic, we must affirm our universal responsibility towards each other as brothers and sisters. The world cannot continue as normal. The world needs a new way forward. Critical in this new path forward, according to Francis, is Dialogue: "Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common ground: all these things are summed up in the one word "dialogue". If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 198).

Like the Pax Romana movement more broadly, one of the goals of this journal is to provide a space for *intercultural, international, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational dialogue* on key issues facing the church and the world.

We are happy to bring you articles and creative works from sixteen contributors coming from ten countries (Bangladesh, Canada, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius (Chile), Mexico, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines). The authors in this volume bring a range of experiences, expertise, and ideas. Some are university students; others intellectuals with doctoral degrees. Some are members and chaplains of our movements; others are friends and collaborators who responded to our open call for papers. We hope that these diverse papers can contribute in some way to the type of dialogue and social friendship that is urgently needed today.

To these we add an article from our archives an article by Rosemary Goldie, a key figure in the history of our movement. With her involvement in the movement, Goldie made her way from a student in Australia to being the first lay woman to work in the Vatican Curia. We present her article as we look towards our centenary year of 2021!

Ravi Tissera (IMCS) and Kevin Ahern (ICMICA)

From Our Archives **Pax Romana Remembered**

Rosemary Goldie – Australia

As we look toward the centenary of Pax Romana, we bring you this article from our archives by Rosemary Goldie of Australia. While studying in France in the years before World War II, Rosemary joined the Fédération Française des Étudiants Catholiques, the French movement of IMCS Pax Romana. During the War, Rosemary helped to start the first IMCS student federation in Australia. After the War, Rosemary worked in the international secretariat of IMCS Pax Romana and represented the movement at Vatican meetings on the laity. During the Second Vatican Council, Rosemary was one of the lay auditors and she later became the first lay woman to work in the Roman Curia.

Introduction

“This is not a history of Pax Romana. Others have written that and will write it again. It is not even the history of a period, but only “glimpses” of Pax Romana as I lived it between thirty and fifty years ago. Some of these are experiences shared by others, although the number grown fewer each year. Some are just memories I would like to share.

Vaduz 1938

The Interfederal Assembly had been in session, 30th April to 1st May, in the Principality of Liechtenstein. The future Prince Franz-Josef II had met the delegates over a friendly meal. We were standing, Rudi Salat and myself, on the crisp snow that covered the street of the village capital. A peaceful spot in Central Europe, where war clouds were gathering rapidly. In a few months I would be returning to Australia; the Administrative Secretary was entrusting me with the task of taking the “message” of Pax Romana to the distant continent. Not too soon, for by the time the University Catholic Federation of Australia was founded in Sydney, all contact with the headquarters of Pax Romana in Fribourg had been cut off and would remain so for years. We affiliated through the Secretariat set up in Washington - headed by the “legendary” Ed Kirchner - after war had broken out in Europe, while delegates were gathered in Washington for the Pax Romana Congress; the story has often been told. Rudi Salat, as a German, could not return to Europe and, when the U.S. came into the war after Pearl Harbour, he left for South America. There he helped to set up movements of university Catholic Action wherever a Nunciature could offer him hospitality.

How did I come to be in Vaduz? I had arrived in Paris in October 1936 on a scholarship (after a six-week journey from Sydney to London). A recommendation from a Jesuit in Sydney to an S.J. in Paris brought me to the Dominican, Fr. Marc Dubois, Chaplain to a little group of women students of the Sorbonne. I discovered that, as member of this group, “Veritas”, I was automatically member of the French Federation of Catholic Women Students, and thereby, member of Pax Romana - of which I had never heard. I was to hear much more of it, however, for

the 16th Pax Romana Congress was to be held in Paris 28th July to 3rd August, 1937, on the occasion of the International Exhibition. For the first time, too, the Congress was to be preceded by Study Days outside of Paris, at the College of Bouffémont. As Pax Romana's first Australian, I was invited. For me, these were days dense with new experience.

In this hey-day of Pius XI's "Catholic Action", the study at Bouffémont was on the "Formation of the Student" in all its aspects - religious, philosophical, cultural, professional, social - and the task involved for Pax Romana. It was here, too, that I had my first taste of the "liturgical renewal", with the experience of the "dialogue Mass."

The Congress which followed in Paris, with about 700 participants, was all too relevant to present-day problems: the subject was "Unemployment among young university graduates". The photos of Bouffémont and Vaduz, with the delegates grouped around the President, Max Legendre, are proof enough that the time was becoming ripe for Pax Romana, set up originally as a student movement, to "produce" a movement of professional people and "intellectuals" generally.

After the Congress in Paris, I was so fully part of the Pax Romana family that, the following year, since no other woman student was available, I went to Liechtenstein as accredited delegate of the French Federation. (...)

The World Scene

It is difficult to recapture today the "feeling" of immediate post-war Europe. Switzerland was something of an oasis in war - weary Europe; but the problems of the world pressed in on us from all sides. I had arrived from Australia among the ruins of London, and I spent all 1946 in Paris under wartime conditions where food and housing were concerned. After the war, Pax Romana's budget was largely dependent on a grant from the American Catholic Relief Services. It was made for refugee students and intellectuals, but half of it could be used for administrative purposes. This stopped abruptly after a few years, leaving the Secretariat in a state of trauma. But our problems were not only financial. The big menace was communism. At Anzio, debate was furious about relations with Marxist-inspired student organizations. "Peace" was an ambiguous term, appropriated by communist propaganda. The necessary "democratization" of University had ideological overtones: students claimed their rights as "young intellectual workers".

There were hopes too, and new horizons. The ONU was getting under way. Before leaving Paris in 1946 I was part of the Pax Romana's delegations to the first conference of UNESCO - we were received at the Nunciature by Mgr. Angelo Roncalli. The first stirrings of decolonization were already felt by the "colonial powers". India was independent from 1947. The Pax Romana Journal, which was revived in a multilingual form in 1947, carried feature articles on Human Rights, on UNESCO as seen by Jacques Maritain, on the movement from European unity in its various forms, on Christian Unity, on the international and supranational commitments of Catholics - in general and of Pax Romana in particular.

Pius XII, mostly through his Substitute, Mgr. Montini, was giving full encouragement to the international apostolate. The pre-war Conference of Presidents (barely tolerated by ecclesiastical Authority) became in 1951 the Conference of Catholic International Organizations, with statutes approved by the Holy See and Permanent Secretariat. Pax Romana played an important part in this revival. It is hard today to realize that, before Vatican II, the Conference of I.C.O. was the only regular forum where world problems were discussed in all their amplitude as a challenge to the "apostolate" (today we would say "evangelization").

The Holy Year 1950 was the first great coming together in Rome after the war of Catholics from all over the world. During that year, Pax Romana held its Congress in Amsterdam and received the famous Message from Pius XII: “Be everywhere present in the vanguard of the intellectual combat, at this time when the intellect is endeavouring to grasp the problems of humanity and of nature in the new dimensions they will have from now on”. The Congress was followed by the Pilgrimage to Rome, where Mgr. Montini addressed the pilgrims at the Colosseum: “Faith is a strength, the only language which unites us”. The following year, Pax Romana gave its full collaboration to the First World Congress for the Lay Apostolate, organized on the initiative of Vittorino Veronese, President of Italian Catholic Action and Vice-President of ICMICA.

The University Apostolate

If world problems and the aftermath of war provided the context in which we lived, our day to day activity, apart from the Relief Service, was mainly concerned with the “University Apostolate”; and, after the division of Pax Romana, this meant specifically, for the IMCS, the student apostolate. Not only “Catholic Action” in the strict sense. Our vision of Pax Romana was wider, as sanctioned even by our Statutes. The members of IMCS were national federations, recognized by the Hierarchy, “comprising Catholic university groups which give the student and integral formation and develop in him the apostolic spirit”; they must not be “active in party politics”. But there was no mention of any “mandate” from the Hierarchy, and no specific method of formation was prescribed. Developing the “apostolic spirit” was interpreted rather widely. Affiliated Federations included, together with Catholic Action groups, traditional organizations, more civic than apostolic in scope, from German-speaking countries, all-embracing associations of Catholic students like the Newman Clubs or societies of English-speaking universities, coordinations of various groups - professional, missionary, “apostolic” - like the French Federation of Catholic Students, Federations of students in exile, etc.

It was hoped that “Mutual fraternal understanding” would, by osmosis, bring a more apostolic spirit to the social-minded Federations, while it was acknowledged that Catholic Action groups could profit from the secular and civic experience of the less “directly apostolic”. From Pax Romana, moreover, came the urging to develop the “social consciousness” of all students. The “politicization” of 1968 and after was in the far future.

The variety of Federations, linked in a wide-open student community, is evident in the news pages of the Pax Romana Journal, “A mariusque ad mare”. It is illustrated also in a series of booklets published up to 1951: on “Catholic Action” (presented in much the same terms as the Vatican II Decree on the Lay Apostolate); on “Professional Economic and Social Sciences, Pharmacy, Art”; on the “Intellectual Apostolate” (proceedings of a Study Week held at Fatima in 1951); finally, “University for Christ, the University Apostolate in Action”. This last publication reflects the work of a Study Week on “University Catholic Action”, held at Mariastein, Switzerland, in January 1949 - the meeting at which for the first time, it had been possible, in a spirit of reconciliation, to bring together German students and those of previously “occupied” countries. The groups presenting their activity in the booklet are from several European countries, but also from Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru, with “echoes” from Australia, India and South Africa. Much would seem remote to the successors of the student leaders of the 1940s and 1950s; but the need for solid Christian formation is something which is perhaps being rediscovered today in the search for “new” approaches to pastoral work and “evangelization” in the University. (...)

Looking Back... And Forward

After the itinerant World Congress of 1952 on “The Mission of the University” (Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec), I left the staff of Pax Romana to work in Roma for the Permanent Committee for International Congresses of the Lay Apostolate (COPECIAL). I spent my last days in Fribourg, in September 1952, excavating in the archives of the years from 1919 (Pax Romana in preparation) to 1930 (when Rudi Salat came to the Secretariat and order began to reign); going through box after box stuffed, pell mell with material of more or less historical import.

Two “pearls” surfaced. One, the circular dated 1921 which announced the definitive “solution” of Pax Romana’s financial problems! The other -history indeed-, in the last box, the hand-written letter in which Baron de Montenach recounted to Abbe Gremaud his “pilgrimage” through Europe, in the last years of the previous century, when he tried to bring Catholic student groups together in what was finally to become, in 1921, Pax Romana.

Contact with Pax Romana by no means ended with my departure for Rome. Many more “glimpses” would be possible. I would like to recall only three more activities, each on its way emblematic for the task, and growth, of Pax Romana.

Today the holding of an IMCS Seminar in Asia would be ordinary administration. It was a pioneering endeavour in 1954, a year before the Bandung Conference, at which the peoples of Asia and Africa were to affirm their place in the world for the first time. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Fr. Pierre Ceyrac, S.J., it was possible for the Seminar to bring together at Loyola College, Madras, from 10th December 1954 to 2nd January 1955, nearly 100 students from 12 countries. My own part, as informal Pax Romana agent, had begun some months earlier when I was traveling to prepare for the First Asian Meeting for the Lay Apostolate (Manila, 1955). In the Pax Journal for February 1954, I am reported as having come to Madras for preliminary planning, after taking part in the First African Leaders’ Meeting for Lay Apostolate, held in Uganda, where I had “worked fast and furiously establishing contacts for Pax Romana with African students and chaplains”.

Another pioneering activity of Pax Romana gave me my first ecumenical experience. In February 1955, a Conference on “University, Culture and Human Community” was jointly organized by Pax Romana and the World Student Christian Federation at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches (Bossey, Celigny, Switzerland).

The carefully worded letter in which the Bishop of Geneva, Lausanne and Fribourg, Mgr. Francois Charriere, General Chaplain of Pax Romana, explained the nature and aims of this meeting to the Pro-Secretary of State, Mgr. Domenico Tardini, is proof enough of the novelty – and potential risk – of such an undertaking at the time.

Finally, during the preparation of the Synod on Laity (twenty years after Vatican II), it seems appropriate to recall the “Fribourg Meeting” of July 1960. On the initiative of Ramon Sugranyes, then President of ICMICA, an international group of 22 participants (4 priests, 3 women) met for the purpose of contributing to the work of the Council. Mgr. Charriere accepted to preside over the meeting. There was no set agenda. The subjects discussed included the status of laity in the Church, Christian unity, Church/State relations, peace and the international community, the Church in the newly emerging nations. The findings, duly forwarded to Rome, may or may not have had an impact on the Preparatory Commissions; the Meeting was in any case an expression of Pax Romana’s role in the Church’s mission to a changing world. The world has

indeed changed since then in many ways; the Church also, in its process of “aggiornamento”. Among the changes are new channels and means of expression for the contribution of those called to be in a special way the “thinking” faithful - mainly, but not exclusively, laity. There are not only Diocesan Synods, Pastoral Councils, National Commissions of all kinds; there are also Pontifical Councils for Laity, Family, Culture; Pontifical Commissions for Justice and Peace, Social Communications...

There remain, however, necessary tasks open to the free initiative of the “Christifideles”. Pax Romana - ICMICA has 40 years experience of taking “lay” initiative – not exclusive of clergy and not unblessed by Hierarchy. It has its place in this new context: a place wider than its structures, wide open to cultural change and exchange, but deeply based in the love of Christ, living in and through his Church for the world of today and tomorrow.”

Empty Everywhere: Outflowing Within

Jojo M. Fung, SJ – Malaysia

Abstract

In the light of the lockdown due to COVID-19, this article offers a theological reflection on the emptiness of the streets and the churches and how this pandemic has facilitated the outflow of contemplative richness from within the hitherto untapped wellsprings of many believers and the creativity of the Church. The pandemic has generated forthcoming narratives related to the victorious Peoples' War, xenophobic Orientalism, electropollution, pharma-elitism, genetic studies and ecological factors. Moreover, this pandemic has ushered in the era of mysticaloncene in which there is a heightened awareness of the actions of *Rûah Elohim* in the age of pneumatolocene in terms of contemplativity, sacrificial spirit, and spirit of Prophetic voice.

Keywords: Capitalocene; Colonial Temporality; Contemplativity; Electropollution; Mysticaloncene; Pneumatolocene

“The tragedy is the wreckage of a train that has been careening down the track of years.”

Arundhati Roy.

*“Great perils have this beauty, that they bring to light
the fraternity of strangers.”* Victor Hugo.

The pandemic is a global crisis that affects the life of the Church at the local, regional and universal levels. What is reportedly empty public streets and squares commiserate with empty pews in the churches and soulless spaces in St. Peter's Square. But the spatial emptiness is a Kairos for many sojourners to be in touch with Immanuel who is God-with-us and allow the igniting of an outflow of inner strength from within that overflows into family life, life in the residence and in society and Mother Earth, making us realized in silence and solitude that we are all interconnected.

1. Whither the Earth, the religions?

From Wuhan to Singapore, Delhi, Bagdad, Uganda, Tehran, Yemen, Bueno Aires, New York, empty public places is a metaphor iconic of our desolate world, stricken by mass hysteria and flat panic, all sacred places of worship, from mosques, spirit-houses, temples, St. Peter's Square in Rome, this global pandemic has infected over 74.9 million, with 42.3 million have recovered and a death toll of 1.66 million still rising.¹ Governments' and states' hospitals are overwhelmed, caught unprepared. National and world economy is at a standstill, leaving 25 million people suffering from devastation of their livelihood. The IMF Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva reported last week that “some \$8 trillion in fiscal stimulus has being poured in by governments to stave off collapse was not likely to be enough. She is expected to argue this week for more debt relief for the poorest countries.”² Thus far, ninety countries have applied for

Emergency Finance from the IMF which offers a \$1 trillion in lending capacity and are placing it at the service member countries. Gita Gopinath, IMF Chief economist, predicted that the “world is likely to lose a cumulative \$9 trillion in output over two years - greater than the combined gross domestic product (GDP) of Germany and Japan.”³ The World Airline is reported to have lost 300 million in this global economic standstill.⁴ Oxfam opines that the pandemic “could push an additional half a billion people into poverty, demanding that world leaders contain the economic fallout and cancel \$1 trillion of developing countries' debt payments in 2020.”⁵

Refugees, migrants, the jobless, the homeless in the border-camps, informal settlements, and slums are most vulnerable as these public places are left without food, healthcare, and security of any kind. Delivery of aids to refugee camps is impossible due to lockdown in Syria. Small and even medium business are forced to close. Nations in the global South, like “Nigeria’s economy is being threatened by the twin shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated sharp fall in international oil prices.”⁶ Emergency financing is needed for developing nations, medium and small businesses and low-income and single-parent families. Healthcare workers, from doctors to nurses, caregivers, shop and emergency workers, have become the new emblems of sacrificial leadership and self-forgetful services at the frontline, risking infection, even death. Return to the scenes of service after recovery is not uncommon among these emblematic service-providers.

2. Forthcoming Narratives

The emerging and conflicting narratives suffer from inconsistencies and gaps, ranging from a victorious people’s war, a Xenophobic Orientalism, high frequency electropollution, the Pharma-Elitist Power and Mandated Vaccine, the Genetic study, and Ecological Factors.

2.1. *A victorious people’s war on COVID-19 in China*

There are allegations of cover up, espionage and counter-espionage within the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic entanglement between US and China, even illegal trade in a specimen of virus, involving a shootout with a vial shattered. What captured the world’s attention has been the declaration of the people’s war on the corona virus, rallying and sending 30,000 medical personnel from the 29 provinces of China to staff the hospitals in Wuhan, the building of the Huashenshan hospital with 1000 beds, completed within a record time of 10 days, to accommodate the infected. Residents in Wuhan are videoed, cheering each other to keep the spirit up with chants of “Jia You” or “add oil,” during the massive lockdown of 40 cities that has proven to be effective. At the same time, there is a boom for the tech-sector, driven by innovation and technology, with the use of AI technology to monitor the movements of residents infected with Covid-19, with an unprecedented surge of 1.1 million hits to connect with doctors with the help of smartphone apps. Shenzhen as the Silicon Valley (Huawei, DJI, Tencent Holding) is on target to realize the 2025 dream of “made in China”. Social media has carried the moving scene of Wuhan residents, bidding farewell to frontline health workers after 53 critical days.

2.2. *A Xenophobic Orientalism*

According to Marius Meinhof, a German sociologist of the University of Bielefeld, the orientalism evolves from xenophobic racism that occasions blatant accusation of the Chinese for “the outbreak due to cultural traits, such as eating bat soup, and now were going to spread it to the

West.”⁷ Then racism morphs into a second attitude known as the “new orientalism” that recourses to the lens of suspicion, using a liberal/authoritarian framework, debating with vehemence the demise of the communist regime while casting total suspicion on all information released from China. This framework suffers from blurring political critique with racism, equating the epidemic with “Chinese virus”, “Made in China”, with the Wall Street Journal publishing a demeaning article entitled “The real sick man of Asia” which resurfaced the hurtful memory of the colonial invasion of Chinese territories after 1895, including the genocidal invasion launched by Japan.⁸

Now the west is witnessing a third attitude called “colonial temporality” that uses the lens of modern/backward. This lens shores up an inflated arrogance of the west, priding itself on a more advanced medical and healthcare system that can handle the outbreak far better than the developing world, only to realize how unprepared they were in the UK, US, Spain, Italy and France. Unfortunately, “This, too, contained an element of *othering* and thus made it implausible to perceive COVID 19 as something immediately threatening Europe.”⁹

Most lamentably, this othering of the virus also leads to a selective implementation of the authoritarian solution, imposing the lockdown and self-quarantine at home, without the accompanying measures of mass testing, home-to-home follow-up by medics, strong protection of healthcare workers, with provision of apartment and daily food and needs, pulling of resources, ranging from facilities to medical personnel to curb the outbreak, and swift interventions from the central government. Such biased selection of the “Chinese solution” without an openness to learn from China regarding the strategies that ensure success of curbing the outbreak is perilous to the wellbeing of the populace.

2.3. *High Frequency Electropollution*

Little known is the narrative on immunotoxicity due to electromagnetic field (EMF). Paul Doyon, a researcher and building biologist, postulated the relation of the outbreak of COVID-19 to the high radiation of the 5G antennas.¹⁰ As early as 1985, Dr. Robert O. Becker warned of the hazard perils of electropollution.¹¹ In the 2007 and 2012 republished Bioinitiative Report and updated in 2014 and 2019, stated that the electromagnetic fields and wireless technologies (radiofrequency radiation) posed perilous risk to health with “damage to DNA and genes, effects on memory, learning, behavior, attention, sleep disruption, cancer and neurological diseases like Alzheimer’s disease. New safety standards are urgently needed for protection against EMF and wireless exposures that now appear everywhere in daily life.”¹² In 2020, the global surface will be dotted with about 600,000 5G base stations, with 130,000 in China, 75,000 in South Korea, and 10,000 in the U.S.¹³ Wuhan alone boosts “3,000 macro base stations and 27,000 micro base stations” and the “5G network will cover every corner of the city and be available at an affordable price.”¹⁴ The fact that China launched the 5G network, just less than two months before the COVID-19 outbreak, left researchers with a quest to seek the relation, if any, between this 5G wireless radiation and the outbreak of COVID-19.

2.4. *Genetic Study, UK and Germany*

The Archaeogenetics Research community at Cambridge, UK and Germany of Peter Forester¹⁵ and colleagues have used the phylogenetic network analysis or PNAS study to help identify undocumented COVID-19 infection sources.¹⁶ The researchers used data from 1,001 “virus genomes sampled from across the world between 24 December 2019 and 4 March

2020”which revealed “three distinct “variants” of COVID-19, consisting of clusters of closely related lineages, which they label ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’.”¹⁷

The closest type of COVID-19 to the one found in bats in Wuhan is known as type ‘A’, “the original human virus genome” or a “founder event” in Wuhan, or “resistance against this type of COVID-19 outside East Asia. Surprisingly, the city’s predominant strand was type ‘B’ and was prevalent in patients of East Asia which “could be immunologically or environmentally adapted to a large section of the East Asian population” but requires further mutation outside of East Asia which seems slower than elsewhere at this initial phase of the pandemic.¹⁸ Americans who have lived in Wuhan carry the mutated version of ‘A’ and in patients in the US and Australia. Found in early patients from France, Italy, Sweden and England is the major European type belonging to the ‘C’ variant. This strand is absent from the study’s Chinese mainland sample, but seen in Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea. The PNAS research further indicates “that one of the earliest introductions of the virus into Italy came via the first documented German infection on January 27, 2020, including “another early Italian infection route was related to a “Singapore cluster”.”¹⁹

The PNAS method has the edge of “accurately traced established infection routes: the mutations and viral lineages joined the dots between known cases” and “could be applied to the very latest coronavirus genome sequencing to help predict future global hot spots of disease transmission and surge” and more poignantly, help to “identify undocumented COVID-19 infection sources, which can then be quarantined to contain further spread of the disease worldwide.”²⁰

2.5. *Ecological Destruction of Buffers*

Ebola, Sars, Mers and Covid-19 are among the three quarters of the new or emerging viral zoonotic diseases that originate from animals which subsequently infect humans. The natural habitat of animals acts as a buffer zone between the virus-carrying and/or infected animals and humankind. Human activities, from large scale agro-plantations, extractive industries, expanding industrial zones and residential areas, have drastically reduced the animals’ habitats, shrinking the available the “wilderness” areas, removing the protective zone humans need, according to Dr. Thomas Gillespie of Emory University.²¹ In the face of their habitats’ destruction, species crowded together in degraded environments while cities, with the population explosion, are herding more residents in unhealthy slums. Not only is humankind turning the world into “an immense pile of fifth” (LS 21) but also impoverished ghettos, most hazardous to health, in the face of genocidal pandemics like Covid-19.

Arguably human actions like deforestation, large scale chemical agro-farming, toxification of sources of water, emission of toxic pollutants into the atmosphere from industries, have adversely impacted climate change. The rise of zoonotic illness, according to Aaron Bernstein, director of Harvard University’s Center for Climate Health and the Global Environment, is attributable to climate change, especially when “air-cleaning forests are replaced by large “steakhouse” livestock farms, which in turn serve as a source for the spillover of infections from animals to people.”²² Inversely, the polluted air is lethal during respiratory disease pandemic like Covid-19 for humans have turned clear air into “a chain smoker of diesel fumes and CO₂” which lowers our immunity.²³

“Health endemics like coronavirus are proof of the destruction of the forests and the climate, and we will continue to fight against deforestation and related viruses, for the balance of the planet,” Dinamam Tuxá said.²⁴

2.6. *Pharma-Elitist Power, Mandated Vaccine*

The coronavirus (CV) pandemic exposes the global asymmetrical power relation and its relation to the global economy. A top MIT Biological Engineer, Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai asserted that the Deep State has allegedly exploited CV for self-preservation of their elitist power and implementation of their globalist-imperialist agenda at the service of crony capitalism.²⁵ The Deep State is linked to the Gates Foundation, Mark Zuckerberg, Clinton Global Initiative, which congealed with the UN to “manipulate the economies, suppress dissent, and push for Mandated medicine,” Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai tweeted.²⁶

The pharmaceutical conglomerates and vaccine manufacturing industries will benefit from this fear-mongering about CV which has been pedaled as the “bogeyman” that only vaccine can eradicate. Dr. Shiva remarks, “vaccines are pure profit, no risk, no liability... use this vaccine for the common good. It is an amazing recipe for fascism.”²⁷ Already, this vaccine, he adds, is being administered in Denmark, aided by the police and military. The giant pharmaceutical corporations, aided by the media, the lawyers and lobbyists, will advertise the vaccine as a “savior” which will be made mandatory for all the citizens. The vaccine will not stop the virus replication process but will destroy an immune-compromised people, living on diets with high sugar and salt, victimized by dirty air, dirty water and dirty food. What is needed is an uncompromising focus on beefing up the people’s immune-health, through consumption of dark rich vegetables and fruits for Vitamin A, exposure to the sun for Vitamin D, and Vitamin C from consuming garlic and onions.²⁸ In the final analysis, Dr. Shiva advocates a choice either for “truth, freedom and health” or “power, profit and control.”²⁹

3. *Wither the Church?*

The solitary figure of Pope Francis, braving the pouring rain, as twilight darkened the sky, addressing an empty, deserted St. Peter’s square, is iconic of the crises Christianity and all the religions are experiencing. With the lockdown ordered by the civil authorities (should it not questioned the government) , most if not all the places of worship are atypically lockdowned and desolately empty. With the economy at a standstill, finance from Lenten appeals, mass collections and intentions, has drastically diminished for funding agencies, the parishes and dioceses, and those ecclesial organizations and movements. Jim McManus opined that:

we owe each other a duty in justice to do everything we can not to spread this infection ... God may act, but expects us to act, too. And that action should be in service and witness... St John of the Cross once said that we should be able to pray anywhere not just in a fine cathedral... actions of care and service to the most vulnerable must be joined with acting to protect other beings infected or dying for treatment being available, by staying at home so far as possible.³⁰

At the same time, McManus also admitted that he and many in his inbox mail “felt the pain of not being able to enter a church and pray.”³¹ A letter to the editor of *Catholic Herald*, Tony

Meehan captured the sentiments of not a few Catholics: “A new force we take to be more authoritative than the commands of God has brought down a barrier, locked a gate, raised a drawbridge between the altar and its people.”³²

The papal curia, the curial discateries, all religious congregations’ curia in Rome, and, most episcopal curia, have gone digital/virtual, livestreaming their weekdays-masses, especially during this year’s Holy week.³³ Social media, like GoToMeeting, Skype and Zoom are the most expedient means of mass communication, even online meetings and teachings for religious educational programs. Online streaming of the liturgy of the hours, novena, rosary, and the daily Ignatian retreat and short courses have proven to be most helpful to sustain the faith communities, in the religious houses, nursing homes and families.

