

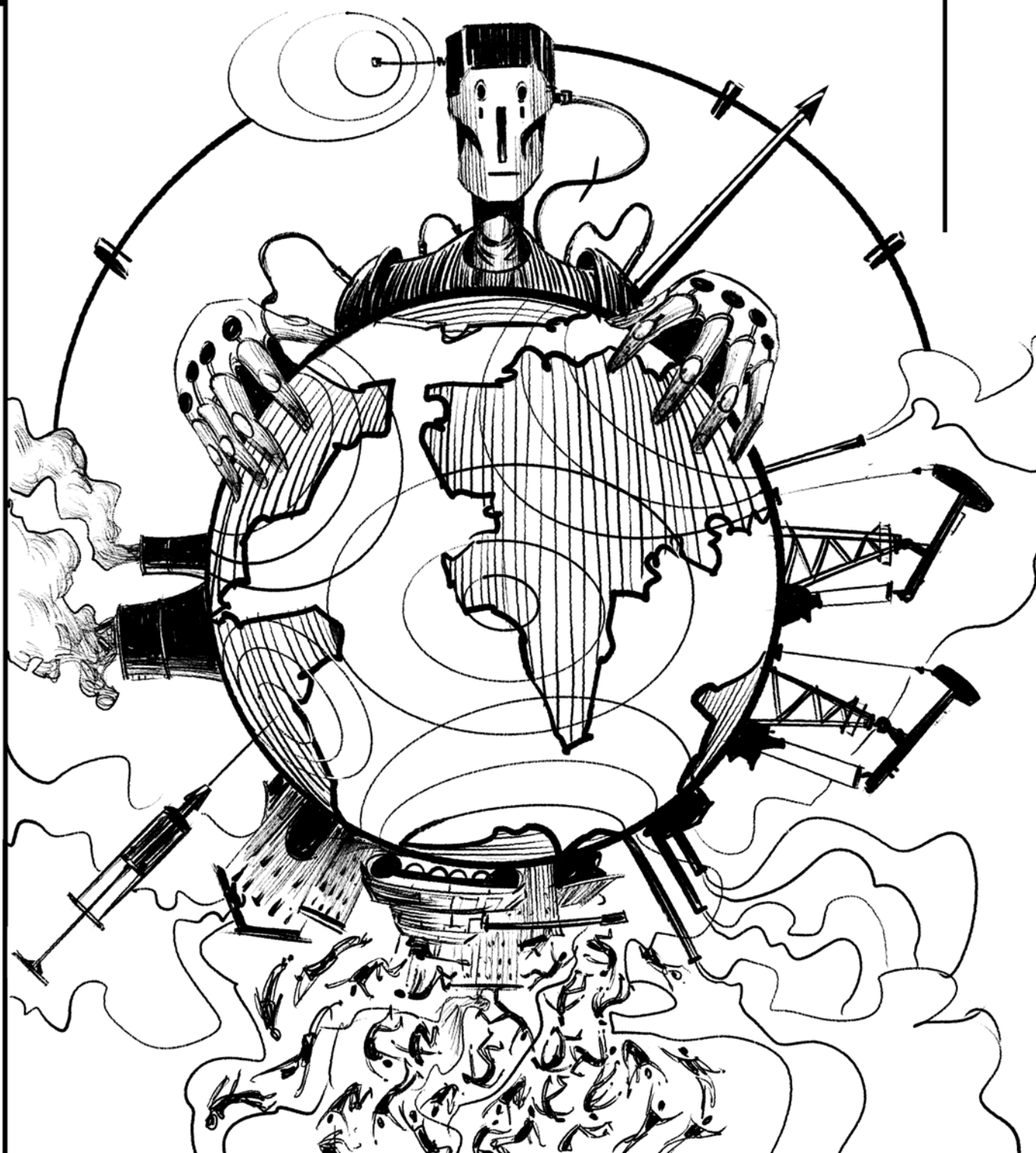
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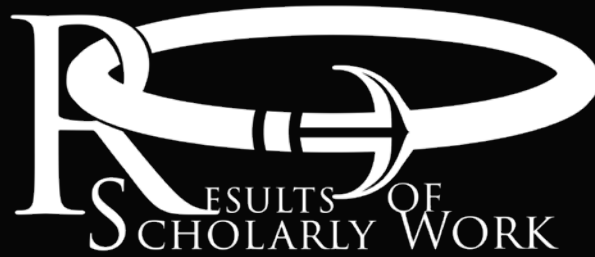
NEWSLETTER ON

THE
RESULTS
OF SCHOLARLY WORK

IN SOCIOLOGY, CRIMINOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

TUNE-CHANGING WORLD - EVERY SINGLE MINUTE





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RESULTS OF SCHOLARLY WORK
IN SOCIOLOGY, CRIMINOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE”

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Your dedication made this publication possible.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

INTRO

In this issue of the journal I continue my quest to bring our readers research representing a variety of different disciplines as the title of our journal so clearly suggests. Additionally, I am committed to having this research represent the works of scholars from around the globe, often with different points of view. In this way, our readers, no matter where they are located, are exposed to academic viewpoints that are absent from the traditional journals within their geographic region.

Journals published within a specific country are wont to reflect a limited way of approaching a subject. Take, for example, the differences between European and American psychology. Psychology journals within the United States uphold the teachings of the American Psychological Association and, for the most part, eschew European psychologists with their differing ways of viewing psychological behavior. The same may be said for disciplines of sociology, criminology, philosophy, and political science that are contained within the title of our journal. Suffice to say, our goal is to give our readership new ways of approaching a body of knowledge.

With our articles penned by global scholars, our readers will be better able to navigate research questions posed by their areas of interest no matter where they reside. In this way, our journal truly contributes to advancing



scholarly research devoid of tendencies that smack of academic ethnocentrism. The end result of this intended exposure to new ways of thinking can result in solutions that better contribute to a field of knowledge, and, more importantly, the betterment of mankind. The latter is often not a major concern of many traditional academic journals. *Results of Scholarly Works* endeavors to present research that not only has scholarly worth but practical application that can translate in public policy.

I now invite you to peruse our latest issue of the journal to encounter the work of our diverse group of academics. As always, *Results of Scholarly Works* brings you cutting-edge research and dynamic opinion that illuminates and educates our readers. Until our next issue, we remain academically yours,

Sincerely,

*Harvey W. Kushner
Long Island University
Brookville, NY*





HARVEY W. KUSHNER

Chairman of the Presidium and academician of EUASU Academy, Chairman of the Criminal Justice Department and a Professor of Criminal Justice at LIU Post, Brookville, New York. Internationally recognized expert on terrorism. Kushner has authored numerous columns, editorials, and six books. His best-seller Encyclopedia of Terrorism has won numerous awards.

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IZHAR HAQ

CPA, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Accounting and the Director of the School of Professional Accountancy at Long Island University – Post. He has over 20 years of accounting experience in senior positions in multinational corporations as well as governmental and not-for-profit entities and is a consultant for the Oil and Gas Industry as well as start-up incubators in New York.

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GIORGI VACHNADZE

Foucault and Wittgenstein scholar. He completed his Bachelor studies at New Mexico State University and received a Master's qualification in philosophy at the University of Louvain. Former editor and peer-reviewer for the Graduate Student Journal of philosophy "The Apricot", he has been published in multiple popular and academic journals world-wide.

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DR. FRANÇOIS DEBRIX

Professor of Political Theory in the Department of Political Science at Virginia Tech. He is the former Director of the interdisciplinary and theory-oriented ASPECT program at Virginia Tech, a position he held for over 11 years. Professor Debrix has authored, edited, and co-edited eight books.

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DR. MARCO ANDREACCHIO

He was awarded a doctorate from the University of Illinois for his interpretation of Sino-Japanese philosophical classics in dialogue with Western counterparts and a doctorate from Cambridge University for his work on Dante's Platonic interpretation of religious authority.

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NATALIIA LEPSKA

Ph.D. in Political Science, Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the Zaporizhzhia National University in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine.



DR. MAXIM LEPSKIY

Professor in the Sociology Department at Zaporizhzhia National University in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine.

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VITALII LUNOV

Associate Professor in the Department of General and Medical Psychology at Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine, fellow of The Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, Member of The Royal Society of St. George, APA, WFMH, The European Association of Science Editors (UK), The Association of British Science Writers (UK).



LEARNED HELPLESSNESS, RESILIENCE, AND TIME PERSPECTIVE IN UKRAINIAN AND ISRAELI CITIZENS AMID PROLONGED WARFARE...

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CO-AUTHORS: VIKTORIA TURBAN, YAROSLAVA RUDENKO, SERGII SEREDA

DWIGHT WILSON

Corresponding Member of EUASU. He has spent over a decade working in the private security industry protecting high profile clients and working in high risk areas. He currently works for Valor Force as a security professional. Dwight is a Guro of Filipino Martial Arts with Rister International Martial Arts for more than 20 years experience.



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MARK HORVATH

Researcher, philosopher and art theorist based. Mark is interested in the Anthropocene, post-anthropocentrism, postmodern social and political theory.

ADAM LOVASZ

Researcher and philosopher based. Adam's interests include Object-Oriented-Ontology, New Materialism, post-anthropocentrism and process philosophy.



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NELLO BARILE

Associate Professor at the Department of Communication at IULM University (Milan), where he teaches Sociology of Media and Sociology of Fashion. His research interests include sociology of media and communication, culture, fashion, consumption, and politics.



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THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE AMERICAN ACADEMY

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HARVEY W. KUSHNER

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8451-1187>
- Email: harvey.kushner@liu.edu

Harvey W. Kushner is Chairman of the Presidium and academician of EUASU Academy, Chairman of the Criminal Justice Department and a Professor of Criminal Justice at LIU Post, Brookville, New York. Internationally recognized expert on terrorism. Kushner has authored numerous columns, editorials, and six books, five of which focus on the pervasive problems inherent in international and transnational terrorism. His best-seller Encyclopedia of Terrorism has won numerous awards.



ABSTRACT

This article traces the growth of technology over the last 75 years within colleges and universities within the United States. Particular attention is paid to the impact of Y2K and the COVID-19 pandemic on technological advances employed by institutions of higher education. The impacts of artificial intelligence and ChatGPT are also explored in detail with suggestions for their effective employment. The article concludes with a rather dire warning.

Keywords

computers, Y2K, cyber age, pandemic, AI, chatGPT

INTRODUCTION

As a college professor for over half a century, I have lived through a number of technological advances that have significantly impacted higher education. The first of which occurred when I put away my slide rule which was in a case attached to my belt like a gunslinger for a pocket calculator in 1972. At the same time, I began to learn all I could about computers and soon I was writing programs in FORTRAN IV for the IBM System/360. I could often be seen happily scurrying down Mercer Street in New York City lugging heavy metal trays of computer punched cards to the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University

to measure voting power using roll call data. Unlike my fellow political scientists of the day, I had training in the hard sciences. I have a degree in mechanical technology and worked as a draftsman and quality control inspector for a government contractor.

RETIRING MY KEUFFEL AND ESSER

My computer programs created initially to assay a variety of phenomena studied by my fellow political scientists at the Department of Politics at New York University even began to pique the interest of researchers within the hard sciences who were somewhat better acquainted with the technological advancements of the day. Yes, somewhat, since the use of the IBM System/360 Operating System by researchers within the hard sciences was not universal. Many still relied on their trusty handheld Hewlett-Packard-35 Scientific Calculator introduced in 1972, so called because it had 35 keys. And others even still relied on their Keuffel and Esser slide rules that proudly hung from their belts.

In 1974, I was contacted by scientists at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center operated by Stanford University for my VOTEPOW and PARSUPPORT computer programs to see if they could enhance their own research. VOTEPOW was a computer program for the measurement of voting power using roll call data (Kushner &

Urken, 1974) and PARSUPPORT was a computer program for measuring the support of a party member for his party (Kushner, 1974). These Stanford nuclear physicists told me that they were anxious to see how my point-biserial correlation program could be of use to them in their research at their facility in Menlo Park, California. They were part of a group of early computer hobbyists known as the Homebrew Computer Club. The latter played a role in developing the microcomputer revolution and the rise of the Silicon Valley technology complex.

Endocrinologists doing post graduate work at New York University even asked me to teach them the value of my computer programs for their own medical studies. I conducted numerous seminars demonstrating how computers could be used to analyze large data sets and find patterns in medical information. Back then the use of computers in medical research was at its infancy. Today advanced computer imaging modalities, such as MRIs and CT scans, are commonplace in medical research. In the early 1970s, few medical students were versed in the use of computers for medical research. One of my students even told me how his urology professor still smelt and tasted urine as a diagnostic procedure.

By the end of the 1970s, computers began to gain popularity in colleges and universities throughout the United States. In 1983, Drexel University became the first campus requiring every student to purchase a laptop. By the mid 1980s I was being called on to review the use of computers throughout the social sciences and the humanities (see Kushner, 1984). At the end of the twentieth century calculators and computers became integrated in most aspects of higher education.

THE YEAR 2000 PROBLEM: NOT

As the millennium was ending and we headed for the very real possibility that computers would

malfunction during the year 2000 problem, also commonly known as the millennium bug, Y2K problem, Y2K scare, Y2k bug, Y2k glitch Y2k error, or simply Y2K. The problems that did occur on 1 January 2000 were generally regarded as minor. Then U. S. President William Jefferson Clinton labeled Y2K as the first challenge of the 21st century successfully met (Loeb, 2019). As we entered Y2K, computers were becoming integrated into all facets of university life. They were being used to register and grade students, enhance classroom pedagogy and heuristics, and aid faculty in their development and research.

Their use had a salutary effect on the workings of the 20th century academy.

METHODS

The research work presented herein is grounded in a variety of logical methods and approaches. These include comparison, analysis, synthesis, generalization, and abstraction, which form the foundation for examining the subject matter. Logical techniques such as induction, deduction, and analogy are utilized to deepen the analysis. Descriptive and comparative analysis methods have been employed to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the research questions.

DISCUSSION

The Cyber Age is Here

With the coming of the 21st century universities entered a new era where other space-age technologies such as the internet were gaining popularity. The cyber age would begin to create a tipping point that would eventually call into question the university as we knew it. The internet along with a variety of corresponding cyber age items such as search engines, emails, smartphones, and other technologies slowly became integrated into all aspects of university life (Coccoli et al., 2014; Coccoli, Maresca, & Stanganelli, 2011; see also



Barana et al., 2016; Barana et. l, 2015; Coleman, 2014; Kerroum et al., 2020; Puncreobutr, 2016; Nguyen, 2018). They enhanced the paradigm that was the university of the first two decades of the new millennium. More importantly, however, their gradual introduction allowed them to gain acceptance with the usual naysayers of new technologies within the academy.

For the most part, college professors not engaged in the hard sciences are notorious for adhering to maintaining their old ways of doing business. They need time to ruminate about the practical use of a new technology. Consider, for example, the introduction of email. Many of my humanities and social science colleagues as well as my own staff in my professionally oriented department balked at its use. Those that failed to adopt the new technologies were not punished by not being rehired, promoted or tenured. Retirement, not punitive actions, would be the way to replace those not interested in adopting technological advancements. In short, the cyber age at the beginning of the 21st century fit the very definition of a tipping point in that it represented the point at which a series of small changes became significant enough to cause a larger, more important change. The latter being the adoption of the new technologies such as search engines, emails, smartphones, and other technologies into all aspects of university life. And these changes did not call into question the university as we know it but COVID-19 was another story.

RESULTS

The Pandemic And The Academy

COVID-19 which was declared by the World Health Organization a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020 and a pandemic on March 11, 2020 ushered in change that impacted institutions of higher learning like no other in recent memory. As societies across the globe began to lockdown to reduce the spread of SAR-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, so did most educational institutions. Never in our history when similar control measures were implemented was the scale of the lockdowns at these institutions so widespread. After more than 18 months of public school closures, K-12 schools throughout the United States reopened with the hope of going back to were they were before the pandemic. Institutions of higher learning must realize that they cannot.

In order to conduct business during the pandemic, colleges and universities throughout the United States needed to immediately adopt a variety of video conferencing platforms such as ZOOM and Google Meet. Through a computer desktop or mobile app (or mobile application), these platforms connect online for video conference meetings, webinars, and live chats. They quickly took the place of traditional synchronous education where communications are scheduled in person. Virtual learning environments (VLEs) such as Blackboard Learn and Brightspace were also employed to further enhance the new synchronous learning experience. VLEs are educational technologies that are web-based platforms for the digital aspects of courses of study within educational establishments.

Instead of just merely enhancing the synchronous learning experience, these VLEs worked to rapidly convert much of synchronous education into true asynchronous communications that would never have to meet face-to-face. As a result, students began to learn how to better use cyber age technologies to fend for themselves. Absent the importance of social interaction with your peers, classroom learning during the pandemic quickly saw the internet along with smartphone capabilities make many aspects of the traditional classroom and university experience unnecessary. Take, for example, the university library for doing research. No longer do students have to wait until the library opened for information when their Google App is accessible all day every day from the comfort of their home. Today's student has no knowledge of the card catalog or the Dewey Decimal System. The open-stack or closed stack holds no meaning for students entering today's college or university library to do their research. Today's library features vending machines offering all sorts of comestibles that were banned in the past. Cappuccinos and lattes are served up to students using their university issued meal cards. The university library of today is replete with computers and devoid of individuals constantly shushing students.

During the pandemic AI (Artificial Intelligence), the intelligence of machines or software in contrast to that of humans and animals, impacted the American academy in the form of generative and creative tools such as ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer). ChatGPT is a chatbot developed by OpenAI an American artificial intelligence research organization registered in Delaware that allows students to refine and steer a conversation towards a desired format and



level of detail. Before the pandemic was declared over in the United States on May 11, 2023 (Hetter, 2023), ChatGPT became the fastest-growing consumer software application in history with over 100 million users worldwide including numerous university and college students throughout the United States.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All the above is not to say that AI at institutions of higher learning was not in use before the pandemic. Applications such as advanced web search engines like Google Search and understanding

human speech assistants like Siri and Alexa were all in play by students and faculty alike. These wonders of modern technology enhanced the educational process by aiding research in a very positive way. For example, they allowed students to continue their studies whenever they so desired. There was no need to visit the library. One only had to consult an app on either their laptop or smartphone. ChatGPT and the like, however, impacted the educational process in a very different way. Specifically, it called into question how students might be graded since the software was capable of writing papers and answering exams. The AI Spring or AI Boom — that is, the ongoing rapid and unprecedented progress in the field of artificial intelligence since the early 2020s—necessitates the undivided attention of the

American academy. The latter has to rethink how students will be tested given the advent of AI.

The pandemic with its lockdown of college and university campuses demonstrated just how quickly cyber technologies can be used to supplement the way institutions of higher learning do business. The switch to and successes of online asynchronous education during the pandemic should illustrate just how rapidly cyber-age technologies can adapt and grow. Academia can no longer slowly integrate new technologies as they become available. The hallowed halls of academia must put aside its staid ways of operation and learn to quickly adapt to cyber technologies as they grow exponentially. No longer can one wait for a paradigm shift to take place as was so accurately explained in Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). Today's paradigm shift is almost instantaneous. In our ever changing technological age, failure to act swiftly will surely call into question the relevancy of the academy.

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THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON THE EVOLUTION OF ACCOUNTING

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IZHAR HAQ

SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANCY, LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY, LONG ISLAND, USA

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1141-6203>
- Email: izhar.haq@liu.edu

Izhar Haq, CPA, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Accounting and the Director of the School of Professional Accountancy at Long Island University – Post. He has over 20 years of accounting experience in senior positions in multinational corporations as well as governmental and not-for-profit entities and is a consultant for the Oil and Gas Industry as well as start-up incubators in New York.



ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence nowadays is attracting the focus of both academics and practitioners due to its contribution in achieving major changes in business environment. Public accounting as a field has benefited a lot from machine learning. Thus, this article aims to highlight the importance and influences of artificial intelligence on accounting. To achieve this aim, this article started with giving a brief overview about artificial intelligence and its evolution over time. This overview helps in showing the power of artificial intelligence and how it attracted investments of billions of dollars due to its leading role in reducing business costs and providing business solutions. Furthermore, the article identifies how artificial intelligence works as this helps accountants to better understand machine learning and identify how it can be optimally used in the field of accounting to get the best results. However, to be widely used in the field of accounting, major investments are required and this is one of the obstacles that faces regional small and mid-sized firms that do not have the required resources to effectively implement artificial intelligence. However, the availability of pre-packaged applications that are offered by big companies such as Google and Amazon can enable small and mid-sized firms to benefit from artificial intelligence. Nonetheless, firms will need to train their labor force to benefit from artificial intelligence. Despite the fact that artificial intelligence can help accounting pro-

fessionals to perform their jobs more efficiently and eliminate repetitive tasks, it is important to note that machine learning cannot eliminate the accountants' role. Artificial intelligence in the accounting field enables accountants to provide their companies with technologies that can save time, increase the efficiency of tasks, reduce costs and help accountants focus more on value-adding activities.

Keywords

machine, learning, accounting, artificial, intelligence, auditing, deep, neural, networks, tax, PCAOB, technology, business, fraud, advisory, internal, control

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence is one of the main areas that attracts the focus of both academics and practitioners due to its significant impact on business operations as well as decision-making processes. However, despite being an evolving technology, artificial intelligence is currently affecting not only businesses and their operations, but also affecting the day-to-day decisions and lives of individuals. Specifically, Google searches, shopping patterns on Amazon, and even movies watched on Netflix as well as several other actions are all monitored and analyzed using artificial intelligence to better understand and target the preferences of each one. Artificial intelligence is also used by Siri and Alexa

so that individuals can interact with their devices without having to use a keyboard.

Given the aforementioned uses of artificial intelligence, it resulted in significant changes in business environment. Specifically, artificial intelligence enables business to sift through enormous data sets and identify patterns and provide information that would have taken thousands of labor hours to determine. Furthermore, artificial intelligence leads to disrupting some industries and potentially creating new industries. Thus, managers, governments and individuals have to understand the impacts of machine learning as it results in major changes in business environment that significantly affect all of them. One of the fields that is affected by machine learning is public accounting. Thus, the aim of this article is to help professionals understand artificial intelligence and its possible impact on accounting as well as highlight potential future opportunities.

METHODS

This research employed qualitative and qualitative methods based on studies from computer science, accounting, auditing, fraud, and general business. This paper proposes a hypothesis that artificial intelligence will have a profound impact on the field of accounting by automating tasks that were typically handled by an accounting professional in auditing and tax but also creating opportunities for greater productivity in the profession. To validate this hypothesis, this paper uses published materials by both the private-sector as well as governmental entities to evaluate the impact of artificial intelligence in fields outside of accounting. This approach allows a comprehensive review of functions best suited for artificial intelligence. Leveraging analysis of artificial intelligence role in other fields allowed. This methodology enabled a harmonization of artificial intelligence attributes that are common across all areas to provide a more nuanced approach to evaluating its impact on the accounting profession. This framework allows the impact of artificial intelligence in areas outside of accounting allowing businesses and policymakers to evaluate the long-term impact of artificial intelligence on society.

RESULTS

The field of accounting is facing a challenging time as various technologies are changing the

business environment and the value that they are able to provide the business environment. The Audit function is critical in ensuring the smooth functioning of the capital markets and the economy. Artificial intelligence is having a significant impact on businesses and consequently it will also have a profound impact on the accounting and the capital markets. The profession has taken an active role in enhancing the value provided from the new technologies. There are many challenges including updating standards and procedures as well as ensuring that accounting professionals have the technical knowledge and training to utilize the insight gained from incorporating data analytics into the audit function. The opportunities for accounting to deliver better services and greater level of confidence is unparalleled in the history of the profession.

DISCUSSION

1. Machine Learning

Machine learning is a branch in the field of Computer Science known as Artificial Intelligence. Artificial intelligence is a branch of computer science that develops programs that mimic human intelligence. Artificial intelligence includes speech processing, image processing, natural language processing, expert systems, and machine learning. Machine learning includes a subfield known as deep learning that uses multiple layers to process the data into information as opposed to what is called "shallow learning", which may only have one layer to process the data as shown in Figure 1.

2. History of Artificial Intelligence

Research in artificial intelligence began as early as the 1950's when computers were recently invented and had only limited memory and processing power. In the 1960's and 1970's, expectations about computers were higher than reality and this resulted in a decrease in research funds directed to computers and artificial intelligence. Thus, by 1980's, the concept of machine learning was mostly relegated to science fiction. In the 1990's the concepts for machine learning were being developed and in 1997 IBM's Deep Blue demonstrated the possibilities of machine learning by defeating the world chess champion (Marr, 2016).

Afterwards, machine learning started to gain popularity and get more advanced due to the increased data storage capacity and computer

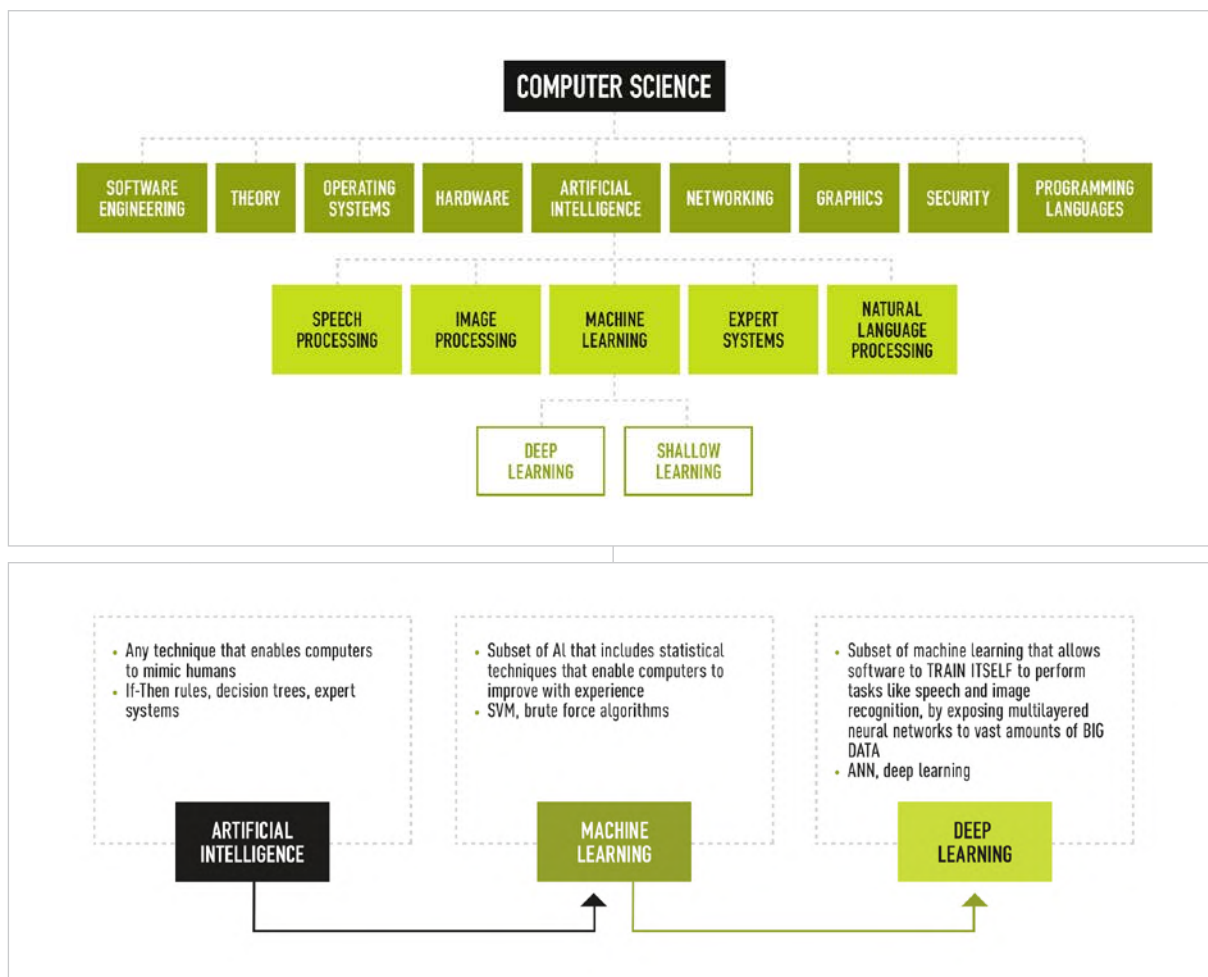


FIGURE 1. 44TH WORLD CONTINUOUS AUDITING AND REPORTING SYMPOSIUM (APPELBAUM ET AL., 2019)

processing power. Furthermore, from 1990’s to 2000’s, the availability of high-quality data and the development of parallel Graphic Processing Units (GPU) resulted in greater popularity of machine learning. Specifically, since machine learning requires large data sets in order to train the learning algorithms, the large high-quality publicly available data allowed researchers to refine the machine learning algorithms. Furthermore, although the parallel processing units were initially used to meet the requirements of graphic intensive games that were in high demand, the developments in parallel processing were beneficial for enhancing the processing power that is required for machine learning. Accordingly, given the technical development witnessed in recent years, research and development in machine learning increased greatly during the last 15 years. Microsoft, Google, Apple, and Amazon as well as foreign technology companies are investing billions of dollars in advancing machine learning and developing products to help businesses lower costs and improve product development.

3. Working Mechanism of Artificial Intelligence

When computers were first developed, computer programs were created to give those computers instructions to follow in solving a problem. For example, if programmers wanted a computer to add up numbers and give them the average, the programmer would write a program instructing the computer to ask for the numbers to be added, divide the added numbers by the count of the numbers and then display the result on the screen. This referred to as Top-Down Programming and was the most widely method of programming until the 1990’s when Object Oriented Programming (OOP) was created. Object Oriented Programming changed the paradigm of programming from isolated computer instructions to treating the programs and the data that it manipulates into a defined object. This paradigm shift resulted in rapid development of graphically based programs that were much easier to maintain because the programs were based on a set of self-contained objects that interacted with each other. OOP worked very well for typical programs such as word processing, spreadsheets and games.

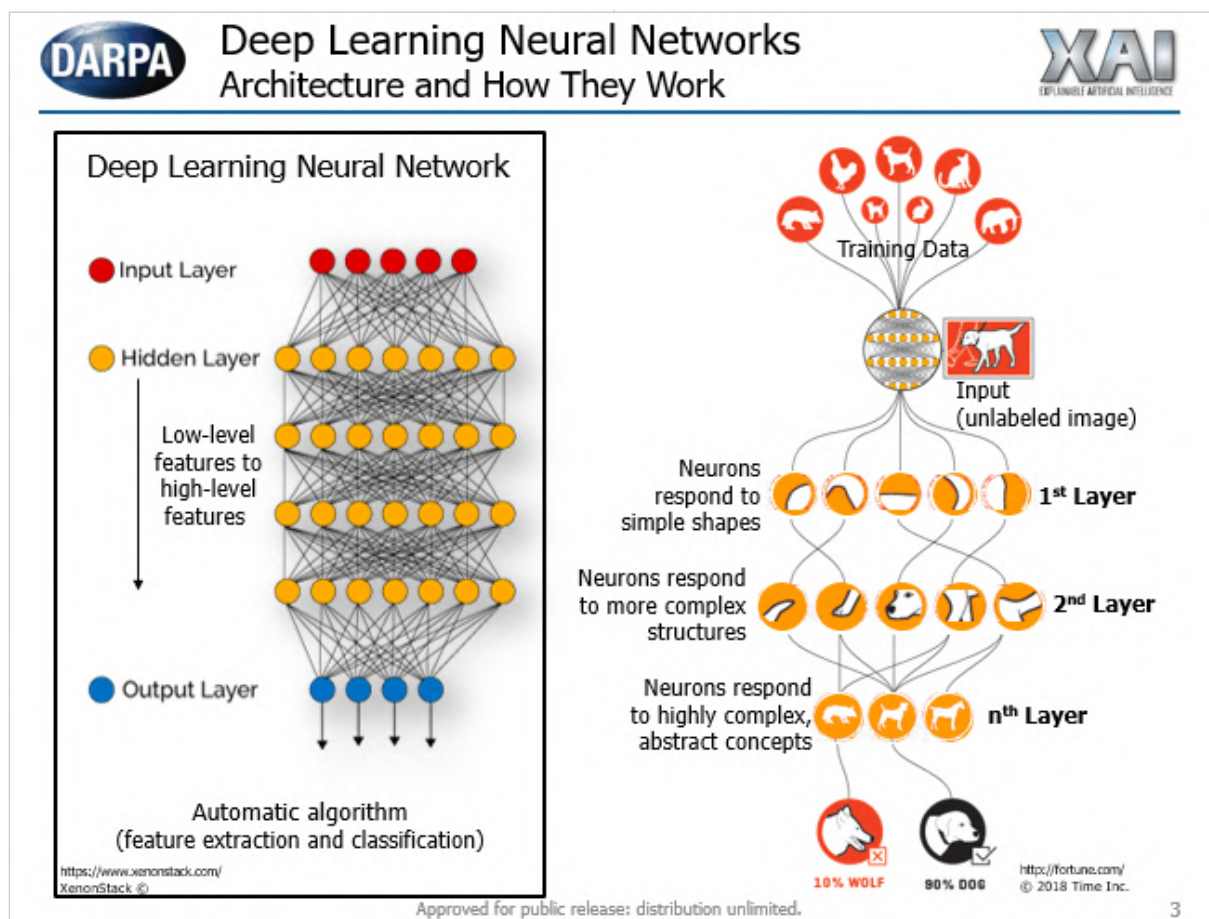


FIGURE 2. DEEP LEARNING NEURAL NETWORK

However, both top-down and object-oriented programming did not work very well for tasks that required artificial intelligence because traditional programming required the programmer to give the computer specific instructions as to what to do for both the expected (user clicked the left mouse button) and unexpected (user clicked right mouse button when left was expected) events. Thus, traditional programming worked very well for computational based problems but was very limited in solving complex problems. This, in turn, resulted in developing what is called expert systems that can work well for solving complicated problems and thus it leads to early success in the field of artificial intelligence. An expert system is "a computer program that uses artificial-intelligence methods to solve problems within a specialized domain that ordinarily requires human expertise" (Zwass, n.d.). Expert systems emulate a human expert's decision-making by using an inference engine to access a knowledge base and usually has a user interface and a knowledge acquisition system to update the knowledge base (Sharma, n.d.).

