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Oil Policy and  
Geopolitics

Third Discussion on the  
Origin

Opportunity of Resistance to  
Pedagogical

Exploration the Essence of the  
Universe



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# Second Time Exploration the Essence of the Universe

*Samo Liu*

## ABSTRACT

"Exploration the Essence of the Universe" (liu (2024)) discussed the issues of time and space. This article mainly discusses the existence within space. The exist in space was matter, energy and information. Energy is the origin of matter, Information is the source of energy and matter, It's all in space. Exist can express the form and the nature of space, and can perceive force and time. Socrates, in order to respect space, put aside the thinking of space, Aristotle founded the philosophical thinking of matter. Today, we have to explore space and still respect space. Name of space is tan (憊) in this article, showing reverence for space, Please don't use the name it (它).

**Keywords:** the space, the existence, basic energy, intellectual energy, the time, energy, information matter and substance, cosmic origin.

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# Second Time Exploration the Essence of the Universe

Samo Liu

## ABSTRACT

*"Exploration the Essence of the Universe" (liu (2024)) discussed the issues of time and space. This article mainly discusses the existence within space. The exist in space was matter, energy and information. Energy is the origin of matter, Information is the source of energy and matter, It's all in space. Exist can express the form and the nature of space, and can perceive force and time. Socrates, in order to respect space, put aside the thinking of space, Aristotle founded the philosophical thinking of matter. Today, we have to explore space and still respect space. Name of space is tan(德) in this article, showing reverence for space, Please don't use the name it (它).*

**Keywords:** the space, the existence, basic energy, intellectual energy, the time, energy, information matter and substance, cosmic origin.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Universe is Material, and Its Origin is Energy and Information Humans are composed of matter. As is well known, living humans are a combination of body and soul. When the soul exists, we can feel that a person is alive and has subjective consciousness. When a person dies, the soul leaves the human body, and the human body still exists as ordinary matter, but it still has the perceptiveness of the soul, just like a stone's perception of force. Humans can exist twice. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe," "Thinking and research on the Human origin," Liu (2024))

Thermodynamics tells us: matter is a kind of existence on motion, change, and dynamic. Where there is matter and energy, there must be heat, not absolute zero. (王志诚 "Statistical Physics of Thermodynamics") Time is the expression of the process of existence of matter and material energy; No matter how long the existence time of stars and galaxies, or how short the existence time of particles, their nature of exist is the same as that of living humans. heat is the expression of the exist and motion of materiality and energy, which is the same as human exist. Matter is real, and we cannot deny this exist, or treat this exist as nothingness. The matter we see is formed by the collection of energy and information. (Liu "Thinking and research on the Human origin Krauss," "A Universe from nothing") Principle of entropy increase is the actual situation of the universe after the formation of matter and energy. existing matter, under the guidance of information, has a soul, allowing matter to perceive all forces, all energy, and information. The process of perception is the time process of material motion and change, and it is also a process of material decay after reaching a balanced state, changing into a form of thermal energy, moving towards balance. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe") The exist of energy is to create matter and express the state of matter's exist. Matter is a collection of energy structure and mass structure. In dynamic energy, matter is formed with reduced entropy, in steady-state matter, it changes back to energy, increasing entropy. Chapter 38 of the "Tao Te Ching" tells us, that the highest benevolence of the universe is thermal equilibrium, which means the total entropy is 0. (Liu "Tao Te Ching-Universal Declaration") Human made factors, such as the creation of atomic bombs, can prematurely or unexpectedly end the life of matter

or stones, but in natural conditions, it will gradually return to the end of its temporal life.

The origin that allows matter and energy to be created, exist, move, and change is also a kind of energy. "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" names it was Intellectual energy (智慧能量), which was a kind of information, the force and the time in physics. Has been discussed in "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe." This is a divine, empty force in the universe, the original cause and reason that allows energy and matter to transform each other. Energy is designed as a factor, the origin of matter, and the origin of energy is called basic energy (基础能量). Causes (因, 阴) and factors (因素, 阳) are the yin and yang existence attributes of the universe. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

## II. MATTER AND EXISTENCE

This is a simple question, yet it easily leads to human disputes and confrontations. In "宇宙本原经典考," it was discovered that 2500 years ago, Buddha Shakyamuni was already concerned about this issue. On one hand, humans are material, and the universe endows the living with material desires, leading to the emergence of four phenomena, called the four images: the image of self (我相), the image of person (人相), the image of sentient beings (众生相), and the image of obstinate (寿者相). (Liu "宇宙本原经典考") Our ancestors awakened and discovered the issue of empty (空), the issue of emptiness (空性), the issue of nothingness (无), and the issue of divinity. This issue can lead to human disputes over the original exist of the universe, the controversy between emptiness and exist, or the controversy between having (有) and not having (无), which is the controversy over the origin of the universe. This contradictory issue has been debated for over two thousand years, or even longer.

In the "Diamond Sutra", Buddha reminded humans: do not fall into the desires of material things, do not be limited by material thinking and contemplation, and at the same time, do not be tempted or confused by the existence of emptiness

and divinity. Therefore, the Middle Way (中道) was proposed, and the Second Patriarch of Buddhism, Nagarjuna (龙树), specifically left behind the "Mahaprajna paramita Shastra (大智度论)" and the "Madhyamaka shastra (中论)." work. (Edited by Master 星云) The "Mahaprajna paramita Shastra" and the "Madhyamaka shastra" hope that human thinking should follow the Middle Way (中道) and not be biased, neither being obsessed with material things nor with emptiness. This theory is the main theory of Eastern Mahayana Buddhism, and the Second Patriarch has become the common ancestor of the eight schools in the East, that is, the common Mahayana Buddhism of eight sects of Buddhism. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

The "Tao Te Ching" begins with the immateriality that the emptiness (无) is the beginning of heaven and earth (无名天地之始), and the exist (有) named is the mother of all things (有名万物之母). In the East, there are disputes, but they are not fierce. There are religions that practice with the body; there is a culture called Confucianism, which also believes in this, because there is a common belief called the "I Ching." However, the expression with language, wordage, and numbers is not understood. There is not enough information, but the East does not have Aristotle. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe.") Seems to be waiting for modern physics.

The disputes are more intense in the West. From fragmented information analysis, the ancestors of the West also thought about the origin of the universe, but not systematically. Aristotle appeared, and material philosophy and material science emerged, setting aside the contradictions of human thought, focusing on the study of matter and human society, leading to earth-shaking changes for humanity. Scientists discovered mechanics; energy; information science of systems science; created nuclear weapons, robots, and discovered genes. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

The "I Ching" inspires us to think about the universe, which is to think about the problem of



yin(阴)and yang(阳)contradictions, to think about the conceptual problem of yin and yang, which is very contradictory and complex. Once the philosophical concepts are clear, it becomes very simple. The author believes that Taoist and Buddhist philosophical thoughts start from the thinking of contradictions and solve the method of thinking about contradictions. Understanding the original thoughts of Taoism and Buddhism about the universe, start from the understanding of nothingness(无)and emptiness(空). The author has liked to think about the problems of nothingness and emptiness since childhood. Thinking about energy and information as the category of emptiness and nothingness, originating from the theoretical learning and practice of mineral processing.

Mineral processing, an engineering discipline, is also called beneficiation, and in some countries, it is included in the category of metallurgy. Minerals like stones are called ores, and mineral processing is the discipline of extracting useful substances to humans from ores. Using energy and information to process stones and make them change. From university to doctorate, from technician to rank of professor level senior engineer, the study is about this. It is a practical professional field. Simply put, it involves blasting a mountain into stones, turning stones into stone blocks, and making the blocks into stone powder finer than flour, approximately -200 mesh = 0.074 mm or below, micron level, and then sorting and extracting useful substances. Many raw materials in industry, daily life, and the military are also produced in this way. (孙传尧 "Comprehensive Utilization Handbook of Mineral Resources") It uses scientific methods such as physics, chemistry, and physical chemistry.

### 2.1 Are stones three-dimensional?

Descartes invented and created the three-dimensional mathematical coordinate system, which is a standard tool for theoretical science. It can also serve as a standardized theoretical scientific expression for the existence of matter; engineering science is the same. However, if practitioners of engineering disciplines regard stones or matter as

three-dimensional, they will become foolish and at a loss. Because the shape of stones is irregular, with strange shapes in all directions. "Zhuangzi 《庄子》" calls it the six direction(六合). (Liu (2021)) The existence of matter is not three-dimensional, but the calculus(微积分) of atomic and molecular existence, which develops and exists changes in all directions. We can express it with three-dimensional theory, but its real existence shape cannot be directly said to be three-dimensional. It must be calculated with calculus. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe") However, it is customary to express matter as three-dimensional, without delving into its mysteries.

Matter is actually existing. If described with real dimensions, it is infinitely dimensional; if described with virtual dimensions, it is not only time, but also the cause(因)of time and mechanics. Time only represents the numerical process of existence, whether it is matter or material energy. (Liu " Reflection and research on the origin of the universe", liu(2024)") Taoist philosophy says that when matter or energy is created, the universe endows it with the cause of time that leads changes and balances directions. ("鹖冠子") The International Committee of Weights and Measures(CIPM)defines the "second" as this meaning. (13th CGPM. (1969)) Please judge (Liu (2024)). There are many causes and factors that lead to the change of stones, many force factors, specifically called energy, kinetic energy, electromagnetic energy, chemical bond energy, atomic energy, etc., as well as thermal energy.

Relativity discovered the kinetic limit of matter and the equivalence of matter and energy with optical information; do other forms of energy have this phenomenon? Making matter into 0 dimensions; making existence into absolute 0 degrees; there should be, the "I Ching" tells us that as long as we understand one thing, the universe is alive, and all existence has the problem of life and death, the problem of existence and non-existence.(刘(2024)) Based on the origin of the universe, physics can discover new ideas and can rethink thermodynamics. New force cause can be discovered.

## 2.2 Are stones alive?

"Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" has thought about this question, and the answer is affirmative. Matter and energy, all existence has this problem. Dying and coming back to life (死去活来), or called coming back to life and dying (活来死去), is just a change of yin (阴) and yang (阳). By substituting Taoist and Buddhist philosophical thoughts into physics, systems science, and mineral processing with dialectical materialism, this conclusion can be drawn.

Mineral processing is an engineering discipline and also a philosophy. The basic theory of mineral processing is based on philosophical hypotheses, respectively called the area hypothesis, the volume hypothesis, the crack hypothesis, or the doctrine. Here, we avoid mathematical formulas and express only in words. Simply put, it is to study the change of stones as the energy of surface area, volume energy, and crack energy. (刘洪均, "The laws of the distribution in wushan SABC comminution circuit and the practical approach")

The area theory of stone crushing power was proposed by Rittinger (雷廷格) in 1867, who believed that the energy required to crush ore is proportional to the new surface area generated in this process; the volume theory of stone crushing power was proposed by Gilpichev (吉尔皮切夫) and Kick (基克) in 1874 and 1885, respectively, who believed that the energy consumption after the crushing of ore is proportional to the reduction in the volume of particles; the crack theory was proposed by Bond in 1952 through the induction and analysis of the stone crushing process, who believed that the energy consumed in the crushing process of ore materials is proportional to the length of the cracks formed in new. (魏德洲 "Solid Material Separation Science"). Here, we do not introduce in detail. The doctoral dissertation analyzed the energy distribution law of a certain engineering project not by directly adopting the three major theories, but by using a fashionable big data theory. However, the three major theories have become

tools for thinking about the relationship between matter and energy. They helped complete the thinking of Taoism's "when qi gathers, it becomes a thing (炁聚为物), when thing disperses, it becomes qi (物散为炁)"; Buddhism's "matter is emptiness (色即是空), emptiness is matter (空即是色)." The direct completion of thinking is quantum mechanics and relativity. (liu, "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

These links, through the thinking of radiation of ore, discover that ore, molecules, atoms, particles, quarks, etc., are all alive, called existence; they will all die, which can be called structural changes, or the existence and non-existence of structure; change to another structure and live again. Very interesting. Humans live in a living universe. It's not the kind of life humans have, but it can be affirmed that it is a problem of structure, the connection and cause and condition between structure and information. The universe, eternally alive, eternally yin (阴) and yang (阳) structure. Therefore, "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" believes that the force that forms particles and quarks should exist. Give it a try. (liu, (2024))

Matter is actually existing and is also a changing existence, a special existence of energy structure, and a special existence of mass structure. Its shape and mass are constantly changing in time, coming from the gathering and change of energy, and returning to the origin of energy in motion and change. The "I Ching" says: the universe is the eternal existence of yin and yang, the eternal change. It is information that makes matter change like this, "Examination of the Origin of the Universe" calls it wisdom energy. Information and energy are non-material existences. On the other hand, the structural information of matter also tells the cause of wisdom energy (intelligence) what to do. Yin and yang are one, never leaving, seeking thermal balance.

In "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe," the author cautiously proposed the

issue of basic energy and the zero-dimensional universe. The reason for being cautious is to hope that humans understand the Middle Way(中道) thinking of Buddha Shakyamuni and the Second Patriarch of Buddhism, Nagarjuna. Our current main thinking is material philosophy, that is, the universe is material, matter determines consciousness, and human thinking has all fallen into material and material desires. However, our ancestors and science tell us that the universe is the coexistence of having(exist, 有) and not having(no-exist无). Physical cosmology tells us that the existence of "having(有)" the existence of material energy, only accounts for about 4.9% of the universe; the existence of emptiness, non-material energy, accounts for about 95.1%. That is to say, matter is actually existing, truly existing, not illusory. From the birth of atoms, real matter is the real existence in the universe, and it is also the true existence of human life. This point is unquestionable. Material philosophy thought is the main guiding thought of human beings for a long time. The space where matter exists and the place where the shape of matter exists is defined by Newton in the "Principles" and can be called relative space,(newton, "The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy") which can be expressed in three-dimensional space. However, space is not three-dimensional, let alone high-dimensional. Space is the original space for creating matter, the space without material position (Leibniz "The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence" Liu (2021)). However, calling space three-dimensional or o-dimensional is a short-term behavior of humans.(liu(2024)) Therefore, it is suggested that humans can understand space, and there is no need to study space, be revered tan(德). The focus is still on studying the existence of matter, energy, and information.

The mass-energy conversion law shows that under the promotion of external force information, when matter reaches the condition of the speed of light, it becomes pure energy. Humans live in matter and energy and discover that matter (such as stones) is formed by the gathering of energy, gathering into mass, but it is changing. Even if it does not reach the information condition of the

speed of light, energy is also moving and changing, determining the shape, mass, and time of matter. When matter completely returns to energy, it means the end of the existence of matter, the end of material time, and matter will die. Matter is a kind of existence that is alive. Existence is a structure.

Quantum mechanics tells us: basic energy, under the action of information, under the action of force (what kind of force?), can become material energy, becoming particles and quarks, and particles and quarks are also living existence; particles can become atoms, molecules material, all things under the action of force, under the action of information, under the action of mechanics and the cause of time, and return to the state of energy. This is the real matter, the real existence of matter, the motion and change of matter.

Thermodynamics tells us: when absolute zero, existence is impossible! Why? "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" believes that it is possible. When temperature is generated, there is material energy and the creation and existence of matter. How much is the thermal energy? Physical cosmology  $4.9\% + 95.1\% = 100\%$  has already told us. It is just "1" that big. (Chapter 42 of the "Tao Te Ching") It is wisdom energy, divine information commanding all this. Humans, calling the universe God, belittle the universe, but is there other more appropriate term?

### III. ENERGY

What is energy? The development of science in the past 500 years, the rapid advancement of human material progress, is the development of energy. The various industrial revolutions have been revolutions of energy and information. Energy originates from the mechanics of physics, including various mechanical principles, including the mechanical principles of chemistry.

Humans have discovered energy and learned to create it. From the energy mechanics produced by the motion mechanics of universal gravitation, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, and atomic energy, humans have transformed mechanics into energy. In the process of studying stones, it was

found that the energy produced by chemical bond forces is the fundamental cause of stone aggregation; chemical bond forces are simple, a type of electric charge. Thus, it was concluded that electric charge is the force of Yin and Yang, the force of structure. Particles are the same. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

Quantum mechanics tells us: matter and atoms come from energy, particles and quarks. To be honest, after reading several quantum mechanics works, I couldn't understand them, and I felt dizzy when I saw those equations and formulas. I only understood a little bit: particles, like stars and galaxies, are beautiful, regular and orderly (规律和秩序), living and dying, moving and changing, very simple, not dizzy at all. Think about human life and death; think about the Big Bang and black holes; it's exactly the same as quantum mechanics. The difference is that this is a segment of discontinuous energy, compared to the existence of stones, it lives too short. There is no mass and universal gravitation. One is material, one is non-material, it's that simple. Do you still feel dizzy? Modern physics has no contradictions, it is people's material philosophical thoughts that artificially create this contradiction. Man-made contradictions. (Liu "Thinking and research on the Human origin" "0-Dimensional Universe - Survival test of all things", liu, (2024))

The raw materials that make up atoms are energy, and this energy comes from the vacuum energy sea of basic energy, which quantum mechanics calls vacuum 0 electric energy. Relativity tells us: matter is energy, formed under the conditions of mass information and the cause of the speed of light. "Survival test of all things" thought about it, the kinetic relativity of the material universe probably has only one Einstein; there may be more other energy relativity. Give it a try.

### 3.1 Taoist View of Energy

There are three "I Ching": "Lian Shan(连山)", "Gui Cang(归藏)", and "Zhou Yi(周易)". According to the insights from relevant materials, "Lian Shan" studies matter and energy in the

universe; "Gui Cang" thinks about the energy of the human body, called Qi(炁); "Zhou Yi" studies space. Energy is the original existence of space, and Taoists call it Qi, known as Yin and Yang energies. Yin(阴) and Yang(阳) energies move and change in the cause and condition of the Five Elements' production (attract) and overcoming (repulsion)(五行生克), with time controlling the direction and balance of movement and change. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe", Liu (2024)).

The great Laozi(老子) summarized the changes of Yin and Yang in the universe in the "Tao Te Ching", and the Taoist research on energy and Qi has been unstoppable. From Wenzhi(文子), Liezi(列子), Zhuangzi(庄子) to Zhang Zai(张载), Zhu Xi(朱熹), Wang Yangming(王阳明), the origin of energy, the movement and change of energy, and the principle of energy creating matter have been systematically considered, forming the Taoist Yin and Yang Qi energy origin doctrine, which is a systematic scientific theory of energy, a scientific philosophical theory. The universe, the origin of existence, is Yin and Yang two kinds of Qi, or information and energy. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" "Survival test of all things" liu(2024))

The state of basic energy is temporarily a state that cannot be expressed by human language, wordage, and numbers. The absolute temperature is zero, the electric charge is zero, the mass is zero, the dimension of existence is zero. It is a primitive state of the universe, and it may also be a balanced state of the universe. There is no matter, no material energy there. It is a unified, eternal, balanced state, and it is impossible to judge the existence of that state. That state, humans do not need to think about tan(慊), just understand tan(慊). Because the material universe is large enough, what affects human existence is the material universe. Studying the material universe is studying human survival and existence. Humans have developed to today and cannot help but pay attention to this great original existence of the universe.

The production of matter, the production of material energy and matter, may be related to the



theories of parity conservation (宇称守恒) and parity non-conservation (宇称不守恒) in physics. Taoists believe: when the universe has original Qi (元炁), it may be the beginning of parity non-symmetry, the beginning of Yin and Yang, the beginning of creating material energy. Material energy is the result of the change of basic energy and should be the original raw material for the formation of particles and quarks. Humans have discovered dark energy and dark matter, and have the basis for thinking about the basic existence of basic energy. (Liu "Reflection and research on the origin of the universe")

The various energies described by physics, as well as the particles and quarks described by physics and quantum mechanics, are energy structures and the basic raw materials for creating atomic matter. The two energies of Yin and Yang continue to change and create. The most mysterious creation is the mass structure, the information source of universal gravitation, and also the numerical starting point of material time. There are atoms, Continue to create and change, and there are molecules and plant and animal cells, human cells. The journey of the universe creating all things begins. What humans see now is the balanced universe in the material state of the universe. Energy must gather into matter, and matter continuously changes into energy in motion. Modern physics has discovered the radioactivity of matter, and artificial radioactivity can end the essence of matter existence. For example, atomic bombs.

Energy changes into matter, matter changes into energy, the universe continues to change and cycle under the principle of balance. The existence of matter and energy is the Tao of the universe. (Liu "Tao Te Ching- Universal Declaration")

### 3.2 Buddhist View of Energy

Buddhist philosophy does not introduce energy in detail, but it has created the causal relationship of the origin of the universe, believing that matter is a factor (因素) of change. This factor is constantly changing in form, shape, mass, and time. For example, energy and basic energy.

Humans and all things are both the fruit of the change of that factor, and at the same time, they are also the cause of the change of that factor. The mutual change of causes and effects in the universe is the original existence of the universe, the existence of change and motion, is a relative existence, not an absolute existence. Conceptually, also it is an absolute existence.

Buddhist cosmological philosophy believes: humans and matter come from emptiness (空) and will also go to emptiness in motion and change. This is the original energy of the universe. (Liu "Textual research of the universe original classic")

## IV WHAT IS INFORMATION?

Information is a modern term. Human information is expressed by language, wordage, and numbers. Human thinking comes from information, and action also comes from information. Information is a special thing that can cause human reactions. We often judge this as good information, this as bad information, so information has both positive and negative effects on human thinking and reactions. The greatest function of information is that it can cause reactions in humans as well as matter and energy, whether it is empty contemplative reactions or actual action reactions.

What is the reaction of matter? Matter, whether we think it is quiet, moving, or changing, is a reaction. The perceptiveness of this reaction of matter is extremely surprising. What makes matter react? Undoubtedly, it is force and time. Human beings, as intelligent substances, have a living soul and a thinking force. Human beings are the existence of the material world, is a special existence, has feelings, will think, there is subjective consciousness, (Liu "Thinking and research on the Human origin") This is a perfect, worthy of pride.

### 4.1 Information Left by Our Ancestors

The ancient Greek philosophers left a lot of information about information, named as gods; in

Buddhist writings, a word often expressed is called emptiness(空性), also called caus(因); in Taoist writings, there are expressions of words like spirit(精) and message(信), as well as wisdom(智). So the words like spirit and message reflect that whether it is the universe creating matter and energy, or the movement and change of matter and energy, human thinking, action, and change, are all expressed by information words. Zhang Zai's(张载) Qi(炁) theory "Zheng Meng (正蒙)"; Zhou Dunyi's(周敦颐) "Tai ji Tu Shuo (太极图说)"; Zhu Xi'(朱熹)"Jin Si Lu(近思录)" Yin and Yang Tai ji philosophy of Li(太极理学); Wang Yangming's(王阳明) "Chuan Xi Lu(传习录)" philosophy of Xin (心学), etc., have a lot of philosophical information. (Liu "0-Dimensional Universe - Survival test of all things") The most important thing is that humans have now learned to create information, which is very pleasing, but also very terrible.

When the author was in a place called Shangri-La and thought he understood the Tao Te Ching and the Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra. When I understood the original thought of the universe left by my ancestors, I was helpless and shed tears. I very much hope that this understanding and thinking is wrong.

4.1.1 The Diamond Sutra chapter 15 chapter 16 tells us that our human. May not be the first time in the universe, could it be the last? I don't know. Our ancestors warned us that if human material science is not developed enough, our existence will be threatened by the universe, just like the dinosaurs. If our science is overdeveloped and human beings do not grasp the fundamental idea of exist on the universe, then human beings will destroy themselves.

As a doctor of engineering, I learned some scientific knowledge and thought that I knew dialectics and even understood the idea of the origin of the universe. It suddenly became apparent that humanity had really reached a point in our own existence at this stage. Possessed the power of self-destruction. However, they do not know the origin of universe is, but they have mastered the ability of the universe origin and have the ability of the God of the universe.

4.1.2 Our ancestors have taught us the mystery of a universal God who has the ability, function, energy and information to create and destroy. Today our human beings have all learned. However, our human mind is still confined to the philosophy of matter. The original idea of the universe left to us by our ancestors, We don't know what it is, but we have the power of the God of the universe too early. Admire Planck and Einstein, but complain about them, complain that their ideas were too early in the human process. The "Diamond Sutra" says that the past mind cannot be attained, the present mind cannot be attained, and the future mind cannot be attained. People today. We are in such a situation that we cannot predict our future. What is our future survival and existence? We are still triumphantly discussing the so-called existential question, Quantum mechanics, relativity, parallel universes and so on. But we do not know that we have not yet mastered the idea of the cosmic origin, but we have the ability of the cosmic origin. Intelligent people can think, human beings who feel and think. It may have to create an ending worse than even the dinosaurs, which will self-destruct and annihilate. Think about it. Is that true? (Liu, "Thinking and research on the Human origin")

#### 4.2 Information Theory and Systems Theory

Do not discuss or comment on information too much, it is an unknown, empty, divine existence. Humans have learned to discover and innovatively create information since classical mechanics.

Information theory founder Shannon believes: information is used to eliminate randomness and uncertainty. The founder of cybernetics Wiener believes: information is information, neither material nor energy. Etc. The definitions of information are diverse and confusing. (许国志, editor-in-chief "System Science Dictionary") No matter what the name of information is, information theory has contributed to the creation of nuclear weapons, robots, the discovery of DNA, etc. When science studies information theory, it has the function of the god of the universe, and it should also pay attention to the simultaneous

study of theories such as synergetics and cybernetics in systems science, otherwise, it will be contradictory. For example, the rapid development of information science, why are humans afraid of robots? People who say these words are often researchers and creators. The same is true of Albert Einstein, who was responsible for the discovery and creation of atomic energy, but regretted the atomic bomb. But what can be done? (Einstein "My World View") Nuclear weapons, DNA, robots have appeared, human beings are very afraid of these will threaten human survival, but there is nothing to do. What is it that humans are afraid of? (Liu "Human Origin Examination") Think about it. It is conceivable that as science advances, humans will create even more powerful weapons.

"Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" designs information as intelligence energy, which is an energy with wisdom. This energy is the energy that makes humans and matter react, and it is also an energy that makes non-material exist energy react. This energy has both positive and negative functions, and it also has an important function called directional balance. (Liu (2024))

"Reflection and research on the origin of the universe" Thinking about force and time as the information of intelligence energy, also called cause, determines the reaction, change, motion, and directionality of matter and non-material. also designs force and time as information, intelligence energy, and cause, and designs the intelligence energy sea of the universe. That is to say, human research and mastery of information are not comprehensive enough, and there is still a greater space for research and exploration. However, is it better for humans to have more control over the information of the god of the universe? Or is it not good? Humans are their own saviors. Humans decide for themselves. (Liu "Textual research of the universe original classic")

From the perspective of material philosophy, this is a double-edged sword. From the perspective of the original thoughts of the universe left by our ancestors, we need to take the Middle Way (中道) and balance (平衡).

Human language, wordage, numbers, science, and coordinate systems are all designed as human information, which is the foundation of human survival and existence. The Middle Way and balance are all reflected in human thought and spirit.

I solemnly request physicists to calculate with their conscience the question, how many nuclear weapons, especially hydrogen bombs, can the earth withstand? What are the boundaries? Will the explosion of many nuclear weapons turn the Earth into Jupiter, Mars or the Sun? Because we mess with the fundamental energy of the universe, we mess with the God of nature of the universe. I hope I am wrong about my ancestors' ideas about the origin of the universe. By the way ask physicists to look for the primordial force that created matter and energy. (Liu "The Second Volume of Reflection and research on the origin of the univers")

Since the God of the universe has made Newton, Maxwell, Planck, Einstein, etc., appear in the human process, it is hoped that there will be some great scientists. Keep looking for force and time. Try it.

#### 4.3 Thought question without an answer.

The universe, why create matter? Why create humans? Why do humans live and exist? Why does it exist and exist like this? Are we really living to find the truth about the universe? What is the primary reason (因) for the universe to bestow human beings? Why do we create such great information as language, writing, numbers, science? What is the origin of this information? If there were no human beings, if there were no human language, writing, numbers, and science, the universe still exists. The universe created us. Should we love the universe or revile it? It may be time for humanity to seriously rethink, or rethink the cosmic origin.

## V CONCLUSION

There is a deep feeling: From the perspective and practice of engineering science, I express the understanding of the original thoughts of our ancestors about the universe. Please verify and

test. Once correct, it may have a great impact on theoretical scientific thinking. Pray and believe that the impact of this information is positive.

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# Utilisation of Multiple Languages in Teaching and Learning: Mapping Initiatives at the University of South Africa (Unisa)

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## ABSTRACT

In South Africa, the role of language is crucial in transforming higher education because it not only affects academic access and success, but also affirms diversity. This means that the implementation of multilingual policies at South African universities constitutes a paradigm shift from the prejudiced methods of the old apartheid regime. Central to the University of South Africa's 2030 strategic plan is the need to transform teaching and learning as well as research and community engagement in order for the university to operate/ function effectively as a leading Open Distance e-Learning (ODEL) institution. Besides the decolonisation of the curriculum, the transformation of teaching and learning requires a review of how most students learn. In various South African legislative reports on language issues, a common problem is that language continues to be a barrier to access and success in higher education. The purpose of this research paper therefore is to map the practices that the university has initiated to overcome the language barrier by creating a space for the previously marginalised indigenous languages to be used in teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** african languages, indigenous languages, language of learning and teaching (lolt), language policy, multilingualism, teaching and learning, translation.

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# Utilisation of Multiple Languages in Teaching and Learning: Mapping Initiatives at the University of South Africa (Unisa)

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## ABSTRACT

*In South Africa, the role of language is crucial in transforming higher education because it not only affects academic access and success, but also affirms diversity. This means that the implementation of multilingual policies at South African universities constitutes a paradigm shift from the prejudiced methods of the old apartheid regime. Central to the University of South Africa's 2030 strategic plan is the need to transform teaching and learning as well as research and community engagement in order for the university to operate/ function effectively as a leading Open Distance e-Learning (ODEL) institution. Besides the decolonisation of the curriculum, the transformation of teaching and learning requires a review of how most students learn. In various South African legislative reports on language issues, a common problem is that language continues to be a barrier to access and success in higher education. The purpose of this research paper therefore is to map the practices that the university has initiated to overcome the language barrier by creating a space for the previously marginalised indigenous languages to be used in teaching and learning. The study utilises a qualitative approach in examining the processes, and challenges of implementing the initiatives to assist students in their learning. It is hoped that the recommendations made will promote collaborative programmes among institutions of higher learning in developing and strengthening the use of multiple languages in teaching and learning. The current study does not examine the impact of these initiatives on the success and pass rate of students, so further research on this subject is needed.*

**Keywords:** african languages, indigenous languages, language of learning and teaching (Iolt), language policy, multilingualism, teaching and learning, translation.