Pope Francis aptly summarizes the mood of the People of God: “I’m living this as a time of great uncertainty. It’s a time for inventing, for creativity.”³⁴ This creativity is demonstrated in the livestreaming of his 7 a.m. mass which many people follow and appreciate, as well as the addresses he has given, and “the March 27 event in St Peter’s Square. Hence, too, the step-up in activities of the office of papal charities responding to the needs of the sick and hungry.”³⁵ This creativity has closed the physical distance between the ordained ministry with the baptized community of believers in the house-churches.

Though commendable that some governments priorities health and livelihood over economic growth, Pope Francis remains critical of the prevalent neo-Malthusianism the influences “the way people are selected according to their utility or productivity: the throwaway culture...“from the beginning to the end of life” in the use “of prenatal selection” and the observable absence of “Down’s Syndrome people on the street when the tomograph [scan] detects them, they are binned” and the “culture of euthanasia, either legal or covert, in which the elderly are given medication but only up to a point” and the “homeless continue to be homeless” or “put in quarantine. And the hotels were empty. But the homeless cannot go to a hotel.”³⁶ Hence the Pope urges Christian families, the *Domus Ecclesia*, to go beyond such utilitarianism by “opening up new horizons, opening windows, opening transcendence toward God and toward people, and in creating new ways of being at home.”³⁷

4. Wither God ?

4.1 *A God asleep.* Many believers are wondering, “Is God asleep on the boat of planet earth during this pandemic?” (Mk 4:35-38)³⁸ Perhaps, the God purportedly asleep, is allowing nature/virus, in the words of Arundhati Roy, to disrupt and mock “immigration controls, biometrics, digital surveillance, and every other kind of data analytics, and struck hardest – thus far – in the richest, most powerful nations of the world, bringing the engine of capitalism to a juddering halt.”³⁹ Moreover, this virus has made “the mighty kneel” and acknowledge that this tragic rupture that has befallen us and “offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves” so that we can break with the past and courageously walk through a portal, with little luggage, “ready to imagine another world” and “ready to fight for it.”⁴⁰

Is not Mother Earth not exposing “our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities” and “shows us how we have allowed to become dull and feeble the very things that nourish, sustain and strengthen our lives and our communities.”⁴¹ The viral pandemic is a time of our judgement as humankind, certainly “a time to choose what matters and what passes

away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others”⁴²

4.2. *Kairos of the Spirit*. The Spirit blows where she wills (Jn 3:8). God’s Creative Spirit (*Rûah Elohim*) is blowing gently yet mightily, across the face of the earth, inflaming hearts, setting the world on fire, “*impassionating*” sojourners with the spirit of contemplativity, flooding hearts with inner strength, outflowing from within, arousing the spirit of sacrificial and self-forgetful services at the frontline and solidarity at the margin, and prophetic courage of speaking truth to the powers.

4.2.1. *Contemplativity*. A contemplative spirit has enabled many sojourners to behold the glory of God that is manifested in nature – in the still silence and solitude of the mesmerizing morning, thick with the aromatic scent of flowers in the refreshing air, the melodious chirping of the birds before sunrise, the countless dew-droplets on the blades of the grass and shrubs, the gentle flow of the river water, the golden moon lingering in the night sky, the breaking of dawn at the horizon, the flights of innumerable species of birds in the sky, the ducks afloat on the water, and the dancing of peacocks at the traffic crossings. All these sightings enable not a few Ignatian sojourners to exclaim, “All of you are the glory [*doxa*] of God.”⁴³

4.2.2. *Inner strength*. Many sojourners have moved from the outer world of glittering neon lights, noise pollution and preoccupation with their smart gadgets, and stepped into their inner sanctuaries, untapped the springs of interiority, and drunk of the water that gradually quenches the unheeded/quenched thirst in the parched deserts of their hearts. The inner sanctuaries are now lit up with thousands lights of calm, compassion, courage, joy, justice, hope, peace and reconciliation, within themselves, in the homes, and within the extended family and clan.

4.2.3. *Sacrificial spirit*. What abounds in this special time is the spirit of sacrificial services. Pope Francis remarks, “We can look to so many exemplary companions for the journey, who, even though fearful, have reacted by giving their lives: doctors, nurses, supermarket employees, cleaners, caregivers, providers of transport, law and order forces, volunteers, priests, religious men and women,” even emergency relief workers who ensure that food supplies are transported to the migrants and refugees, hurdled in makeshift shelters and camps.⁴⁴ Families in the neighborhood have reached out to those elderly, to run errands for them so that they have sufficient food and medicine at home. Countless of agencies, Churches mosques and temples, have set up shelters for the homeless and the migrants who have decide to walk home after they lost their jobs in the major cities after the lockdown, only to return to homes where hunger and starvation await them, and also temporary centers for offering relief-aids to the families who have filed for bankruptcy, having lost their small and medium-size enterprises when the local-global economy came to a standstill.

4.2.4. *Spirit of Prophetic Voice*. God’s Spirit has emboldens critics like Marius Meinhof to decry colonial temporality of the west and Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai to speak the truth to the powers behind the Deep State. From Asia, the President of the FABC, Cardinal Charles Bo, SDB, has become an emblematic voice in his address: “Let me be clear,” the cardinal asserts, “it is the CCP that has been responsible, not the people of China... But it is the repression, the lies and the corruption of the CCP that are responsible... the CCP ... is a threat to the world...this regime is responsible, through its criminal negligence and repression, for the pandemic sweeping through our streets today... For the sake of our common humanity, we must not be afraid to hold this regime to account.”⁴⁵

5. Mystique with a personal mystagogy

This lockdown has foregrounded the emergence of the era of ‘Mysticalocene’.⁴⁶ The silence and solitude have disposed many sojourners to the promptings of *Rûah Elohim* in the age of ‘Pneumatocene’ to plummet the mystery of life in the Cosmos.⁴⁷ I feel like a ‘stardust-sojourner’ [‘ss’], taking the next small steps in this nurturing mystique of life which I treasure since 2017. I find myself like a neophyte under the illuminating ‘guru-ship’ of *Rûah Elohim*. What is unique in this sacred sojourn is this ‘new shift’ in my experience of being ‘tutored’ in the presence of the Triune God to understand further about Trinitarian Cosmicism⁴⁸ which enhances my personal communion not only with the celestial hosts of ancestors, angels and saints but with the countless stardust-particles in the Cosmos.⁴⁹ At the same time, I gained a further understanding of the close relation between the outpouring of God’s spirit and the renewal of the face of the earth.⁵⁰ I also have grown in a deeper knowledge of the meaningfulness of the mantra that I embody and offer which I begin two weeks ago.⁵¹ I repeat this mantra as I jog in the early morning so that this mantra acquires a deeper felt-sense each passing day.

Easter Saturday, April 11, 2020. St. Thomas Moore Chapel. Campion Hall. At the 8.15pm Easter Vigil mass, in listening the first reading Gen 1:1, 26-31 and contemplating on how God’s Spirit is fashioning the Cosmos into being, I could visualize the planet earth inflamed with fire. This vivid image reminded me of the tongues of fire in Acts 2: 13 and the 35th Jesuit General Congregation, Decree 2, “A Fire That Enkindles Other Fires: Rediscovering our Charism” and how Ignatius of Loyola talked about inflaming the world (*Ite Inflammate Omnia*) with God’s spirit of love.⁵² May the fire of God’s Spirit that, with all the prayers of all the believers of all faiths, consume the systemic evil, the sacrilegious wickedness in human hearts, the viral, genocidal toxicity and lethality of this pandemic that contaminate the air around the earth.

Easter Sunday. April 12, 2020. Sitting in the lotus position, visualizing myself in the presence of the Triune God with the celestial host of Mother Mary, all the angels, saints, all the renowned and reputable chiefs, mystics, sages, shamans of all faiths, we then turn our attention to the planet earth, at a distance. In unison of heart and mind, we “rain down” the creative and liberating power of God’s Spirit that inflames the earth from within that breaks forth and consume the infected and polluted surface of the earth, outpouring God’s Creative Spirit that outflows in the hearts of individuals, families, communities, global village as compassion, justice, sacred sustainability of life and livelihood of all at the frontline and margin in every continent on earth.

Easter Monday. April 3, 2020. As I jogged along the bank of the River Thames, all of nature, with all the houses on my left and right, the chirping birds, the ducks in the flowing water, are all exclaiming with what exudes from my heart: “*All of you are manifesting God’s doxa !! You are the glory of God. I am the glory of God. We are both the glory of God !!! I love you. I adore you. I worship you. We are all sacred and divine in God. Alleluia !! Alleluia !!*”⁵³

The emptiness of the public spaces has facilitated this new mystagogy of overflowing the Trinitarian love to inflame Mother Earth which in turn facilitates the outflow of liberating love for all interrelated kinds and our beloved Mother Earth.

Conclusion

The spatial emptiness is metaphoric of the places of worship of all the religions. Emptiness, occasioned by the inability to deal with the deafening silence within, leads to boredom, frustration and even panic. The crisis due to the economic standstill and the emptiness of the lockdown churches have both contributed to the financial crises of the churches, dioceses and funding agencies in the global North, and monetary insecurities of the ecclesial movements dependent on such financial institutions.

Yet the emptiness without has opened individuals to the “transcendental stirrings” of God’s Creative Spirit which outflows within the hearts, deepening in sojourners a sense of contemplative interiority, sacrificial services, and prophetic boldness. More poignantly, this outflow represents the living fountain that nourishes and nurtures a mystique of life steeped in Trinitarian Cosmicism that intensifies communion with the celestial host in the presence of the Triune God who is *Rûah Elohim*. This Creative *Rûah* is fluid, slipping through closed doors, sips into the interstices of power, becomes food for the jobless and homeless, the migrants and refugees.

Indeed the spatial emptiness in the *chronos* pales in significance compared to the boundless outflow of the liberating creativity in the *Kairos*.

¹Data from <https://www.google.com/search?q=What+is+the+current+statistics+of+Covid+19+globally&rlz=1C5CHFAenPH852PH854&oq=What+is+the+current+statistics+of+Covid+19+globally+&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i22i30i457j0i22i30.13461j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>, accessed December 18, 2020.

² “IMF says ‘worst recession since Great Depression’ is likely,” <https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/imf-worst-recession-great-depression-200414125253286.html>, accessed April 15, 2020.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Al Jazeera Live English News, April 14, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/live/>, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁵ “Coronavirus could push half a billion people into poverty: Oxfam,” https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/coronavirus-push-billion-people-poverty-oxfam-200408192048642.html?utm_source=website&utm_medium=article_page&utm_campaign=read_more_links, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁶ “Statement by IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on Nigeria.” April 7, 2020. <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/07/pr20137-nigeria-statement-by-imf-managing-director-kristalina-georgieva-on-nigeria>

⁷ Marius Menhoff, “Othering the virus,” <https://discoversociety.org/2020/03/21/othering-the-virus/>, accessed April 10, 2020.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Paul Doyon is a Building Biology Practitioner (BBP) and Electromagnetic Radiation Specialist (EMRS) with the [International Institute for Building Biology and Ecology \(IBBE\)](#). He is also the founder of the website [EMF Refugee](#). See his article, uploaded on March 5, 2020, “China, 5G, And The Wuhan Coronavirus: The Emperor’s New Virus,” <https://www.electricsense.com/5g-coronavirus/>, accessed April 11, 2020.

¹¹ See Robert O. Becker, “The Body Electric,” (New York: Quill, 1985).

¹² The BioInitiative: Press Release. (2007, 2012), <https://bioinitiative.org/media/press-releases/>

¹³ See A. Weissberger, dated Oct. 31st, 2019, “China to launch 5G mobile networks on Friday with a huge government backed push.” IEEE ComSoc (Communications Society) Technology

Blog. <https://techblog.comsoc.org/2019/10/31/china-to-launch-5g-mobile-networks-on-friday-with-a-huge-government-backed-push/>, accessed April 6, 2020.

¹⁴ General Office of Hubei Provincial People's Government. (April 16th, 2018). "5G network coming to Wuhan." http://en.hubei.gov.cn/news/newslst/201804/t20180416_1275769.shtml

¹⁵ See Peter Foster is a fellow of the McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research Institute at Cambridge, as well as the University's Institute of Continuing Education.

¹⁶ The phylogenetic network analysis or PNAS study conducted by Peter Forester and team was first pioneered in New Zealand as early as 1979, and then developed further by German mathematicians in the 1990s and caught the attention of Professor Colin Renfrew, founder of the first Archaeogenetics research groups in the world at the University of Cambridge, UK.

¹⁷ See "COVID-19: genetic network analysis provides 'snapshot' of pandemic origins," <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/covid-19-genetic-network-analysis-provides-snapshot-of-pandemic-origins>, accessed April 11, 2020. Peter Forester and team's findings are published today in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*. The software used in the study, as well as classifications for over 1,000 coronavirus genomes and counting, is available free at www.fluxus-technology.com

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See Jonathan Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," *The Tablet*, 4 April (2020), 8-9.

²² Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," 8.

²³ Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," 9.

²⁴ Emilee Gilpin, "COVID-19 crisis tells world what Indigenous Peoples have been saying for thousands of years." <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/03/24/news/covid-19-crisis-tells-world-what-indigenous-peoples-have-been-saying-thousands-years?fbclid=IwAR27iO9h4-UpTrG1hBDRHoaTdErmdYXH2p3l9Hayqct7J2Xxn4ZCMRSIgoU>, accessed April 16, 2020.

²⁵ See Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai, MT Ph.D. In biological engineering and the 14-boy inventor of Email has unabashedly admitted his status as a Dalit who hailed by Mumbai but immigrated to the US. See his [twitter.com/realDonaldTrump...](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump) and the Feature Interview with Dr. Shiva, "Top Doctor Exposes Everything The Deep State is Trying to Hide About CV," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcE73gyfij4>, accessed April 15, 2020.

²⁶ Shiva, "Top Doctor Exposes Everything The Deep State is Trying to Hide About CV..."

²⁷ Shiva, "Top Doctor Exposes Everything The Deep State is Trying to Hide About CV..."

²⁸ Onions of all colors (including white) are good sources of vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium and folate, while garlic is rich in vitamin C, vitamin B6, thiamin, potassium, calcium, phosphorous, copper and manganese.

²⁹ Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," 8.

³⁰ Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," 9.

³¹ Tulloch, "Nothing can ever be the same again," 9.

³² Tony Meehan, "The Lack of Mass is Hard to Bear," *Catholic Herald*, April 10, 2020, 27.

³³ In 2020, the season of Lent for the (Latin) Catholic Church began on Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020, with 5 weeks of Lent, culminating in the Easter on Sunday April 12, 2020.

³⁴ Austen Ivereigh, "Pope Francis on Living with COVID-19: 'A Time of Great Uncertainty,'" April 8, 2020, <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/time-great-uncertainty>, accessed April 10, 2020.

³⁵ Ivereigh, "Pope Francis on Living with COVID-19: 'A Time of Great Uncertainty...'"

³⁶ Ivereigh, "Pope Francis on Living with COVID-19: 'A Time of Great Uncertainty...'"

³⁷ Ivereigh, "Pope Francis on Living with COVID-19: 'A Time of Great Uncertainty...'"

³⁸ Pope Francis aptly use the "asleep" metaphor in his "Urbi Et Orbi Blessing," Extraordinary Moment of Prayer, presided over by Pope Francis, Sagrato of St. Peter's Basilica, Friday, 27 March, 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/urbi/documents/papa-francesco_20200327_urbi-et-orbi-epidemia.html, accessed April 15, 2020.

³⁹ Arundhati Roy, "The Pandemic is a portal," https://amp.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca?segmentid=acee4131-99c2-09d3-a635-873e61754ec6&twitter_impression=true, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁴⁰ Roy, "The Pandemic is a portal."

⁴¹ Roy, "The Pandemic is a portal."

⁴² Pope Francis, "Urbi Et Orbi Blessing," Extraordinary Moment of Prayer, presided over by Pope Francis, Sagrato of St. Peter's Basilica, Friday, 27 March, 2020.

⁴³ I felt inspired to chant this mantra as of April 3, 2020, when I went out for my morning jog. I came upon this mantra after I preached about God's Doxa in my homily on April 2, 2020, at the mass in the St. Thomas Moore Chapel, Campion Hall, Oxford, UK.

⁴⁴ Pope Francis, "Urbi Et Orbi Blessing," Friday, 27 March, 2020.

⁴⁵ Cardinal Bo speaks the unspeakable," <https://www.ucanews.com/news/cardinal-bo-speaks-the-unspeakable/87714>, accessed April 15, 2020.

⁴⁶ I become aware that the age of 'mysticalocene' has never been totally lost from human civilization which abounds in great mystics and sages. But this era has been ostensibly eclipsed by the age of 'Anthropocene' and what Duncan Kelly called the 'Capitalocene', two periods that illustrate the conjoined histories of capitalism and ecological exploitation as Jason Moore alluded to in his books: *Capitalism in the Web of life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: 2015); Jason Moore, (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Oakland, CA, 2016); also see Duncan Kelly, Chapter 4 'Ecological Debts' in *Politics And The Anthropocene* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2019), 68.

⁴⁷ In prayer on April 16, 2020, I felt that the era of mysticalocene is very much the age of *Rûah Elohim* that blows in the Cosmos, over the face of Mother Earth, gently and mightily, thus recreating the Cosmos to become a New Creation.

⁴⁸ With my prayer experiences thus far, I formally named this experience related to the Trinitarian Cosmicism on March 31, 2020.

⁴⁹ Diarmuid O' Murchu opines that the Cosmos with the innumerable stardusts-particles therein move towards 'an enlarged horizons and even flow in patterns, albeit chaotic sometimes, toward a preferred sense of direction' in his book, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit: Science, Religion, and Indigenous Spirituality*, New York: Orbis Books, 2012, 46, 73.

⁵⁰ This is akin the Contemplation of Pentecost in the 5th Week of the Spiritual Exercises on the Trinitarian Conversation on sending the Third Person into the world.

⁵¹ This mantra has further additions of the glory/doxa dimension as of April 3, 2020.

⁵² *Ite Inflammate Omnia* is a response to Luke 12:49, when Christ said, "I have come to cast fire on the earth, would that it were already kindled." St. Ignatius, responding to this biblical injunction, often ended his letter to Jesuits going to the missions with the exhortation, *ite inflammate omnia* – "go set the world on fire." This refrain is commonly found in the mission literature of many Jesuit colleges and universities today, for just as St. Ignatius wanted everyone to be set afire with passion and zeal for the Kingdom of God, we continually exhort our faculty, students, and alumni to be agents for change in the world, men and women for others. See Mark Bosco: *Ite Inflammate Omnia: Setting the World on Fire with Learning*, <http://www.conversationsmagazine.org/web-features/2016/ite-inflammate-omnia-setting-the-world-on-fire-with-learning>, accessed April 16, 2020.

⁵³ I added the Alleluia Alleluia to my mantra in my morning jog on April 16, 2020.

ENABLING THE RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED DURING LOCKDOWN

An Examination on the Means and Ways of Enshrining the
Disability Rights in Third World Countries During COVID-19 Pandemic
Period and Its Aftermath

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Abstract

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has brought all walks of day today lives of people to a standstill, there is no room to neglect inherent human rights of the people. The people with disabilities, considered as a vulnerable group of people due to biological complications that they face since birth or from a certain point of their lifespan have been compelled to use extraordinary facilities to cope up with their regular activities. Most countries have compelled to implement safety precautions in order to extinguish the spread of the outbreak making the lifestyles of the disabled people even worse. At a time when the statistics indicates that most of the disabled individuals who are trapped either in their homes or other institutions face specific challenges in terms of accessing medical and other facilities, education, employments and health-related information even in developed nations with higher standards of social protection and disability rights frameworks compared to that of the third world or the developing countries, the situation of disabled persons in the developing world go without words. Judicial pronouncements are less likely to be found on this area and the cavity is only to be filled with the unbinding health guidelines, monitors, and press communiques of international and non-international stakeholders who are involved in disability rights movement. This study aims to examine the direct, indirect and technical violations of the rights of the persons with disabilities in lockdown and post lockdown periods during the pandemic and inclusive safety measures which could be implemented so as to ease the frozen lives of the disabled people back to normalcy. Furthermore, this study will suggest several mechanisms to face the specific challenges that developing nations need to overcome in catering the needs of the people with disabilities battling with the prevailing socio-economic conditions arisen due to COVID 19.

Keywords: Disability rights, COVID-19 pandemic, prevailing socioeconomic conditions, third world countries, inclusive safety measures

Introduction

The terminological interpretation of disability has been widely inferred with the advent of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. At the very outset, it defines the people with disability as those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.¹ This upheaval of dispositions worsened by the discrimination and lack of accessibility made the people with disabilities a vulnerable² group

among the society ranging from that of the so-called developed nations³ to the less developed nations. Though the concept of third world is misinterpreted and abused leading them to much controversies⁴, the countries which are in the regions of African, Asian and Latin American isles ensued with the decolonization process which took place in the last century would be encompassed in this paper as its focal.

The Travaux Préparatoires of the United Nations Convention On the Rights Of People With Disabilities⁵, succinctly argues the fact that the people with disabilities require specific reservations in par with their abled counterpart in terms of the economic, social and political arenas. However, the prevailing misconfigures in the Asian and African regions which are inherently identical in nature to their geopolitics incidentally culminated far-reaching and crosscutting effects on the people with disabilities. Accordingly, this study addresses both academically and politically digressed dilemma of direct, indirect and technical violations of the rights of persons with disabilities during lockdown and the aftermath and would suggest mechanisms to confront the peculiar challenges faced by the developing nations in catering the needs of the people with disabilities.

Methodology

The initial idea of this study was originated as a consequence of various personal and accumulated experience on the peculiar challenges faced by the people with disabilities during COVID-19 pandemic. Though the developing third world do not share common characteristics in their COVID-19 response mechanisms; this study transcends beyond a mere comparative of the challenges that people with disabilities face during lockdown in their respective countries. It is a qualitative analysis of the responses of the people with disabilities living in the third world developing countries on such challenges leading to suggestions of potential change to meet the minimally expected increased standards of living. It may seem that the present issue has been addressed by previous academics and policy makers, yet the findings of the desk research proved the hypothesis negative. The fact that most of the developing nations lacking a central database containing primary data of the people with disabilities add to this major cavity. The available little amount of literature also offers slender assistance to the solution of the problem this study is concerned with. Therefore, considering the possibilities of receiving a rich understanding of the insights of the research problem, one-on-one interviews and questionnaires were used to gather the qualitative observations of the people with disabilities, activists and policy makers on the issue. In view of the probability for reduced generalizability, a wide range of disability activists and movements operating in Asian, African and Latin American developing countries were consulted. Individuals with disabilities from diverse socio-economic backgrounds were also interviewed for several weeks to the effect of disclosing perceptions of the persons with disabilities on the measures that were taken by the governmental and non-governmental sector of their respective countries. Case study research was also performed on peculiar incidents that took place in Sri Lanka where the rights of the people with disabilities were severely violated. It should also be mentioned that all the interviews were carried out during the lockdown via telephone, WhatsApp calls and Zoom meetings.

A Brief Overview to the Plight of the People with Disabilities During the Pandemic in the Context of the Third World

It has been estimated that One billion people, or 15% of the world's population experience some form of disability according to the estimates of the World Bank⁶ out of which 80% of the disabled people are assumed to be living in developing nations⁷, the condition of the people living with disabilities in those regions cannot be segregated a dichotomy in comparison to the susceptibilities faced by the general public in those countries. In addition, the magnitude of the disabled population in those areas cannot be isolated in terms of realizing equal rights to the international community. The abrupt lockdown of the countries with the spread of the pandemic sequenced diverse and novel yet challenging issues. The governments of those countries which are almost inefficient, bureaucratic and politicized in their inherent nature, are still struggling in their full swings to continue internal and external political and economic stability. The growing rate of unemployment, lethal decrease of foreign remittances and export income are the key indicators which demonstrate the gravity of the present situation to which those governments are perilously confronted with. This backdrop should also carefully be taken into account in examining the pathetic plight to which the people living with disabilities in those countries have to confront amidst the countless issues in their day today lives. It was found that the people living with disabilities in Asian, African and Latin-American regions had to face many repercussions amidst the pandemic and the state of lockdown. Food, shelter and medicine were the key essentials that were in acute need to those communities within the period of lockdown. The people who were incapable of mobilization as a result of their ailments seemed to have been deprived of the expected care and support which was indeed a dire necessity to live up to the minimum standards. For instance, wheelchair users who are incapable of going out of the house were deprived of the minimum financial allowance provided by the Government in Sri Lanka and the deaf community were barely aware of such initiative which could make their lives easier since the news and other announcements were not communicated in the sign language. In addition, people using sign language were incapable of using it due to the compulsory use of face mask which also barred their way of understanding other people's words through lip reading. However, the efforts of good Samaritans played by the disabled peoples' organizations, civil societies and governments in some instances by utilizing the minimal disposable resources at those particular times.

The stories of the people with disabilities in third world do not unlock as the easing of lockdown. The social distancing methods which still are being in practice of educational institutions, places of employment and public places such as hospitals, public transport, etc. fermented extra burden and exerted an additional pressure on the people with disabilities. As the anticipated standards of accessibility were not met in those countries due to the prevailing conditions, the assistance of persons without disabilities either within the families or workplace or educational institutions has become an intrinsic applicability for the people with disabilities. In some cases, such assistance is extremely essential due the status of some certain disabilities. Nevertheless, social distancing policies amply hindered the disability related individuals whose attendant concerns are part of the socioeconomic lives and derivatives of the people with disabilities perplexed inviting chaos and uncertainties of the lives of the disabled communities.

The process of reduction of labor as a part of cost-cutting considerations also fall short the expectations of the employment of the people with disabilities since they become a vulnerable group of employees who have promptly been chosen to be expelled. In the meantime, the odd jobs and irregular workmanships which have become the general source of income of the people with

disabilities have also been critically hampered by the prevailing social circumstances. Employers in some countries have continued to proceed in their work and have taken steps to fire the employees who are not attending to work. This measure has also resulted in many disabled employees being fired from their job even without proper payment for the days that they served for the employers. The lack of social insurance schemes and social safety nets as in the developed nations, the predicaments are still worsening.