However, expert systems have three major drawbacks which are: (i) It requires a great deal of time and effort by experts to develop the

knowledge base and the inference engine, (ii) It is limited to solving problems in a very narrow scope, and (iii) It is unable to learn from the data provided. In contrast, in machine learning, it is expected that the algorithm learns from the data provided, thereby it eliminates the limitations inherent in expert systems. Machine learning can either use shallow learning or deep learning. Shallow learning uses one layer to process data while deep learning uses two or more layers. Almost all modern machine learning algorithms use deep learning because it is better suited for solving complex problems. Machine learning attempts to analyze data in a manner similar to how humans learn. For example, if we wanted a young child to learn to identify a cat, we would point at a cat and say to the child "cat". The child would see that a cat is an animal that walks on four legs, has a tail, and is furry. If a child saw a squirrel and pointed at it and said "cat", we would correct the child and say "squirrel". The child would notice that even though the squirrel walked on four legs, had a tail, and was furry, its shape was different from a cat and it walked and made sounds in a manner that is different from a cat.

In machine learning the goal is to write an algorithm that could be trained using test data

to look for specific patterns. For example, to have a machine learning algorithm that can analyze animals' pictures and identify those that contain cats, general characteristics of cats should be identified first (four-legged, furry animal with a tail) and provide the computer with a sample that contains pictures of animals. Initially, the algorithm starts with identifying animals that don't have the common characteristics previously highlighted such as snakes (no fur neither legs), birds (no fur neither four-legged) and fish (no fur neither legs). However, there must be algorithm that help the computer program learn that there are other characteristics (such as sounds it makes, claws, and shape of its head and body) to differentiate it from other four legged furry animals with tails as shown in Figure 2.

There are many different methodologies used for machine learning, one methodology used to identify something using characteristics is called the K-nearest neighbor (K-NN) algorithm. This algorithm is one of the simplest classification algorithms used in machine learning. The fundamental concept is that the programmer determines the initial value for K, which will be the number of characteristics that the machine learning programming will use (Bronstein, 2017). This means that, if the programmer used four-legged, furry, tail, and claws as the main characteristics of cats, then this means that the program is going to look at four characteristics to determine if a specific picture contains a cat or not. Increasing the number of characteristics used will allow the program to eliminate animals that are not cats. However, higher number of characteristics could also mean that a cat may get misidentified as not being a cat. For example, if the programmer limits the weight to be under 30 pounds, then house cats would be properly identified, but the big cats would not be identified as cats. Consequently, in machine learning, it is critical to use the optimal algorithm and then train the algorithm using a large set of test data to ensure that the machine learning program is trained properly before using it to solve a problem or identify something based on characteristics.

4. Expected Innovations in Artificial Intelligence

Although machine learning is currently gaining more popularity compared to the previous decade, it is expected that its effect on everyday life and business operations is going to increase dramatically in the near future. Entefy, an artificial intelligence software company, identifies a number

of industries that are expected to be affected by machine learning including automotive, manufacturing, consumer goods, and hospitality. In the automotive industry, machine learning can be used to improve human driving skills to improve safety while autonomous vehicles would eliminate accidents caused by carelessness or distractions. Machine learning can be used by manufacturing companies to increase productivity by improving workflow and reducing unnecessary expenses. In consumer goods machine learning can be used to analyze past purchase patterns of customers to determine the development of new products, promotion strategies, and pricing to reduce expenses associated with unsold products. Machine learning has allowed the hospitality industry to use the purchasing behavior of travelers to tailor the booking process (Entefy, 2018). Entrepreneur Magazine identified a number of innovations resulting from machine learning that included healthcare and embedded retail-management systems. Dr. Corbett in that article highlights that "Google has developed a machine learning algorithm to help identify cancerous tumors on mammograms. Stanford is using deep learning algorithm to identify skin cancer" (Agrawal, 2018). Embedded retail management systems allow companies to move inventory to maximize sales and to avoid situations where some stores have excess inventory while others are experiencing lost sales by not having enough inventory.

Given the widespread use of machine learning in vast amount of industries, it is expected that machine learning will also have a dramatic effect on the accounting profession in the near future. Nowadays, public accounting firms aim to provide their customers with the expertise needed to deploy machine learning algorithms in businesses to speed up and improve business decisions while lowering costs. Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) in 2018 announced

INDUSTRIES AFFECTED BY MACHINE LEARNING

- Agriculture
- Automotive
- Consumer Goods and Services
- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Hospitality and Travel
- Insurance
- Manufacturing
- Media and Entertainment

FIGURE 3. INDUSTRIES AFFECTED BY MACHINE LEARNING

a joint-venture with a contract analytics software company called eBravia, to use machine learning algorithms for contract analysis (Artificial Lawyer, 2018). Those algorithms are used to review a number of documents related to revenue recognition standards and lease accounting. Deloitte and MapR are collaborating to help retailers enhance customer experience by using machine learning to target product and services based on past buying patterns ("MapR and Deloitte Announce Strategic Alliance to Modernize Analytics and Speed AI Success," 2018). While the major public accounting firms may have the financial resources to invest in custom machine learning applications, regional public accounting firms have the agility to use pre-built machine learning tools to develop expertise through implementations in mid-size companies. Current machine tools that are available from the top technology companies for developing machine learning applications include Google Cloud Machine Learning, Amazon AWS SageMaker, Microsoft Azure Machine Learning, IBM Watson Machine Learning, Oracle Adaptive Intelligence Apps, and Salesforce Einstein. There are smaller companies that are also developing tools for developing machine learning applications including Paperspace (Brooklyn company with cloud-based neural network), Snark (Baidu-backed cloud-based machine learning tools), and NimbleBox (Ray, 2019). Smaller public accounting firms can also benefit from the power of machine learning for small companies once pre-packaged applications are available. *"Soon, we'll see prepacked applications that incorporate the distributed processing, machine learning, and analytics of today's overhyped custom-made solutions"* (Oliver, 2015). Current investments in machine learning will in the near future result in commoditization of machine learning applications that will eventually become available to small and mid-size-companies. *"Big companies have to find an AI solution profitable so they will invest in it, and in turn, vendors can continue to develop that solution to the point that it becomes a something that anyone can use. That is how machine learning will become accessible to small businesses"* (Faggella, 2019). Small and Mid-size accounting firms have a potential to capitalize on the eventual availability of machine learning applications usable by small and mid-size businesses. However, the key is data as machine learning algorithms require large amounts of data in order to properly train them. Small businesses (and many mid-size businesses) either do not have that volume of data or it is not in

a format that can be used easily (Faggella, 2019). Small and mid-sized public accounting firms can train the machine learning applications using data from a number of clients in the sector to develop a solution that an individual small business would be unable to develop on their own. In order to be able to capitalize on this opportunity, the requisite skills would need to be developed either by training the current staff or by hiring new staff that have exposure to machine learning and data analytics.

5. Artificial Intelligence and Accounting

Given the technological breakthroughs that the whole world is currently witnessing, it is expected that many of the routine accounting processes will be handled by machine learning algorithms. Accounting processes such as expense reports, accounts payable, and risk assessment, to name just a few, can be easily automated using machine learning. Furthermore, accounting tasks that require processing documents started to disappear with the availability of document scanners, optical character recognition, and software to match source documents. For example, machine learning algorithms can automate the accounts payable process matching an invoice to a purchase order and determine the expense account to charge, reducing the time to process a payment. An employee can release the payments after reviewing the document. This type of automation is referred to as Robotic Process Automation (RPA). *"RPA does not replace humans with actual robots. But there are softwares available in the market which let you configure automation workflows to automate your business operations"* (Kappagantula, 2019). Although RPA was initially used in automating repetitive tasks, the introduction of machine learning enables RPA to automate routine tasks that would normally require human decision-making. *"Robotic process automation (RPA) is the use of software with artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning capabilities to handle high-volume, repeatable tasks that previously required humans to perform. These tasks can include queries, calculations and maintenance of records and transactions"* (Gillis, 2024). Since the world is changing fast and this causes vast changes in the business environment, it is currently accepted that the accounting jobs like many other jobs will change in the near future, but the key question is how public accounting will change.

Given the fact that many companies currently deploy or will deploy machine learning in their operations to improve accuracy and perform their operations more efficiently, this, in turn, will affect the advisory services provided of public accounting firms. It is estimated that almost 80% of the time spent in advisory services is directed for processing information about the operations of the company (Jesus, 2018). This information processing could be easily handled by machine learning algorithms which can result in directing most of the time billed to the client to value-adding services that focus on analyzing the information produced by machine learning.

However, this does not mean that machine learning can replace accountants, the impact of machine learning will most likely be less pervasive in certain accounting tasks such as tax preparation services that require specialized advice and technical research in the context of complex corporate and individual planning issues. Nonetheless, the tax planning function can still be affected by machine learning. Global companies face large and increasingly complicated tax compliance requirements and allocating revenue and expenses to various taxing jurisdictions requires significant data processing and analysis. Machine learning can help tax professionals keep up with relevant tax law changes. Creating algorithms to extract relevant planning information from vast amounts of data is ideal for machine learning. It is hard to do effective tax planning without the relevant and important facts, machine learning can make the fact gathering and analysis function much more efficient and effective. Finally, taxing authorities are exploring the use of machine learning to increase transparency and audit efficiency. Almost every governmental jurisdiction around the globe raises revenue through taxes. Taxes imposed include income taxes, value-added or VAT taxes, property taxes, payroll taxes and sales taxes just to name a few. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has already developed machine learning algorithms to identify activities associated with tax evasion and fraud. Michael Sullivan of Fresh Start Tax and a former IRS agent indicates that *“The public should be aware that the IRS has begun using a new audit method, the” Machine Learning Tax Audit*”.

However, it is expected to have high error rates when machine algorithms are being trained and this also affected tax planning functions when machine learning was first introduced to it. *“As it turns out, the data from the Machine Learned*

Audit was incorrect and these taxpayers should not have been selected for audits” (PRWeb, 2012). The accuracy of machine learning is dependent on two things; large amounts of data and computing power to process the data. The IRS now has both to capitalize on machine learning. The IRS says that it expects that 80 percent of its tax returns will be filed electronically this year. That makes a total of 250 million returns filed, with \$2 trillion in revenue. *“But processing those returns uses only a fraction of the agency’s computing power. An entire year of tax returns amounts to 15 terabytes, or just 1.5 percent of the IRS storage of 1.2 petabytes (one quadrillion bits of information), based on public data from IRS presentations”* (Satran, 2013). The IRS recently signed a seven-year, \$99 million contract with Palantir Technologies to develop machine learning algorithms. *“The project uses machine learning algorithms and artificial intelligence to examine and analyze files tax returns, bank reports, property records and social media posts. It analyzes various patterns of conduct and activities that might indicate noncompliance”* (Stahl, 2018). As tax laws continue to get more complicated and the IRS’s processes for identifying a taxpayer for an audit become more sophisticated, machine learning may allow tax accountants to better predict deductions that will be disputed by the IRS and identify the regulations that allow for those deductions.

Another area that is expected to change dramatically in the near future due to the introduction of machine learning is auditing. Specifically, it is expected that the automation of analyzing the clients’ financial statements and the related source documents can lead to having smaller audit staffs. However, auditing standards require an auditor to understand the systems and processes related to the preparation of the financial statements. This means that auditors are required to have technical expertise to understand the machine learning algorithms used in a company’s financial systems which is not one of the requirements that auditors should have nowadays but it is one of the dramatic changes that is expected to be introduced to the field (Shimamoto, 2018). One of the biggest challenges for auditors in machine learning era is the “black box” problem. *“However, there is a downfall to the use of machine learning: the ‘black box effect’. In traditional programming that uses a recipe approach, if a decision-maker or assurance professional wanted to know why a decision was made, software engineers or analysts could*

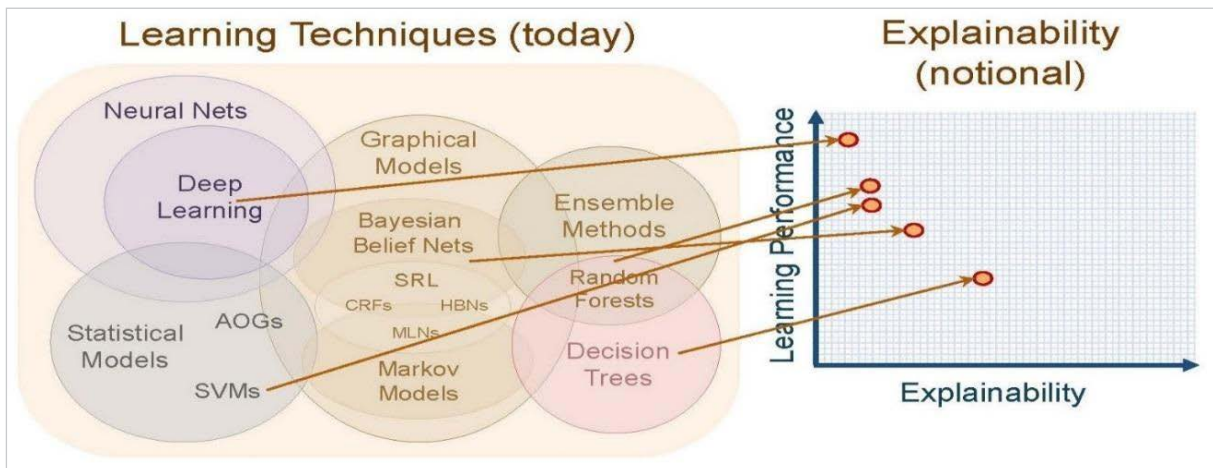


FIGURE 4. LEARNING TECHNIQUES AND EXPLAINABILITY¹

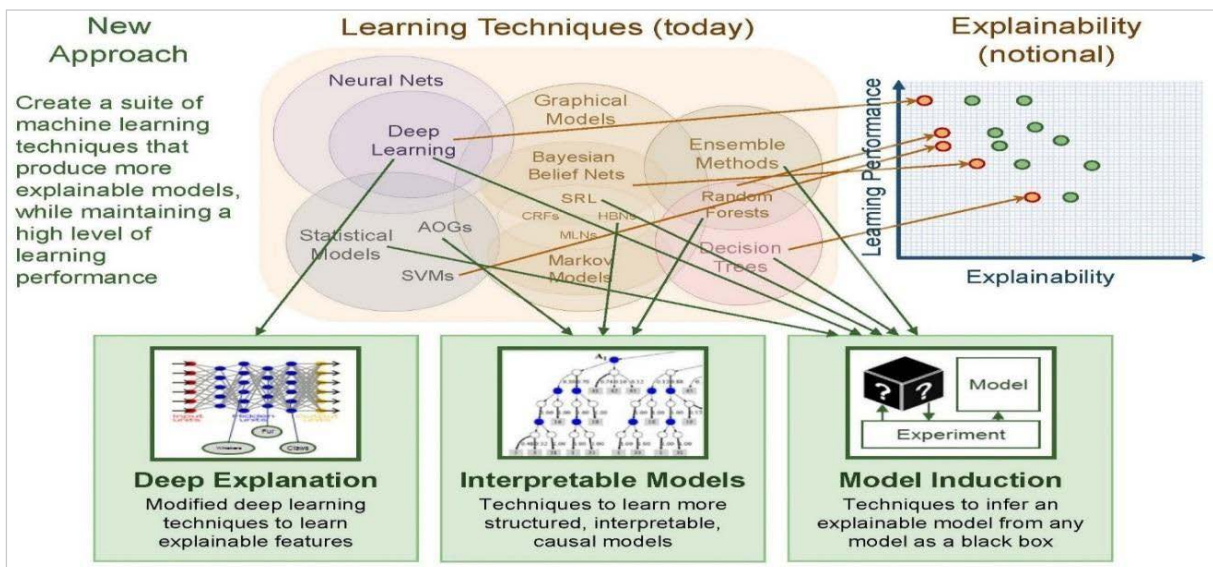


FIGURE 5. NEW APPROACH: LEARNING TECHNIQUE SS. APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE: DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED [HTTPS://WWW.DARPA.MIL/ATTACHMENTS/XAIPROGRAMUPDATE.PDF](https://www.darpa.mil/attachments/XAIProgramUpdate.pdf)

peek inside the program and see that threshold X was reached, which triggered the effect. But, with many machine learning algorithms, it is extremely difficult to look inside an algorithm to ascertain why a certain result was returned” (Clark, 2017). Part of the problem is that the current development of machine learning focuses mainly on performance and ignores the fact that these algorithms may be difficult to explain and understand. Deep learning algorithms can contain hundreds of layers evaluating large number of parameters that would be difficult to understand as shown in Figure 4. “That process, known as deep learning, allows neural networks to create AI models that are too complicated or tedious to code

by hand. These models can be mind-bogglingly complex, with the largest nearing one trillion parameters” (Bleicher, 2017).

55 companies reported AI as a risk in their 2018 annual reports due to the “black box” problem (Appelbaum et al., 2019). To deal with such a problem, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) has identified machine learning and artificial intelligence as areas of focus for audit inspections. Furthermore, they also monitor the development and use of audit tools that involve machine learning for audit engagements. “Throughout 2019, we will ... consider whether firms are effectively using these tools and applying due care, including professional

¹ Approved for public release: distribution unlimited <https://www.darpa.mil/attachments/XAIProgramUpdate.pdf>

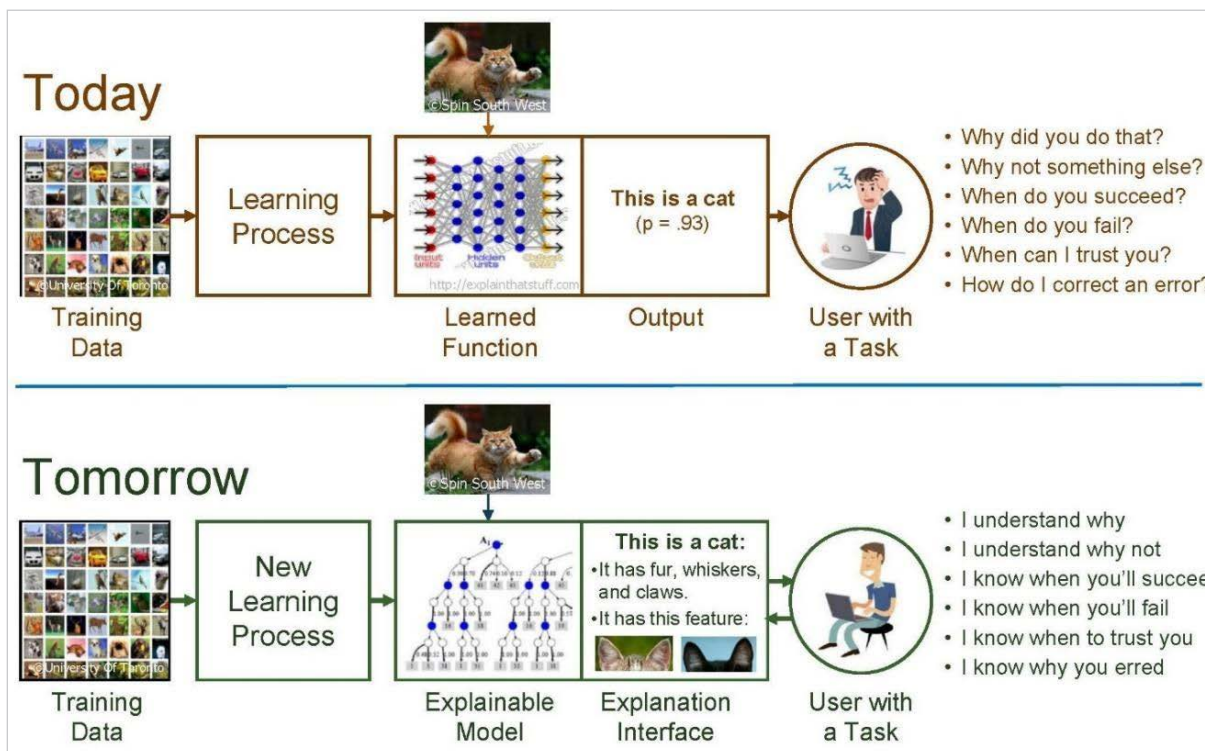


FIGURE 6. LEARNING PROCESS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE (APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE: DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED [HTTPS://WWW.DARPA.MIL/ATTACHMENTS/XAIPROGRAMUPDATE.PDF](https://www.darpa.mil/attachments/XAIPROGRAMUPDATE.PDF))

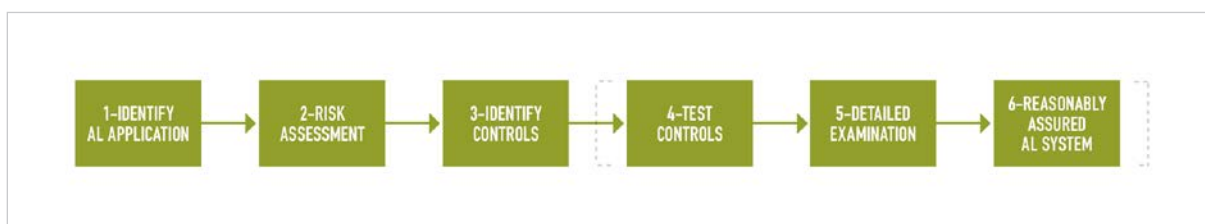


FIGURE 7. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STEPS DURING AN AUDIT (APPELBAUM ET AL., 2019)

skepticism, when they do” (Heller, 2018). Thus, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has identified a new approach to developing machine learning algorithms that would result in more explainable systems as shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6.

Developing machine learning algorithms that are designed to ensure that decisions are explainable is years away, but there is already research in progress to eliminate or reduce the “black box” problem. “A full-fledged fix is still years away but a number of promising plans are emerging. Some researchers test AI systems like scientists test lab rats, tinkering with the inputs to see how they affect behavior in hopes of illuminating the decision-making process. Others attempt to probe the networks’ behavior with additional nets or invent new programming languages to better control how these systems learn. The approaches may vary but their goal is the same: to ensure that our machines do not

evolve too far beyond our ability to understand them” (Bleicher, 2017). At the 44th World Continuous Auditing and Reporting Symposium, Sevilla Spain — March 21 & 22, 2019, six steps were identified in evaluating, testing, and assessing artificial intelligence applications during an audit as shown in Figure 7.

Additionally, the institute of Internal Auditors highlight three lines of defense that can be applied to ensure that artificial intelligence applications are consistent with company policies and procedures as well as governmental laws and regulations as shown in Figure 8. The first line of defense is internal controls, the second line includes compliance, security, risk management, and inspections, and the third line of defense is internal audit. Internal audits processes for machine learning algorithms are important for external auditors because it will not only allow for a more reliable risk assessment but it can also reduce the amount of time and effort exerted to

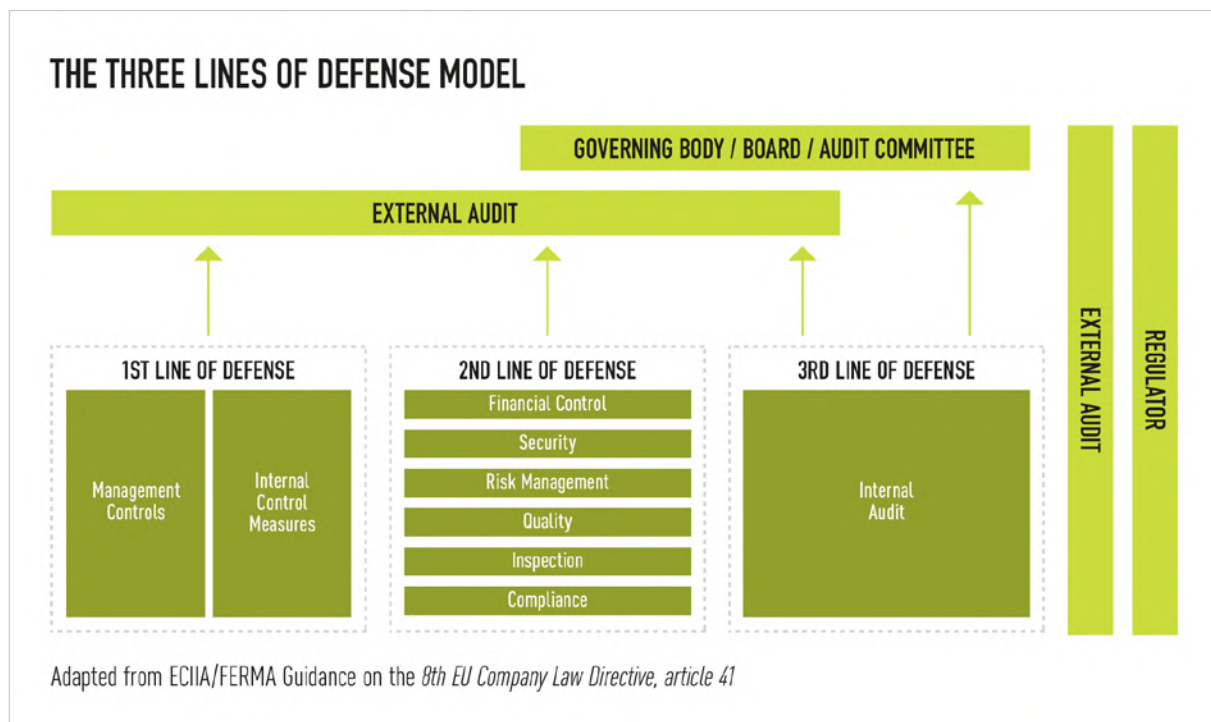


FIGURE 8. THE THREE LINES OF DEFENSE MODEL “GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS: THE IIA’S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AUDITING FRAMEWORK”, THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNAL AUDITORS, 2019

MACHINE LEARNING IMPACT ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTING		
Auditing	Tax Compliance	Advisory Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Audit Staff • Machine Learning Expertise • Internal Control Emphasis • Improved Fraud Detection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced time reviewing material • Machine Learning Expertise • New Tax Planning Opportunities • Improved Value-Added Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce time processing information • Machine Learning Expertise • Improve accuracy and reduce costs • Emphasis on Value-Added Service

FIGURE 9. THE IMPACT OF MACHINE LEARNING ON ACCOUNTING

understand the machine learning algorithms used by a business.

Auditors will not only need to understand the technologies but also the interaction with internal controls to avoid material misstatements. Potential fraud in a company’s financial statements could also become easier to identify by using a machine learning algorithm to identify transactions that have characteristics associated with fraudulent activities.

Machine learning is expected to have a significant impact on businesses as they deploy the technology to improve processes and reduce costs. accounting will need to evolve not only to understand the technology used by companies to better direct its efforts in auditing the financial statements but also to be better positioned to provide the best tax and advisory services at a cost that creates value for their clients. ac-

counting firms have started to invest in machine and data analytics in order to provide their customers with new technologies that improve processes and lower expenses. These investments will expand the range of services provided by public accounting firms creating opportunities for accounting professionals.

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THE INCOMPUTABILITY OF CALCULATION:

WITTGENSTEIN, TURING AND THE QUESTION
OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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GIORGI VACHNADZE

UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-5503-059X>
- Email: giorgi.vachnadze@europeanschool.ge

Giorgi Vachnadze is a Foucault and Wittgenstein scholar. He completed his Bachelor studies at New Mexico State University and received a Master's qualification in philosophy at the University of Louvain. Former editor and peer-reviewer for the Graduate Student Journal of philosophy "The Apricot", he has been published in multiple popular and academic journals world-wide. Vachnadze's research focuses on philosophy of language and discourse analysis. Some of the questions and themes addressed in his work include: History of Combat Sports, Ancient Stoicism, Genealogies of Truth, Histories of Formal Systems, Genealogy of Science, Ethics in AI and Psychoanalysis, Media Archaeology, Game Studies and more.



ABSTRACT

Calculation is one of the foundational concepts operating at the basis of the notion of an algorithm. Seemingly intuitive, it remains nonetheless no small task to provide a rigid theoretical framework for articulating an ontology of computation. The central and primary point of oscillation around which the following paper will revolve, is concerned therefore not only with the complicated questions that make up the foundations of logic and mathematics, but the social and political implications that follow directly therefrom. Whether a machine can think is directly tied to the question of whether calculation is a form of thinking. That is, whether human thinking is a form of calculation. Subversively, Wittgenstein claims not only that human thought is irreducible to computation, but that human calculation itself is a form of thinking that is entirely different from anything that could be labeled "mechanical". Wittgenstein's critique of the Turing Thesis paves the way for a new variety of Foucauldian Biopolitics aimed specifically at the discourse surrounding Artificial Intelligence. A discourse that bears a suspicious resemblance to Christian pastoralism.

Keywords

Ludwig Wittgenstein, Michel Foucault, biopolitics, artificial intelligence, machine learning,

christianity, Alan Turing, calculation, computation, philosophy

INTRODUCTION

One of many fascinating questions that occupied Wittgenstein in his reflections on the foundations of mathematics is the question of whether a machine could think. More importantly, what does it mean at all to say that a machine — or a human being for that matter — thinks? The Wittgenstein-Turing debate presents a very important moment in history, which has left its own mark and exerted its own considerable influence on some of the important questions in contemporary research on AI. The following paper seeks to initiate an open-ended discussion into several epistemological and ontological questions concerning the nature of calculation, human thinking, Artificial Intelligence, the famous Turing Thesis, ethical normativity, rule-following, language-games and more. The central concern of the following reflection is to attempt to offer an alternative view of both the social and mathematical foundations of algorithms as they pertain to the dominant paradigm of machine learning. The discussion will offer a philosophical and historical overview of the major developments in the area, while trying to develop the less popular, Wittgensteinian interpretation of AI philosophy. In order to properly

unearth the alternative Wittgensteinian picture, we will draw on Michel Foucault's critical archaeological method of biopolitical critique. The paper will be brought to a finish with an experimental tangent activating a Deleuzian line of flight with the aim to draw a novel parallel between the Wittgensteinian account of calculation and Deleuzian *abstract machines*. Suggesting additional pathways of research and conceptual development.

METHODS

The current methodology relies on textual analysis and hermeneutic interpretations of primary and secondary sources. A Foucauldian and Wittgensteinian approach with elements of historical and genealogical studies was combined with a close reading of Wittgenstein's work on the nature of calculation, the foundations of mathematics and various reflections on language, logic and *forms of life* (*Lebensform*). The Foucauldian and Wittgensteinian perspectives were used to interrogate the main text used for the current study: Stuart Shanker's (2002) *Wittgenstein's Remarks on the Foundations of AI*. Foucauldian discourse analysis

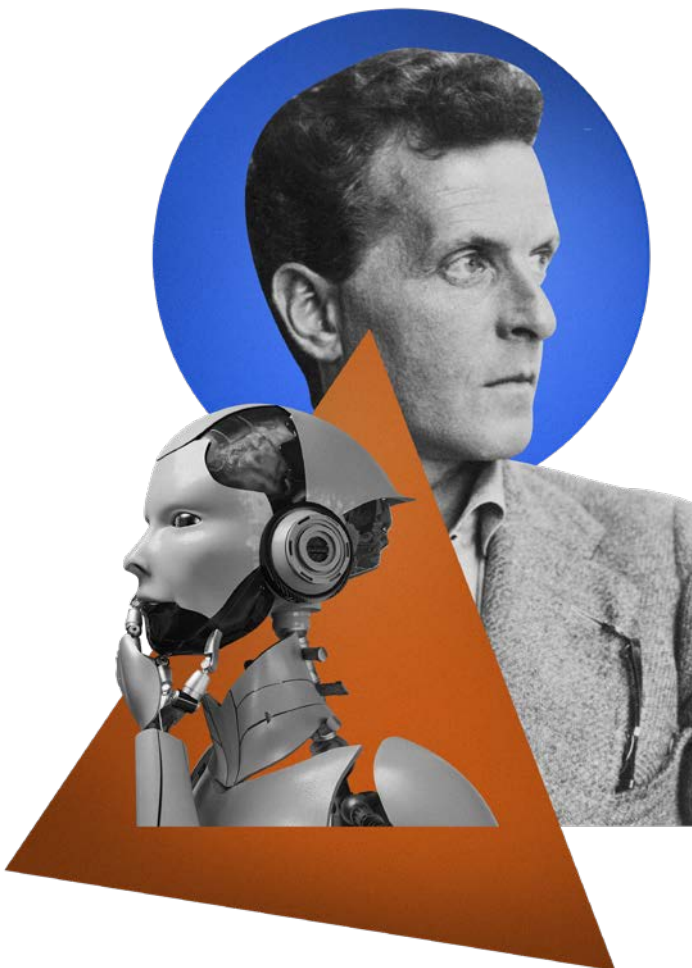
was used to examine the history of AI research in a critical vein. The combined methodology offers a new ontological picture of human agency and mathematical calculation, one that tends to contest the conventional picture in the philosophy of mind offered by Turing.