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## I. BACKGROUND

From the time it became apparent at the University of South Africa (Unisa) that language attitudes may influence learning, the Senate Language Committee commissioned the strategic project called *Survey of Language Attitudes (SLA)* (2013 - 2016) to investigate the language attitudes and preferences of Unisa students. One of the objectives of the project was to make recommendations for the implementation of an informed, successful language policy at Unisa. Some of the recommendations which emerged from the findings of the qualitative research project on the language attitudes and language preferences of Unisa students were the following:

- Languages should be developed for academic purposes and a parallel medium of instruction should be encouraged where possible.
- A phase-in approach to language policy implementation should be used.
- African languages should be used to facilitate and support learning.
- Examination question papers should be translated into various African languages wherever possible.

The *Survey of Language Attitudes (SLA)* (2013 - 2016) project served as a platform that informed the implementation of the 2016 Unisa Language Policy. The project's recommendations resulted in

the introduction of a Language Unit as a 5-year strategic project in October 2018 called *Transformation: building capacity for South African languages*. The Language Unit is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the university's language policy and ensures that all academic departments play an important role in the achievement of multilingual education and the development of African languages. The definitive goal of the Unisa Language Policy (2016) is to utilise a mother-tongue-based multilingual education system to cater for all South African students. The implementation plan of the 2016 Unisa Language Policy was adopted in 2017.

The next section outlines the research problem and aim, followed by an overview of the promotion of multilingualism in teaching and learning at selected South African universities.

## II. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND AIM

The transformation of teaching and learning requires a consideration of how most students learn, paying particular attention to the way the language medium facilitates or hinders their access to subject content, and their degree of success. Various South African legislative reports on language issues identify the common problem of language acting as a barrier to effective learning in higher education for the following reasons:

- (a) Indigenous official languages have structurally not been afforded the official status to function as academic and scientific languages, and
- (b) most students are not proficient in English, presently the dominant language of teaching and learning in higher education.

The purpose of this research paper, therefore, is to map the practices that the university has initiated to address the issue of the language barrier by creating a space for the previously marginalised indigenous languages to be used in teaching and learning. This study seeks to demonstrate how Unisa provides support to its students, for most of whom English is not the first language or mother tongue, to enable academic access and success.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature focuses first on multilingualism in teaching and learning at selected South African universities. Second, it considers the functional approach to translation, as translation is a method used to make texts accessible to the new target group.

Since South Africa became a democracy in 1994, many academic institutions in South Africa have been faced with the challenge of how to develop and use indigenous languages in academia as Section 29(2) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) mentions the right to education in the language of the individual's choice. Based on case studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Ndimande-Hlongwa, Balfour, Mkhize and Engelbrecht (2010) and Kamwendo, Hlongwa and Mkhize (2013) address a significant issue, which is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in higher education. These scholars highlight the impact of mother tongue / home language instruction on students' performance and success. They state explicitly in their research articles that the University of KwaZulu-Natal does not intend to discard English, but favours its use concurrently with isiZulu, thus endorsing a bilingual mode of teaching. Academics are not compelled to acquire isiZulu, but they are encouraged to learn it so that they can make informed decisions based on the nature of the discipline and consider the involvement of communities in the discipline.

Tshongolo (2022) in his Ph.D study about enhancing epistemological access using bilingual material in teacher education states that language continues to be an obstacle to most students who are second or third language speakers of English in South African universities. He proposes that a flexible approach for academic success be adopted. He believes that this imperative can be achieved by promoting mother-tongue bilingual education. His research was based on first-year teacher education students at a university in the Eastern Cape, and examined how beneficial it would be for students whose first language is isiXhosa to access study material and assessments in isiXhosa in a higher education institution. The

study further explored the potential benefits of training teachers in the language medium in which they will teach (isiXhosa), instead of training them in English. In cases where a bilingual mode of instruction was promoted (English-isiXhosa), student throughput improved as students were taught in a language they fully understood. The researcher recommends that development and strengthening of multilingual education awareness projects should be endorsed as there are still many who have not yet grasped the relevance of mother-tongue-based multilingual education. Institutions such as PanSALB should educate people about the basic human right to receive tuition and academic training in a language of one's choice as articulated in Section 29 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996).

The example of the University of KwaZulu-Natal where English and isiZulu are used as languages of teaching and learning in some domains serves as evidence that indigenous languages of South Africa can be developed as formal academic languages. Since the subject of Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in higher education is topical in South Africa, and some institutions of higher learning are battling with the implementation of the language policy, the research on language issues at the University of KwaZulu-Natal provides useful guidelines on language planning in higher education. Additionally, the study by Tshongolo on the use of English and isiXhosa in a university in the Eastern Cape confirms that mother-tongue-based multilingual education enhances student performance. Institutions of higher learning that plan to introduce multiple languages in teaching and learning, can learn /gain insight and guidance from the research of these scholars.

Hlatshwayo and Siziba (2013) conducted a survey of students' perceptions of multilingual education at North-West University (NWU). The researchers wanted to establish how South African university students conceptualise multilingual education and what they expect from it. The survey was conducted at the North-West University (NWU) Mafikeng campus where a sample of 500 questionnaires was distributed to students who

were first-year undergraduates during Academic Literacy lectures. The research concluded that the use of multilingualism in higher learning contributes to the learner's conceptual and pedagogical development as well as his/her communicative abilities. The researchers suggest that each province in South Africa, depending on the linguistic needs of its learners / students, should design a language policy suitable for its learners / students. For example, the North-West Province (the home of the above-mentioned university) could have Setswana, English and Afrikaans in its policy. Setswana and Afrikaans are the primary languages in this province, and the North-West University Mafikeng campus utilises these languages in addition to English for business communication. The researchers believe that the use of the students' home language as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) would improve their performance and efficiency.

Kaschula (2019) gives an overview of practices in promoting multilingualism in some South African universities. For example, at the University of Cape Town, an isiXhosa- and Afrikaans language course is compulsory for the MB ChB programme and other Health Sciences professional training programmes. The University of Limpopo offers a fully bilingual Bachelor's degree in Sesotho sa Leboa and English in Contemporary English and Multilingual Studies. The University of Stellenbosch has developed glossaries that comprise three languages (English-Afrikaans-isiXhosa) for disciplines such as Law, Psychology, Social Work and Sociology. Rhodes University offers isiXhosa vocation-specific courses in Pharmacy, Law, Journalism and Education. Kaschula emphasises the importance of language in the Africanisation of the curriculum. The use of multiple languages by higher education institutions is a response to the call made by Neville Alexander (2003) in his work *The African renaissance and the use of African languages in higher education*. He says that it is impossible to even think of an African renaissance without the development and intellectualisation of African languages. His basic proposal is:

[U]ntil and unless we are able to use the indigenous languages of South Africa as languages of tuition at tertiary level our educational system will continue to be skewed in favour of an English-knowing elite (Alexander 2003: 23).

He suggests that South African universities can adopt ‘a step-by-step development and implementation plan’ to develop specific languages, and the decision to begin using those languages for specific functions will remain the responsibility of that institution. (Alexander 2003: 30).

The succeeding paragraphs deliberate on the functional approach to translation as Unisa translates tutorial texts to make them accessible to students who are second- or third-language speakers of English. It was in the late 1970s and early 1980s when Reiss and Vermeer formulated the functional approach to translation, terming it *skopos* theory because it is the *skopos*, that is, the purpose or scope of the translated text that determines the translation process (Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997:156). The intended recipient of the target text is an important factor in any translation process. The recipients of the target text have their own culture-specific world knowledge, as well as their own expectations and communicative requirements. The translator is expected to produce a target text which conforms to the requirements of the translation *skopos*. The function of the translated texts is informative as the texts provide knowledge, and the language used is formal. Following in Vermeer’s footsteps, Nord (1992) moved away from the equivalence-based approach to translation. She adopted Vermeer’s approach that texts should be translated according to a *skopos*. However, by introducing the concept of *loyalty*, Nord adapted the functionalist theory to what she considered to be the requirements of the translation task. ‘Loyalty’ can be defined as embodying the commitment of the translator both to the source and the target situation as well as their responsibility both to the initiator of the source text and the target recipient (Moropa 2005).

The translations discussed in the paper represent language for special purposes (LSP) since the university has adopted a multilingual approach to produce translated tutorial letters that can assist students who are not proficient in English to access specialised subject fields in their preferred language. Language for Special Purposes refers to language that is normally very formal in register with a highly specialised vocabulary (i.e. vocabulary used by experts in a particular field, e.g. chemistry, physics, computer science, agriculture, accounting, economics, law, etc.). Language for Special Purposes texts are restricted and precise and typically feature, amongst others, an abundance of specialised terms. Crystal (2010: 400) makes the following points about the language of science:

- The large technical vocabulary is undoubtedly its most characteristic feature reflecting the specialised subject matter of scientific domains of enquiry.
- Everyday words are too vague for many scientific purposes, so new ones have to be invented.

Language for Special Purposes’ phrases and terms are chiefly aimed at serving the communication needs of specialists. By contrast, Language for General Purposes (LGP) is ‘general’ in the sense that it is in common usage. The initiator of the translation (the academic / lecturer in this context) wishes the target text to serve a specific purpose or function when it is received by recipients, i.e. the students who are not first-language speakers of the original / source language.

This section concludes by referring to the *Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Institutions* (2020) which is a revision of the *Language Policy for Higher Education* (2002). The revised language policy seeks to address the issues raised in relation to ensuring the development and strengthening of a multilingual environment in which all official languages are developed and used as languages of scholarship, research, teaching and learning. The language policy states that higher education should consider all indigenous languages as sources of



knowledge that can inform learning of the different disciplines. Higher education institutions should nurture an environment where multilingualism is not seen as a problem but as a resource to facilitate cognitive development, epistemic access, inclusiveness, transformation, social cohesion and respect for all languages. Therefore, conditions must be created for the development and strengthening of indigenous languages as languages of meaningful academic discourse.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a qualitative approach in examining the processes and challenges of implementing the initiatives to assist students in their learning. The data sources are reports of institutional, language-related strategic projects, college reports on language policy implementation, multilingual resources developed by colleges, and language policy reports previously authored and presented by the researcher who obtained ethical clearance from the university to access Unisa data.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The initiatives that are discussed in the study are the following:

- (i) Developing multilingual glossaries
- (ii) Digitalising multilingual glossaries
- (iii) Translating examination question papers (EQPs)
- (iv) Translating tutorial letters
- (v) Offering modules in more than one official South African language.

##### 5.1 Developing multilingual glossaries

Prior to the dawn of a democratic South Africa, Unisa built its language capacity around English and Afrikaans. In compliance with the *Language Policy for Higher Education* (2002), the University adopted a language policy in 2006 and revised it in 2010 and 2016. Two African languages were introduced; isiZulu and Sepedi. Multilingual glossaries were developed in these languages in addition to English and Afrikaans. As the 2016 language policy committed to promote all official languages, colleges began to expand the

glossaries by adding the other official languages. For example, the College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies developed a multilingual glossary of action words (verbs) in assessment. Initially the glossary of over 40 assessment verbs with definitions was developed in four languages by the college. The Language Unit as a body that monitors the implementation of the language policy, collaborated with the College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies to broaden the scope of the glossary by adding the other seven official South African languages. The Senate Language Committee approved the glossary of assessment terms in eleven languages in March 2021. The multilingual glossary is available for use by students and staff in colleges. Figure 1 below presents a sample of assessment verbs with their definitions in five official South African languages: English, Afrikaans, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. The definitions are meant to improve the students' understanding of the concepts in his/her preferred language.

[illegible]

Figure 1: Multilingual glossary of assessment terms in five South African languages

These glossaries are paper based in MS, PDF or Excel format and are appended to the study guide or tutorial letter. Some are uploaded on the university teaching and learning platform called *myUnisa* under ‘Additional resources’. A detailed exposition of institutional multilingual glossaries was carried out by Shoba and Moropa (2023) in an article entitled *Multilingual glossaries for teaching and learning: an initiative at the University of South Africa*. The university emphasises the importance of multilingualism in higher education by promoting the digitalisation of the glossaries, hence the following discussion.

### 5.2 Digitalisation of multilingual glossaries

The Department of Geography within the College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies pioneered the digitalisation of multilingual glossaries. The Unisa Academy of African Languages and Science (AALS) was a strategic project that was conceptualised in 2009. From 2013-2018 the project focussed on research and development of language technology for four South African languages. In 2021 a computational linguist in the Academy of African Languages and Science project worked with the Department of Geography on a new version of Terminator for displaying and interacting with

geography glossaries. Terms as well as their definitions are in four languages: English, isiZulu, Sesotho sa Leboa / Sepedi and Afrikaans. The multilingual glossary comprises a list of terms with definitions and cross-references covering a variety of terms used in geography, the environmental field and geographical information systems (GIS). The selection of terms is based on the undergraduate modules offered by the Department of Geography at the University of

South Africa (Unisa). The glossary aims to provide support to the students in their learning in a multilingual context.

In the introduction to the user guide, it is stated that the glossary will not only be of value to Unisa students, but also to lecturers and students at other universities, schoolteachers and learners, and a wide variety of stakeholders in civil society and industry. Figure 2 shows the front page of the user guide.

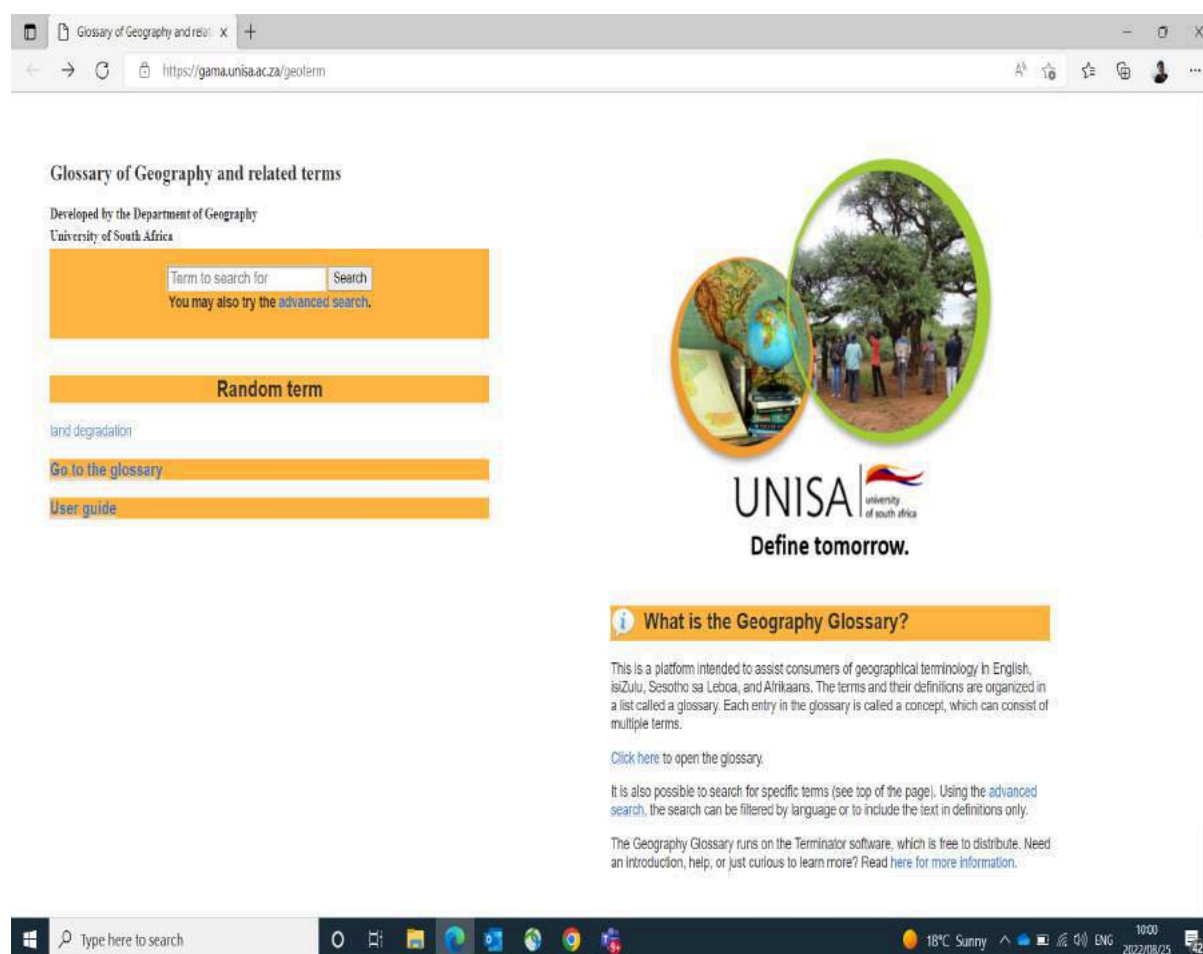


Figure 2: Front page of user guide: <https://gama.unisa.ac.za/geoterm>

In using the platform, users are encouraged to provide feedback. This can take the form of comments or suggestions and a text box in which to write the feedback statement is provided. The Department of Geography intends to expand the glossary in the future to include more indigenous South African languages. This approach in developing glossaries is based on the Unisa

Language Policy 2016 which adopts a phase-in approach to advancing the indigenous languages.

### 5.3 Translation of examination question papers (EQPs)

The university Senate took a decision at its first sitting during the first quarter of 2018 to translate Unisa examination question papers (EQPs) from English into all official South African languages,



in line with the institution's 2016 language policy. The translation of examination question papers from English into official South African languages is a process that requires systematic procedures to provide a product that is acceptable to Unisa as a client and students as the end-users. The next paragraphs outline the translation procedures that the university adopted.

For a successful implementation, Senate appointed the Senate Language Committee chaired by the Vice Principal (VP): *Teaching and Learning, Community Engagement and Student Support* to manage the process. It was agreed that a staggered approach be followed starting with the first year, i.e. National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 5 in 'at risk' modules. At risk modules are modules with a low pass rate. The purpose of the translated examination question papers was to provide the student with access to the examination question paper in his / her preferred language to enhance comprehension of the concepts in the various disciplines. Students were still required to answer the examination questions in English. Translation proper was faced with several challenges, for example, human resource capacity and the submission dates. Based on the output norms, the Directorate of Language Services responsible for translating and editing in the university, estimated that, with the available capacity, it would take about 19 weeks to complete the translations of approximately 45 examination question papers into ten languages. After deliberating on the matter it was agreed that due to time constraints and limited capacity the examination question papers be translated into isiZulu, Sesotho sa Leboa/ Sepedi and isiNdebele and Tshivenda. The compromise was reached to mitigate further risks that could hamper the actual translation phase.

To ensure the success and sustainability of the project it was recommended that a dedicated group of staff should be assigned to the project, for example one supervisor with the necessary authority to manage the entire process, one administrative manager with two assistants to manage allocation of examination question papers. The language practitioners should sign a

declaration of secrecy before they were allowed to handle examination question papers.

The tasks of the administrative staff included:

- receiving declarations of secrecy from all translators/quality assurers
- liaison with examiners, translators and quality assurers
- keeping track of receipt and allocation of original examination question papers
- keeping track of allocation and receipt of edited versions of the examination question papers
- keeping track of allocation and receipt of translated versions
- keeping track of allocation and receipt of quality assured versions
- keeping record of word counts of the various source texts
- checking whether texts have been translated in full, etc.

In the first cycle, the university had 39 examination question papers for 'at risk' modules across colleges. The college domains encompass education, economic and management sciences, accounting sciences, human sciences, law, agriculture and environmental studies, science, engineering and technology, as well as the sub-disciplines within these colleges.

For security purposes, all examination question papers submitted to the university's Directorate of Language Services were password protected. The subject line and file name in the email did not identify the document as an examination question paper. Examiners created different passwords for each examination paper. If the examination question paper was not password protected the Directorate of Language Services deleted it and asked the examiner for a resubmission. When the examination question papers were circulated between the language practitioners and the examiners, passwords were amended to provide additional security. It was imperative that the examination question papers be processed on Unisa premises, as the translation of examination question papers could not be outsourced. Language practitioners were recruited mainly from the language departments within the



institution; African Languages, Afrikaans and Theory of Literature, English Studies and Linguistics and Modern Languages. Subject specialists, i.e. the academics who taught the modules and were proficient in the languages of translation, were requested to participate as quality assurers. The duty of the quality assurer was to clarify meaning, eliminate jargon and polish language by editing grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation and other technicalities of style (Van de Poel, Carstens & Linnegar 2012: 9).

The institutional Language Unit trained language practitioners before the translation proper stage to equip the team with pre-translation skills. The pre-translation activities included the importance of a translation brief, text analysis, terminology search, translation procedures/methods and practical exercises translating specialised texts.

They were made aware of the existing resources in the different languages such as the multilingual glossaries developed by the Unisa Directorate of Language Services, Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) orthography and spelling rules for all official languages as well as multilingual terminology lists published by the national Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. Collaboration with subject specialists was crucial during the translation process. If there was no glossary, the examiner was advised to extract key terms from the tutorial material for the language practitioners to translate. The language practitioners were instructed to keep a record of all the new terms that they created. The newly created terms would be submitted at a later stage to linguistic structures such as PanSALB, in accordance with the national policies and rules of terminology verification.

This paper includes copies of the examination question paper in **all** the South African Official Languages.

ALL EXAMINATION QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED IN ENGLISH  
THE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED IN ALL THE SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES FOR STUDENT SUPPORT

The first examination question in this pack is in English, and thereafter the papers in the various languages are presented in alphabetical order and can be found on the pages as indicated in the following table of contents.

*Figure 3:* below provides an example of the cover page of a translated examination question paper

	Language	Page No
1.	ENGLISH	
2.	AFRIKAANS	
3.	ISINDEBELE	
4.	ISIXHOSA	
5.	ISIZULU	
6.	SEPEDI	
7.	SESOTHO	
8.	SETSWANA	
9.	SISWATI	
10.	TSHIVENDA	
11.	XITSONGA	

*Figure 3:* Cover page of an examination question paper

In practice, the word ‘all’ (with reference to languages) is replaced by the number of languages in which the question paper is translated. The

translation of exam question papers for the October/November 2019 examination period was completed at the beginning of August 2019. The

examination question papers for the 39 modules were translated successfully from English into four indigenous languages; Sepedi, isiZulu, Tshivenda and isiNdebele. This means that the examination question paper was in five languages. Due to the time constraints, it was impossible to have the examination question papers translated into 10 official languages. (See Appendix A for a list of some modules from the various colleges whose exam question papers were translated.)

Table 1 below is an illustration of the number of languages in which the exam question papers

were translated for the May/June 2020 Semester 1 examination period. For example, out of the four examination question papers from the College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies, three EQPs were translated into eight languages and one into nine languages. In the College of Economic and Management Sciences, three examination question papers were translated into ten languages and two were translated into nine languages. The pattern differs from college to college and there was a significant increase in the number of languages of translation as compared to the October / November 2019 examination.

Table 1: Translated EQPs for May/June 2020; Total translations = 368

COLLEGES	NUMBER OF EXAM QUESTION PAPERS TRANSLATED INTO:			
	7 languages	8 languages	9 languages	10 languages
Agriculture & Environmental Sciences: (4 papers)		3	1	
Economic & Management Sciences: (5 papers)			2	3
Law: (5 papers)			1	4
Science, Engineering & Technology: (2 papers)			1	1
Human Sciences: (13 papers)	1	1	4	7
Education: (11 papers)	1	4	1	5

The Covid-19 pandemic posed a challenge to the translation of examination question papers. Due to the Covid-19 lockdown and the subsequent decision to offer assessments on an online platform, the university could not continue with the project for the second semester in 2020 as the current examination platform is not designed to upload more than one examination question paper per session.

4.4 Translation of tutorial letters

Similarly to the translation process used for the examination question papers, the translation of tutorial letters requires collaboration and coordination between the academics and the language professionals to ensure a successful outcome. The only distinction is that it is not necessary for the tutorial letters to be password protected, although the translators still maintain confidentiality. The academic provides a translation brief indicating the language/s of translation, due date, delivery mode and any other relevant information. The translator requires resources such as specialised dictionaries, parallel texts and multilingual terminology lists or glossaries to handle the actual translation.

The purpose of Tutorial letter 101 is to equip students with the fundamental concepts, standards and principles of the subject field. As an example, the author has used Tutorial letter 101: *Introductory Financial Accounting (FAC1501)*, taken from the College of Accounting Sciences for the 2022 academic year. Table 2 below shows the total number of words of each of the translations of the Tutorial letter which was translated into five languages: isiXhosa, isiNdebele, isiZulu, Tshivenda and Xitsonga.

*Table 2:* No. of words per translation of FAC 1501 Tutorial letter 101

Source text	Target text and language	No. of words
Tutorial letter 101 / 3/2022 Introductory Financial Accounting (FAC1501)		3 241 words
	<i>Isikhokelo sokufunda 101 – Intshayelelo ngoCwangciso lwezeMali (isiXhosa)</i>	2 559 words
	<i>Incwadi yokufundisa 101 – Introductory Financial Accounting (isiNdebele)–</i>	2 587 words
	<i>Incwadi yokufundisa 101 – Isethulo Sokubalisisa Izimali (isiZulu)</i>	2 420 words
	<i>Incwadzi Yekufundzisa 101 – Singeniso Kutekuphatfwa Kwetimali (siSwati)</i>	2 767 words
	<i>Luñwalo lwa Thuthoriaḽa 101 Muhasho wa Financial Accounting (Tshivenda)</i>	4013 words
	<i>Papiladyondzo 101 Ndzawulo ya Financial Accounting (Xitsonga)</i>	3735 words

The difference in the number of words of the translated texts is attributed to the morphological structure of each language. Some languages are conjunctively written while others are disjunctively written. A very important feature of the South African indigenous languages is that any word that stands in a particular relationship to the noun has a concord which is derived from the noun class prefix to indicate the concordial system. The noun prefix is very important because all words which may stand in a special relation to a substantive are brought into agreement with it by the class concord. There are several concords such as subject concord, object concord, adjectival concord, possessive concord, relative concord etc. In some of the indigenous languages the concords are written together with the noun while in others the concords are separated from the noun (Moropa 2005).

To conclude the section on translation activities, it is worth mentioning that the Language Unit developed a translation framework that emphasises quality assurance. Initially, it was for the translation of examination question papers, but now it is utilised in all translation services and products managed by the Language Unit. The translation process for the core process of translating is based on ISO 17100: 2015, a quality standard published by the International Standard Organisation. The quality standard specifies the requirements for all aspects of the translation process that impact quality and the delivery of translation products. The Language Unit continuously recruits language practitioners from academic and support departments within the institution. It conducts training workshops to build a team of competent language practitioners (translators, quality assurers and proof-readers) for all official South African languages within the

institution. The topics dealt with during the workshops include the following:

- Translator competence (knowledge) – ability to choose the most suitable word among alternatives; ability to make decisions; ability to produce a functional target text.
- Translation proficiency (skill) – ability to produce a good quality target text; ability to translate to the required standard.
- Self-revision / self-check: accuracy, linguistic correctness and readability.
- Bilingual peer review: Source text versus target text – seeking accuracy and consistency (terminology, register, style).
- Monolingual peer-revision accuracy.

According to Van de Poel, Carstens and Linnegar (2012), translators are essential mediators in the communication process between author and reader (or speaker and listener in the case of interpretation) because they make texts accessible to new groups of readers / listeners who would

not otherwise be able to understand the original versions. In other words, texts would not be accessible to the new target audience without the translator's/ interpreter's intervention.

### 5.5 Teaching a module in more than one language

Regarding the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), the Unisa 2016 Language Policy; Section 4.2.3 states that:

*Where there is capacity, a selected number of modules and programmes will progressively be offered in more than one official South African language in order to support relevant national policies.*

The plan for teaching a module in more than one language according to the 2017 language policy implementation plan is presented in Figure 4 below.

Actions	Performance Measure	Targets/Milestones					Accountable	Type of evidence
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
1.2.1 Determine learning programmes that can use an additional two or more other official South African languages	Senate approved list of multilingual learning programmes	•	One new learning programme identified in Colleges where applicable	One new learning programme identified in Colleges where applicable	One new learning programme identified in Colleges where applicable	One new learning programme identified in Colleges where applicable	Executive Deans	
1.2.2 Develop study material for identified learning programmes in other official South African Languages	Modules developed according to the FTA that incorporate multilingualism		Number of modules	Number of modules	Number of modules	Number of modules		
1.2.3 Offer modules/learning programmes developed in 1.2.2				Offer identified module				
1.2.4 Audit of existing resources in the identified learning programmes in 1.2.1		By end of year	By end of year	By end of year	By end of year	By end of year	LU Executive Deans	

Figure 4: 2017-2021 plan for teaching a module in more than one language



Regarding this initiative, an example is drawn from one department in the College of Human Sciences: the Department of Religious Studies and Arabic within the College of Human Sciences. The first-year module RST1501 is offered in English and isiZulu. The Tutorial letter 101 comprising assignment questions is available in English and isiZulu. The students are allowed to submit the non-venue-based examination portfolio in either English, Afrikaans or isiZulu. This instruction is presented in Figure 5 below.

**Religious Studies and Arabic – Oct/Nov 2020**  
**RST1501 NON-VENUE-BASED EXAMINATION**  
**e-Portfolio**  
*Akukho ukuhlolwa oku-formal kule-module. Esikhundleni salokho, sifuna ukuthi uhlanganise bese uthumela i-(e-portfolio).*  
*Ungathumela i-(e-portfolio) yakho ngesiNgisi, nge-Afrikaans kanti futhi ungayithumela futhi nangesiZulu, ungakwenza lokho uma uxoxisene wahlela nothisha wakho-.... I-(e-portfolio) izoba namamaki angu-60% wamamaki akho wonke esephelele. Abafundi abakhuluma isiZulu abadinga incazelo ezigabeni ezithize bangaxhumana nothisha obhekene nesifundo.*

Figure 5: Non-venue-based examination instruction in isiZulu

The lecturer created a discussion forum on *myUnisa* in Nguni languages where students discuss topics related to the module. The four languages listed in Figure 6 below: re isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele and siSwati. These languages belong to a group of languages called Nguni, and the speaker of any of the mentioned languages would participate in the multilingual discussion forum.