It was learnt that the endeavors of Samaritan by non-governmental organizations in collaboration with disabled peoples' organizations provided a considerable support to ensue the day today lives of the people with disabilities in compared to the sustenance of the public sector. Lack of related data regarding the location and status of the people with disabilities led to the delays of providing the necessities on one hand while the inefficient handling of the communication of information in accessible and approachable formats to the people i.e. failing to transmit the necessary details specifically in times of lockdown using sign language interpretations, audio files and other accessible ways on the other hand discomforted the lives of the people with hearing impairments. These challenges violate the rights of the people with disabilities protected under Article 11⁸ together with Articles 3,4,5,6,7,9 and many others of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the People with Disabilities. However, it is not reasonable or tactical for governments of the third world countries to play a blame game rather than utilizing responsive framework based on sensitivity and accountability in seeking solutions. It is high time to analyze the aforementioned situation to which most of the disabled people individually and he public as a whole have fallen into and suggest mechanisms to overcome those problems and enshrine the rights of such people in prospective circumstances.

Root Causes of Inequality and Violation of Basic Necessities of the People with Disabilities in Third World Countries.

The study in which the data is drawn from various quarters of the considered geographical stretches analogize the fact that the effectuating conditions confronted by the people with disabilities during the pandemic ensue because of several identical root causes irrespective of the cultural, social and economic stratum of the countries they live in. The main three obstacles which precipitated an extra vulnerability are poverty⁹, lack of communication and insensitivity of the society and in particular the governments of the third world countries. Such insensitivities from educational institutions, neighborhoods, employers and the general public inevitably result in utter discrimination of the disabled community and in some contexts they may lead to bullying and even molesting such disabled individuals during the times of lockdown and its aftermath by various ways. Therefore, those issues should be subjected to deliberate considerations to prevent the vicious and crosscutting exposures of disabled individuals in such critical junctures. The means and ways of overcoming such issues namely the abject poverty, lack of communication and lack of sensitization of the societies towards the disabled must be examined in an esteemed manner which is receptive and resemblant to the socio-economic and demographics of the inhabitants rather than establishing an ad hoc mechanism. The temporary measures such as providing small grants and distributing commodities would more or less not be sufficient and conducive in the long run as such measures would not address the crux of the matter and provide robust solutions to the issues.

The Ways and Means of Overcoming the Challenges Faced by the Persons with Disabilities in Third World During Pandemics.

It is learnt that the people with disabilities in developing world had to face significant issues during the outbreak of COVID-19 entailing extra barricades to their normal lives which are full of intact issues in survival which should be taken into account in order to redress the violations of their rights. The United Nations Convention on The Rights of People with Disabilities can in fact be utilized as the Avant-garde of enshrining the rights based on legal principals of substantive equality¹⁰. An inclusive yet collective mechanism in combination with the governments, international agencies, local disabled persons' organizations and other stakeholders is a requisite rather than temporary measures such as providing subsidies. Long term and short term actions can be suggested to prevent the people with disabilities from being deprived of their rights. The United Nations Organization and other related international bodies working for the people with disabilities along with their local agencies and local civil societies can engage in establishing a constantly updated database containing information such as the nature of disability, special needs emerging from such disability whereabouts, socio-economic conditions and level of dependence of the people with disabilities living in third world countries in order to assist them rapidly in such disasters as such a comprehensive collection of data would immensely contribute to the public institutions and civil societies who are willing to support the people with disabilities in a tailor-made manner for individuals without being delayed. This aforesaid mechanism would enable the relief providers to swiftly reach up the disabled individuals.

The second crucial option would be introducing a medical identification document similar to the hospital communication passport which would be easier for medical staffs in hospitals and other relevant public authorities to identify the people living with disabilities¹¹, in particular those who are suffering with learning disabilities¹². The ideal long term policy that is expected to uplift the standards of lives would be designing and implementing infrastructures and communicational aspects in a universally designed disability-friendly manner through which the personal autonomy and skills in education, social activities and employments can be advanced. The concept of "Universal design" has been provided for under Article 2 of United Nations Convention On the Rights of People with Disabilities as the "means the design of products, environments, programs and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design"¹³. Within a system powered by this concept would not neglect assistive devices for specific groups of persons with disabilities where it is needed. In addition, strong safety nets can also play a significant role in providing the necessary security and care for the people with disabilities who are incapacitated to act independently and preventing from those being victimized to sexual, domestic and other kinds of violence during such crisis times of pandemics like COVID-19 and other disasters due to their state of helplessness.

Conclusion

The pandemic which has been spreading across the globe creating unprecedented yet colossal problems reorganized the thinking patterns and work behavior of the world from top notch level to the grassroots. Whilst it contributed to many inventions, it is noteworthy to adapt those changes acquiescent to the human rights, human dignity and wellbeing of mankind irrespective of gender, raise, skin color, disability and countless other differences. It is common ground that the persons with disabilities with their inherently vulnerable condition of compelling them engage in a constant battle for life had to face additional hardships and face an aggravated gravity of life

struggle with the unexpected adaptations in the society to COVID-19. Persons with disabilities living in third world nations face an inflamed version of this calamitous fate due to the entrenched discrepancies coupled with lack of accessibility and relevant basic necessities when compared to their counterparts in the developed nations. These unique challenges highlighted in this paper should not be oblivion or neglected as the majority of the disabled community consisting a considerable percentage in the worlds' total population have been affected with this phenomenon. Even though the pandemic is not peculiar to many regions such as Asia and Africa where a considerable number the people with disabilities live in, political, social and even academic attention has been deviated from the plight of the disabled people living through pandemics. Therefore, the authors expect that this paper would be an eye-opener for international community, disabled peoples' organizations and other civil society organizations and academics to recognize the catastrophic issues which are faced by the disabled community particularly in the third world countries. Furthermore, this paper invites to contemplate this matter from a new dimension as subservient to a serious and complicated rights based issue rather a superficial charity based stereotype clouded with outdated religious, cultural and social norms as the construed substantive equality is the crux of the matter which needs to be addressed. However, an in-depth study on the matters faced by the individuals with disabilities in respect of education, employment and health related aspects should be carried out under the abled and strict guidance of the international bodies such as United Nations' Organization, World Health Organization, Regional bodies accompanied by state governments and the civil society organizations followed by a continuous updating and assessment of data collected. The short term and long term matters unveiled from such a study should also be examined and the solutions be implemented in a tailor made manner. Such a solicited, well thought and collective mechanism is the way in which the lives of the people with disabilities who are being affected and would be affected in future disasters can be taken back to normalcy shielding the inherent human dignity, equality and all the rights and privileges prescribed in the international treaties and customs reiterating and including the people with disabilities with fraternity in the realm of human family.

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¹¹ A template for such a passport was introduced by Include Me Too named: COVID-19 Hospital Communication Passport: "COVID-19 Hospital Communication Passport," Include Me Too, accessed June 18, 2020, <http://www.includemetoo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Hospital-Communication-Passport.pdf>.

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A Curse or a Vainglory in the COVID-19 Crisis: Donald Trump's Dream Has Come True

Bernard Lee – Canada

Abstract

Pope Francis has suggested a list of 15 diseases of leadership (Hamel, 2015). The original purpose of Pope Francis' speech is to pontificate the members or leaders of the Catholic Church before Christmas in 2014. I stress the relevance of the 15 diseases of leadership, which may arguably lead to ineffective or even worse notorious leaders in our contemporary era. Even famous leaders may have infectious ailments such as bigotry, aloofness, narrowmindedness, triviality, and so on. Leaders need to adhere to the high expectation of the public (Bloom, 2015), more often than not, the public scrutiny (Whalen, 2016), and set up an example for others (Kulesza, 2019), particularly the leader of a country or a large organization. This paper offers a new perspective for leaders to reflect on to make the right decision at the right time, especially during the Covid-19 Crisis.

As of 12 December 2020, the US has tallied 15,548,135 COVID-19 cases with a ghastly death toll of 290,803, driving the US to the top of the world's COVID-19 league table (BBC News, 2020). "America first and only America first," spasmodically chanted by Donald Trump since his presidential campaign (Moore, & Laffer, 2018; Kauffman, 2016; Toma, 2018). Now, his dream has come true as the American coronavirus COVID-19 cases have topped the world. This paper is not intended to explore the 'America first' policy but instead to use Trump to illustrate some of the relevant diseases of leadership pinpointed by Pope Francis (Hamel, 2015). The original purpose of Pope Francis' speech is to pontificate the members or leaders of the Catholic Church such as the Cardinals, Archbishops, and the senior management before Christmas in 2014. It is not uncommon for leaders to have infectious ailments such as bigotry, aloofness, narrowmindedness, triviality, and so on. Leaders need to adhere to the high expectation of the public (Bloom, 2015), more often than not, the public scrutiny (Whalen, 2016), and set up an example for others (Kulesza, 2019), particularly the leader of a country or a large organization.

Throughout her history, the Catholic Church possesses the features of a hefty bureaucratic organization, and yet has been shepherded by abounding adept spiritual and servant leaders. Hence, Pope Francis' deliberation is pertaining to leaders in any organization. Diseased leaders spur diseased followers and, in turn, spark the ailing organization (Cote, 2018). Here I would like to use Donald Trump as an example to illustrate the essential diseases of leadership that hamper the efficacy of a country.

First, the disease of thinking we are immortal, immune, or downright indispensable, (and therefore) neglecting the need for regular check-ups

Donald Trump is gravely infected with superiority symptoms, from narcissism to white supremacy, and from white supremacy to racial divide. 'America first' is Trump's feckless and fustian slogan, which beckons narcissism (Papenfuss, 2020). Two prominent Democratic

presidential candidates, Elizabeth Warren and Beto O'Rourke have brazenly castigated Trump is a white supremacist (Greve & Ho, 2019). Even worse, the fact is that the lion's share of Americans flat out envisage Trump is a white supremacist (Panetta & Hickey, 2019). Besides, Trump is a racist as he articulated it crystal clear that he preferred more immigrants from Norway and Asian countries, but not from African countries (Greve & Ho, 2019). Grievously, Trump unashamedly scoffed the developing countries, i.e., Haiti and El Salvador shitholes (Dawsey, 2018). Along the line, there has been a heap of criticisms about Trump over his racial remarks (Falconer, 2019). Ineptly, Trump is too little, too late to self-critique. Pope Francis suggests the countermeasure to this ailment is to change the mentality: Be a humble servant (Turgel, S. (2015).

Second, there is the disease of mental and (emotional) “petrification”

Trump is in a lack of empathy towards marginalized people and minority such as people of color, as he has lost humility due to his wealthy family background (Bordwell, 2019). Plainly speaking, Trump has no ‘moral compass’ at all when compared with the former President of the US (Moss, 2018). Prior to Obama’s first term of presidency, he has already put empathy as the priority in his book *The Audacity of Hope*, saying that empathy “is at the heart of my moral code, and it is how I understand the Golden Rule—not simply as a call to sympathy or charity, but as something more demanding, a call to stand in somebody else's shoes and see through their eyes (Moss, 2018).”

Contrary to empathy and humility embraced by Obama, Trump’s exorbitant immigration policy is a new fascism that defies the divine ‘universalism’ mentioned in Galatians 3:28 as Trump administration starkly bifurcates families, which contravenes the teachings alluded to Exodus 22:21 (Simon, 2017).

A useful antidote to cure these mental and emotional diseases, as suggested by Pope Francis, is to grapple and sprout the fervor of generosity and altruism.

Third, the disease of poor coordination

When compared with China, the most populated country in the world, the US is by far lacking behind in halting the global pandemic in the US (Campbell & Doshi, 2020). There is a dearth of the adequate leadership of Trump to deal with the crisis (Pilkington & McCarthy, 2020). Trump might have been aware of the pandemic but has yet under-estimated the seriousness of the virus. Besides, Trump has procrastinated to take the proper action starting from the outbreak of the virus in the US (Campbell & Doshi, 2020).

The complete list of 15 diseases of leadership, according to Pope Francis (Hamel, 2015).

1. The disease of thinking we are immortal, immune, or downright indispensable, (and therefore) neglecting the need for regular check-ups.
2. Another disease is excessive busyness.
3. Then there is the disease of mental and (emotional) “petrification.”
4. The disease of excessive planning and functionalism.
5. The disease of poor coordination.
6. There is also a sort of “leadership Alzheimer’s disease.”
7. The disease of rivalry and vainglory.
8. The disease of existential schizophrenia.
9. The disease of gossiping, grumbling, and back-biting.
10. The disease of idolizing superiors.
11. The disease of indifference to others.
12. The disease of a downcast face.
13. The disease of hoarding.
14. The disease of closed circles, where belonging to a clique becomes more powerful than our shared identity.
15. The disease of extravagance and self-exhibition.

That leadership will also require effectively cooperating with China, rather than getting consumed by a war of narratives about who responded better. Little is gained by repeatedly emphasizing the origins of the coronavirus (Campbell & Doshi, 2020).

The virus is universal and not at all foreign in the US (Kessler et al., 2020), Trump and his administration should not shift the world's attention, making tremendous efforts to find fault on China as China has done so well to halt COVID-19. The steps taken by the leaders of the US and China to deal with COVID-19 have been polar opposites. The US postponed to react and subsequently, leading to the current chaotic situation, whereas, China responded expeditiously and decisively to lockdown Wuhan City to contain the virus. Trump has lost the sense of community (Carney, 2019) and the spirit of good-fellowship in handling the global health crisis. Trump's parochialism makes him viciously incompetent to contain the COVID-19. Dreadfully, Trump's last resort is trying to find the scapegoat to downplay his mishandling of the crisis such as triggering a COVID-19 racial war against China to shelter his faults (Server, 2020) and criticizing the World Health Organization for not quick enough to warn the world about the unprecedented virus (Chalfant, & Samuels, 2020).

The countermeasure to this illness is to have the mentality change: the head-in-charge of the organization needs to appreciate the merits of teamwork, and other team members are no worse than the head of the team.

Fourth, the disease of rivalry and vainglory

During his spectacular testimony before the House Committee in February 2019, Michael Cohen, Trump's former personal lawyer declared that Trump is a 'cheat' and alleged Trump as well as his family members committed a series of crimes though after Cohen's hearing, Jay Sekulow, a personal lawyer of Trump, denied Cohen's assertion (Friedman, 2019). Cohen accused his former boss is going to make his brand great but not the country great (Friedman, 2019). In Trump's Tweeter, he aggrandized his golf course in Scotland is the greatest globally (Gilson, 2019). According to Moss (2018), his focus is "on getting his name onto products, buildings, and news stories."

In coping with the COVID-19, Trump displayed his extreme selfishness. In handling the insufficiency of masks in the US, Trump's selfish administration has used the Defense Production Act to compel 3M to stop exporting the ordered surgical masks to other countries and redirected the masks, which were produced in China to the US. As a result, an array of countries complained about it, and Germany is one of the essential complainants (Swanson, Kanno-Youngs, & Haberman, 2020). The antidote to this disease of vainglory of a leader is to consider both own interests and others' interests impartially.

Fifth, the disease of gossiping, grumbling, and back-biting

Cohen further alleged Trump is a con man (Friedman, 2019). Since Trump assumed the President's office, Trump has offered more than 16,000 false or misleading statements (Fact Checker, 2020). Besides, Kessler, Kelly, & Cahlan (2020) pointed out that Trump has intentionally underrated the COVID-19 threats and forged duplicitous statements to Americans.

Chronologically, Kessler et al. (2020) listed out Trump's evident fake Coronavirus claims since the COVID-19 unraveled in the US. Just to name a few.

- On 21 January, Trump claimed, "We have it totally under control." **The truth is**, "within weeks, Washington state would become the center of the outbreak in the US (Kessler et al., 2020)."
- On 10 February, Trump asserted, "Looks like by April, you know, in theory, when it gets a little warmer, it miraculously goes away." **The truth is** that even virus experts are not sure if COVID-19 is seasonal or not (Kessler et al., 2020).
- On 25 February, Trump reiterated, "The level of death with Ebola — you know, at the time, it was a virtual 100%." **The truth is** the fatality rate for people with Ebola was not a virtual 100%, but it varies from 25% to 90% and averages 50% (Kessler et al., 2020).
- On 25 February, Trump falsely declared, "We're very close to a vaccine." **The truth is**, "Health experts say a vaccine for this coronavirus is at least a year away from mass distribution, if not longer (Kessler et al., 2020)."
- On 26 February, Trump boasted, "When you have 15 (cases in the United States), and the 15 within a couple of days is going to be down to close to zero, that's a pretty good job we've done." **The truth is** two weeks after his claim, there were 1,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, and the death toll was 28 (Kessler et al., 2020).
- On 26 February, Trump insisted, "This is a flu. This is like a flu." **The truth is**, "The new coronavirus appears to have a much higher fatality rate than the seasonal flu, possibly 20 times higher (Kessler et al., 2020)."
- On 2 March, Trump affirmed that "But the same vaccine could not work? You take a solid flu vaccine — you don't think that would have an impact or much of an impact on corona?" **The truth is** the drug company executives have explained to Trump that, "The coronavirus was new and therefore could not be protected against by vaccines developed to immunize people against other viruses ...it would take more than a year to develop, test and bring to market a coronavirus vaccine (Kessler et al., 2020)."
- On 6 March, Trump attested that "Anybody that wants a test can get a test." **The truth is** the Health and Human Services Secretary explained that American people might only get a test with the prescription of a medical doctor or public health official (Kessler et al., 2020). Besides, the US is lagging behind a lot of Asian countries or cities in furnishing tests for potentially infected people, i.e., China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Japan.
- On 9 March, Trump contended, "This blindsided the world. And I think we've handled it very, very well." **The truth is**, "On Jan. 30, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared that there is an outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern" (Kessler et al., 2020)."
- On 11 March, Trump feigned, "This is the most aggressive and comprehensive effort to confront a foreign virus in modern history." Kessler et al. (2020) have

pointed out **the truth is** that “Beyond the unverifiable claim about his administration’s efforts, there is no such thing as a ‘foreign virus.’ Viruses can emerge anywhere on Earth.” The classic example of the Spanish flu has appeared in the US (Kessler et al., 2020).

- On 16 March, Trump proclaimed that “We have a problem that a month ago nobody ever thought about.” **The truth is** there were enough warnings in January unless Trump ignored them. On 28 January, Trump’s formal officials have warned him to take specific precautions steps to halt the virus. Besides, on 23 January, the Chinese government was determined enough to lockdown Wuhan city to curb the COVID-19 (Kessler et al., 2020).

Pope Francis describes this as a kind of people who do not have the backbone, to tell the truth directly are coward and cold-blooded (Hamel, 2015). Anyway, the best antidote to this illness is to stop gossiping, grumbling, and back-biting by self-reflection.

Sixth, the disease of indifference to others

Trump tends to only think of himself, losing the sincerity to build people's relationships. When asked about the lack of ventilators for Americans, Trump sneered at the reporter (Botsford, 2020). In the face of the unprecedented Covid-19, Trump relies on his gut feeling to solve problems, and ignores the expert warnings in the first place and do not take the predicted coronavirus threats seriously. When he fails to handle the virus crisis, Trump’s simple strategy is to resort to retort others (Borger, 2020). Mostly due to the complacency and indifference to others, Trump and his administration have not seen the threats occur. Hence, the inadequate relevant virus tests have led to the undeniable wave of deaths and infected people of the US (Borger, 2020)

Trump has held an indifferent attitude towards the actual needs of the infected patients in New York. In response to the escalating crisis in New York, the epicenter of COVID-19 in the US, the Governor of New York urged Trump and his administration to deliver tens of thousands of ventilators in hospitals, they challenged the demand, and only promised to deliver 400 ventilators. However, they later sent 4,000 (Forgey, & Choi, 2020).

The antitoxin of this disease is sharing, which establish a genuine and warm relationship between people.

In sum, the diseases manifested by Trump, particularly in handling the COVID-19 crisis are hazardous to any leaders in any countries or institutions in either micro, meso, or macro levels.

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Noli Me Tangere

Daniel Deak – Hungary

Abstract

Although a lot and more is known about COVID-19, the respective knowledge is still insufficient today. So, most of what can be done is the prescribed rules of social distancing are followed. Yet to distance, and separate, oneself from one's fellow creatures, or at least from physical contact runs counter to the natural urge of the being to embrace.

These days, it seems to be necessary to carry out some kind of de-socialization, which, however, can break the very foundations of social existence. The topos of "noli me tangere" (don't touch me!) has then taken on a new meaning. Once it is forced to slow down and make distancing, one could do nothing but ponder.

Although a lot and more is known about COVID-19, the respective knowledge is still insufficient today. So, most of what can be done is that the prescribed rules of social distancing are followed. Yet to distance, and separate, oneself from one's fellow creatures, or at least from physical contact runs counter to the natural urge of the being to embrace.

These days, it seems to be necessary to carry out some kind of de-socialization, which, however, can break the very foundations of social existence. The topos of "noli me tangere" (don't touch me!) has then taken to date on a new meaning. Once it is forced to slow down and make distancing, one could do nothing but ponder. The result of this is an essay to be presented below.

Simple questions can be raised: where did women and men come from and where do they go to? And what will happen next? In answering the question of "where?", it is worth assuming that while the command of distancing strikes us in shock, it is not new because humans have been exposed to other forms of profound alienation for many decades, compared to which this practice has now entered merely a new phase.

The problem with the "where to?" one has to face is that if distancing is done too well, life is paralysed. One can be feared that by the time the virus is overcome, there will be in many respects no-one and nothing to rehabilitate. In the wake of the pandemic, new doubts arise about whether social processes can be modelled and controlled.

What is known the least about is even after months the question of "what will happen next?" that is asked anyway, and this question is essential because if the human cannot radically renew current living conditions, one can be afraid that they will fall again and again into a stack that is dug precisely by and for themselves. Then again, a pandemic will be released to people, or another means of education will be a blow that will surprise the population with a similar but not less harsh pedagogy. In the shadow of COVID-19, economists are also gaining further evidence that reasons for the stagnation of economy can be hidden by far not only inherently in the economy itself, as the economy is much more exposed to natural constraints than one might think in peacetime.

Bonus

In addition to the ban on “don’t touch me!”, encouragement is also needed. Hans Holbein Jr who worked on the subject among other fellow-artists had just understood that only one hand of the master of Nazareth to be depicted held Mary Magdalene back, but the other one encouraged her. One hand is holding back in the present, but the other one points to the possibility of future fulfilment. It is possible to get closer to such fulfilment if the vulgar perception can be set aside that identifies development simply with growth.

The order of “don’t touch me!” seems to be completely profane as it is merely an epidemiological measure. There is more to the speech from the gospel story: the nature of the inviolability of the risen Jesus of Nazareth – “I have not yet ascended to the Father” – does not require rational reasoning but faith (Jn. 20, 17). The ban arising from the need to defend against the virus is purely dictated by common sense, yet a rational procedure does not seem to be sufficient to withstand restrictions because these restrictions are not just realized but experienced. Demonstrating tempers and emotions, and even embracing spiritual content – especially in emergencies – is at least as real as physical contact or lack thereof.

It seems to be a paradox that restrictions are experienced as we have been forced to honor them, yet, if it is thought about, one can realize that the new situation that has occurred is considered to be a logical consequence of the social order that has been already formed. The explanation certainly does not lie in the fact that one is suffering the well-deserved blow because of an allegedly sinful way of life. Finding a credible way of speaking is not obvious at all.

In recent decades, it has become important that, in addition to the conditions that emerge during the production and acquisition of the assets of economic and symbolic capital, structures have emerged that reflect a subjective assessment of the positions occupied by individuals and their groups. As a result, in addition to the absolute figures of acquisition, their relative aspect also acquires real social significance: what do these numbers mean to those who are affected in a specific life situation?

The arena of awakening is not to the macro, but the micro world. Of course, it has also been necessary for social stability before that the existing power relations be strengthened even informally, just as small communities have always a privileged space for life. However, as a result of the deepening crises in the capitalist production structure, the “status quo” can no longer be sustained without capital invading our homes to an unprecedented extent and without capitalist interests interweaving our intimate relationships.

Anthony Giddens argues that the metaphysical unity of space, time, and power is fading as a result of globalism. A homogeneous population living in a given area and time can no longer be associated with the exercise of power. Space and time slip together, and no longer or not properly orient us in action. New constraints and boundaries are unfolding, and the new order that is just emerging will immediately become liquid.

According to Pierre Nora, the consciousness of breaking with the past is shifting more and more within us. Historical continuity is being replaced by torn memory. The separation of memory and history from each other leads to a perception that in a mass society that followed the Industrial Revolution, the ancient bonds of identity have been broken, which in turn coexisted organically with us for many centuries until the modern age.

The removal forced by COVID-19 is just the culmination of this process. It has not even been noticed that the practice of distancing has been evolved so far. The only change is that the deficit that has inadvertently been suffered as a result of the alienation dictated by capitalist interests and the increasingly conspicuous disturbances in orientation in space and time is now being realised in a new way. The virus one gets around one's neck as misfortune is just a bonus.

Malevil

Isolation can be frightening and even remorseful for many: has something been ruined really? If one gets stacked, after a while the words will become empty and messages will be limited to, "I'm fine. Take care!" Closed and locked up, the meaningless games of imagination can be activated and barren memory or even foolish confidence can prevail that tomorrow will also be the way as it is today. Miracle doctors and fortune tellers are multiplying around.

It is arrogant to think that the events around us, but which are not entirely or not at all foreseeable to us, could be so easily deciphered and, in particular, that the multifactorial processes, into which our insights are fragmented, could be held under control. A medieval man struggles with how to be brave in his or her physical condition, and even despite bodily capabilities. The way of thinking in modernity is radically different: it is possible and worth striving for achieving what is good, even if it cannot be grasped in its entirety.

Although everyday life may be full of denial, fiasco and downfall, there is an ultimate good that is worth fighting for, even though it is known from Goethe that the spirit of denial is "ein Teil von jener Kraft, / Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft. ..." (the part of the power that always strives for evil and does yet good forever). It must not be forgotten about that the denial, which, in the spirit of the anthropological optimism of Hegel and Marx is the carrier of progress, grows out of the thrill of the temptation evoked already by Goethe.

We love to equip our world in such a way that the events contained in it could be interpreted and their driving forces could be revealed. However, in their enigmatic nature, things that remain outside the framework of the interpretation of formal rationality, such as the whim of fate, are a challenge for those who suffer them. Hegel and Marx themselves do not deny that people's ability to transform reality is limited [Marx: "Sie wissen das nicht, aber sie tun es." (they don't know, but they do it)] and, according to Hayek, one's ability to know about all the relevant facts is inadvertently limited, and people often become therefore prisoners of synoptic disappointments.