RESULTS

The results of the study have shown that an alternative epistemology of mathematics can offer a new and insightful way of conceptualizing human agency, understanding various findings in the research on Artificial Intelligence, and the mutual overlap between the two. Highlighting further the political and the biopolitical dangers of ignoring these conclusions and their implications.

DISCUSSION

"Is it possible for a machine to think?" Asks Wittgenstein (Shanker, 2002) in the *Blue Book* (Wittgenstein, 1958) adding the qualification that the laws for the operation of such a machine could be formulated in either the propositions of physics or biology. He emphasizes further, that the nature of the question is fundamentally different from the typical interpretation of the question i.e., 'is it possible for a machine to think yet?' As in, this is not an issue of computational power, the current state and sophistication of scientific discourse or technological progress. The question is rather posed as a self-questioning of the discourse on A.I. in general. In other words, does it *make sense*, at all, to ask whether a machine could think? Are we not getting entangled in a linguistic confusion? Is it possible we are being held captive by a picture (Wittgenstein, 2021; 2010), which instead of asking a real, meaningful question — dazzles our intelligence and results only in the bewitchment of our thoughts? Are we perhaps making a category mistake? The question is therefore a meta-question that serves as a somewhat minimalist, yet all the more effective strategy for subverting the very foundations of Turing's thesis, or at least its unwarranted application to all human creativity. *"And the trouble which is expressed in this question,"* he continues, *"is not really that we don't yet know a machine which could do the job. The question is not analogous to that which someone might have asked a hundred years ago: 'Can a machine liquefy a gas?' The trouble is rather that the sentence, 'A machine thinks*



(*perceives, wishes*)' seems somehow nonsensical. It is as though we had asked 'Has the number 3 a colour?'" Wittgenstein was directly opposed to what Stuart Shanker (2002) refers to as the *Mechanist Thesis*, since, as the above question should have shown, the question concerning the very ontological status of Artificial Intelligence tends to transgress the rules of the *grammar of our language* (Ghosh, 2004).

It is often the case that two great minds tend to talk past each other, this might also hold true for the Turing-Wittgenstein debate as it did with many others. Turing in a way refused to agree, or maybe even acknowledge, that there was a category mistake being made. We *infer* that humans can think — he may have said — just like we *infer* that machines can think. But it seems we do not have an empirical method of verification for the existence or non-existence of thought; the only evidence for thinking is outward behaviour. The question, according to Turing, remains indeed empirical in nature for machines and humans alike. But what sort of empiricism does this entail? Wittgenstein refused to give credence to what Shanker terms Turing's "*bridging argument*" (Shanker, 2002), which aims to integrate questions of mathematical logic with certain problems that belong exclusively to the domain of philosophy; the philosophy of mind. Shanker offers a reading of Turing's famous *On Computable Numbers* (Turing, 1936) and an interpretation of Turing Machines. It is the CN paper, where Turing makes a move that takes him from issues concerning mathematics to problems that form part of philosophical epistemology. And this is precisely where Wittgenstein is waiting for him on high-alert. According to Wittgenstein, by attempting to bridge the gap between philosophy and mathematics, Turing has entangled himself in certain philosophical confusions that do little justice to either the proper philosophical questions concerning the nature of the mind, nor the questions that pertain to the foundations of mathematics. This offers a first glimpse at the sophistication of Wittgenstein's thought on these issues. Wittgenstein contends, in a way, that by transgressing the proper bounds of mathematical logic, Turing has in fact created unnecessary misunderstandings for the *mathematical content* in *On Computable Numbers*, and not just the philosophy.

Turing compares human calculation to machine calculation. According to Turing, the pre-conscious processes that underlie human calculations, the smallest constituents of think-

ing, can be described completely i.e., they are mechanical. Shanker cites the following passage: "We may compare a man in the process of computing a real number to a machine which is only capable of a finite number of conditions q_1, q_2, \dots, q_R , which will be called '*m-configurations*'. The machine is supplied with a '*tape*' ...running through it, and divided into sections...each capable of bearing a '*symbol*'. At any moment there is just one square, say the *r*-th, bearing the symbol $G(r)$ which is '*in the machine*'. We may call this square the '*scanned symbol*'. The '*scanned symbol*' is the only one of which the machine is, so to speak, '*directly aware*'." (Shanker, 2002). Shanker wants to bring our attention to two expressions in the passage; the statements: "*so to speak*" and "*directly aware*" are revealing here, he argues, of certain philosophical (not mathematical) presuppositions that may be unjustified. The attempt of reducing recursive functions to binary systems would offer the possibility of constructing a machine that could execute the given commands. This is what Turing extracts from Church's Thesis i.e., that any recursive function can be transformed into a computable function. In other words: *all algorithms can be translated into binary systems*. This poses two challenges for the advocates of the computational theory of the mind: First, it must be shown that recursive systems are in fact computational systems and second, that human actions are *both* recursive and computational.

Turing wants to extend the computational model to human calculation and herein lies the rhetorical manoeuvre expertly caught by Wittgenstein. By seeking to expand the Mechanist Thesis and failing or refusing to make the distinction between human *thinking* and human *calculation*, Turing (or those who speak on his behalf) unjustifiably reduce(s) all human activity to crunching numbers. It is here that Wittgenstein's objection acquires significant traction: Turing machines, Wittgenstein says, "*are really humans who calculate*." This statement, I want to argue, is a masterful Foucauldian reversal, which targets the most fundamental and abstract questions concerning the philosophical and mathematical foundations of Artificial Intelligence. Instead of affirming together with Turing, that *humans are just machines who calculate*, Wittgenstein dismantles the Mechanist Thesis by arguing that machines are humans who (only) calculate, that is, *without thinking*. Another level of complexity is introduced however, when we look at Wittgenstein's analysis of the nature of calculation in his *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (Wittgenstein, 1983).

Shanker cites the RFM: "*Does a calculating machine calculate?*" — asks Wittgenstein. Calculation is not a technique that belongs exclusively to the domain of mathematics. It is embedded in our everyday lives. Without the multiple applications to a diversity of different contexts (outside of mathematics), the statement ' $25 \times 20 = 500$ ' would be meaningless on its own. Or at least, it would not carry the air of certainty that we normally associate with it. An innocent truism at face value, Wittgenstein employs his observation concerning the social aspect of mathematical calculation to question Turing's central thesis: "*the idea that recursive functions are mechanically calculable*" (Shanker, 2002). It is especially here, that we can notice another fascinating convergence between Foucault and Wittgenstein. According to Wittgenstein, calculation is a *normative social practice*. By dismantling the notion of mathematical calculation, it seems that Wittgenstein has performed no less than a Genealogical uncovering for the *savoir* of Machine Learning; the series of cultural norms and practices that underlie and support the *connaissance* (the surface effect) of algorithms and certain parts if not the entirety of mathematical disciplines. Not to mention the fact, that for the last 60 to 70 years or so, basic linear algebra has been re-branded and marketed as human (artificial) intelligence.

The *normativity of mathematical discourse* is what we could term the central point of oscillation at the heart of both Wittgenstein's *Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics* (Wittgenstein, 1989) and the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (Wittgenstein, 1983). From a Foucauldian point of view, it would not be entirely unjustified to label these works as *Archaeologies of Proofs*. Which in turn would serve as an important if not an essential component for a thorough Genealogy of A.I. systems.

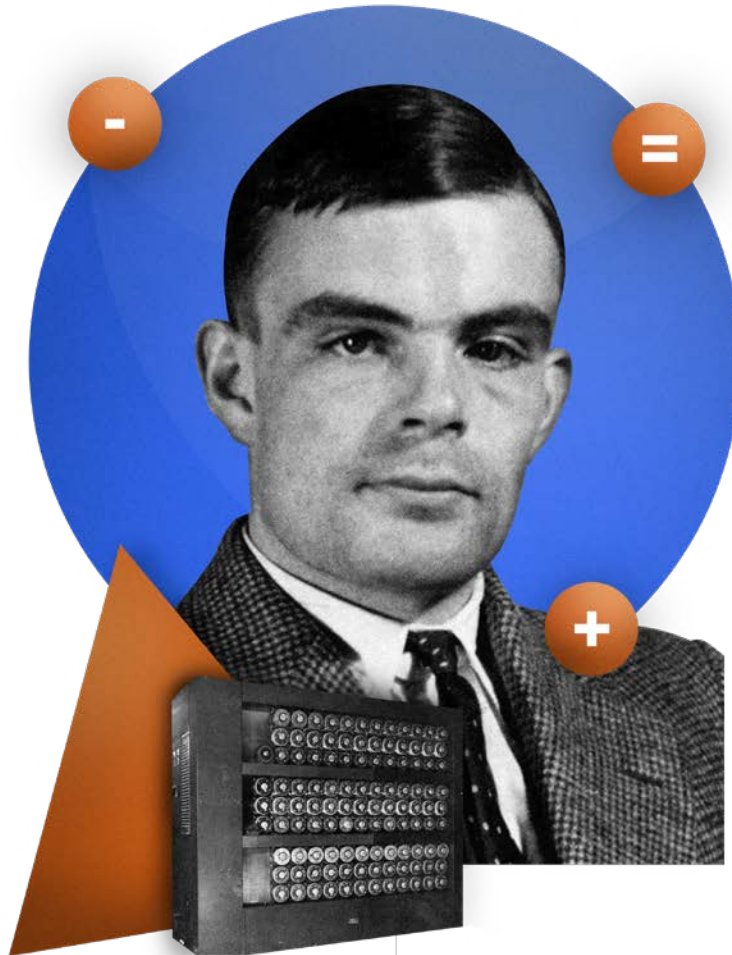
Mathematicians work with definitions. There is a strict grammatical structure to mathematical proof. Proving a theorem implies multiple instances of assenting to, executing and/or following a rule. The rule is derived from the definition, from the *grammar* of the proposition. But how can we know that a rule is understood, as opposed to having been followed without comprehension? How can we tell the difference between intentional and accidental calculation? Would not the difference consist precisely in that which sep-

arates mechanical movement from sentience? "... *the fact that we can map a rule onto S's behaviour does not entail that S is following that rule*" writes Shanker (2002). Something else is needed. But this 'something else' cannot be anything other than observable behaviour. Hence Turing's cunning use of the phrases "*so to speak*" and "*directly aware,*" which are supposed to stand in or somehow denote *mental states*. What evidence could we have that could support (or falsify) the existence of such mythical entities as *mental events*? This carries a flavour of deduction, but it remains as obscure as any myth.

The existence of patterns and regularities is not a sufficient condition for us to infer that an *act* of calculation has been *performed*, let alone the existence of some Cartesian 'mental states' that accompany the production of symbols. There is no way for us to tell whether the pattern emerged out of a willed intention or a mere accident. But the distinction is crucial if we are to speak of intelligent sentience i.e., whether calculating machines *calculate*. "...*rule-following does not reduce to mere regularity... ...the agent must do such things as instruct, explain, correct, or justify his or her actions by appealing to the rule*" (Shanker, 2002). These practices are however embedded in a life-world (Eden, 2004) and they bear the irreducible complexity of a *Lebensform* (Hanfling, 2003). The *savoir of mathematical knowledge*, unlike mathematical knowledge itself, cannot be quantified; it falls outside of the computational model. Turing's Machines cannot be trained in the meaningful sense, even though they can provide the correct answer to a calculation problem, they are unable to provide justifications for their actions nor introduce true novelty into a system. It takes another human being to *describe the causal nexus*¹ of mechanical interactions that produces the needed results. Furthermore, unlike a child, the machine cannot later take up the job of explaining herself either. Whether the action is explained or justified, it takes a human being to account for the calculation once it has been performed (either correctly or incorrectly).

Wittgenstein's aim was to keep mathematical logic within its proper bounds without letting it overstep and enter the domain of philosophy. This is far from a merely academic concern; the problem is entangled with serious ethical and political issues. Many other prominent figures in the

1 Justification and causal explanation are two entirely different modes of disclosure.

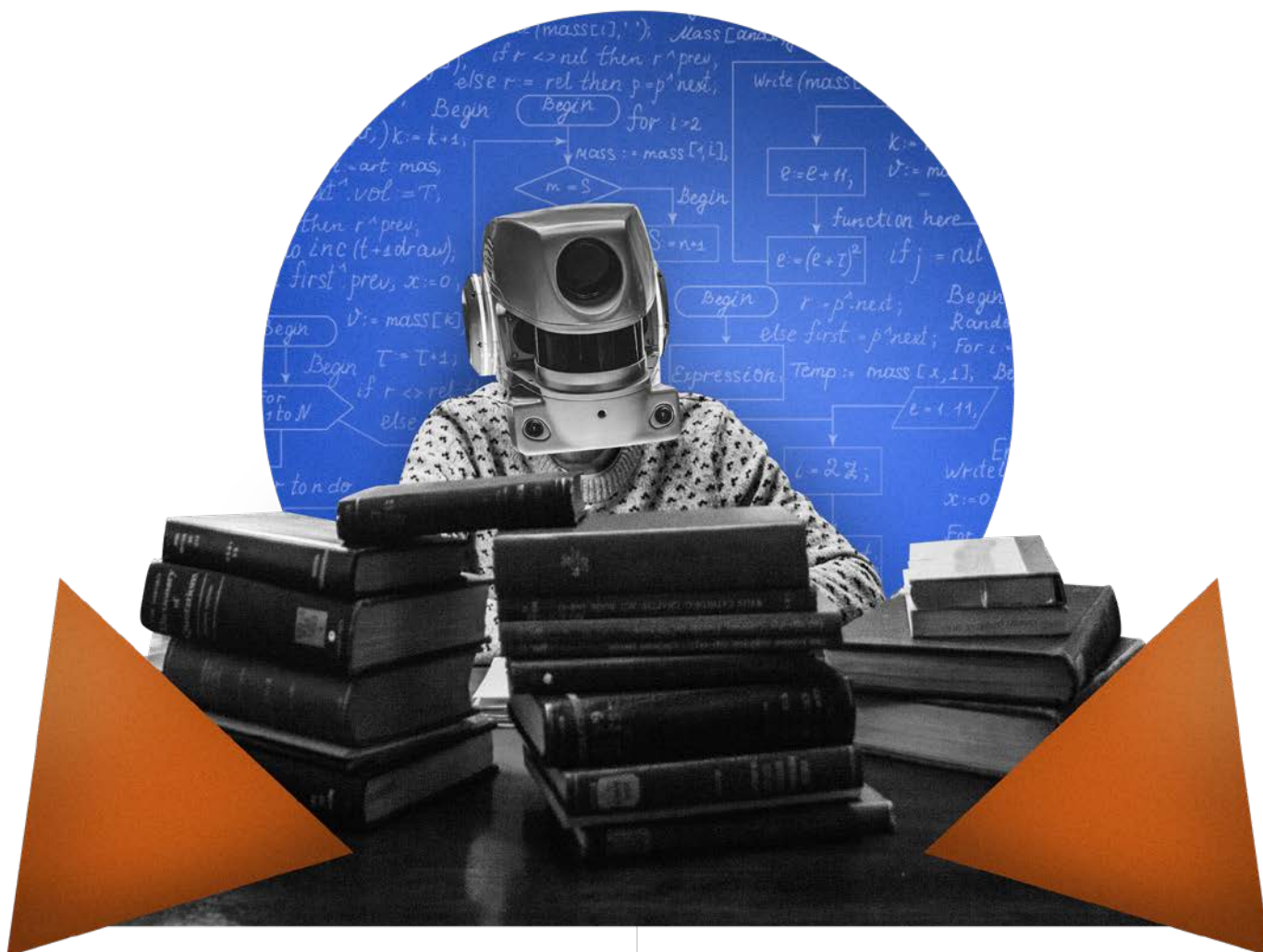


history of mathematics have underlined the fact that the Church-Turing thesis is at least in part an epistemological problem. Wittgenstein's insight here is that Alonzo Church has provided a brilliant and elegant *definition* for recursive computability, however it remains, as all definitions, tautological and syntactical. There is no empirical evidence either in favour or against the formulation, it is a rule, which in the inductive-mathematical sense remains unfalsifiable (Popper, 2002), we cannot imagine a state of affairs that would disprove it. Turing's contribution to Church's Thesis is that effectively computable systems are *Turing Machine Computable* i.e., "a machine could do it," a real physical machine. However, that in no way entails that machines have any human-like cognitive capacities. And in this sense, the CT thesis cannot be used as an argument in favour of A. I. Turing's contention is in a way, paradoxically, the direct opposite; if something is 'machine calculable' this implies precisely the fact that it does *not* require any human intelligence to perform the operation. Does this mean that machines are indeed stupid? Is calculation a *mindless* activity? Not quite.

Though Turing did argue that the elementary instructions, the atomic operations are mechanical and 'dumb', the complexity, which emerges

out of the initial inputs begins to form certain blind spots, which today we refer to as black boxes, these in turn introduce an element of uncertainty between the command and the desired output. What happens in-between is allegedly similar to cognitive creativity, which *can* be rendered somewhat analogous to human intelligence. Shanker (2002) notes the transition between 1936, when Turing's interest in machine intelligence was confined exclusively to the domain of mathematics, and 1946, when Turing became interested in a vast set of "*non-numerical problems*" that inevitably brought his research into contact with the military-industrial complex. It wasn't until 1950 that the fully-formed mechanist thesis was introduced in *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*. Turing's project had thereby traversed an immense trajectory from mathematical formulations of recursion theory, to computer science and the final epistemological leap to Artificial Intelligence.

Gödel's critique of the mechanist thesis runs parallel to Wittgenstein's objection. According to Gödel, Turing has offered a brilliant reformulation of formal systems as computable structures. Any formal system is Turing-Computable. However, this would only imply that the *Incompleteness Theorem*, the idea that any formal system contains at



least one proposition, which is unprovable within the system, would now apply to both formal systems as well as recursive-computational systems i.e., software programs. Once again, we can notice something along the lines of an 'Archaeology of Proofs', where the surface effect of effective procedure (its sharp conceptual formulation) tends to hide and disguise its underlying *savoir*, the flawed and contingent quasi-structures of human practice, culture and life, not to mention the institutional and political-economic matrix of power-relations that sustains the algorithmic *connaissance*. The fundamental question for machine intelligence is therefore, *not* whether the machine can calculate well or whether it can solve well-articulated problems better than a human, but whether it can participate in non-formalizable, embodied and spontaneous human practices that constitute the *savoir* of our life. Furthermore, Wittgenstein's ideas concerning human calculation create new problems that pertain to the question of where one would place calculation itself, with respect to the *savoir/connaissance* division? As it turns out, even calculation has its own inherent vagueness when we think about it as being embedded in a way of

life. If calculation is a normative practice, can we even think of machines as capable of calculation, let alone the ability to reproduce other varieties of human creativity?

The supporters of the mechanist thesis respond by saying that the Incompleteness Theorem can be interpreted not as a limitation, but as a paradox which could serve to strengthen the computational theory. Gödel has shown that thinking is at least (or at best) a *quasi*-computational process. The fact that thinking is algorithmically open only removes the need for perfect algorithms. But we are still then faced with the Wittgensteinian problem of whether we can tell if an outcome (either desired or undesired) is a result of intentional action or a mere accident. Non-sentience can take many forms, it can be both productive and unproductive, predictable or random, correct or incorrect — in either case we have the popular account, which posits intelligence for whatever the outcome. How are we to know that we are not investing algorithms with an agency they do not really possess in either case? Is it all just a matter of faith in the end? If we just keep shoving "intelligence" wherever we encounter either a black box or a transparent

algorithmic computation, how are we to say that the current discourse on A.I. is any different than the religious rhetoric that speaks of God as either the mysterious unfathomable (i.e. a Black Box) or intelligent design (i.e. the rational clock-work Universe)?

The Incompleteness Theorem, perhaps far from a limitation, could have opened-up the possibility for higher-order problem solving capabilities for artificial systems. Such higher-order skills are termed “*heuristic problem-solving*” (Shanker, 2002); they entail the capacity for algorithms to train themselves. A.I. experts define ‘learning’ as any kind of modification in the system that results in a lasting change in the system’s ability to adapt to its surroundings.

According to Wittgenstein, any question of learning must fundamentally concern itself with the notion of *following a rule*. Analogously, Turing had introduced the concept of *mechanical rule-following* for machines. Algorithmic thinking is the dominant paradigm in our age, we are located, so to speak, within an *algorithmic epistemic formation*. Recursive systems are not just programs or useful instruments for crunching numbers, they are considered to be a very convenient way to make sense of things, a way to think about the world in general. An algorithm can be conceived as a collection of rules or commands needed to arrive from a given set of initial conditions to some desired result. Algorithms are essentially functions, and just like functions they can exhibit various degrees of opacity, but only due to the inherent limitations in human ability to follow and remember every single step of the mapping operation. Fundamentally, algorithms are simple i.e., mechanically computable, but at higher levels of complexity, just like complex life-forms, they begin to acquire emergent properties that are irreducible to the simple set of instructions that served as their starting point. There is an exponential increase in the “size” of the Black Box. The transition from simple to complex algorithms is marked by the ability of the program to rewrite its own “initial” set of commands, to reformulate the rules governing its own behaviour (Romanycia, & Pelletier, 1985). In a Foucauldian sense, the program would be able to subject itself to its own technology, to *apply itself to itself* the way we do; to become and ‘unbecome’ a subject; to *subjectify* (Heller, 1996), *desubjectify* (Mcloughlin, 2021) and *re-subjectify* its own self. Does this imply that the semi-open Turing-Machine can “reach beneath itself,” the way humans do? Can it read a book by Sartre and suddenly decide to take on new pro-

jects? Could it experience an existential crisis and overheat? Would it be able to partake in our way of life? Could it *dwell* in the cultural *savoir* of human relationships?

Shanker (2002) notes that the self-modifying, higher functioning A.I. is in fact *post-computational*. But there is a sense in which for Wittgenstein, even basic algorithms may exhibit a level of complexity that exceeds ‘mechanical rule-following’. Wittgenstein had a bone to pick with the idea that one could ‘thoughtlessly’ follow a series of ‘meaningless sub-rules’ like a machine scanning symbols on a piece of tape, or at least that such behaviour would constitute a cognitive phenomenon. “*There is an important distinction*” Shanker writes, “*between describing a subject as following the sub-rules of an algorithm, and describing a subject as grasping the algorithm itself*” (2002). We can follow a rule without understanding the rule itself. The mastery of a rule implies more than the ability to apply the rule. It involves one’s ability to give reasons for the application, as well as the ability to re-adjust oneself vis-à-vis the rule. Learning how to act under a series of circumstances (no matter how many), does not yet imply that one has mastered the game as a whole. Similarly, learning how to execute a single (or several) atomic rule(s) does not mean, that the machine has ‘learned an algorithm’. Moreover: “*The simplicity versus complexity of a rule has no bearing on the normativity of rule-following*” (Shanker, 2002), because the sub-rules can each be considered as a rule in itself and therefore, understanding an atomic rule implies the same *cognitive-affective attunement* as following any of the higher-order rules. This culminates in the paradox of one having to deal with a *meaningless rule*. What would such a rule be like? A rule is a meaningful set of instructions, what else could it be? How can one speak of a meaningless rule without slipping into unavoidable contradictions? Once again, we are forced to ask, as we did with Hubert Dreyfus; “*how such a radical thesis could have been so readily and uncritically accepted*” (Shanker, 2002).

It is no doubt fascinating that despite having been engaged in acts of calculation for more than 2000 years, it was not until 1936 that humans have (allegedly) arrived at a satisfactory *definition* of computation. To reiterate, Turing attempted to reduce calculation (a rich, vast, normative and culturally value-laden process, as argued by Wittgenstein) to *mechanical* calculation. By doing so he has in a way invented a whole new category of ontologically very questionable “rules” of conduct. Shanker formulates this ontological ambiguity

by arguing that Turing has in effect abolished the difference between "*following a rule mechanically and following a 'mechanical rule'.*" We could paraphrase this by saying that Turing performed an epistemic leap by collapsing the idea of a *very simple rule*, or a rule that is *very easy* to understand, interpret and follow, to a *rule that requires no interpretation* and such that can be followed "mechanically." But does this make any sense at all? Is there such a thing as a "neutral rule?" I argue that Turing's ideas concerning mechanical rule-following, mind states and machines, are in fact *theological concepts*, having no real empirical or analytical backing.

With Wittgenstein, we saw that calculation, even (or perhaps especially) the simplest instance of computational activities, is a normative practice. Turing is in one way or another aiming to remove precisely this normative (according to Wittgenstein — irreducible) human element, in order to formulate the computational theory of mind and eventually, a computational theory of human action. There seems to be an implicit dehumanization of calculative activities in Turing's program. In the event that rendering calculation into an automated and neutral action governed by "meaningless rules," proves epistemically untenable, then we should begin to look for alternative reasons and motivations for why the discourse on Artificial Intelligence has proven so popular. Intuitively however, we could already anticipate where this line of reasoning will take us: It is quite possible, if not very likely, that far from an epistemically "meaningless" and "neutral" technical process that computation was portrayed to be, algorithmic technologies may in fact turn out to be, much like Christian techniques of subjugation and control, *nothing more(!)* than political technologies for warfare and internal state governance.

Turing's formulation of computability can therefore be seen as the "Biblical Canon" of Artificial Intelligence research. By attempting to nullify the meaning of a rule, a sub-rule or an action, Turing attempted to create a new mode of spiritual ascension, whereby a certain activity would become purely syntactical; a form without content. An impossible *Aufhebung* (Burbidge, 2020). "...no matter how simple a rule might be, this does not

serve to remove its 'semantic content,'" (Shanker, 2002). We cannot exclude the fact, that Turing's Neo-Platonic delusion, may result in very dire consequences for the human race. These have already been formulated in various ways under the more or less common, overarching general phrase: "*the disappearance of the human*" (Foucault, 2005), (Han Pile, 2010). Another important component therefore, of the theological unconscious of the current science-drive age, is a eugenicist if not an altogether genocidal and fascist epistemological anti-humanism. "The system is not the problem, the code is not the problem, the robot is not the problem etc. — it's the *underlying human element*," says the computational regime. It is the human which is "flawed" and requires excommunication: An exorcism. What we encounter here again, is nothing more and nothing less than the Encratism; the self-renunciation, the abolition and destruction of the self, found in Christian technologies of self-conduct. The *spectralization* of subjectivity (Stypinska, 2024). The self is the source of evil, the source of glitches, errors, misapplication and so forth. By removing the self and handing oneself over to the (pastoral) algorithm, we should let "A.I. take the wheel" and carry us forward into the Artificial Kingdom of pure, transparent computation. It sounds all too familiar.

Oversimplifying things a bit, we could argue that there are two kinds of statements in the world: *Descriptive* and *Prescriptive*. The order of normative rules susceptible to interpretation belongs to the latter, whereas the order of causes and effects belongs to the former. In the first case it makes no sense to speak of 'errors' or 'blunders,' as long as we describe the causal chain more or less accurately it remains what it is, just a series of events that follow one another. In the second case, when we are, for example, taught *how to describe* things, we have a whole plethora of institutional practices and techniques for training and education whereby one is taught to execute an action in a manner that is more or less accurate, more or less requiring correction and alignment. This is deeply intertwined with discipline and the strictness of instruction² but we can never speak here of someone having finally reached the ultimate point where their action *is* mechanical.

² We often hear someone being referred to as a 'machine.' Athletes, scientists, great chess players and so on are often called "human machines". These are people whose outward behaviour exhibits a pattern that is reminiscent of a gapless series of causal effects. This is one of the delusions that sustains the idea of "thinking machines," detracting at the same time from the inherent creativity of those who show mastery of activities that are far from mechanical.

The prescriptive paradigm is a very loose system of human activity, which requires interpretation, elucidation, justification and performance. This is not a shortcoming of this mode of discourse, it is simply its own characteristic domain. Turing's "computational alchemy" creates the illusion that human action, thought and creative activity (the prescriptive modality) can be reduced to a series of (in principle) observable cause-and-effect relations (the descriptive modality). In his attempt to bridge the gap between mathematical logic and the philosophy of mind, Turing has in effect compromised the integrity of both disciplines.

The theological unconscious is then a *machinic unconscious*, but not in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari give it (Guattari, 2010), quite the opposite — a rigid, docile and uncreative machinic unconscious. The Theologico-Machinic unconscious is therefore what shapes the *positive unconscious* (Vighi & Feldner, 2007) of our episteme; the *savoir* of Artificial Intelligence. Wittgenstein's work on the foundations of mathematics and the epistemology of calculation provides us with all means necessary to reveal, through an *archaeology of proofs*, the *genealogy of self-improvement technologies*; the collection of social practices that operate as the hidden cultural and political force that sustains the on-going research and popularity of technological developments in A. I. The underlying "trick" therefore, disguised both meticulously and spontaneously by Turing as well as those anonymous structures of power that benefit from this rhetorical maneuver, lies in the *substitution of a mechanical process for a normative one*. The political agenda here is becoming increasingly clear: To replace normative human behaviour with mechanical devices. Why? Because humans have the capacity to question their actions and their inevitable ethical implications. Machines on the other hand only serve to create distance and responsibility gaps that benefit those humans who either fail, refuse to acknowledge and/or directly benefit from the machine's inability to follow a rule in the strictly correct (creative) sense of the word.

Let us return to the question: what separates "*mechanically following a rule*" from "*following a 'mechanical rule'*?" Shanker (2002) notes that Wittgenstein did not exclude the possibility that an agent could follow a rule "mechanical-

ly", that is, without conscious awareness; without *reflection*. But not without *thinking*. The analogy is nonetheless misleading, if not dangerous. We can compare our actions to the working of a mechanical device when we perform an action without paying much explicit attention to it, like certain things we do every day (brushing our teeth, driving a car, putting our glasses on etc.), but we cannot *identify* our behaviour with a machine. Anything that is actually and exclusively causal/automatic is categorically different from human thinking. As discussed before, these are two separate modalities of actions and events, which only apparently seem to converge, but they never become identical. Hence the contradiction: "Can a machine think?"

Nonetheless cognitivism³ maintains that "*we can learn how the mind works by mapping verbal protocols — transcripts of everything a subject says while solving some problem — onto a very different kind of formal model: viz., a computer program*" (Shanker, 2002). Cognitivism is one of several sub-branches of what is generally understood as *psychologism* in traditional philosophy. It was thought for some time, especially before the advent of Artificial Intelligence, that psychologism was largely overthrown by both phenomenology (Husserl) and logicism (Frege), however it seems we have come full circle with a new revival of psychologism through cognitive science and AI (Zahavi, 1994; Frege, 1960). *Computational Psychologism*. An interesting detail emerges where computation is conceived not as a logical process, but nonetheless as an algorithmic effective procedure. An algorithm is fundamentally empirical, which explains the predominance of black-boxes in digital systems. This is not the case with logic, logic only reveals what is already stated explicitly. However, if logic is given a psychologistic interpretation, where the logician as a subject is taken into consideration, then the black-box returns as a series of gaps, lapses, mistakes or simply opaque unconscious processes that emerge in-between deductive operations. With logic, unlike algorithms, nothing is hidden.⁴ It seems therefore, that computational models can approximate the workings of ordinary language much better than formal-deductive models. And in fact, logic strictly speaking, wants nothing to do with everyday

³ The underlying epistemology of AI research.

⁴ These in turn however are in-principle translatable into mechanical procedures i.e. there is nothing mystical about them. And they do not exclude sentience.



language. We have therefore, competing accounts of calculation, where Wittgenstein's version belongs neither to the first nor the second.

Let us go out on a limb, take a line of flight and posit an extravagant hypothesis: Is it possible that the later Wittgenstein, in his formulation of an *Anti-Turing-Computable* account of calculation, has in fact offered us something along the lines of a Deleuzian machinic ontology of rhizomatic, algorithmic networks? What if the universe is in fact "Deleuze-Computable?" And what would that entail?

CONCLUSION

The flat ontology offered by Deleuze (DeLanda, 2013) is very similar to Wittgenstein's conception of language-games. Every kind of statement and discursive act is located on the same ontological plane as any other. No one kind of entity has a metaphysical precedence over another. Everything

is a machine; a machine that is nonetheless very different from a Turing machine or a symbolic engine. Unlike Turing machines, Deleuzian machines operate through *irreducibilities* and *irreductions*. They are not governed by mystical "mind-states" nor can they be accounted for through simple 1-0 binaries. A curiously post-structuralist stance offered by Wittgenstein's rejection of a private language resonates here quite strongly: "*Everything is out on the open, nothing is hidden*" i.e. there is no depth. Most interestingly, the Deleuzian world, including the human mind, is not "*like a machine,*" it is very literally and quite directly, an interconnected network of machines. Can we therefore speak of a complex world of overlapping *Machinic Language-Games? Rhizomatic Families of Robots? Algorithmic Plateaus of Immanence?* More importantly, could a Deleuzian reading of Wittgenstein, offer us a new, more effective epistemology for understanding Machine-Learning Systems, Autonomous Systems and Cybernetic Capitalism in general?