Figure 6: RST 1501 discussion forum in four Nguni languages

It is the role of the lecturer to initiate the teaching in isiZulu. If the lecturer is proficient in any of the indigenous languages and is willing to pilot teaching in another language in addition to English, it is possible to teach in more than one language.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates how the University of South Africa supports its students in their learning, using multiple languages. The university began by producing multilingual glossaries for the various disciplines as far back as 2009. It started by introducing two indigenous languages in addition to English and Afrikaans, and in its 2016 language policy, it committed to advancing all the official indigenous languages of the country. In 2021, it initiated the digitalisation of the multilingual glossaries, which was pioneered by the Department of Geography within the College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies. In the October/November 2019 examination period, the translated examination question papers to support first-year students in assessment were introduced specifically for modules with a low pass rate, that is the 'at risk' modules. The translated examination question papers were representative of the colleges in the institution (see Appendix A). This initiative was hindered by Covid 19 in 2020, as the university was obliged to move from venue-based examinations to online assessments. The current online assessment platform permits only one exam question paper to be uploaded. To address this issue, the university must develop an online platform that will enable the student to select a different language of choice besides English. Assisting students in their learning by translating tutorial material into indigenous languages is an ongoing process, however human resource capacity and submission dates remain a challenge as some languages have less translators than others. The university has demonstrated its commitment to advancing multilingualism as it implemented strategic projects on language attitudes and language transformation.

The University of South Africa offers eleven official South African languages: English,

Afrikaans, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. Additionally, it has a Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages which offers Translation and Interpreting Studies at Honours level. The nature of the Honours programme is such that students who have completed their studies should not only be competent translators/interpreters but should also be eminently well-equipped for a career in any profession in which language plays a central role, e.g. editing, terminology and lexicography. The University of South Africa as a centre of scholarship should be a crucial constituent in the advancement of the indigenous languages. As the university is in the process of implementing its 2023 language policy, which is a revised version of the 2016 one, it should consider developing collaborative projects with other institutions to develop language resources to enhance the use of multiple languages in teaching and learning and research in higher education. Collaboration between linguists, terminologists and computational linguists should be strengthened to develop online terminology banks for both students and staff. The digitalisation of multilingual glossaries should be accelerated in the implementation plan of the 2023 language policy. The university should take the lead in the training of language teachers, interpreters, translators and other language professionals. It remains the responsibility of the Department of Higher Education to support the Departments of African languages nationwide in terms of funding, infrastructure and personnel as they are the primary drivers of scholarship in these languages.

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Appendix A

Names of modules with translated EQPs: October/November 2019

Module name	Code
Mercantile Law	CLA1501
Economics	ECS1500
Economics 1A	ECS1501a
Elementary Quantitative Measures	QMI1500
Decision Sciences	DSC1520
Forms of Business Enterprise	FBE2604
Theories of Social Change	SOC2601
Management 1A	MNG1502
Art and Handwork	PRS1034
Child Development	EDT101G
Guidance, Counselling and Life Skills Development	EDT102H
Emergent Mathematics	EMA1501
Emergent Literacy	EML1501
Health Education	HEC101V
Early Childhood Teaching	PRS101Y
Health in Early Childhood Education A	PRS1023
Statistics	STA1510
General Chemistry	CHE1501
Drawing	DRW1501
The Learning Child	ETH102L
Religious Studies and Arabic	RST1501



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# Critical Didactics: An Opportunity of Resistance to Pedagogical Practices Instituted by Neoliberal Policies

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## ABSTRACT

This text analyzes the impacts of neoliberal policies on Didactics and proposes that the following guiding questions: How can Didactics resist the impact of neoliberal policies that have invaded pedagogical practices, taking away their meaning and autonomy? How to reverse the distortion in the epistemological consideration of Pedagogy and Didactics? How to organize resistance practices? The methodology used derives from action research undertaken with the Observatory of Teaching Practices and analyzed using critical hermeneutics in dialogues with a group of teachers from a public education network. After collective analysis based on critical theory and recent research, the creation of Renewed Critical Didactics (DCR) is indicated using the theoretical assumptions that underlie Critical Pedagogy.

*Keywords:* didactics; critical didactics; renewed critical didactics.

*Classification:* LCC Code: LB1025-1050.75

*Language:* English



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# Critical Didactics: An Opportunity of Resistance to Pedagogical Practices Instituted by Neoliberal Policies

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## SUMMARY

*This text analyzes the impacts of neoliberal policies on Didactics and proposes that the following guiding questions: How can Didactics resist the impact of neoliberal policies that have invaded pedagogical practices, taking away their meaning and autonomy? How to reverse the distortion in the epistemological consideration of Pedagogy and Didactics? How to organize resistance practices? The methodology used derives from action research undertaken with the Observatory of Teaching Practices and analyzed using critical hermeneutics in dialogues with a group of teachers from a public education network. After collective analysis based on critical theory and recent research, the creation of Renewed Critical Didactics (DCR) is indicated using the theoretical assumptions that underlie Critical Pedagogy.*

**Keywords:** didactics; critical didactics; renewed critical didactics.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The paralysis of reflection on the field of organization of pedagogical work in the classroom, in its constitutive categories (the so-called “field of didactics”), produced the necessary space for it to be gradually occupied by those proposals that aimed to introduce improvements in the school traditional, whether through the new school or technicalism, or through a combination of these, which ended up helping to reinvigorate, more recently, conceptions of education and school that we

considered, at least theoretically, to be outdated (FREITAS, 2014, p. 1087).

The consolidation of neoliberal policies in Brazil has produced incalculable tensions in the practice of pedagogy, teaching and established knowledge. More than the restructuring of the economic, political and social spheres, what comes to the fore is the redefinition and re-elaboration of the ways of meaning, representing and valuing the world. Gentili (1995, p. 244) highlights that neoliberalism needs, among other things, to depoliticize education, giving it the meaning of a commodity to guarantee the triumph of its mercantilizing strategies and the necessary consensus around them.

This depoliticization is one of the main ruptures that undermine the pedagogical (critical) rationality of education. Paulo Freire, long ago, was already outraged by this process and stated: “Perhaps never has so much been done to depoliticize education as today” (Freire, 2000, p. 95).

The science of education in its history has already seen that it does not work to offer the educator theories about facts and observed norms for the teacher to apply in their practice; however, it is essential to help the educator “to understand the demands of each concrete educational situation, in such a way that he becomes able to carry them out autonomously” (SCHMIED-KOWARZIK, 1983, p. 50).

What is highlighted is the necessary training of the teacher, the pedagogue, for autonomous, critical thinking, since this position, on the reflection of the educator's responsibility, must be the core of pedagogical science.

Educational practices, if carried out in a purely tutorial way, organized from the outside in, mechanically reproduced, assuming neutral practices, without commitments to the subject and their circumstances, are unfeasible, corresponding to meaningless actions, which do not function as pedagogical practices. Therefore, I consider that all pedagogy must become a pedagogy for the oppressed, in the sense of bringing the subject to dialogue, reflection and commitment to training.

It is never too much to highlight that when we talk about the politicality of pedagogical practices, we want to state that this does not mean pedagogical indoctrination or pedagogical domestication. On the contrary, the teacher's critical thinking is the greatest weapon against doctrinal proselytism. Politicality is exercised from a Freirean perspective, suggesting that:

Understanding the limits of educational practice undoubtedly demands political clarity from educators in relation to their project. It demands that the educator assume the politics of their practice. It is not enough to say that education is a political act, just as it is not enough to say that the political act is also educational. It is necessary to really take on education policy (FREIRE, 1993, p. 46-47).

I want to highlight the issue of seeking the politics of your practice. This search, this task is eminently pedagogical. As Freire (1993p. 22, emphasis added) insists, education is permanent, it is political, not because a certain ideological line or a certain political position or a certain economic interest decided so. "Education is permanent in the reason, on the one hand, of the finiteness of the human being, on the other, of the awareness that he has of his finitude". And more, it becomes political, through the ontological movement of man in the world, since, throughout history, this man incorporated into his nature, not only the feeling of knowing that he lived, " but knowing that he knew and, thus , knowing that I could know more."

This basic politicality is inherent to the pedagogical act' that is' the teacher aware of his social role as

an educator, knowing for and against what he is acting, perceiving and recognizing himself as a subject is the one who gives direction to his being – world, as consciousness and as commitment.

In this way, one can perceive the inadequacy that invades teaching processes when they become excessively technical, planned and evaluated from the outside in, in a merely regulatory and oppressive way and also, focused only on their final products and when the teacher's voice is silenced, not only by the fragility of her initial training, the precarious conditions of permanent training that are offered to her and the precarious conditions for exercising her professionalism, in a world controlled by the market and which, in order to survive, depersonalizes and despises humanity, silences the political questions of practice; silences the subjects.

Highlighting the depoliticization that results from processes that technify practices, we remember FREIRE again:

*"The technicalist view of education, which reduces it to pure technique, even more so, neutral, works towards the instrumental training of the student, considers that there is no longer antagonism in interests that everything is more or less equal, for it what really matters It is purely technical training, the standardization of content, the transmission of a well-behaved wisdom of results"* (Freire, 2000 b, p. 79). (my emphasis)

Kincheloe (1997, p. 55) reinforces this position, when recalling the inadequacy of teaching processes linked to technical logic, referring to educational positivists, he understands that they try to produce exact forms of empirical evidence, for concepts and for practices, which are not empirical in nature. And so it asks: *How should we empirically and precisely measure a student's emancipation or liberation from discourses of power?*

Education takes place in process, in dialogues, in the multiple contradictions that are inexorable between subjects and nature that mutually transform each other. Measuring only learning results and products, as a way of evaluating

teaching, can be, and has been, a major fallacy and produces irrecoverable damage to pedagogical practice.

I consider that this “intervention” in pedagogical work at school has been produced in a planned and continuous manner, with a view to removing the possibilities of criticism and dialogue from everyday practices. The excessive regulation of practices, in the form of external assessments, curricula frozen in official documents, lack of conditions for the school to self-direct its projects and practices, has produced the impossibility of reflective, critical and even creative practices, producing a cornerstone of didactics and the exhaustion of pedagogical rationality, which gives it ground and meaning.

All of us, whether as people, as educators or as protagonists or participants in current social and educational practices, in particular, are seeking to understand the consequences of a world dominated by capital, trying to breathe and find ways in the face of so many imposed transformations. to our ways of living and making sense of the world. Like everyone, we are feeling displaced from our perspective on the world and seeking to understand the impact of the configurations of processes resulting from “supposed” education reformers, on the dynamics of school practices, teacher training and the meanings that are now attributed to Pedagogy and Didactics.

This is what we want to discuss in this text: how can we resist the impact of neoliberal policies that have invaded pedagogical practices, taking away their meaning and autonomy? How can we say no to so much neoliberal obscenity? How to reject and not be led by so many corporate agreements? How to reverse the distortion in the epistemological consideration of Pedagogy and Didactics; How can we make the results of education research that we conduct in thousands of educator research groups?

Following Nóvoa , this is how we will go in the text: “It’s time to say no. No to the degradation of public schools. No to teacher mobility. No to a country without a future. As Sophia Mello Breyner

said: 'Forgive them, GOD, because they know what they do.’<sup>1</sup>

It is time to deepen, rectify, expand the density of Critical Didactics, starting with the recommendation of critical theory: elaborate a critical diagnosis and build resistance practices. It's time to say no! It's time to build resistance! Let's start by highlighting elements that support a critical diagnosis: recovering the meaning of Critical Pedagogy and, next, that of Critical Didactics.

## II. CRITICAL DIAGNOSIS/CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

The challenge of critical theory consists in being able to renew its diagnoses in order to make it possible for us to continue formulating a perspective, from which obstacles to emancipation or emancipatory potentials, when present in a given society, are considered and analyzed in a critical way (MELO, 2011, p. 249).

In a 1937 text, entitled *Critical Theory and Traditional Theory* , Max Horkheimer presented for the first time the concept of “Critical Theory”, where he indicates the criticism of different forms of domination and the interest in the emancipatory conditions present in social reality. One cannot ignore the context in which the Frankfurt School's thought emerged: the rise of fascism, Nazism and Stalinism, the decline of left-wing workers' movements in Western Europe and the collapse of left-wing parties in Germany.

According to Marcos Nobre (2004, p. 32), "the orientation towards emancipation is the *first* fundamental principle" of critical theory, in addition to critical behavior in relation to knowledge produced under capitalist social conditions and the social reality itself that this knowledge intends to grasp . These principles also support the perspective of the critical theory of education based on Adorno (1985; 1995),

<sup>1</sup>Speech by Antonio Nóvoa as rector of the University of Lisbon. 2013. <https://www.publico.pt/2013/05/03/sociedade/noticia/antonio-novoa-exorta-profesores-a-dizer-nao-1593260> . Accessed on 07/12/2018.



especially in his reflections in the texts of the *Theory of Semi-formation* and in the essays that make up the work *Education and Emancipation*.

Vilela (2007) is very precise in stating that *semi-training*, so present in contemporary educational practices, is something that can be overcome, through the transformation of social relations that can occur in the educational process. From this perspective, I highlight the need for Critical Didactics, which, through the possibility of training critical thinking, in students and future teachers, can unbalance the orchestrated game of oppression built by supposed education reformers.

As Schmied-Kowarzik highlights, *emiformation* is a process of systematic domination and we must denounce it and not condone it:

Semi-formation “cannot be explained in itself, because it is the result of a process of systematic domination by mechanisms of dominant political-economic relations” (SCHMIED-KOWARZIK, 1983, p. 114).

Reporting and not complying does not mean sterile criticism of doing nothing. Habermas himself criticizes the theorists of the Frankfurt School, warning of the need to overcome the weaknesses of a dead-end diagnosis, the result of a “performative contradiction of totalized criticism”.<sup>2</sup>

Different authors linked to critical theory come together to formulate a blunt confrontation with capitalism and its different forms of oppression, without neglecting to reflect on real and concrete barriers that exist for the construction of a new social order (BENHABIB, 1986).

*S emiformation*, contrary to the ideal of training, which aims to be a process of emancipation of individuals as subjects of social praxis, produces the accommodation of these subjects to the situation of domination to which they are subjected. Hence the need for critical pedagogy, which will boost Critical Didactics.

<sup>2</sup> (PINZANI, A, *Habermas*, Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2009, p.70).

Moving further into the current century, it is important to highlight the essays by Santos (2000; 2007) who warn of the need to also reinvent emancipation, since the way it was formulated by modern critical theories no longer responds to the needs of the present. But, for him, it is not just an update of critical theory for the present time. It's more than this. Because he considers that, in its classic formulation, critical theory remained restricted to the context of its creation, Western Europe and the USA, ignoring the rest of the world, as well as the problems that concerned it, such as colonialism. By ignoring, along with dominant science, the rest of the world, critical theory contributed to making irrelevant what was done and what was thought outside its original context.

Santos (2000; 2007) suggests that the waste of experiences and the marginalization of non-scientific and non-Western knowledge concern not only regulatory knowledge, but also modern critical theory. A fact that, in its conception, contributed to weakening modern critical theory, which from knowledge-emancipation ended up becoming part of knowledge-regulation, thus losing a large part of its emancipatory potential. Thus, he considers that, to reconstruct critical theory and reinvent social emancipation, it is necessary to break with ethnocentrism and scientism in both traditional theory (knowledge-regulation) and modern critical theory (knowledge-emancipation).

Saviani (2008, p. 69), has long been highlighting that a critical pedagogy, articulated with popular interests, will value the school, and I say, the public, secular, quality school, and this pedagogy must be attentive to what occurs within it; will be committed to functioning well, therefore, will be interested in effective teaching methods. “Such methods will go beyond traditional and new methods, incorporating the contributions of both”. These will be methods that stimulate students' activity and initiative without giving up the teacher's initiative.

*[...] will encourage dialogue between students among themselves and with the teacher, but without ceasing to value dialogue with historically accumulated culture; will take into*

*account the students' interests, learning rhythms and psychological development, but without losing sight of the logical systematization of knowledge, its ordering and gradation for the purposes of the process of transmission-assimilation of cognitive contents* (SAVIANI, 2008, p. 69).

I also add and highlight that critical pedagogy, as such, must insist on projects of emancipation of the popular class, discussing with them the meanings of this emancipation and must insist on the reflexivity/politicity of educational contexts and invest in collective, collaborative learning, integrated into a ecology of knowledge according to Santos (1991) and mobilized by the dynamics of a pedagogy of the oppressed (FREIRE, 1975).

I highlighted in a recent article (FRANCO, 2017) that all of Freire's work was always constituted as critical pedagogy, and his perspective was always at the heart of further studies on this issue, since his work is structured around founding principles of logic of critical pedagogy, among which I highlight:

- a. The purpose of education is to form subjects who are aware of their place in the world; subjects who, in the educational process, learn to give name and meaning to the world; never depersonalized subjects and objects at the mercy of a process that is foreign to them; the big question will always be that teaching is indeed educating, in a symbiosis that gives it meaning and direction;
- b. Education will always be an act of resistance to the rationalization of educational practice as a pretext for enhancing economic development; education can never be carried out from a marketing perspective, seen as a disposable and dehumanized commodity and product. The logic of education does not align with neoliberal logic.
- c. The construction of knowledge will take place in dialogical practice; in the critical experience of the tension between theory and practice and never as a transmission of information without connection to the reality of students or educators; which implies the construction/reinvention of a critical didactics

that has as its presuppositions the emancipatory processes and the oppressor/oppressed dialectic;

- d. The emancipation of the subjects of practice must organize all pedagogical practice, in a continuous process of struggle and social commitment, where the foundations of a democratic and critical practice are woven. This process will never be carried out from the perspective of indoctrination/domestication of subjects. The voice of the oppressed will be needed to lead and signify the desired emancipation.

### III CRITICAL DIDACTICS

Veiga (1992, p. 39-40), when carrying out an important study of the historical retrospective of Didactics, emphasizes that this, when placed in the perspective of critical pedagogy, starts to have as its central issue the formation of man, especially the man who belongs to the most disadvantaged sections of society, establishing itself as a space of denial of domination. Thus, the focus of Didactics, based on the assumptions of Critical Pedagogy, will be to “work towards going beyond methods and techniques, seeking to associate school-society, teaching-research, teacher-student” (1992, p. 39). From this perspective, Didactics is committed to the politicization of the teacher, seeking, among other aspects, to “combat the demobilizing orientation of technicalism and recover the specifically pedagogical tasks discredited through reproductive discourses”.

Let us remember that Critical Didactics recommends the following ingredients as necessary practices: the politicality of teaching, with a view to the contextualization and historicity of content; consideration of the multidimensionality of teaching; the dialogicity of practices; the use of investigative methods in the classroom; in addition to the presupposed active intellectual participation of students.

But what are the pedagogical tasks discredited by the current speeches of supposed education reformers? In a collective synthesis with the Observatory teachers (FRANCO, 2018), it was

possible to categorize some practices judged by the group as practices of resistance, which are based on some principles critical statements :

### 3.1 *There is no linearity between teaching and learning*<sup>3</sup>

Pedagogy and its practices are of the order of praxis; This occurs in the midst of processes that structure life and existence. Pedagogy moves between cultures and subjectivities; subjects and practices. Walks around the school, but precedes it, accompanies it and walks beyond it. Didactics has a smaller scope, more focused on school processes within classrooms. Pedagogy places intentions, broad projects; didactics undertakes to account for what has been established to be called school knowledge. The logic of didactics is the logic of the production of learning (in students), based on previously planned teaching processes. The practice of didactics is, therefore, a pedagogical practice. Pedagogical practice includes didactics and transcends it.

Faced with this unpredictability, it is difficult to determine a priori the paths of a *teaching-learning process* ; the pedagogical educator knows that it will only be possible to plan activities that perhaps lead to learning!

This is why Critical Didactics works from the perspective of weightlessness: the teacher knows that each pedagogical situation is unique and must be prepared to adapt procedures and methods that best adapt to the circumstances of the moment. In this way, the learning that supposed education reformers want to produce can only be configured as training in ready-made responses. Mere teachings that do not necessarily produce learning.

A good teacher knows that it is impossible to control the learning that will result from a given teaching situation. This teacher, from the perspective of Critical Didactics, knows that learning is paths constructed by subjects based on their interpretations and experiences in different spheres of life.

<sup>3</sup> Part of this text has already been discussed in FRANCO (2015).

Teaching is planned with the intention of the student's future learning. However, the great challenge of teaching has been the impossibility of controlling or predicting the quality and specificity of learning that arises from certain teaching situations.

Teaching planning, no matter how efficient it is, cannot control the immensity of possible learning possibilities that surround a student. How to know what the student learned? How to plan the next step in your learning? We need, as recommended by Didactics from a critical perspective, critical and dialogical monitoring of students' training processes. As F, Freire always reminded us, it is through teaching that education takes place.

The contradiction is always present in educational processes: teaching only takes shape in the learning it produces! And learning, in its broadest sense and well studied by cognitive pedagogues, results from interpretative syntheses carried out in the subject's dialectical relationships with their environment. They are not immediate, they are not predictable, they occur through the interpretation of the subject, the meanings created, current and former circumstances, in short: there is no direct correlation between teaching and learning . It can almost be said that learning always occurs beyond, or below, what was planned; they occur in the tortuous, slow, dynamic paths of the subjects' trajectories. Radicalizing this position, Deleuze states that it will never be possible to know and control how someone learns (2006, p. 237).

*Teaching-learning* attempts occur through pedagogical practices. These are living, existential in nature, interactive and impactful. Pedagogical practices are those practices that are organized to achieve certain educational expectations. These are practices loaded with intentionality and this occurs because the very meaning of praxis is configured through the establishment of an intentionality, which directs and gives meaning to the action, requesting a planned and scientific intervention on the object, with a view to transforming social reality. Such practices, no matter how planned they are, are unpredictable

because in them, “neither theory nor practice has precedence, each continually modifies and revises the other” (CARR, 1996, p. 101).

Learning occurs among the multiple teachings that are inevitably present in people's lives and that compete with or enhance school teaching. There are always teaching concomitants. Therein lies the challenge of Didactics today: to make school teaching as desirable and vigorous as other “teachings” that invade students’ lives.

As teachers and practitioners of Critical Didactics, we must demystify the direct relationship between teaching and learning. This relationship diminishes the learning processes, making us believe that only what is taught is learned and belittling the student's capacity for intellectual autonomy and the possibilities of “pedagogical improvisations” on the part of teachers. From the knowledge of the complexity of the pedagogical practices of teaching and learning, it is now known that the task of teaching is much more retroactive, which accompanies the student's existential process, than imposing, from the perspective of having to learn like this and now. You cannot learn by decree, nor by pre-programmed itineraries; we learn through dialogicity, through the negotiation of meanings.

### 3.2 *Teaching is formative praxis: teaching is always forming subjects*

I have seen many students repeat the phrase that is very common on social media: “educating is for families and teaching is the job of schools”.

I see this as a big mistake. I cannot conceive of teaching outside the perspective of training!

In a 2013 film, *Monsieur Lazhar*<sup>4</sup>, here translated as *He Who Brings Good News*, this issue appears, when parents pressure the Algerian teacher, telling him: “you were hired to teach and not to educate”.

I believe it is impossible to separate teaching and consider it a merely transmissible and neutral action of information. Despite Paulo Freire's

statement that education is always a political act being so well known and repeated, we still see many teachers considering that their mission is simply to transmit information, without contextualization, without criticism and almost always without dialogicity.

I consider that the relationships between teacher, student, curriculum and school are relationships that impose a tensional and contradictory coexistence between the subject who learns and the teacher who organizes himself and prepares the conditions to teach. The teacher can find ways to experience the dissonance of resistance and resignations posed by the student, either by acting as a trigger for learning processes; or as an “accompanyer” of the multiple possibilities of return for your action.

Like life, what results from the action of good teaching will always be imponderable situations!

The important thing is to monitor, monitor, recompose and readjust the initial plan. This dynamic, which goes from triggering challenging, intriguing, demanding situations in students, to the feedback that students produce, mixing life, current experience and interpretations of the challenges posed, is the hallmark of the identity of the teaching-learning process, seen in its complexity and amplitude.

I consider that pedagogical practices should be structured as critical instances of educational practices, from the perspective of collective transformation of the meanings and meanings of learning.

The teacher, in the exercise of his teaching practice, may or may not exercise himself pedagogically. In other words, your teaching practice, to transform into a pedagogical practice, requires at least two movements: that of critical reflection on your practice and that of awareness of the intentions that govern your practices. The naive awareness of his work (FREIRE, 1979) prevents him from walking through the intricacies of contradictions and, furthermore, makes it impossible for him to become a critical professional.

<sup>4</sup>Directed by Philippe Falardeau.



True educational action can only be seen as praxis that integrates, according to Kosik (1995), two aspects - the labor and the existential - and manifests itself both in the transformative action of man and in the formation of human subjectivity. When the existential side is no longer considered, praxis is lost as meaning and allows it to be used as manipulation (FRANCO, 2001).

Understanding praxis is an eminently pedagogical task. Kosik (1995, p. 222) highlights that praxis is the sphere of the human being, therefore, it is not a practical activity opposed to theory, but praxis "is the determination of existence as an elaboration of reality". A pedagogical intervention as an instrument of emancipation considers praxis as a form of reflective action that can transform the theory that determines it, as well as transform the practice that implements it.

Thus, I reaffirm that teaching, transformed merely into the practice of passing on content, in the form of information, is *semi-training* and cannot be considered a training practice, but if it does not mobilize the subject's participation and involvement, it will simply be a practice of manipulation.

I turn again to Adorno, 1985 to highlight the importance of the concept of cultural industry, expressed in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to refer to culture intentionally produced and systematized by the market, which functions as a privileged arm at the service of the capitalist system as a powerful instrument of domination of consciences.

The statement that teaching is just "getting the point across" greatly favors this industry, weakening the subject's training. I consider that acting critically against *semi-formation* requires excellent training work, continuous and persistent work, from the perspective of criticism and dialogue with these circumstances. This dynamic of counter-hegemony, presupposed by Critical Didactics, could, perhaps, lead to practices of resistance and emancipation from the neoliberal practices that have invaded educational practices.

It is really the challenge of those who believe that teaching needs a critical logic to survive. The

authors Bandeira and Oliveira (2012, p. 231) put it this way:

The great challenge facing us in the educational sphere today, in the light of Adorno's thought, is the critique of semi-education, as it presents itself not only in the macrosocial context, but in the space of the classroom itself, seeking to capture, in a critical way, its intrinsic tendencies. Only through this path will it be possible to emerge a cultural formation that will contribute to the expansion of individuals' horizons, to the emergence of subjects aware of their potential and artisans of their own history.

This question leads us to think about the validity of the term of universalization of education: have we universalized education or have we just universalized the spaces where children are placed in a supposed school, which does not teach or teaches little?

### 3.3 The construction of resistance practices

In the introduction I called for Nóvoa's cry: "It's time to say no". And then Nóvoa says and I follow him: *No to the degradation of public schools. No to teacher mobility. No to a country without a future. As Sophia de Mello Breyner said: 'Forgive them, Lord, because they know what they do'.*<sup>5</sup>

I see that this issue is globalized! And I come across the anguish in Gomes' writing (2015, p. 3), when he finds strange the paths of Pedagogy in Portugal and in the world and when he suggests the thesis that it is possible to disturb the founding matrix of thinking about education, accepting its history, its accidents and the risk of *other thoughts* about pedagogy:

Today, in Portugal, we, teachers and educators (and mothers), are facing a new cycle of returning to basics, through a broad and heterogeneous set of political measures. I would just like to highlight here: the increase in the number of students per class and per

<sup>5</sup> Speech by António Nóvoa: <https://www.publico.pt/2013/05/03/sociedade/noticia/antonio-novo-a-exorta-professores-a-dizer-nao-1593260> Accessed: July 6, 2018.

school and the reduction of learning to what is objectively measurable.

This return to basics is seen by the author as the intention of educational policies to control and normalize teachers' work, in an attempt to suffocate the human and pedagogical dimensions of teaching work.

What is called a return to basics, as if it were a return to fundamental, canonical and indisputable knowledge, is, above all, a reinforcement of the submission of childhood and everything that is childish in the pedagogical relationship (GOMES, 2015, p. 3).

According to the author, we must, as pedagogues and education professionals, resist the return of this basic proposed by education reformers. After all, we had already moved in another direction and, as I wrote in the initial epigraph: imagine that even today, supposed business reforms in education are based on conceptions of education and school that we considered, at least theoretically, to be outdated (FREITAS, 2014, p. 1087).

Gomes (2015) finds that the globalization of economies, markets and workers has produced errors in the pedagogical conceptions of schools and education processes. Referring to the reality of Portugal, he states that school *rankings*, along with instruments for national and international regulation of schooling results, promote the entry of mercantile logic into education processes. He highlights: "the aim is for education and the work of schools and teachers to be more measurable and comparable and for the vectors of distinction and differentiation to be mechanized and see their effectiveness bureaucratically controlled and certified" (GOMES, 2015, p. two).

This neoconservative movement had already been analyzed by Apple (1989, p.129-130) and also highlighted by Sacristán (1998, p. 162) when stating that:

[...] the criticism of the school, its practices and the knowledge they teach is made from the point of view of production. The so-called

"back to basics" *that* this conservative discourse advocates involves focusing on the most immediately profitable learning, criticizing any other "cultural distraction" in the curriculum...[...] regression to methods efficient, the emphasis on stricter control of the curriculum...[...].

policies remove pedagogical specificities, naturalizing simplistic teaching and learning practices, making people believe that it is enough to copy/paste/repeat and give correct answers for education to take place. How can we break this logic so present in educational practices and policies? I believe in counter-hegemonic practices, produced by Critical Didactics, practices that produce in students and future teachers the awareness of the need to resist these supposed facilities proposed by the reforms. The revolutionary action of critical practices is necessary, which are based on reflexivity, politicized and dialogue as the basis of the method. More than ever, Critical Didactics can be a path forward.

### 3.4 Failure to use BUSINESS CONCEPTS

Why do we bow down and not say no when our convictions invade? Why do we assume concepts that distort the meaning of education? For example: why do we accept talking about tutors or teaching agents replacing the concept of teaching? Why do we accept and reproduce the word *protagonism* at school, replacing the concept that is so dear to us, of intellectual autonomy? Why did we accept the replacement of educational counselors and today we have life and work tutors in full-time schools in the state of São Paulo? There are many other examples, but the important thing is that we must resist propagating and giving credibility to these strategic concepts. Are we managers, administrators or are we school directors, or administrators of the educational conditions in schools?

Rank schools? Why do we attach so much importance to this? Do the measures that supported this ranking represent your conception of education? Do these rankings say anything about good training, autonomy/emancipation?