In recent months, only a few decisions have been taken based on adequate evidence. The reason for this is that it is not much that can be known about the causes of the epidemic. Its course can hardly be reliably modelled yet, and there is not yet any prospect of the appearance of an antidote. As a result, responsible leaders with a due mandate are forced to make political decisions based on voluntarism.

Where science is silent, gaps arising from uncertainty are filled by politics, which can be done well, as the German chancellor did it, when she showed us in a shocking speech addressed to her constituents on 18 March, in which she warned them seriously, but she also conveyed encouragement. It can also be done, of course, less well if the power reflex of concealing relevant information debilitates benevolence. Although we know that a serious plague such as war or epidemic is not anthropogenic, it is still made anthropomorphic, that is, it is almost personified while stubbornly looking for explanations. If, on the other hand, one gets tired of all this, he or she will tell himself or herself that a plague-like distancing and a ban are just a bad dream.

Too many people cannot be drastically prevented for too long from following their normal way of life because one can then be easily fall back into a pre-civilisation era. Those who are strong can for one reason or another easily get an exception to restrictive rules for themselves while constantly threatening the majority even with violence. There are countries where, thanks to advanced technologies such as the G5 network and Huawei's mobile apps, a society can be held even more systematically under control while, before the next wave of the virus's explosive spread, they are already preparing the public that the virus should be brought in by foreigners who can thus be made a scapegoat. One can slip into a Malevil if nature strikes back at man and society.

Perspectives

A moral being does not necessarily do what he or she can physically do. If it is accepted that living beings are created, the theses of unlimited property and absolute dominion over the Earth is rejected. Then, wayfaring strangers can be seen among the inhabitants of the Earth who are instigated by the consciousness of temporality into modesty.

Economic freedom is a value in itself, but it is also, or at least should be, a means of achieving greater justice. According to Amartya Sen, the meaning of development is not to achieve some growth indicators, but to extend freedoms, what in turn presupposes the elimination of social deprivation, new investments in the human sector and, last but not least, the proper operation of democracy and rule of law. Only the freedom thus conceived implies the possibility of a genuinely free market.

Distancing and slow-down are prerequisites for survival, and this is true not just during a pandemic. According to Wolfgang Sachs, when development is identified with economic growth, then poverty is confined to the mere issue of the supply with material goods. Then, equality is transformed into monotony, the slogan of the standard of living extinguishes the diversity of vivid life, and the pursuit of needs leads to a trap of dependency.

In an age dominated by the voluntarist notion of development, inequality cannot be objected to as long as the poorest will be worse off. However, when the biophysical environment puts constraints on growth, it is no longer enough upon putting the concept of equity into practice just to limit oneself to supporting the poor, but it is also required to radically limit the old ways, in which one has become accustomed to getting rich. Development cannot be replaced with economic growth.

If not before, then now, after and before a pandemic, it will be glaringly obvious: material needs arise only in the context of available goods and can only be interpreted in this context. The assumption that these needs always exceed the possibilities afforded by production is manipulative and underpins the notion that our prosperity depends on uninterrupted consumption. The basic question of arranging for our life after a pandemic is whether one is finally able to get rid – as Ivan Illich put it – of the pattern of “homo miserabilis,” that is, of the image of a man continuously longing for material needs.

According to him, hope and desire are different from expectation and need. The latter concern scarcity and require the impersonal perspective of a developmental trajectory while the former can be associated with personification, which, while often capricious, flashes the chance of breaking free from the captivity of alienation. In the perspective of improving personal relationships, it cannot remain hidden that our actions entail moral limitations, and even suffering, from which it will not be sought to run short of it in need.

***Laudato Si* Requires Monetary Reform**

Djamester S. Simarmata - Indonesia

Abstract

The earth needs change in human habits, leaving all that spoil home of all God creatures. Economy is imbedded in earth environment, provider of all-natural resources, and serves as limited capacity waste dump. Economy needs energy that emit GHGs, triggering global warming. GDP growth enables continual rise in consumption, more GHG emission since energy use rises. Also, consumption is marred by waste and throw-away culture. Nations race for the highest and fastest GDP/capital growth. Good transactions needs money, supporting finance and economic financialization, diverting the economy from real sector. Money was formerly issued by state, then by private bank debt-based. Debt rises and becomes vital for state, firms and households, promoted by banks through debt-based expenditures, to be repaid by higher economic growth and higher emission. Progressive taxation could solve poverty and inequality. Apt monetary system could reduce debt, lowering the required economic growth, GHG emission, in addition to renewable energy. A Sovereign Money System (SMS) is suitable for this, reducing private bank role that triggers global financial debacles, cares for the limited planet capacity by suitable global economic size. But above all, human beings need to realize the limited earth capacity.

Keyword: bank, debt, ecology, environment, finance, GHG, growth, global-warming, money. **JEL :** E5, E50, G21, Q4, Q5

Introduction

COVID-19 urges us to reexamine the aspects of life on Mother Earth, since it is alleged that it could be partly related to global climate change. Changes in mean climatic conditions and climate variability can affect human health via indirect pathways, particularly via changes in biological and ecological processes. The recurrence and spread of vector-borne human, animal, and plant pathogens to new geographic locations are influenced by climate change [Carlson et al 2020]. Besides the change in land uses all over the world, the rare tropical forest ecologies areas have been crucially destroyed. These are just for short term benefits, contributing to GDP of the host countries, neglecting all values of sacrificed biodiversity. The world has degraded 60% of its ecosystems, destructing its natural capital, reducing its natural resources and natural services, while global CO2 emission has risen 40% since 1990 [Prosperity w/o growth].

Macroeconomics aims at stable limitless market driven growth, but how could an economist conversant with ecology or physics espouse infinite growth on a finite planet? It needs to know, what factors drive the need for continual economic growth besides enabling general country development, increasing population welfare. A notable objective is to iradicate or reduce the poverty level, one of the SDG objectives. Alas, achieving those objectives produces side effects in terms of pollution, waste and climate degrading gas emission. Could it be without growth?

An issue has surfaced lately, the big repayment of debts from: goverment, corporations and households. Repaying debt overhang forces countries to attain higher economic growth above the “business as usual” level, resulting in higher CO2 emission. Waves of debt accumulation of

countries are recurrent features of the global economy over the past 50 years. After the global financial crisis, another wave appeared pushing up higher global debt level to 230 % of global GDP in 2018 [World Bank Group, 2020]. But the IIF reported higher debt level of 318 % of global GDP in Q3 2018. It is concluded that the waves of debts are triggered by banks lending spree enabled by its money creation power. A critical issue is to compare the benefits and costs of the existing debt-based money and the sovereign money.

Economy and the Environment

An economy is imbedded in an environment, covering many kinds of ecologies. It consists of two big sectors, the public and the private sectors. Public and private sectors produce goods and services complementarily or substitutively. The public sector covers many sub-sectors with two specific fiscal and monetary systems. The two systems task with the whole economy, while other public sub-sectors are limited to specific domains. All productions take input from the environment and reject waste and pollution to it. The fiscal system is in charge of taxes and budget matters while the monetary system manage credits, money circulation, and price stability. The environmental public sector is tasked with all externality effects. In fact, either the available world resources and its capacity to absorb waste and pollution are limited below a threshold level. Global warming is mainly affected by the CO₂ emission from energy production and use, plus other GHG.

The solar system provides the world with energy, while the earth supplies natural resources and services as natural capital. The economy will be sustainable if it lives off the earth's natural income without depleting or degrading the natural capital. The biggest problem of our time is the global warming due to excessive CO₂ gas from fossil fuel. The excessive exploitation of the natural capital exacerbates the global warming, a battle-front from the *Laudato Si* perspective.

Emitting much less CO₂ needs shifting from fossil fuel to solar energy or other renewable energy sources. Alas, the price of fossil fuel is still lower than other clean energies. The share of fossil fuel in world energy was 85% in 2018. Seeing the recent devastating effects of the global warming as indicated by the polar ice and the top of Mount Blanc ice melting, the rising frequency of typhoon, and so on, global action should be of higher urgency level. Reducing CO₂ emission, is a top priority. Moreover, it needs accommodation of sustainable economic growth.

Trade is vital for economies, either individually or collectively, for it promote specialization and productivity. Initially products exchange was by bartering, which was cumbersome due to the necessity of *double coincidence of wants* and the rising number of goods. Money innovation facilitates trade, avoiding most of the barter handicaps. Money also facilitates trades between the present and the future time period like investment. But the trouble of money created out of nothing should be considered.

A basic economics law, income must be a counterpart of a product or service contribution to the economy resulting through human work, central to *Laborem Exercens*. Income without product counterpart is an unearned income (Maurice Allais), which will be inflationary and unjust. Land price hike at the bord of newly constructed road engenders capital gain for the owner, raising his purchasing power, then prices: inflationary. Digital money creation by banks also generates unearned income, called *seigniorage*. The two incomes are rent incomes, distortive and unjust. Land as part of fixed natural capital, is subject to rent scarcity. It was the reason why Leon Walras

proposed to nationalize land. Land is the main component of real estates which frequently a source of financial crisis, as recent US subprime mortgage. For the sake of justice and correcting its distortion, the unearned income should be appropriated or taxed by the state [Allais, 1988].

CO2 Emission and Climate Adaptation Fund

In the last 30 years, energy intensity per unit of output has declined one third globally [Jackson 2009]. As a result, the global carbon intensity per dollar of GDP fell from one kilogram to just 770 gram. But these are insufficient. Since 1990 carbon intensities have declined on average by 0.6 percent per year. Global population increased 1.3 % per year, while average per capita income increased 1.3 % per year, leaving the approximate rise in the carbon intensity of 2 percent per year. This is a relative decoupling, different from absolute decoupling, expressed as material decrease in use. Data for absolute decoupling is scarce.

Data show that global CO2 emissions remain highly concentrated: top 10 % emitters contribute to about 45% of global emissions, while bottom 50% emitters contribute to 13%. There is a sharp global inequality in carbon emission, where the developed countries dominate. Piketty et al [2015] proposed a world progressive tax contribution to climate adaptation fund for the rich individual emitters of more than 6.2 ton CO2 per year, including other GHG. Before, the contributors were only the advanced countries. According to the above report, it is required to raise 150 billion euro per year for climate adaptation funds.

Monetary and Banking System

Money is important, so the saying: money makes the world go round. Originally, money was created by public institutions, state or temple. But in 1666 the Free Coinage Act was enacted in Britain, by which the private banks or central banks was in charge of money creation, not the sovereign, which is a privatization of money. The private goldsmith was the origin of paper money in London as a receipt for a deposited gold coin in goldsmith bank. In 1694, the private Central Bank, Bank of England was created. After the Free Coinage Act, if the sovereign was in need of money for any expenditures, it was obliged to borrow from the private Central Bank. It was a revolution.

As is now well-known, the monetary system consists of Central Bank or Bank and commercial banks, a two tier system. The Bank creates coin and reserve money for inter-banks transactions, while banks create scriptural money for all kind of transactions. Now, the world currency is dominated by money issued by private banks or state enterprise banks. Most of money is in the form of fiat money, made of paper. Just a small proportion of the currency is in the form of coin. The banks are with profit motive similar to other corporations, but have privilege to create money, different to non-bank enterprises. The banks channel and allocate credit in the economy. Stunningly, banks is not part of macroeconomics, in spite of its significant role in investment and consumption loans, the vital building blocks for GDP formation.

Private banks conduct money creation when they issue loans to borrowers. Awardable credit limit for any bank is constrained by Basel II regulation. But the case of Bank of Leuven in 2008 gave evidence of its ineffectiveness. Bank of Leuven was threatened to go bankrupt due to capital insufficiency. But the bank found a way out of the trouble by creating money, lent to

outsider who bought the bank stocks, and bankruptcy was avoided. It was not illegal, since banks have been in operation according to the money creation principle since long time ago in the middle of the 19th century [MacLeod, 1866]. Alas, economics neglects this fact, because developing countries (DCs) are advised to take foreign debt if they are lacking in saving for investment. It causes dispensable high indebtedness of the DCs in foreign currency.

Finance becomes more independent from the Real Sector

The latest fact, financial investments have higher return compared to real sectors. Moreover many financial investments could generate return in short time period even in microseconds like high frequency trading, HFT. The higher preference to financial investment than to real sector is distortive. HFT or other short-time financial trading should not be part of normal investment. Incomes from these activities do not render real product and job as a counterpart. It is more appropriate to be considered as a casino economy [Keynes], lacking in ethical aspects [*Caritas in Veritate*].

Commercial banks is a financial subsystem, follows its practices, prefers short-termism and invests in the financial sector, pushing up assets prices, causing bubble economy. As such, finance has been uprooted from its original existence in real sector. According to Bain Report in 2019, the prospective global financial wealth in 2020 could achieve a value of \$ 900 trillion, much higher than the global GDP of around \$ 90 trillion. How could be this virtual wealth (Soddy) justified. Natural capital and finance, are opposing one another in terms of time, which should not be evaluated according to the financial market principles. Natural capital will be valuable or much more worthwhile for the existence of the future generations, a central care of Pope Francis. From the point of view of nutrient food chain, all the living things in the world should be kept in tact, which is one of the vital point of *Laudato Si*: Protect all creatures even the smallest one.

Emission Burden of the Debt

A country's debt in principal and interest will be repaid. Indonesia for example has an around 30 percent of GDP debt level. By assuming 3.5 percent interest rates and 20 years maturity, it needs 2 percent of GDP per year to serve the debt until maturity date. If the Indonesian GDP is considered \$ 1 trillion, the yearly repayment will be \$ 20 billion. The related extra carbon emission due to debt repayment will be 1.4 billion kilogram carbon emission, assuming 700 gram carbon per USD GDP. The economic and the emission burden of the debt is very severe. Imagine the global debt at 230 percent GDP [Global Waves of Debt] or 320 percent of GDP [IIF]. Assuming the same condition to Indonesian debt, 230% GDP debt needs yearly repayment of \$ 13.6 trillion, producing yearly global emission of 9.5 trillion kg carbon, or 9500 billion ton of carbon. This is a huge additional burden to the planet, compared if it is without debt

The solar capital, vital source of clean energy has been too long neglected, dragging on fossil fuel with high GHG emission. It leads to the ever rise carbon stocks in the atmosphere causing global warming. The banking system prioritizes high profits and short-termism, justifying their choice of fossil fuel as a high-profit generators. 33 Global banks financed fossil fuel projects with \$ 1.9 trillion since Paris Agreement [Banking on Climate Change]. This is incomprehensible seeing the rising threat of the global warming. An unethical "love of money" as warned in bible is hidden in the banks culture, neglecting the common goods. The bible warning is quoted again in

the *Evangelii Gaudium* of the Pope Francis. Private banks with the power to create money for credit are free to pursue their own goals, contrary to *Laudato Si*. While the Central Bank is also independent. It could raise GDP, but does not make life worthwhile [R. Kennedy, 1968].

Poverty Issue

Poverty eradication is one of the common goals to strive for strong economic growth. Energy technology fails to strikingly reduce the carbon intensity per dollar GDP and the global warming continuously rise. Poor people is the most to suffer from global warming. One way to achieve poverty eradication is by implementing a redistributive system, supported by progressive taxes. The issue of inequality is now a global concern. Alas, ideal taxes are not yet realizable. The implemented tax reforms, precisely tending to increase the inequality, either in advanced or in developing countries. There has to be a radical reform in the taxation system as well as in the economic system, which focuses on the private sector while neglecting external costs and common goods. Private banks have powerful double whammy to the economy: negative externalities due to the credits misallocation to what are beneficial to the banks in spite of negative effects for the whole economy, especially for the common goods. And the bank power for money creation generates seniority income for them, which should belong to the state, is one source of poverty and inequality.

Sovereign Money System (SMS) as a Solution

Based on previous explanations, it is proposed a sovereign money system (SMS), where the Central Bank (CB) creates money instead of the commercial banks (private or state enterprises). Seigniorage income from money creation would be a state revenue, complementing or even replacing taxes.

The first proposal for monetary reform was originated from a group of eminent economists in Chicago in the Great Depression of 1930, entitled the Chicago Plan. Those economists were aware that the origin of the crisis was due to too much credit from banks.

The banks will operate as a pure intermediary institution, with a principle of full reserve banking, where the sources of fund could be from the Central Banks or depositors. The CB will have a limited independence and will be under indirect supervision of the Ministry of Finance. The commercial banks could not lend to anyone if they do not have money.

Under SMS, fiscal system will transform into a new form consisting of two components: money creation revenue and normal taxes. The debt-base money will be abandoned. The required taxes will decline at the same quantity to the new created money value, captured by the government as the unearned income.

The government through Central Banks will provide necessary information, indirectly guide credit allocation to the business projects, beneficial to the economy and environment. It will avoid the high preference tendency to the financial sector, avoiding or reducing the bubble economy. The present banking system has a tendency towards a frequent financial crisis.

The short termism culture will be minimized and pro-environment attitude with long term perspective will prevail. The common good will be widely promoted by reinforcing investment in

the less carbon emitting sources of energy. Seigniorage will help financing adaptation finance as promoted by Piketty.

Similar result is concluded from the 2009 Great Recession, too much credit was awarded to the borrowers, in spite of the Basel II. There have been many monetary reform groups in the world. One main group falls under the NCT (New Currency Theory), while another is following the MMT (Modern Monetary Theory). This article is close to the NCT.

Money created at the same time when the bank give out credits. Debt repayment needs higher economic growth than business as usual, so that it will increase the GHG emission, especially the CO₂ gas.

Private banks tend to short-termism, averse on long terms investment, which are necessary for sustainable investment in the economy. The higher return on financial investment, like stock market, real estate, and so on, diverting investment from real sector investment, which provide employment and income.

Most of the assets, like real estate and financial assets in the capital market are from the ongoing corporations, contain a small part of IPOs. Hence the market does not support the new corporations and the continuous rise in the prices of existing assets, supported by credit from commercial banking, often leads to bubble and then crises.

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Comunidades en línea de tecnología abierta y gratuita, open source

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Abstract

Todas las formas de protección de propiedad intelectual tienen como objetivo el desarrollo tecnológico y económico, existen ejemplos de cómo fortalecen industrias.

Sin embargo, al ser los medicamentos y los equipos médicos componentes esenciales de la garantía del derecho a la salud, sus patentes limitan su fabricación a una pequeña selección de proveedores. Lo que acarrea barreras importantes para la implementación de políticas de acceso a la salud.

Frente a la emergencia, los editores científicos han puesto a disposición pública los trabajos sobre COVID-19, alcanzando porcentajes de acceso abierto inéditos en revistas. Esta gran labor de divulgación ha permitido la creación de comunidades que participan en línea en la investigación y desarrollo de equipos médicos de ayuda para la emergencia.

La mayor red de expertos en tecnología abierta y gratuita *open source* alusiva del mundo, se constituyó en Marzo del 2020 por voluntarios. Acciones que en conjunto con otras iniciativas *open source* relacionadas, llevaron a que en la semana del 30 de marzo al 5 abril las publicaciones sobre covid-19, incrementaran su número en 97% en relación a la semana anterior.

Esto nos demuestra que existe un claro potencial técnico para aliviar la escasez de equipos médicos durante esta y futuras pandemias utilizando código abierto, que permitan su fabricación rápida con menos recursos.

Los sistemas abiertos actuales se encuentran en una etapa de diseño temprano y es necesario que para que este enfoque alcance los requerimientos técnicos se requieren de más pruebas, pero también del desarrollo de políticas que actualicen las regulaciones de propiedad intelectual para viabilizar el acceso primero a los equipos y cuando se desarrollen a los medicamentos y vacunas demandados al asegurar la posibilidad de producirlos localmente a precios inferiores a los ofrecidos por las empresas transnacionales.

Propiedad intelectual

La propiedad intelectual parece difícil de definir, sin embargo estamos conscientes de ella en nuestro día a día.

Sabemos que si existe un libro es porque hay un autor y que para que exista una máquina se requiere de un inventor. Es decir, disfrutamos de una obra gracias a que alguien dedicó tiempo, dinero y esfuerzo en desarrollar sus ideas.

También sabemos que cuando alguien es el titular de una propiedad tiene la libertad para utilizarla como desea, siempre que no infrinja la ley, y de impedir a otros que dispongan de su propiedad.

Así que la expresión “**propiedad intelectual**” se utiliza para determinar los tipos de propiedad resultado del intelecto.

Es curioso que en el Convenio que establece la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual (OMPI), no hay una definición formal para la expresión “propiedad intelectual”. En cambio establece los derechos en relación con: “Las obras literarias, artísticas y científicas; las interpretaciones de los artistas intérpretes y las ejecuciones de los artistas ejecutantes, los fonogramas y las emisiones de radiodifusión; las invenciones en todos los campos de la actividad humana; los descubrimientos científicos; los dibujos y modelos industriales; las marcas de fábrica, de comercio y de servicio, así como los nombres y denominaciones comerciales; la protección contra la competencia desleal; y todos los demás derechos relativos a la actividad intelectual en los terrenos industrial, científico, literario y artístico”.

Cuando compramos bienes cuya propiedad intelectual está protegida, parte de lo que pagamos le corresponde al creador aunque el no realizara por completo la pieza que compramos. Por ejemplo, si compramos un libro, el autor recibirá una ingreso aunque no sea el propietario de la imprenta.

Todas las formas de protección de la propiedad intelectual tienen como objetivo el desarrollo tecnológico y económico.

Así la protección de la propiedad intelectual ha desarrollado industrias, como la agro industria. Ejemplo de esto es el mango de Chiapas, creado por Ataulfo Morales Gordillo en 1963.

De los primeros cinco árboles que cultivó Ataulfo Morales en su predio, actualmente hay entre 25 y 30 mil hectáreas sembradas en la Costa-Soconusco de Chiapas.

Debido a su demanda ha generado fuentes de empleo y centros de investigación. Desde el 2002 obtuvo la denominación de origen, una forma de propiedad intelectual.

La propiedad intelectual que protege a los medicamentos y equipos médicos es la patente, entonces, *¿qué es una patente?*

Entre las formas más antiguas de proteger a la propiedad intelectual están las patentes. Existen desde el siglo XVIII, tal vez esa es la razón por la que el término a veces se emplea de manera genérica al referirnos a la propiedad intelectual.

Una patente es un documento otorgado por una oficina de Gobierno (comúnmente la Oficina de Patentes) que protege una invención y otorga al dueño el derecho exclusivo de usar su invención por un período limitado de tiempo.

Se entiende por invención a una solución nueva y útil a un problema técnico.

Las patentes se destinan a cualquier invención de proceso o producto en todos los ámbitos de la tecnología. Por eso las cosas que ya existen en la naturaleza, no pueden patentarse.

Aunque las patentes están previstas para los grandes adelantos de la tecnología, también se otorgan para pequeñas mejoras tecnológicas. Si son invenciones o mejoras y cumplen con tres características: novedad, actividad inventiva (no es una solución obvia para los especialistas en la materia) y aplicación industrial, son patentables.

Si la oficina de patentes considera que cumple con las características de patentabilidad otorga la patente a un titular. El titular de la patente puede impedir a otras personas a realizar, la invención patentada mientras dura la protección.

La duración de una patente suele ser de 20 años a partir de la fecha en que se presentó la solicitud. Cuando los derechos de patente expiran, la tecnología pasa a ser del dominio público y el público puede utilizarla en beneficio propio.

Mientras los derechos de la patente están vigentes, el titular tiene derecho a ceder, vender o dar en licencia la patente *únicamente en los países* en los que la invención está protegida por una patente *a cambio de revelar completamente al público la manera de utilizarla*. No existe una patente que abarque todos los países. El sistema de patentes es un sistema territorial.

A fin de proteger la invención en un país determinado, se debe obtener una patente en dicho país.¹

En caso de que la invención patentada no se explote durante cuatro años a partir de la fecha de registro de la solicitud, el Convenio de París establece la concesión de licencias obligatorias.

Aunque las patentes ofrecen derechos y protección también tiene limitaciones que promueven avances técnicos.

Retomemos las limitaciones de las patentes. Es legal:

- Usar las invenciones cuya patente expiró.
- Emplear dispositivos patentados para investigación.
- Utilizar las invenciones en un país distinto al que se concedió la patente.
- Conseguir una licencia obligatoria.

Al tratarse de información de dominio público, cada oficina de patentes tiene un buscador para las colecciones de patentes nacionales. Es posible acceder a esos buscadores desde la página de cada oficina o a través de Google Patents² que también ofrece el texto traducido de las patentes.

Las solicitudes internacionales de patente se buscan en PATENTSCOPE, de la Organización Mundial de Propiedad Intelectual.³

Las patentes y el acceso a la salud

El que la propiedad intelectual tenga entre sus objetivos la generación de ingresos económicos, genera inquietud frente a la emergencia mundial por el virus SARS – COV2, pues una vez que se desarrollen medicamentos y vacunas podrían ser de difícil acceso por su alto costo para los países en desarrollo.

A diferencia de la competencia de precios, la competencia en innovación (que requiere un alto grado de investigación) ocurre solo entre los países desarrollados. Esto les da ventajas en el comercio de productos.

Los medicamentos son un componente esencial para garantizar el derecho a la salud, la Organización Mundial del Comercio –OMC–, creada en diciembre de 1994 obliga a los 164 Estados Miembros a reconocer la propiedad intelectual en todos los campos tecnológicos, incluyendo el sector farmacéutico.⁴

Es decir, para la Organización Mundial del Comercio los medicamentos son como cualquier otro producto, lo que ha ocasionado barreras importantes para la implementación de políticas de salud.

Al ser el acceso a la salud un derecho humano, para evitar barreras por propiedad intelectual, existen *flexibilidades*.

Las *flexibilidades* son dispositivos que buscan mitigar los efectos negativos de los derechos conferidos al titular de la patente, a fin de que los Estados miembros de la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad de la Salud, puedan aplicar las normativas y políticas de Propiedad Intelectual que mejor se adapten a las circunstancias y capacidades nacionales y regionales.

En el caso de la salud, las flexibilidades permiten la obtención de medicamentos a precios más razonables.

Las flexibilidades aplicables a medicamentos son:

- La licencia obligatoria.
Se le permite a compañías que no son los titulares de la patente para fabricar, usar, vender o importar un producto sin la autorización del titular de la patente.
- Las importaciones paralelas.
Un producto fabricado legalmente en el exterior es importado por otro país sin la autorización del titular de los derechos de propiedad intelectual. Si el titular de la patente vende un lote de su producto en el mercado, sus derechos patentarios están agotados, no posee más derechos sobre lo que sucede con ese lote.
- La excepción Bolar.
Permite a los fabricantes de medicamentos genéricos utilizar una invención patentada para obtener permiso de comercialización sin el permiso del titular de la patente.
- Uso Experimental
Permite a los investigadores usar invenciones patentadas en sus investigaciones con el objetivo de entender mejor la invención.
- Actuación del sector de salud en los procesos de análisis de pedidos de patentes farmacéuticas.