Apart from an exceptional minority of scholars, the general academic consensus is that Turing was a mechanical reductionist, while Wittgenstein was directly opposed to most if not all forms of empirical "reductionisms". Deleuze holds a similar position in formulating his machinic ontology. But unlike Deleuze, Wittgenstein was directly engaged with and even lectured the young Turing. The fact that Wittgenstein had read Turing's seminal *On Computable Numbers*, is a historical fact, evidenced also by his writing in the *Blue and Brown Books* and the *Philosophical Investigations*. Whether we can indeed combine Wittgenstein's insights on the foundation of mathematics with a Deleuzian philosophy of abstract machines will unfortunately have to be addressed at another time. What matters for the moment, is the possibility of an alternative lifestyle and a different practice of mathematical calculation that could open new vistas for addressing the contemporary problems concerning human nature and machinic intelligence.

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THE END OF NEOLIBERALISM?

BYUNG-CHUL HAN'S AND YOKO OGAWA'S REDISCOVERY
OF CONTEMPLATION IN ACCELERATED TIMES

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DR. FRANÇOIS DEBRIX

VIRGINIA TECH, USA

- Email: francdeb@vt.edu

Dr. François Debrix is a Professor of Political Theory in the Department of Political Science at Virginia Tech. He is the former Director of the interdisciplinary and theory-oriented ASPECT program at Virginia Tech, a position he held for over 11 years. Professor Debrix has authored, edited, and co-edited eight books on topics ranging from biopolitical theory, the politics and theory of violence and horror, critical approaches to neoliberalism and the body, representations of global politics, the critical geopolitics of terror, media and visual studies, language and politics, and critical perspectives on international humanitarianism and world order. He is also the author of over 50 articles and essays that have appeared in a range of journals and publications, such as (more recently) *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, *Fast Capitalism*, *New Formations*, *International Political Sociology*, *Society and Space*, *Spectra*, and *Baudrillard Now*. Additionally, he has translated several of French critical social theorist Jean Baudrillard's works into English.



ABSTRACT

Several critical theorists have suggested that the way out of neoliberal capitalism is to accelerate it in order to force its collapse. In *The Scent of Time*, German-Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han calls for a different challenge to neoliberalism by way of a rediscovery of contemplation. Han suggests that contemplation can undercut the *vita activa* (or active life), which Han blames for the hyper-active neoliberal ways of being and living, as well for the seeming impossibility to end neoliberal time(s). This article examines Han's thought on contemplation, highlighting his critique of both neoliberal time(s) and acceleration. It expands the scope of Han's analysis by turning to Japanese author Yoko Ogawa's novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor*. Ogawa's novel revolves around time and memory. Ogawa offers a compelling understanding of contemplation that complicates Han's thought. Ogawa's sense of contemplation resists being defined by neoliberal modalities of living even though it often remains stuck in them. This article concludes by asking what it means for neoliberal subjects to allow Ogawa's contemplation to enter their lives, and what critical possibilities it might bring.

Keywords

acceleration, Byung-Chul Han, calculation, contemplation, lingering, neoliberalism, time, thinking, Yoko Ogawa, *vita activa*

INTRODUCTION

Of late, several critical theorists have suggested that the only way out of neoliberal capitalism is to accelerate and intensify it so as to force the entire system to collapse. Such a push towards what some have called "terminal acceleration" seeks to develop strategies that can lead to a "full decomposition [designed] to consume [neoliberalism's] rotting culture" (Noys, 2014, p. 80). Or, as social theorist Steven Shaviro puts it, in order to "overcome globalized neoliberal capitalism, we need to drain it to the dregs," thus hoping that, "by exacerbating our current conditions of existence, we will finally be able to make them explode, and thereby move beyond them" (Shaviro, 2015, p. 2). In a slightly different way, still hopeful of discovering a future beyond neoliberalism, others have called for an "accelerationism of the left" that would "unleash latent productive forces" while somehow

“repurposing [neoliberalism] towards common ends” (Williams & Srnicek, 2013). In *The Scent of Time* (Han, 2017), philosopher Byung-Chul Han rejects these accelerationist perspectives, which he believes are obsolete and misconstrue the nature of today’s neoliberal times. Han calls for an altogether different challenge to neoliberal capitalist times (as a condition and an epoch) and neoliberal time (as a way of calculating or measuring the time individual subjects spend on various activities). In particular, Han’s challenge to neoliberalism takes place through a rediscovery of contemplation or, as he puts it, lingering. Han suggests that contemplation or lingering can undercut the *vita activa* (championed by Hannah Arendt, among others), which Han blames for the continued acceptance of hyper-active and work-intensive neoliberal ways of being and living.

This article explores Han’s thought on contemplation as this concept relates to time and duration, particularly in the context of neoliberal capitalism. It highlights Han’s critical challenge, via contemplation, to neoliberal times and time, and to the idea of acceleration. But it also expands the scope of Han’s critical reappraisal of contemplation by turning to Japanese author Yoko Ogawa’s novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (2009). Ogawa’s novel is centered around time, memory, and concerns with ending. This study suggests that Ogawa offers a compelling understanding of contemplation (albeit in a literary form) that both complements and complicates Han’s analysis. While it is still conditioned by neoliberal times, Ogawa’s sense of contemplation (developed through her novel’s main protagonists) nonetheless resists being defined by neoliberal capitalist modalities of living and by the *vita activa*. This article concludes by asking what it might mean for neoliberal subjects to allow Ogawa’s contemplation to enter their lives, and what critical possibilities vis-a-vis neoliberal time (including some left unaddressed by Han) it might bring.

METHODS

This essay is an investigation of the notion of contemplation or lingering (and of the mode of thinking that may be associated with contemplation) that is situated at the intersection of critical philosophical and political theoretical analysis (via the work of Byung-Chul Han and his extensive examination of contemporary modalities of neoliberalism) and literary studies (through the novelistic writing of Japanese author Yoko Oga-

wa). By juxtaposing Ogawa’s novel to Han’s close critical philosophical reading of thinkers in, texts about, and concepts derived from (mostly) western social and political thought (from Aristotle about the *vita contemplativa* and Arendt about the *vita activa* all the way to contemporary accelerationist scholarship and related scholarship centered around the question of neoliberalism and time), this study follows a trans-disciplinary and intertextual approach (Shapiro, 2012) that brings in contact literatures, genres, and disciplinary approaches — here, Ogawa’s novel and Han’s philosophical essays — that are typically not associated with one another. The objective of such a critical analytical perspective or method, perhaps more common in humanities scholarship than in social scientific studies, is to take advantage of the theoretical readings and analyses offered by a certain theoretical perspective (for example, Han’s critical thought on neoliberalism, accelerationism, and the work of thinkers who have championed the idea of the *vita activa*) while at the same time not taking them for granted or accepting them as given. In other words, the critical perspective introduced by Han and some of the key concepts he introduces as analytical challenges to neoliberalism and related arguments can be furthered (possibly enriched, but perhaps corrected, nuanced, or even improved too) when they are placed in a textual context (here, a fictional text, a novel, and its own narrative unfolding) where the taken-for-granted dimension of the newly illuminated concepts (for example, contemplation or lingering as challenges to neoliberal accelerated times) and their critical acumen are less obvious. Put differently, when theoretical concepts and perspectives — such as contemplation, lingering, or even thinking, in Han’s case — appear in a literary context that is not a priori concerned with philosophical challenges or arguments, additional (and hopefully enriching) insights, and even perhaps supplementary critical possibilities, about these concepts and perspectives may be uncovered thanks to a series of textual techniques or elements (writing style, affective relations among the main characters, narrative structure, genre, plot, etc.) that are proper to the literary work. Once again, in the spirit of intertextual and trans-disciplinary scholarship in the humanities and the social sciences, it is towards these goals that, in this essay, Ogawa’s presumably non-theoretical or non-philosophical novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor* is placed in contact with Han’s critical philosophical analysis.

RESULTS

The first section of this study reviews and evaluates Han's critique of acceleration and of recent accelerationist perspectives on neoliberalism and time. Among other elements of his philosophical critique, Han explains that accelerationists have misunderstood neoliberal time, which they insist on depicting as a matter of increased speed and/or intensity resulting from the operations of neoliberal capitalism when, in fact, according to Han, neoliberal time is about losing control, expanding aimlessly and in all directions, and what he calls "atomization." This critique leads Han to suggest that capturing the nature of neoliberal time (for the sake of enabling a critique of neoliberal times) requires one to look deeper into the historical and philosophical origins of neoliberalism's use and abuse of time, something that Han traces to the modern (and early capitalist) notion of the *vita activa*.

In the second section, relying on philosophical analysis and a close reading of Han's work, the essay details Han's critique of the *vita activa* (active life), its antagonism of the *vita contemplativa* (contemplative life), and its extension into today's neoliberal hyper-active life and hyper-intensive work. It leads to a third section that showcases Han's attempt at recovering the *vita contemplativa* — or what he more commonly calls contemplation or lingering — as a challenge to both the *vita activa* and to today's neoliberal time and times. This section explains Han's connection between contemplation and thinking, and it shows that contemplation's relation to time or "duration" (as Han puts it) is presented by Han as a form of living (and thinking) that needs to be recovered if one wishes to break away from neoliberal hyper-active times and "atomized" time. Yet, a key finding or result of this section — and of this study, more generally — suggests that Han's detailed analysis and, crucially, his desire to see contemplation re-emerge as a way of living differently (and thus of doing away with neoliberal times) fall short as they fail to offer concrete strategies or outcomes.

Thus, in a fourth section of this study, Ogawa's novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor* is introduced both to reflect on Han's challenge to neoliberal time and times via contemplation and to unsettle Han's own argument in order to offer additional perspectives on contemplation and its critical potential. This essay reveals that Ogawa's emphasis on time, lingering, and thinking in her

novel, seemingly away from neoliberal times but perhaps still conditioned by them, can nonetheless help us to ask questions about neoliberalism, the *vita activa*, and their use and abuse of time, questions that Han's analysis does not seem to be able or willing to consider. In particular, Ogawa's rendition of contemplation or lingering in *The Housekeeper and the Professor* shows us that contemplation is not just something that may re-emerge if and when neoliberal accelerated or "atomized" times (and the *vita activa* that supports them) are removed, as Han suggests. Rather, Ogawa's novel intimates that, even if it is impossible to do away with the hyper-active life and times of neoliberalism, and even if neoliberalism's times are often hard to bear for the individual subject and may not come to an end any time soon, there may still be opportunities under neoliberal conditions for the (neoliberal) subject to discover and appreciate forms of contemplation or lingering, and to enjoy moments, fleeting and unpredictable as they may be, when thinking (in Han's sense) is still possible. Constrained and conditioned by neoliberalism as opportunities for contemplation may remain, they nonetheless may be able to initiate some critical possibilities for today's neoliberal subjects when dealing with hyper-active life, hyper-intensive work, and the atomization or acceleration of time.

DISCUSSION

Neoliberalism and acceleration

In *The Scent of Time*, Byung-Chul Han diagnoses the contemporary neoliberal condition in relation to what it does to the concept of time. In so doing, Han elaborates upon recent accelerationist approaches to the possibility of neoliberalism's end times. Han rejects accelerationist "solutions" to neoliberalism because, as he puts it, "the age of acceleration is already over" (Han, 2017, p. vi). For accelerationists, neoliberal capitalism increases what Han calls the "flow of time," and it augments the speed and intensity at which contemporary social, cultural, and economic operations and transactions take place (Noys, 2014, p. x). In this way, neoliberalism will not just repeat itself over and over. Instead, it will finally crash and burn.

According to Han, accelerationists have misconstrued time under neoliberal capitalist conditions. Acceleration, which accelerationists typically equate to speed or intensification (or both), will

not bring an end to neoliberalism. Rather, according to Han, acceleration is merely "an expression of the bursting of the temporal dam" (Han, 2017, p. 2). Put differently, under neoliberal conditions, it is "a general inability to end and conclude" that is "the cause of today's acceleration" (Han, 2017, p. 2). Thus, acceleration is a symptom of the hegemonic force of neoliberalism or, more precisely, of what neoliberal capitalism has done to time. In a neoliberal context, time is running out of control, and it is spreading aimlessly, in all directions, often with much speed and alacrity (which get confused with acceleration), because there is nothing in contemporary modalities of neoliberalism that can anchor time anymore (Han, 2017, p. 2). Thus, "the feeling that [neoliberal] life is accelerating is really the experience of a time that is whizzing without a direction" (Han, 2017, p. vi).

If acceleration "is not a primary process" but only a symptom, or perhaps the "consequence of time having lost its hold" (Han, 2017, p. 19), accelerationists' quest to end neoliberalism and perhaps to surpass it will miss its

target since it only deals with symptoms of neoliberal time and does not get at what actually drives it. Instead of accelerated time, Han believes that the contemporary neoliberal condition is about "atomized time." Atomized time "is a discontinuous time" characterized by the fact that "there is nothing to bind events together and thus [to] found a connection, [or] a duration" (Han, 2017, p. 18). In part, for Han, this is because history has given way to information. And information and its technology do not "possess any narrative width," and are "neither centered nor... have a direction" (Han, 2017, p. 17). Information, Han continues, "represents a new temporal paradigm," something that once again he calls "atomized time" (Han, 2017, p. 17). "Atomized time" takes hold of most social practices under neoliberalism. Crucially, social practices that were reliant on "promising, fidelity, or commitment" disappear, and along with them, social meaning gets eroded too. Social practices based on promising, fidelity, or commitment, and the meanings attached to them, were "temporal



Byung-Chul Han
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practices,” Han believes, because they tied human subjects “to a future” (Han, 2017, p. 18). Han deplores the fact that, as neoliberal subjects, “we are [now] subject[ed] to a radical loss of space and time, even of world, of being-with,” since all we have left to count on is “atomized time” (Han, 2017, p. vii). In particular, a time of and for contemplation, for lingering, and for thinking is what has now been lost.

The vita activa and time

Han blames what he refers to as the *vita activa* for the disappearance of historical time, for its replacement by “atomized time,” and even for the turn to accelerationist strategies to try to achieve neoliberalism’s end. Han writes: “Not the least cause for today’s temporal crisis is the absolute value attached to the *vita activa* [since it] ... leads to an *imperative to work*, which degrades the human being into an *animal laborans*” (Han, 2017, p. vii). Different from the way Han typically writes about neoliberal capitalism in many of his books (where he often limits himself to offering harsh but often lucid diagnoses about the contemporary neoliberal condition¹), in *The Scent of Time* Han seeks to “offer reflections on possibilities for recovery” (Han, 2017, p. vii). What Han wishes to recover here is tied to what, for him, one must first recover from. And what one must recover from is the hegemonic imposition of a *vita activa* that, in Han’s view, has controlled modern subjects and their social lives for centuries, and moreover has shaped both liberal and neoliberal subjects, their use of time, and their social actions.

According to Han, the “imperative to work” is the key dimension of the *vita activa*, and this “imperative to work” has been exacerbated in neoliberal times by “the *hyperkinesia* of everyday life, [that] deprives human existence of all contemplative elements and of any capacity for lingering” (Han, 2017, p. vii)². Only contemplation or lingering, or what, going back to Aristotle, Han calls the *vita contemplativa*, is worth living

if the neoliberal subject is ever to recover its humanness³. Relatedly, only “a revitalization of the *vita contemplativa*” (Han, 2017, p. vii) can provide answers to neoliberalism’s end times. Han blames the protestant Reformation, Martin Luther, but even more so Calvinism for the denigration of the *vita contemplativa*, or what Han understands to be a form of contemplative lingering that, from Aristotle to early modern capitalism, had been prized as “an absolute priority” (Han, 2017, p. 86). Even in public settings (not just in private matters), a time or “duration” dedicated to thinking was seen by Aristotle to be crucial “to rest one’s mind,” to “collect oneself,” and to fully engage in “the contemplative consideration of truth” (Han, 2024, pp. 86–87). Work, for Aristotle, while necessary to social activities, to the good functioning of the home (*oekonomia*), and to the proper running of the *polis*, was nonetheless “non-rest” and “un-freedom” (Han, 2024, p. 86). Rest and leisure were not seen as passive activities, but rather as “noble” and “free” undertakings that were crucial to the development of the mind, the growth of the human being, and the well-being of society. Rest and leisure, in the service of time as duration, were dedicated to contemplation and thinking, and they were contrasted to what was “useful and necessary,” in other words, to work (Aristotle, 1995, p. 285; Han, 2017, p. 86).

However, during the 16th and 17th centuries, Calvinism inverted the relation between rest or contemplative lingering and work. Work became a supreme value, Han claims, and rest, leisure, and contemplative thinking had to be subordinated to work or adapted to the necessities of work and work-time. While work, according to Luther, was postulated to provide an essential connection to God’s “calling upon men” (Han, 2017, p. 89), Calvinists gave work a supplementary yet crucial economic dimension. As Han puts it, “in Calvinism, work is given meaning in the context of the economy of salvation” (Han, 2017, p. 89). To work hard, constantly, tirelessly, without end and without complaint, and to subordinate all of life’s

1 See, for example, Han’s analyses of various dimensions of neoliberalism in *The Burnout Society* (Han, 2015) or in *Non-things: Upheaval in the Lifeworld* (Han, 2022).

2 Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams offer a somewhat similar diagnosis when they note that “neoliberalism creates... competitive subjects” and that neoliberalism’s “imperatives... drive these subjects to constant self-improvement *in every aspect of their life*.” They add that, as a result of the neoliberal condition, “one’s personal life is as bound to competition as one’s work life” (Srnicek & Williams, 2015, p. 64).

3 In a more recent work, Han uses the term “inactivity” rather than contemplation or lingering. “Inactivity” for Han, similar to contemplation, is what can or even needs to be opposed to active life, for the sake of “being human.” Han writes: “The inactivity involved in any doing is what makes the doing something genuinely human” (Han, 2024, p. 2).



actions to work, brings one closer to God, but also guarantees that one's apparent economic and social success (or at least, one's endurance) will become a pathway to divine salvation. As Han writes, for the Calvinist individual, "only success in work is... a sign of having been chosen" (Han, 2017, p. 89). Thus, Han adds, the "care for salvation turns the individual into a *worker*," and this worker "is brought closer to his goal [God's salvation] not by a *vita contemplativa*, but by a *vita activa*" (Han, 2017, p. 89). In fact, from the perspective of the individual subject now turned into a worker, the *vita contemplativa* has to be completely shunned as it becomes "reprehensible" (Han, 2017, p. 89).

Han, like Max Weber before him, traces the economic and social roots of liberal and later neoliberal capitalism to this turn to the *vita activa*. Protestant asceticism becomes a compulsion to work, to produce, and "to accumulate, which leads to the formation of capital" (Han, 2017, p. 90). As Weber wrote, the protestant surrendering of life to work and to the *vita activa* "had the psychological effect of freeing the acquisition of goods from the inhibitions of traditionalistic ethics. It broke the bonds of the impulse of acquisition [and]... it not only legalized it, but [it]... looked upon it as

directly willed by God" (Weber, 2014, p. 98). The complete take-over of an individual's life (and soul) by work makes the individual subject (as a liberal subject) into an *animal laborans*⁴. This *animal laborans* is defined by its use of time. Either as a worker or, as Han adds, "outside of work [when] it is at best a consumer" (Han, 2017, p. 100), the liberal subject only "*uses up time*" (Han, 2017, p. 100). Every so often, the liberal subject as *animal laborans* may enjoy a few breaks. But these breaks remain governed by the logic of work, and they are placed to the service of the *vita activa*, not of contemplation, of lingering, or of thinking. In fact, Han indicates, Marx had already explained that "a subject that is formed through or by work will not find a different perception of the world during times that are free from work" (Han, 2017, p. 100; see also Marx and Engels, 1985).

Hannah Arendt famously sought to rehabilitate the *vita activa* by trying to free it from its connection to work, productivity, and accumulation (Arendt, 1998). Yet, according to Han, Arendt failed, in part because she sought to blame the *vita contemplativa* for what she saw as the relegation of the *vita activa* to mere work. Arendt argued that there are many forms of *vita activa*, and that a compulsion to work and a constant

⁴ Or, as Han puts it in another text, "human existence is [now] fully absorbed by activity, and thereby becomes exploitable" (Han, 2024, p. 1).

need to “use up” time are only one, negative, form of it. According to Arendt, the *vita activa* is first and foremost “a life which is determined to act” (Han, 2017, p. 102). And a life that acts is a life that, heroically, seeks to “begin something altogether new” (Arendt, 1998, p. 247). The *vita activa* for Arendt is related to, as she puts it, “the miracle of natality,” or the “miracle that saves the world.” “The faculty of action,” Arendt claims, “is ontologically rooted” in natality, in “the birth of new men, ... and [in] the action they are capable of by virtue of being born” (Arendt, 1998, p. 247). According to Arendt, the will to act, the determination to create new beginnings, or the desire to start new things is unique to humans, and it is ultimately what makes political action and public life possible. Without the *vita activa*, the human being is nothing more than an *animal laborans* (or a *homo laborans*, as Arendt prefers to call it). Thus, it is in fact *the vita contemplativa*, Arendt asserts, that is truly responsible for turning the human being into a *homo laborans*, and not the *vita activa*. As she notes: “my contention is... that the enormous weight in contemplation in the traditional hierarchy has blurred the distinctions and articulations within the *vita activa* itself” (Arendt, 1998, p. 17). In other words, western thought’s undue emphasis on contemplation since at least Aristotle, Arendt believes, has not allowed humans to appreciate the various ways in which an active life can be experienced and, furthermore, it has relegated active life to the economic domain or to a life dominated by the necessity of work and productivity. In this configuration, the so-called *vita activa* (the life and actions of *homo laborans*) ends up degenerating into a passive life, something that is anathema to Arendt’s belief in action, natality, or what she sees as the unique ability of humans to perform new beginnings.

Han’s rediscovery of contemplation

Han disagrees with Arendt’s assertion that contemplative life (that she can only comprehend as passive life) is responsible for the *vita activa*’s turn to compulsive work. Han writes: “Arendt

erroneously believes that what is really new owes its coming about exclusively to a heroic subject that is determined to act” (Han, 2017, p. 103). Han explains that “events which form the world and culture rarely derive from the conscious decision taken by a subject that is determined to act” (Han, 2017, p. 103)⁵. It is even less so when the subject who is ready to act and to create new beginnings is caught in the routine of work time, a routine that leaves precious little moments for thinking, for contemplating, and for coming up with new creations. Han suggests that so-called events or actions that may change the world are actually more likely to result from leisure, rest, or “play free from compulsion” (Honig, 1993, p. 103).

Moreover, while Arendt is intent on blaming the *vita contemplativa* for the modern degradation of active life, Han asserts that there is actually little left of contemplation in contemporary liberal or neoliberal modes of social and economic organization, when human beings have become and are expected to be laboring and consuming subjects, and when their “free time” (which can be plentiful, but not necessarily restful or contemplative) is a mere extension of work time. Thus, in Han’s reading, Arendt is unable or unwilling to “recognize that the franticness or restlessness of modern life has a lot to do with the loss of the contemplative faculty” (Honig, 1993, p. 104). Han concludes that “being cannot be reduced to being active” (Honig, 1993, p. 105) since today “being active” is something that actually “impoverishes [one’s] experience” (Honig, 1993, p. 104). Again, Han deplors that “making the *vita activa* an absolute value drives everything out of life that is not act or activity” (Honig, 1993, p. 109).

Ultimately, Arendt’s rehabilitation of the *vita activa* seeks to take control of time. According to Han, this is very much in line with the take-over of contemplative time (or life as lingering and dedicated to thinking) initiated by the protestant Reformation and exploited by liberal capitalism. All modalities of active life, Han suggests, and perhaps even more so in contemporary neoliberal times, are obsessed with making use of time, taking hold of it, measuring or calculating time

5 It should be noted that Han’s reading of Arendt’s concept of the *vita activa* is not shared by several other prominent theorists. For example, Bonnie Honig writes that, for Arendt, action is *not* necessarily a “conscious decision taken by a subject determined to act,” as Han claims. Action, Honig suggests, “does not derive its meaning from the intentions, motives, or goals of actors” and, in fact, it is action or the deed itself that “produces or gives birth to the actor or performer” (Honig, 1993, p. 78). Thus, Honig continues, through Arendt, one may actually see “the consequences of action [and of the *vita activa*] as ‘boundless’, uncontrollable, irreversible, and unpredictable” (Honig, 1993, p. 80).

as a series of acts and activities, and preventing it from drifting away (as if being active was driven by a fear of becoming passive). Han's call for a rediscovery of contemplative life in the face of the *vita activa* demands that the human subject let itself be dominated by time, or that time as duration, as lingering, as leisure, or, as Han also intimates, as "hesitation from action" (Honig, 1993, p. 105) take hold of the subject's actions and, perhaps more importantly, of its thinking.

Han affirms that "[f]orms of the *vita contemplativa* are... modes of being" too, and such modes of contemplative being and life like "hesitancy, releasement, shyness, waiting, or restraint" are not passive (Honig, 1993, p. 93). Rather, they are "modes of duration" that enable thinking as a creative pursuit. Thinking is "a contemplative activity," Han writes (Honig, 1993, p. 106). It is a mode of rest and leisure, a way of letting time or duration take possession of one's being. Thinking does not "dictate to time." Rather, it is "time that dictates to thinking" (Honig, 1993, p. 108). But for time to "dictate to thinking" in a way that keeps the human subject free, time must be released from the *vita activa*, from work, from use or utility, from productive activity, from calculation, from restlessness, and from acceleration. Han states: "Thinking is free because its place and time cannot be calculated" (Honig, 1993, p. 109).

Unfortunately, neoliberal time as accelerated time or, better yet, as atomized time does not allow today's life any gains in time or duration. Neoliberalism's accelerated or atomized time only has space and time for endless and often repetitive action, for frantic work, for hyper-activity (and hyper-active modes of so-called leisure), for restlessness in seeking to be productive, innovative, calculating, and competitive. Han concludes his diagnosis of the current state of contemplation with Nietzsche's famous aphorism: "From lack of rest, our civilization is ending in a new barbarism. Never have the active, which is to say the restless, people been prized more" (Nietzsche, 1984, p. 172).

Sadly, Han's attempt at finding a way out of *hyperkinesia*, his desire to restore the time of the *vita contemplativa*, never yields much of a solution. Han repeatedly demands a "revitalization" of the *vita contemplativa*, but his plea is short of practical answers. Han's call for a return to the *vita contemplativa*, for giving time to thinking, or for lingering remains stuck in the neoliberal capitalist time and its various modalities of (hyper)active life. Han does provide important clues about neoliberal times and their possible

aftermath. Ending neoliberal time and times, Han makes clear, would require surmounting the *vita activa* and reviving a *vita contemplativa* to which Han gives a rich philosophical history. But the crucial issue that Han remains unable to address is not *what* could replace the (hyper)active neoliberal times, but rather *how* to do away with neoliberal capitalism and *how* to give time a future (or better yet, a duration). One suggestion offered by Han, all too briefly, only in passing, is a hint at the possibility of a hesitation or a doubt that might arise in the day-to-day labors or tasks of the neoliberal subject and in the otherwise routine and repetitive movements of the subject's body while at work. Evocatively, via Martin Heidegger's metaphor of music and dance (1977), Han writes that, when the music stops and the dancer pauses, a "moment of hesitation" in the repetitiveness of the dancer's movements and in the restlessness of its body emerges, and this hesitation can become "the condition for the beginning of an altogether different dance" (Han, 2017, p. 113). But Han does not go beyond this provocative intimation about the moment of hesitation of the subject's body. Absent any further elaboration on hesitation (or any other possible temporal challenge to hyper-active neoliberal times), Han's hoped-for return to contemplation or lingering remains a matter of wishful thinking, or perhaps a nostalgic longing for an Aristotelian reevaluation of thinking over work and action in the conduct of life and the purpose of being.

Contemplation in Ogawa's The Housekeeper and the Professor

Despite Han's inability to offer an answer to neoliberal capitalism's times and to a hyper-active mode of life that seeks to keep the atomized time of the neoliberal subject hyper-productive, hyper-competitive, and hyper-calculated, Han's attempt to retrieve the notions of contemplation and lingering and to explore if they can offer resistant (or, perhaps, hesitant) possibilities for a different way of thinking and living is intriguing. Han's eagerness to revive contemplation and lingering is worthwhile. But I suggest that these notions can be thought more expansively and creatively by perhaps not placing them primarily in opposition to the *vita activa*, or perhaps by taking them outside of the domain of Western thought where they tend to remain primarily tied to concerns about being and about living the good life. Japanese author Yoko Ogawa's novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (2009), I argue, can give

us a different context (and a different textual, conceptual, and perhaps critical domain) where lingering and contemplation and, with them, the sense of time, duration, and the future in relation to neoliberal times, may be further examined.

Several of Ogawa's novels and stories are centered around the question of time, memory, the future (or its impossibility), and the anxiety about concluding or arriving at an end point. Often, a sense of lingering or contemplation (in Han's sense) with regards to how time is spent seems key to Ogawa's characters and perhaps to her writing too. *The Memory Police* (Ogawa, 2020), perhaps Ogawa's best-known novel, features the themes of memory, oblivion, and disappearance in the context of a near-future society where (somewhat reminiscent of Orwell's

1984; Orwell, 1949) an authoritarian police force seeks to maintain control over time by preventing individuals from accessing thoughts and recollections about the past and about things that are no more or have disappeared. In *The Housekeeper and the Professor*, the passing of time, the dialectic between absence and preservation of past thoughts, activities, and feelings, the loss of memory, but also the enjoyment of uncalculated moments, situations, and encounters are all crucial to the novel's plot.

The Housekeeper and the Professor revolves around three main characters. First, there is the Professor, a former mathematics university professor who, as a result of a car crash many years ago and the traumatic head injury he suffered in the accident, now lives with only 80 minutes of



Ogawa Yoko
Photo credit: uzaigajjin
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short-term memory (his long-term memory from before the accident remains intact). Every 80 minutes, his brain "reboots," and the memory of what happened earlier in the day, last week, or a few years ago gets erased. The Professor experiences everything anew every 80 minutes. His only way of trying to keep some sort of coherence in his day-to-day living is to write vital information (his address, where his clothes and shoes are located, when he has to take his medicine, the name and physical description of his current housekeeper, and of course the fact that his memory only lasts 80 minutes at a time, among other things) on many notes that he tapes onto his clothes, his body, and throughout his small house. If things change in his daily routine, he must alter the notes, scratch the old information, and handwrite a new text before he forgets to do so. The Professor spends his days reflecting, looking on, staring at the sky, and solving and even writing complex math puzzles. Often, having limited short-term

memory, he repeats himself, and he replicates the same motions, actions, statements, and thoughts that he had earlier in the day or the day before. Yet, for the Professor, these actions, statements, and thoughts are always new (unless they have been recorded on the notes). Much of the Professor's time is devoted to fondly and intensely looking at numbers and equations.

The Housekeeper is the woman (a single mother in her thirties) in charge of caring for the Professor on weekdays from morning to evening. On weekends, the Professor's sister-in-law tends to his basic needs as she lives in the main house nearby (the Professor's dwelling is a small cottage in the backyard of the sister-in-law's house). The sister-in-law hired the Housekeeper for the Professor, as she did with all the previous housekeepers, most of whom quit or were let go since it is a daunting task to take care of a person whose memory gets erased every 80 minutes. But the Housekeeper, whose name is never mentioned, and from whose perspective the story is told, manages to stick around for a good while, and in due time, a genuine caring and even loving relationship develops between the Housekeeper and the Professor (a bond that remains, although not as intensely, for years after the Housekeeper is no longer in charge of the Professor's care and as the Professor is eventually sent to a long-term facility).

The third key character is Root, the Housekeeper's young son (around 10 years old), who cements the affective bond between the Professor and the Housekeeper, and who helps to make the trio into a family and home of sorts. Although it is against the rules (both those set by the sister-in-law and those of the agency for which the Housekeeper works), Root spends more and more time with his mother and the Professor, in the Professor's cottage first, and eventually on a few outings too (shopping, walking to the park, and even going to a baseball game), whenever Root is not at school. It is the Professor who insists on making sure that the Housekeeper brings Root to the Professor's house after Root is done with school for the day as the Professor is adamant that it is not safe for a young child to walk home by himself and wait there for his mother. Root is actually the name that the Professor gives to the child as the top of the child's head reminds the Professor of the square root sign.

The *Housekeeper and the Professor's* narrative unfolds over a period of about one year (with the last chapter of the novel jumping a few years ahead). Over the course of this year, the



growing affection of the main protagonists for each other, their unusual familial bonds, and the daily challenges faced by each of them (mostly by the Professor, as his condition worsens and the 80-minute short-term memory window eventually narrows to nothing) are delicately recounted by Ogawa via the narrator/Housekeeper. The difficulties they encounter, the inevitable multiple repetitions, and even the mini-crises — for example, when the Professor wanders off, or when he gets frazzled without his notes, or when he expresses (although rarely) frustration at his condition (at not recognizing Root and the Housekeeper without his notes, for instance)—are never presented as obstacles to overcome. Rather, they are part of the rhythm of life, of the flow of time that the three of them spend, and often enjoy, in the company of each other. Even the Professor's initial trauma, the injury that forced the Professor and, by extension, during the year they lived together, the Housekeeper and Root to have to reassess the meaning of time, of duration, of past, present, and future, and indeed of life itself is never expressed as an impediment, or as a bitter twist of fate that somehow has to haunt the present moment, or as a burden that everyone in the household must bear. It is not until the latter part of the novel that a few clues about the Professor's trauma as a result of his accident are given. It is also not until then that it is revealed, almost in passing, as if this was only tangential to the story, that the Professor used to have a very active life as a world-renowned math scholar, that he also was romantically involved with his sister-in-law, and that it seems that the two of them were planning for a future together when the accident occurred.