Why should we assume that we develop pre-made projects in our schools that mean nothing to the participants of this school?

These mechanisms for changing the names of already established concepts tend to produce “common sense” in society in favor of these formulations. We must resist these traits of naive interpretation of these nomenclature substitutions. It's not just a semantic issue; It is a form of colonization of educational culture by business logic.

#### IV. FINAL REFLECTIONS

According to Hill (2003, p. 24), Glenn Rikowski, develops a Marxist analysis based on the study of the workforce. Referring to education, he suggests that teachers are the most dangerous of workers because they have a special role in the formation, development and strength of the only commodity on which the capitalist system depends: labor power .

Rikowski, according to Hill (2003, p. 25), argues that the State needs to control this process for two reasons.

First, to try to ensure that it occurs. Second, to try to ensure that the types of pedagogy opposed to the production of labor power do not and cannot exist. Especially, as is clear from this analysis, the capitalist state will attempt to destroy any form of pedagogy that attempts to educate students about their true predicament – the creation of a consciousness of their own as a future workforce and the support of this consciousness with a critical vision that seeks to undermine the peaceful functioning of the social production of labor power. This fear implies rigid control, for example, of the curriculum for teacher training and training, teaching, and research in education. ( my emphasis )

Paulo Freire left us his legacy that is linked to the necessary politicality of education. From this comes the understanding that, to learn, the student needs to become a subject, cover himself with humanity and construct meanings: become a

subject who sees himself in the world and who can call himself the author of that world. Paulo Freire taught us: depersonalized, we are oppressed and mute!

Paulo Freire also highlights that to become an educator and pedagogue it is essential to be in the world, with the world and make your practice that which consolidates your theory and your theory that which continually readjusts and concretizes the practice.

Once again, I want to highlight that pedagogical rationality, which underpins Critical Didactics, requires the praxis of reflection; of dialogue and politicity (being and being in the world consciously) and that this rationality has been put aside in the contemporary world, due to the force with which neoliberal policies have destroyed our pedagogical culture. As a result, it is clear that contemporary society has moved away from this critical rationality in favor of the neoliberal logic that simplifies and technifies pedagogical processes, depersonalizing the subjects of practice, whether students or teachers.

I believe that Freire, Habermas and Adorno have important signs to put pressure on oppressive school practices and support a true paradigmatic break with the school as an ideological apparatus of the state. I highlighted in this text that current studies indicate that only in part, schools and their practices reproduce the mechanisms of domination; There are predicted and unforeseen mechanisms that produce the counter-hegemony of reproductive processes. Therefore, there is always hope, there is always critical resistance.

Focusing on these possibilities, with the idea of strengthening the fruitfulness of dialogue, based on Freire; of communicative action, based on Habermas and awareness and critical reading of the impacts of the cultural industry, with warnings from Adorno and reflections from Freire, it will perhaps be reasonable to delve into the intricacies of practices, reinventing processes of resistance and transformation.

The classroom, the school spaces, are totalities where the multiple determinations arising from the chain of pedagogical practices that surround it

occur. I believe that to resist and emancipate, we need to look at these practices from the perspective of totality, in order to enhance the dynamics of historical contradictions, as highlighted by Lukács:

*The category of totality means (...) on the one hand, that objective reality is a coherent whole in which each element is, in one way or another, in relation to each element and, on the other hand, that these relations they form, in objective reality itself, concrete correlations, sets, units, linked together in completely different ways, but always determined ... (LUKÁCS, 1967, p.240)*

This whole is made up of parts, laws, logics mediated among themselves and when they become disconnected, they produce disarticulations that harm the original meaning they had.

Paulo Freire comforts us when he states, referring to pedagogical practices as resistance: “ *my hope is necessary, but it is not sufficient. Alone she does not win the fight, but without her the fight weakens and falters* . (FREIRE, 2008, p.15).

I believe that these reconnections, with emancipatory meanings, can be organized from the perspective of a pedagogy that deepens other ways of experiencing school and training processes, thinking and acting with the complexity that the issue involves, as FREIRE reminds us, (2008, p.15)

*Thinking that hope alone transforms the world and acting driven by such naivety is an excellent way of falling into hopelessness, fatalism, pessimism...(...) doing without hope which is also based on truth as an ethical quality of the struggle , is to deny it one of its fundamental supports. The essential thing (..) is that it (hope) as an ontological necessity, needs to be anchored in practice. (my emphasis). FREIRE, (2008, p.15).*

I consider that the present time, dark and difficult times, requires in-depth analyses, which recover the point of view of totality and historicity, creating new relationships of meaning between theoretical knowledge and pedagogical practices:

it is necessary to think about new dynamics of teacher training so that the reproduction of alienating mechanisms, produced by the subjects who participate in school practices, are reviewed and reinterpreted: it is necessary that curiosity, critical thinking, investigation of practice, dialogic forms are finally incorporated into school culture .

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# Third Discussion on the Origin of the Universe

*Samo Liu*

## ABSTRACT

"Exploring the Origin of the Universe" (Liu, 2024) discusses space and time, while "The Second Exploration of the Origin of the Universe" (Liu) delves into existence in space. This represents humanity's endeavor to use language, words, numbers, and science to discuss these questions. Why don't animals and stones engage in such discussions? Why do humans utilize information to discuss these pieces of information? Humans have stumbled upon information; how should they deal with it? There are no correct or standard answers; each person is a philosopher, engaging in contemplation. This article briefly discusses the existence of humanity.

*Keywords:* origin of the universe, basics energy, intellectual energy, matter, energy, information, humanity, intellectual matter, thought, balance, middle way, peace.

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# Third Discussion on the Origin of the Universe

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*"Exploring the Origin of the Universe" (Liu, 2024) discusses space and time, while "The Second Exploration of the Origin of the Universe" (Liu) delves into existence in space. This represents humanity's endeavor to use language, words, numbers, and science to discuss these questions. Why don't animals and stones engage in such discussions? Why do humans utilize information to discuss these pieces of information? Humans have stumbled upon information; how should they deal with it? There are no correct or standard answers; each person is a philosopher, engaging in contemplation. This article briefly discusses the existence of humanity.*

**Subject Terms:** origin of the universe, basics energy, intellectual energy, matter, energy, information, humanity, intellectual matter, thought, balance, middle way, peace.

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## I. INTRODUCTION: HUMANITY NEEDS PEACE

As a technology worker, from the perspective of engineering science and guided by dialectical materialism, these article explore philosophical issues based on the ancestral concept of the origin of the universe, striving to resolve the contradictions between modern physics theories of relativity and quantum mechanics and generate some new insights. If the understanding is incorrect, it may be deemed irrelevant. However, it might also be correct (Liu, "宇宙本原考," "人类本原考").

At a deeper level, understanding the ancestral concept of the origin of the universe, our ancestors hoped that every individual would live well and happily. But how should one live? How can one live happily? These are questions for each person to ponder. Each person is their own savior; humanity is its own savior (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考")..

Humanity has created a philosophy of matter, which will influence humanity for a long time. Humans live in a material universe, greatly influenced by energy and matter. We must develop science, create and develop human material enjoyment, and respond to the universe's impact on human survival (Liu, "宇宙本原考"). We must live scientifically, respect the heavens, respect matter, respect energy and information. Energy and information have given birth to matter and humanity. Like humans, energy, matter, and information are alive; the universe is alive. Understanding the universe and humanity as living and thinking entities is the essence of the concept of the origin of the universe, All exist in The space of 0 dimension. (Liu, 2024.5, 2024.8, "0 維的宇宙—萬物生存考").

The universe, like a deity, is even greater than a deity. It has created all things, including a special substance referred to as intelligent matter in "宇宙本原考," which is humanity. The god of the universe hopes that people will live well, endowing humanity with the causes (因) of self, appetite, and desire, which include both the causes of gods (神因) and demons (魔因), without any positive or negative connotations. However, it has not provided humanity with an instruction manual on how to live and exist; this is something humanity must figure out for itself (Liu, "宇宙本原考," "人类本原考"). Humanity is grateful to the god of the universe. Among all substances, only humans have sensation subjective

consciousness, language, word, numbers, and a scientific coordinate system, known as explicit perception (Liu, "宇宙本原考").

We exist in a three-dimensional universe, but also in a zero-dimensional universe; the 0-dimension is the primal universe. This question has been debated for over 2000 years. Despite the advent of quantum mechanics, relativity, physical cosmology, and systems science, and even the publication of "0 維的宇宙—絕對空間考," it is expected that the debate will continue, perhaps even turning into quarrels. The philosophy of matter will influence humanity for a long time and must not be denied (Liu, "宇宙本原考").

A survey could be conducted online: Are humans willing to live? If the majority of humans believe they do not want to live or exist, they know what to do. If the majority of humans believe they want to live or exist, and furthermore, want to live and exist happily, then the publication and discussion of this article are meaningful.

## II. HUMANITY AND THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE

The universe endows humanity with the causes (因) of self, appetite, and desire, enabling humans to develop language, writing, numbers, subjective consciousness, and thought, and even to create science (Liu, "宇宙本原考," "人类生存考"). Humanity exists in the material universe, the universe of energy, and the universe of information (Liu, 2024.8). Grateful to our great ancestors who endured so much hardship, humanity has survived through countless trials and tribulations in history, and today we have coordinates, we have science, and we have become the rulers of the universe's matter. Are we humans living well? It seems so.

The "I Ching" tells us that the universe is a universe of yin and yang, a universe of ceaseless change (Max Born, "The Restless Universe"), creating all things, including humanity. Humanity is a form of matter, just like all things in the universe, but we have the ability to use language, writing, numbers, and subjective consciousness

for thought, allowing for a dual existence (Liu, 2024.5, 2024.8).

Humanity lives amidst contradictions, constantly facing them and contemplating how to resolve them to achieve the goal of individual survival and fulfill the goal of survival bestowed upon humanity by the universe. We must confront the material universe, also known as the three-dimensional universe. Humans have created science, discovered scientific information, and must use the philosophy of matter and material science to guide the creation of material wealth, energy, and information for humanity, improve our scientific means of survival, and respond to the cyclical laws of the universe and the threats it poses to human survival.

Humanity has not let down the hope and causes of survival bestowed upon it by the universe, creating matter, energy, and information for human survival and existence. Developing nuclear energy, creating robots, and studying genes. Atomic bombs, robots, and human genetic research are not frightening in themselves; what's frightening is humanity's own psyche. If these scientific means are used for the pleasurable survival and existence of humanity, it is the hope given to us by our ancestors and the hope of the origin of the universe's thought. Ancestors do not hope to see human thought used for confrontation between humans. However, what if the opposite happens?

### 2.1 Ancestral Concept of the Origin of the Universe, Is an inspiration for resolving human contradictions

The original thought of the universe is to understand the existence of space and contradictions in space, and to solve contradictions with dialectics.

Humanity exists amidst contradictions, and war is a means of resolving contradictions, an extreme and unwise means, but sometimes a desperate one. Humanity, our ancestors, evolved through the process of struggling against sky (与天斗), against Existence of Nature (与地斗), and against themselves (与人斗) (Mao Zedong, "Selected Works of Mao Zedong"). A Greek philosopher



once expressed: war is an unavoidable thing, an extreme means to achieve harmony, to resolve conflicts (Frank Thilly, "A history of philosophy").

Throughout human history, war may have seemed like a thrilling affair, producing heroes. As a child, I admired heroes greatly - charging through enemy lines, revered by thousands. But as I grew older, I realized it was simply slaughter among fellow beings, a painful realization. Every time I visit the Old Summer Palace, thoughts of the brutal oppression suffered by our ancestors stir up hatred and thoughts of revenge (Zhang Chao, "The Old Summer Palace"). Guided by dialectical materialism, our country has become powerful, yet my country proposes the philosophical idea of a community with a shared future for humanity (Xi Jinping, "On Governing the Country and Governing the Nation"), which I couldn't grasp at the time. It was only after studying the fourteenth chapter of the "Diamond Sutra" that I understood the philosophical concept of a community with a shared future for humanity (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考"). As an ordinary person, I have come to realize that when humanity has the ability to become gods of the universe, we must consider the cost of war to humanity. I am proud of my country.

If you ask someone, "Are you a fool?" The response might be, "You're the fool." I proudly proclaim myself to be a fool. From an ignorant fool to a people of can think. Because my generation has experienced many

contradictions, we have the right to speak on contradictions.

Human beings are self, but when I was a child, I seriously criticized and reflected on the human self with adults. Human beings must eat, but when I was a child, the countryside was very poor, not enough to eat, not warm to wear, often frostbite, but very happy. For our great leaders also eat plain food, wear patched clothes, and believe in Him spiritually. Human beings love sexuality, and the author did not know what sexuality was when he was a child, but he was seriously critical sexual freedom with adults.

Humans love money, and when they were young, they seriously criticized capitalism along with adults. He was a great admirer of his ancestors, and severely criticized and abused his ancestors and their culture when he was a child. (Liu, "人类本原考") In the end, it turned out that he liked the ideology and culture left by his ancestors. We call it the Cultural Revolution.

Materialist dialectics "to seek truth from facts" thinking, so that China has undergone earthshaking changes, our generation with blood and sweat hard work, more than a billion people out of poverty, know the unity, learned to think. However, the phenomenon that was criticized as a child has appeared. The people are pleased with the concepts and actions taken to fight corruption and build a clean government, crack down on criminal syndicates and evil forces, ensure workplace safety, protect the environment, and put life first. Of course, I only represent myself, an ordinary citizen.

These experiences can make people think, what is right? What's wrong? Human thinking is a coordinate system, man-made thinking coordinate system. Many of humanity's contradictions are of its own making.

Dinosaurs once existed on the Earth, and their existence was not easy. Very brave, they did not destroy themselves, but intelligent human beings, if you do not think clearly the ancestors left behind the original thought of the universe, we will not even as dinosaurs, it is likely that we will destroy ourselves. This is what our ancestors warned us about 2,500 years ago. (liu"宇宙本原经典考")

It is estimated that for quite a long time, human beings will not be able to avoid war, However, be careful, we already have the ability to destroy ourselves, and the weapons that can completely destroy mankind already exist. (Liu, "宇宙本原考") Therefore, peace is no longer a slogan, but a reflection of the wisdom of The Mahaparinirvana. (般若智慧)

There are many ways to solve the conflict, we have to think of our ancestors left us the universe

Lenovo ideas. Chapter 38 of Tao Te Ching holds that the highest power of the universe is balance; According to the Diamond Sutra, Master Nagarjuna believes that the highest human wisdom is Prajna (The Mahaparinirvana) and the Middle Way. (liu“道德经-宇宙本原的宣言”“宇宙本原经典考”, 2024.5)

Physics has also coined a new vocabulary called parity equilibrium and parity imbalance. When the parity is not balanced, there will be contradictions. The contradictory result of the universe is to create biomass, energy and human beings, and to contain them. How should human beings deal with contradictions? Balance is an important way to solve contradictions. Therefore, to think about the causes and factors of contradictions and the ways to solve contradictions is to think about the origin of the universe, which is the wisdom and thinking of the Mahaparinirvana in the material world.

The universe does not want to destroy anything. The words for destruction are created by man. The fifth chapter of the Tao Te Ching says that the universe is equal to all things. (Liu, "道德经-宇宙本原的宣言") The universe is cyclical, and this is illustrated to some extent in Professor Penrose's writings. (Penrose, "The Road to Reality") Human beings know very well that it is not a funny thing for human beings to disappear. So humans have to fight. But, How hard should we do?

## 2.2 Scientific Concept of the Origin of the Universe

Socrates proposed relinquishing contemplation of cosmic space, redirecting philosophical inquiry to human society and the material universe, a task completed by Aristotle. Human thought, abandoning a contradictory approach, focused its energies on materialistic dialectics, delving deeply into scientific questions regarding the material universe. This shift left spatial and emptiness-related questions to religion, catalyzing a rapid advancement in scientific understanding (Liu, 2024.5, "宇宙本原考").

Newton resolved the issue of mutual perception of mass among atomic substances through universal gravitation; electromagnetism addressed the issue of perception between the yin and yang structures

of matter; modern physics tackled the problem of mutual perception between energies; physical cosmology revealed the truth of the existence of matter and non-matter in space; quantum mechanics shed light on the logical problems existing in the universe; relativity informed us about the equivalence of mass and energy under conditions of light speed; and four-dimensional spacetime revealed the existence of emptiness, energy, and information when time equals zero, as well as the existence of fundamental energy and wisdom energy, the coexistence of yin and yang energies(阴阳二炁) (Liu, 2024.5, 2024.8).

The development of physics has forced humanity to reconsider the problem of the origin of the universe, shifting from contemplation and understanding of the material universe to the existence of the entire universe's true space. This reconsideration forces us to approach the problems of physics and cosmology from the systematic perspective of the Daoist and Buddhist concept of the origin of the universe left by our ancestors. Paradoxically, the emergence of quantum mechanics and relativity has created contradictions that compel us to resolve them from the perspective of the origin of the universe, using the scientific method (Liu, 2024.5).

From another perspective, humanity has advanced to the level of gods of the universe. With the means and methods to understand and harness the energy and information of the origin of the universe, humanity has acquired immense power and also the ability to destroy itself. The double-edged sword brought about by science compels us to reconsider from the perspective of the origin of the universe.

So, how should we contemplate the issue of the origin of the universe, or rather, how should we utilize the concept of the origin of the universe to guide human thought? This question is crucial. It is a question left for our generation to contemplate by our ancestors (Liu, "Classic Consideration of the Origin of the Universe").

This question has posed obstacles to modern physics and has also created contradictions for human survival and existence. There are no

correct or standard answers, only some reference opinions offered from the concept of the origin of the universe left by our ancestors for humanity to contemplate.

### III. RESPECT FOR HEAVEN(敬天)

Heaven is the universe, the expanse of space.

Socrates and Aristotle urged us to abandon contemplation of space and instead focus on the material existence within it, namely humanity and material entities. No one deliberately designed this; humanity stumbled upon mechanics, energy, and information inadvertently, inventing coordinate systems and calculus. This was a natural phenomenon arising from human subjective consciousness. Quantum mechanics and relativity have reopened the gates of cosmic space and the concept of the universe's origin. The contradictions in modern physics have forced us to reconsider the issue of space that Aristotle set aside (Liu, 2024.5, 宇宙本原考).

The great Newton discovered universal gravitation and posed questions about absolute space, relative space, and place (Newton, "Principia"). Material science has taught us about the three-dimensional nature of space; quantum mechanics and relativity have revealed the possibility of the existence of a real zero-dimensional space. The zero-dimensionality of space may be an important method for resolving the contradictions in modern physics (Liu, 2024.5, 2024.8).

Scientific knowledge has equipped us with the means to understand the material and non-material existence within space, providing insights into the true nature of space. Understanding space's reality signifies humanity's great progress. However, whether it's three-dimensional or zero-dimensional, our understanding of space is still just a stage in human development and the study of the universe. It is not eternal truth (Liu, 2024.5).

Respecting Heaven means understanding and honoring the reality of space. This is an essential message and task passed down to humanity from the universe and our ancestors. However, we

should not treat space as an "existence" to be studied; this could lead to ambiguity (Liu, 2024.5). Understanding and respecting space—space as the mother (Liu, 2024.8)—means understanding and embracing the love and creativity inherent in space, as well as its balance and cyclical nature. Space does not destroy anything; only humanity entertains the concept of subjective destruction. Taoist philosophy advocates "action without action(无为而为)," while Buddhist philosophy speaks of the emptiness of the five aggregates(五蕴皆空).

True space is zero-dimensional, the genuine space of the universe. According to our current scientific knowledge, as analyzed from a human perspective, the fourth chapter of the Tao Te Ching tells us that this is as far as we can currently comprehend. Understanding and respecting Tan (德, /\*-) for the advancement and existence of humanity, we pray for the protection of heaven.

If we ask, "Where do humans come from?" the answer is "from parents." Indeed, humans should honor their parents. However, the sperm and egg from parents come from energy and information. The fusion of yin (阴) and yang(阳) energy creates embryos, fostering birth, growth, aging, and death. Who enables all this? Space and the existence within it. Space and the yin-yang existence within space are the true origins of humanity; space is the mother. Think about it, isn't it?

Pythagoras said "all things are numbers," and space is countless, eternal, and infinite. Therefore, contemplating space might not be subject to study or reflection through mathematical or physical methods. It may only be logically considered through space physics, system science, information theory, probability theory, and mathematical statistics, based on human research on matter, energy, and information. However, space is just space; it is not an existence. Please do not categorize space as an existence, especially without understanding its essence. Moreover, do not add dimensions to space without understanding its true nature. I apologize to the great Einstein and Professor Witten (Liu, 2024.5).

Time and space do not bend; the description of bending is only applicable to the existence within space.

A serious problem arises when materialistic philosophy distorts the thoughts of some scientists. We can't blame the scientists, because everyone has grown up under the influence of material science, material philosophy. We fundamentally do not know what space and time are. It may take humanity a long time to study this question, assuming humanity continues to exist.

What is light? Einstein did not understand ("宇宙本原考," Liu, 2024.5). He left with doubts about quantum mechanics. Physics should continue to ponder this question. Hiroshi Ooguri's (大栗博司) "Strong Force and Weak Force" suggests that if light becomes heavy, it must have longitudinal waves in addition to transverse waves (Hiroshi Ooguri, "Strong Force and Weak Force"). "人类本原考" proposes that light belongs to the category of fundamental energy; photons belong to the category of material energy. This might depend on the kinetic energy speed of photons and the material and non-material nature of light. Please refer to the verification ("人类本原考," "万物生存考," Liu, 2024.5).

If we were to liken space to a deity, then light, force, and time would be the angels of the cosmic gods ("万物生存考," Liu, 2024.5). Let us praise them. Light, force, and time are beautiful, but science is not flawless.

#### IV. RESPECT FOR EARTH(敬地)

Here, the Earth(地) does not just refer to the land on our planet; it encompasses both the terrestrial mass and the existing matter in universe, all exist of natural.

Earth represents the existence within the universe, encompassing both energy and material existence. Everything belongs to the category of Earth (Liu, "宇宙本原考"). Respecting Earth means honoring all existences within the universe, including quantum mechanics and relativity, which represent the origins of material creation. Respecting Earth means respecting classical physics and

honoring scientific research on matter, energy, and information.

Humans are a form of matter, the highest form of intelligent matter created by the universe. Humans have language, subjective thinking, and consciousness. Humans are an existence, a collective of energy, information, and matter, a combination of soul and body. Humans exist within existence, living within the realm of matter, energy, and information. As the rulers of all things, humans must respect all existences, honoring information, energy, and all forms of existence, coexisting with all cosmic beings.

Humans are beings of information; they can create and discover information. They have even created robots, representing the universe (Liu, "人类本原考"). Regarding information, humans can only discover Tan(德) (the essence of information) and create Tan(德). It is advisable not to dwell excessively on Tan(德). Information is also a deity or angel of the universe, possessing sublime divinity (Liu, 2024.8).

Information symbolizes humanity and represents the informational essence of cosmic creation. Given humanity's current level of information, we cannot ascertain the origin of information; this is a long-term task for humanity—discovering and creating information. Information is the eternal exploration of human existence. Use information to judge information (Liu, 2024.5, 2024.8).

As for matter and energy, there is no need to discuss them here; physics has done an excellent job. Theoretical scientists have researched matter and energy to the extreme. As engineering scientists, our duty is to execute. The same applies to ordinary people. We proceed according to the research of theoretical scientists, conducting research in various fields. For the survival and existence of humanity, we must do so.

The study of the origin of the universe requires the collaboration of various disciplines in natural and social sciences, including science, philosophy, and religion. No single discipline can accomplish this task alone.



As technology workers, we create material wealth based on the knowledge and information created by theoretical scientists. When creating new matter and energy, we must focus on dialectical thinking, or else we risk the disappearance and death of matter, leading to environmental destruction. Just as humans will die when the main structure of their bodies is destroyed, similarly, when humans destroy the structure of matter in the natural universe, it will lead to the death of matter. We must refrain from creating new matter indiscriminately, such as robots, atomic bombs, or DNA, until we have confirmed the value and impact of new creations on human survival and existence. However, it is clear that we cannot control this situation, just as we have already created atomic bombs, discovered DNA, and created robots. With the progress of science, the new informational tools created by humans will become more powerful. Because we humans have not yet learned to contemplate the origin of the universe, we cannot control our own minds.

We cannot determine how much of a threat new information creation poses to humanity. Especially when we cannot grasp our own minds, the more matter and information we create, the faster humanity's confrontation with the material philosophy of the mind will lead to its demise.

Please reflect on whether the current situation we face is like this. Therefore, contemplation of the origin of the universe is an urgent matter. We hope that the progress of science and information will no longer pose new and greater threats to human survival and existence. Human fear of nuclear weapons and robots is essentially a fear of their own minds.

## V. RESPECT FOR HUMANITY (敬人)

Respecting humanity seems like a straightforward matter; do we really need to discuss it?

### 5.1 *Respect for Oneself*

It seems too simple; do we need to discuss self-respect? Yes, indeed, it's an interesting question. This question is related to space and the existence within space, and it relates to the soul, which the author refers to

as the mind in his works (Liu, "宇宙本原考" and "人类本原考"). Humans are material beings. Chapter 77 of the Dao De Jing states that materiality is a form of self-identity (Liu, "道德经-宇宙本原的宣言"). This is the reason for the origin of the universe, the reason for the mind of the universe. It's something humans cannot control. Therefore, humans inherently possess self-identity, and signals of the self will amplify.

"宇宙本原考" suggests that when the universe created humans, it was akin to humans creating computers. It installed a software of the mind for humans, which every person possesses. Everyone is aware of the existence of this software, known as the soul. However, each person cannot fully communicate with their own soul. This can only be achieved by learning to be still and tranquil, as advocated by Daoism (Dao De Jing) and Buddhism (Heart Sutra). Taoism is called "致虚极, 守静笃"; Buddhist is called "行深般若波罗蜜多".

The human mind software possesses both divinity and demonism (with neither positive nor negative connotations), two contradictory existences. The demonistic mind possesses all the characteristics of materiality. For example, one's ego, appetite, and sexual desire are naturally given. Therefore, human ego, appetite, and sexual desire are not sins but natural traits. The cosmic deity has also endowed humans with divine characteristics, possessing spatial traits such as creation, innovation, and inclusiveness.

Humans must have material desires, including ego, appetite, and sexual desire. These are the basic and necessary conditions for human existence. How should one treat these inherent natural causes? The universe has not provided standard answers for humans, requiring each individual to perceive, feel, and contemplate and to decide based on their own circumstances. In communal living, humans establish certain standards of law, culture, and morality. However, this contradicts the freedom of thought that individuals seek. The informational systems within human bodies are contradictory existences, complex contradictions. The Huangdi Neijing states that there is a divine presence within our

bodies, possessing yin-yang characteristics, influenced by five factors of life and constraint (Liu, 2020, "宇宙本原考"). Simply put, each person cannot truly understand themselves.

"人类本原考" has considered this question but only presents some phenomena without providing answers. This is because each person and each human community has different circumstances, requiring individual contemplation and mutual understanding, with the precondition of recognizing this fact.

For example, regarding the issue of the self: in the material world, everyone enjoys the self and desires money, status, power, etc. But do these bring more pleasure and happiness, or more troubles? Only you know.

Regarding appetite: Humans must convert food into energy to survive. Appetite is not a sin; it is your subjective consciousness and the cause of the cosmic mind that makes you do this, a natural trait given by the universe. Over 2,000 years ago, two Chinese sages debated whether human nature is good or evil. One believed that human nature is evil because humans know how to snatch eat milk as soon as they are born (Liu, "人类本原考"). But what should one eat and how should one eat it correctly? Resolving the contradiction of appetite involves eating. There are various ways to think about this. One is the problem of being full or hungry. In Chinese history, many peasant uprisings were caused by starvation, which is why the greeting in China includes "Have you eaten?" Another is the sensation of taste, satisfying desires for color, aroma, and taste, which comes after not having to worry about food and drink, each with its differences. There is also dietary selection based on health standards, each with its differences, and so on. There is also a natural divinity determination of your body's health indicators related to diet (Liu, "宇宙本原考"). Daoism and Buddhism advocate for simple and vegetarian diets. Buddha Siddhartha was a prince but chose begging, considered the lowest form of living by humans (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考"). In contemporary times, a billionaire has also chosen this lifestyle, named Kazuo Inamori (稻

盛和夫) (Kazuo Inamori, "Living with Purpose"). There is no standard answer to the problem of appetite; your own answer is your answer. However, once you have an answer, you will judge whether others' answers are correct based on your own. This is because the software program of your mind is your own input, with the basic program designed by the universe.

Regarding sexual desire: Humans generally enjoy it and may even excessively enjoy it. Sexual desire is not a sin; it is also the cause of the cosmic mind that makes you do this. It is the acquired nature given by the universe to human beings, and the reason for time is related to the natural phenomenon of human maturity. This problem is much more complex than appetite, although it does not starve people to death, but involves the second person and the human yin and yang structure. History is full of examples of wars being waged because of the opposite sex. But how should one deal with sexual desire throughout one's life? Everyone wants that freedom. But does the God in you body like this freedom? Taoism believes that controlling sexual desire can prolong life, do you believe it? (Liu "人类本原考") This is another contradiction.

All of this. There is no standard answer, only a word called dialectics, or balance and middle way.

So, respecting yourself is a difficult question to answer. This is a philosophical question. Everyone has a heart, called a soul. The human mind and the universal mind are one. (Wang Yangming, "传习录", "Liu, "宇宙本原考")

## 5.2 Respecting Others

The Dao De Jing suggests that managing oneself should be like governing a country, learning to understand and respect oneself, in order to handle the fundamental relationships of human existence (Liu, "道德经-宇宙本原的宣言"). Because human existence is the same and equal, all things are unified (Zhuangzi, "齐物论").

The author's field of study and research is engineering, not philosophy or religion. However, in the course of study and life, it involves many other specialized knowledge, discovering

contradictory information such as information science, linguistics, and numerology. For example, humans have invented vocabulary like love, hate, and respect, which do not exist in the universe. The universe is very simple; matter and energy only perceive forces and time, balancing and cycling equally. In the realm of information, energy, and matter, the principles of mechanics are that forces are equal in magnitude but opposite in direction, and time governs direction and balance (Liu, 2024).

The universe created humans, endowed with sensations and subjective consciousness, which complicates matters. Humans create information and subjectively amplify it. For example, love and hate are such amplified information, and "respect" is how one handles the contradiction between love and hate. The result may be disrespect.