Estas flexibilidades se encuentran en el Acuerdo TRIPS (“Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights”, Aspectos relacionados con el comercio de los derechos de propiedad intelectual)

En este convenio se tratan los aspectos de la propiedad intelectual relacionados con el comercio internacional. En el caso de temas de salud, busca encontrar un equilibrio entre el acceso a medicamentos existentes y la promoción de la investigación y el desarrollo de nuevos medicamentos.⁵

Así como un creador tiene derecho a exigir los derechos sobre su propiedad intelectual, cualquier tipo de trabajo creativo puede estar disponible en el dominio público.

Existen opciones como Creative Commons, una organización sin fines de lucro que ofrece 6 licencias para compartir trabajo creativo. Todas requieren atribución, para que el autor original sea acreditado por su trabajo.

Licencias de fuente abierta (open source) Permite a otros programadores incorporar el código a sus propios proyectos, siempre que en su reutilización se incluya la información de derechos de autor y licencia en el código reutilizado.

Los proyectos populares de código abierto tienen múltiples contribuyentes, por lo que su mantenimiento y mejora no depende de un único ingeniero o una empresa en particular. Alrededor de 15,600 desarrolladores de más de 1,400 compañías contribuyeron al sistema operativo Linux de código abierto de 2005 a 2017.

Dominio público

Un trabajo que es de dominio público no está protegido por la ley de derechos de autor.

Cualquiera puede usar y reutilizar ese trabajo creativo de cualquier manera, y no tiene que proporcionar atribución.

Cuando expiran los derechos de la propiedad intelectual de las obras creativas e invenciones, estas entran en el dominio público.⁶

Propiedad intelectual frente al COVID-19.

Ante la pandemia de COVID-19 el mundo necesita la información que permita obtener tratamientos, medicamentos y equipos médicos.

Por lo que se han presentado respuestas colectivas a lo largo del planeta para facilitar el acceso a la información.

PATENTSCOPE se adecuó para facilitar la búsqueda sobre las tecnologías que pueden servir de base para la lucha mundial contra la COVID-19

“Los documentos de patente son una valiosa fuente de conocimientos técnicos adquiridos por los seres humanos a lo largo de los siglos.” Dijo Francis Gurry, Director General de la OMPI en el comunicado de prensa del Índice de COVID-19.

Este servicio consiste en la selección de más de 83 millones de documentos de patente y documentos conexos que se consideran de utilidad para las personas dedicadas a mitigar los efectos de la COVID-19. La selección fue hecha por especialistas, sobre determinadas áreas tecnológicas relacionadas con la detección, prevención y tratamiento del COVID-19.

Por parte de las editoriales se crearon centros de recursos que sitios web con acceso abierto (usualmente requieren el pago de una suscripción) sobre publicaciones al respecto del COVID-19. Se han alcanzado porcentajes de acceso abierto inéditos en revistas.

Algunos ejemplos de estos centros de recursos son:

- Zenodo, un espacio que almacena y difunde información digital de acceso abierto, ha creado comunidades que recopilan los trabajos más relevantes en la investigación.
- LitCOVID, es un centro mantenido por la National Library of Medicine / National Institutes of Health (NIH) que rastrea información sobre la Enfermedad del Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). Contiene más de 39,000 artículos y se actualiza diariamente con nuevos artículos de PubMed. En la semana del 30 de marzo al 5 abril incrementó su número de registros en 97% en relación a la semana anterior.⁷

La gran apertura de información ha permitido la creación de comunidades en línea que participan en la investigación y desarrollo de material de ayuda para la emergencia.

El sistema médico hasta la emergencia por COVID-19 empleó únicamente ventiladores especializados, patentados y fabricados por una pequeña selección de proveedores.⁸

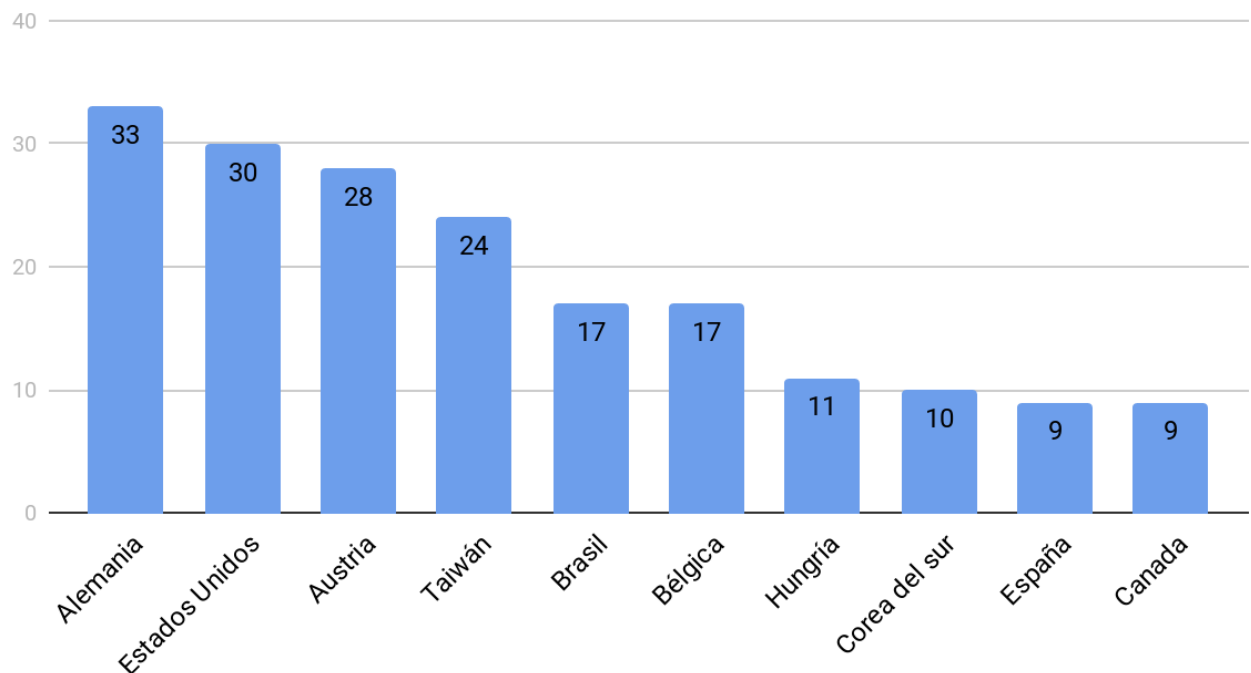
Entre estos proveedores destaca Dräger, que está especializada en los ventiladores mecánicos. Cuenta con más de 800 patentes al respecto, registradas en Estados Unidos, Reino Unido y Alemania.

Se dice que cuando Johann Heinrich Dräger presencié cómo se reanimó a un hombre que estuvo a punto de morir ahogado en el río Támesis de Londres se inspiró para desarrollar la ventilación mecánica.

Empleó su experiencia en el diseño de equipos respiratorios y de aplicación de anestesia para crear el Pulmotor, el primer respirador para emergencias producido en serie del mundo.⁹ Heinrich Dräger, recibió la patente del “pulmotor” en 1907

Los diez países con más camas de cuidados intensivos por cada cien mil habitantes son:¹⁰

Camas de cuidados intensivos por cada 100,000 habitantes.



La especialización de los equipos, producto de una amplia investigación, las empresas dedicadas a la fabricación de equipos médicos, venden pequeños volúmenes porque en condiciones normales, un hospital solo necesita unos cuantos. Para hacer frente a esta baja demanda, estas empresas han protegido su propiedad intelectual. La protección les permite comercializar su invención de manera exclusiva para recuperar la inversión realizada.

Pero frente a la escasez de estos equipos, con la información disponible y las flexibilidades antes mencionadas, ¿se pueden fabricar los equipos médicos requeridos rápidamente si se utilizan sistemas de fabricación alternativos a los de las marcas reconocidas?

Ante esta pregunta, se han creado diferentes comunidades en línea en la que se intercambian conocimientos y experiencia para fabricar los equipos. Principalmente se elaboran caretas faciales, cubrebocas, overoles y ventiladores.

Entre estas comunidades destaca Coronavirus Makers¹¹. Es la mayor red de expertos en tecnología abierta y gratuita open source del mundo. Se constituyó en Marzo del 2020 y está integrada por más de 20,000 investigadores, desarrolladores, ingenieros, etc.

Los Makers no reciben ningún tipo de beneficio económico, participan por el deseo de ayudar durante la contingencia sanitaria.

Otras comunidades digitales creadas para hacer frente a la emergencia COVID-19 son:

- Coronavirus Tech Handbook. Es un espacio de colaboración entre técnicos, organizaciones ciudadanas, instituciones públicas y privadas e investigadores.

- Open Source Ventilator. Una web con distintos documentos relacionados con respiradores, el trasfondo, la demanda en números y diseños existentes, algunos de ellos Open Source
- Open COVID-19. Tiene como objetivo desarrollar de manera colaborativa herramientas y metodologías de bajo costo y de dominio público que sean seguras y sencillas de utilizar para combatir la pandemia del covid-19.
- Crowd fight COVID-19. Iniciativa de la comunidad científica para poner todos los recursos disponibles al servicio de la lucha contra el COVID-19
- Coronavirus Makers MX.¹² Comunidad inspirada en lo realizado en España. Su sitio web sirve, principalmente, como una central que recibe los requerimientos de ayuda de los hospitales. Los requerimientos se validan, y se canalizan a los Makers.

Para el 25 de abril, las peticiones de protectores faciales sumaron 19 mil; y 250 cajas anti aerosol, necesarias en el proceso de intubamiento de un paciente. Además trabajaron en un prototipo de respirador de emergencia de bajo costo, fácil de usar, adaptado a la disponibilidad de materiales de México.¹³

El prototipo es durable (desde el punto de vista de la mecatrónica) y alcanza una frecuencia, un volumen y presión de ingreso de aire adecuados.

Estas comunidades trabajan en la denominada “fabricación distribuida en masa”. Consiste en el desarrollo de diseños de equipos médicos que se comparten con licencias de fuente abierta libremente en Internet para que otros puedan simplemente descargar y replicar el diseño en su propia impresora 3D.

No cuentan con las condiciones para formar parte de la cadena de producción en masa, emplean impresoras 3D caseras, pero existen decenas de miles de estas impresoras en el mundo.

Esto ha permitido que los diseños se descarguen incluso en áreas remotas y se fabrican bajo demanda según sea necesario, a partir de materiales disponibles.

Además de los diseños de de fuente abierta de los equipos médicos existen diseños de impresoras 3D.

Conclusión

La propiedad intelectual no es sólo un medio para obtener protección y privilegios a los creadores de cierta invención. Si bien le brinda a su dueño la capacidad de hacer lo que desee con la obra, incluyendo el compartirla, también existe un marco legal que brinda restricciones.

Al ser el derecho a la salud un derecho fundamental, se ha puesto atención en que las patentes de los productos farmacéuticos y de los equipos médicos no afecten el acceso oportuno, aceptable y asequible a servicios de atención de salud. Estas restricciones incluyen acciones que garantizan la obtención de medicamentos a precios más razonables.

Las flexibilidades son medidas suficientes para la obtención del tratamiento y (cuando se desarrolle) la vacuna contra COVID-19 si se aplican por los gobiernos miembros de la Organización Mundial del Comercio. Existen antecedentes exitosos para hacer frente al VIH.

Además la emergencia generó una respuesta altruista a través de medios digitales, que ha permitido una gran intercambio de información, la co-creación de materiales médicos y pruebas diagnósticas. Así se crearon comunidades con este objetivo, entre las que destaca Coronavirus Makers por ser la que tiene más participantes.

¹ OMPI, curso General de la propiedad intelectual a distancia. 2010.

² <https://patents.google.com>

³ <https://patentscope.wipo.int/search/es/search.jsf>

⁴ OMC | Entender la OMC - miembros y observadores. www.wto.org › thewto_s › whatis_s › tif_s › org6_s

⁵ CHAVES, Gabriela Costa; VIEIRA, Marcela Fogaça and REIS, Renata. Acceso a medicamentos y propiedad intelectual en Brasil: reflexiones y estrategias de la sociedad civil. Sur, Rev. int. direitos human. [online]. 2008, vol.5, n.8, pp.170-198. ISSN 1983-3342.

⁶ Creative commons and open source (article). (n.d.). Recuperado de <https://www.khanacademy.org/computing/computers-and-internet/xcae6f4a7ff015e7d:digital-information/xcae6f4a7ff015e7d:digital-copyright-and-licenses/a/creative-commons-and-open-source>

⁷ Torres-Salinas, Daniel (2020). “Ritmo de crecimiento diario de la producción científica sobre COVID-19. Análisis en bases de datos y repositorios en acceso abierto”. El profesional de la información, v. 29, n. 2, e290215.

⁸ Pearce JM. A review of open source ventilators for COVID-19 and future pandemics [version 2; peer review: 3 approved] F1000Research 2020, 9:218
<https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.22942.2>

⁹ Tecnología para la vida desde 1889 - Draeger, Corporate Communications.
https://www.draeger.com/Library/Content/Technology_for_life_since_1889_es.pdf

¹⁰ ¿Cuántas camas UCI tiene cada país? - Mapas de El Orden Mundial - EOM. (2020, April 15).
<https://elordenmundial.com/mapas/cuantas-camas-uci-tiene-cada-pais/>

¹¹ <https://www.coronavirismakers.org/makers/>

¹² Andrade, K. (2020, May 28). Makers Mx: Ellos equipan a personal médico contra el COVID-19. Recuperado de <https://www.chilango.com/noticias/reportajes/coronavirus-makers-mx/>

¹³ Nurit Martínez | El Sol de México. (2020, May 21). Mexicanos transforman respiradores manuales para COVID-19 en mecánicos. Recuperado de <https://www.elsoldemexico.com.mx/doble-via/salud/ingenieros-mexicanos-up-transforman-respiradores-manuales-ventiladores-de-pacientes-covid-19-coronavirus-en-mecanicos-5260767.html>

Ambiguïté et richesse du numérique en temps de pandémie. Théologie en temps de crise

Heriberto Cabrera Reyes, SDB - Mauritius / Chile

Résumé

Le texte : « Ambiguïté et richesse du numérique en temps de pandémie », aborde les questions liées au numérique en ce moment de crise et les différences entre les émissions en direct ou en différé.

En regardant dans la foi ce temps de *lockdown*, nous pouvons reconnaître la manière « mystérieuse » dont Dieu agit pour nous soutenir malgré la distance, malgré l'absence de communauté « physique » et malgré l'absence de communion sacramentelle.

Au-delà des ambiguïtés, nous sommes admiratifs de la créativité des fidèles et des pasteurs. Mais derrière ses adaptations, peut-être ce qui est plus important, c'est de s'émerveiller par une nouvelle manière d'agir de Dieu, ce qui ressemble fortement à une sorte de nouvelle Pentecôte.

« La théologie nous ne la faisons pas pour notre consommation,
ni pour le fait de faire de la théologie, ni pour avoir une propre théologie comme certains qui
cherchent à avoir sa propre maison. Nous cherchons une théologie qui soit maison pour tous ».

Gustavo Gutiérrez

Introduction

Je remercie le confinement que m'a imposé le COVID-19 et qui m'a obligé de sortir de mon cadre, paradoxe pour quelqu'un enfermé dans une chambre depuis huit semaines.

Je vais aborder, dans ce texte, les questions liées au numérique en ce moment de pandémie et les différences entre les émissions en direct ou en différé.

Ce sujet ne doit pas être séparé d'un regard plus large, concernant : « L'apport de la foi » en ce temps de crise¹.

J'espère que ces lignes vous aideront à mieux comprendre ce que nous avons vécu et à reconnaître la manière « mystérieuse » dont Dieu agit pour nous soutenir.

Je suis admiratif de la grande créativité de productions qu'ont été publiées, presque une nouvelle langue qui anticipe, peut-être, une nouvelle Pentecôte.

1. Un aréopage ambigu : le numérique

Un espace à habiter de manière évangélique

En 2017, les jeunes à Rome avaient interpellé l'Eglise par rapport à sa présence dans le monde numérique :

Le monde des *news media* mérite une mention particulière car, surtout pour les jeunes générations, il est véritablement devenu un lieu de vie ; il offre beaucoup d'opportunités inédites, surtout en ce qui concerne l'accès à l'information et la possibilité de tisser des liens à distance, mais il présente aussi des risques (par exemple le cyber-harcèlement, les jeux de hasard, la pornographie, les pièges des *chat room*, la manipulation idéologique, etc.). Bien qu'avec de nombreuses différences selon les régions, la communauté chrétienne en est encore à insérer sa présence dans ce nouvel aréopage, où les jeunes ont certainement quelque chose à lui enseigner ².

Je crois que les jeunes peuvent non seulement nous enseigner comment ce monde numérique fonctionne, ses codes et son langage, mais aussi nous aider à saisir le changement anthropologique qu'il comporte. Cette contribution possible a été encore une fois évoquée lors du Synode des jeunes :

Le monde digital, comme jamais auparavant, représente un grand potentiel pour réunir les peuples malgré les distances géographiques. L'échange d'informations, d'idéaux, de valeurs et d'intérêts communs est de plus en plus développé. L'accès aux outils d'apprentissage en ligne a ouvert des opportunités d'éducation dans des régions éloignées ³.

Le COVID-19 nous a fait plonger de manière inattendue dans le défi du numérique en quelques jours. Beaucoup d'adultes retardaient ou négligeaient son acceptation dans leur vie, certains étaient même des analphabètes du numérique. Ainsi, ils se sentaient lointains, ayant parfois des discours négatifs, d'ailleurs, parfois, non sans raison.

Aujourd'hui, dans certaines situations, comme celle où je suis, à l'Ile Maurice : *lockdown* ou confinement obligatoire pendant huit semaines, le numérique est devenu l'unique, et je dis bien « l'unique », moyen de garder contact avec le monde, avec nos destinataires, avec nos paroissiens, avec les jeunes, avec nos familles et les personnes que nous aimons. Malgré les limites du numérique, nous remercions Dieu de la richesse et de l'opportunité qui nous ont été offertes grâce à l'outil informatique.

Revenons un peu en arrière, déjà en 2002 le Conseil Pontifical pour les communications sociales avait dit que :

Elle (la réalité virtuelle) offre également à l'Eglise un moyen de communiquer avec des groupes particuliers, — jeunes, jeunes adultes, personnes âgées ou contraintes de garder la maison, personnes habitant dans des régions éloignées, membres d'autres organismes religieux — qu'il serait autrement difficile d'atteindre ⁴.

Cette valorisation positive est devenue aujourd'hui une évidence et les mots du Pape Jean-Paul II qui avait qualifié les médias de « premier aréopage des temps modernes » sont devenus réellement d'actualité. Certes, il ne suffit pas d'utiliser les médias pour assurer la diffusion du message chrétien et l'enseignement de l'Eglise, mais il faut intégrer le message dans cette « nouvelle culture ».

Le Pape François, dans son Exhortation Apostolique *Christus Vivit*, parlait aussi des opportunités du numérique:

87. Ils constituent une extraordinaire opportunité de dialogue, de rencontre et d'échange entre les personnes, et donnent accès à l'information et à la connaissance. En outre, l'environnement numérique est un contexte de participation sociopolitique et de citoyenneté active et il peut faciliter la circulation d'une information indépendante capable de protéger efficacement les personnes les plus vulnérables en révélant au grand jour les violations de leurs droits. Dans de nombreux pays, Internet et les réseaux sociaux représentent désormais un lieu incontournable pour atteindre les jeunes et les faire participer, notamment aux initiatives et aux activités pastorales.

Ce texte est tellement d'actualité, qu'on n'aurait jamais pensé qu'à la place « d'incontournables », ces moyens seraient devenus « uniques » et « indispensables » pour ceux qui sont en situation de confinement ou doivent faire du télétravail.

Pour la plupart des agents pastoraux et prêtres, c'est un monde maîtrisé par l'utilisation des « applications », qu'ils ont téléchargées sur leur portable (*store*). Ce temps de pandémie nous a mis à l'épreuve de la production du matériel numérique. Ainsi à cause du confinement, on s'est retrouvé : techniciens, producteurs, caméramans, acteurs, animateurs et communicateurs. Tout cela avec des moyens souvent modestes.

Un appel à la créativité a été lancé à ceux qui n'avaient pas nécessairement les compétences ni le talent. Cela a donné parfois lieu à des émissions « tops » et d'autres, à des productions de faible qualité. Combien de temps pourra durer cette situation ?

Quand on regarde ce monde des émissions, il semble que tous ont quelque chose à dire et nous sommes parfois submergés de propositions : prêtres, évêques, Pape... offrent tellement d'informations, que devant une telle fécondité nous pourrions nous sentir noyés, perdus.

Vers une nouvelle perception du numérique

Nous savons tous combien le *net* peut être source ou moyen pour véhiculer de mauvaises choses, c'est pour cela que nous pouvons avoir un sentiment de méfiance et de peur envers lui :

Quand on se réfère à la technologie, il faut comprendre la dualité qui existe dans son utilisation. Alors que les avancées techniques modernes ont réellement amélioré nos vies, il faut se montrer prudent dans leurs usages. Si la technologie a pour certains permis d'élargir le cercle de leurs relations, pour beaucoup d'autres elle a pris la

forme d'addiction venant remplacer les relations humaines et même la relation à Dieu. Quoi qu'il en soit, la technologie a maintenant une place incontournable dans la vie des jeunes et doit être considérée en conséquence ⁵.

Comme vous avez sans doute déjà constaté, il y a deux positions, une positive et une négative par rapport au numérique, notamment à Internet. Je pense qu'il faut rester prudents, car dans le *net* il y a du bon et du mauvais, voire du très mauvais, cette cohabitation entre le bon grain et l'ivraie (Mt 13, 14-30), est une invitation au discernement et à un bon exercice de la liberté.

Devant les discours et les pratiques de l'Eglise par rapport aux médias, certains, comme Guy Marchessault, affirment que nous sommes héritiers d'une perception de médias qui a produit des blocages historiques et une approche utilitaire ⁶. Par contre l'Eglise affirme avoir adopté une approche fondamentalement positive à l'égard des médias ⁷. Quoi qu'il en soit, le moment n'est pas au débat et aux discours, mais à de bonnes pratiques. Comme a été le cas lors de ce confinement, où les productions religieuses nous ont accompagnées.

L'utilisation à une plus grande échelle du numérique pour travailler, communiquer et nourrir notre foi, nous a mis devant des questions profondes concernant la conception de l'Internet et du *net*, car ce qui est en train de changer c'est la culture, la conception des rapports. Ainsi, nous avons été acteurs d'une nouvelle sorte d'anthropologie qui est en gestation :

Il est très important de mettre en évidence le fait que l'expérience de relations relayées technologiquement structure la conception du monde, de la réalité et des rapports interpersonnels ; c'est à cela qu'est appelée à se confronter l'action pastorale, qui a besoin de développer une culture adéquate ⁸.

A propos de cette nouvelle manière de concevoir la technologie et ses conséquences, les jeunes nous invitaient au dialogue :

L'Eglise devrait approfondir sa compréhension de la technologie, afin d'aider ces jeunes à en discerner un bon usage. De plus, l'Eglise devrait, en interne, approfondir sa compréhension de la technologie, particulièrement Internet, et l'envisager comme un espace fécond pour la Nouvelle Evangélisation. Les résultats de ces réflexions devraient être formalisés à travers un document ecclésial officiel⁹.

Il y a encore du chemin à faire car c'est sur cette nouvelle culture que l'Eglise devrait se positionner et donner un avis, et pas tant sur l'utilisation ou la question morale ¹⁰. Autrement dit, nous devons nous poser des questions concernant l'inculturation de l'évangile dans cette nouvelle culture numérique. Le défi étant d'incarner le message, les valeurs, la personne de Jésus sur le *net*. Il ne s'agit pas seulement d'évangéliser à travers le numérique, mais d'évangéliser ce milieu, d'être présents, de l'habiter par la présence de Dieu. C'est important parce que la culture numérique fait partie intégrante de la vie de nombreux jeunes. Et comme disait Grégoire de Nazianze : « ce qui n'a pas été assumé, n'a pas été guéri » ou sauvé.

2. Les types d'émissions et d'interactions

Les sacrements sont des rencontres entre Dieu, l'homme et la communauté, ils peuvent être définis ainsi :

Acte symbolique (geste, parole), qui signifie une réalité invisible destiné(e) à la sanctification des hommes. Dans le sacrement, c'est Dieu qui agit par l'intermédiaire de son ministre (prêtre ou diacre). Il existe sept sacrements : le baptême, la confirmation et l'eucharistie, la pénitence (réconciliation), l'onction des malades, l'ordre (par lequel on devient diacre, prêtre ou évêque) et le mariage. Le baptême, la confirmation et l'eucharistie constituent "l'initiation chrétienne". Le sacrement du baptême, en cas d'urgence (danger de mort) peut être donné par tout baptisé ¹¹.

Ce temps de crise et de confinement pose des questions par rapport à la manière de vivre ces sacrements. De nouvelles modalités, notamment pour la participation à l'eucharistie, sont en train de naître ou de se populariser.

La TV, le téléphone, *WhatsApp* et autres sont des outils précieux, mais on perçoit facilement leurs limites par rapport aux sacrements, particulièrement la dimension communautaire et la matérialité de chaque sacrement (pain, vin, eau, huile etc.).

Les émissions en directe ou en différé

Dans la manière de fonctionner actuellement, deux types de formules sont proposés aux fidèles : les émissions en direct et les émissions en différé, avec la possibilité ou non d'interaction (envoi de messages).

C'est intéressant ce que dit le document qu'a envoyé le Cardinal Sarah pour donner les indications pour la Semaine Sainte 2020 : « Les moyens de communication télématiques en direct, et non enregistrés, pourront être utiles » ¹².

Deux choses attirent notre attention, avant tout les mots « télématiques » ou « *telematic broadcasts* » et « pourront ». « Télématiques », c'est un mot que d'habitude on n'utilise pas et « pourront » est un verbe qui, en ce moment de confinement, n'est plus possible d'être conjugué au « conditionnel », car aujourd'hui nous n'avons que cela pour maintenir le contact avec nos paroissiens dans une grande partie du monde.

Deuxièmement, quand le Cardinal parle « en direct, et non enregistré » ¹³, veut-il dire qu'il y a une différence ? Nous y reviendrons, en tout cas, je crois qu'il y en a une. Commençons par rappeler ce que le Conseil Pontifical disait en 2002 à propos de la relation entre destinataires et émetteurs, car c'est très pertinent :

L'interactivité à double sens d'Internet est déjà en train d'estomper la traditionnelle distinction entre ceux qui offrent et ceux qui sont destinataires de la communication et de créer une situation dans laquelle, du moins potentiellement, chacun peut faire les deux. Il ne s'agit plus de communication à sens unique, du haut vers le bas, du passé. Alors que de plus en plus de personnes se familiarisent avec cette caractéristique

d'Internet dans d'autres domaines de leur vie, on peut s'attendre à ce qu'elles la recherchent également en ce qui concerne la religion et l'Eglise ¹⁴.