The passing of time, time's duration, and moments of reflection, contemplation, and hesitation are important to all three characters, particularly when they are together. Although they are active, they have routines, they have daily chores, and they plan events and even outings, when they are together, time does not seem to matter much. Their time together is not exactly restful, nor even particularly leisurely (the Housekeeper labors around the house and sees to it that the Professor's basic necessities are met and that he is comfortable; the Professor works on math problems, sometimes for many hours at a time; and Root diligently does his school homework), at least in the way that rest and leisure are measured and understood in relation to work (in other words, as breaks from work). But the time or duration of their life together, which still involves activities,

is not work either. Put differently, even with the challenges resulting from the fact that the Professor only has 80 minutes of short-term memory, each of the three characters' time is rarely calculated.

Calculation, Han explains, is antithetical to contemplation or lingering. According to neoliberal accelerated or atomized time, calculation prevails. Calculation defines the time of the neoliberal subject. It takes hold of the neoliberal subject's life as calculating ensures that the subject performs its work effectively, productively, intensely, and competitively. According to Han, calculation is a degradation of thinking caused by the *vita activa*. As Han puts it, calculation is "what can be accelerated at will" (Han, 2017, p. 109). Whereas thinking is often discontinuous, meanders, takes a "detour or a step back," and "looks around," calculating seeks "a precise location" and often demands an outcome (Han, 2017, p. 109). Calculating, in other words, does not take the time to wander and linger, and instead it must find ways to "use up time" (Han, 2017, p. 113). Thus, in neoliberal times, when thinking is reduced to calculation, "thinking [also] assimilates itself to labor" (Han, 2017, p. 109), that is to say, to work, to a task that must be accomplished, to a period that has been set in advance, to a time-frame or a schedule with chunks of time that are supposed to be finite (at least, if the task is to be productive and successful).

It is ironic that, in their life together, the Professor, the Housekeeper, and Root are able to create a space and a time where and when calculation no longer matters since, as was mentioned above, a great deal of the Professor's time is dedicated to math problems, to equations, to numbers, and, literally, to calculations. The Housekeeper and Root are also invited to enter the Professor's space and time of reflection and contemplation built around numbers and mathematics. As the Professor talks about what he calls the "beauty" of numbers (prime numbers, numbers in a series, combinations of numbers, etc.), the shape and appearance of them, or the simple clarity in the presentation of some equations, the Housekeeper is drawn into the Professor's work, or better yet, into his way of thinking (she even starts to spend time on a few math problems, and every so often she too stares at numbers and equations). And Root becomes fascinated by the way the Professor explains to him how to think through, and possibly resolve, some math problems that are part of Root's homework. In a way, the Professor, the Housekeeper, and Root manage to flip around

the relation between calculation and thinking in neoliberal times (as Han understands it). Indeed, for the Professor, but also for the Housekeeper and Root, numbers and calculations become an opportunity to think, to meander and wander, to take detours, and to linger. While the Professor still seeks to solve math problems, he is equally, and often, more interested in posing new problems and devising new puzzles. He does not put much emphasis on the outcome, the result, the end point of the thought process, or the termination of the duration (he clearly no longer cares about professional success either). Because he sets aside outcomes and results, he is able to see the "beauty" of numbers, of math problems, and even of calculation, a beauty and sense of wonderment that are also potentially unending (despite his own condition and his repetitive life), that depend on allowing numbers and their mysteries to run their course, and that allow the Professor's life (despite the fact that it is carved up in 80-minute segments) to be open to thinking and lingering.

The Professor willingly shares this love for thinking and spending time with numbers in an unmeasured, uncalculated, and unproductive way with the Housekeeper and Root. As the story unfolds, they too allow themselves to be possessed by this reversal of calculation, by this way of lingering with numbers, and by the kind of leisure that math brings to their life. Leisure, as Han noted, is not "relaxation" (Han, 2017, p. 87). Indeed, the Professor, the Housekeeper, and Root work for hours on math problems, on thinking about and with numbers. For them, leisure spent with numbers, when calculation is no longer a concern (or, rather, when calculation is no longer tied to measuring progress in reaching outcomes, to work, or to production), "does not serve the purpose of distraction," but rather "of collecting oneself" (Han, 2017, p. 87). As Han clarifies, this "collecting oneself" is never a purely intellectual endeavor. Thinking as lingering is not just a way for the mind to wander away for a while, or to escape the pains and trials of physical labor. Rather, "lingering presupposes a gathering of the senses" (Han, 2017, p. 87). Once again, this is how the time spent with numbers, the duration of their collective life when lingering or contemplation takes hold of their daily activities, is experienced by the Professor, the Housekeeper, and Root. The leisure of lingering/contemplation that takes hold of their life in the household also opens up spaces of affective closeness, kinship, intimacy, shared joy, and peacefulness, for each of them, at least for as long as they are allowed to stay together (which

means for as long as the Professor's 80-minute at-a-time memory cycles, his system of notes, and the acceptance of the Professor's unique condition by the Housekeeper and Root remain more or less intact).

The apprehension of time and the appreciation for contemplation or lingering, away from calculation and work, in Ogawa's novel seem to offer compelling literary illustrations of Han's arguments about contemplative life and thinking, and about the importance of finding ways to revitalize them in neoliberal times, when calculation, atomization, and acceleration have taken away leisure, pleasure, and the "gathering of the senses." However, *The Housekeeper and the Professor* introduces an important but troubling element in any celebration of a return to contemplative life in neoliberal times. Han does not seem to recognize or perhaps does not want to accept the possibility of this troubling element. Indeed, in Ogawa's novel, it is mainly *because of* an initial accident, of an aberration, and of a trauma that the main protagonists are able to create and enjoy a time and space when and where lingering becomes possible and contemplation, at least for a while, can interrupt the frantic pace of neoliberal time/times. Outside of (and before) the home and family that, by chance, they create, with a life of contemplation built around the beauty and wonderment of numbers, of puzzles, and of thinking, each of the main characters remains a fairly typical liberal or neoliberal subject, and each is caught within the logic of the social and economic needs and requirements imposed by the *vita activa* and the (neo)liberal capitalist system that active life supports.

The Housekeeper, a single mother, is always desperately seeking new jobs, working for a housekeeping agency where employees come and go, where being let go from one job means hoping that another housekeeping opening elsewhere will materialize, and when any small mistake on the job can lead to termination and having to look for another mode of employment, if any is available (these worries about social and economic precarity are expressed a few times by the narrator/Housekeeper in the novel). Root is a Japanese schoolboy for whom the pressures of getting good grades, of studiously doing homework, and of solving the math problems his teacher gives him can become intense daily concerns, even if he enjoys spending time with the Professor and thinking with him about math puzzles. Finally, the Professor was a rather typical (neo)liberal subject (and academic) before his accident. While

the novel does not tell us much about the Professor's life before his injury, the bits of information we collect across the story suggest that he was an active, successful, and well respected professor and researcher at a top university who was working on a theorem that brought him global recognition and, more than likely, led him to travel quite a bit, go to conferences, give lectures at various universities, and have his work published and read widely (and outside Japan too, since we know that he had exchanges with fellow mathematicians in languages other than Japanese). The novel also tells us that he had a romantic affair with his sister-in-law, that he had a brother (we do not know much about him and why he is no longer around), and that the Professor and the sister-in-law were worried about keeping their romantic relationship away from the public eye (to this day, the sister-in-law tries not to mention anything about it and she only refers to the Professor as her brother-in-law). All in all, the Professor appears to have had an extensive and full (perhaps even complicated) *vita activa*, centered around his work (and scholarly success), and complemented by an active private and intimate life that probably required quite a bit of daily management too.

Thus, when time as lingering arrives for the Professor (and, by extension, during the year they spend with him, for the Housekeeper and Root, too), it is only *after* the trauma has happened, and, in fact, *as a result of* the trauma. Lingering, contemplation, thinking, and duration spent with and around numbers and math problems are never completely intentional, willed, or even a life choice for the Professor. While the Professor, through thinking as lingering and his relinquishing of the *vita activa*, finally enjoys "peacefulness" (as the novel's narrator often notes, being "peaceful" or living "peacefully," including finding "peace" in the contemplation of numbers, is now what the Professor values most), this peacefulness of thinking, of contemplative life, is also not something he has sought to cultivate throughout his life. In this way, contemplation or lingering here is significantly different from the Aristotelian *vita contemplativa* that Han eagerly wishes to resurrect. In Ogawa's *The Housekeeper and the Professor*, the peacefulness of lingering with numbers is the traumatic outcome of a forever open wound, of some previously (and still) lost time (the time when the Professor was a math scholar, the time he used to spend with his sister-in-law/lover), of a flaw in the Professor's now severely damaged brain, and of an unresolved crisis in several individuals' lives.

The Professor's discovery of contemplation and the pleasure and peacefulness he now draws from it and that he shares with those around him are accidental. Contemplation here is the result of an accident in the Professor's life, but also, in a way, the product of an accident in the life and time(s) of neoliberal capitalism and its support by the *vita activa*. It is *because* the *vita activa* has been violently and unexpectedly interrupted for the Professor, *because* his life as a neoliberal subject has been upended, that he now can encounter contemplation and enjoy math problems and numbers as a matter of thinking, and no longer as objects of and for calculation. One might even suggest that, if it had not been for his prior hyperactive life as a neoliberal subject and academic before the accident, if it had not been for his taking his life into overdrive by ceaselessly seeking to do more, and perhaps faster (in other words, by seeking to accelerate his life, work, academic success, and productivity), the accident and trauma may not have happened, and thus the professor's eventual opening to time as duration and to thinking as lingering may not have been possible. One might also generalize this point and surmise that it is perhaps *only* as a result of the burnout of the neoliberal subject in accelerated or atomized times that the rediscovery of contemplative life, of lingering, is feasible. If that is the case, the possibility of lingering or contemplation is always limited and contained. In such a configuration, contemplation is always conditioned by the (hyper)active life characteristic of neoliberal times, something that Han seems unwilling to accept. As for Root and his mother, their partaking of thinking as lingering, their own opening to contemplation via numbers and math, is always going to be only a brief episode in their otherwise busy and active lives of labor, a pleasurable and peaceful episode for them too, but one that nonetheless ends when the Professor is sent to a long-term care facility (the Housekeeper and Root continue to visit the Professor at the facility, and for many years until his death, but they can only spend a short amount of time with him each time they visit).

Concluding thoughts: Contemplation as peaceful loss?

Might it be that it is only after one has been traumatically dispossessed of one's active life, or after one has lost both one's past (or at least, crucial parts of it) and the possibility of one's future (of planning for future times) that one can

finally live the present as a matter of lingering or contemplation? In a way, this is what Ogawa's novel appears to tell us. If this is so, contemplation is never really the challenge to neoliberal atomized or accelerated times that Han thought it could be. And yet, while lingering or contemplation in *The Housekeeper and the Professor* is accidental, results from a trauma, and leaves one with an insurmountable loss, it is also never completely reducible to the accident, the trauma, or the loss. Contemplation/lingering is not a flight away from them. And it is not a way of forgetting or coping with the tragedy either. Rather, one might argue that, born out of an initial trauma, contemplation is (as Han might put it) a detour or a hesitation,

one whose time or duration is not pre-determined nor calculated, and crucially one that may still be able to appear in a life that is no longer what it used to be, but that nonetheless (and perhaps precisely because it is no longer what it used to be) still offers opportunities for thinking, contemplating, wandering, and appreciating "beauty," which can be numbers or math problems (as was the case for the Professor) or anything that provokes thinking in a non-calculated and non-productive way. Contemplation after or even as a result of the trauma may thus still offer a life for the subject that does not need to be defined by the trauma or the accident, nor by anything that preceded and possibly led to it.



As Ogawa shows us, there can be pleasure and peacefulness in experiencing a form of contemplation that might arise from trauma or loss, but also that *does not let itself be possessed by it*. Could this form of contemplation or lingering be available to today's subject in atomized or accelerated hyper-active and hyper-calculated neoliberal times? Could this be the pathway for the neoliberal subject out of the impasse that the *vita activa* and its insistence on work, productivity, and competition have left us with, and that neoliberal capitalism continues to take advantage of? Could a life of lingering resulting from trauma (including the traumas caused by neoliberal capitalism) but oblivious to it, either through memory loss (as with Ogawa's Professor), or because the burned-out neoliberal subject no longer has anything to lose in turning its back to its hyper-calculated life, be a better option when attempting to end neoliberal times than terminal modes of acceleration? Or, if not a better option, could it be at least a more pleasurable pathway for the individual subject, who may continue to live with neoliberal capitalism's trauma, but who also can look for ways to not let its life be constantly defined by it? And might this form of contemplation evoked by Ogawa's novel be an answer to Han's call for a recovery of time as hesitation, doubt, detour, or wandering? Answering these questions is beyond the scope of this article, and probably beyond the scope of Ogawa's novel too. But perhaps more importantly than seeking to answer these questions, it is crucial that they be posed or, better yet, that there remain in today's accelerated neoliberal times some critical literary and/or theoretical spaces (such as those provided by Ogawa's writing, and perhaps by Han's theorizing at times too) for contemplation and lingering so that they may be given an opportunity to be meaningful to life again.

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PLATONISM ACROSS BORDERS:

FROM THE GLOBAL POINT OF VIEW TO THE INNER
LIFE OF THINGS

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DR. MARCO A. ANDREACCHIO

INDEPENDENT RESEARCHER

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5025-1321>
- E-mail: marco.andreacchio@cantab.net

Marco Andreacchio awarded a doctorate from the University of Illinois for his interpretation of Sino-Japanese philosophical classics in dialogue with Western counterparts and a doctorate from Cambridge University for his work on Dante's Platonic interpretation of religious authority. Andreacchio has taught at various higher education institutions and published systematically on problems of a political-philosophical nature. Editorial member of *Dogma* journal.



ABSTRACT

Historicist scholarship has contributed to obscuring a fundamental sense in which classical, canonical Chinese scholarship is by and large Platonic. Chinese classics have been systematically *used*, rather than properly *understood*. As a result, they have been effectively denied the right to guide us into an understanding of what they point to—their message. Now, such a message may prove to significantly help today's scholarship in facing a crisis of standards unwittingly exposed by historicism itself. The present work questions historicist assumptions by way of 1. accessing traditional Chinese literary sources in their original poetic context and 2. testifying to the sense in which Platonism cuts across civilizational borders. In this respect, the present investigation serves as a case study inviting recognition of Platonism as a currently viable *poetic* solution to the crisis of modern science.

Keywords

philosophy, platonism, chinese classics, buddhism, historicism, poetry

INTRODUCTION: THE FORMAL CHALLENGE

Mercantile exchanges have always constituted a challenge for dialogue—for *wrestling with ideas*—insofar as commerce continuously draws people before others, usually “different” *others*, thereby exposing acquired habits to novelty and complexity (Kaldis & Heath, 2017).¹ What is challenging here is what stands “outside of the box,” what escapes all certainties, what threatens pre-established harmonies, what reminds us of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of obtaining any durable closure in dialogue.

To the extent that modern society is built on mercantile principles, it calls us all to face each other. It might seem, then, that dialogue thrives in the modern world. Yet, in the act of fostering dialogue, notably in the name of Diversity, the modern marketplace comes to redefine the Self as a function of the Other. The *modern* Self is called to a special dialogue the essential condition of which is the *uprooting* of the Self, not merely from its fossilized convictions, but also and most importantly from its *natural right* to respond *poetically* to its “inner,” *metaphysical resources* (Nelson & Drabinski, 2014; Zuckert, 2018).² The Self is driven to face an

¹ Cf. *Wealth, Commerce, and Philosophy Foundational Thinkers and Business Ethics*. Byron Kaldis and Eugene Heat.

² See e.g., *Between Levinas and Heidegger*. Eric Sean Nelson and John E. Drabinski (2014), eds. For an exposure of the bankruptcy of the modern project to cut ethics off from classical metaphysics, see *Leo Strauss on Political Philosophy Responding to the Challenge of Positivism and Historicism*. Catherine H. Zuckert (2018), ed.

open-ended horizon of dialogue—indeed, to be free—while being denied the right to bear direct, conscious witness to the *ground* of all dialogue, the *meaning* of all freedom.³

Does this *mean* that the *pre-modern* conception of dialogue as pertaining primarily to its ground has been conclusively abrogated? While being granted *textual* or *physical* access to literary works from a great variety of epochs or places, are we being compelled to feed into the *physicalist* dogma that those works are incapable of bespeaking our roots as a permanent ground of intelligibility, a bedrock of *permanent ideas*, of *living questions* allowing us to retrace *Platonically* any and all perspective or “point of view”—above all the Global one of “the End of History”—to “the inner life of things,” the life that is not “mine” or “yours” (thus, not a predicate), but proper/original to the ontological constitution of ourselves and our world?⁴

Today, it is only in resisting the temptation to yield to the *anti-Platonic*, mercantile impulse of our Global or Open Society (Patt, 1997),⁵ that we can draw classical literary works “across boundaries” into dialogue about their common ground of intelligibility, thereby reliving dialogue “anachronistically,” or *Platonically*. It remains to be seen if the *experiment* proposed here will confirm, or unsettle the certainties that we, as Citizens of a New

World Order, are being raised to cherish (Andreacchio, 2022b).⁶

METHODOLOGY

Including a Diagnosis of Our Current Situation

The present study’s methodology is phenomenological in an Aristotelian sense that tends to be obscured by methodologies of a modern-Cartesian extraction.⁷ While contemporary scholarship tends to remain “perspectival,” if only by conceiving perspectivism *a posteriori* as a universal or “global” mode of investigation, the present study addresses its ancient sources as stages for the illumination of a non-perspectival methodology. In this respect, it would be fair to suggest that the “method” advanced here involves a Socratic hermeneutics that strips the very category of method of modern prejudices on the way to discovering a *natural* method, or a method defined by natural ends, or more precisely by nature as seat of permanent spheres of intelligibility.⁸

Modernity’s 18th century detractors warned that in seeing “more” than the ancients, modern man loses discernment of what he sees (Andreacchio, 2013).⁹ Why do the moderns see more?

3 For a recent historicist defense of the “meaning” of freedom as a function of the modern individual-ego’s will within the strictures of a “social contract,” see Toby Buckle, *What is Freedom? Conversations with Historians, Philosophers, and Activists* (Buckle, 2021). On the reduction of classical appeals to freedom to expressions of racial bigotry, see Tyler Stovall. *White Freedom The Racial History of an Idea* (Stovall, 2022).

4 Modern liberalism’s abandonment of a classical metaphysical grounding for ethics/politics has opened the door to staunchly illiberal reconstructions of classical metaphysics in terms of “traditions” serving as receptacles of what Nietzsche called our “will to power”. See e.g., Alexander Dugin, *Political Platonism: The Philosophy of Politics* (Dugin, 2019).

5 With the possible exception of Hegel, there are arguably no greater prophetic spokespersons of the anti-Platonist *Geist* incarnated by our Global Society, than Kant, Nietzsche and Heidegger. See *Formen des Anti-Platonismus* by Patt (1997).

6 On the practical problems inherent in the constitution of any “world order,” see Andreacchio, “Redemption: The Third Act of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*” (Andreacchio, 2022b).

7 On Aristotelian phenomenology, see Jens Kristian Larsen, “Counting (on) Being: On Jacob Klein’s Return to Platonic Dialectic,” in *Phenomenological Interpretations of Ancient Philosophy*. Kristian Larsen and Pål Rykkja Gilbert (2021), eds

8 At the opposite end of the spectrum of approaches to the problem of methodology stands Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge* (Feyerabend, 1975/1991). While for Feyerabend, the inadequacy of modern rationalism point to a fundamental conceptual anarchy, here the prognosis to the crisis of modern reason is seen as a return to reason as a (philosophical) problem hidden in the (divine) mystery of being itself.

9 In his 1948 lecture on “Reason and Revelation,” Leo Strauss summarized G. E. Lessing’s argument as follows: “We see more than the ancients; and yet our eyes might possibly be poorer than the eyes of the ancients; the ancients saw less than we; but their eyes might have been more discerning than ours. I fear that the whole comparison of the ancients and the moderns would lead to this result” (Meier, *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, 179; Meier, 2006). Giambattista Vico’s work (from the 1708 *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione* to the 1744 *Principj di Scienza Nuova delle Nazioni* (Vico, 1744/2015), which may be rendered as *Principles of the Founding of Nations*, in the respect that Vico’s *nuova* refers to the divine or divine-like origin or root of political things) is in agreement with Lessing’s conclusion. See Andreacchio, “Autobiography as History of Ideas”. See “*Autobiography as History of Ideas*” by Andreacchio (2013).

Because they rise above the ancients (as dwarfs on giants' shoulders, as the adagio has it), thereby gaining sight of a vaster landscape. But how might modern man rise above the ancients? The simple answer is contained in the rise of the modern Self or *ego*.¹⁰ The modern self is so constituted as to have access, or as to *believe* to have access to a vision of the Whole (of reality) that for his ancestors could be entertained only by a biblical God.¹¹ The problem of "seeing more, but without less discernment" is accounted by the new "mode" of vision (as per Machiavelli) characteristic of modern man, or of the modern-Cartesian *ego*. The modern self is *attributed* autonomous powers, powers autonomous of divinely innate ends. Modern man sees, so to speak, on his own, or as an *individual*; what is more, he "individuates" himself. He is not *placed* at the center of the world; rather, as Napoleon crowning himself, he places himself in a center, as an *object* of concern. Descartes performs this operation with clarity and distinction: with the Frenchman, the self is *objectified* as pure "subject," recipient of his environment.

In our Cartesian universe, the self—the new "man" decried by the likes of Jonathan Swift¹²—responds not to God or to a hidden natural order of things (φύσεως τάξις), but to his unconscious "material environment" (*res extensa*), if only where this is thereupon projected back onto a nominal or deistic deity.¹³ In this respect, modern man stands as the exemplary "target" of a very hostile universe: he is raised to see his incapacity to see what pre-modern man had assumed to see. Modern man sees his incapacity by seeing that the Whole (*i.e.*, the general context of vision) is hostile to vision, where vision is no longer assumed to be rooted in "things themselves" (*res ipsae*), but in a mere "formal" *ego*. Hence the need for the modern self to "fill

himself" with the world—to explore, to absorb, to conquer *res extensa* (nature conceived mechanistically). Only in the process of "acquiring" his purportedly violent world can modern man find *meaning* for his existence; only in the act of converting "matter" into "Spirit" (as Hegel's *Geist*) can modern man find *himself*. Thereupon, man's "egoic" consciousness yields to the awakening of Spirit itself as the truth about man's *evolution* from empty/formal universality to the concreteness of a Universal Individual, namely the Open Society that today we are raised to regard as our "global" (diachronically and synchronically) destiny. The Cartesian *ego's* *monistic* "point of view" (as per Leibniz) yields, today, to a super-variant, the "Global point of view" that is supposed to integrate all old egoic points of view, thereby resolving the problem of the old Machiavellian conflict between man and violent nature. In the Global point of view, "inert nature" has been *integrated* (or has integrated itself) or "channeled and controlled" (as per Machiavelli) into a Society of channeling and control, namely our *technological* society.¹⁴

Modernity's technology is not a mere tool, to be sure, but a *way of life* formalized in modernity's *ideology*, a plan (blue-print) to "change the world," in the sense of "integrating" nature—including all birth, or life—via a process of quantification.¹⁵ Herein lies the key to our ability to see *more*, in the very act of losing our capacity to see beyond or behind *appearances*. Not altogether unlike Goethe's Faust, modernity's "one dimensional man"¹⁶ trades interiority for exteriority: he turns his back on "higher things" after the promise of dominion over "lower things"; he abandons what is above himself, if only in order serve as its vicar vis-à-vis what is below himself. In short, modern man is a man compelled to abandon God in order to be a god among

10 *Ibid.*, on the significance of the Cartesian *ego*. Leo Strauss himself identifies concern with the Self as foundational for the modern world.

11 On the modern Cartesian *ego's* quasi-dethroning of the bible's God, see Jacob Klein's discussion on Descartes in Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought*, 197–210 (Klein, 1968). Klein also recalls the ancient tale of the Cosmos slipping out of Aristotle's hand, as he dozed off. See Klein, "Aristotle: An Introduction," in Cropsey, ed., *Ancients and Moderns*, 68 (Klein, 1964; Cropsey, 1964).

12 Spicy irony colors Swift's Sept. 29, 1725 "confession" to Alexander Pope: "Principally I hate and detest that animal called man; although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth" (*The Works of Jonathan Swift* by Swift (1843)).

13 Adam Smith's case is exemplary. On Smith's modernism, see Joseph Cropsey, "Adam Smith," in *History of Political Philosophy*. Leo Strauss and J. Cropsey, (1987/1963): 635–58.

14 For a recent *de facto* or tacitly technocratic critique of technocracy, see Jeffrey Friedman. *Power Without Knowledge A Critique of Technocracy* (Friedman, 2019).

15 See Jacques Ellul, *The Technological System*. Lisa Richmond, transl. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2018.

16 See Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Marcuse, 1991).

beasts. Yet, this new god serves a second function, standing as pivot for the rise of our Open Society, technological consummation of nature.

RESULTS

The present study finds that classical Chinese literary records have been systematically mis-



read in a modern “scientific” context to feed into a mechanistic conception of nature or life. When read on their own ground, or when not contextualized *ex machina*, our classics emerge as illuminating their own context, allowing us (readers) to question our mechanistic conceptions. In reading our sources by allowing them to guide us to reflect upon the context of reading itself, we expose ourselves to the discovery of our context as an irreducible sphere of intelligibility. In Platonic terms, interpretation coincides with a path of purgation through which the reader is awakened to a mind free of all compulsions. The grounds are thereby exposed for an overcoming of the crisis of interpretation or of reason attested to by the modern rise of historicism. If historicism arises to justify modern (Cartesian) rationalism/freedom and its “individual,” it also exposes its groundlessness, opening the door to the consolidation of a regime in which right is might. The present study uncovers classical Chinese literary sources as testifying to the trans-historical character of a “Platonic” alternative to historicism. What is further shown is that the alternative in question is not only still viable for present day scholarship, for it stands as the sole discernible way out of our contemporary civilizational crisis.

DISCUSSION

1. *Platonism in the East: Preliminary Sketch of a Buddhist Response to the Global Society*

There is hardly any classical tradition that has been coopted to serve the cause of the Open Society of “individuals,” more than Buddhism. We need not be familiar with Nāgārjuna’s defense of “the Middle Way” (*madhyamā-pratipad*)¹⁷ and the logic of “double negation” (*neti neti*) it inherits from ancestral Vedic authors, in order to appreciate that Buddhism’s “Four Noble Truths” (*chatvari-arya-satyani*) is incompatible with modernity’s “individuality”—an

17 Nāgārjuna’s 1st c. AD *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (“Root Verses of the Middle Way”) stands among the most eminent texts of traditional Buddhism.

invention parasitic on Christianity's doctrine of divine indivisibility (Nāgārjuna, 1995; Aquinas, n.d.).¹⁸

As the Buddhologist Donald S. Lopez discerningly remarked, the long-established English expression “Four Noble Truths” is apt to be misleading.¹⁹ The Sanskrit *chatvari-arya-satyani* may be best understood in the light of its ancient Chinese translation, which easily lends itself to be rendered as “The Sages’ Four True/Trustworthy Declarations” (四聖諦 *sishengdi*). What do the sage/noble declare? They declare that there is an unacceptable superficial problem/condition (that of the people at large), which stems from a tide/current of “grasping compulsion” (in this sense, the plebes do not live, but “are lived”). The noble speakers invoke the extinction of the grasping compulsion (the vulgar drive to gain satisfaction, or to overcome the authority of the noble), pointing to a horizon or place more fundamental than compulsion—whence the declaration of a pathway bridging the gap between nobility and the vile condition of slaves to compulsion. *Ergo*: sagely/noble authorities themselves show that people are not condemned to their servile condition.

The foregoing reading of the “true/trustworthy declarations” (*satya*) of “the noble ones” (*arya*) and indeed of Buddha himself, invites the conclusion that modernity’s “individual” is but the product of “grasping compulsions” (viz., a vulgar compulsion to overcome authority). In traditional, pre-modern Buddhism, where there is no autonomous “social atom” striving to rise to the heavens of an Open Society—to the zenith of its mechanically “evolving” universe—the noble and the vulgar are both masks (*personae*) of thought itself (where thought is the “mirror” in which the masks appear).

Buddhism responds to the threat of *political* decadence, or of outright barbarism ensuing from all open conflict between aristocrats/

authorities and their subjects. Where one pole (standing for “Reason of State”) tries to deny the people (standing for “Natural Reason”) the right to freedom (here, *natural* participation in Reason of State), the other tries to deny authorities their own right to rule. Buddhist “nobles” respond that both poles—the Sages and the Commoners—are but masks on the stage of Mind/Thought. Where the “foundations” are exposed, the two political poles can challenge each other without falling into obscurantism, the demise of the order of Mind itself. Conversely, where the providential agency of Mind (“divine natural providence”) and thereby the *meaning* of human life is eclipsed, the stage of our life is chaotic. In this respect, the crisis of theology is coeval with the crisis of politics; the latter entails the former.

2. The Modern Challenge to Platonic Buddhism

As the modern Enlightenment shows us, in closing itself to the theological, the political gains in *abstract universality*. No longer seeking its redemption “Platonically” in a divine mystery beyond all experience (such was the mystery that Rudolf Otto set out to defend in his *Das Heilige*), the political necessarily reifies the eternal into a symbolic “transcendental” universal begging for *realization*. The *liberating experience* invited by abstract universality is formidable. Unlike divine mystery, abstract universality is *empowering*, calling humanity as a whole to the magisterial task of *fulfilling* that of which the abstract or symbolic universal is a mere promise.

Abstract universality discloses a horizon of multiple *special* microcosms mirroring the universe in their attempt to render it *concrete*. These *specializations* are supposed to *integrate* into the constitution of an overarching *concrete universal*, which is what our Open “Leviathan” Society, or Hegel’s consummate State, is supposed to be. Here is the essential *telos* of modernity:

18 See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, First Part, Q. 11 and De Koninck, “Aristotle on God as Thought Thinking Itself,” 473 and 477 (Aquinas, n.d.; De Koninck, 1994). See also Andreacchio, “The Modern Deceit: Emancipation from Social Society.” Though Étienne Lamotte renders Buddhism’s *ātmabhāva* as “individuality” (*individualité*, apparently interchangeable, however, with “substantial Me”/Moi *substantiel*, or “substantial soul”/âme *substantielle*) posited merely expedientially, the Sanskrit term denotes more literally “own-substance” (自體 *ziti*), or even “self-certainty,” as the one characteristic of “my body” (身 *shen*, or 自身 *zishen*). See Lamotte, “Le Concept de vacuité dans le bouddhisme,” 74. On *ātmabhāva* as 自體 *ziti*, see 郭瓊瑤 Guo Qiongyao (2008), 《金剛經》的「即非」之辯—日本學界對「即非論理」的論考與爭議 [“The Debate over ‘affirmation-in-negation’ in the *Diamond Sūtra*: Discussions and Disputes over the ‘logic of affirmation-in-negation’ in Japanese Academia”]; on *ātmabhāva* as 自身 *zishen/jishin*, see 川田 熊太郎 Kawada Kumataro (1967), 瑜伽論の自身所有縁起 [“On Conditioned Substance/ *ātmabhāva* in the *Yogācārabhūmi-Sāstra*”].

19 See *Four Noble Truths* (Lopez, 2024).

the abstraction of symbolic universals produces particulars driven towards the *realization* of universality on the basis of particularity. The "noble ideal" is realized on a "vulgar-material" basis. This is modernity: idealism on a materialist foundation. The notion implies that idealism is somehow given a task "by matter". It is not enough for the modern idealist to "contemplate nature" (*à la* Epicurus); he must rather *fulfill* nature, or resolve the contradiction between ideal and material, between universal and particular. This can be achieved only through the *logic* of modernity, whereby an abstract notion is supposed to be realized in a special discipline, or other, *autonomously* from *theological* and *ethical* considerations, alike. The realization of the abstract universal must consequently be understood as *technological*, rather than as merely "artistic" or *technical*. Why, technology is "art" (*techne*) for which the theological is a Kantian "as if" (*die Als-Ob*) instrumental to the *resolution* of common political problems (Andreacchio, 2019).²⁰ The resolution in question is necessarily *specialized* as long as it does not converge with other *specializations* into the "solution" or *dissolution* of natural problems, of nature as fundamental problem.