### 5.2.1 Love and Hate

These are terms created by humans. It's unclear how ordinary animals express such information; the perception of information between matter and energy involves only issues of generation (生) and inhibition (克), attraction and repulsion. Daoism believes that the information of yin (阴) and yang (阳) is completed through the factors of the five elements (五行 : metal, water, wood, fire, and earth (Liu, 2020)). It's quite complex, and when it enters the human mind, it becomes even more complex. Human sensations and subjective consciousness amplify these pieces of information (Liu, "人类本原考"). However, the principle remains the same. Physics does not deal with the issue of love and hate; the dialectics and logic of thinking about information problems are consistent. Love and hate move and change within the information of yin and yang, and human interactions are filled with fluctuations of love and hate. Love can sustain and propagate human existence; hate can lead to mutual harm and even destruction. It's the mutual exchange of information between factors and elements that leads to movement and change. The reality is that humans have brought about Cause and factor their own destruction. What should be done?

The principle of mechanics is that action forces are equal in magnitude and opposite in direction; the principle of human thought is that releasing the information of love will result in more love, and releasing the information of hate will result in more hate. For the sake of human survival and existence, why not release the information of love among humans? This is respect, the basic principle of human peace (Liu, "人类本源考").

### 5.2.2 Balance and the Middle Way

Daoism refers to the creation of the universe as "doing without doing (无为而为) ," the transformation and balance of yin and yang in the generation (生) and inhibition (克) of the five elements (Liu, "道德经-宇宙本原的宣言").

Buddhism calls it "five aggregates are empty," (五蕴皆空)," the causal changes and middle way of factors and elements (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考"). Physics and systems science tell us about the material and immaterial aspects of the universe, the changes in information, energy, and matter (Liu, 2024), as well as the creativity, inclusiveness, and balance of space (Liu, 2024). Humans have discovered this information and use it to think about information, judge its correctness, and only through science can the explicit existence of information be manifested. Without humans, there would be no explicit expression of information, no language, no writing, no numbers, and no science. Therefore, the existence of humans is supreme (Liu, "人类本原考").

The greatest framework for human thought should be the issue of human existence and human peace. The "Diamond Sutra" reminds us that when contemplating the issue of human existence, we must not only learn to think in terms of material philosophy but also understand the fundamental principles of the universe's existence, enabling humanity to overcome challenges (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考"). By using scientific philosophy to resolve contradictions, humanity can surely overcome these challenges.

### 5.3 "Philosophy of Science is the Guiding Method for Human Peace"

With the end of the Second World War, some countries that instigated war apologized. This reflects a scientific attitude and civilization; otherwise, it would leave their own countries with troubles. The world is still in turmoil, and wars may still occur. By analyzing the causes and factors of war and avoiding war as much as possible, especially avoiding the use of destructive weapons such as nuclear weapons, humanity can prevent its own disappearance. The effective way to resolve human conflicts is to gradually shift human material philosophical thinking to contemplate the origin of the universe.

From an informational perspective, the philosophical thoughts of Daoism and Buddhism have been faithfully implemented by scientists. Scientists have discovered the yin-yang balance of the origin of the universe, the causality and middle way of factors, and scientists are the great bodhisattvas. Let us hope that scientists will achieve the greatness of Buddha, and Buddha is the enlightenment of humanity (Liu, "宇宙本原经典考").

Enlightenment for the balance of humanity, human peace, and human existence.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The discussion and contemplation of the origin of the universe are undertaken solely by humanity. This is a necessary condition for human survival and existence, and it is a question that humanity must ponder if it wishes to continue existing.

What is the origin of the universe? What is material philosophy? What is material science? These are questions that each individual must earnestly contemplate. Whether it is modern physics or the survival and existence of humanity, it is time to consider these questions. Therefore, the cosmological ideas of Daoist and Buddhist philosophy left by our ancestors are scientific philosophies. Ancient Greek philosophy, ancient Indian philosophy, and ancient Babylonian philosophy are areas where the author has limited knowledge, but they may all contribute to this

understanding (Liu, "o-Dimensional Universe: Absolute Space Consideration"). It is hoped that this will attract attention from contemporary humanity. First and foremost, the scientific community is urged to prove the existence of space and the entities within it.

All the information conveyed by human language, writing, numbers, and science points to one truth: human-made truth. There is no absolute truth, only relative truth (Liu, "人类本原考"). There is one great truth: for humanity to live, to exist. Otherwise, all the existence created by humanity will cease to exist, but the universe will continue to exist as usual. Face the great mother of space, we can only kneel and pray for the blessing of Space - the mother of humanity and all things. At the same time, we should strive harder. Only humanity can be its own savior.

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# The Persecutory Civilization

*Jeremy Adler*

## INTRODUCTION

We live in a persecutory civilization. For two-and-a-half millennia persecution has formed the model by which societies operate. This does not mean that we are the only persecutory civilization. It does not mean that our societies engage in permanent persecutions or that they have not undergone a civilizing process. But for several thousand years the act of persecution has formed a constant in our civilization; it is endemic to society; and the persecuted leader such as Socrates or Jesus has constituted an ideal type in the West. They established the victim as hero as a model of behaviour, followed by authorities such as Origen and Irenaeus. Persecution is usually contrasted with tolerance; it is also opposed to religious freedom; but the actual structure of persecution -- its sociology -- has only been examined on a handful of occasions. It is time to define it.

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Persecution is among the vilest acts that any person or group can perform on another: the persecutor is always in a more powerful position than the victim, and for the victim there is no escape from the tormentor. It is unfair, unjust, and cruel. In this respect it negates natural law. It is often legally sanctioned but always associated with suffering. In that regard it can be called a crime against life. However, the emphasis on the contrast between persecution and tolerance has led to a general stress on encouraging toleration, and writing the history of toleration, to the neglect of correcting persecutory behaviours as such.

The histories in this field examine the growth of toleration, but largely ignore the proscription of persecution. Indeed, the act of persecution had practically no place in law until after the Second World War.

The role of what may be called the persecutory mentality is crucial in ancient Rome, at the time of the Crusades, in the period of the Witch Craze, and in the epoch of the Huguenots. In each instance the victim is demonized by the perpetrator. Yet the histories of these cruel practices tend to dwell on specific prejudices, of which anti-Semitism is the most egregious; but they thereby ignore the common factor of the *longue durée*, the persecutory habit, the persecutory mentality. Yet this mentality underlies a multitude of prejudices and crimes that scar the character of the West. This trajectory helps to explain the atavistic nature of the Shoah.

The criminalization of persecution by legal instruments backed up by the authority of an international criminal court is perhaps the most signal event in the long history of western persecutory acts. This, then, is the line here taken: from the beginning of the persecutory civilization about two-and-a-half millennia ago to its recent prohibition by legal instruments. Just as persecution is generally undertaken to achieve a dubious form of social purity, its curtailment leads to a new quest for international concord. It is not toleration which defines the opposite of persecution but concord -- not a negative act, but a positive value -- and the display of human sympathy.

Given its serial ramifications, the complexities of this topic defy the kind of linear method proposed by Descartes.<sup>1</sup> Instead of his standard, undeviating approach, a multidirectional style seems more apposite; and I will therefore revert to *Montaigne's advice*:<sup>2</sup> "*When collating objects, no*

<sup>1</sup> Descartes. *Règles pour la direction de l'esprit*. Trans. J. Sirvin. Librairie Philosophique, Paris. 2012: 30; 39.

<sup>2</sup> Michel de Montaigne. *The Complete Essays*. Trans M.A. Screech. Penguin. London. 1987: 1207.

quality is more universal as diversity and variety". For to understand the intricate nature of victimisation, it will be necessary to travel back and forth in time, and farther afield across different dimensions in space, but also to supplement historical facts with reflections, in order to discover how to define and how to curtail the persecutory mentality.

The persecutory mentality could well be singled out as a defining feature of what Max Weber calls "a universal history of culture".<sup>3</sup> Although other cultures – the Muslim world; Japanese culture; Cambodia; Rwanda; Myanmar; China – afford strong illustrations of persecution, and might provide illuminating examples of this most cruel form of behaviour, this essay will focus almost exclusively on the West, and the Shoah in particular, in order to develop as clear a picture as possible of this most widespread phenomenon. Yet as will emerge, the Shoah continues to spawn its offspring, and to cast a shadow over the world to come.

## II. THE PERSECUTORY SOCIETY

In spite of our trust in the rule of law, we live in a persecutory civilization. The number of individuals who have been persecuted throughout the ages because of the colour of their skin, their religious affiliation, or their philosophical views is legion. These are the tyrannized victims upon whose shattered existences the contemporary world is erected. No wonder that John Stuart Mill described the act of persecution as:<sup>4</sup> "one of the most tragical facts in all history."

Our mythology enshrines persecution in the myth of Prometheus: for the sake of a noble, life-enhancing act, when he robbed the fire from the sun and brought the flame to earth, Prometheus was punished by a repetitive act of cruelty, such that his punishment became the inferno of eternal persecution. His fate inscribed

persecution in our foundation myth: through his flame, the martyrs have been immolated down the ages, and even the victims of the camps were burned to cinders. As Montesquieu observed,<sup>5</sup> three crimes – witchcraft, heresy, and the crime against nature – were all punishable by fire. Fire is the element of persecution, whether in the bonfires of the saints, or the insatiable ovens of the Shoah.

For the purposes of this study, I understand "western civilization" to mean the Graeco-Hebraic-Christian heritage which stretches back for about two-and-a-half millennia.<sup>6</sup> This concept maps onto the history of the West understood as a single diverse culture created by independent states focussed on political economy, agriculture, trade, colonialism, and warfare and given to such major pursuits as religion, intellectual enquiry, the arts, exploration, and the inventions of science and technology – in short, the civilization Fernand Braudel calls the *longue durée*. This fits the well-known political structure isolated by Samuel P. Huntington: his idea of civilization signifies widely shared practices, modes of thinking, norms, and values.<sup>7</sup> The persecutory mentality is one such propensity. Persecution is its practice. Within any country in any given civilization, massive divisions may occur, which give rise to aggressive acts such as forced migrations and genocide<sup>8</sup>. This means that the persecutory mentality is a consequence of the heterogeneous structure of a civilization; hence, at its most comprehensive, persecution expresses a persistent intra-civilizational conflict. It was

<sup>3</sup> Max Weber. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans Talcott Parsons, Routledge. London and New York. 1992. XXXVI.

<sup>4</sup> John Stuart Mill. 'On Liberty.' *On Liberty and Other Essays*. Ed. John Gray. Oxford University Press. Oxford. . 1991. 1-128. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Montesquieu. *The Spirit of the Laws*. Trans. And Ed. Anne M. Cohler, Basia C. Miller and Harold S. Stone. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1989. XXI. vi.

<sup>6</sup> Joshua Cole and Carol Symes. *Western Civilizations*. Two Vols. Norton. New York. 2020. Mark Kishlansky, Patricia O'Brien, and Patrick Geary. *A Brief History of Western Civilization. The Unfinished Legacy*. Two Vols. HarperCollins. London. 2007. Marvin Perry. et.al. *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*. Cengage. Boston. MA. 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Free Press. New York. 2002. 40-55.

<sup>8</sup> Op. cit. 137.

recognised as early as Rousseau that there is a direct correlation between divided states and religious persecution. This disjuncture, on his account, inaugurated the systematic abuse of the Jews.<sup>9</sup> The countries that Huntington describes as “torn”, as Russia has been for centuries,<sup>10</sup> possess a greater bias towards such maltreatment. Contrary to the general view of civilization as a growing array of peaceful achievements, therefore, I regard violence in general and persecution in particular as intrinsic to social life. This contrasts with the overriding position adopted by Norbert Elias, who traces the increase in civilization since the Middle Ages, attributing it to the growth in individual self-control;<sup>11</sup> however, it conforms with his subsidiary argument, which regards violence as integral to mankind’s “unending and constantly endangered process of civilization.”<sup>12</sup> The West is never free from persecution, either in a real or in a symbolic form. The persecutory mentality is a constant.

Against Durkheim’s belief that persecution is to be regarded as “abnormal”, I argue that it must be understood as a normal social form.<sup>13</sup> This is confirmed by Siniša Malešević who claims:<sup>14</sup> “the last 2,000 years of human history would show that if there were any near universal processes that have shaped our global past, these must have been collective violence and social exclusion”. To this pattern we should add persecution. There is hard evidence for this hypothesis. In their keynote publication *Religious Freedom Denied*, Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke reach the astounding conclusion that religious persecution is as

ubiquitous as it is pernicious in the modern world:<sup>15</sup> “Of the 143 countries with populations of two million or more, between July 1 2000, and June 30 2007, 86 percent (123 countries) have documented cases of people being physically abused or displaced because of a lack of religious freedom, that is *religious persecution*.” This confirms H. G. Adler’s thesis that persecution is a universal.<sup>16</sup> It may be called the *persecutory constant*: some or other form of persecution may be regarded as constant throughout the world at any given moment in time. Other authors have lent historical depth to this paradigm. In their study of the persecution of the Jews in Germany, Nico Voigtländer and Hans-Joachim Voth have shown that the same patterns of persecution lasted for 600 years in Germany – including *auto da fés* – from the medieval pogroms to the Shoah.<sup>17</sup> This is perhaps the greatest continuity in the history of persecution that has been empirically verified. But the indications support the opinion that the period in question is appreciably more extensive. This is suggested by Alphonse Dupront’s classic study, *Le Mythe de Croisade*,<sup>18</sup> which demonstrates that the myth of the crusades, a cognate notion to persecution, lasted rather longer. The earliest persecutions can be dated to the Babylonian era of around 600 BCE which is defined by the earliest deportations of the Jews. The milder kinds of persecution are well-nigh omnipresent. Only the most virulent are rare. In the words of David Nirenberg:<sup>19</sup> “after its

<sup>9</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *The Social Contract*. Penguin. Harmondsworth. 1968. IV. viii. 177-178.

<sup>10</sup> Op. cit. 139-144.

<sup>11</sup> Norbert Elias. *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*. Two Vols. Bern and Munich. 1969. II: 135.

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan Fletcher. *Violence and Civilization. An Introduction to the Work of Norbert Elias*. Polity. Cambridge. 1997. 184.

<sup>13</sup> W. S. F. Pickering. ‘Does Durkheim Make a Contribution to Understanding Of Alleged Cause of Persecution?’ *Durkheimian Studies*. 9. 2003. 40-57: 46.

<sup>14</sup> Siniša Malešević. *The Sociology of War and Violence*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2010: 399.

<sup>15</sup> Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke. *The Price of Freedom Denied. Religious Persecution and Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2011. 18.

<sup>16</sup> H.G. Adler ‘Zur Morphologie der Verfolgung’ (1960). In: H.G. Adler. *Nach der Befreiung. Ausgewählte Essays zur Geschichte und Soziologie*. Ed. Peter Filkins with Jeremy Adler. Konstanz University Press. Konstanz. 2013: 159-170. 159.

<sup>17</sup> Nico Voigtlander and Hans-Joachim Voth. ‘Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Violence in Germany. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*. 127. 2012. 1139-1392.

<sup>18</sup> Alphonse Dupront. *Le Mythe de Croisade*. Four Vols. Gallimard. Paris. 1997.

<sup>19</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*. Princeton. Princeton. 1996. 5.

birth the persecuting mentality seems to transcend particularities of time and place.” Persecution became ubiquitous. There is, therefore, a persecutory continuum that stretches from the earliest phases of civilization right down to the Shoah and beyond, and which is characterised by its cyclical recidivism.

This essay will confine itself to the West, which like so many other collectives deserves to be recognised as a persecutory civilization. The greatest minds of western civilization have been demonized and subjected to persecution: Socrates was poisoned by drinking hemlock in 399 BCE; Jesus was crucified for his views around 33 CE; Boethius was executed in 524; Jan Hus was burnt at the stake for defending the truth in 1415; William Tyndale was strangled in 1538; Giordano Bruno was immolated in 1600 for his heretical beliefs; Galileo was sentenced to life imprisonment for his scientific views in 1633; Spinoza was excommunicated from the Jewish community in 1656; the poet Quirinus Kuhlmann was burned at the stake in 1689; Jean-Jacques Rousseau was hounded from place to place in his native land for his revolutionary writings from 1763; Fichte was driven out of his university Chair at Jena in 1799 for alleged atheism; Dostoyevsky was exiled to Siberia in 1849; Bakunin was imprisoned for his political views for seven years from 1851; Alfred Dreyfus was wrongfully convicted of treason and exiled in 1894, causing one of the biggest scandals in modern French history; the revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg was summarily dispatched in 1919; the leader of the German Jewish community Leo Baeck -- like so many others -- was victimized by the Gestapo in the 1930’s; the poet Osip Mandelstam was systematically persecuted from 1933 until his death from cold and starvation in 1938; the Spanish poet and playwright Federico Garcia Lorca was assassinated in 1936; Primo Levi was incarcerated in Auschwitz from 1944-1945; in 1947 Bert Brecht was grilled by the Un-American Activities Committee; Alan Turing committed suicide on account of his homosexuality in 1954; Martin Luther King was mown down in 1968; the Nobel peace laureate Andrei Sakharov was harassed by the Soviet authorities on account of

his libertarianism from 1972 until his death in 1989; the Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov was arrested by the Russian authorities in 2014 and sentenced to twenty years imprisonment for alleged terrorism offences; the Anglo-Iranian Nazanin Zaghari-Radcliffe was detained in Iran from 2016-2022; Osman Kavala was arrested and subsequently imprisoned in Turkey in 2016; and Alexei Navalny was unjustly convicted in 2021.

These actions evince “systemic violence”:<sup>20</sup> the aggressive and more subtle form of coercion that is inherent to society. Ideals like those of Sakharov represent the antithesis of persecution: intellectual freedom, cosmopolitanism -- which he calls *rapprochement* -- and world peace.<sup>21</sup> Sakharov’s brave stance and his maltreatment by the state demonstrate the lasting relevance of the martyr as a symbol of civic virtue. The killers always believe that by destroying their enemies they can do away with their ideas, although the opposite is the case. Strangely, Carlyle omits the martyr as hero in his celebration of great figures, albeit he venerates Jesus as the greatest of all heroes.<sup>22</sup>

In order to understand persecution among social relations in general, it needs to be seen as a form of *conflict*, which, as Simmel argues, is essential to the formation of society.<sup>23</sup> Persecution arises where there is a competition between different groups:<sup>24</sup> a competition of economic riches, a competition of territory, a competition of beliefs, a competition of values. Where the ruling class experiences competition from a rival in the quest for religious truth, say, the latter will incur retribution. However, under certain

<sup>20</sup> Systemic and Structural Violence in College - Criminal Justice - IresearchNet

<sup>21</sup> Andrei D. Sakharov. *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom*. Penguin. Harmondsworth. 1968: 23-25.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Carlyle. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. Ed. David R. Sorensen and Brent E. Kinser. Yale University Press. New Haven and London. 2013: 28.

<sup>23</sup> Georg Simmel. *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations*. Trans. Kurt H. Wolff and Reinhard Bendix. The Free Press. New York. 1955: 25.

<sup>24</sup> Op. cit. 58-67.



circumstances, as Augustine held, such action may be vital to the proper operation of society. There are various forms of aggression in society; but it needs to be stressed that among the various kinds of antagonism, persecution represents an *extreme*:<sup>25</sup> it admits neither mediation nor reconciliation. Warfare may cease; hostility may abate; but persecution usually only ceases with the extinction of the injured party, who is hated even unto death. The persecutor's hatred for his prey is ineradicable. This explains the unremitting hunger of the mass murderer: the inexorable lust for blood which exhibits that denial of guilt and the self-righteous assertion of innocence which is so typical of killers like Karadžić. Bloodlust, hatred and jealousy lend persecution its unremitting ferocity. But apart from conflict, the act of persecution resembles Durkheim's understanding of *punishment* among primitive peoples.

There are several schools of thought on persecution which have largely led separate lives: the historical, the legal, and the sociological. In what follows I will attempt to fuse these traditions. The lawyers particularly stress the difficulty of defining persecution. Even in refugee law there is little agreement. It appears to be undefinable by definition. Alice Edwards sums up the position today:<sup>26</sup> "There is no internationally accepted definition of what constitutes 'persecution'." Authorities call the concept both "elusive"<sup>27</sup> and "protean"<sup>28</sup> and Jean-Pierre Cavaillé claims that there is a "woeful lack of definition" of the term.<sup>29</sup> The leading thinkers tend to stress the fact that there is too great a

variety of persecutory acts to define it properly.<sup>30</sup> Thus Jaya Ramji-Nogales et al. leave the matter unclear:<sup>31</sup> "There has never been a succinct, definitive definition of 'persecution' because the nature of persecution and our understanding of it keep changing." But the opposite is true. Examining the changing nature of persecution across the ages it is possible to determine numerous constants. From Golgotha to Bucha, just as Kant's concept of "radical evil"<sup>32</sup> – *radix malorum* -- remains the same, the essential character of persecution never alters; for if humanity is typified by its tendency for evil, it will always tend towards persecutory behaviours, too.

In the absence of a consensus, I will recall some of the most useful examples. The legal school offers the most creative, innovative approach on offer. We owe one of the most exhaustive legal analyses to James Hathaway and Michelle Foster in their standard reference work on *The Law of Refugee Status*.<sup>33</sup> They conclude that a "human rights-based framework" offers the best standard. This opinion is endorsed by UNHCR and is "overwhelmingly approved" by scholars.<sup>34</sup> Despite its value for the courts, the principle has less to offer a historian. It may work as a legal instrument. But it cannot serve as a universal category suitable for the *longue durée*. Furthermore, Hathaway and Foster stress the "failure of state protection"<sup>35</sup> as a critical factor in causing harm, which is to beg the question. In sum, this formula is too limited to reflect historical reality. It has little to say about the mechanism, structure, or causes of persecution.

<sup>25</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Alice Edwards. 'Age and Gender Dimensions in International Refugee Law', Erika Feller, Volker Türk and Frances Nicholson. Eds. *Refugee Protection in International Law*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2003. 46-80. Supra Note 11. At 50 and 80.

<sup>27</sup> Pathmakanthan v. Holder 612 F.3d 618

<sup>28</sup> Bocova v. Gonzales 412 F 3d 257

<sup>29</sup> Francesco Maiani. 'The Concept of "Persecution" in Refugee Law: Indeterminacy, Context-Sensitivity, and the Quest for a Principled Approach.' *Les Dossiers du Grihl*. 4. 2022. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Katherine L. Vaughns. 'Taming the Asylum Adjudication Process. An Agenda for the Twenty-First Century'. *San Diego Law Review*. 1.63.1993.

<sup>31</sup> Jaya Ramji-Nogales, Andrew I. Schoenholtz and Philip G. Schrag, 'Refugees Roulette. Disparities in Asylum Adjudication'. *Stanford Law Review*. 60. 2007. 295-411: 379

<sup>32</sup> Immanuel Kant. *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*. (1793-1794). AA. VI. 37.

<sup>33</sup> James C. Hathaway and Michelle Foster. *The Law of Refugee Status*. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2015. Esp. 14.25-14.37; 182; 196.3-198.6; 199.14-200.16.

<sup>34</sup> Op. cit. 194-196.

<sup>35</sup> Op. cit. 288-361.

For this reason, the legalistic approach cannot be used as the dominant paradigm outside of the legal context, but needs to be set within a wider frame of reference. Yet it cannot be sufficiently stressed that the legal approach sets a new standard of accuracy and has also introduced actions for a definition of persecution – such as the invasion of privacy by surveillance<sup>36</sup> – which are not to be found in traditional explanations. It has brought some sharp distinctions. For example, Jaakko Kuosmanen<sup>37</sup> argues persecution has three components: “asymmetrical and systemic threat, severe and sustained harm, and unjust discriminatory targeting.” This is illuminating, if not entirely satisfactory. It could apply to many unpleasant situations, such as child molestation, the harassment of young military recruits, or the exploitation of prostitutes. A similarly profound attempt to define the point in law is Scott Rempell’s essay,<sup>38</sup> although this, too, does not offer a definition suitable for a full analysis. Like Hathaway and Foster and other legal minds he is guided by the contemporary concern with human rights. But by concentrating on rights and the plight of refugees, he too overlooks the ubiquitous nature of persecution; and his attempt to define persecution as “the illegitimate infliction of sufficiently severe harm”<sup>39</sup> is too wide for a historical understanding: it includes isolated acts such as a single rape or murder that cannot conceivably be regarded as persecution: and a car crash, a street fight, and a poisoning, would also fall within his determination. This cannot be right. Whereas he gives a fine account for modern law, he misses the actual quiddity of persecution.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, it is questionable whether the widespread stress on

“harm”<sup>41</sup> can provide a sufficiently exclusive category for persecutory actions. The emphasis on the effect of persecution is ultimately too one-sided. However, Rempell’s adduction of factors like “psychological harm”<sup>42</sup> and “mental suffering”<sup>43</sup> does add an essential dimension to our knowledge. In light of such differing views, it is possible to arrive at a working definition: *Persecution may be summarised as the systematic violation of an individual or collective by a more powerful individual or a larger and more powerful collective within a given society in a methodical series of actions ranging from prejudice and torture to murder and genocide; it is perpetrated on grounds of nationality, belief, religion, race, colour, gender orientation or similar characteristics in order to achieve the solidarity and purity of the host community. The character of the victims does not matter; it is only their attachment to a particular group or their beliefs that count. The entire procedure involves breaching the victim’s rights, to cause their maximum suffering, and to achieve their irrevocable exclusion from the host collective.* This definition affirms that persecution is a process; that it is systemic to western societies; that it is systematic; that it is persistent; that it is violent; that it intends to isolate, harm and destroy; that it depends on stereotyping individuals – to use Walter Lippmann’s term<sup>44</sup> -- on grounds of race, colour, creed, class, or nationality;<sup>45</sup> that it typically attacks collectives

<sup>36</sup> Op. cit. 284-287.

<sup>37</sup> Jaakko Kuosmanen. ‘What’s So Special About Persecution?’ *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. 17. 2014. 129-140: 131.

<sup>38</sup> Scott Rempell. ‘Defining Persecution.’ *Utah Law Review*. Social Science Research Network. 2013. 283-344: 343-344.

<sup>39</sup> Scott Rempell. ‘Defining Persecution’. 283; 286.

<sup>40</sup> W. S. F. Pickering. ‘Does Durkheim Make a Contribution to Understanding One Alleged Cause of Persecution?’ *Durkheimian Studies*. 9. 2003. 40-57: 40-41.

<sup>41</sup> Scott Rempell. ‘Defining Persecution’. 288; 292-319; 327-330.

<sup>42</sup> Op. cit., 297. Swiss law recognises “unbearable psychological pressure” as a form of persecution. The Concept of “Persecution” in Refugee Law: Indeterminacy, Context-sensitivity, and the Quest for a Principled Approach (openedition.org). 26.

<sup>43</sup> Scott Tempell. ‘Defining Persecution.’ 303.

<sup>44</sup> Walter Lippmann. *Public Opinion*. (1922). Transaction. New York. 79-156.

<sup>45</sup> The determination in refugee law is in terms of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. See James C. Hathaway and Michelle Foster. ‘The Causal Connection (Nexus) to a Convention Ground. Discussion Paper No. 3. Advanced Refugee Workshop. International Association of Refugee Law. Auckland. New Zealand. October 2002’.

linked by networks; that despite its emphasis on the category of the victim, specific individuals frequently attract the ire and hatred of the agent; that it is driven by the so-called contagion of belligerence,<sup>46</sup> or what Simmel has called the “suggestibility” which promotes hostility;<sup>47</sup> that it is internal to a society – the great exception being the Final Solution or other cases like the monstrosities of Bucha in Ukraine: here the state exports its own internal persecutory acts; and that it resembles Durkheim’s view of punishment, which is both an act of vengeance and one of expiation, by means of which the perpetrator – in the throes of “passionate feeling” – makes the victim “suffer for the sake of suffering.”<sup>48</sup>

Persecution is thus an arbitrary and unjustifiable form of primitive punishment. As such, its essence is to inflict the maximum of suffering on an innocent person. Major legal accounts also rest on the recognition of suffering.<sup>49</sup> Such suffering, according to Nietzsche, is a virtue. For the purpose of suffering, as Franz Baermann Steiner maintains following Nietzsche, is to establish value:<sup>50</sup> “A life without suffering is valueless.” Hence the aim of persecution is to create value. Just as a legal process generates value by upholding justice, persecution is intended to bring a world of value into being at the expense of the victim’s existence. The irony of this strategy is that it usually does create value, as can be seen in the case of Socrates and Jesus or that of Levi and Havel.

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*International Journal of Refugee Law*. 15. 2003. 461-476: 461.

<sup>46</sup> Randall Collins. *Violence. A Micro-sociological Theory*. Princeton University Press. 2008.11.

<sup>47</sup> Georg Simmel. *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations* 30.

<sup>48</sup> Emile Durkheim. *The Division of Labour in Society*. 67-74.

<sup>49</sup> James C. Hathaway and Michelle Foster. *The Law of Refugee Status*. 186; 212.

<sup>50</sup> Franz Baermann Steiner. *Orientpolitik, Value, and Civilization*. Selected Writings II, ed. Jeremy Adler and Richard Fardon. Berghahn Books. Oxford and New York. 1999. 116.

Furthermore, persecution is a religious rite insofar as it aims at martyrdom; and – as will be seen -- it infringes natural law<sup>51</sup> as understood from Plato<sup>52</sup> and Cicero<sup>53</sup> to Cassirer<sup>54</sup> and Rommen.<sup>55</sup> By perpetrating moral injury, moreover, it breaches the principle of no-harm. All advocates of natural law agree on this point, namely the right to be a person,<sup>56</sup> which is trashed by persecution. In every instance, too, persecution involves the abuse of human rights.<sup>57</sup> Since the twentieth century when persecution was first incorporated into international legal instruments, it has often been defined in legal terms. It is now accordingly interpreted as being in conflict with UDHR;<sup>58</sup> and the human rights perspective has latterly also been adopted by UNHCR.<sup>59</sup> In short, persecution is a systematic infringement of natural law and human rights, which is today regarded as a violation of universally valid legal codes. Its procedures amount to various forms of torture which inflict an arbitrary, systematic, and severe degree of suffering on the victim, making their existence unbearable.

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<sup>51</sup> On this vast field, see e.g. John Finnis. ‘Natural Law Theories’. *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/natural-law-theories/> 2007. Revised 2020.

<sup>52</sup> C. M. Chilcott. ‘The Platonic Theory of Evil’. *The Classical Quarterly*. 17. 1923. 27-31; 27.