A retenir que dans un certain type d'émissions en direct, l'interactivité à double sens est possible, et c'est très riche et beau de constater comment les fidèles envoient, par exemple, des messages (prières, demandes et autres) pendant les célébrations de l'eucharistie transmises par *Facebook*.

Il y a un autre cas, celui des émissions en direct mais sans possibilité de commentaires. Cela arrive quand on suit la messe à Rome ou ailleurs, où les messages ne sont pas possibles, notamment quand c'est à la TV.

Une potentialité des émissions, déjà mentionnée, est celle des programmes en différé. Ici, il n'y a pas la possibilité de faire des commentaires, autant pour les émetteurs que pour les récepteurs, et s'il y en a, ils se font évidemment après l'émission « réelle ». Les émissions en différé permettent par contre de retravailler les images et le contenu, ce qui enlève les risques du *live* et donne plus de qualité technique et éducative.

Une guérison à distance

A ce point de notre réflexion, il me semble important de se demander s'il y a ou non une sorte de grâce du direct, du *streaming*, du *live*.

Rappelons quelques textes bibliques qui pourraient nous illuminer dans la quête d'une compréhension de ce que nous sommes en train, non seulement de réfléchir, mais de vivre.

L'évangile de saint Jean nous rapporte un miracle à distance qui par sa modalité est très surprenant :

Il y avait un fonctionnaire royal, dont le fils était malade à Capharnaüm.

Ayant appris que Jésus arrivait de Judée en Galilée, il alla le trouver ; il lui demandait de descendre à Capharnaüm pour guérir son fils qui était mourant.

Jésus lui dit : « Si vous ne voyez pas de signes et de prodiges, vous ne croirez donc pas ! »

Le fonctionnaire royal lui dit : « Seigneur, descends, avant que mon enfant ne meure ! »

Jésus lui répond : « Va, ton fils est vivant. » L'homme crut à la parole que Jésus lui avait dite et il partit. Pendant qu'il descendait, ses serviteurs arrivèrent à sa rencontre et lui dirent que son enfant était vivant. (Jean 4, 46-51).

Dans cette histoire, je voudrais m'arrêter seulement pour approfondir deux questions : guérir à distance et la foi.

Avant tout, celui qui demande le miracle est peut-être quelqu'un de sang royal ou tout simplement un serviteur du roi, voire même un soldat. Dans ce dernier cas, il ne serait pas juif. Quoi qu'il en soit, le récit nous dit que son fils est éloigné (environ 20 km) et malade.

Nous avons aussi d'autres récits où Jésus guérit à distance en Mt 8, 5-13 et Lc 7, 1-10, « on peut penser que les trois évangélistes disposent d'une tradition commune »¹⁵. A la différence de Matthieu et Luc, chez Jean, l'homme va devoir intervenir deux fois pour demander la grâce de la santé. Jésus accordera la guérison non en sa présence mais par sa parole : « va, ton fils est vivant » (v. 50).

Je m'explique : dans les trois récits la question fondamentale n'est pas que la guérison se passe à distance, mais c'est la foi qui est au centre. Pour Matthieu et Luc, le miracle est la conséquence de la foi, par contre Jean invertit cette relation¹⁶. Il faut retenir cet aspect comme essentiel quand on pense aux émissions par Internet, la foi est plus importante et non tant la distance. C'est la foi qui donne de la valeur à la participation en direct ou en différé. C'est pour cela que pastoralement parlant, il faudrait que chaque croyant se demande la place de la foi dans sa participation aux émissions.

Une autre chose qui me semble déterminante, c'est la question du « temps », le miracle se passe au même moment où Jésus parle, faut-il voir là une relation entre action de Dieu qui agit dans le présent et suivre une émission en direct ? C'est peut-être un peu anachronique, mais certainement très inspirant.

Directe ou différé, le temps

Dans le point précédent, nous avons fait référence à une possible différence entre une émission en directe et une en différé, s'il en a une, c'est laquelle ? Autrement dit, si je ne peux pas suivre à un moment déterminé une émission, pourquoi ne pas la suivre quand je peux où je veux ? Allons plus loin, puis-je suivre une messe dans mon lit ou en train de manger ?

La mentalité de consommation peut orienter notre façon de nous rapporter aux médias. Ce qui n'est pas bien. Par exemple, je peux choisir mon émission préférée ou mon prêtre préféré, au moment qui m'arrange, à la limite Noël en Carême et Pâques à Noël.

En soi, ce n'est pas si grave, si on la considère comme une simple émission, mais où se situe le sens de la communauté et le fait que l'émission a été faite pour un moment précis de l'histoire et par des croyants ? Le risque c'est celui d'ajuster la foi et les sacrements à nos besoins, en excluant la communauté physiquement et temporellement. Se couper de la communauté, même virtuelle, est un grand appauvrissement, car la sacramentalité n'est jamais un acte solitaire : un moi et Dieu, mais plutôt moi et Dieu dans une communauté.

Cela n'empêche pas que Dieu nous touche avec ces émissions qui sont hors du temps (elles agissent un peu comme un livre qui nous interpelle), comme par exemple les chants ou les conférences, mais est-ce qu'il faut appliquer les mêmes critères pour une messe que pour un chant ?

Il me semble que dans le cas de célébrations et de moments de prière, le « direct » en *streaming* est l'idéal, à condition que tous ceux qui y participent soient responsables, polis et qu'ils aient pour but d'y participer. Un filtre est possible, en mettant un mot de passe, pour chaque participant, afin d'éviter des commentaires déplacés.

Concernant la question du « direct » encore, je crois qu'anthropologiquement et spirituellement c'est une option plus riche, particulièrement pour la messe, non parce que Dieu ne puisse pas agir à un autre moment de la journée ou de l'année, mais par le fait que le prêtre qui

célèbre se sait en communion d'une manière « mystérieuse », avec ceux qui le suivent momentanément.

D'autant plus quand le direct permet une nouvelle façon de participer avec les petits émoticônes et les commentaires des *followers* qui montrent leurs sentiments, nous pouvons même y voir leur nom ou le *nickname* avec leur « avatar » dans le coin de l'écran.

Cette communion « mystérieuse » ne l'est pas dans le sens occulte, mais dans le sens que nous nous savons unis en ce moment à d'autres frères et sœurs, qui ont la même intention.

Cette communion est voulue et permise par Dieu. C'est parce que nous aimons le même Christ et que lui nous aime, qu'elle est une grâce pour ses participants qui, soutenus par l'Esprit Saint, font l'expérience de la rencontre avec Dieu.

La grâce prend la forme de la « puissance de la simplicité », comme la première communauté chrétienne : « chaque jour, d'un même cœur, ils fréquentaient assidûment le Temple, ils rompaient le pain dans les maisons, ils prenaient leurs repas avec allégresse et simplicité de cœur ». (Ac 2, 46).

Le direct a donc une nouvelle grâce, celle de milliers d'espaces et des personnes qui se rencontrent, parce qu'elles se savent unies, non tant par un réseau Internet, que par ce qui est célébré et par celui qui est célébré : le Christ et la foi que nous lui portons, comme dans le texte évangélique de guérison à distance que nous avons étudié.

Don Luigi Guissani disait à propos du présent :

Seul le présent peut vaincre l'abstraction : le présent est l'objet véritable de la connaissance. Tout ce que l'on ne peut pas expérimenter d'une certaine façon dans le présent n'existe pas. Même Dieu, dans son existence, doit être présent ici puisque la présence est la caractéristique de l'être de Dieu. Comme dit saint Thomas : « Le nom 'Celui qui est' signifie être dans le présent et cela convient souverainement à Dieu, dont l'être ne connaît ni passé, ni avenir » ¹⁷.

Donc, le présent est le *kayros*, le temps du salut, où le Dieu du présent, le Dieu « je suis », se fait expérience pour nous. Car Dieu est toujours quelque chose qui se passe maintenant, en ce moment, en cet instant précis.

Dans ce sens, l'émission suivie en direct, au présent, permettrait d'expérimenter le Dieu du présent, cette façon de concevoir le temps évite de tomber dans une foi théorique et illusoire.

Pour celui qui « produit » des émissions, la frontière entre la pertinence de la mission qui lui est confiée et sa « popularité » exprimée en *followers* n'est pas toujours claire. Comment rester humble quand on a beaucoup de « vues » et *followers* ? De nouvelles formes d'orgueil peuvent naître, aussi bien dans le clergé que pour les laïques, où on peut rivaliser en vraies « *stars* du *Web* ».

Conclusion

Terminons en disant que les émissions en direct sans possibilité de commentaires sont plus pauvres en échange, mais toujours nécessaires quand il s'agit des contraintes propres à la TV où un grand nombre de personnes suivent.

Il me semble donc, dans la mesure du possible, que la participation aux émissions en direct soit le choix le plus souhaitable, notamment quand on parle de prières et de la messe.

Mais revenons au récit évangélique de la guérison à distance, au fond ce qu'importe c'est la foi et l'amour que nous mettons dans ce moment où nous sommes présents devant Dieu. Car quand il y a la foi et l'amour, l'espérance n'est pas très loin, et nous en avons tellement besoin en ce moment précis.

Autant, pour la distance que pour le temps (direct ou en différé), certainement Dieu peut agir de manière qui dépasse notre entendement. Notre travail théologique consiste à essayer de nommer ce qui est possible de l'être et notre travail pastoral consiste à accompagner de la meilleure manière possible les personnes en ce moment « unique ».

¹ Je viens de publier un petit livret sur la question : Heriberto Cabrera, *Effondrement, apocalypse ou renaissance ? Théologie en temps de Crise* (Maurice : SDPJV, 2020).

² Document préparatoire pour le Synode 2018 sur les jeunes. *Les Jeunes, La Foi et Le Discernement Vocationnel* (2017).

³ Document de la réunion pré-synodale. *Les jeunes, la foi et le discernement vocationnel*. (Rome, 19-24 mars 2018).

⁴ Conseil Pontifical pour les communications sociales, *L'Eglise et Internet* (2002).

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_fr.html, n° 5.

⁵ Document de la réunion pré-synodale. *Les jeunes, la foi et le discernement vocationnel*. (Rome, 19-24 mars 2018).

⁶ Guy Marchessault, « Communiquer la foi dans une parole publique : intervenir dans les médias de masse », dans *Précis de théologie pratique*, dir. Gilles Routhier et Marcel Viau (Montréal/Bruxelles : Novalis/Lumen Vitae, 2004), 414.

⁷ Cf. Par exemple, les messages du Pape Paul VI et du Pape Jean-Paul II à l'occasion des Journées mondiales des communications sociales, mais aussi les nombreux documents du Conseil pontifical pour les communications sociales : *Pornographie et violence dans les médias. Une réponse pastorale* ; *Ethique en publicité* ; *Ethique dans les communications sociales*.

⁸ Document préparatoire pour le Synode 2018 sur les jeunes. *Les Jeunes, La Foi et Le Discernement Vocationnel* (2017).

⁹ Document de la réunion pré-synodale. *Les jeunes, la foi et le discernement vocationnel*. (Rome, 19-24 mars 2018). Voir aussi dans le même document où est écrit que : « Internet offre à l'Eglise une opportunité d'évangélisation sans précédent, particulièrement par les réseaux sociaux et les vidéos en ligne. Parce que nous appartenons à cette «génération médias» nous pourrions conduire cette évolution. Il s'agit également d'un moyen de choix pour aller à la rencontre d'autres jeunes, et rejoindre des jeunes d'autres religions et des non croyants. La «Vidéo du Pape» ou les séries de vidéo sur le Pape sont un bon exemple de l'utilisation des médias pour l'évangélisation ».

¹⁰ Voir Conseil Pontifical pour les communications sociales. *Ethique dans les communications sociales* (4 juin 2000).

¹¹ Définition proposée par l'Eglise Catholique de France dans

<https://eglise.catholique.fr/glossaire/sacrement/>

¹² Congrégation pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements, *Décret du 25 mars 2020, En temps de Covid-19 (II)*.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20200325_decreto-intempodicovid_fr.html

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Conseil Pontifical pour les communications sociales, *L'Eglise et Internet* (2002).

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¹⁵ AAVV, *Les évangiles. Textes et commentaires*. Dir. Philippe Gruson (Paris : Bayard, 2001), 925.

¹⁶ Cf. Xavier Léon-Dufour, *Lectura del evangelio de Juan. Jn 1-4*. Tom I (Salamanca: Sigueme, 1989), 321.

¹⁷ Luigi Giussani, *Engendrer des traces dans l'histoire du monde* (Milan : Parole et Silence, 2011), 164.

Peacebuilding and Resilience:

Toward Strengthening Preparedness of Fragile States to Effectively Respond to Disease Outbreaks

Michael Afolami - Nigeria

Abstract

In the past five decades, countries around the world have witnessed series of disease outbreak that have climaxed into a public health emergency of international concern. From all indications, these events have some iota of similarities in the characteristics that they exude. Some of them come like a flash and quickly evaporate into thin air while some remain a hard nut to crack. Disease outbreaks can have quite devastating effects even when unaccompanied by other dynamics like wars and armed conflicts. The consequences of an outbreak in fragile states are dire owing to the multifaceted cluster of ruins it comes with. However, through positive peacebuilding, fragile states can be more prepared to respond to and lessen the impacts of disease outbreaks. This paper assesses the socio-economic impacts of disease outbreaks in Nigeria, as a case for a fragile state, and expounds peacebuilding as a mechanism to strengthen resilience and preparedness of fragile states to manage disease outbreaks. It reveals the nexus between peacebuilding, resilience and fragility, and makes a strong case for high levels of positive peace as the bedrock of a highly resilient and less fragile state.

Introduction

The capacity of a country to prevent and respond to disease outbreaks is a strong determining factor of a country's level of resilience. Instances of past outbreaks like Lassa fever, Ebola Virus Disease and, most recently, COVID-19 give us a clear conviction that due to several implementation issues,¹ not even the availability of disease early warning system could accurately predetermine the time, scope and proportion of a disease outbreak. The implication of this drawback is the urgent need to devise mechanisms to effectively respond to, manage and reduce the impacts of an outbreak.

Previous studies have attempted to deal with the causes and impacts of disease outbreak in Nigeria, but lacking in extant studies are mechanisms to help the country prepared to effectively manage an outbreak. Therefore, this article will make an attempt to provide perspectives that are likely to answer the question: how can fragile states be more prepared to cushion the impacts of disease outbreaks and health emergencies. The objectives of this study include a succinct assessment of the response to selected cases of disease outbreaks in Nigeria, highlighting their impacts in the social and economic domains of the country. The study describes the systematic application of peacebuilding as an effective mechanism for strengthening resilience of fragile states to be able to more effectively cushion the wide-ranging impacts of disease outbreaks. I will proceed to give a succinct background to the key concepts in this study: peacebuilding, Lassa Fever, Ebola Virus Disease, and COVID-19.

Peacebuilding

Various authors in peace and conflict studies have defined, taught and thought of peacebuilding as the non-violent resolution and peaceful transformation of conflicts. Conflict, here, is tantamount to war, fight, violence, and armed struggle, and may extend to mean more critical disagreements between parties. According to Lisa, peacebuilding includes efforts by diverse actors at local and global levels to address the immediate impacts and root causes of conflict before, during, and after violent conflict.² This opinion suggests that peacebuilding is an activity conducted with the aim to manage conflict. Taking a dive further into peacebuilding perspectives, Catholic Relief Services believes that, peacebuilding seeks not just the end of direct violence, but also the building of a just and sustainable peace, and this to them is positive peace.³

The question of peacebuilding as a matter of significance only in conflict situations, or, as also a means to sustainable peace has continued to receive tremendous attention since Johan Galtung distinguished between negative peace as the absence of war, and positive peace as the integration of human society.⁴ To elaborate this distinction, the Institute for Economics and Peace theorizes negative peace as the absence of violence or fear of violence, while positive peace is the attitudes, institutions and structures that sustain and create peaceful societies.⁵ This is not diversionary; it appears that the distinction between negative peace and positive peace makes it clearer that the whole idea of peacebuilding is a precondition to mitigate wars and conflict, and build sustainable peace through some factors necessary for the integration of human society.

Peacebuilding in a society is the vigorous fixing and operationalizing of a sustainable societal system that creates an environment of equitable interaction with the social, political and economic domains of the society. The ideal state is that which demonstrates respect for the right of others, fights against corruption and has a high functioning government that is committed to improving human capital and creating an environment for human potential to thrive. Therefore, peacebuilding, in the context of response to disease outbreak, is the building of a state of justice, which builds up an environment of resilience. Resilience in this sense is the capacity of a country to respond or adapt to specific shocks more effectively due to the presence of strong formal and informal institutions.

Lassa Fever

Since the first report of Lassa fever in Borno State, Nigeria, in 1969, cases and outbreaks continue to be reported in Nigeria and the disease is increasingly recognized to be endemic in many parts of West Africa, with an estimated 300,000 - 500,000 cases and 5,000 related deaths occurring annually in West Africa.⁶ The caveat to note is that surveillance for Lassa fever is not standardized; therefore, these estimates are crude. There is an increasing death toll of patients from Lassa fever right up till date. In 2016, Nigeria reported 273 suspected cases and 149 deaths (case fatality rate – 55%) from 23 states. From 1 January through 9 February 2020, 472 laboratory confirmed cases including 70 deaths (case fatality ratio= 14.8%) have been reported in 26 out of 36 Nigerian states and the Federal Capital Territory.⁷

Due to non-availability or inadequacy of PPEs, well-equipped health facilities and functioning diagnostic centers, many health workers have contracted the infection and died as a result. While some stakeholders blamed the death of health workers from Lassa fever on their carelessness, some health workers rebutted this claim, describing it as callous and insensitive, as simple gloves are sometimes not

readily available in Federal Teaching Hospitals, with the workers paying the ultimate price.⁸ As part of the effects of the outbreak, Nigeria had to shut down the multimillion-naira cassava flakes (Garri) [one of Nigeria's sources of revenue] processing company with the fear that people could contract Lassa fever through consumption of garri. This affected both internal and external revenue generation.⁹

Ebola Virus Disease

Although smaller in scope, the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) was confirmed to be in Nigeria in July 2014. It was declared an emergency in August 2014 by the Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Nigeria Center for Disease Control, and on 20 October 2014, Nigeria was declared Ebola-free. There were 20 total cases with eight deaths from EVD in Nigeria.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, the entire West Africa region lacked infectious disease surveillance capacity and this was a major factor that contributed to the spread of EVD in the region.

A key informant interview of the Lagos State Health Commissioner revealed that airports were not prepared and port health was ill-equipped both in terms of knowledge of the disease, and in the number of available personnel and diagnostic facilities.¹¹ The disease outbreak recorded negative impacts on the commercial activities of Lagos state with the hospitality industry losing over 8 billion naira.¹² The economic cost incurred by Nigeria due to the Ebola outbreak was estimated to be US\$186 million. It is noteworthy that the EVD outbreak in West Africa, apart from significantly impacting health systems and resources in the affected countries, also limited movements and disrupted public and private services.¹³

COVID-19

The coronavirus disease broke out in China in December 2019, and is rapidly infecting new people and claiming lives. With the widespread of the disease to other countries and the alarming levels of severity and inaction, the World Health Organization declared the virus a pandemic on March 11 2020. Within the first three months of the declaration, more than 3 million people were confirmed positive to COVID-19 with over 200,000 deaths. The attitude of government and the people to the realities of the pandemic was arguably, one of the major reasons for the widespread of COVID-19 in Nigeria, particularly with the people refusing to acknowledge the existence of such a virus. This attitude was observed to be influenced by the level of confidence of the people in the government. Due to the rich history of corruption in many African countries, it was difficult for the people to believe, and for their governments to convince them, that COVID-19 is a real pandemic phenomenon. The COVID-19 outbreak is also reported to have negatively impacted Nigeria's economy and caused grave socio-economic consequences including theft, suicide, aggression, murder, and increased crime rate.

In all these events, a particularly notable derivation is Nigeria's weakness to effectively mitigate the impacts of disease outbreaks on health, livelihood and other domains of the society. For instance, with the COVID-19 outburst, Nigerian states governor imposed lockdown restrictions in their states. This action had serious impacts on businesses and investors resulting from the decline in purchasing power of consumers, who had to comply with national lockdown restrictions. Many enterprises have had to downsize their staffs, or reduce their salaries, or even close down their businesses.

Based on the foregoing, this study posits that positive peacebuilding would serve as a strong mechanism for building resilience and preparedness of fragile states to be more effectively responsive to disease outbreak.

Methods

Context and Setting

The Institute for Economics and Peace posits that positive peace (PP) factors can be used as the basis for empirically measuring a country's resilience, or its ability to absorb and recover from shocks. It can also be used to measure fragility and to help predict the likelihood of conflict, violence, and instability.¹⁴ Similarly, the Fund for Peace measures countries against 12 indicators.¹⁵ A country is said to have high levels of positive peace if it scores high in the eight pillars.

*Table 1: Pillars of Positive Peace, Domains and Indicators.*¹⁶

| Pillar | Domain | Indicator |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Acceptance of the rights of others | Structures | Gender Inequality Index (GII) |
| | Attitudes | Group Grievance |
| | Attitudes | Exclusion by Socio-Economic Group |
| Equitable Distribution of Resources | Structures | Inequality-adjusted life expectancy index |
| | Structures | Poverty headcount ratio at \$5.50 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population) |
| | Structures | Equal distribution of resources index |
| Free Flow of Information | Attitudes | Freedom of the Press |
| | Attitudes | Quality of Information |
| | Structures | Individuals using the Internet (% of population) |
| Good Relations with Neighbours | Attitudes | Hostility to foreigners/private property |
| | Structures | International tourism, number of arrivals (per 100,000) |
| | Structures | The extent of regional integration |
| High Levels of Human Capital | Structures | Share of youth not in employment, education or training. (NEET) (%) |
| | Structures | Researchers in R&D (per million people) |
| | Structures | Healthy life expectancy (HALE) at birth (years). |
| Low Levels of Corruption | Institutions | Control of Corruption |
| | Attitudes | Factionalized Elites |
| | Institutions | Irregular payments and bribes |
| Sound Business Environment | Structures | Business Environment |
| | Structures | GDP per capita (current US\$) |
| | Structures | Prosperity Index Score |
| Well-Functioning Government | Institutions | Political Democracy Index |
| | Institutions | Government Effectiveness: Estimate |
| | Institutions | Rule of Law: Estimate |

Study Design

The triangulation design approach to mixed methods of data collection was used. Qualitative data was collected from case study materials including the 2019 PPI report of the Institute for Economics and Peace and the 2019 Global Peace Index report.

A quota sampling method was used to select 11 countries for analysis. To determine the relationship between fragility and peacefulness, the FSI 2019 data was collected from the Fragile States Index Annual Report 2019. In order to ascertain the impacts of the levels of peacefulness of a country on their capacity to respond to disease outbreak, COVID-19 data was obtained from online sources such as Worldometer and John Hopkins University COVID-19 dashboards.

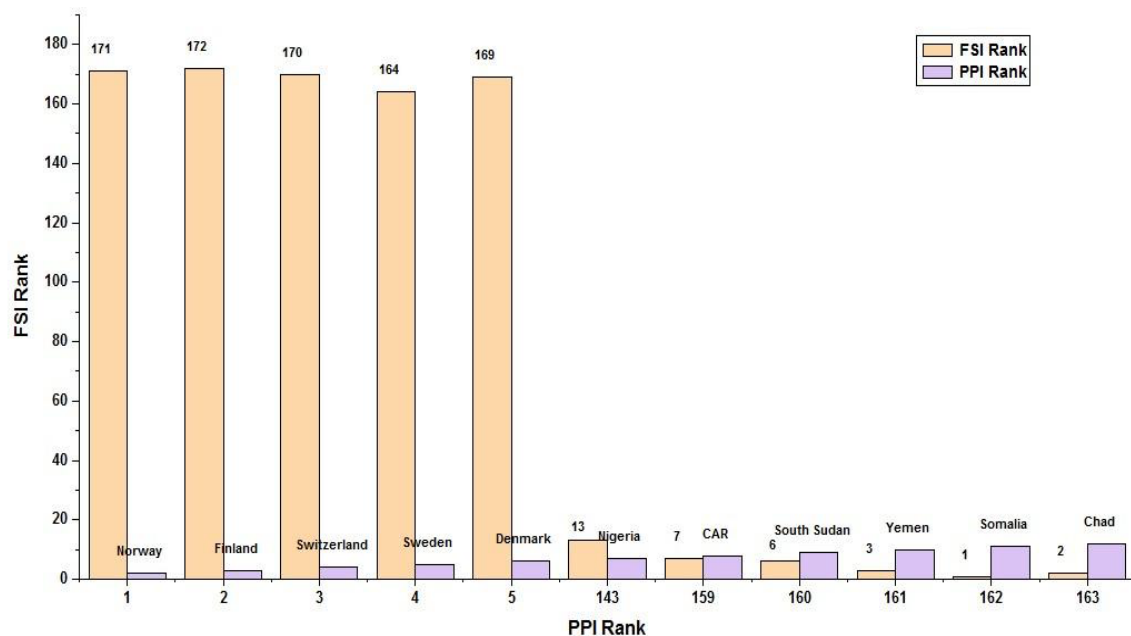
The data obtained from the different sources included quantitative data such as COVID-19 data which were used to analyze relationships between peacebuilding and COVID-19, as an exemplar for disease outbreak. Four indicators for COVID-19: number of tests done, number of confirmed cases, number of deaths, and number of recoveries were obtained. The period observed was February to April 2019. Specific data that was used was for the twenty-ninth day of the three months.

The dataset was compiled and checked for outliers in preparation for analysis. The data was then analyzed and charts created using Origin.

Results

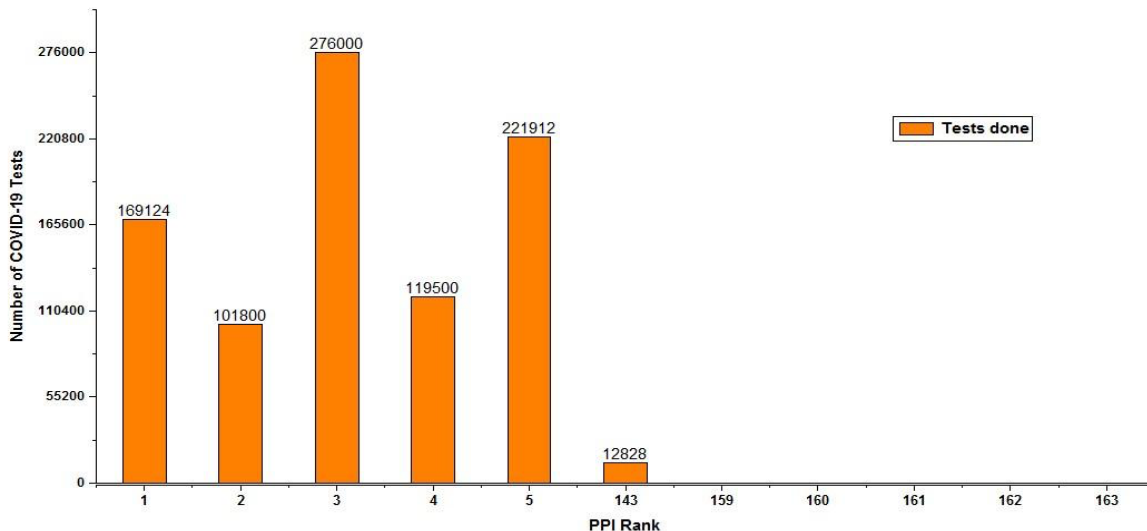
The purpose of this study was to address the question of how fragile states can be more prepared to cushion the socio-economic impacts of disease outbreaks. Therefore, the study focused on establishing peacebuilding as the mechanism for effective response to disease outbreaks. The results of this study show a negative correlation between the PPI and the FSI. What this means is that a country with high levels of positive peace will be less fragile. Hence, as revealed in the figure below, the countries ranking highest in the PPI rank lowest in the FSI.