While modernity may seem to offer an uncanny reminder of a classical call to transcend mechanical necessity, it deviates from classical antiquity by calling for the apotheosis of "the machine," rather than liberation from it. The distinction between the two alternatives is brought to light most vividly by modernist readings of Buddhism as rejecting any permanence, stability, eternity, or immutability, in the very act of positing *mechanisms* underpinning our everyday life-experience. Thus would the renowned scholar Étienne Lamotte state: "[the] founder [of Buddhism], Buddha Sākyamuni, declares without ambiguity: "There is nothing permanent (*anitya*), stable (*Dhruva*), eternal (*sāsvata*), immutable (*aviparināmadharman*)"—even as our experience is predicated upon "the mechanism of an immutable production in dependence (*pratityasamutpāda*)" (Lamotte, 1977).²¹ The implication would seem to be, not that there simply is nothing immutable, but that the immutable is

a *machine* underlying our ordinary life-experience—a machine that unsettles any Vedic return of Ātmanic *determination* to Brahmanic *indetermination*; such a return is rejected as representing "immanentism" (Lamotte, 1977). Thus, Buddhism would upset, if not overturn altogether, what we could call a "theory about everything," or any totalistic doctrine. Yet, Buddha exposes the machine of a beginning-less samsāra only in the act of promising its cessation (Lamotte, 1977). But how can what does not begin be ever terminated? This is *the* foremost problem of modernity.

3. Preface to a Revival of Platonic Buddhism

With Buddhism, there is a horizon of "being" that transcends any mechanism, the horizon of what is neither mechanical, nor personal (hence the doctrine of *anātman*). And yet, Lamotte insists that throughout the centuries Buddhists "faithful to their Master" have always professed the *reality* of the *impersonal* "five aggregates" (*skandadharmātravāda*) constituting our ordinary experience.²² Experience is held together, not by any person, but by a "grasping" called *upādāna* (often translated as "attachment"), a gluing-agent of sorts that the Chinese would name 取 *qu*—"appropriation". All determinations of consciousness, including consciousness as its own determination, are inherently-impersonal *properties* held together by "compulsive grasping" (*upādāna*) to constitute a flux of innumerable ephemeral identities, or *personal designations*. Thus, personality is not the product of a "higher Self". Any "higher" Self, no less than any "lower" Self would be a *distraction* from truth, or from liberation from *upādāna*, the "grasping" defining all Selves. Transcendence of illusion, or rather of delusion, is a "letting go" of all grasping, whereby the cohesiveness of properties yields to the "empty form" of consciousness, or *absolute indetermination* in and of itself. Grasping grasps masks of truth; it obscures truth; it projects it into the desert of the past, even as truth returns continuously, from the back-door of the future. Whence the cyclical character of samsāra: as we compulsively grasp masks of truth, we are compelled to relive truth as a curse. Our compulsions—betraying *violence*—mask truth, the danger of all dangers.

20 See "Review Essay, Part II: Mastery of Nature" by Andreacchio (2019) esp. 234-38.

21 Lamotte (1977), *op. cit.*, 67–68. Lamotte's Buddhists are *de facto* philosophical Epicureans (78).

22 The "aggregates/constituents" of experience include material elements (*rūpa*), sensations (*vedanā*), notions (*samjñā*), volitions/impulses (*samskāra*) and modes of consciousness (*vijñāna*).



Now, the grasper is nothing other than an aggregate of “properties” (*skandadharmā*) serving as masks distracting the grasper from truth. Yet, properties *in themselves*, or in a “Platonic” sense, are *mirrors* of truth: not attributes of any “self” (determination), but of the absolutely undetermined. In this respect, the world is originally populated by “Ideas”—forms (τὰ εἶδη) that are “void” of grasping, of *upādāna*; forms of *pure intelligibility* in the respect that they reflect their source, the truth about all forms.

Truth in Greek is “disclosure” or “revelation”: ἀλήθεια, the *presence* of all things. The truth of all things is their *being-present*, their *exposure*. To know something is to see that something exposed, to see it present, to see it unmasked, unhidden, or to see the hidden aspect of it. To know something is to see its *roots*, the part that is in the dark, underground. Seekers of knowledge are necessarily archaeologists, un-earthers, revivers: they call people and their properties into the light of the present, lest they be buried in the darkness of the past—into the stream of the compulsion that Buddhists would

designate as *upādāna*: *samsāric*, vicious grasping. The very properties that are grasped to obscure the present are originally or inherently “void” of all grasping and thus of all determination; such are the forms of Buddha’s speech, his *Dharma*; the ways of his Way.

4. *Unearthing Platonic Buddhism from Beneath the Cavern of Modernity*

Buddhism (Buddha’s Way, or the Way of Awakening) is restorative of our life-experience and is “brought into China” textually precisely in this context, to restore language to its proper function. Formally, to save scholarship (儒 *ru*) and its soul (道 *dao*) from mutual alienation. What we have learned to call Confucianism and Daoism were originally two faces of the same coin, as day and night are. The *Dao* was the 先王之道 *xianwang zhi dao*, “the way of the former kings”. Accordingly, *The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine* (2003) (黃帝內經 *huangdi neijing*) would retrace the problem of “the way” to the question

of "the true man" or 真人 *zhenren*. Its introductory chapter, "Discourse on the Heavenly True in Early Antiquity" (上古天真論 *shang-gu tianzhen lun*), calls us to retrace all outward authority to an inner nature; the ascent to "the sagely king" (聖人 *shengren*) is a mirror of the return to what is true about "the achieved man" (至人 *zhiren*) "retraceable to the true man" (歸於真人 *guiyu zhenren*). As the old adagio goes, what is true in the eye of Heaven is not true in the eyes of ordinary men. The *true* man sees with the eye of Heaven and indeed is as invisible as Heaven is. He is what is true *about* all men; he is our hidden humanity. But what is *hidden* is eclipsed by the corruption of mores, foremost among them that of language. Hence Confucius's exemplary call to rectify speech (正言 *zhengyan*) (Confucius, n.d.). The "Daoist" is the "Confucian" who reminds his fellow scholars that outward accomplishment is the function of a common nature: all masks *ought* to serve—because they originally or naturally do so—as mirrors, not eclipsers of an underlying reality. *La comédie humaine*: our outward accomplishment is no more than an echo of an original perfection. The quest for power alienated from the mystery of a divine mind is, as the Bible's *Bereishit* (Genesis) reminds us, satanic. Our yearnings remain, as they must, unfulfilled in the future because they are fulfilled "in the beginning," the inevitably hidden, secretive or sacred dimension of the visible, the present.

Classical language attests to the duplicity of things, or to the hiddenness of revelation—of light in the dark. Paradigmatic is "the moon" to which long-acclaimed classical writers dedicated hymns of mysterious longing. Notable among old Chinese hymns to the moon is a composition by 張九齡 Zhang Jiuling (678–740), "Distant yearnings in the Moon's presence" (望月懷遠 *wangyue huaiyuan*), where truth is sought in a dream, or in the medium of poetry, rather than directly:

海上生明月，天涯共此時。

Luminous moon born on ocean's surface,
heavenly banks meet in this moment;

情人怨遙夜，竟夕起相思。

The lover regrets the lengthy night, noctur-

nal realm arouses yearning.

滅燭憐光滿，披衣覺露滋。

Extinguished candles to cherish light's fullness,
dressing aware of dew's expanse;

不堪盈手贈，還寢夢佳期。

Cannot contain this brimming gift, return
asleep to dream of nuptial date.

The last verse returns to the first, where the moon appears on the surface of the waters to unify lovers placed at the antipodes of the world "in this moment". The *presence* of the moon serves as medium of communication, yet not directly, but in a reflected manner. Zhang's own discourse stretches out like the night it evokes, to establish a communication we long for in the ocean of night. Over dark expanses of water, shines the poet's word, engenderer of yearnings, calling us to rise back to the moon itself. Yet, Zhang warns us not to extinguish our candles for the fullness of light, or to flee the touch of water—of death itself—in search of immortality. For the gift of the present cannot be grasped or contained. The marriage of man and the moon is indeed consummated only in a dream (Zhang, 2011).

Zhang's Tang dynasty composition provides a fine testimony of the classical "Platonic" understanding of the limitations of the human mind, a mind incapable of seeing itself if not in the medium of its own articulation, its own *speech*, its *logos* (λόγος), or 道 *dao*. The oriental "moon" can be seen only in the medium of prophecy, or poetry—of soothsaying that awakens in the night, not outside of lady night's own speech, but within it.

Zhang's contemporary, Caoxi Huineng (曹溪慧能), "Sixth Patriarchal Prophet" (六祖大鑿 *liuzu dajian*) addresses the question of the nature of Mind in his legendary "response" to the patriarch Yuqian Shenxiu (玉泉神秀):²³

菩提本無樹 The Root of Wisdom is devoid
of Tree,

明鏡亦非臺 Nor is the Luminous Mirror
a support.

本夾無一物 From the beginning, there is not
a thing,

何處惹塵埃 Where could dust accrue?

23 The composition is found in Chapter 1 of the *The Great Sixth Patriarch Teacher's Altar Scripture of the Way's Treasure* (六祖大師法寶壇經 *liuzu dashi fabao tanjing*; the usual abridged translation of the Chinese is, "Platform Sūtra"; at https://triptika.cbeta.org/T48n2008_001). Legend had it that Huineng's statement stood in stark contrast with Shenxiu's *authoritative* teachings. While Shenxiu had come to serve as "Imperial Preceptor" (帝師 *dishi*), Huineng would be heralded as an illiterate sage whose words bore witness to the original unity of wisdom and truth and so to the *living* wisdom of Buddha. In the persona of Huineng, Buddhist scholars would come to defend the independence of wisdom from political appropriation. In his *The Spirit of Zen*, Van Schaik (2018) skims the surface of the problem at hand.

In Huineng's poetic stanza (*gāthā*/ 偈陀 *jituo*), the trunk/tree, not the root is negated, where 本 *ben* may be translated at once as “originally” and “origin/root,” as the Latin *principium*. 本夾 *benlai* would then correspond to the Greek ἐξ ἀρχῆς, or even *in principio*, where “the beginning” is the limit/end of all unfolding (the *terminus ad quem* coinciding with the *terminus a quo*). 本夾 *benlai* would indicate, not only “in the beginning,” but “always” and thus too, “in the head,” as in the Septuagint rendering of Genesis (בראשית *Bereishit*; Chabad.org, n.d.).

Where the Hebrew בראשית *bereishit*, from ראש *ros*, or “head,” is “in the head/heading,” where “head” is “seat of authority,” or Mind, ἐποίησεν (which renders the Hebrew ברא *bara*) entails a *noetic* “poetic” production, or a “distinction,” which, in the case of *Genesis* 1:1 pertains explicitly to the heavens above and the earth below.²⁴ The two poles are distinguished in themselves (being *named*) and from each other, much as Adam and Eve are: while both poles are originally *one*, it is “in the *authorial* beginning”—in the heading of the Story, where the Story is *alive* as its Mind—that they are separated, as Father (Thought) and Son (Word) in John 1. Thus may we read *Genesis* 1:1 as follows: “In his Mind, the Divine Ruler produced the heavens and the earth,” with the implication that the production at hand involves a *mental discrimination*. It is *in the mind of the Story* that distinctions are “made,” inviting the conclusion that the divisions point back to the unity of the divine mind. The Bible itself is then to be understood as the product of a divine mind, in which all distinctions are at once unified and sustained/disclosed.

The foregoing excursus into the mysterious “head” of the Bible draws us back to Huineng's 本夾無一物 *benlai wu yi wu*: “in the beginning there is nothing,” a proposition *de facto* opening the door to the notion and doctrine of a *creatio ex nihilo*. “Nothing” is literally “absence of a single thing” (無一物 *wu yi wu*) a periphrastic expression indicating, not primarily “nothing” per se, but the *purity* of Mind, unfettered by anything. The 明鏡 *mingjing* is an *immaculate* “lu-

minous mirror,” one that is *devoid* of any of the distinctions it produces. Where could illusion, the “dust” of this world, arise? What “support” would allow it to accrue? Huineng's answer is, *nowhere*. The “dust” cannot, therefore, constitute an obstacle for Mind.

While the Tree of Wisdom may occasion “dust,” wisdom itself does not. There is, therefore, nothing “wrong” with wisdom, nothing reprehensible. Wisdom is then eminently *desirable*—*in itself*, or *by nature*. Were wisdom to be the mere *fruit* of a “tree,” then Mind would serve as support for appearances and thus potentially for deception. Wisdom cannot be something acquired aside from the truth of Mind: wisdom cannot be “learned”. In the absence of any original or proper distinction between truth and wisdom, there is no need to rid Mind of its products (“things”).

Is there, then, no Tree of Wisdom? Is the Tree of Wisdom an *illusion*? If there is no wisdom aside from truth, then eating of the Tree of Wisdom would prove fatal. Conceiving wisdom as something other than truth—if only as an “Other” through which we can access truth itself—would be to go astray, to leave the “Garden” of the Mind; to “fall” into a *desert* in which Mind would appear at best as a fearsome master, a jealous God.

In a “fallen world,” wisdom and truth need to be reconciled. Indeed, the reconciliation of wisdom and truth is precisely what Huineng's *gāthā* points back to. What is “from the beginning” is Mind, Huineng's “luminous mirror” (明鏡 *mingjing*), a classical poetic designation. Being void of anything, Mind is a *pure form* (εἶδος), rather than the support/stage (臺 *tai*) of its products. It does not “justify” anything or anyone; it is thus absolutely (ontologically) independent/unfettered (Mind *in-itself* is not a predicate; it does not serve any[one's] cause). Hence Huineng's last provocative/rhetorical question (何處惹塵埃 *hechu re chenai*), where Mind/thought is no-where, not being any of its determinations, “where could dust [ever] arise!” In sum, Mind is not the *tree* of wisdom, but wisdom itself. Wisdom is not Mind's *fruit*, not something that can “fall off” from Mind, not something that can be

24 On the meaning of ברא *bara*, see Van Wolde (2017), “Separation and Creation in Genesis 1 and Psalm 104”. Compare Leo Strauss's 1957 lecture, “On Interpretation of Genesis,” in Green, ed., *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity*, 359–76. Van Wolde's research is compatible with Strauss's reading of *Bereishit*'s ברא *bara*, “Platonically,” as διαίρεσις or “division” (Green, 1997).

“grasped” by Mind. All that Mind grasps is but “the wisdom of the world,” which is to say, *dust*. “Dust” cannot accumulate over Mind without Mind’s grasping it. The obstacles of thought are not obstacles in themselves. There is nothing inherently detrimental to thought, with the exception of the “karmic” byproducts of Mind’s “grasping” (*upādāna*). Where Mind “grasps,” it serves as stage for delusion, a stage opening the door to outright evil. Yet, Mind in itself, or at its root (*in principio*) does not grasp, but give—give of itself. That is the general message of the scripture containing Huineng’s *gāthā*, the 六祖壇經 *liuzu taning*. The 壇 *tan* of the title, is the altar whence the patriarch testifies to the Dharma, the “Way” of Buddha and thus of Mind (for Buddha is Mind’s proper act, namely awakening). The stage (壇 *tan*) is to be understood as source of enlightening or awakening guidance, rather than of precepts ensnaring people. By the same token, we are to conclude that Mind is originally not a stage (臺 *tai*) for evil, but one (壇 *tan*) for good.

As noted above, Huineng’s words respond to the verses attributed to Patriarch Shenxiu (Van Schaik, 2018). These read: “You are the Tree of Wisdom, Mind as a luminous mirror’s support, Time and again diligently wiping, do not let dust accrue” (身是菩提樹，心如明鏡臺，時時勤拂拭，莫使惹塵埃。 Here Buddha’s “word/way” (法 *fa*, rendering the Sanskrit *dharma*, etymologically denoting “support”) is not understood radically enough, as stemming from Mind itself. Instead, Dharma is presented as *our* way back to Buddha/Mind. *You*, as “Tree of Wisdom,” confront Mind *as if it were* a support for *your* ascent to wisdom. Mind stands as *justification* for man’s sacred battle against worldly or profane “dust”. What allows us to live unstained by evil is assiduous dedication to wisdom based on truth. Thus speaks the *moral* man.

Huineng’s response exposes the moral life to its “dangerous” foundation. Rather than struggling to live in the Garden of Eden, man is to face the challenge posed by what stands outside

of the Garden. More precisely, we are to learn to face the Abyss of Truth without *falling* into it. This is possible only where we cease conceiving wisdom as object of “grasping,” or as the mirage of a “grasping-mind”. Whence the Buddhist doctrine of “absence of self-referentiality,” or of the “vacuity of beings and their ways” (*sattvadharmasūnyatā*). The “way” (*dharma*) of a “being” (*sattva*) is not self-referential or “individual” in the respect that its content ultimately coincides with its *transcendent end*. Beings are not “self-enclosed,” but always and necessarily tending towards their perfection understood as their original place in Mind.

The lesson to be gleaned here is that to live is not to fit in a system, but to expose oneself to a *thought* irreducible to any system. The very doctrine of *pratīyasamutpāda* (usually rendered as “dependent origination”) bespeaks the limitations of *natura naturata*, or “derivative nature” (where “nature” is birth, as φύσις). Here, things arise out of a background, the “birth” of things entailing a “pre-history” or *context*, a horizon of “conditions” or “occasions” (causes in the ancient Latin sense of *caussa*). Thus would the Chinese render *pratīyasamutpāda* as 緣起 *yuanqi*, where 緣 *yuan* (compound of 糸 *mi* and 豕 *tuan*) suggests “retracing of determination,” or “having a retracable identity”. All objects of experience presuppose a meta-empirical, or “metaphysical” context: Mind, not as its own object, but as the *referent* of all of its objects. Thus, in Aśvaghōṣa’s 2nd c. *Discourse Awakening Trust in the Great Path* (1666) (大乘起信論 *Dacheng Qixin Lun*,²⁵ later echoed by the Ming Dynasty *Record of the Mirror of Mind*, or 心鏡錄 *Xinjing Lu*), “Mind does not see Mind” (n.d.) (心不見心 *xinbujian xin*); for “no appearance can fully represent it” (無相可得 *wuxiang ke de*),²⁶ even as speech can point to it directly; as a finger indicating the moon (手指月 *shou zhi yue*).²⁷ So while Mind is irreducible to words, words *can*, because they *always do*, empty out into Mind. For they arise out of Mind insofar as in them Mind “descends”

25 Title traditionally attributed to Aśvaghōṣa (fl. 1st c. AD) and usually translated as *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*.

26 All references to Chinese Buddhist texts are drawn from the *Taishō Tripitaka*, the Buddhist “Three Vehicles” (*Tripitaka*)—of scriptures, interpretations and discipline—redacted in the early 20th c. under Emperor Taishō and carrying the full title of 大正新脩大藏經 (Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō), commonly abbreviated as 大正藏 *Taishōzō*, or more simply as “T”. See Vol. 32, n. 1666 (T.32.1666), at <https://tripitaka.cbeta.org/T32n1666>; Vol. 48, n. 2016.85 (T.48.2016), at https://tripitaka.cbeta.org/T48n2016_085; and 釋摩訶衍論 (Shi Moheyan Lun, n.d.), T.32.1668.4 at https://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=T32n1668_004. Compare T48n2016_085 and 0881c07 (https://tripitaka.cbeta.org/T48n2016_085); see also the *Record of Pointing to the Moon* (n.d.) (指月錄 *Zhiyuelu*).

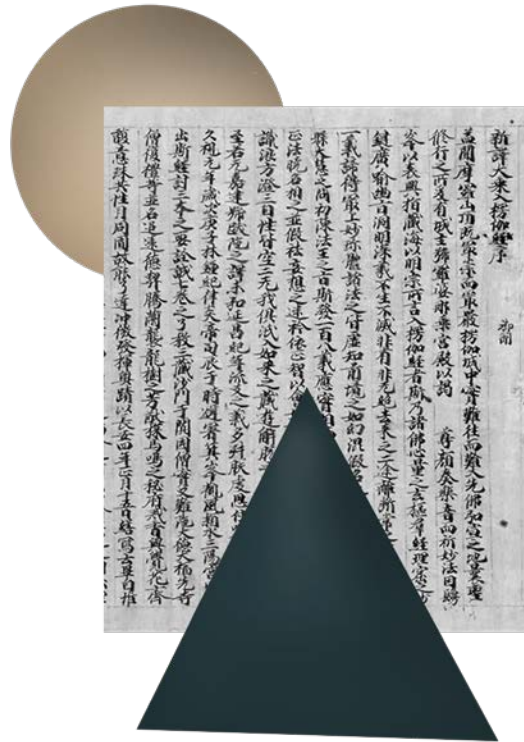
27 See *Record of the Moon in the Water Pointing Purely to the Moon* (水月齋指月錄 *Xueyue Zhaizhi Yue Lu*).

to find itself as *avatāras*, its own phenomenal determinations.

Let us pause on this point. Mind sees itself directly in its own “poetic representations,” even as these fail to *resolve* Mind—the *problem* of Mind, Mind as *fundamental problem*—in themselves. What we learn is that poetry *extinguishes* itself (the Chinese will read, 滅 *mie*, as in Zhang Jiuling’s “extinguished candles”—滅燭 *miezhu*) in *bearing witness* to Mind, to the fundamental problem, the mystery of all mysteries (shining as a moon in the dark). This is nirvana, the “blowing out of the candle,” the consummate referent of all modes of consciousness and thus, too, of all speech and thereby of all contents of experience. For experience unfolds in speech, just as speech unfolds in Mind.

Experience is gathered into its *poetic forms* where they *point back* to their transcendent ground: Mind as *fundamental alternative* to all universalism, including that of our Global Society of “individuals”. Mind makes itself known through/in speech *in principio*, before any universal could ever present itself as *solving* the problem of Mind once and for all. Prior to serving as ideological building-blocks of any New World Order, our words are pointers to an original, *underlying order*, allowing for direct knowledge, or knowledge stemming from its own ground. This is to say that prior to our seeking truth, truth seeks us. In this respect, communication does not originally build “castles”—Empires, Caves or Societies, no matter how universal, no matter how “Open”—but gathers *back*, *undoes*, goes “against the current” of all building, entailing what traditional Buddhism would refer to as “an *alternative* transmission outside of doctrines, not standing on words” (不立文字，教外別傳 *buliwenzi jiaowaibiechuan*).²⁸ It is not that words are to be distrusted, but that they are to be understood in the light of a source of pre-verbal intelligibility, cradle of speech, no less than of being. Thus do we read in Chapter 4 of *The Scripture of the Descent at Lanka* (n.d.) (楞伽阿跋多羅寶經 *Lengqieabaduoluo baojing*; otherwise known as the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*):

Where the infinite depths of the *Cradle-of-Being* [如來藏 *rulaizang*] combine with



“the seventh mode of consciousness” [i.e., *volition*, TN], the two together giving rise to *appropriation*, the Wise depart from them. Where Mind appears as an image in a mirror, its permeations spreading without beginning, the contemplative examiner of Being discerns the vacuity of all deeds [i.e., *karma*, TN]. As fools seeing the finger pointing to the moon contemplate the finger without contemplating the moon, literalists do not see what the self [or, “identity”] truly is. Where Mind works like a backstage operator, volition resembles an actor on stage, while the “five sensory modes of consciousness” gather as companions into a deluded audience. 甚深如來藏，而與七識俱，二種攝受生，智者則遠離。如鏡像現心，無始習所薰，如實觀察者，諸事悉無事。如愚見指月，觀指不觀月，計著名字者，不見我真實。心為工伎兒，意如和伎者，五識為伴侶，妄想觀伎眾。²⁹

What is at stake, here, is the distinction between Mind *in itself* and Mind as mirrored in speech. In the latter case, “mind” is *grasped*, or, to be more precise, Mind’s *aggregate-determination* (a “compound”) grasps itself in terms of a “self” or “identity”—a determination of consciousness

²⁸ *Scripture of the Great Brāhma* (n.d.) [“Indian”] *Heavenly King* [Deva Rāja] *Asking Buddha to Dispel Perplexities* (大梵天王問佛決疑經 *dafantianwang wen fo jueyi jing*).

²⁹ T16n0670, 0510c11, at http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/T16n0670_004.

“receiving” the activity of Mind as the “external/objective” content of a theatrical play. The real *context* of the play is never questioned, even as it may be *divined* in terms of a supreme deity, or heavenly authority. Yet, the context of the theater of our daily experience is Mind *proper*, Mind as “Cradle-of-Being” (*Tathāgatagarbha*), whence ultimately stem all of our “volitional-deeds” (*karma*, 事 *shi* or 業 *ye*) and so the very freedom that the deluded cherish in terms of self-determination. The Buddhist Scripture appeals to Mind as the source

of a freedom that *we* partake in to the extent that we *let go* of ourselves, rather than holding onto ourselves, our self-determination. For self-determination is nothing but a *mode* of Mind (*vijñāna*), a “derivative/conditioned” guise of what is neither a “person” (*ātman*), nor a machine or mechanical process (*samsāra*).

It is for the sake of helping the deluded let go of themselves that Buddha invokes *nirvāna*, the extinction of the beginning-less stream of self-referentiality/determination. *Nirvāna*, the



“blowing out” of the “candle” of samsara, entails the very blowing-out of “time,” or of the present as lost in a stream of self-appropriation. In the light of nirvāna, the present is disclosed *directly* out of its permanent ground of intelligibility, rather than via the past and/or the future. Both past and future re-emerge as *functions* of the present, of the *avatāra* of eternity. Far from denoting a merely “negative” activity, nirvāna *reinstates* all beings and their world independently of any compulsion (*viz.*, *upādāna*). The Gods themselves, Masters of Men, are “revived” as *mirrors* of awakening, replacing imposters who, in samsāra, are mistaken (and mistake themselves) for *alternatives* (opaque masks) to awakening.

Thus does Buddhism’s affirmation of the primacy of Mind over any of its objects—including “mind” as (hypothetical) object, or as “abstract” reification—settle the classical dispute between “idealists”/theists and “materialists”/atheists in favor of the former. Even if, or rather precisely because, the distinction between mind and body is ultimately an illusion, it is more appropriate to believe in the primacy of Mind/form over body/content, than to believe in the opposite. For what we call “mind”—what *for us* is mind as *predicate*—is definitely more akin to *reality* than any “body” ever could be. Theism is truer than atheism, or physicalism. For theism sets aside a poetic space for reflection upon Reality or *Being*, such that no atheism would ever invite.

Buddhism’s lesson is Platonism’s own, which is not about establishing Mind as “heavenly master” (we already have a plethora of those), but about *letting go* of the contents of experience (by recognizing them) as “mere modes of consciousness” (*vijñaptimātra*, or 唯識 *weishi*), as

opposed to constituents of a theatrical battlefield populated by perceiving-beings (*sattvas*) and independent “objects” of perceptions (*dharmas*). Thus would Vasubandhu, “founding father” of Yogācāra Buddhism, warn that, “the moment you turn to what is conditioned, knowing that it is devoid of anything attainable, is the moment you abide in mere consciousness by having let go of both grasping and its objects” (若時於所緣，智都無所得，爾時住唯識，離二取相故) (Vasubandhu, 1985).³⁰ The “self” itself is not to be understood as a determination of consciousness, but as consciousness itself; not as a *res cogitans* (Descartes’s ego), but as *cogitatio* itself, the *agency* of thought whereby thought unifies the contents of experience back to their source—as the *mirror* of their mysterious ground of intelligibility.

The Buddhist doctrine of “no-self” (*anātman*) is not one of self-denial, but one pertaining to “the proper place” of self, just as the Socratic discourse of Plato’s *Republic* addresses the paramount importance of seeking the contents of experience in their original context—outside of the “cavern” of our ordinary experience (Plato, 2007). Our “Platonic Cave” is precisely what the Buddhist addresses as samsāra, the world of illusions, of dreams and of “selves” slavishly bound to them—compliments of poetry ill-conceived, or rather altogether *forgotten*, not to say *abandoned* (Alighieri, 1481; Andreacchio, 2022a).³¹ The traditional Chinese rendering of *anātman* is 無我 *wuwo*, which entails absence (無 *wu*) from any designated place, rather than any denial of being. The question is not whether or not there is such a thing as a “self,” but *where* any “self” is; the “answer” being that the “self” is a form irreducible to any content, but also to any *con-*

30 玄奘 Xuanzang’s translation of verse 28 of Vasubandhu (天親 *tianqin*, fl. 4th-5th c. AD), *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā* (唯識三十論頌 *weishi sanshi lunsong*), or “The Thirty Verses of Mere Consciousness”. In the cited passage, knowledge coincides with “letting go” or departing from the twofold “grasping-grasped” scene (here 相 *xiang*, or *nimitta*, a “sign” insofar as all appearances “signal” their ground/source). In his work on 玄奘 Xuanzang’s 成唯識論 *Chengweishi lun* translation of the *Vijñaptimātratā siddhi śāstra* (“Interpretation of the Achievements of Consciousness Alone”) by Dharmapāla 護法, Peter Lunde Johnson renders 相 *xiang* as “mental image”. See Johnson, *On Realizing There is Only the Virtual Nature of Consciousness*, 452 (Vasubandhu, n.d.). It is reasonable to conclude that Johnson’s rendering of *vijñaptimātratā* as “only the virtual nature of consciousness” is only virtually justifiable (Johnson, 2018).

31 The drama of the abandonment, nay betrayal of poetry is represented most vividly in Dante Alighieri’s *Comedy* (1481). See Andreacchio, “*Fleeing Evil*” (2022a). Plato’s “Buddhist” *redemption* of the City reduced to a Cave — the *polis* having decayed to the status of den for misanthropic misogyny — entails recognition of an ultimate harmony between ethics (the life of the City) and metaphysics (life outside of the City). That harmony corresponds to the one between political rhetoric and *eros*. While the two are irreducible to each other, as Leo Strauss noted, Plato does point to their sublime synthesis in “the rhetoric adumbrated in the *Phaedrus*” (“Review of Man in His Pride” by Strauss (1951), 396). Yet mysticism, or the mysterious dimension of human life, is *philosophical*: at the heart of the human lies a *discourse*, a *logos*, of which our “outer” speech is a mere projection. It is that “hidden” discourse that allows us to discover that “love” is not *originally* at odds with politics/morality (Plato, 2003).

text (standing inherently or constitutionally free from any "co-dependence"). The identical problem arises *mutatis mutandis* in Plato insofar as he invites us to discover the contents of experience in terms of pure intelligibility. Far from constituting a *material-literal* world (a world of appearances, or *μορφές*) in which we are lost, experience is a poetic theater in which we are originally *found* (indeed "invented" by poets). Somehow, our being lost in a desert presupposes our being found in an oasis, a *garden* in which the *finder* sees in us his own image.

Platonism is naturally open to the great "finder" present in the biblical Garden, even as the truth about his wisdom is buried in the abyss of the darkness surrounding Eden. Likewise, Buddhism is naturally inclined towards Buddha's cosmic *apotheosis*. In both "pagan" settings, the supreme "point of view" cannot be one *building* on "individuals" ("individuated" selves) and their "objective-material" context, but one *underlying* the *extinction* of both individuals and their environment. Indeed, the lofty "point of view" of our Age's Global Eye stands as the consummate nemesis of the Mind that sees all things as mirrors of its mysterious truth. What the Global Eye surveys clinically as inherently meaningless, or mechanically-evolving *res extensa*, Buddha's "Platonic" Eye *exhumes* out of the cavern of "matter," restoring it as the living body of truth itself.

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CATEGORY
CONTEXT OF THE ETYMOLOGY
“CONFLICT”

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DR. MAXIM LEPSKIY

ZAPORIZHZHIA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5604-641X>
- Email: waysensey@gmail.com

Maxim Lepskiy is a professor in the Sociology Department at Zaporizhzhia National University in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine. Professor Lepskiy has both academic and governmental administrative experience and currently heads the Research Board in Social Forecasting of the Sociological Association of Ukraine. He is an Academician of the European Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. He is the author of than 220 publications, including 21 monographs, 13 workbooks, and 4 textbooks on such subjects as social and political forecasting, conflict modeling and resolution, and peacemaking and human development.



NATALIIA LEPSKA

ZAPORIZHZHIA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6010-423X>

Nataliia Lepska is a Ph.D. in Political Science, Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the Zaporizhzhia National University in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine. She is the author of more than 130 publications on the problems of modern geopolitics, world politics, the activities of international organizations, political forecasting and state development.



ABSTRACT

The digitalization of the world, the conflict and variability of context in social networks turns people to search for the meanings and meanings of “conflict” in authoritative dictionaries that have their own categorical context, a reflection of the universal and the specific in a changing world. The study is updated by the need to resolve the conflict, which, without understanding the essence and context of conflicts, is the most complex theoretical and practical issue in professional negotiations.

The purpose of the article is to understand the categorical context of the etymology of conflict in dictionaries.

Research methodology. The article demonstrates the results of a holistic etymological study

that goes through the stages of: searching for significant attributions as the meaningful meaning of the “conflict”; the subject field of “conflict” and the categorical range of similar and opposite meanings; searching for the opposite phenomenon; categorical context of the meaning of the conflict.

The article discusses the “root”, “created” and “derived” meaning of the conflict. In “conflict” the following semantic essential attributions are defined: forceful, coercive, opposing, controversial, victimized and/or resource-loss aspects. The study of synonyms “dissentio”, “dissideo”, “discordo” and antonyms “consentio”, “concordo”, “consido”, “conveni” allows us to consider linear and non-linear interaction in the process of conflict formation and resolution.

The opposite of "conflict" is "concordo", as a reflection of coordination and removal of the contrast of sharp isolation.

Basic to the conflict are the contexts of subjectification of an objective contradiction; existential confrontation; crisis-government context; differentiation of "other" as an extroverted-introverted subjective conflict; social-environmental contradictions in the field of personality development. The use of contextual meanings of dictionaries in content analysis allows us to determine the profile of changing conflict contexts.