<sup>53</sup> Cicero. *De Legibus*. II.11. Paul Meany ‘Cicero’s Natural Law and Political Philosophy’. *Libertarianism*. 31 August 2018. <https://www.libertarianism.org/columns/ciceros-natural-law-political-philosophy>

<sup>54</sup> Pellegrino Faruzzi. ‘Han’s Kelsen’s and Ernst Cassirer’s Conception of Natural Law’ .Peter Longford and Ian Bryan, ed.s, *Hans Kelsen and the Natural Law Tradition*. Brill. Leiden. 2019. 327-371.

<sup>55</sup> Patricia Birnie, Alan Boyle and Catherine Redgwell. *Principles of Public International Law*. Oxford University Press. Oxford. 2009. 143-152.

<sup>56</sup> Heinrich Rommen. *The Natural Law. A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy*. Liberty Fund. Indianapolis. 1998: 205.

<sup>57</sup> James C. Hathaway. *The Law of Refugee Status*. Butterworths. Vancouver. 1991. 104-105.

<sup>58</sup> The Concept of “Persecution” in Refugee Law: Indeterminacy, Context-sensitivity, and the Quest for a Principled Approach (openedition.org). 31.

<sup>59</sup> Op. cit. 33.

Several writers have sought to contextualise persecution in the *longue durée*, notably Norman Cohn.<sup>60</sup> However this is contested ground. David Nirenberg has set out to refute Cohen's position.<sup>61</sup> He accuses historians of stringing together episodes over time to create a false impression of continuity.<sup>62</sup> His approach is, however, inconsistent. For example, he treats an assault on the Jews of Girona in 1331 which resembled an earlier one in Girona of 1285 as if this were part of the same history. Contrary to his own theory, he accepts a structural continuity in historical time.<sup>63</sup> Sociological method is more appropriate: fragmentary events can be connected into a pattern -- what I call the cycle of persecution.<sup>64</sup> This is an "ideal type" in Weber's sense. On such an interpretation, the emergence of a tolerant society does not actually refute the continuity of persecution, as has been claimed,<sup>65</sup> it merely marks the end of a cycle. Hence, to reject "the linear narratives of escalating hatred", in Nirenberg's scheme, does not entail embracing historical fragmentariness,<sup>66</sup> but accepting a more complex narrative than the binary typology of "cataclysm" and "stability".<sup>67</sup> The processual character of persecution envisages a gradualist set of changes.

A sociological analysis reveals a scheme of victimization that extends over time, and a martyr-like response that continues over the millennia, from Masada to Babi Jar. Isolated periods, such as the Great Persecutions, like that from 950-1250 analysed by Robert Moore, or Restoration England, which Mark Goldie calls "a

persecuting society", constitute individual episodes in a wider, deep-rooted culture.<sup>68</sup> Yet none of these important studies matches Gordon Allport's masterpiece on prejudice.<sup>69</sup> His study suggests how a formal scheme could also be devised to explain persecution. That would clearly differentiate persecution from prejudice, cruelty, harassment, and other forms of violence. sociological framework provides the best method for analysing persecution in general and the Shoah in particular. There are several different strategies on offer. An early approach was devised by the Jewish historian Simon Dubnow, who advocated a -- non-Weberian -- sociology of Jewish history. This involves a synthesis of the nation's development.<sup>70</sup> His Approach is close to Fernand Braudel's historical programme, which asserts the identity of history and sociology.<sup>71</sup> Yet there was also a significant cluster of analyses in the era of the Shoah itself. The earliest attempt to subject the National Socialist state to sociological analysis arose as early as 1939 with Talcott Parsons'<sup>72</sup>keynote essays on the Nazi State. More remarkably still, various inmates in the ghettos and camps resorted to sociological analyses in order to make sense of their ordeal and preserve

<sup>60</sup> Norman Cohn. *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."* Harper and Row. New York and Evanston. 1967: 16.

<sup>61</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence. Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages.* Princeton University Press. Princeton. 1996: 5.

<sup>62</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence*: 7.

<sup>63</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence*: 213-214.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke. *The Price of Freedom Denied*. 21; 71-73; 79-80; 217.

<sup>65</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence*: 9; 38-40.

<sup>66</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence*: 246.

<sup>67</sup> David Nirenberg. *Communities of Violence*: 248.

<sup>68</sup> Mark Goldie. 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance. In Restoration England.' In Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan Israel and Nicholas Tyacke, eds, *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*. Oxford University Press. Oxford. 1991: 331-368; 331.

<sup>69</sup> Gordon W. Allport. *The Nature of Prejudice*. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. Basic Books. New York. 1979.

<sup>70</sup> Simon Dubnow. 'The Sociological View of Jewish History'. In Dubnow. *Nationalism and History*. Ed. Koppel S. Pinson. The Jewish Publication Society of America. Philadelphia. 1958: 336-353.

<sup>71</sup> Fernand Braudel. 'History and Sociology'. In *On History*. Trans. Sarah Matthews. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago. 1980: 64-82; 69.

<sup>72</sup> Uta Gerhardt, ed., *Talcott Parsons on National Socialism*. Routledge. London and New York. 2017.



the record for the future. This was the case with the so-called *Oneg Shabbat* put together in the Warsaw Ghetto, which survived the hostilities against all the odds, and now provides a unique record of life under duress.<sup>73</sup> Without necessarily relating back to these pioneering studies, scholars adopted sociological concepts after the Shoah in the 1940's. The chief exponents of this approach were either former camp inmates, such as David Rousset,<sup>74</sup> Eugen Kogon,<sup>75</sup> and H.G. Adler;<sup>76</sup> or scholars in exile such as Max Horkheimer, T.W. Adorno and Hannah Arendt.<sup>77</sup> For these brilliant theorists, sociology provided the intellectual precondition for defining the Shoah.

As W.S.F. Pickering observes, virtually nothing has been written on persecution from a sociological point of view.<sup>78</sup> Perhaps the most comprehensive attempt at a sociology of persecution is that by my late father, H.G. Adler, in two weighty essays titled: 'On the Morphology of Persecution', and 'The Experience of Powerlessness: Towards a Sociology of Persecution'.<sup>79</sup> He begins with Weber's idea by distinguishing two basic social patterns, "inclusion" and "exclusion".<sup>80</sup> These are determined by the two values of "equality" and "inequality",<sup>81</sup> and from these polar constructs he derives a morphology of persecution. The social polarity leads directly to "oppression", and the intensification of oppression ultimately produces "persecution."<sup>82</sup> This more intense social form is marked by a release from moral boundaries on the part of the persecutor,<sup>83</sup> and by actions on his part that in essence resemble insanity.<sup>84</sup> This violent process ultimately aims at the extinction of the victim:<sup>85</sup> the final objective of persecution is the victim's "slaughter".<sup>86</sup> According to this viewpoint, the act of persecution, as opposed to mere oppression, is characterised by its "systematic" character.<sup>87</sup> Adler is perhaps the first to have recognised the systematic nature of acts of persecution. But he also notes a wild, dynamic side to the process, which leads to "anarchy" and "nihilism"<sup>88</sup> when persecution reaches its climax. This entails the annihilation of both the victim

<sup>73</sup> Samuel D. Kassow. Ed. *Who Will Write our History? Rediscovering a hidden archive from the Warsaw Ghetto*. Penguin Books. London. 2007.

<sup>74</sup> David Rousset. *L'Univers Concentrationnaire*. Éditions du Pavois. Paris. 1946.

<sup>75</sup> Eugen Kogon. *Der SS Staat. Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*. Tempelhof. Berlin. 1947.

<sup>76</sup> H. G. Adler. *Theresienstadt 1941-1945. Das Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft*. (1955). Second Edition. Mohr Siebeck. Tübingen. 1960. *Theresienstadt 1941-1945. The Face of a Coerced Community*. Trans. Belinda Cooper. Cambridge University Press. New York. 2017. 'Zur Morphologie der Verfolgung'. (1960). In: *Nach der Befreiung*. Ed. Peter Filkins with Jeremy Adler. Konstanz University Press. Konstanz. 2013: 158-170. 'Die Erfahrung der Ohnmacht'. (1961): 170-187.

<sup>77</sup> Hannah Arendt. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Harcourt Brace. New York. 1951.

<sup>78</sup> W. S. F. Pickering. 'Does Durkheim Make a Contribution to Understanding One Alleged Cause of Persecution?' *Durkheimian Studies*. 9. 2003. 40-57: 40-41.

<sup>79</sup> H.G. Adler 'Zur Morphologie der Verfolgung' (1960) and 'Die Erfahrung der Ohnmacht: Zur Soziologie der Verfolgung (1961)'. In: H.G. Adler. *Nach der Befreiung. Ausgewählte Essays zur Geschichte und Soziologie*. Ed. Peter Filkins with Jeremy Adler. Konstanz University Press. Konstanz. 2013: 159-170 and 171-187.

<sup>80</sup> Adler. 2013: 171.

<sup>81</sup> Adler. 2013: 173.

<sup>82</sup> Adler. 2013: 180.

<sup>83</sup> Adler. 2013: 181.

<sup>84</sup> Adler. 2013: 181.

<sup>85</sup> Adler. 2013: 180.

<sup>86</sup> Adler. 2013: 182.

<sup>87</sup> Adler. 2013: 183.

<sup>88</sup> Adler. 2013: 184.

and – ultimately -- the perpetrator.<sup>89</sup> This commentary recalls Durkheim’s “effervescence”. Adler’s inclusion of the perpetrator and his fate in his model is an unusual element in his theory. The three examples he has in mind in creating this model are the French Revolution, Stalinist Russia and the Third Reich. A similar scheme to the arc he describes can be seen in the persecution of the Huguenots. Here, one can observe a trajectory from 1545, the Massacre of Mérindol, 1572, the climactic St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, 1598, the Edict of Nantes, and 1787, the Edict of Tolerance. In both instances historical waves occur, inspired by a recollection of the past, whose purpose it is to manipulate the future: every act of persecution has its own telos and seeks to shape an impending reality. In contrast to Rempell’s thesis, it can be affirmed that persecution is legitimized, in order that the perpetrator may establish a new world order. What can be noted here – not considered by Adler -- is the positive resolution often attempted or attained. This feature is also typical for the Shoah in the years immediately following the end of the Second World War.

The incisive analyses of Adler’s close friend and intellectual collaborator Franz Baermann Steiner complement this approach. His short essay ‘On the Process of Civilization’ written in 1944,<sup>90</sup> five years after the publication of Norbert Elias’s *magnum opus*, which Steiner may have known. Steiner reverses the trajectory proposed by Elias and resolves the long-standing paradox which has consistently perplexed interpreters of the Shoah: the occurrence of the most unimaginable evil in the seemingly most highly civilized society. The solution stems from his anthropological take on the Shoah as a result of civilization:<sup>91</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Adler. 2013. 185f.

<sup>90</sup> Jeremy Adler and Richard Fardon. *Franz Baermann Steiner. A Stranger in the World*. Berghahn Books. Oxford and New York. 2022. 179-190.

<sup>91</sup> Franz Baermann Steiner. *Orientpolitik, Value, and Civilization*. Selected Writings II. : 123-128; 127-128.

The demonic sphere lies within our own society. Would anyone who has been in a concentration camp believe that wild animal are worse than a human torturer? This form of torment is new: trapping human masses in close-knit nets, building gigantic cages past which ‘healthy’ life floods by. This is more demonic than the torments of slavery, more horrible than the worst that ever happened before: the religious wars of European Christendom. For the captive does not know why he is captured, the guard does not know why he should torment him -- and the people outside -- alas, what do they know?

The process of civilization is the conquest of man by the natural forces, the demons. It is the march of danger into the heart of creation.

Schooled in history, sociology and anthropology, but avoiding psychology, Steiner’s conspectus fuses the history of the West with its religious wars to his analysis of modern society. This enables him both to grasp the continuity of persecutory behaviour and the insidious novelty of the cruelty devised by the National Socialists. By recognising the role of the introjection of what he calls “the demons” as the decisive characteristic of modernity -- the opposite of Norbert Elias’s account -- Steiner not only reveals the metamorphosis of persecutory behaviour over the ages, but resolves the long-standing paradox of persecution and civilization: they are not incompatible, but mutually embedded.

Adler and Steiner’s viewpoint marries with that of Steiner’s most famous pupil, Mary Douglas.<sup>92</sup> As emerged from H.G. Adler’s account, persecutory events are cyclical, and the cyclical character of these operations accounts for their perennial occurrence. This is Douglas’s understanding, too. The issue lies less in the continual persecution of specific groups – such as Jews or Roma -- than in the eternal return of the same persecutory rhythms.<sup>93</sup> And yet, as in the rituals examined so

<sup>92</sup> Jeremy Adler and Richard Fardon. *Franz Baermann Steiner. A Stranger in the World*. 100; 117-118.

<sup>93</sup> Stanley Cohen. *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*: 172.

closely by Mary Douglas,<sup>94</sup> the ultimate persecution leads to a rebirth: what she calls the “ritual cycle”. This is the paradoxical unity of death and life. Ultimately, as she recognises, life reigns supreme. In this secular cycle, the rebirth I am talking about may occur in restitution or the enactment of new customs or laws as occurred with Westphalia or UDHR. On Steiner and Douglas’s account, the cycle of persecution does not remain attached to history, but becomes elevated to myth.

The history of persecution is closely entwined with the history of violence, the history of warfare, and the history of genocide: Persecution is a form of violence, it often occurs under cover of war, and genocide is its most extreme form. It can be assumed that anywhere that atrocities occur, persecution may also figure. As to conflict in general, Randall Collins was among the first to attempt its history in sociological terms, but whether we should look to the origins of our subject in ancient Mesopotamia between 3900 and 3000 CE, as he seems to believe, is questionable. In focussing on a clash of city civilizations in this period he has nothing to say about intra-state conflicts. His history wants a sharper focus on hierarchies, strata, and internal affairs.<sup>95</sup>

The archaeologists have more to say here. As inequalities and aggression can be traced back to the earliest prehistoric societies, a topic which has been much debated since Elman Service,<sup>96</sup> Morton Fried,<sup>97</sup> and Peter Bogucki,<sup>98</sup> it may be assumed that persecution originated in prehistory, too, which is a hypothesis that is confirmed by the

evidence for bondage and slavery several thousands of years ago. With the emergence of agriculture, modes of inequality arose, defined by lineage and kinship.<sup>99</sup> If Harry Turney-High was correct in his landmark monograph on *Primitive Warfare* that combat was universal, if not inevitable,<sup>100</sup> the same might be true of persecution. The thesis is confirmed by John Keegan’s conclusion that:<sup>101</sup> “The written history of the world is largely a history of warfare.” If an argument by analogy is valid here, persecution has existed in some form throughout history. It would be a task worth pursuing to document this claim.

The most radical expression of a persecutory society, namely genocide, also emerged in prehistory.<sup>102</sup> The *locus classicus* in antiquity occurs in *The Iliad*. It is Agamemnon who invokes the deed:<sup>103</sup>

‘Dear brother, o Menelaos, are you concerned so tenderly with these people? Did you in your house get the best of treatment

from the Trojans? No, let not one of them go free of suddendeath and our hands; not the young man child that the mother carries still in her body, not even he, but let all of Illion’s people perish, utterly blotted out and unmourned for.’

<sup>94</sup> Mary Douglas. *Purity and Danger*: 174-177.

<sup>95</sup> Randall Collins. *Conflict Sociology. Towards an Explanatory Science*. Academic Press. New York. 1976. 402-408.

<sup>96</sup> Elman Service. *Primitive Social Organisation*. Random House. New York. 1962.

<sup>97</sup> Morton Fried. *The Evolution of Political Society*. Random House. New York. 1967.

<sup>98</sup> Peter Bogucki. *The Origins of Human Society*. Blackwell. Oxford. 1999. 205-329

<sup>99</sup> Peter Bogucki. *The Origins of Human Society*. 206.

<sup>100</sup> Harry Turney High. *Primitive War. In Practice and Concepts*. Columbia University Press. New York. 1971. 142.

<sup>101</sup> John Keegan. *A History of Warfare*. Pimlico. London. 2004. 386.

<sup>102</sup> I am here following the succinct analysis by Hans van Wees. ‘Genocide in the Ancient World.’ Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*. Oxford University Press. Oxford. 2013. 239-258.

<sup>103</sup> Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago University Press. Chicago. 1961. VI. 55-60.

Inasmuch as this genocide was typical for the ancient world it represented an act of conspicuous destruction':<sup>104</sup> by asserting the victor's absolute show of force, the act – as in more recent times – served to demonstrate the power and superior status of the perpetrator. It was a typical act of social closure as defined by Weber. Whether such bestial acts as intra-uterine infanticide actually occurred remains open: they may have been intended as admonitory horrors, designed to shock, and to demonstrate the absolute power of the perpetrator's gods. An even more radical example of genocide features in Deuteronomy, where genocide serves to enable the Israelites' appropriation of the promised land:<sup>105</sup>

You shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things that they all have done for their gods and you stand guilty before the Lord your God.

Such serial genocide, involving the extinction of six entire peoples, can hardly have been intended literally:<sup>106</sup> the magical incantation of so many names has a distinctive aim, which is to magnify the glory of Yahwe; altogether, the purpose of this biblical hyperbole must surely have been to demonstrate His absolute power, and thereby to prove the incontrovertible superiority of the Israelites. In this case, we would be dealing with an early example of symbolic persecution. The aim was simple: to empty a homeland for the Israelites. However, given that the ideology of legitimate genocide did exist, it may have been put into practice.<sup>107</sup> The specific purpose named in the

text is to maintain the purity of the Israelites. What is at stake is the maintenance of their belief. Here too, then, in the biblical account, serial genocide represents a typical act of Weberian social closure. One of the most seminal analyses of genocide is that by Christopher Powell. Whatever the merits of Powell's thesis that genocide is a product of civilization,<sup>108</sup> his argument supports the view that genocide and civilization are coterminous: this discovery of "civilizing genocide"<sup>109</sup> resolves the enigma of the Shoah's contiguity with the apex of German culture – a thesis earlier developed by Franz Baermann Steiner.<sup>110</sup> Persecution represents the actor's response to danger – the perceived danger symbolized by the victim – and treats that victim reciprocally to the same violence which he represents for the perpetrator.<sup>111</sup> Persecution is a form of danger behaviour. Ironically the act of persecution is intended as an act of danger limitation: the agent seeks to neutralize the – either real or imagined – threat represented by his enemy. But in seeking to limit the danger, the agent absorbs the danger into himself. By an extreme paradox, the introjection of danger by means of the moral restraint which typifies the development of civilization also promotes the emergence of disorder, brutality, and genocide. The more advanced and sophisticated a civilization, the greater its power, the more violent its impact.

<sup>104</sup> Hans van der Wees. 'Genocide in the Ancient World'. 240.

<sup>105</sup> Deuteronomy 20.16-18.

<sup>106</sup> Op. cit. 241-242.

<sup>107</sup> Op. cit. 242.

<sup>108</sup> Christopher Powell. *Barbaric Civilization. A Critical Sociology of Genocide*. McGill-Queen's University Press. Montreal, 2011. 11; 126-162.

<sup>109</sup> Op. cit. 126.

<sup>110</sup> Jeremy Adler and Richard Fardon. *Franz Baermann Steiner. A Stranger in the World*. 179-190.

<sup>111</sup> Franz Baermann Steiner. 'Taboo'. In *Taboo, Truth, and Religion. Selected Writings*. Vol. I, Ed. Jeremy Adler and Richard Fardon. Berghahn Books. Oxford and New York. 1999. 101-214. 213-214



The atavistic nature of the Shoah is often apparent intuitively; but by recognising the milestones of persecution, it can be understood as an age-old phenomenon, which reached its climax in the Final Solution. The full force of this persecution derives in part from its place at the climax of a trajectory of horrors. As not all of these monstrosities are empirically linked, they can only be connected in structural terms. Thus, the atavistic character of the Shoah is not an impression, but a fact, which can best be grasped not by history but by the social sciences. From the very outset of scholarship on the Shoah, it has been recognised by a handful of theorists that it can only be properly understood by means of sociology, albeit there has yet to be a formal classification. Indeed, from Zygmunt Bauman<sup>112</sup> to Alex Alvarez<sup>113</sup> it was fallaciously maintained that sociology had shown no interest in the Shoah. Why this misunderstanding should have taken place is hard to understand. For, as I have shown, sociologists have never ignored the nature of the Shoah; yet the academic community misrepresented the situation, and ignored or perhaps even suppressed the existing sociological explanations. One reason for this curious state of affairs may be that the sociologists constructed an alternative world view which suppressed the role of persecution in the Shoah. Instead, they either relied on historical accounts, or introduced alternative models of their own, such as the Marxist explanation, according to which the Shoah was brought about by exploitation.

Looking back at the history of sociology, there are several kinds of approach to the Shoah on offer. Talcott Parsons introduced some of Durkheim and Weber's chief categories to analyse Nazism, notably "anomie" and "charisma".<sup>114</sup> The

categories which best account for the Nazi's persecution of the Jews can indeed be found in the works of the founding fathers: Durkheim's concepts of "solidarity",<sup>115</sup> "anomie",<sup>116</sup> "effervescence",<sup>117</sup> and "punishment";<sup>118</sup> Weber's seminal category of "social closure";<sup>119</sup> and Simmel's schema of "conflict"<sup>120</sup> and "unity."<sup>121</sup> It is hard to see why historians grappling with the causes of the Final Solution should expend so much effort on defining new explanations when the conceptual framework already exists in the works of these great sociologists. Weber regards "social closure" as the exclusion by one group of another group on some pretext such as race, language, religion, local or social origin, descent, residence etc.<sup>122</sup> This leads to the formation of "interest groups" and ultimately to a "legal order", whereby the interest group becomes a "legally 'privileged' group" (*Rechtsgemeinschaft*). Such closure is "an ever-recurring process." Weber's analysis provides a model for the exclusion of a specific group on grounds of race or religion or some other difference in a perceived competition

<sup>115</sup> W. S. F. Pickering. 'Does Durkheim Make a Contribution to Understanding One Alleged Cause of Persecution?' *Durkheimian Studies*. 9. 2003. 40-57.

<sup>116</sup> Emile Durkheim. *Suicide. A Study in Sociology*. Trans. John A. Spaulding and George Simpson. Routledge & Kegan Paul. London. 1952: 241-276. Stephen Adair. 'Status and Solidarity. A Reformulation of Early Durkheimian Theory'. *Sociological Enquiry*. 78 (1). 2008: 97-120.

<sup>117</sup> Scott Daper. 'Effervescence and Solidarity in Religious Organizations.' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 53. 2014: 229-248.

<sup>118</sup> Emile Durkheim. *The Division of Labour in Society*. Ed. Steven Lukes. Trans. W. D. Halls. Palgrave Macmillan. London. 1984. 67-70.

<sup>119</sup> Max Weber. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Studienausgabe. Mohr Siebeck. Tübingen. 1972: 201-203.

<sup>120</sup> Georg Simmel. *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations*: 13-56..

<sup>121</sup> Op. cit. 16-20.

<sup>122</sup> Max Weber. *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretative Sociology*. Part II. Chapter II. Ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Trans. Ephraim Fischhoff et al. California University Press. Berkeley. 1968: 339.

<sup>112</sup> Zygmunt Bauman. *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Polity Press. 1989: 3.

<sup>113</sup> Alex Alvarez. *Governments, Citizens and Genocide: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Approach*. Indiana University Press. Bloomington. 2001: 1.

<sup>114</sup> Uta Gerhardt, ed., *Talcott Parsons on National Socialism*. 40; 178; 204-205.

for economic goods.<sup>123</sup> This enables one to understand the constant emphasis on the financial exploitation supposedly practiced by the Jews which is frequently rehearsed in anti-Semitic literature, not to mention the broadsides of the Nazis. Hitherto, Weber's concept has been largely used for class analysis, but it also provides an excellent tool for studying persecution. Frank Parkin, the foremost social closure theorist after Weber, emphasises that closure is used for "the monopolization of specific, usually economic opportunities."<sup>124</sup> Parkin recognises that all stratified societies establish closure that "is experienced through a myriad of direct personal degradations and affronts to human dignity."<sup>125</sup> This comes close to recognising closure as persecution. He cites blacks under *apartheid* and racial and religious ghettos as examples of persecuted groups.<sup>126</sup> He might have added that the Shoah arose from the most extreme act of social closure.

Weber's model can easily be linked to Durkheim's concept of solidarity.<sup>127</sup> Weber defines the mechanism by which society excludes the other. Durkheim explains the internal or psychological character of the process:<sup>128</sup> "all that societies need in order to be united is that their members fix their eyes on the same end and come together in the same faith." According to David Lockwood, this understanding of solidarity is fundamental to societies as such:<sup>129</sup> "To the extent that societies

may be thought of as systems, they are surely distinguished by their peculiar need for solidarity." It follows – however unpleasant the thought -- that persecution needs to be understood as an elementary tool with which society structures itself as a social system. According to Durkheim, social solidarity manifests in religion as what he calls "effervescence";<sup>130</sup> and the self-same phenomenon emerges in persecution. Religion involves the refinement of evil into the ideal. Hence acts of rage and evil such as violence and persecution exhibit the same characteristics as are contained in religion. Durkheim describes the emergence of religious effervescence as follows:<sup>131</sup>

We have seen, in fact, that if collective life awakens religious thought when it rises to a certain intensity, that is because it brings about a state of effervescence that alters the conditions of psychic activity. The vital energies become hyperexcited, the passions more excited, the sensations more powerful; there are indeed some that are produced only at this moment. Man does not recognize himself; he feels somehow transformed and in consequence transforms his surroundings. To account for the very particular impressions he receives, he imputes to the things with which he is most directly in contact properties that they do not have, exceptional powers and virtues that the objects of ordinary experience do not possess. In short, upon the real world where profane life is lived, he superimposes another that, in a sense, exists only in his thought [...]

Durkheim's model is not just a picture of religion; it is far more wide-ranging. What he calls "effervescence" is essentially the same as the hysteria engendered by an ideology. Durkheim's French term also means "turmoil" or "ferment". The false reality prompted by an ideology follows the same pattern as defined by a religion. The superimposition of a pseudo-reality on the world

<sup>123</sup>For further categories see Alexander Laban Hinton. 'The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide.' In Alexander Laban Hinton. Ed. *Annihilating Difference. Anthropology of Genocide*. Berkeley. University of California Press. 2002. 1-42: 4.

<sup>124</sup> Frank Parkin. *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique*. Columbia University Press. New York. 1979: 44.

<sup>125</sup> Frank Parkin. *Marxism and Class Theory*: 69.

<sup>126</sup> Frank Parkin. *Marxism and Class Theory*: 68.

<sup>127</sup> Emile Durkheim. *The Division of Labour in Society*. 57-157. Alexander Gofman. 'Durkheim's Theory of Social Solidarity and Social Rules.' Vincent Jeffries. Ed. *The Palgrave Handbook of Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity*. Palgrave Macmillan. New York. 2014. 45-69.

<sup>128</sup> Emile Durkheim. 'Individualisme et les intellectuels.' *Revue Blanche*. 4e. 1898. X:7-13: 9.

<sup>129</sup> David Lockwood. *Solidarity and Schism*. Clarendon Press. Oxford. 1992: 3.

<sup>130</sup> Scott Draper. 'Solidarity in Religious Organizations'. 231-232.

<sup>131</sup> Emile Durkheim. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Trans. Karen E. Fields. The Free Press. New York. 1995: 424.

is as typical of an ideology as of a religion. Mary Douglas has noted the proclivity of effervescence to give rise to sectarianism,<sup>132</sup> and this would appear to confirm its propensity to segue into persecution. In short, the fantasy world created by “effervescence” is like that engendered as a motive for persecution; and persecution is both a religious act – for example, in the hounding of the Christians by the pagans – and a secular deed modelled on a religious rite.

It will be helpful to link Durkheim, Weber and Simmel’s views with an anatomy of persecution devised by Richard Fardon.<sup>133</sup> In what follows, I shall supplement his account with categories borrowed from the founding fathers of sociology as well as several of my own. Persecution is an overarching category, being far wider, more inclusive, than torture, slavery, or genocide. It can be characterised as follows:

1. Persecution tends to occur in riven countries;
2. It may be initiated by a ruler or by a collective;
3. It is commonly inaugurated by an edict or a command;
4. It is internal to a social formation that displays a self-conscious identity;
5. It is systematic;
6. It is sustained;<sup>134</sup>
7. It has an explicit history;
8. It is directed against an internal collective identity in a plural society;
9. It is systemic in hierarchical societies;
10. It originates in prejudice and stereotyping;
11. It employs organised violence;
12. The degree of physical violence in particular varies over time;
13. Its violence intensifies to a climax;
14. Its violence is both symbolic and physical;
15. It is actualised in relationships of unequal power;
16. It operates by means of social closure;

<sup>132</sup> Mary Douglas. *Natural Symbols. Explorations in Cosmology*. Routledge. London and New York.1996. 79.

<sup>133</sup> Richard Fardon. Personal Communication. 15 November 2022. I have emended this typology and added various categories, some of them from Durkheim, Weber and Simmel.

<sup>134</sup> Jaakko Kuosmanen. ‘What’s So Special About Persecution.’ 135.

17. Its victims may be individuals or collective;
18. It is typified by anomie in the host collective;
19. It is theorised in terms of “purity” or similar images with respect to race, nationality, philosophy or religion;
20. Hence it tends towards eradication or purification;
21. It is enacted by means of “effervescence”;
22. This process requires the suffering of the persecuted victims;
23. Therefore, it has a strongly ritualised and performative element;
24. In its western form it has a necessary relationship with victimhood and cults of martyrdom;
25. Its framework oscillates between “subhuman” and “exemplary”;
26. It has no room for the “ordinary” or “mundane” in human affairs;
27. It is cyclical;
28. It enhances solidarity in the collective;
29. It concludes with rapprochement.

The persecutory complex draws upon pre-persecutory violence, including:

1. The enslavement or execution of external enemies;
2. The persecution of individuals with identities considered deviant;
3. The genocide of collectives considered hostile.

This pattern holds good for the two-and-a-half millennia which I am treating as a persecutory civilization in which specific individuals or collectives are regularly demonized.