Figure 1: Countries that have high levels of peace have low levels of fragility.



This study further revealed that high Positive Peace countries have the capacity to detect cases of disease outbreak early through testing, while low PP countries are relatively poor in early case detection.

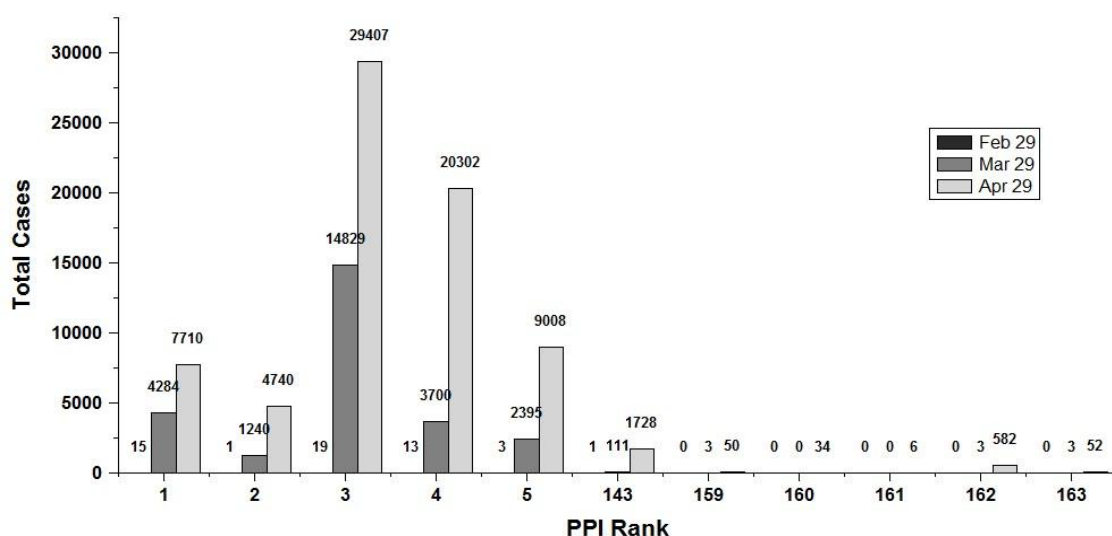
Figure 2: Total Number of COVID-19 Tests done in each country as at 29 April, 2020



From the findings, it is observed that the higher the number of tests done in a country, the higher the number of confirmed cases. Figure 2 above show that low PP countries did not report the number of people tested for COVID-19 as at the time of analyzing this data.

However, data obtained and analyzed gave the evidence that high PP countries detected COVID-19 cases earlier and quicker, and consequently, recorded a higher number of cases, deaths and recoveries than low PP countries.

Figure 3: Total Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases as at 29 April, 2020



Additionally, the numbers of recoveries and deaths recorded in a country over a period of time are influenced by the number of tests done and confirmed cases.

Figure 4: Total Number of COVID-19 Deaths as at 29 April, 2020

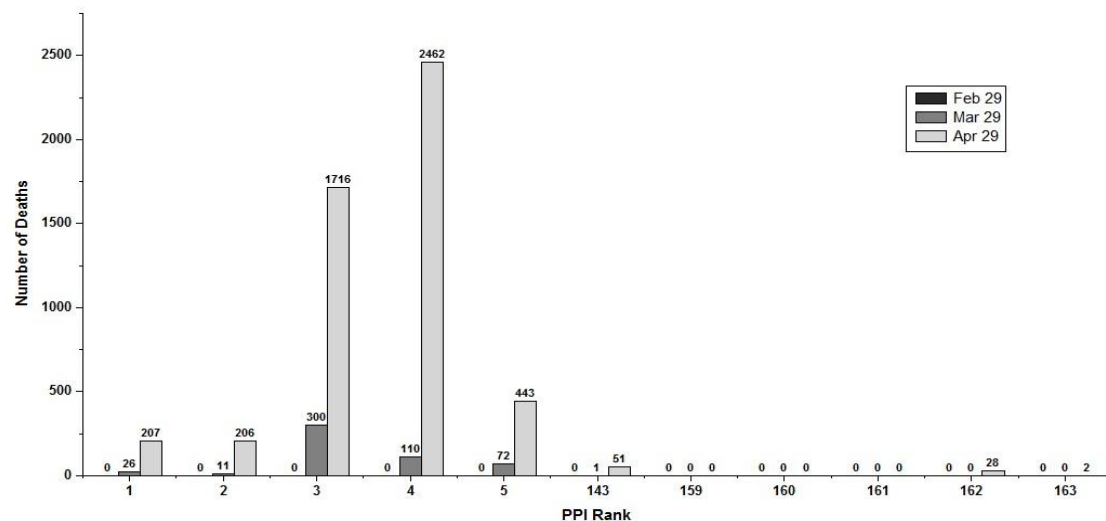
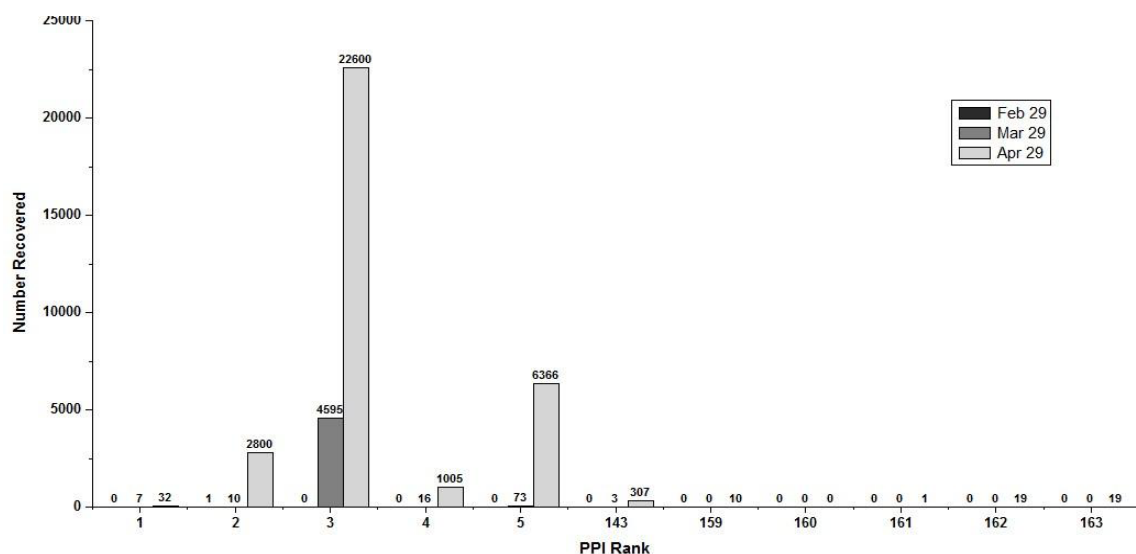


Figure 5: Total Number of infected people, who have recovered from COVID-19 as at 29 April, 2020



Discussion

This study aims to demonstrate that countries with high levels of positive peace due to their vigorous peacebuilding efforts are more resilient and prepared to more effectively cushion the socioeconomic impacts of disease outbreaks. From the above observations and analyses, the study came up with a number of findings.

Although countries may rank high in the PPI, they may still record high fatality from disease outbreak. The reason for this is not far-fetched from the testing capability in countries. As opined in Henrique's analysis, "the lack of widespread, systematic testing in most countries is the main source of

discrepancies in death rates internationally.”¹⁷ This is also not unconnected to such other factor as the systemic nature of societies that makes it difficult to prove causality from one event to another.

For this study, preparedness, partly represented by country testing capacity, and based on the statistics revealed in this study, is determined by the level of positive peace. This implies that high positive peace countries are assumed to have a higher capacity to detect cases than low positive peace countries. This capacity, based on the assertions of the positive peace framework in Table 1 above, boils down – but not limited - to government effectiveness and, is demonstrated by the availability of strong structures and institutions, diagnostic laboratories and sophisticated health facilities that are well-equipped with workforce and modern equipment. Hence, for fragile states to be regarded as prepared and capable to effectively respond to disease outbreaks, they must strive to rank high in the positive peace index.

As observed in figure 2, most low positive peace countries did not report the number of tests done at the time of conducting this study. Navigating through the low PP countries, there are evidences of the lack of testing capacity and monitoring and surveillance facility to provide real time reporting of data in each of them. Nigeria, at the outbreak of COVID-19, had only five testing laboratories and shortages of ventilators. This is to reemphasize the need for justice and strong institutions in fragile states. Various authors have also expressed belief that justice and strong institutions are vital for the containment of disease spread.¹⁸

Conclusion/Recommendation

Fragile states will bear the brunt of pandemics because they lack preparedness and resilience. The narrative can only change if fragile states record high levels of positive peace. This may not stop deaths from arising from an outbreak, but it will help them shorten the lifespan of the outbreak. Consequently, this will reduce spending on long-term disease control, diminish societal tensions and disturbances, and curtail the risks associated with economic growth. My recommendation to fragile states therefore is to reposition their countries on a positive peace system, focusing on improving on the eight pillars, and climbing to the top of the positive peace index.

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An Analytical Description of the Lockdown Being a New Addition in Fighting Global Warming

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Abstract

Global warming has been threatening the future of life on planet Earth. Many steps and precautions had been taken in the past years to reduce the effects of global warming. Somehow the efforts haven't been enough to fight the rapid harms continuously done to the environment. But in recent times due to the pandemic COVID-19, it can be seen that all kinds of pollution have decreased drastically and the main catalyst working here is the global lockdown. Saving our planet has been a major goal in recent years. Tree plantation, recycling, and global awareness are being used every day to reduce the effects of global warming. But the recent lockdown has shown us how much damage mankind has been causing the environment through industrialization, over-consumption, human exposure, and negligence. COVID-19 has forced the world to a lockdown which led to restriction of all human activities all over the world. A remarkable change has been visible by the course of lockdown. It seems that the environment has restored many damages during the lockdown period. Despite all the efforts through the years trying to fight global warming, we had not been nearly successful as the results of lockdown. So, lockdown can be an effective solution in bringing balance back to the environment. A pre-planned week-long lockdown per year, calculating all the aspects can be beneficial for the environment in the long term.

The purpose of this paper is to utilize the study of the effects of lockdown in our climate. It helps to minimize the gap of understanding and to develop the implementation of lockdown. The outcome of the study can contribute to both academic and practical sector. Moreover, it can be used in future research, and decision-makers can come to a better solution with the knowledge of this study. With the global temperature increasing rapidly, it is vital to ensure restoration of the balance of nature. Lockdown is the fast and effective answer to deal with global warming in this crucial hour.

Keywords: Global warming, Climate change, Lockdown, Movement control, COVID – 19, Sustainable consumption.

Introduction

Global warming is one of the most viral issues from the past several decades. Various initiatives were taken to find a proper solution. However, none of them worked enough to solve the issue. Moreover, increasing carbon emission push up global warming to a new height. However, the world experiences a decline in the carbon emission at the present pandemic condition. Data shows that due to movement control and lockdown in several countries, there was a significant drop in human consumption behavior and expenditure. As a result, the production goes down to balance with a lower

consumption rate in most of the sector. Eventually, it contributes positively to reduce global warming indicators.

COVID-19 is a new harmful wide-spreading disease in human history. However, the world had been experienced several epidemics such as smallpox, plague, cholera, influenza, measles, AIDS, Ebola, SARS and currently COVID- 19 (Jones, 2020). Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) caused by the coronavirus, first identified in China in 2003. Later on, in 2012, a similar kind of virus found in Saudi Arabia known as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Current COVID – 19 become very serious that the whole world is now suffering from this disease. World Health Organization (WHO) already declare the global public health emergency due to its high infection rate (Ye et al., 2020). Additionally, it becomes challenging to find a proper solution for this virus for its high rate of transmissibility (Manski & Molinari, 2020). Already many countries applied lockdown or movement control to minimize the spreading of the disease. So, people are forced to limited their activities.

Sustainable consumption is not a new idea to the global community but most of us not interested in this practice voluntarily. So, the impact of sustainable consumption is not that much significant to observe properly at the past time. Nevertheless, this pandemic forces us to control our overconsumption and give away several unnecessary behavior and habits. As a result, we saw a positive effect on the environment and global warming. We human being changed our lifestyle and behavior to adapt to this pandemic situation. Even people are also accepting the “New Normal” to be safe from this pandemic and future diseases.

Within this lockdown period, people are facing several challenges to adapt to the situation. However, currently, people able to adapt to change. A considerable change observed in the lifestyle of society. Especially people avoid unnecessary expense and activities, which is the central concept of sustainable consumption. Furthermore, this lockdown works positively for the carbon emission minimization. So, the policymaker may introduce planned lockdown or movement control to habituate the people with new changing lifestyle. Which is a great way to minimize carbon emission and global warming.

Global warming situation in previous years

The Earth's surface temperature, the oceans and the atmosphere are increasing over time. Moreover, because of this increasing temperature, several negative impacts have been observed in previous years. Data says that nearly on average 1 degree Celsius increased globally since the late 19th century. Maybe this 1 degree Celsius not too much serious issue in our daily life but due to increase of this average 1 degree Celsius globally sea level also increasing (BBC, 2020). Since 1880, the global average sea level has risen by around 8 to 9 inches (21 to 24 centimeters). The rising level of water is mostly due to a mixture of glacier and ice sheet meltwater and seawater thermal expansion as it warms (Lindsey, 2020). The ice in Greenland is now melting six times more quickly than it was four decades before (Mouginot et al., 2019). Much of the change of global warming has emerged in the last 35 years, with the six warmest years on track after 2014 (NASA, 2020). Additionally, with the top 700 meters (about 2,300 feet) of the ocean displaying warming of far more than 0.4 degrees Fahrenheit from 1969, the oceans have consumed all of this elevated heat (Levitus et al., 2017).

There are now consequences that scientists have expected from global climate change: melting of sea ice, the rapid increase in sea level and prolonged, more extreme heatwaves, increased probability of droughts and the increased intensity of hurricanes, such as tropical cyclones, loss of agricultural farm

production, soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, desertification, habitat destruction, ocean acidification, diminished freshwater supplies, and stratospheric ozone disturbance and depletion (Lyons et al., 2018; NASA, 2020; Rossati, 2017; Trenberth, 2018). Human and wildlife both face a great challenge due to global warming and climate change. This is not only the fact of increasing temperature and sea level but almost everything affected by global warming.

There have been 13,740 natural disasters worldwide since 1960. And it caused 5.4 million loss of life moreover 7.9 billion people affected directly and indirectly, and almost 3.3 trillion USD in economic losses. These natural hazards include earthquakes, droughts, epidemics, floods, high temperatures, landslide, insect infestation, dry mass migration, hurricanes, wildfires, volcanic activity, etc. (Fang et al., 2019). Most of these situations created for global warming and climate change. Additionally, at present, almost every country facing more or less the same challenges. Realizing this issue, the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) created The Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) in 1988. At present, the organization has 195 Member countries. The organization was formed to deliver frequent science reports to policy-makers on climate change, its effects and possible future threats, as well as to propose mitigation and adaptation options (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2020).

Lockdown to minimize the spreading of COVID-19

Lockdown or movement control had been applied in several places due to the COVID – 19 impact. COVID - 19 began in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019, when an unresolved pneumonia case was reported (Thienemann et al., 2020). Later on, the virus spread to many countries through the human body. There are very few countries who were not infected by this virus. To understand the severity, the data of the two countries present here. One, South Korea confirmed more than 1000 cases in a week from 31 cases. Another, Iran identified 1,000 cases from zero within 12 days (Zhang et al., 2020). By understanding the wide-spreading nature of the virus, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the COVID-19 as a pandemic. Furthermore, now the condition is so severe that, the total number of infected 33,034,598 and death number is 996,342 till 28th September 2020 (WHO, 2020).

Lockdown is also known as stay-at-home order, safer-at-home order or movement control order in a different country because of different rules and regulation by the authority. The primary purpose of this action or term to ask the people to stay home except for essential activities or to work in essential businesses so that the healthy people may not get infected by the sick people. Currently, many countries and states went through this lockdown to keep people safe from COVID -19 and its spreading. As a result, the regular economic activities fall, production of different sectors lessen than usual capacity even some of them stop due to low and no demand. Not only production but also the service sector also affected a lot. Such as the tourism and aviation industry (Hasanat et al., 2020).

Global warming and environmental situation in COVID -19 period

COVID-19 became a golden opportunity for the mother earth to restore its environment and ecological condition through a lockdown and movement control. A good number of studies and data showed that this rapid and positive change of the global environment never happens in past several decades (e.g. Forster et al., 2020; Le Quéré et al., 2020). Even, Global Carbon Project stated that climate experts forecast that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (i.e. global warming) will decline to levels

unimaginable since the Second World War (Zambrano-Monserrate et al., 2020). Moreover, the new report reveals that, in the first quarter of 2020, the dramatic curtailment of global economic development and migration forced down global energy consumption by 3.8 percent compared to the first quarter of 2019. If lockdowns continue for several months and recoveries across most of the world are sluggish, as is increasingly possible, yearly demand for energy will drop by 6 percent in 2020, wiping out the last five years of growth in production. The last 70 years have not had such a drop (IEA, 2020).

Both municipal and central governments around the world have practically imposed a ban on their residents' free travel outside their home to prevent collective dissemination. So, numerous educational, religion, science, athletic, cultural, and political mass meeting activities such as Olympics, Hajj, etc. are cancelled. Moreover, different kinds of factories are not in production and all forms of transport are limited or cancelled. As a result, industrial waste levels have reduced to a significant degree because of the non-functioning of factories. Vehicles are rarely seen on the highways resulting in almost zero greenhouse gas emissions and toxic tiny particulate matter suspended to the atmosphere. Because of the decreased power consumption in manufacturing and other areas, the use of conventional energy or fossil fuels has been drastically reduced. And it leads to a tremendous improvement of ecosystems.

Comparison between different pollutant present in air before and after lockdown

| | PM ₁₀ | PM _{2.5} | CO ₂ | CO | CH ₄ | H ₂ | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|----------------|------|
| Before lockdown | 176.07 | 0.51 | 6.08 | 2.59 | .03 | 4.05 | 3.93 |
| After lockdown | 84.79 | 0.37 | 3.19 | 0.16 | .02 | 4.32 | 9.75 |

Source- (Arora et al., 2020)

Until COVID-19, a high degree of urban air pollution is struggling worldwide in particular in the form of CO₂, SO₂, NO₂ and particulate matter. From 2001 to 2019, different agencies worldwide revealed, such as clean air systems to reduce emissions levels. These initiatives have emphasized the air quality regulations. They are much low level than the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), and further evidence of the health impacts of air pollution has been studied.

It has been known that before COVID-19, CO₂ emissions were increased consistently by 1 % from the preceding decade (Jackson et al., 2019). The positive result of the lockdown is to minimize CO₂ emissions by -17 per cent (-11 to -25 per cent) by 7 April 2020, relative to 2019 mean emission stage (Quéré et al., 2020). Not only the air quality but also other elements of the environment also had a positive impact due to lockdown. As the human being control the movement, so people are not frequently getting in touch with outside of the house. As a result, almost every kind of pollution decreases a lot. Even wildlife also got space to restructure their livelihood.

Studies found positive relations between per capita energy consumption and per capita GDP with per capita carbon emission (e.g. Dong & Zhao, 2017; Kumar & Muhuri, 2019; Wang et al., 2019). In this COVID – 19 period, several countries and states applied lockdown and movement control. As a result, the energy consumption went down as well as the economic activities. On the other hand, data shows that 2-7% of CO₂ emissions fall in a global context in 2020 compare to 2019 (Barbier, 2020).

About 50% has significantly lowered jet fuel and 30% in gasoline usage. At the same time, electricity demand has decreased by less than 10%. CO₂ emissions decreased by 15 %, while local air contaminants also decreased, saving nearly 200 lives a month (Gillingham et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the evidence from the literature found a positive relationship between energy consumption, globalization, economic growth (Balsalobre-Lorente et al., 2020). Subsequently, the outbreaks of COVID-19 hence the need for lockdowns have contributed to a decline in the consumption of electricity. Almost every kind of economic operations have been set on hold and that lead to a dramatic decline in energy demand, followed by a reduction in carbon emissions. Moreover, Solarin et al., (2016) mentioned that, in the long run, globalization and energy consumption are strongly linked.

Sustainable consumption to minimize global warming

Increasing economy, population and consumption have created tremendous and often detrimental impacts on the natural ecosystem and resource base of the Planet. Extreme natural resource mining, habitat destruction and climate change have become very significant. Additionally, over and unnecessary consumption has a negative impact on the environment (Joshua, 2017). Even studies found ‘hyper-consumption’ trend among people is increasing. In this trend, people intend to buy and consume more than they can afford and need (Lai & Ho, 2020). On the other hand, there is a strong relationship between per capita carbon emission and per capita consumption and expenditure (Dong & Zhao, 2017). So, it seems that increase of over and unnecessary consumption contribute to higher per capita consumption and expenditure. As a result, per capita carbon emission boosts up the global carbon emission.

There are many studies, and substantial evidence proved that carbon emissions responsible for global warming (Parncutt, 2019). The previous section highlighted the data and information regarding increasing global warming and its effect on mother earth and humankind until this pandemic situation. Moreover, Tollefson, (2020) showed how this pandemic contributes to minimizing the carbon emission in five several ways. Because of this pandemic situation, most of the people are concern about their essential needs rather than an unnecessary expenditure. In some case, people are forced to have only necessary goods and service due to lockdown or movement control which is considered as sustainable consumption. For example, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the demand for oil in January–September 2020 fall down nearly 50% (Balsalobre-Lorente et al., 2020). Which means a good number of human activities has been slow down which many not essential for people. Moreover, Cohen, (2020) mentioned about the opportunity of sustainable consumption transition by this pandemic situation. Already a study found that 86.7% of participants able to control their unnecessary expenditure within this pandemic period in India (Tripathy et al., 2020).

It is true that following sustainable consumption by a single person is not possible to change the entire situation unless everyone participates and cooperate with this strategy. Policy for sustainable consumption must be understood in the context of the urgent need for demand-side emissions reductions to reach critical medium-term targets by 2030. Most of the sustainability policy is technological innovation-focused. However, sustainable consumption is more about behavioural change within the people to minimize the per capita expenditure and consumption.

Planned lockdown / movement control for sustainable consumption

These beneficial environmental effects could be immediate, but this lockdown should teach policymakers and people how to minimise emissions on a long-term basis (Muhammad et al., 2020). Apart from the negative impact of COVID-19 on the health sector, this pandemic contributes to enhance sustainable consumption as well as minimise the carbon emission (Cohen, 2020). People indeed faced a different kind of challenges for sudden lockdown or movement control order from the authority, but every government tried to support the people to manage the situation.

Sustainable consumption is a behavioural issue of people, and it may take time to change the mind of the consumers toward sustainable consumption (Fischer et al., 2017). To aware the people and make them habituate with the sustainable consumption government need to take several actions. By considering and evaluating this situation, this study suggests having a planned lockdown or movement control period to get the full benefit of sustainable consumption in future. If the government or the authority take enough preparation for a planned lockdown period, people will face less challenge to habituate with the situation. For example, one of the best outcomes of this pandemic is “work from home”. Although it was difficult for many employees to accept the change, it reshapes perceptions of organizations and individuals about work and occupations. Most importantly, studies found that the “work from home” concept helps to enhance the productivity of the employee and minimize the overall cost of operation (Caramela, 2020).

Conclusion

Almost every country and many organizations are working to minimize global warming so that we can save our planet from the negative consequence of climate change. Although several studies and experiments were done, and many initiatives have been taken. However, none of them is effective enough to fight global warming. But this COVID-19 situation capable of minimizing the carbon emission as well as betterment for other environmental issues. Due to lockdown, people are forced to limited their activities, consumption and expenditure. As a result, studies found that per capita carbon emission goes down because of limited per capita consumption and expenditure. Although experts suggest that, sustainable consumption helps to minimize global warming, but until this pandemic time, it was not possible to apply the strategy. However, people forced this time to go for lockdown and practice sustainable consumption which results in a positive impact on the global warming issue. By exploring and considering all the information, this theoretical study suggests applying a planned lockdown or movement control on a regular basis with further study in future. This kind of initiative help to habituate people with sustainable consumption as well as minimize the global warming impact.

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Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit (CPIA) in Philippine Communities:

A Social Accountability Program in a Monitory Democracy

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Abstract

Public trust in public service is a government condition which is determined, continuously challenged and spurred as mandated functions of bureaucrats and elected official are expected to be executed, hopefully for the general welfare of the state. Statutes, institutions, key state and non-state actors, political, economic and socio-cultural systems and processes form part of the public sector governance ecosystem. Performances in the implementation of programs and projects, that may be national, regional or local in scope, are measured, monitored and evaluated in a periodic basis. Constantly, short-term, medium-term and long-term development plans are set by the current government regime with the intention of making a responsive, inclusive and sustainable corrective actions. Monitory Democracy as introduced by John Keane (*Life and Death of Democracy*, 2009) is the on-going public scrutiny and public control of decision makers, whether they operate in the field of government or inter-governmental institutions, or within so-called non-governmental or civil society organizations, such as businesses, trade unions, sports associations and charities. Prior to the COVID-19 era, there are growing political, economic and social movements that push governance in its barest forms across different countries worldwide. In the procurement function of providing social amelioration programs to the poorest of the poor and the vulnerable lower middle class, the hallmarks of good public sector governance, namely accountability, leadership, integrity, stewardship and transparency is warranted from individual and institutional levels. The Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit (CPIA), as a social innovation and social accountability mechanism may be institutionalized even beyond COVID-19. The theoretical foundations and linkages established in this paper serve as building blocks in addressing the ramifications, competency requirements, incentives and features of a risk-based, and gender-responsive regulatory governance reform in the public administration of the Philippines' predominantly poor communities.

Keywords: new communitarianism, new public governance, public service motivation and citizens' participatory internal audit.