Keywords

conflict, conflict attributions, conflict formation, conflict resolution, context.

INTRODUCTION

The growing importance of the digitalized world and accelerated communications in the Internet environment increasingly focuses attention on the communicative and semantic content of the concept of "conflict". Changes in the world change the contexts of perception and differentiate people, increasing the field of conflict. People turn to dictionaries as a measure of the universal. In these changes, the importance of awareness of the essence, the genetic core of "conflict" and its contextual manifestations in a rapidly changing world is growing. The study of this problem is updated by the need to resolve the conflict, which, without understanding the essence and context of conflicts, even in professional negotiations becomes the most difficult theoretical and practical issue.

During war, the study of the nature of the conflict and its context is aggravated by the "fog of war" and the purposeful confrontation not only of the participants in the war, but also of other parties involved in the conflict or using it for their own purposes. That is why there is an increasing need to consider these problems from the position of objectivity, scientificity and impartiality to the essence and content of the conflict, from the position of the universal, with verification of the scientific position of humanity and mankind, in a return to Kant's maxim, in the justification of the principle by its universality. "Act only according to the norm that you want to see as a universal imperative — a norm for all people and also for you... Act in such a way that you always treat people and yourself as an end and never only as a means" (Kant, 1993, p. 30).

In this article we present for discussion the results of a study of the "genetic core" and categorical context in the etymology of conflict. Etymology is chosen as the basis for consideration as that linguistic environment that reflects the essence and manifestations of the conflict, their awareness by people, and the consolidation of this important meaning in the long-term and ultra-long-term perspective of communication and communication of people, which has both historical past and modern social subject dimensions. In this case, dictionaries reflect the meaning of a kind of compass in the linguistic space of meanings.

The purpose of the article is to understand the categorical context of the etymology of conflict in dictionaries. The subject of the study is the etymological discourse of the categorical context of the conflict. The object is the semantic field of the conflict, which is represented in the representation of its meaning in dictionaries.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article reflects the results of an important stage in the study of the etymology of "conflict".

Etymological research is realized as a consistent ascent from the abstract to the concrete in the implementation of the following stages of research:

1. Search for significant attributions as the meaningful meaning of the concept "conflict". This is carried out in the study of what is essential in the "root meaning", in the content of the phenomenon, which in human consciousness is designated by ideas about the origin of the phenomenon, about the essential that people comprehend through the phenomenon. Then the "derived values" from the "root value" are analyzed. In sociology, this would be the relationship between an independent variable ("root meaning") and a dependent variable (the emergence of this "derived meaning" of an object or process).
2. At this stage, the main subject field is "conflict", reflecting the essence as "created meaning". An equally important process of analysis at this stage is the study of the categorical series of "conflict", namely the synonymous series of meanings that are similar in meaning, and the opposite antonymic series of "conflict". This stage is aimed at exploring both the subject field and its boundaries in similarities and

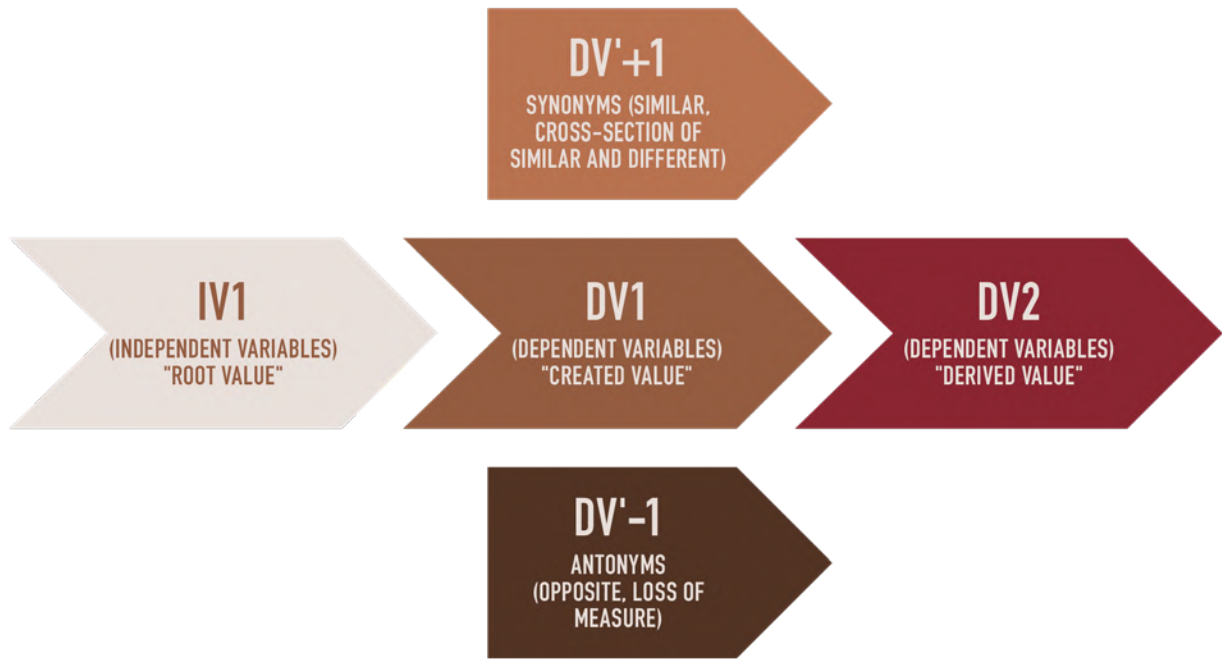


FIGURE 1. STAGES OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

differences, and in searching for the opposite for “conflict”. The opposite in the meaning of the loss of meri, when qualitative characteristics transform into other, opposite ones, i.e. the essence changes.

3. At the third stage, the process of unfolding the essence of the conflict through the unity and struggle of the opposite, namely conflict and its opposite, consent, is explored.
4. At this stage, the categorical context through which the essence of the conflict is manifested and has a specific (special) and specific meaning is considered. At this stage, we first ask about the contextual profile of the conflict.

The researcher’s understanding of this process can lead to the opposite search for essential attributions not through movements from the origin of etymology to the specific practice of application, but, on the contrary, from the practice of applying the concrete to the search for the general and special in the individual, in the concrete, in living non-abstract practice.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In our study, we first looked at the etymology — the origin of the meaning “conflict”, in the sequence “root meaning” and “the main meaning is created” and the derived meanings of “conflict”, and then we will consider the categorical series —

identical in synonyms and different in them, and check significant attributions through antonyms, because they are opposite. The opposite in the dialectical approach means the loss of measure, qualitative meaning, as a transition to another qualitative meaning, located in unity and struggle. If the category series allows us to clarify the subject field of “conflict”, in its essential attributions, the intersection of this subject field with similar concepts and, above all, with synonyms with an emphasis on essential qualitative characteristics and the degree of identity and difference; as well as antonyms, opposite, different qualitative meaning, loss of measure. In the categorical series, the main thing is the process of awareness of essential attributions by which we can establish this subject field, designated by the “real name” of the essence and content of this subject field.

After this analysis, we will check in further derivatives essential attributions, through studies of the categorical context, through that changeable, special, having different intensity and specificity of manifestations, which in the universal subject field of the “real name” of the “conflict” demonstrates a living peculiarity and specificity in living events.

Search for significant attributions as the meaningful meaning of the concept “conflict”.

The search for significant attributions began with IV (Independent variables) “root meaning” and

creating the word "conflict." The preliminary results were the clarification of the etymological origin of the word conflict, which originates from the verb "confligere", which meant "to collide, fight", it was created from two parts con — "with, together" and + fligere "to push, strike". First, the root and its derivative meaning of the word "fligo" was examined, discussed by Michiel Arnoux Corde Waan:

«fligo, -ere 'strike' [B. III; pf. flixi, ppp. flictum] (Andr., Acc.)

Derivatives: flictus, -us 'collision' (Pac.+); affligere 'to strike, cause destruction' (PI.+), afflictare 'to strike repeatedly, vex' (Pl.+), confligere 'to collide, argue' (Lucil.+), conflictäre 'to contend; harass' (Ter.+), effligere 'to strike dead' (PI.+), efflictare id.' (Pl.), aflictim (Naev.), efflictim 'passionately' (Pl.+), profligäre 'to the trap, overwhelm' (PI.+). (Vaan, 2008, p.226).

According to the etymology, "conflict" is derived from the verb "to hit" and has the meaning "to collide and argue"; together with other words created from the root "to hit", it reflects the different intensity of "impact interaction". The authoritative Oxford Latin Dictionary, edited by P. Gler, defines "conflict" as:

«conflictio ~önis, f. [CONFLIGO+-TIO]

1 A striking together, collision... 2 The action of fighting; disagreement, clash (with opponent in a law-suit)... 3 (rhet.) An inconsistency, disagreement (of 2 statements, etc.).

conflicte -äre ~äui ~ätum, tr., intr. (usu. in pass. or as dep.). [CONFLIGO+-TO]. 1 Head out frequently, buffet... 2 (usu. pass.) To harass, distress, torment... 3 (usu. dep.) Join the contest, con-tend, struggle...

conflictus ~is, m. next+-TUS)

1 A striking together, collision, clash... 2 An impact.

confligō ~gere ~xi ~ctum, intr., (Ir.). [CON+-FLIGO]

1. To strike together, collide, clash; (w.acc.) to fight B collision (also transf.)... 2 To do battle, contend, fight; to fight against... 3 To put it into words, argue (against). b (of principles, etc.) be conflict, disagree; to be matter of contention (Glare, P. G. W. (Ed.), 1968, p.401–402).

The study of the etymology of "conflict" made it possible to identify significant semantic attributions of "conflict", namely:

1. "Strike together", in this sense we see an increase in destructive force emanating from several sides — let's call this the force aspect.

In the force aspect, it is determined that at each subsequent stage the use of destructive force on both sides increases. Each side in a conflict has a stage of gathering forces together and this happens on both opposing sides. It is in this aspect that the escalation of the conflict, its spiral, and inflation begins.

2. "Force to collide", in this sense there is a connotation of unnatural, artificial coercion and unexpected collision, but having the result of coercion, a coercive aspect. This aspect reflects coercion, an attempt not so much to convince as to exert pressure. Therefore, persuasion in the early stages of a conflict prevents the spiral of violence and escalation of the conflict. This is only possible when there is not yet a large accumulated conflict potential, for which the reason for the conflict is only the actualization of the entire potential of the conflict.
3. "To fight, to fight against someone", in this sense there is already a directed force "against", which determines the subject or object against whom they are acting, resisting. In this sense, there is already a goal setting "against" — an opposing aspect. It is this aspect that means that the totality of attributive aspects means that the opposition of the two parties in the whole imposition is replicated and scaled. Therefore, history knows of cases of insults in human relationships that developed into wars. Goal setting shaped conflict activity and conflict culture of social groups and societies.
4. "To argue and disagree", in this sense, semantic verbal opposition is considered — dispute, disagreement, as not having agreement. In this attribution, the mental qualities of the dispute are important — different views, ideas, thoughts, etc. Such agreement has not yet been formed, or is moving towards it or has been lost. This is a controversial aspect. This aspect reflects the lack of balance or its loss, which can be reflected in positions, their logistics and resources, behind which interests, values, approaches and visions are hidden.
5. "Pursue, suffer, torment... go through... great and numerous inconveniences", this meaning demonstrates that arguing and fighting always have losses, which are reflected in the loss of normal interaction, which turns into "persecution", or it is the loss of a balanced mental or physical state, designated by the words "suffer" and torment." The words "pursue" and "torture" reflect the criminal side of the conflict interaction and the victimizing side creates a victim due to losses. In the words

“suffer” reflects the opposite victim behavior and its overcoming through a subjective attitude — “to go through great and numerous inconveniences.” In any case, these meanings reflect from victim relations to the meaningful meaning of the loss of physical, mental, spatio-temporal and other personal resources, which is reflected in states of suffering and torment. These meanings reflecting the aspect can be designated as a victim or resource-loss aspect.

These aspects have been verified in the Olivetti Latin Dictionary (Conflicto, 2024-a), the Latin-English Dictionary (Conflicto, 2024-b), and the Dictionary Cambridge (Conflict, 2024-a). academic dictionary Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries (Conflict, 2024-b), in the German dictionary “Wörterbuch Deutsch-Englisch” (Konflikt, 2024). Consideration of the various etymological meanings of dictionaries reflect significant attributions, but sometimes authors tend only to special or specific meanings according to their taste or choice, narrowing the meaning of the linguistic reflection of the phenomenon.

The combination of these aspects determines the etymological code of the conflict; each of these essential attributes can dominate in certain conflicts, in the manifestations of conflict manifes-

tations. The dominance of one or another aspect determines the typology of conflicts.

After the first stage of etymological analysis, we moved on to consider the categorical series of conflict, namely the synonymous and opposite series of meanings.

Categorical series of conflict.

Synonyms in the subject field have a large amount of identity, they have similarities, but focus on some sense and meaning, or diversify the semantic field, that is, they also have differences. Synonyms for conflict (DV⁺1) are the words dissentio, dissideo, discordo. These words have the prefix Dis. It means that the incorrect, negated has the characteristic “not” or “without”, the addition of which changes the meaning to the absence of this quality. In this part, this prefix reflects and emphasizes a contradictory aspect, a lack or loss of balance, a lack of something that is of an important, essential nature.

The opposite row is represented by (DV⁻1) — consensio, concordo, consido conveni. In the opposite “conflicts”, the prefix con is important — “with, together” denotes a common process among different subjects.



Let us present the results of this stage of analysis in a table.

Consideration of the synonymous (DV'+1) and antonymic (DV'-1) series of the concept of conflict gradually gives an understanding of the subject field of the phenomena it denotes. Thus, Dissideo denotes the prerequisites for conflict, reflecting spatial distance, distance and difference, loss of intimacy and unity. At this prerequisite

stage, it is possible to Consider the formation of a common place, calmness, and the formation of integration as a result. But only in the spatial organization of people's integration there are vertical meanings — an unexpected fall, the organization of a camp. And we saw the contexts in the resentmental unification of autocracy in conflicts with the connotation of victimhood — everyone is attacking us and we must create a fortress camp.

TABLE 1. THE COMBINATION OF THE VALUES

Essential attributes of «conflict»	Synonyms	Essential attributes of "concord" (concordo)	Synonyms for "agreement" (the opposite row for "conflict")
1. "Strike together" – the power aspect	Dissentiō – disagreement, as discrepancies (procedural and driving).o	3. Agreement procedure, strength of organization, drafting - organized aspect	Consentio – to agree, to perceive together, to unite in something or on something (procedural and driving)
2. "Force to collide" – the forced aspect	Dissideo – spatial characteristics of distance, distance and characteristics of difference (space and differentiation)	1. Forcing different points of view to agree, the coercive aspect	Considio – spatial characteristic of organized proximity, determination of place, unexpected accidental fall, calm, termination, conduct, ending as a result (space, integration, result)
3. "Fight, fight against someone" – the opposing aspect	Discordō – disagreement in the meaning of a quarrel, "heart apart" – a mental state or state of spiritual strength.	2. Establishment and decision by mutual consent - the operating aspect	Convenio is the establishment of an agreed state; at the same time, this word reflects the institutional meaning of law and responsibility. (state of institutional strength)
4. "Arguing and disagreeing" is a controversial aspect		4. The process of coordination, harmonization, resonance as removing the contrast of sharp isolation - the connecting aspect	
5. "To pursue, suffer, torment... go through... great and numerous inconveniences" - victimization or resource-loss aspect		The first coercive aspect defines the cessation and reduction of the escalation of the victim or resource-loss aspect, as the creation of preconditions for agreement and the start of negotiations. Precondition-de-escalation aspect	

And in this connotation of spatial organization under totalitarianism and autocracy, camps — commonplaces denote differentiation into places of dissent (concentration camps in Nazi Germany and the Gulag in the Soviet Union) and places of integration of those who agree.

At the same time, *Consido* can be a place of agreement; in facilitation this is known as an “open space” of communication according to facilitation-organized procedures, i.e. if the space determines the non-violent coordination of perception and the procedure for making joint decisions.

It is in this sense, either autocratic or democratic, that the ways of resolving disagreements, the calm non-violent resolution of otherness, occur. The loss and negation of general perception as a spatial, value, semantic, procedural and driving removal is indicated by the concept of *Dissentiō*. The phenomenon he designates is resolved by procedural and driving joint perception, agreement, unity, but their objective nature on something and on something is obligatory. Here we must note that disagreements are not resolved by appeals, but must be achieved by a common perception and focus on any subject by harmonizing perceptions and agreements, that is, perceptual, emotive and cognitive, which manifests itself in the contextual. The next stage of our analysis is an attempt to consider the opposite etymologies of “conflict” and “agreement”.

DISCUSSION

There are a lot of manifestations of conflict, and therefore its classifications. Moreover, even in one type of conflict there are even more contextual meanings. I will give an example of such a conflict and confrontation as a terrorist act. On the initiative of Professor H. Kushner and Academician O. Maltsev, the journal “American Behavioral Scientist” had a major issue dedicated to this problem. I will only cite the difference in context in the titles of extremely relevant articles on terrorism, which is one of the types of conflict: Harvey W. Kushner “If It Looks Like Terrorism, Feels Like Terrorism, Acts Like Terrorism, Then It Probably is Terrorism” (Kushner, 2023); Oleg Maltsev “Countering Terrorism: Sociopsychological and Geopolitical Aspects”; Harvey W. Kushner, Oleg Maltsev and Kanykei Tursunbaeva “Editors’ Introduction: Terrorism Through a Different Lens” (Kushner, Maltsev, & Tursunbaeva, 2023); Jerome Krase “Terrorism and an Autoethnography of

9/11” (Kruse, 2023); Maxim Lepskiy and Nataliia Lepska “The Phenomenon of the Terrorist State in Contemporary Geopolitics: Attributive, Static, and Dynamic Characteristics” (Lepskiy & Lepska, 2023); Vitalii Lunov, Oleg Maltsev, Mykhailo Matiash, Vasyl Mosiichuk and Bohdan Tkach “Psychological Underpinnings of Terror Awareness: A Comprehensive Dive into Ukrainians’ Perception of Terrorist Threats Amidst War Tensions” (Lunov, Maltsev, Matiash, Mosiichuk & Tkach, 2023).

The diversity of contexts increases with the presence of different typologies and classifications in the study of such a ubiquitous phenomenon as conflict. This increase poses the need for the researcher to search for what is universally significant in the etymology of “conflict” and in determining the categorical context. The study of the synonymous and opposite series determines the task of searching for the opposite conflict, with which the conflict is in unity and struggle; unity determines the mutual transition with the loss of measure and qualitative certainty. At the same time, the opposite is supposedly a mirror in which the phenomenon is reflected, in our study the phenomenon of “conflict”.

Search for a dialectical pair of “conflict” as a semantic social construction of reality

Actually, conflict and agreement on significant attributions, in our opinion, have a different profile and reflect their opposition. Thus, the prerequisites for conflict are spatial and differential aspects (*Dissideo*), as well as differences and differences of perception (*Dissentio*). At the same time, prerequisites are a category of potential or hidden conflict. The conflict itself has a configuration of forceful and coercive aspects, counteracting and contradictory aspects. If the prerequisites also have potential characteristics, that is why at this stage of the conflict development, prevention works better, preventing the conflict from unfolding, manifested in spatial integration and effective general (*Consido*), the formation of joint perception, unification for the sake of development and life (*Consentio*).

If prevention does not occur at the preconditional stage of the conflict, then an open conflict occurs, leading to an internal rupture in the mental and spiritual sphere (*Discordō*). And at first glance, the supposed conflict should be opposed by a convention, an institutional fixation of peace. During the Russian-Ukrainian war, we saw how “conventions”, international law and

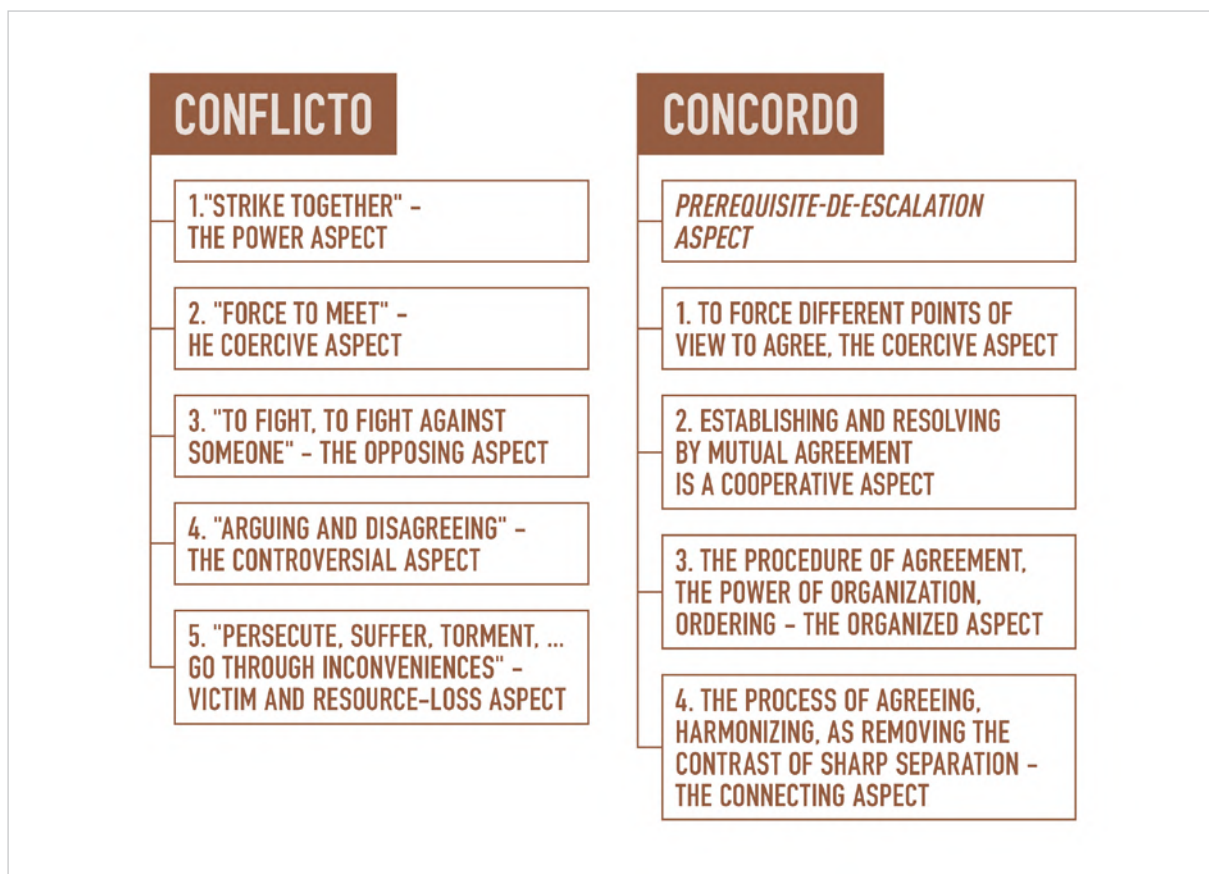


FIGURE 2. CONFIGURATIONS OF CORE "CONFLICT-AGREEMENT" ATTRIBUTIONS

international agreements, and, above all, the concerns of appealing to these acts do not work if the aggressor decided to continue the aggression through force and coercion.

Therefore, conventions are not opposed to conflict, unless a configuration for resolving the conflict and stopping the force of aggression has been created before. The external manifestation of the conflict is precisely the deployment of discordia, therefore the core of the conflict must be opposed by concordia, the joint bringing of the mental and spiritual spheres to balance and development, to agreement. No less interesting is the sequence of prerequisites in conflict resolution: the emergence of the need to look for a common space of solutions, integration and results, to approach a common perception. These premises form the coercive aspect of concordia, leading to the coinciding, organized and connecting aspect.

The power aspect is present here by default, because general agreement in the mental and spiritual sphere, healing the situation requires great efforts of will and power block. The power aspect is determined latently, but this power is based on the ability to force people to renounce violence, be able to conduct a dialogue (in search of something that matches), organize procedures

for resolving conflicts and formulate a law and a form of agreement that will not be violated, i.e. Concordia aspect.

Therefore, conflict and concordia (agreement) are the core of the study and resolution of conflicts, the study of their dialectical unity and opposition, and a careful study of their opposing attributions. In the history of philosophy, concordia was the focus of not only religious teachings; let us recall that the works of Vladimir Vinnichenko were devoted to the ethical and philosophical theory of concordism.

Let's try to consider a fairly conditional sequence, since the process of conflict deployment and the process of conflict resolution can have iterations, return to the previous stage, or be synchronized and parallel.

Therefore, in the previous diagram we designated a conditional sequence of processes according to the time of occurrence.

In the study of conflict and consent, and their synonymous and antonymous series, the division into the dominance of external and internal in these processes is interesting. This distribution occurs in the following diagram.

After considering the first stage of analysis — clarification of the meaningful semantic

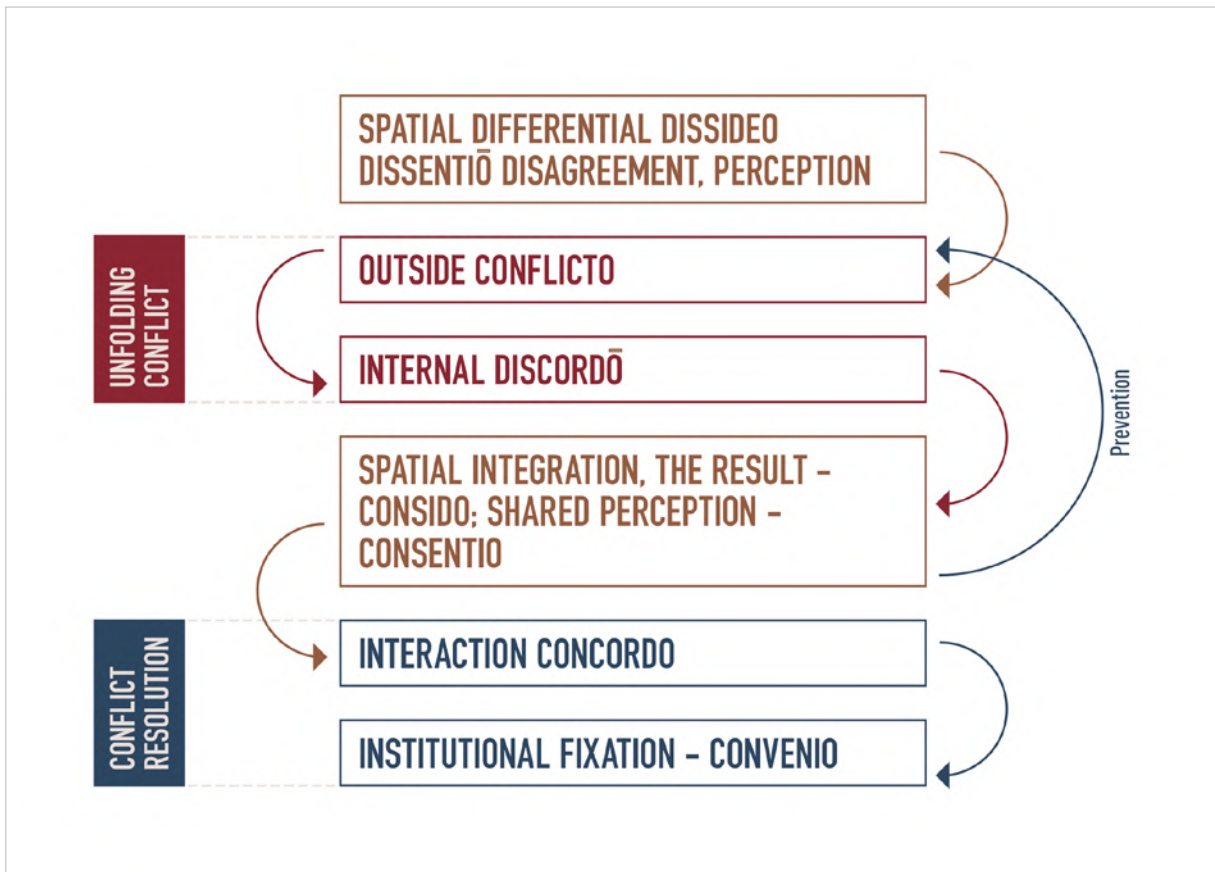


FIGURE 3. LINEAR DEPICTION OF CONFLICT UNFOLDING AND RESOLUTION

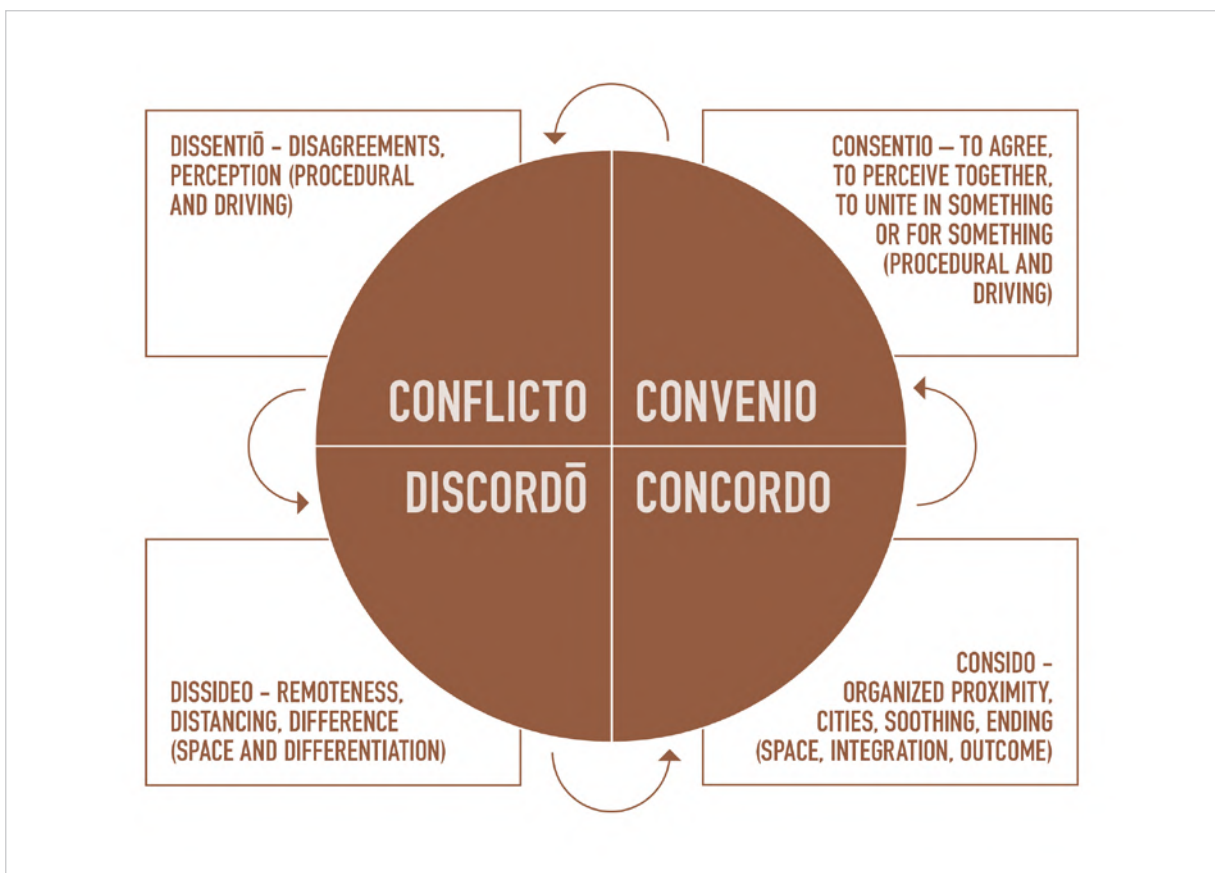


FIGURE 4. NONLINEAR IMAGE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DEPLOYMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION.

attributions of the conflict, by which we can distinguish the subject area of the conflict from other phenomena and phenomena designated in the semantic field of etymology. We carried out the second stage of the study of etymology — we analyzed the categorical range of concepts, its coincidence and the differences between similar and synonymous concepts, as well as the opposite — antonymous and opposite to the content of the conflict concepts.

The third stage determined the search for a dialectical pair to study the unity and struggle of opposing phenomena, designated by certain concepts and the possibility of rationally defining their relationships. In this matter, in essence, there is a semantic social construction of reality, which in the future must be verified and verified by reality in order not to become hyperreality or phantasms. The test is aimed at searching for scientific patterns noted in speech constructions, enshrined in the practice of a large community of people using language and its semantic fields.

The next stage of etymological analysis for us is the study of phenomena as components of the subject field of a concept, located within this field. Sometimes the categorical context has the relations universal, specific, generic (general) — specific (specific). If the objective as a universal and general distinguishes a concept from other concepts, since it denotes a phenomenon that differs from other phenomena, then the specific, special, specific and concrete (often individual) reflects variability and is often indicated by *modus* characteristics that reflect the specific intensity of manifestations of the universal concrete.

Therefore, let us turn to the next stage of etymological research to the categorical context of the concept "conflict".

Categorical context of the concept "conflict".

The categorical context demonstrates the meanings by which people convey the internal meaning of the conflict, and sometimes act as synonyms, but the context forms a variety of manifestations of the essence of the conflict, a reflection of the content of the conflict in its various forms.