Two key sources for the history of persecution with a strong mythic turn are ancient philosophy and the Bible. Socrates and Jesus are the fountainheads of victimhood. They are the archetypal individual victims. The typical elision of myth into history which often defines the act of persecution is evident in both cases. Socrates had a clear understanding of his fate, as emerges from *The Apology*:<sup>135</sup> “I would have you know, that if you kill such a one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you injure me.” He was

<sup>135</sup> Plato. *Apology*. 30. c. *The Dialogues*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. I. Sphere Books. London. 1970: 73.

accused of two main crimes: atheism and the corruption of youth. This reflects the religious dimension of persecution. Although given the chance to escape from Athens, Socrates chose to remain, and suffer the death penalty. At the end he displays the equanimity of true martyrdom. The experience of suffering propels him to moral victory:<sup>136</sup>

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death, and that he and his are not neglected by the gods. Nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance; I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; therefore the oracle gave no sign, and therefore also I am not angry with my condemners or my accusers. But although they have done me no harm, they intended it; and for this I may properly blame them.

The martyrdom wrought by persecution elevates the victim to the transcendent sphere of the gods: he exhibits the “exemplary” behaviour characteristic of the victim of persecution. Thus, by his superior action, Socrates became a martyr to wisdom. However, as Debra Nails argues, it is in *Phaedo* that the highest form of his life is depicted insofar as this dialogue reflects on the soul’s escape from the body and its entrance to the afterlife.<sup>137</sup> Here, too, persecution transcends to myth. By this fickle persecution, the Athenians heightened the solidarity of the state: this was an emblematic act of social closure, which had far-reaching consequences in the historical age. In the Middle Ages, the Christians regarded Socrates as a saint, a model for their behaviour, and so his exemplary action became a model to follow.<sup>138</sup> Like many heretics, therefore, he displayed pure goodness and nobility: the inferior

proves to be the better man, for the victim is superior to his executioner.

In modernity, thinkers from Ficino<sup>139</sup> to Voltaire and from John Stuart Mill to Nietzsche<sup>140</sup> invoked Socrates, too. In the Renaissance, the image of Socrates as Christ became widespread,<sup>141</sup> and Ficino bequeathed a picture of Socrates as Jesus to future generations, shaping the image of martyrdom both for Catholics and for Protestants.<sup>142</sup> Voltaire himself was hymned as a modern Socrates.<sup>143</sup> likewise, Voltaire’s play *Socrates* of 1759 extols the Athenian as a martyr to philosophy.<sup>144</sup> By the eighteenth century, he had become “a proto-Christian martyr for the godhead.”<sup>145</sup> More generally, as John Stuart Mill put it, Socrates was “a man unique in history, of a kind at all times needful, and seldom more needful than now.”<sup>146</sup> Socrates’ tragedy evolved from myth until it became a historical force and reflected the simple dialectic of persecution: every victim is a moral victor.

The Bible is the second source for persecutory thinking of this kind. It is also a myth in essence. The subject of biblical persecution is treated in numerous works, notably in two standard monographs: William Friend’s *Martyrdom and*

<sup>139</sup> John Hankins, ‘Socrates in the Italian Renaissance’. *A Companion to Socrates*. 337-352: 346.

<sup>140</sup> James L. Porter, ‘Nietzsche and “the Problem of Socrates”’. *A Companion to Socrates*. 406-425. Werner I. Dannhauser. *Nietzsche’s View of Socrates*. Cornell University Press. Ithaca and London. 1974: 176-259.

<sup>141</sup> James Hankins. ‘Socrates in the Italian Renaissance’. Michael Trapp. Ed. *Socrates from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*. Routledge. London. 2007. 179-208:196.

<sup>142</sup> Op. Cit. 350.

<sup>143</sup> Russell Goulbourne. ‘Voltaire’s Socrates’. Op. Cit.. 229-247: 229-231.

<sup>144</sup> Voltaire. *Socrates*. Trans. Frank J. Morlock. Amazon. N.p. 2006: 33.

<sup>145</sup> K.J.H. Berland. ‘Dialogue into Drama: Socrates and Eighteenth-Century Verse Drama’, *Themes in Drama. Drama and Philosophy*. 12. 1990. 127-141: 130.

<sup>146</sup> John Stuart Mill, ‘Grote’s *History of Greece* [II]’, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. J. M. Robson, Toronto University Press, Toronto, 1963-1991, XI: 309. See *John Stuart Mill. A British Socrates*, ed. Kyriakos N. Demetriou and Antis Loizides, eds, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2013.

<sup>136</sup> Loc. Cit., 84.

<sup>137</sup> Debra Nails, ‘The Trial and Death of Socrates’, Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar, *A Companion to Socrates*. Blackwell. Oxford. 2009: 5-20: 16-17.

<sup>138</sup> Henk A. Bakker, ‘Beyond the Measure of Man: About the Mystery of Socratic Martyrdom’, *Church History and Religious Culture*, 95, 2015: 391-407.



accused of two main crimes: atheism and the corruption of youth. This reflects the religious dimension of persecution. Although given the chance to escape from Athens, Socrates chose to remain, and suffer the death penalty. At the end he displays the equanimity of true martyrdom. The experience of suffering propels him to moral victory:<sup>136</sup>

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death, and that he and his are not neglected by the gods. Nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance; I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; therefore the oracle gave no sign, and therefore also I am not angry with my condemners or my accusers. But although they have done me no harm, they intended it; and for this I may properly blame them.

The martyrdom wrought by persecution elevates the victim to the transcendent sphere of the gods: he exhibits the “exemplary” behaviour characteristic of the victim of persecution. Thus, by his superior action, Socrates became a martyr to wisdom. However, as Debra Nails argues, it is in *Phaedo* that the highest form of his life is depicted insofar as this dialogue reflects on the soul’s escape from the body and its entrance to the afterlife.<sup>137</sup> Here, too, persecution transcends to myth. By this fickle persecution, the Athenians heightened the solidarity of the state: this was an emblematic act of social closure, which had far-reaching consequences in the historical age. In the Middle Ages, the Christians regarded Socrates as a saint, a model for their behaviour, and so his exemplary action became a model to follow.<sup>138</sup> Like many heretics, therefore, he displayed pure goodness and nobility: the inferior

proves to be the better man, for the victim is superior to his executioner.

In modernity, thinkers from Ficino<sup>139</sup> to Voltaire and from John Stuart Mill to Nietzsche<sup>140</sup> invoked Socrates, too. In the Renaissance, the image of Socrates as Christ became widespread;<sup>141</sup> and Ficino bequeathed a picture of Socrates as Jesus to future generations, shaping the image of martyrdom both for Catholics and for Protestants.<sup>142</sup> Voltaire himself was hymned as a modern Socrates.<sup>143</sup> likewise, Voltaire’s play *Socrates* of 1759 extols the Athenian as a martyr to philosophy.<sup>144</sup> By the eighteenth century, he had become “a proto-Christian martyr for the godhead.”<sup>145</sup> More generally, as John Stuart Mill put it, Socrates was “a man unique in history, of a kind at all times needful, and seldom more needful than now.”<sup>146</sup> Socrates’ tragedy evolved from myth until it became a historical force and reflected the simple dialectic of persecution: every victim is a moral victor.

The Bible is the second source for persecutory thinking of this kind. It is also a myth in essence. The subject of biblical persecution is treated in numerous works, notably in two standard monographs: William Friend’s *Martyrdom and*

<sup>139</sup> John Hankins, ‘Socrates in the Italian Renaissance’. *A Companion to Socrates*. 337-352: 346.

<sup>140</sup> James L. Porter, ‘Nietzsche and “the Problem of Socrates”’. *A Companion to Socrates*. 406-425. Werner I. Dannhauser. *Nietzsche’s View of Socrates*. Cornell University Press. Ithaca and London. 1974: 176-259.

<sup>141</sup> James Hankins. ‘Socrates in the Italian Renaissance’. Michael Trapp. Ed. *Socrates from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*. Routledge. London. 2007. 179-208:196.

<sup>142</sup> Op. Cit. 350.

<sup>143</sup> Russell Goulbourne. ‘Voltaire’s Socrates’. Op. Cit.. 229-247: 229-231.

<sup>144</sup> Voltaire. *Socrates*. Trans. Frank J. Morlock. Amazon. N.p. 2006: 33.

<sup>145</sup> K.J.H. Berland. ‘Dialogue into Drama: Socrates and Eighteenth-Century Verse Drama’, *Themes in Drama. Drama and Philosophy*. 12. 1990. 127-141: 130.

<sup>146</sup> John Stuart Mill, ‘Grote’s *History of Greece* [II]’, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. J. M. Robson, Toronto University Press, Toronto, 1963-1991, XI: 309. See *John Stuart Mill. A British Socrates*, ed. Kyriakos N. Demetriou and Antis Loizides, eds, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2013.

<sup>136</sup> Loc. Cit., 84.

<sup>137</sup> Debra Nails, ‘The Trial and Death of Socrates’, Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar, *A Companion to Socrates*. Blackwell. Oxford. 2009: 5-20: 16-17.

<sup>138</sup> Henk A. Bakker, ‘Beyond the Measure of Man: About the Mystery of Socratic Martyrdom’, *Church History and Religious Culture*, 95, 2015: 391-407.



*Persecution in the Early Church*;<sup>147</sup> and James Kelhoffer's *Persecution, Persuasion and Power in the New Testament*.<sup>148</sup> These two authorities show how the theme of persecution appears in the Pauline Letters, in Peter, Hebrews, and the Revelation of John as well as in Mark. These Biblical portrayals of persecution established a model for Christianity, which is a world religion focussed on individual victimhood. A key insight that Kelhoffer pursues in this regard is the redemptive power of suffering: to withstand persecution is a mark of legitimacy. This kind of view is evidenced by the elevation of Socrates and Jesus to the highest position in the western pantheon – an insight maintained down the years to the Enlightenment and into the thought of the philosopher-scientist Joseph Priestley.<sup>149</sup> Both Socrates and Jesus became models to imitate: persecution as an ideal entered the core of western thinking.

Western civilization -- as George Steiner observes<sup>150</sup>-- began with two deaths: those of Socrates and Jesus. Each of these was preceded by a ceremonial meal. What does this signify? In its origins, western persecution takes the form of a sacrament. For the metaphysical aspect of eating food can also symbolise an act of persecution: the devouring of the earth's fruits may also mirror the massacre of man. The ritual meal signifies a rite of passage whereby Socrates and Jesus translated to a higher existence. They proceeded to their death by taking the sacrament of persecution. Both victims accepted their fate stoically in their closest circle. Their death became the defining feature of their life. But that is not all. As the twinned avatars of the modern spirit,<sup>151</sup> they jointly figure

the idea that the West should be understood as a persecutory civilization, albeit the act itself is not always active. Their roles are cognate: the figureheads of modern western civilization were martyrs to goodness and truth; their martyrdom was symbolized in a mythic ceremony whose universal acceptance shaped historical reality.

This can easily be seen in contemporary writing. Among the modernist writers, Mikhail Bulgakov recognised the trajectory that led from the persecution of Jesus to the cruelty in a modern totalitarian state. This is the theme of his novel *The Master and Margarita*.<sup>152</sup> here, the montage of scenes in Communist Russia with episodes involving Pilate and Jesus evokes a parallel between antiquity and modernity. The dialogue between Jesus and Pilate anticipates the Communist state:<sup>153</sup> "Among other things I said' ... 'that all power is a form of violence exercised over people and that the time will come when there will be no rule by Caesar ...'." In this fantastic montage, the persecution perpetrated by the NKVD recalls the martyrdom of Jesus Christ. Both the world that sprang from Golgotha and the Marxist-Leninist State is riven by cruelty. Authors like Bulgakov develop the history of persecution into ever more unlikely directions. Yet its function remains constant. Punishment is tied to our highest ideals. It is the price of value – what Bulgakov calls "The kingdom of truth."<sup>154</sup>

Persecution often depends on mythical foundation acts which are subsequently translated into historical time. The origins of western acceptance of persecution have also been traced back to the Maccabees in Roman times who made a willing and unresisting sacrifice:<sup>155</sup> "we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our fathers." The siege of Masada in 73 CE has gone down as the symbol of Jewish resistance. Eleazar the leader of the Jews, as recounted by the historian Josephus, gave a rousing speech in

<sup>147</sup> W. H. C. Frend. *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church. A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus*. Blackwell. Oxford. 1965.

<sup>148</sup> James A. Kelhoffer. *Persecution, Persuasion and Power. Readiness to withstand hardship ....* Mohr. Siebeck. Tübingen. 2010.

<sup>149</sup> Carl Sundell, 'Joseph Priestley on Jesus and Socrates Compared', *Catholic Insight*, 25 September 2022.

<sup>150</sup> George Steiner. 'Two Suppers'. *No Passion Spent. Essays 1978-1996*. Faber and Faber. London. 1996. 390-419: 391-2;

<sup>151</sup> William F. Bostick, 'Jesus and Socrates', *The Biblical World*, 47, 1916: 248-252.

<sup>152</sup> Mikhail Bulgakov. *The Master and Margarita*. Trans. Michael Glenny. The Harvill Press. London. 1986.

<sup>153</sup> Op. cit., 39.

<sup>154</sup> Op. cit., 40.

<sup>155</sup> II. Macc. 7.ix-xxxi. See W. H. C. Frend. *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*: 46-47.

which he treats the people's fate as a special gift of the Lord who enabled them to sacrifice themselves and die as "free men": "Our wives shall die unsullied, our children free from slavery. And when they have gone before us in death, we will perform the loving deed upon each other."<sup>156</sup> The Maccabees became a mythic symbol for their brethren. The very same soteriological suicide defines the origin of the modern persecution of the Jews during the First Crusade when the Jews of Mainz were slaughtered.<sup>157</sup> The image recurred almost a millennium later at Babi Jar. Mythical persecutions travel through the centuries when they lend succour to the descendants. The persecutory myth revives as a historical fact.

The same is true in Christianity. As Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount:<sup>158</sup> "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It cannot be ruled out that the early Christians modelled their image of Jesus on Socrates, although the opposite is more likely. What the two men share is a philosophical martyrdom.<sup>159</sup> Life does not just depend on sacrifice, but on *reflected sacrifice*. The Church is created by consciously surviving persecution. In Tertullian's words: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."<sup>160</sup> From here it is but a short step to Augustine's idea in a letter to St Boniface where he speaks of a "righteous persecution".<sup>161</sup> The progressive radicalization evident in Augustine's theory is typical of all forms of persecution, right down to the collective persecution of the Shoah: it extends from opposition to coercion, to the acceptance of chastisement and finally to the

belief in "strong measures" against heresy.<sup>162</sup> Augustine aspires to a form of social closure to achieve the unity of the Church in the City of God.

The place of two individual victims, the victim as hero, at the fountainhead of Western history supports my contention that our civilization may be called a civilization of persecution. In a typical fashion, Socrates and Jesus inaugurate the history of persecution. Their two doctrines, philosophy relating to truth and religion to God, provided the spiritual preconditions for the western persecutory mind-set. The same symbolism of victimhood is associated with one of the most widely read works of the Middle Ages, Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, written during the author's imprisonment, shortly before his execution in the year 524.<sup>163</sup> Boethius was regarded as a notable thinker in the circle around Alcuin at the Court of Charlemagne; and no less a poet than Dante regarded him as an example in his banishment.<sup>164</sup> Thus Boethius in his relationship of unequal power enters history as a victim. Martyrs were models.

Via Dante and others, exile<sup>165</sup> came to be regarded as a form of persecution in the west. Here, too, social closure operates, inasmuch as the expulsion of the exile heightens the cohesion of the community. Dante's heart-rending evocation of his banishment is the epitome of exilic persecution:<sup>166</sup>

<sup>162</sup> Ronald Christenson. 'The Political Theory of Persecution: Augustine and Hobbes.' *Midwest Journal of Political Science*. 12. 1968: 419-438; 423-424.

<sup>163</sup> John Marenbon. 'Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius'. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition). Ed. Edward N. Zalta. <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/boethius/>>.

<sup>164</sup> Gian Martinelli. 'The Consolation of Boethius for Dante the Poet and Pilgrim.' *Proceedings of Great Day*. 2010. VII. <https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1196&context=proceedings-of-great-day>

<sup>165</sup> Catherine Keen. 'The Language of Exile in Dante.' [https://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/GCMS/RMS-2001-03\\_C\\_Keen,\\_The\\_Language\\_of\\_Exile\\_in\\_Dante.pdf](https://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/GCMS/RMS-2001-03_C_Keen,_The_Language_of_Exile_in_Dante.pdf)

<sup>166</sup> Anne Paolucci. 'Exile among Exiles: Dante's Party of One'. *Mosaic*. 8. 1975. 117-125; 119.

<sup>156</sup> Flavius Josephus. *Geschichte des jüdischen Krieges*. Trans. Heinrich Clementz. Benjamin Harz. Berlin and Vienna. 1923: 658-659.

<sup>157</sup> Robert Chazan. *In the Year 1096. The First Crusade and the Jews*. The Jewish Publication Society. Philadelphia. 1996: ix-xi.

<sup>158</sup> Matthew. V. x.

<sup>159</sup> Candida Moss. *The Myth of Persecution*. HarperCollins. 2013: 60.

<sup>160</sup> Tertullian. *Apologeticus*. 50, 13. See Joshua J. Congrove. 'Preface'. Herbert B. Workman. *Persecution in the Early Church*. Clearnote Press. Bloomington. 2014: xv.

<sup>161</sup> Jean-Pierre Cavaille. 'The Notion of Persecution': 2.

Alas, would it had pleased the Dispenser of the Universe that I should never have had to make excuses for myself; that neither others had sinned against me, nor I had suffered this punishment unjustly, the punishment I say of exile and poverty! Since it was the pleasure of the citizens of the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me out from her most sweet bosom (wherein I was born and brought up to the climax of my life, and wherein I long with all my heart, and with their good leave, to repose my wearied spirit, and to end the days allotted me), wandering as a stranger through almost every region to which our language reaches, I have gone about as a beggar, showing against my will the wound of fortune, which is often wont to be imputed unjustly to the fault of him who is stricken. Verily I have been a ship without sails and without rudder, driven to various harbours and shores by the parching wind which blows from pinching poverty. And I have appeared vile in the eyes of many, who, perhaps from some report of me, had imagined me in a different guise.

Dante's banishment had a geopolitical cause. The city was divided into Whites and Blacks. He belonged to the former. The Pope threatened to excommunicate the city if it did not restore the latter to power. The matter was complicated by the Pope's invitation to Charles de Valois to enter Florence. Upon his violent entry, the Blacks returned to power, and Dante was expelled. This narrative is typical of persecution as a consequence of what Huntington calls a "torn" collective. For his alleged corruption Dante was banished and condemned to death *in absentia* by the Blacks. The means was as cruel as it was symbolic: vivisection.<sup>167</sup> The man who was excluded from his homeland was to be suffocated in its soil. He never saw his wife again and never again entered his native Florence. The agony of the exile who can no longer exercise his human freedom results in a desolate condition: through his suffering Dante is condemned to statelessness and enters the anguished pantheon of victimhood.

Thus, he becomes a dominant figure in the history of persecution since antiquity and reinforces the western image – inaugurated by Ovid -- of the poet- victim as hero.

<sup>167</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/feb/01/dante-descendant-seeks-to-overturn-poets-1302-corruption-conviction>



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# Money Laundering: Risks and Socioeconomic Consequences in the Colombo-Venezuelan Border

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## ABSTRACT

The following documentary review article analyzes the risks and socio-economic consequences of money laundering in the border area between Colombia and Venezuela (Norte de Santander - Táchira), through text mining and documentary exploration with the purpose of identifying the main negative effects that money laundering has on the country's development and the adverse consequences that this activity has for the economic growth of the region. Specific factors are characterized regarding the underground economy and the unfavorable effects on the development of society, concluding that border areas are more affected by this criminal practice since smuggling has become a frequent means of money laundering and is more present than it would be in central areas of the country. This situation may occur due to the difficulty for the state to audit bilateral border operations and/or the imminent presence of underground economies in this area of the country.

**Keywords:** underground economy, illegality, money laundering, border.

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# Money Laundering: Risks and Socioeconomic Consequences in the Colombo-Venezuelan Border

Lavado de Activos: Riesgos y Consecuencias Socioeconómicas en la Frontera Colombo-Venezolana

Lesly Marcela Peña Arias

## RESUMEN

*El siguiente artículo de revisión documental analiza los riesgos y consecuencias socioeconómicas del lavado de activos en la zona fronteriza de Colombia y Venezuela (Norte de Santander - Táchira), por medio de minería de textos y exploración documental con la finalidad de identificar los principales efectos negativos que trae consigo el blanqueo de capitales en el desarrollo del país y las consecuencias adversas que dicha actividad acarrea para el crecimiento económico de la región; se caracterizan factores específicos en cuanto a la economía subterránea y los efectos desfavorables para el desarrollo de la sociedad, llegando a la conclusión de que las zonas fronterizas tienen mayor incidencia a esta práctica delictiva ya que el contrabando se ha convertido en un móvil frecuente de blanqueo de capitales y está más presente de lo que estaría en zonas céntricas del país. Esto puede producirse debido a la dificultad por parte del estado al auditar las operaciones bilaterales fronterizas y/o la inminente presencia de las economías subterráneas en esta zona del País.*

**Palabras Clave:** economía subterránea, ilegalidad, lavado de activos, frontera.

## ABSTRACT

*The following documentary review article analyzes the risks and socio-economic consequences of money laundering in the border area between Colombia and Venezuela (Norte de Santander - Táchira), through text mining and documentary exploration with the purpose of*

*identifying the main negative effects that money laundering has on the country's development and the adverse consequences that this activity has for the economic growth of the region. Specific factors are characterized regarding the underground economy and the unfavorable effects on the development of society, concluding that border areas are more affected by this criminal practice since smuggling has become a frequent means of money laundering and is more present than it would be in central areas of the country. This situation may occur due to the difficulty for the state to audit bilateral border operations and/or the imminent presence of underground economies in this area of the country.*

**Keywords:** underground economy, illegality, money laundering, border.

**Author:** Universidad Francisco de Paula Santander Colombia.

## I. INTRODUCCIÓN

Las relaciones entre las ciudades fronterizas significan en gran parte el entrelazamiento del comercio, las políticas y la cultura de sus actores. Las dificultades empiezan a presentarse cuando en estas zonas hay problemáticas sociales y se crea un espacio más amplio para actos delincuenciales y dificultando cada vez más las políticas de control y el ejercicio de las autoridades. Siendo uno de estos problemas la economía subterránea.

El objetivo de esta investigación es poder analizar las circunstancias en cuanto a la economía local

debido al blanqueo de capital en la ciudad fronteriza de Cúcuta desde el año 2018 hasta el 2021, utilizando el método de investigación descriptivo se demostrará como se ven afectados los sectores económicos por dicha problemática, y cómo esto repercute en el desarrollo de la sociedad.

El desarrollo de las capitales es un fenómeno que altera no solo la economía pública colombiana, sino que su materialización conlleva a problemáticas que afectan la integridad bancaria, involucra el crecimiento desmedido en la desigualdad de distribución económica del país (Bayona-Rodríguez, 2019). Sus efectos y consecuencias parecen ser desconocidas o infravaloradas a pesar de ser una limitante para el crecimiento socio-económico de una Nación. Esta problemática viene en aumento debido a la facilidad y rapidez con la que se fortalecen las instituciones criminales organizadas para este delito. El problema tiene un trasfondo más inquietante, ya que la principal finalidad del “blanqueo de dinero” es eliminar cualquier huella que facilite encontrar el nacimiento ilegal de los activos.

El presente artículo de investigación hace referencia al impacto socioeconómico generado por el lavado de activos, que es el instrumento utilizado por la delincuencia organizada para “legalizar” y evadir declarar el dinero obtenido de forma ilícita, haciendo un enfoque en los riesgos y las consecuencia que ha generado dicha actividad en la frontera Colombo Venezolana.

Podemos decir que en el observatorio de lavado de activos y extinción de dominio de la Universidad del Rosario UR-LAFT, las normativas relacionadas con el lavado de activos se constituyen en documentos de obligatoria e indispensable observancia para el Estado Colombiano, con el fin de conceptualizar el blanqueo de capitales y de ejercer acciones de prevención, control, detección, y de ser necesaria una respectiva judicialización tanto en el delito de LAFT como sus delitos subyacentes

Según Eduardo G 2020, El blanqueo de capitales data de 1920 con origen en Estados Unidos, y

podemos decir que este fenómeno fue uno de los efectos negativos derivados de la acelerada globalización y el auge del narcotráfico en los años 70, siendo así el lavado de activos una herramienta popular entre la delincuencia organizada para burlar a las autoridades financieras.

En la Frontera Colombo Venezolana el lavado de activos es un tema de conocimiento público casi normalizado pero que lamentablemente pasa desapercibido o es ignorado por la comunidad. Se ha tomado como un tema de impresión momentánea y no como una verdadera amenaza o preocupación en los sectores productivos y comerciales del departamento. Pero ¿Por qué esta problemática debería tener más visibilidad? Para identificar las respuestas a esta problemática primero se deben conocer sus antecedentes y destacar la magnitud del problema.

## II. METODOLOGÍA

Para realizar el presente artículo sobre el lavado de activos en la frontera colombo venezolana se utiliza una metodología de investigación cualitativo con enfoque descriptivo, la revisión bibliográfica permite analizar las diferentes bases de datos como scopus, scielo, legiscomex, redalyc, ebscohost, repositorios, revistas institucionales de la cuales se establecen las acciones que se seleccionaron en artículos, publicaciones, reportes económicos e informes sectoriales.

En ese sentido, se inicia con una investigación de la bibliografía referente a la frontera colombo-venezolana donde se hace un análisis desde lo general hacia lo específico enfocándonos en los riesgos y consecuencias socioeconómicas. Luego se procede a realizar un diagnóstico del objeto de estudio a través de fuentes de información secundarias que permitan estudiar la realidad de esta zona fronteriza.

Su diseño de investigación exploratorio con un enfoque documental. Se analiza la problemática de la economía sumergida, y los riesgos como también consecuencias del lavado de activos por medio de una investigación de documentos. Para realizar dicha investigación, se realiza un análisis de texto que permite evidenciar la estructura

basada en textos, explicándoles claramente para así tener observaciones más relevantes en los documentos.

La población analizada se encuentra en los puentes internacionales ubicados en la frontera de Cúcuta en Norte de Santander en los sectores El

Escobal, Puente Unión en el municipio de Puerto Santander y La Parada que es un municipio de Villa del Rosario; y en Venezuela se encuentra el municipio de Ureña ubicado en San Cristóbal, Población Boca de Grita en el estado Táchira y el Puente Internacional Simón Bolívar que está en San Antonio del Táchira.



Fuente: Oficina de Naciones Unidas para la Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios OCHA (2018) <https://www.unocha.org/>

Figura 1: Mapa de la frontera de Cúcuta, Norte de Santander con Venezuela en el estado Táchira

La presente investigación está orientada en temas referentes a la economía subterránea, en donde se ubica el blanqueo de activos, la financiación del terrorismo, la participación bancaria y los riesgos y consecuencias para el crecimiento de un país. Asimismo, dicha información está apoyada o soportada por publicaciones previas en diferentes

bases de datos como scopus, scielo, redalyc, ebsco host, reportes económicos e investigaciones académicas.



### III. ANTECEDENTES

#### 3.1 Economía Subterránea en Colombia

La economía subterránea se define como una asociación que se caracteriza por implementar ejercicios por fuera de la legalidad de una nación, y en Colombia esta economía oculta toma fuerza por la influencia del narcotráfico, la informalidad, la evasión de impuestos y por último el lavado de activos. (Villar, L., Steiner, R., Taboada, B., Jaramillo-Vallejo, J., Villamizar, M., & Carrasquilla, A. - 2022).

Según L. Medina (2018), la economía oculta (subterránea) minimiza la confiabilidad de los datos estadísticos oficiales, esto perjudica la capacidad para medir la actividad económica y su incremento puede conducir a un ciclo de recesión en la economía del país. Lo anterior influye en el poco desarrollo y crecimiento de diferentes sectores económicos Zabala T. (2020)

De acuerdo con Cortés G. (2018), el blanqueo de capitales actualmente es un problema que afecta a todo el mundo, la cual repercute en diferentes países a nivel mundial y ha aumentado su importancia en las economías internas. Según Osorio J (2020) Este es uno de los medios por el cual los grupos ilegales introducen dineros ilícitos en las economías para continuar financiando sus actividades criminales a través de transferencias para blanquear el efectivo por medio de negocios que son fachada.

Según Gómez Díaz (2020), los departamentos que se encuentran en zonas fronterizas son más propensos al flujo de capitales producto del narcotráfico, lavado de activos y contrabando, por la presencia de grupos delincuenciales en dichas zonas y la facilidad de estos para desplazarse a través de los límites fronterizos que no son controlados por las autoridades aduaneras.

En Colombia, González (2018) afirma que se implementan medidas cautelares con el blanqueo de capitales por medio de organismos como la Superintendencia Financiera del país con SARLAFT (Sistema de Administración del Riesgo de Lavado de Activos y de la Financiación del Terrorismo), con BASC (Business Alliance for

Secure Commerce) para el comercio y la UIAF (Unidad de Información y análisis financiero).

#### 3.2 Lavado de activos- riesgos y consecuencias socioeconómicas

Se puede decir que como parte de la economía sumergida, el blanqueo de capital es una problemática que, aunque es difícil de cuantificar con datos puntuales su efecto en el desarrollo económico de un país, es posible identificar a grandes rasgos las consecuencias socioeconómicas que trae consigo.

El blanqueo de capitales perjudica la estabilidad económica del país puesto que contribuye al aumento de actos violentos, desplazamientos, aumento de la brecha de desigualdad social y económica, disminución de los recursos públicos, falta de empleo y así mismo, la corrupción (H. Rangel; G. Barrera; O. Gómez, 2019). Para el estado colombiano es crucial identificar los delitos ocasionados por el blanqueo de capitales y la financiación del terrorismo (LAFT) puesto que el dinero filtrado por medio de fachadas son en su mayoría provenientes de actividades ilícitas que tienen relación con el Narcotráfico (cultivo y distribución de drogas y armas) tráfico de personas, sobornos y corrupción Daza, N. (2019). Para identificar dichos delitos el estado ha establecido nuevas políticas en contra del financiamiento del terrorismo y en contra de la multiplicación de armamentos de destrucción masiva por medio el sistema CONPES 4042 (UIAF, 2021)

La problemática de blanqueo de Capitales repercute directamente en el ámbito social aumentando la inseguridad jurídica de la sociedad, promoviendo la violencia, los desplazamientos, la pobreza y afectando también el sector inmobiliario debido a la incautación de bienes desde la presunción del delito ya que inhabilita el inmueble del mercado, o por el contrario formando una burbuja inmobiliaria debido la masiva adquisición de propiedades, generando un falso incremento de precios lo cual resulta en un aumento de la dificultad para el resto del país al momento de adquirir vivienda (J.A. Nuñez, 2020).