Introduction

Governments across different countries set their development plans anchored on pre-determined intended outcomes that may be aligned to the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Improvement of citizens' quality of life to a certain comfortable level would require careful planning, grounded implementation and tight internal control in order to ensure that with limited resources, set goals will be achieved, better yet exceeded. Inclusive growth of any state may be elusive yet practically possible to attain. Development across the different strata of society in a simultaneous

fashion, will be challenging and would require strong collaboration between the government, private sector and civil society.

Inclusive growth, though elusive, in the different echelons of the economy, will require effective and efficient implementation of development plans. Ascending and accelerating socio-economic growth rates within a period of performance, assessment and evaluation may be analyzed further to better understand the rationale behind increments and decline. From risk society to audit society through risk regulation regimes, the intention is to mitigate risks, specifically financial risks and operational risks in the public sector, through social insurance / protection programs, grounded on social accountability and social innovation, such as the Citizens' Participatory Audit program, adapted by the Philippines' Commission on Audit since 2011. Power (1997) believed that the state has become increasingly and explicitly committed to an indirect supervisory capacity without assuming a decisive function. The state cannot play this indirect role without assuming a decisive function. The state cannot play this indirect role without assuming the efficacy of these practices at the foot of a regulatory hierarchy. Audit is not simply a solution to a technical problem. Audit also makes possible ways of redesigning the practice of government.

The Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) in a specific country, normally spearhead and accommodate citizens' engagement through citizens' participatory audit in order to promote transparency and accountability in public service. Various activities and approaches have already been adapted by different SAIs across different countries to signify citizens' engagement. Motivations from responding citizens may initially be for enjoyment and personal benefit to tokenism to citizen power (Arnstein, 1969).

Citizens' engagement may come in various forms and manners of manifestations. Citizens' engagement may come as a game changer for development. Citizens' engagement may be viewed from a rights-based perspective or from an instrumental approach. As Amartya Sen argues, citizen engagement is a key component of human capability, making it a right-based perspective. On the other hand, Ghazala Mansuri and Vijayendra Rao propose citizens' engagement as a means to achieving improved developmental outcomes, making it an instrumental approach. If extreme positions will not be taken, then perhaps a middle ground, or a combination of the rights-based approach and the instrumental approach will be forged (Worldbank, 2015). As far as developmental outcomes are concerned, citizens' engagement will definitely provide positive outcomes that may not be achieved, should citizens' engagement is minimal or non-existent. The World bank viewed that with citizens' engagement as game changer for development, the following development outcomes will be achieved: a) better budget utilization; b) improved service delivery; c) greater state responsiveness to citizens' needs; d) the creation of spaces for citizen engagement and e) the empowerment of local voices.

The quest for the suitable features of an inclusive, extensive or representative and sustainable regulatory reform framework, that will affect a truly active citizen engagement through citizens' participatory audit, may be long, winding and difficult. However, different local government units may face different risk regulation regimes which should be addressed through a devolved function of internal audit. The dichotomy of *ex ante* scrutiny / audit and *ex post* scrutiny /audit may have their respective intended purposes. However, with long standing audit findings, remaining unresolved, anchored on weak internal control on certain accounting cycles, it is worth looking at the merits of internal audit. As per Philippine Administrative Order Number 70 of 2003 issued to government agencies and local government units included, the parties concerned were mandated to have an Internal Audit Service unit in their respective jurisdictions. The internal audit function may have not been properly and comprehensively applied in all transactions of certain local government units. Involving citizens to be

pro-active and be engaged in Citizens' Participatory Audit, may be the bitter pill which may necessitate the elusive cure to the administrative illness of weak internal control and poor record keeping which most local government units have experienced for a long period of time.

Based on the annual financial reports and annual audited reports (2018) prepared by the Commission on Audit (COA), a general overview about the compliance¹ profile of 146 cities and 1,488 municipalities nationwide revealed that majority of these cities received qualified, disclaimer and adverse audit opinion. Such audit compliance status supports further the need to have these more aggressive governance reforms, so as to strengthen the symbiotic participation of the private sector and civil society in the regulatory governance framework.

Grounded on new public governance theory (Osborne, 2010) of government-society relationships, aggravated further with the challenges brought about by climate change and public health concerns, private and public organizations of the 21st century are pressed to look for opportunities which will encourage and eventually institutionalized risk-based regulatory policies at national and local levels. Adapting the World Bank's prescribed community development model, community financial management system and community procurement system, there are networks of activities that would demand efficient, effective, and economic utilization of natural and fiscal resources. As a good governance feature, tight internal control system will have to be in place and will be achieved through internal audit. As a case in point, the Department of Social Welfare and Development conducted since 2003 the National Community Driven Development Program (NCDDP) which incorporated citizens participation in the community procurement process, as prescribed in the Philippine Government Procurement Act of 2003 (R.A. 9184).

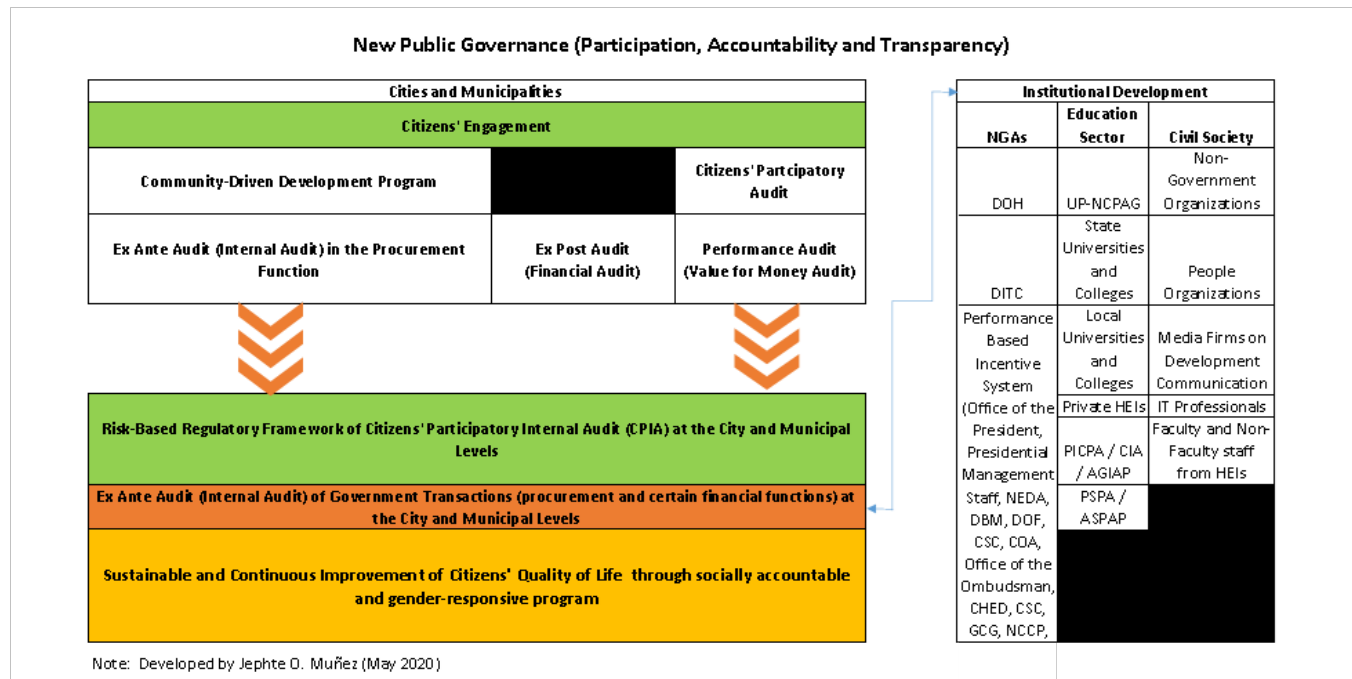
With limited Commission on Audit (COA) personnel to conduct ex ante and ex post audit engagements, the paper posits the institutionalization of the devolved function of citizens' participatory internal audit (Phase 1) across the wider realm of government transactions at the city and municipal levels. Through a collaborative regulatory governance system between the Commission on Audit, State Universities and Colleges, Local Universities and Colleges and Civil Society, Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit may be achieved.

The Five (5) percent annual budget allocation for Gender and Development activities across the Local Government Units may be a good source of funding in order to implement Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit (CPIA) program. Ultimately, the Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit is envisioned to be an inclusive Governance Reform Framework. Understanding the governance ecosystem, wherein key state and non-state actors, resources, systems and processes are placed in deep scrutiny and analysis. The regulatory reform framework will orchestrate collaborative and engaging citizens to be politically active, concerned, involved and committed individuals to state affairs.

As the Philippines and other countries around the globe are going through one of the most difficult times in the pages of world's history due to the novel corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic, the phenomenon commands a multi-level regulatory governance framework for strong collaborative linkages to flourish between civil society, the academic communities, the industries and the government, for a much-improved quality of life among the citizens of the Philippines.

As a policy regulatory reform initiative, the devolve function of internal audit at the city and municipal levels will have to be institutionalized (grounded on institutionalism²) and operationalized (grounded on the network theory³).

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework



Based on field work experiences and research on the type of state audit being conducted by the Commission on Audit (COA), most often, ex post audit and performance audit (or value for money audit) is being conducted through the citizens' participatory audit program of the Philippines' Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) or COA. A parallel analysis revealed that ex ante audit or internal audit is actually being carried out at the city and municipal levels for projects covered by the KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP⁴ of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Thus, in the spirit of public governance, transparency and accountability, a proposed devolved function of internal audit be done at the community level, not only for KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP⁵ projects but for operational and financial activities of the barangays (communities) all over the country. Initially, the citizens' participatory internal audit will be conducted in the procurement function but eventually will include all other pertinent administrative functions at the community level.

Social Accountability and its Conceptual Challenges

Social Accountability is a process of constructive engagement between technically competent and willing to engage citizens and a responsive government to conduct a social audit on the administrative procedures and processes as well as check the conduct and performance of public officials, politicians and service providers based on accessible and verifiable information as these individuals use public resources to deliver services, inclusive community development, protection of the citizens' socio-economic welfare and ensure human rights are respected and uphold (ANSA-EAP, 2015).

For social accountability to foster, there are four pillars⁶ that will create an enabling environment: 1) organized and capable citizen groups; 2) government champions who are willing to engage; 3) context and cultural appropriateness; and 4) access to information.

Social audit can be defined as an approach and process to build accountability and transparency in the use and management of public resources. It relies on engagement from citizens and / or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to directly and /or indirectly demand accountability and transparency in the public policy and budget cycles. Social audit is participatory and can be an anti-corruption and efficiency mechanism. It is based on the premise that citizens want and have the right to know what the government does, how it does it; how it impacts on them; and what the government has an obligation to account and be transparent to citizens (Berthin:2011)⁷.

The Manual on Community Participation in Government Procurement sets the guidelines drawing lessons from experiences in community-based / community-driven development projects, good LGU practices and from existing laws and guidelines. It focuses on how the community can participate in managing procurement by being involved in planning, procurement and implementation, and on how the community can participate as contractors or service providers under negotiated procurement through community participation.

Citizens Participatory Internal Audit, as an accountability mechanism, may be able to pick up important principles, procedures and guidelines from the community participation in government procurement manual prepared for similar purposes set forth in the internal control components of the Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual.

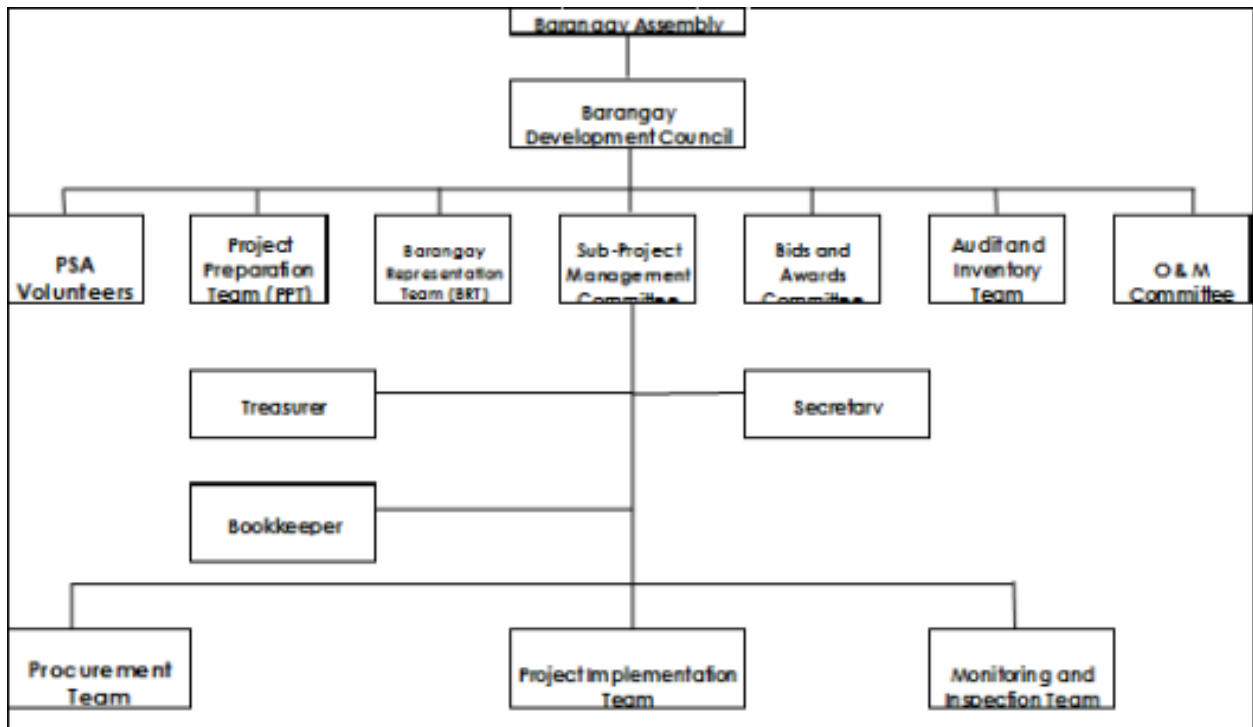
Issues and Challenges in having the Citizens' Participatory Audit

From the COA's perspective, a report provided the following concerns that needs resolution and action plan:

1. Securing the buy-in of top and middle management and rank and file employees must be the first order of business.
2. Constant review, assessment and adaptation including redesign and adjustments in previously agreed upon activities are expected to be part and parcel of the implementation processes.
3. Creating awareness and building capacities are important for sustainability.
4. Putting more teeth into public audits.

Based on the KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP Community Financial Manual (Wrathall and Muñoz, 2013), the program provides certain committees, which are composed of volunteer citizens, who are engaged in the audit and third-party monitoring and inspection.

Figure 2 Parallel Review on the Internal Audit Function in the KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP



SOURCE:: KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP Community Financial Manual, 2013

On Internal Audit in the Philippine Public Sector

The legal bases for internal audit is very much pronounced with a listing of pertinent laws, orders and regulatory directives. However, as Mendoza noted alarming realities on the ground, as follows: Without the support from the LGU officials, initiatives to improve the internal audit performance may end up at the lowest priorities causing transparency of local fiscal administration to suffer. Considering that 66.33 percent of elected mayors are part of political dynasties (Mendoza et al, 2015), loyalty to elected officials may be attributed to long standing relationship of certain citizens with the ruling influential families. Objectivity in the conduct of internal audit function may be difficult to achieve. Furthermore, majority of the 146 cities and 1,488 remain not to have an Internal Audit Unit. Thus, it will be a good alternative or arrangement to have COA accredited Citizen Participatory Auditors, to be hired as consultants, aligned with the provisions of the Philippine Government Internal Auditors Manual.

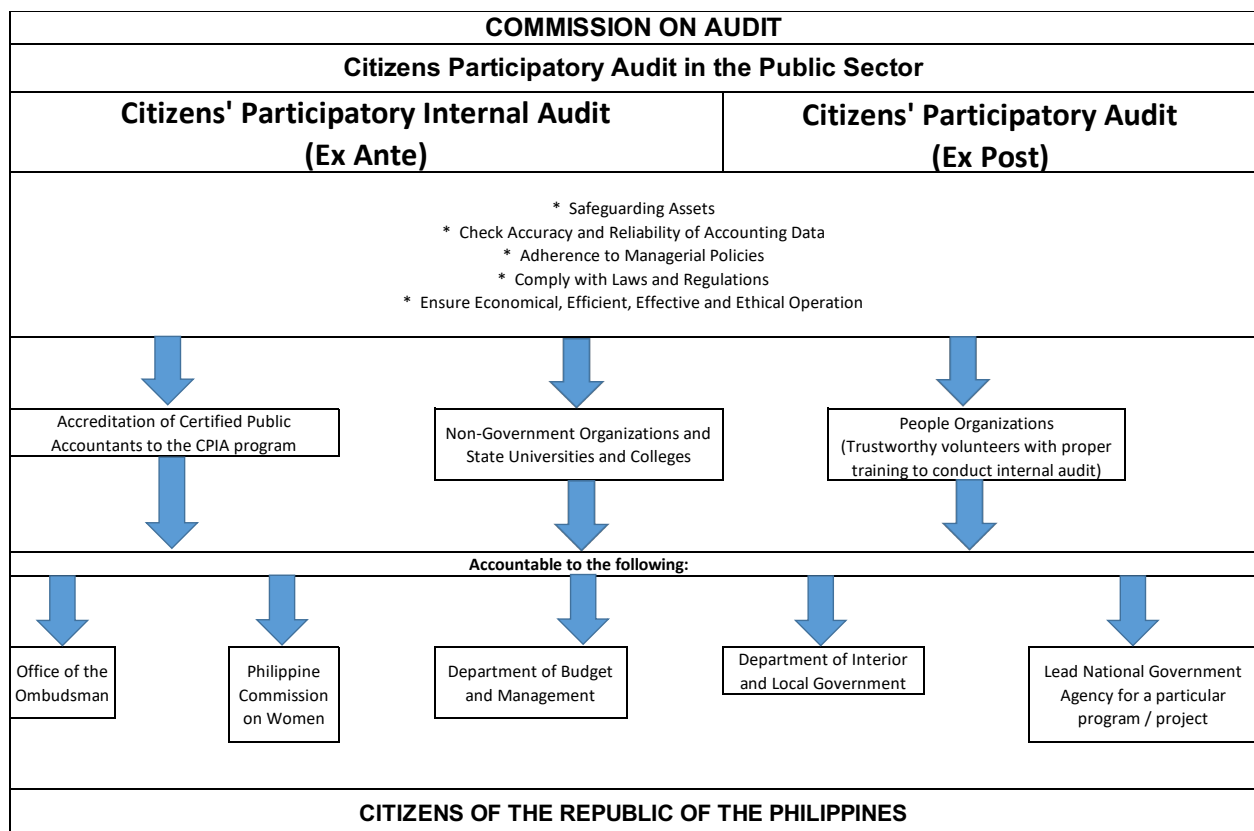
Conclusion and Recommendations

To ensure active citizens' engagement through citizens' participatory audit at the local government level, the view should be from a multi-dimensional perspective rather than from a straightforward perspective. Emphasis should be given to wider scope and extent and on a per

jurisdiction basis. Value for money audit, as a special performance audit, could be a good start. However, COA should redirect its audit agenda to internal audit or ex ante audit, rigorously apply the relevant laws that prescribe community or citizen participation in government procurement, and eventually to other expenditure and monitoring activities for a more proactive stance in transparency, accountability and integrity.

Certain audit functions will be performed by professional Certified Public Accountants while certain audit functions, particularly internal audit functions that may be devolved at the community level. Citizens audit teams should closely coordinate with the Commission on Audit, Department of Interior and Local Government as well as with the Department of Budget and Management. Proper technical workshops should be provided by State Universities and Colleges, spearheaded by the University of the Philippines – National College of Public Administration and Governance, Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the Philippine Society for Public Administration in order to ensure that quality audit will be assured.

Figure 3 Proposed Framework for Citizens' Participatory Internal Audit



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¹ Compliance (or non-compliance) to the Philippine Public Sector Accounting Standards (PPSAS) as well as to the Philippine Public Sector Auditing and Assurance Standards (PPSAAS) in the preparation of audited financial statements as well as the audit opinion, audit observations and recommendations.

² Institutionalism is not a theory in a formal sense; it is instead the framework, the language and the set of assumptions that hold and guide empirical research and theory-building in (much of) public administration. (Frederickson, 2012).

³ Network governance, concerned with how “self organizing inter-organizational networks” (Rhodes, 1997; see also Kickert, 1993) function both with and without government to provide public services.

⁴ KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP stands for Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services – National Community Driven Development Program

KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP, otherwise known as the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services-National Community-Driven Development Program, is one of the poverty alleviation programs of the Philippine Government being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). It was approved on 18 January 2013 by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) Board, which was headed by President Benigno Aquino III.

KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP is the expansion into a national scale of operations of the community-driven development (CDD) approach, which was tried and proven effective by Kalahi-CIDSS, its predecessor, which started in 2003.

CDD is a globally recognized strategy for achieving service delivery, poverty reduction, and good governance outcomes. It:

- Helps communities in poor municipalities identify challenges around reducing poverty and make informed decisions on a range of locally identified options for development, including how this is made and in what form;
- Gives control of resources to address local poverty to communities; and
- Builds the capacity of both state (including local governments) and civil society stakeholders to provide assistance and respond to calls for support from poor communities as they implement development initiatives.

The development objective of KALAH-CIDSS-NCDDP is to have barangays/communities of targeted municipalities become empowered to achieve improved access to services and to participate in more inclusive local planning, budgeting, and implementation.

⁶ Discussions were retrieved from www.ansa-eap.net/about-us/who-we-are/the-four-pillars-of-social-accountability/

⁷ For further elaboration on definitions and alternative definitions, see Social Audit Tool Handbook. USAID. 2008. http://www.microlinks.org/ev_en.php?ID=25145 201&ID2-DO TOPIC.

Nature's Retaliation & Our Repentance

Aloysius Pieris, SJ – Sri Lanka

Oh the sin of human greed
That marred our paradise!
It spawned in us a fatal need
For a lethal merchandise
Which cannot starving children feed But cruel wars devise!
We who sowed that noxious seed With death are called to dice!

Nature's vengeance now we face!
Broke she all our fences
Which kept apart a race from race.
Her wrath defies defenses!

Trips by rail and air and sea
Have come to a deadly halt.
Social mammals though we be,
Now loners through our fault.

It's our wild pursuit of lust That made us eat the fruit!
The cunning snake that eats the dust Has made us each a brute.
Betray we did the Maker's trust
And did Her Will dispute
Repent we will; repent we must
And ne'er the earth pollute

As we cease to hurt the Earth, Observe its vengeful ban,
Witness we a second birth In Nature's world-wide span

Skies are blue; trees are green
The roads devoid of fumes
Birds are heard and even seen!
Its role the Earth resumes.

Time has come to change our ways
And treat this cosmic shrine
As a consecrated space
To hear the voice divine!
Let us spend the rest of days
Toeing Nature's line; For the Holy Bible says
"Abide by God's design."

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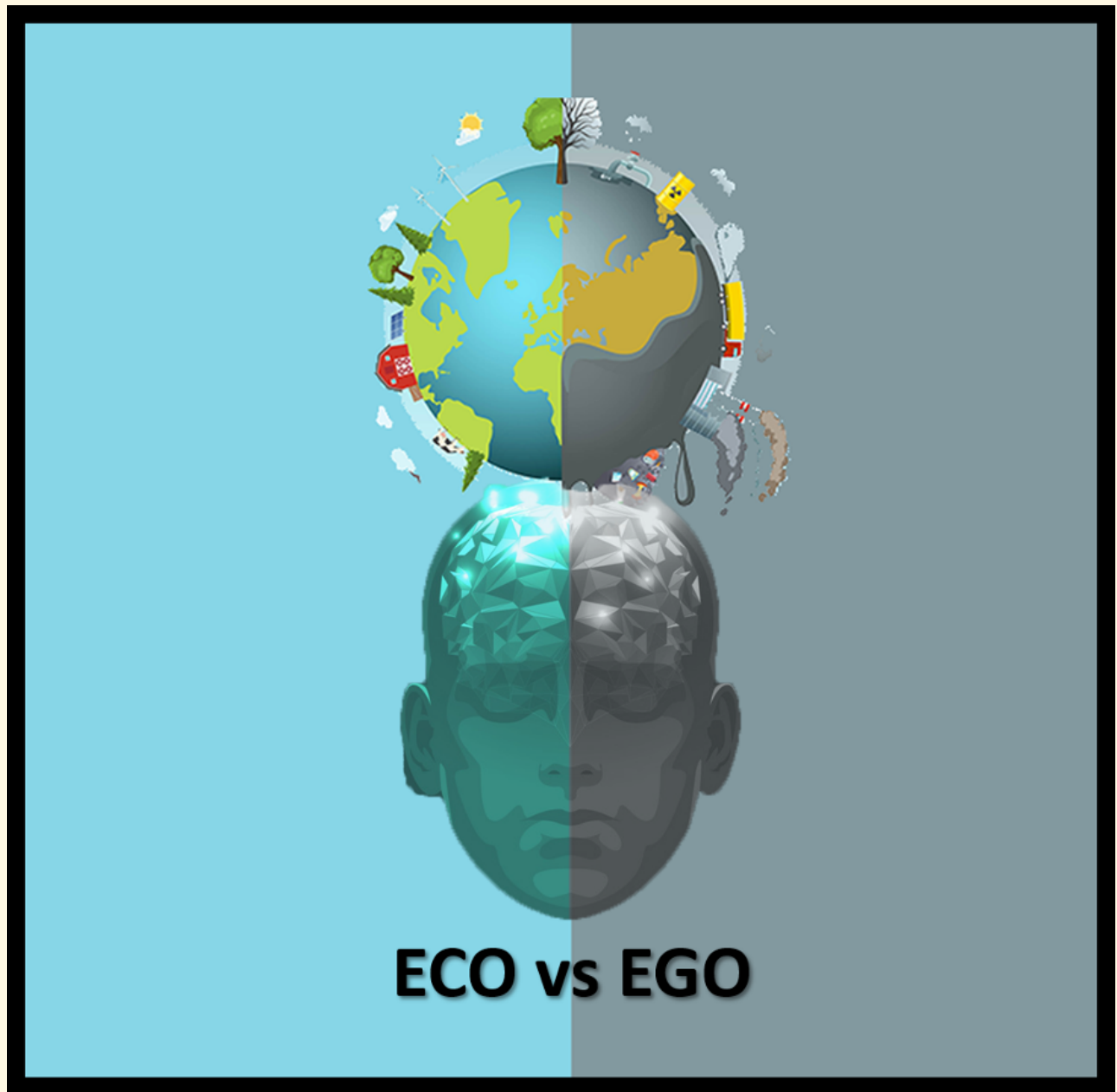
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Eco vs. Ego

Patrick Drishya Purification –Bangladesh



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