La integridad bancaria del país también se ve afectada ya que para la ejecución del delito LAFT es inminente la participación y colaboración de funcionarios de la banca, los cuales son incorporados al fraude fiscal por medio del efecto cadena a cambio de comisiones o sobornos que de igual manera entran a hacer parte de la economía subterránea. En caso de que alguna entidad bancaria sea sorprendida en flagrancia, será acusada por participación en blanqueo de capitales, generando pánico bancario y colapso en el sistema financiero del país, aumentando la desconfianza de los inversores extranjeros. (J, Osorio. 2020)

En cuanto a los riesgos económicos, el lavado de activos puede generar distorsiones en el mercado al aumentar la demanda de dinero, haciendo ineficientes las políticas monetarias implementadas en la estabilización de los precios y disponibilidad de dinero circulante (La República, 2018). Así mismo, al no tener un control y conocimiento real de los datos estadísticos del país, se genera un desafío mayor para los inversores al momento de querer realizar estudios de mercado o estimaciones puesto que información inexacta genera desconfianza y mayor riesgo.

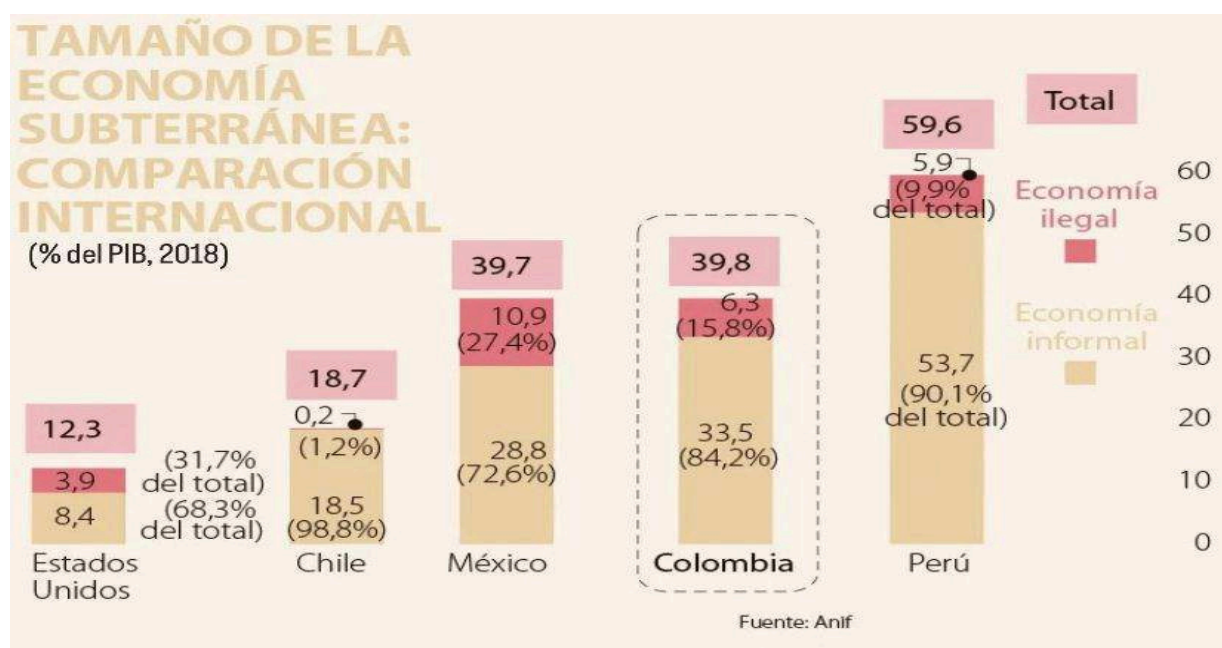
El aumento de la desigualdad también es un riesgo inminente a causa de la ventaja competitiva con la que cuentan los comercios financiados con dineros ilícitos ya que es difícil para las empresas legítimas competir en condiciones desiguales y limitando la participación de nuevos competidores.

## IV. DISCUSIÓN

### 4.1 Comparación de la economía subterránea a nivel internacional

Según López E. (2019) la economía informal se evidencia en mayor medida en los países en vía de desarrollo en los cuales la precariedad de la economía y la deficiencia en la política laboral obliga a los trabajadores a ejercer puestos que no cuentan con prestaciones laborales o seguridad social y a menudo carecen de condiciones dignas.

En su mayoría hablamos de la prostitución, ventas ambulantes, servicio doméstico, reciclaje informal y todo aquello que se constituye como una actividad económica irregular o invisible pero que significa la única forma sustento de parte de la población.



Fuente: Tomado de, Anif 2018 Centro de Estudios Económicos(mayo 2018) havoscope global market information <https://www.anif.com.co/>

Figura 2: Tamaño de la Economía Subterránea: Comparación Internacional

Según la Anif (2018), las tendencias de la economía subterránea significan la suma de la economía informal más la economía ilegal, Con lo cual en Colombia representa el 40% del Producto Interno Bruto que es igual al 33,5% de economía no formal más el 6,3% de economía ilegal, con similitud con el país mexicano el cual presenta la economía ilegal más alta de las demás comparativas con un 10,9% con respecto al 39,7% de su contribución al PIB. En comparación Perú y Chile muestran los índices más altos de informalidad con un 90,1% y 98,8% de tasa de economía informal con respecto a su PIB. Según Índices anteriores, las razones en su mayoría son las drogas, la poca eficacia tributaria, y el mayor uso de dinero en efectivo.

Hoyos N. (2018) Afirma que todos los instrumentos financieros son propensos a amenazas y malversación lo cual propicia su utilización en el blanqueo de capitales, y como medida preventiva sean necesarias las instituciones cuyo objetivo principal es tener un control y orden de actividades ilegales; dichos organismos constantemente están creando normativas encaminadas al perfeccionamiento de los instrumentos actuales.

#### *4.2 Economía subterránea: Lavado de activos en la frontera colombo-venezolana*

Específicamente la frontera colombo-venezolana a través de la historia se ha caracterizado por ser una región con mucho dinamismo económico gracias a la proximidad de sus fronteras y la diferencia en sus modelos de gobierno. Hasta el 2013, disponía de una actividad comercial considerablemente valiosa para la región, Con un valor en exportaciones de USD\$100 millones de Cúcuta hacia Venezuela, un año después dichas exportaciones disminuyeron a la cifra de USD\$37,7 millones (Pabón, Arenas y Sepúlveda, 2019).

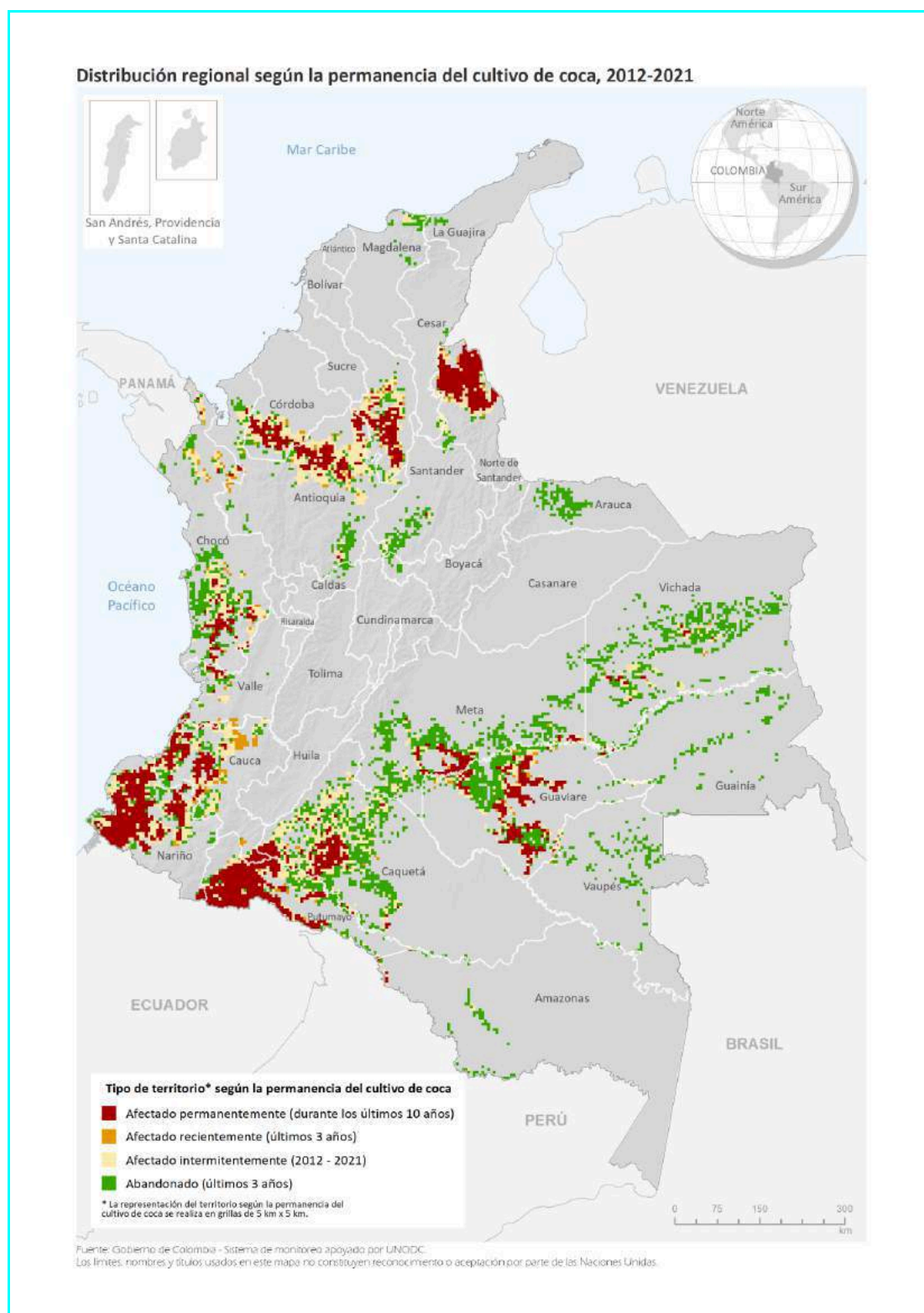
Pese a que la zona fronteriza es un punto fundamental en el desarrollo económico del país gracias a la relevancia de la industria petrolera generada en su mayoría por Venezuela (Niño, Camargo y Cañizares, 2019), el panorama

económico de la región fronteriza es desalentador, puesto que la escasa presencia de entes estatales reguladores dificulta la ejecución de políticas públicas en pro del desarrollo y la integración económica.

En el ámbito de la ilegalidad es de suma importancia incluir no solo el contrabando de víveres o combustibles que son los más comunes, sino también el de personas, medicinas, ganado y oro como una problemática con consecuencias en todos los aspectos económicos, políticos y sociales imaginables.

La industria ilegal en esta zona es principalmente dirigida por el grupo al margen de la ley “Clan del Golfo”, que se encuentra y moviliza hacia el Táchira por los enfrentamientos con el ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional), los cuales compiten y disputan por quedarse con el dominio de la zona que anteriormente era controlada por las FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) cuando se desmovilizaron (La Opinión, 2018). Así mismo, surgen enfrentamientos con grupos ilegales y delincuencia organizada de Venezuela y Colombia para quedarse con las mejores rutas usadas en el contrabando y todo tipo de actividades ilegales (El Tiempo, 2018).

La presencia del narcotráfico tiene una gran incidencia en el desarrollo del lavado de activos de las regiones. Como se muestra en la gráfica (Fig.3) Los departamentos con mayor cultivo e instalación permanente de Coca en el país se encuentran principalmente en las periferias



*Fuente: Metadatos UNODC - SIMCI*

**Figura 3:** Mapa Distribución regional según la permanencia del cultivo de coca, 2012-2021

Según el director de Fiscalías de Norte de Santander (2021): “En las declaraciones de exportaciones a Venezuela se podría evidenciar un aumento en el lavado de activos, debido a que

Colombia no cuenta con relaciones diplomáticas con dicho país, por lo tanto, no hay cómo corroborar los soportes contables, por eso, en un caso hipotético una persona se dirige a los bancos



Colombianos afirmando que recibirá un giro de millones de dólares de unas exportaciones que hizo a Venezuela, de cualquier producto, y la DIAN debe creerle, porque no se puede solicitar al gobierno venezolano, si esa factura es real o no”.

De acuerdo con Daniel T. (2021) las denuncias de las exportaciones ficticias y el ejercicio ilícito de abrir cuentas bancarias a personas ajenas a las operaciones para que reciban grandes sumas de dinero sin conocer su procedencia o destino, recibiendo a cambio un pago por esa operación que se constituye como blanqueo de capital hacen que Cúcuta sea vista como un refugio fiscal para los narcotraficantes.

Las buenas prácticas para prevenir el lavado de activos normal son obligatorias pero si son recomendables por la Oficina de las Naciones Unidas contra la Droga y el Delito (UNODC) y Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá (CCB) en pro del buen desarrollo de la nación.

## V. CONCLUSIONES

Esta investigación parte desde la conceptualización del lavado de activos o también llamado blanqueo de capital como parte de la economía subterránea. Tal como lo demuestran los resultados, las zonas fronterizas tienen mayor incidencia a esta práctica delictiva puesto que el contrabando, que es una forma frecuente de blanquear capital está más presente de lo que estaría en zonas céntricas del país. Esto puede producirse debido a la dificultad por parte del estado al auditar las operaciones bilaterales fronterizas.

La presencia del Narcotráfico es un factor directamente relacionado con el aumento del Lavado de activos y por ende la financiación del terrorismo en una región. las organizaciones criminales así como cualquier otra organización necesitan capital para continuar con sus actividades y dicho capital producto de hechos delictivos puede ser introducido al mercado por medio de la economía sumergida y las operaciones no reguladas, esto hace que para el estado sea cada vez más difícil detectar el blanqueo de capitales.

En cuanto a la influencia del lavado de activos en el desarrollo socio-económico de una región es necesario conocer el trasfondo que deriva a esta actividad, ya que la delincuencia organizada necesita financiarse para seguir funcionando y para ello utiliza no solo la violencia sino también la participación de entidades financieras o la ciudadanía, ya sea de forma voluntaria o por el contrario aprovechando su poder sobre la seguridad de las zonas vulnerables.

Si bien, los riesgos y consecuencias del lavado de activos van desde la violencia, los desplazamientos forzosos, la inseguridad social, el crecimiento de la delincuencia, la financiación del terrorismo y el contrabando de mercancías no reguladas que afectan directamente a los consumidores, podemos observar que dicho blanqueo de capitales incide negativamente en la reputación de una región y hace que para el resto del mundo sea más riesgosa y menos atractiva la inversión al momento de analizar las estadísticas oficiales.

La difícil relación entre Colombia y Venezuela y la deficiencia de políticas y acuerdos bilaterales de seguridad en la zona fronteriza genera mayor dificultad al momento de ejercer control y querer esclarecer las operaciones comerciales de la ciudadanía de ambas naciones. Así, por cuenta del contrabando y el narcotráfico se sigue prolongando la precariedad en la zona y se hace cada vez más presente el blanqueo de capitales.

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# Palestine-Israel Conflict: the Influence of Arab Countries on the Oil Policy and Geopolitics of the Middle East

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## ABSTRACT

As the world energy market was still getting used to OPEC+'s production restrictions and the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East continued to escalate, causing unease since October 7, 2023. Palestinian political and military organisation Hamas attacked Israel on 7 October, reigniting years of conflict between Palestine and Israel. Israel has been violently responding to Hamas by bombing the Palestinian Gaza region for over a month now, and the growing casualty toll has kept the commodities market in a state of unease. As a result, on dramatically changing geopolitical situation in the region also illustrated that how last decade Arabian countries playing important role with relationship gigantic states. Qatar one of states that immediately reacted to this humanitarian crises. Official Doha are threatening to create a global gas shortage as part of their support for Palestine. "If the bombing of Gaza does not stop, we will cut off the gas supply to the world," said Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

*Keywords:* oil, gas, geopolitics, Palestine, Israel, Middle East.

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**Keywords:** oil, gas, geopolitics, Palestine, Israel, Middle East.

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Natural resources have had an essential role in international relations and its importance has changed throughout the centuries.

In the face of increasing competition, and even confrontation, in energy markets, the words of Henry Kissinger, spoken in 1974: "You can never conduct energy policy<sup>1</sup> as a purely economic matter. From the very beginning it was the subject of foreign policy."<sup>2</sup> On top of this, Russian-Ukraine war demonstrated after huge pandemic year that energy policy is primary on foreign affairs of the world.

In addition, Natural gas is shifting from a regional to a global scale and it is playing a key role in the transition of the energy paradigm, and its importance is supported by three factors. First, by the increase of its consumption across the world, competing, since the 90s, with oil and coal, since it is a cleaner fossil fuel with lower environmental emissions, and more versatile, which contributes to overall energy system resilience to disruption. Second, this increase is also associated with the growth in the interconnection of gas transportation networks worldwide, whether already built or in project. <sup>2</sup> Third, the world's proved gas reserves are growing, about 40% over the past

<sup>1</sup> Kissinger H. Interview in Business Week. 1974. 23 December; Reproduced in Department of State Bulletin. 1975. 27 January. P. 106.

<sup>2</sup> The European Union, for example, has drawn up a list of 195 key energy infrastructure projects known as projects of common interest (PCIs) to help create an integrated EU energy market. But the country that has presented the most global strategy in terms of infrastructure is China, in particular One Belt one road initiative, launched by the president Xi Jinping, 2013.

20 years <sup>3</sup> (*Middle East one of leading land in the globe on gas export*)

A sharp escalation in geopolitical risk in the Middle East, a region accounting for more than one-third of the world's seaborne oil trade, has markets on edge. In its October oil report, the International Energy Agency (IEA) highlighted the possibility of "higher for longer" interest rates due to price fluctuations, slowing down economic and demand growth for crude oil. This was in response to oil prices rising to nearly \$98 per barrel in mid September after additional production cuts by Saudi Arabia and Russia.

<sup>4</sup>After three days of starting this war on 10 October, while US benchmark West Texas Intermediate increased 4.3 percent to \$86.38 per barrel, global benchmark Brent Crude increased 4.2 percent to \$88.15 per barrel. Despite the fact that neither Israel nor the beleaguered Gaza Strip are major oil producers, worries that the fighting would spark more instability in the region have shocked the markets. Some of the world's largest oil producers, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, are located in the Middle East. The region also has vital transit routes, such the Strait of Hormuz, which is referred to as the world's most significant "oil chokepoint." Unlike the spike in oil prices that followed Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, the fighting between Israeli soldiers and Hamas fighters, which has killed more than 1,500 people so far in Israel and Gaza, does not directly involve oil-producing nations. By the way, Musa Abu Marzouk a member of the Politburo of the Palestinian Hamas movement waited more practical steps from Islamic countries for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, said to Turkish newspaper Yeni Şafak. He maintained that "We know very well that earlier, during the Arab wars, an oil embargo was introduced to support the

Arab cause. Today it is possible to stop the oil supplies of those who help this Zionist entity. Arab and Muslim countries can take more steps towards a ceasefire. Islamic countries should not be content with statements and condemnations."

<sup>5</sup> "Voluntary cuts are expected to keep the oil market in deficit as OPEC+ could pump 1.3 million barrels per day (mb/d) below the call on its crude in 4Q23," IEA said. Russian oil export revenues rose from \$1.8bn (Rbs174.41bn) to \$18.8bn in September, the highest since July 2022.

Arab nations can be crucial in helping Israelis and Palestinians put an end to the ongoing violence, prevent conditions in Gaza that exacerbate the region's security and instability, and create a framework for negotiations for resolving the conflict that is supported by both international and regional support in today's Middle East and global politics. The United States has always been a key actor in previous Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts, but it does not have a clear vision as to how to end the Gaza war and provide for new arrangements to safeguard Israel's security and enable the Palestinians to fulfill their long standing national aspirations. The European Union, a highly generous donor <sup>6</sup>and former active member of the Middle East Quartet—a body founded by a global diplomatic explosion two decades ago—can also be diagnosed with the same lack of vision<sup>7</sup>. October 7, member countries of the EU, along with Great Britain, have focused their diplomatic actions on joining the United States in expressing solidarity with Israel after the Hamas attacks, calling for the protection of civilians in Gaza, suggesting temporary halts in ongoing military operations, and advancing plans for getting humanitarian aid to the strip's inhabitants, implicitly operating within the

<sup>3</sup>Almost three-quarters of the worlds proved natural gas reserves are located in the Middle East and Eurasia, with Russia, Iran, and Qatar together accounting for about 54% of world proved natural gas reserves as of January 1, 2016 (EIA, 2016).

<sup>4</sup><https://www.iea.org/reports/oil-market-report-october-2023>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/bu-savasi-abd-yonetiyor-4573406>

<sup>6</sup>[https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/eu-increases-humanitarian-aid-gazaeu25-million-2023-11-06\\_en#:~:text=As%20part%20of%20the%20EU's,million%20for%20Gaza%20this%20year](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/eu-increases-humanitarian-aid-gazaeu25-million-2023-11-06_en#:~:text=As%20part%20of%20the%20EU's,million%20for%20Gaza%20this%20year)

<sup>7</sup><https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/09/joint-statement-on-israel/>

framework imposed by Israeli relocation efforts for Gaza's population. European officials have not made a single policy proposal to end the war or initiate peace. And we should not expect more from them, given the major differences among EU member states in their positions on the Israel-Palestine issue, their costly involvement in the Russia-Ukraine war, and rising antisemitic and anti Muslim sentiments tearing their social fabrics. However, like the United States, European leaders might successfully back regional initiatives, not the least of which would be through financial and economic aid packages that would be vital for Gaza's reconstruction down the road.

Conversely, important Arab nations have recently made investments in creating regional security arrangements. These states, if they can agree on a strategy, have a greater desire and capacity to lead regional diplomacy due to long-term trends.

First, two vital neighbors of Israel and Palestine, Egypt and Jordan, are potentially powerful investors in such an approach. Geostrategically and politically, for the Egyptian and Jordanian governments, the Gaza war poses massive national security threats linked to the dangers of a Palestinian mass displacement, in addition to the troubling specter of long-term violence in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. Second, Saudi Arabia is a potential participant. Saudi Arabia is not a direct neighbor of the Palestinians and does not have diplomatic ties with Israel, in contrast to Egypt and Jordan. However, Saudi diplomacy, in an effort to get the kingdom out of a proxy war in Yemen and regional escalation at large, has reoriented its course to conflict resolution and stabilization steps in the Middle East. Saudi leaders endorsed a Chinese mediation initiative to restore diplomatic relations with Iran and, prior to the Gaza war, engaged officials of U.S. President Joe Biden's administration in talks tailored toward normalizing relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Long term violence and ongoing confrontations between Israel and the Palestinians, along with their wider ramifications in the Middle East, pose fundamental threats to Saudi Arabia's interest in regional security and stability.

A final set of participants include not only the Arab countries that signed the Abraham Accords with Israel and normalized relations—the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco—but also Qatar, which has maintained collaborative relations with Israel as well as with all Palestinian actors, including the Palestinian Authority and Hamas<sup>8</sup>. The web of diplomatic relations and collaboration schemes these countries have developed with Israel and Palestine in recent years can be instrumental in facilitating regional peace efforts.

Main Arab actors today are not waiting to be courted: they are deeply interested in a secure regional order, more capable of acting (not merely reacting) diplomatically and engaging with both Israelis and Palestinians.

In the past, Arab states have been parties to the conflict. They have been deeply divided and each had their own interests, making diplomacy difficult and often centered around merely getting parties to the table. When they arrived, all attention was on courting them to make concessions and grant recognition; each grudging step in that direction was hard-won. Key Arab players nowadays are not waiting to be courted; rather, they are better capable of acting diplomatically and interacting with both Israelis and Palestinians than simply waiting for the phone to ring. They are also sincerely interested in a stable regional order. Once the talk of American policy talks, key Arab states now prioritize regional stability. Undoubtedly, none of those states could act by themselves, and they're not accustomed to working together.

Based on several regional and international causes, the Palestinian issue was gradually deprioritized. Leading up to the current war in Gaza, the political environment left little room for a political solution.

But it was not only Israel's disinvestment from two-state diplomacy that drove the Palestinian issue downward in importance. On the

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/qatar-hostage-mediators-press-hamas-civilian-releases-diplomats-sources-2023-10-24/>



Palestinian side, ongoing disputes between the PA in Ramallah and militant movements led by Hamas's government in Gaza meant there would be no unified voice if a negotiation table was ever set. Arab-mediated reconciliation efforts between the PA and Hamas—both Egyptian- and Qatari-led—bore no fruit. Israeli policy became based on cementing the division and decay, not overcoming it. Hamas's radical rhetoric and willingness to engage in frequent rounds of hostilities with Israel increased the PA's impotence and irrelevance, both for successive Israeli governments that were preoccupied with security and for the Palestinian public that moved between radicalization and disenchantment.

Indeed, the destructive decline of Palestinian national institutions was greatly aided by regional circumstances. Regionally, although Egypt and Jordan kept up their diplomatic efforts to revive peace talks between Israel and the PA based on the two-state solution, some Arab states (like Algeria) confined their roles to fiery rhetoric and minor reconciliation talks between Palestinian factions. Others, such as Syria and Libya, paid little attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict altogether due to internal turmoil. And some countries engaged in normalization efforts with Israel that offered no political end to the conflict, such as Bahrain, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates.

Key European countries traditionally engaged in the Middle East, such as France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy, confined their policies on Palestine to economic aid packages for the West Bank and humanitarian aid for Gaza. Preoccupied with domestic tensions due to the rise of right-wing populism and intra-European fiscal and political conflicts, European governments reduced their engagement in the Middle East to key strategic interests, trade, migration, and security. The West's disinterest in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian problem has grown as a result of the worldwide crises brought on by the coronavirus pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Given the circumstances in the region and around the world, as well as the internal politics of all the major players, the gradual decline of diplomacy may make sense. However, inertia has once again shown to have an extremely high cost. There have been unexpected outbursts of global diplomacy in response to previous explosions; these experiences offer both good and bad lessons for any current endeavor. In fact, it might be obvious on BBVA research on Geopolitics of the Middle East and potential spillovers on picture №1.



*The BBVA Research Geo World Report A Visual Guide to Geopolitical Affairs - Middle East potential scenarios .P-20*

On November 11, 2023 leaders of the Islamic, Arab and oil-producing worlds gathered in the capital of Saudi Arabia. This meeting became historic from any point of view.

First, the events were initially planned to be divided into two days: on November 11, 2023 a meeting of the heads of the League of Arab States (LAS) was to take place, and the next day, the cool conference halls of Riyadh were to receive numerous delegates from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The main issue on the agenda, of course, was the situation in the Gaza

Strip, and since this very situation for the Palestinians is extremely desperate and difficult, it was decided to combine both events.

Here you need to understand that the League includes 22 Arabic-speaking countries, chaired by a representative of Egypt, and the

Organization of Islamic Cooperation under its wing unites as many as 57 participating countries (the structure is headed by a functionary from the Muslim-African Chad).

Secondly, representatives of Israel, although they were absent from Riyadh, can rightfully count a resounding victory to their credit. For the simple reason that all the fiery and emotional speeches demanding that all earthly and heavenly punishments be brought down on the heads of the Jews ended in an enchanting fuss, although some players tried to persuade brothers in faith to take decisive action.

For example, Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi proposed a theoretically feasible mechanism, implying the severance of any political and economic ties with Israel and the introduction of broad sanctions. Algeria's initiatives were more radical and obviously unfeasible. In addition to

traditional calls to stop any relations with Tel Aviv, representatives of the African continent intended to demand that the United States not establish new military bases in the Middle East and not provide any practical assistance to Israel. The requirement for Washington is obviously impossible to fulfill, and therefore, as a motivating stick, key representatives of the Arab oil-producing world had to introduce an embargo on the sale of hydrocarbons to Israel in particular and the West in general.

And at this point the main scandal and embarrassment occurred.

Eleven representatives of the League voted for the proposed scenario, but Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco were categorically against it, and flatly refused to curtail trade in oil, which is directly or indirectly supplied in the interests of Israel.

In fact, all the emotional steam from the summit was blown away. Neither religious appeals nor appeals for the unity of peoples of Arab origin helped.

#### Influence of Sea corridor to the region

Crude oil prices declined on 25 December, 2023 during thin Christmas trade amid questions about unity among OPEC+ producers and concerns on Red Sea trading routes due to attacks from the Yemeni Houthi rebel group.

Any ship flying the Israeli flag would be targeted, according to the Houthi organization, which responded to Israel's attacks on the blockaded Gaza Strip.

Since the Suez Canal is used by about **12%** of all trade, the Red Sea is one of the most significant trading routes in the world. Following a security breach, a number of multinational corporations, including the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), owned by Italy and Switzerland, Maersk, based in Denmark, Hapag-Lloyd, a German shipper, and CMA CGM, based in France, halted all of their operations in the Red Sea. Following the declaration by the British energy company bp

that it would cease all tanker activity in the Red Sea, there were worries expressed that seaborne deliveries, which have primarily hampered the transfer of commodities up to this point, would soon extend to the shipping of energy<sup>9</sup>. Experts say the prolonged inability of the Suez to operate may pose economic threats for regional countries such as Egypt, whose economy is already fragile.

What happened to oil prices during previous conflicts involving Israel and Palestinians?

The 1973 oil crisis, which followed the October War and saw Egypt and Syria launch a surprise attack on Israel to retake territory, has come to mind in light of the recent surge in oil prices.

In response to US support for Israel during the 1973 conflict, Arab oil producing countries cut oil production and placed embargoes on the US and some of its allies, causing oil prices to quadruple over the following months. The situation today, however, is very different from back then.<sup>10</sup>

Many in OPEC came to the conclusion that the 1973 embargo was a grave error as a result of the decades-long animosity cultivated by the major oil-consuming countries.

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<sup>9</sup><https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/oil-prices-start-week-with-thin-trade-due-to-christmas-holiday-break/3091709>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2023/10/10/will-global-oil-prices-keep-rising-due-to-the-israel-hamas-war>

4. The European Union, for example, has drawn up a list of 195 key energy infrastructure projects known as projects of common interest (PCIs) to help create an integrated EU energy market. But the country that has presented the most global strategy in terms of infrastructure is China, in particular One Belt one road initiative, launched by the president Xi Jinping, 2013.
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