Sometimes the search for a universal essence can occur as a generalization of specific manifestations, an aggregation of the specific through the particular to the general. In our case, we check the search for essential attributions through the use of words in context; philologists work with this in "dictionaries." Therefore, let's turn to dictionaries.

Thus, in "New Explanatory Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language," ed. Vasil Yaremenko, Ok-sana Slipushko "conflict" is considered as "a clash of opposing interests, opinions, views; serious disagreements; heated argument; friction, collision, collision. Somewhere in the villages various local conflicts began to break out (Fr.); //Complication in international relations, which could lead to an armed conflict. A contradiction, a skirmish underlying the plot of a work of art" (Yaremenko, V., & Slipushko, O., 2003, Vol. 1. P. 885).

If we consider the fields that unite contexts in this dictionary, then we see the field of the collision event with the mental component and intensity of the dispute (acute, serious, friction, clash, collision); the field of international politics with a process leading to an armed conflict; and the intention in the plot of the work is the field of the theater, in the broad sense of the word.

The fields of manifestations are presented in the semantic application of manifestations of conflict, we built them in the table of the Cambridge English Dictionary, and the Goethe Dictionary (among the searches for dictionaries — we saw the most detailed and thorough analysis) translated these semantic manifestations, and also used Ukrainian online dictionaries Synonymy.info (Synonymy do slova Konflikt, 2024) and Slovtovir (Perekladaiemo slovo konflikt, 2024).

Only the Cambridge Dictionary provided antonyms for conflict; I decided to keep them in the table; oddly enough, there are much more synonyms for conflict in a categorical context, unlike "peace, truce, treaty." Resolving a conflict turns out to be much more difficult than entering into a conflict. As we see, the greatest diversity of the contextual field is presented in the German language in the Goethe dictionary. Therefore, it is not surprising that the generalization was most profoundly made by the author of the article devoted to the conflict.

In our opinion, the most generalized categorical context was defined by Horst Fleig in the Goethe-Wörterbuch dictionary in "the Konflikt" article:

1. "Clashes and conflicts with reference to different (opposite) natural forces (elements) or principles of development; more often about the emergence of a new result...;
2. Fight (to life and death), physical confrontation, especially military, also through hand-to-hand combat or grappling; ... (threatening) expansion and occupation...;

TABLE 2. CONTEXTUAL UNITS IN CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE CONFLICT FIELD

Dictionary.cam-bridge (eng) DC	Synonymy.info (ukr) Sy	Translation	Slovotvir ukr) SI	Translation	Goethe-Wörterbuch (Горст Флейр) (de) GW	Translation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>fight</u> 2. <u>combat</u> 3. <u>battle</u> 4. <u>struggle</u> 5. <u>clash</u> 6. <u>warfare</u> 7. <u>hostility</u> 8. <u>encounter</u> 9. <u>confrontation</u> 10. <u>action</u> 11. <u>skirmish</u> 12. <u>engagement</u> 13. <u>fray</u> 14. <u>scuffle</u> 15. <u>melee</u> 16. <u>set-to</u> 17. <u>fracas</u> 18. <u>tussle</u> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Війна 2. Драма 3. Зіткнення (інтересів) 4. Інцидент 5. Колізія 6. Суперечка (поглядів) 7. Суперечність (у творі) 8. Сутичка (військовий) 9. Тертя 10. Ускладнення (політичний) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. War 2. Drama 3. Conflict (of interests) 4. Incident 5. Collision 6. Dispute (views) 7. Contradiction (in the work) 8. Skirmish (military) 9. Friction 10. Complication (political) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Чвара 2. Суперечка 3. Сутичка 4. Сварка 5. Заколот 6. Суперечність 7. Незгода 8. Розладдя 9. Воя – війна 10. Сутик 11. Противенство – протидія 12. Звада (незгода, ворожнеча) 13. Протиборство 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chvara 2. Dispute 3. Fight 4. Quarrel 5. Mutiny 6. Contradiction 7. Disagreement 8. Discord 9. Howl - war 10. Clash 11. Opposition - opposition 12. Zvada (disagreement, enmity) 13. Competition 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gegensatz 2. Gegenwirkung 3. Opposition 4. Widerspruch zu 5. Handel zu 6. Gefecht 7. Handgemenge 8. Kampf zu Opposition 9. Antagonismus 10. Kollision 11. Krise, Krisis 12. Mißverhältnis 13. Spannung 14. Uneinigkeit 15. Verwirrung 16. Wechselstreit 17. Widerwärtigkeit 18. Zwiespalt, Zwist zu 19. Aufruhr 20. Aufstand zu 21. Widerstreit zu 22. Diskrepanz zu 23. Differenz 24. Dissens 25. Divergenz 26. Entzweigung 27. Gegnerschaft 28. Grunddifferenz 29. Kontroverse 30. Meinungsverschiedenheit 31. Polemik Widerspiel zu 32. Drang zu 33. Abweichung Widerstand 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contrast 2. Counteraction 3. Opposition 4. Contradiction to 5. Trade too 6. Battle 7. Scuffle 8. Fight to opposition 9. Antagonism 10. Collision 11. Crisis, crisis 12. Disproportion 13. Tension 14. Disagreement 15. Confusion 16. Exchange dispute 17. Disgust 18. Discord, discord 19. Riot 20. Uprising too 21. Contradiction to 22. Discrepancy to 23. Difference 24. Dissent 25. Divergence 26. Disunity 27. Opposition 28. Basic difference 29. Controversy 30. Disagreement 31. Polemics contradict 32. Urge to 33. Deviation resistance
Antonyms						
peace truce treaty						

3. Social, political tension or crisis, especially as a struggle for power, confrontation, clash of different interests of classes and social groups, as well as revolutionary unrest;
4. Dissent, difference, inconsistency in intellectual, especially artistic, ethical and scientific issues or positions:
 - a) as a disagreement in thoughts or a struggle for direction, an argument; repeats "conflict of opinion" as well as (literary) discord... to express a stimulating intellectual climate, rich in debate,
 - b) as a divergence, conflict between different (including mutually incompatible) mental and spiritual forces and aspirations of a person; as an "eternal conflict"... as an (internal) emotional or spiritual conflict, also in the sense of a dilemma; once as an "inner conflict" ... to be in a certain kind of conflict with something, not (totally) in tune with something or not (totally) convinced of something;
5. As a clash of an individual, his personality, best character traits and talents with other people and the world around him, sometimes in the sense of confrontation; more often as a condition of individual development, sometimes as an insult or more quickly in the understanding of critical discussion (also in contact with); recurring conflict" (Fleig, 2004–2009).

Each context has its own field of meaning and emphasizes the measurement and awareness of a specific and specific conflict. At the same time, in each of these contexts there are significant attributions as a universal, universal in the semantic sense of the conflict.

For our further analysis, let us note that the first point concerns subject-object relations, in which the subject of the conflict refers to natural opposing forces and principles of development, reflecting dialectics, as theories of development, the emergence of a new quality. This issue is further reflected as the relationship between objective contradiction and subjective conflict and the collision event. This context reflects the subjectification of an objective contradiction.

In the subjectivization of an objective contradiction, the power aspect is realized, as an attempt by people not only to justify, but also to use the forces of nature, elements or resources, since justification by principles, by definition, is a search for soil on the known patterns that form the basis of practical activity. Here, coercive and

counteracting aspects are combined in conflicting activities aimed at results. At the same time, the controversial aspect is realized as an objective strengthening in the dispute, as the receipt of conflict advantages. In the subjectivization of a conflict, what is important is the attitude towards the victim and resource-loss aspect, which actually determines losses and losses relative to objective circumstances or, conversely, is used in a conflict to justify aggression or one's weakness. For example, Nazi Germany justified its aggression by protecting German-speaking citizens of other countries. A similar justification occurred during the Russian-Ukrainian war, aggression was carried out under the slogan of protecting Russian-speaking citizens. Or they justify their incapacity or weakness as a desire to shift responsibility for resolving the conflict to others.

The second context reflects the intensity of a collision, a fight (life and death), the intensity and scale of which can range from physical confrontation, hand-to-hand combat, group combat, to war with its phenomena of occupation, destruction, etc. We designate this context of "life and death clashes" of varying scale and intensity as existential confrontation.

The second context also has its own specifics for displaying significant attributions. This context is collected due to the intensity of opposition, based on force and coercion and reflected in the dispute, first of all, in the physical and space-time dimensions, with its scale, intensity and destructive force, from individual combat and hand-to-hand combat to large-scale wars. The victimization and resource-loss aspect determines the level of determination of conflict actors who fight for life or death. For example, it is the last stage of the escalation of the conflict with Friedrich Glasl that determines the readiness to act "together into the abyss" in the fight for death.

In the third context, the semantic center is the struggle for power, the consequence or result of which is social and political tension and crisis in the structure of society, up to qualitative changes in the structure of society, revolution. We designate this context as a crisis-power context.

In this context, significant attributions are determined by the field of intense and crisis power, when the struggle for it has already been scaled up in social and political groups in forceful and coercive aspects. Opposition and disputes put an end to the structure of the state and its power. The intensity of the embodiment of the conflict can be designated as reforms, a change of



power, up to revolution. The victim or resource-power aspect denotes the frames, the framework of the crisis-power escalation of the confrontation and the determination of the conflictants to fight for power and determine at what price this struggle will be.

The fourth context demonstrates mental differences and differences as external conflict of thoughts and internal emotional and spiritual conflict. We designate this context as differentiated otherness, as an extroverted-introverted subjective conflict.

This contextual field defines at the center the contradictory aspect and opposition both to disagreements with the outside world and other people, and to the divergence of internal aspirations. These central essential attributes of the conflict determine the need to use force for choice and decision-making; often a person disciplines himself both through his development through the free choice of the direction of his life and activity, and through the very coercion of the sequence of their implementation, strength in good without the temptations of evil. Many conflicts occur in this context such as mental and spiritual confrontations, interpersonal disputes and intrapersonal conflicts. They occur with different dominance of extraversion and introversion and their relationship in the locus of control of the individual in his life. In this context, the individual defines himself as a victim of these relationships, or a subject of life or a subject of death (a thief).

The fifth context defines personal conflict with the social environment, other people, and the surrounding world in the context of development, which we designate as social-environmental contradictions in the field of personal development.

Here it is determined what direction and influence a person exercises and receives when colliding with other people, the environment and the objective world. In what direction does a person apply his forces, with what responsibility does he carry out the coercive aspect, what in this interaction does a person oppose and what does he defend (the opposing aspect), what is he ready to perceive and what does he enter into synergy with, and what does he argue with. The best characteristics of a person, known in Machiavelli's time as "virtues" (virtues) in interaction with the environment, determine the category of fate ("fortune"). Conflict in the context of social-environmental contradiction in the field of personal development is one of the turning points

in the fate or biography of an individual or larger social subjects.

Let us consider the concept of conflict in a categorical context; the phenomena are designated by the subject field "conflict" and their connection with the main contexts of "conflict". As documents for counting units of content analysis of "conflict", we took the online dictionaries Dictionary Cambridge (eng) DC, Goethe-Wörterbuch (Gorst Fleig) (de) GW, as well as two Ukrainian-language online dictionaries Synonymy.info (rus) Sy and Slovtvir (rus) Sl.

Each of the dictionaries has a different representation of terms that fall under the etymological meaning of the conflict, therefore the profile of conflict contexts in each of the dictionaries is presented differently, and this also allows us to consider the representation as a whole both for each dictionary and in a generalized one, in comparison with the maximum possible representation in these contexts.

This methodological technique of studying the "real name" of the conflict in the generalized meanings of dictionaries can be used to search for a contextual profile in national dictionaries and generalized comparative analysis, or in content analyzes of texts. Overall, the etymological analysis and the presented content analysis provide a useful contextual profile of the consideration of the "conflict", its essence, content, stage and directions of resolution.

In the etymological analysis of context, one can consider not only the generalized profile of the contexts of selected dictionaries, but also the profile of an individual dictionary. Analysis of dictionaries is necessary to search for contextual fields, and this approach can also be used in the future after this categorization for content analysis by thematic elements of any article devoted to the conflict, both separately and with the addition of thematic connections of significant attributions and contexts for considering the conflict with its sectoral or spherical specifics and the focus of certain publications.

So, for example, in selected dictionaries we can create a context profile of these dictionaries.

From the analysis and frequency of data, we see different perceptions of the people who compiled the dictionaries and the people who will study them, and perhaps different perceptions in the national cultures or subcultures of those who compiled them regarding the understanding of conflicts.

TABLE 3. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF DICTIONARY GENERALIZED CONFLICT CONTEXTS (DEMONSTRATION)

Context	DC	Sy	Sl	G.W.	Frequency	max	%
<i>subjectification of an objective contradiction</i>	19. 10. 11. 12. Σ4	1.2. 3. 4. 5. 8. 9. 10. Σ8	2. 3. 6. 8. 13. Σ5	1. 2. 3. 4 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 33. Σ20	Σ37	74	50
<i>existential confrontation</i>	1. 2. 3. 4. 6. 13. 14. 15. Σ8	1. 2. 3. 6. 7. 8. 10. Σ7	3. 5. 6. 9. 10. 11. 13. Σ7	6. 8. 9. 11. 19. 20. Σ6	28	74	37.83
<i>crisis-government context</i>	1. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 17. 18. Σ10	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 8. 9. 10. Σ9	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.12. 13. Σ12	2. 3. 4 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 11.13. 14. 15. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. Σ28	59	74	79.73
<i>differently differentiated, extroverted-introverted subject conflict</i>	1. 4. 5. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. Σ16	2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 9. Σ6	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 10. 11. 12. 13. Σ12	1. 2. 7. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 17. 18. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. Σ25	59	74	79.73
<i>social and environmental contradictions in the field of personality development</i>	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 16. 18. Σ15	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. Σ10	5. 6. 7. 8. 11. 12. 13. Σ7	1. 2. 3. 4 5. 6. 7. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. Σ30	62	74	87.78

TABLE 4. PROFILE OF CONFLICT CONTEXTS IN THE DC DICTIONARY

Context	DC	max	%
<i>differently differentiated, extroverted-introverted subject conflict</i>	Σ16	90	17.78
<i>social and environmental contradictions in the field of personality development</i>	Σ15	90	16.67
<i>crisis-government context</i>	Σ10	90	11.11
<i>existential confrontation</i>	Σ8	90	8.89
<i>subjectification of an objective contradiction</i>	Σ4	90	4.44
	53	90	58.89

TABLE 5. PROFILE OF CONFLICT CONTEXTS IN THE SY DICTIONARY

Context	DC	max	%
<i>social and environmental contradictions in the field of personality development</i>	Σ10	50	20
<i>crisis-government context</i>	Σ9	50	18
<i>subjectification of an objective contradiction</i>	Σ8	50	16
<i>existential confrontation</i>	Σ7	50	14
<i>differently differentiated, extroverted-introverted subject conflict</i>	Σ6	50	12
	40	50	80

TABLE 6. PROFILE OF CONFLICT CONTEXTS IN THE SL DICTIONARY

Context	DC	max	%
<i>crisis-government context</i>	Σ12	65	18.46
<i>differently differentiated, extroverted-introverted subject conflict</i>	Σ12	65	18.46
<i>existential confrontation</i>	Σ7	65	10.77
<i>social and environmental contradictions in the field of personality development</i>	Σ7	65	10.77
<i>subjectification of an objective contradiction</i>	Σ5	65	7.89
	53	65	58.89

TABLE 7. PROFILE OF CONFLICT CONTEXTS IN THE GW DICTIONARY

Context	DC	max	%
<i>social and environmental contradictions in the field of personality development</i>	Σ30	165	18.18
<i>crisis-government context</i>	Σ27	165	16.36
<i>differently differentiated, extroverted-introverted subject conflict</i>	Σ25	165	15.15
<i>subjectification of an objective contradiction</i>	Σ20	165	12.12
<i>existential confrontation</i>	Σ6	165	3.83
	40	165	65.45

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The basic meaning from which the understanding of conflict comes is fight and clash; It is important to emphasize that this fight and clash is common (con — “with, together”).

“Conflict” has its own semantic essential attributions:

1. Power aspect. 2. Coercive aspect (“to force to collide”). 3. The opposing aspect (“to fight, to fight against someone”). 4. Controversial aspect (“to argue and disagree”). 5. Victim and/or resource-loss aspect (“to pursue, suffer, torment... go through... great and numerous inconveniences”).

Study of the categorical series “dissentio”, “dissideo”, “discordo” and the antonymic series (consentio, concordo, consido conveni) allows us to consider assumptions about their linear and non-linear interaction in the process of conflict formation and conflict resolution.).

We consider the main opposite of “conflict” to be “concordo”, which has such significant attributions: a reflection of the processes of coordination, harmonization, resonance, as the removal of the contrast of sharp isolation.

Verification by categorical contexts of the semantic meaning of the conflict and its essential attributions. To study the categorical context, two

Ukrainian online dictionaries were selected — one scientific, the second open to communication participants, and two academic dictionaries — Dictionary Cambridge and Goethe-Wörterbuch with a thorough article about the Horst Fleig conflict.

The main ones for the semantic meaning of the conflict are the contexts of subjectification of the objective contradiction; existential confrontation; crisis-government context; differentiated “other” as an extroverted-introverted subjective conflict; social-environmental contradictions in the field of personality development The use of contextual meanings of dictionaries in content analysis allows us to determine the profile of conflict contexts both in the total meaning and in the profile of dictionaries.

Essential attributions, categorical series and categorical context in the etymology of “conflict”, in our opinion, are a powerful tool for forming a profile of the conflict of each side in the content analysis of the representation of the conflict by actors in the text.

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LEARNED HELPLESSNESS, RESILIENCE, AND TIME PERSPECTIVE IN UKRAINIAN AND ISRAELI CITIZENS AMID PROLONGED WARFARE: SOCIAL AND NEUROBEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

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VITALII LUNOV

BOGOMOLETS NATIONAL MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7085-8454>
- Email: vitalii.lunov@gmail.com

Vitalii Lunov is an Associate Professor in the Department of General and Medical Psychology at Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine, fellow of The Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, Member of The Royal Society of St. George, APA, WFMH, The European Association of Science Editors (UK), The Association of British Science Writers (UK). Registered EuroPsy psychologist in clinic and health (EU). Dr. Lunov is a scientific consultant for the UK-UA research project “Military Syndromes in the 21st Century: A Comparative Study” at the House of education & research (London). His research focuses on the models of categorizing attributes of the hardiness and cognitive and emotional states of IDPs and host population in Ukraine, Ukrainian Syndrome, and overcoming the psychological consequences of the war in Ukraine. Additionally, his studies address the neurobehavioral factors of the Ukrainian Syndrome, influenced by geopolitical and ethnopsychological factors. His research has appeared in a variety of journals such as American Behavioral Scientist, Neuropsychiatry i Neuropsychologia, Psychodynamic Practice, Anthropology of Peace & Violence eJournal, Conflict Studies: Effects of Conflict eJournal, Games & Political Behavior eJournal, and Conflict Studies: Terrorism eJournal, SSRN.



CO-AUTHORS

Viktoria Turban

G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0816-1269>
- E-mail: v.v.turban2@gmail.com

Viktoria Turban is a Professor and Head of the Laboratory of General Psychology and History of Psychology at the G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine. She is also a scientific consultant for the UK-UA research project “Military Syndromes in the 21st Century: A Comparative Study” at the House of education & research (London) in Israel. Her scientific achievements include developing a structural-functional model of joint activity in situations of uncertainty and a structural-functional model of ethical consciousness. She investigates the impact of war on the ethical consciousness and behavior of citizens under wartime conditions. Dr. Turban’s research has contributed significantly to understanding how war influences ethical decision-making and behavior in affected populations. Dr. Turban’s research has been published in journals such as Cognitive Psychology eJournal and Ethics & Global Investments eJournal. She is also the Editor-in-Chief of Volume 9: General Psychology, Historical Psychology, Ethnic Psychology of “Current Issues in Psychology,” a collection of scientific works from the G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology at the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine.

Yaroslava Rudenko

G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0043-9131>
- E-mail: conspravo@proton.me

Yaroslava Rudenko is a Ukrainian singer and scientist. She is an Honored Artist of Ukraine, a soloist of the National Philharmonic of Ukraine and the Honored Academic Song and Dance Ensemble of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and a candidate of art history. Rudenko is a laureate of international and national competitions and festivals and

has been awarded the Order of Princess Olga III Degree and a medal from the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine for “Assistance in the Development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.” She is a research correspondent at the G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv. Rudenko’s contributions to both the arts and science, combined with her accolades and roles, illustrate her dedication and impact on Ukrainian culture and research, particularly in times of national challenge. She studies the influence of vocal therapy on the mental state and psychosomatic disorders of military personnel. Her research has been published in journals such as Digital Health eJournal, Clinical & Counseling Psychology eJournal, Public Health eJournal, and Social & Personality Psychology eJournal.

Sergii Sereda

G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine

- E-mail: serg.helmed@gmail.com

Sergii Sereda is a PhD student at the G.S. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine. His work primarily focuses on the integration of online psychological interventions and the development of comprehensive psychological assessment protocols. He is an emerging scholar in the field of psychology, contributing to the advancement of metacognitive and neuropsychological perspectives, particularly in the context of digital therapy and the post-COVID era. His contributions to the field have been recognized through various publications, enhancing the understanding of online psychological therapy and its applications in modern clinical settings. In addition to his academic pursuits, Sereda is dedicated to bridging the gap between research and clinical practice, ensuring that advancements in psychological science are effectively translated into digital therapeutic protocols. His ongoing research aims to develop and refine digital therapeutic methods, contributing to the broader field of psychology and offering valuable insights into the future of mental health care. His research has been published in journals such as Psychiatry eJournal, Neuroscience Public Health eJournal, Clinical & Counseling Psychology eJournal, and Medical & Mental Health Sociology eJournal.

ABSTRACT

The incessant, incomprehensible war in Ukraine and Israel inevitably determines everyday uncertainty and chronic stress, which significantly affect the mental health, well-being and functioning of the civilian population. This study examines the problem of studied helplessness, resilience and understanding of life in the context of the perception of a temporary perspective among Ukrainian and Israeli citizens. The study highlights the possibility of using the "Unified Framework for Integrated Psychological Assessment and Intervention," which combines metacognitive, neuropsychological and psychodynamic approaches. This framework is proposed as the most important strategy for meeting the complex psychological needs of people in war-affected areas. By applying this comprehensive framework, mental health professionals can develop more thoughtful and effective support systems, increase resilience, encourage future-oriented thinking, and mitigate feelings of helplessness, ultimately improving the well-being of a person living in a prolonged environment.

Keywords

helplessness, resilience, time perspective, prolonged war, neurobehavioral patterns.

INTRODUCTION

The ongoing war in Ukraine and Israel supports conditions of uncertainty and chronic stress. The phenomenology of the psychological consequences of such protracted wars is important for the creation of effective measures and complexes of support for citizens. Prolonged stay in a combat zone disrupts the functioning of mental health. Anderson et al. (2019) found a link between uncertainty and a person's ability to influence circumstances, pointing out that prolonged and unchanging exposure to unpredictable stresses leads to increased levels of trigos and depression. In addition, the constant threat of being a victim of violence and environmental instability significantly changes everyday life, habits, determining the feeling of helplessness and powerlessness, which is a concomitant factor in many behavioral and mental disorders. Unfortunately, the considered problem has not only historical foundations, but also real events of the war in Ukraine and Israel.

Contemporary research in Ukraine confirms the impact of prolonged war on the well-being

and mental health of the civilian population (Rudenko, 2022). The complicated psychological consequences of Russian military aggression for Ukrainian citizens include increased levels of anxiety, depression and PTSD (Lunov, Lytvenko, Maltsev, & Zlatova, 2022; Kokun, 2023). Particular attention should be paid to the issue of military terrorism and the adequacy of the behavioral reactions of the civilian population to terrorist threats (Lunov, Maltsev, Matiash, Mosiichuk, Tkach, 2023). The psychological impact of a long war, which in different classifications is defined as "hybrid," "full-scale," "atypical" on Ukrainian citizens, is largely determined by their coping behavior strategies. Previous studies (Maltsev, 2017) have identified such mechanisms for overcoming problems as problem solving, self-control and proactive adaptation, which play a key role in ensuring and maintaining personal security in the context of territorial orientation, primarily in regions close to combat and terrorist zones. Physical proximity to the territories of military threats has a negative impact on the basic beliefs of people, emphasizing the importance of overcoming resources in mitigating the negative psychological consequences of a long war (Maltsev, 2017). In addition, we found a significant psychosomatic effect on the health of Ukrainian men during the Russian-Ukrainian war, which emphasizes the need for a mental health support system (Lunov, Matiash, Abdriakhimova, Pavlov and Dzeruzhynska, 2024).

The case of Israel is classic in the context of a long war. Studies confirm that the Israeli population exposed to prolonged war shows high levels of stress and PTSD (Schimmelpfennig et al., 2023). In addition, research by Veronese et al. (2021) and Taha et al. (2024) demonstrates the effects of occupation on resilience and mental health in Gaza.

As a rule, most studies are focused on the maladjustment and PTSD in the context of the psychological impact of a long war, other socio-psychological and neurobehavioral factors deserve special attention. It is worth noting that the learned helplessness, resilience and temporal perspective are the most important constructs that open the subject understanding of the psychological state of people living in protracted zones of war.

Learned helplessness, as described by Seligman (Quinles, Nelson, 1988), is distinguished by a strong sense of powerlessness and the belief that no action of an individual can influence their circumstances of life. As is known, learned

helplessness is characteristic of individuals living in territories prone to prolonged wars, where a constant tendency to uncontrolled stress, a vital threat, can lead to patterns of passive behavior and an inevitable feeling of helplessness (Jones, 2014). A study by Boankic et al. (2020) on forced migrants summarizes that prolonged difficulties can contribute to the formation of a culture and narrative of learned helplessness.

Moreover, resilience plays an important role in mitigating the effects of prolonged war. Fino, Mema, and Rousseau (2020) argue that resilience helps mitigate the impact of war trauma on PTSD development, underscoring the importance of measures to increase personal resilience in zones of permanent war.

Regarding the temporal perspective, Zimbardo's research emphasizes its important role in how people perceive the circumstances of their daily lives (Zhang et al., 2013). It should be noted

that in areas of constant hostilities, maintaining an adequate life prospect is quite a challenge. In Roozitalab et al. studies (2022) the effectiveness of various forms of life-oriented therapy to improve the psychological well-being of war veterans are emphasized.

The development of neuroscience has shown that the neuropsychological effects of an individual living in protracted war require special attention. For example, the DMN brain network involved in self-reflection undergoes dysfunction under the influence of chronic tension, stress and maladaptation (Buckner, 2013; Liddell et al., 2023). It should be noted that understanding the mechanisms of functioning of brain modes, such as, for example, frontal network (Marek & Dosenbach, 2018) and Salience network (Menon & Uddin, 2010) is essential for analyzing the full range of behavioral problems of the civilian population in war zones.

RESEARCH FOCUS AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the study is to determine the pliers of the learned helplessness, resilience and time perspective, as well as neuropsychological patterns in the citizens of Ukraine and Israel in a long and unpredictable war.

LITERATURE REVIEW: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND NEUROBEHAVIORAL IMPACTS OF PROLONGED WARFARE

Learned Helplessness

The concept of learned helplessness, initially identified in dogs by Seligman and then observed in humans, plays a crucial role in understanding trauma. This psychological phenomenon is characterized by a pervasive sense of powerlessness when people believe that their actions do not affect their circumstances, resulting in symptoms such as passivity, emotional isolation, depression and a permanent sense of helplessness. These symptoms are not only a response to physical events but may also arise from "moral" trauma deeply painful psychological wounds because of actions, or their absence, which violate one's moral or ethical code (Litz et al.).



Integrating learned helplessness into injury research shifts the analytical focus from the Freudian focus on memory loss to understanding trauma as loss of control. This perspective is more in line with modern psychiatric approaches that have moved away from Freudian psychoanalysis. Thus, he discusses the criticisms of theorists, who argue that trauma is mediated by cultural context and that the existing theory of trauma often ignores these influences.

In the context of transmissibility, the helplessness acquired suggests that loss of control, rather than the traumatic memory itself, can spread to people, affecting their activities and perpetuating the cycle of helplessness. This perspective increases the understanding of how trauma can affect not only individuals but also communities.

Ultimately, learned helplessness provides a valuable lens for investigating trauma, emphasizing restoration of control to heal. In literary texts, this restoration can manifest itself through writing, interaction with the environment, spirituality and personal relationships, each offering a therapeutic potential, restoring a sense of activity. Using this theoretical framework, post-traumatic studies can provide a more complete and culturally adapted understanding of traumatic experiences, both in the literature and in the real world.

Relevance to Prolonged Warfare in Ukraine and Israel

It's crucial to delve into the underpinnings of helplessness when studying the prolonged conflicts, in Ukraine and Israel. The ongoing wars in these regions subject the populace to stress leaving them susceptible to feelings of powerlessness and a lack of agency. By examining the aftermath of these conflicts through the helplessness framework we can gain deeper insights into the coping mechanisms and resilience factors that emerge in highly tense environments.

In situations like those faced by individuals in Ukraine and Israel where violence and instabilities threats people's sense of control can be undermined by bolstering their resilience. Through community support, cultural traditions and effective coping strategies Individuals can counteract the damaging impacts of helplessness. Understanding how these communities navigate the enduring challenges brought about by prolonged warfare can shed light on their fortitude.

Incorporating learned helplessness into trauma research establishes a groundwork for examining the enduring repercussions of war. By interpreting trauma as a loss of agency while highlighting the significance of contextual elements this approach enhances our comprehension of resilience and temporal perspectives within populations affected by conflict. This integrated perspective offers insights with both depth and practical implications in realms such, as social psychology and political science.

Russo's (2023) study delves, into the real-life experiences of veterans aiming to grasp how learned helplessness, military culture and chronic homelessness intersect. The focus is on veterans who have endured 90 consecutive days of homelessness and currently reside in a therapeutic housing shelter. The study interprets the themes of learned helplessness using Seligman's PERMA + HC model. Encompassing Positive affect, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, Health and Control. Russo's research sheds light on how the veterans shift from military to life plays a role in their perception of learned helplessness. Key findings, among the participants include a lack of experiences, reduced engagement levels, unstable relationships, limited sense of purpose feelings of unfulfillment, physical health obstacles and a restricted sense of control. These factors collectively influence their resilience. Furthermore, Russo noted that veterans faced difficulties, in maintaining their connections after leaving the military leading to increased feelings of isolation and helplessness. The veterans mentioned relying on government support programs and having a time functioning independently without assistance. This dependency made it more challenging for them to take charge of their lives and improve their situations. Russo's research highlights the importance of recognizing how transitioning from military to life affects veterans psychologically and the role that learned helplessness plays in their struggles with long term homelessness. The findings of this study can guide targeted efforts to strengthen resilience and provide support, for veterans as they work to overcome obstacles in reintegrating into society.

In research conducted by Bosankić, Mešić and Šošić (2020) explored the impact of prolonged hardships, on both returnees and displaced persons (IDPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina following the 1992–1995 war. The study sheds light on the reliance on assistance and the considerable employment obstacles encountered by these groups. Through a field investigation involving than 2000



returnees and IDPs the research delves into how external factors influence migrants lives and their ways of coping with a specific emphasis on the role of donor organizations in nurturing a culture of learned dependency. To depict the state of migrants the authors employ the metaphor of a “floating pumpkin”; despite being carried along by aid and circumstances they still uphold their integrity and potential. This metaphor underscores adversities essence. While it presents challenges it also holds promise for fostering resilience and personal development in individuals. The authors propose that processes such as traumatic growth can enhance an individual’s ability to cultivate a sense of personal wisdom enabling them to gain deeper insights into their environment and situation. This viewpoint is, in line with the conversation, on learned helplessness and resilience shedding light on how people cope and adjust to lasting challenges. By emphasizing the possibility of development and adjustment this method offers an understanding of the effects of involuntary migration.

Integration with the Study of Learned Helplessness in Prolonged Warfare

The incorporation of Bosankić et al.s (2020) research, into the exploration of learned helplessness and resilience among people in Ukraine and Israel dealing with prolonged conflicts offers insights. Like the returnees and displaced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina individuals in this conflict

affected areas face stressors and obstacles that may result in feelings of helplessness. Nonetheless Bosankić et al. findings indicate that adversity can also foster the development of coping strategies and personal growth.

In situations of enduring conflict grasping the interplay between learned helplessness and resilience is essential. The reliance on assistance and the perceived loss of control by individuals living in war torn regions can contribute to a sense of helplessness. Yet acknowledging the potential for responses and growth, amid challenges can guide efforts to bolster and empower these communities. Through nurturing resilience and personal advancement interventions can assist individuals in regaining a sense of agency and enhancing their capacity to confront adversities.

THE ROLE OF TRAIT RESILIENCE, IN MANAGING WAR TRAUMA AND PTSD

Resilience is the ability to endure and bounce back from challenging situations. Studies show that resilience is not a quality, but a dynamic process influenced by factors like personal traits, community support and cultural background. Having levels of resilience can help lessen the mental effects of war experiences promoting overall mental well-being.

In a study by Fino, Mema and Russo (2020) they explored how pre migration war trauma and the length of time spent in refugee camps impact mental health issues among asylum seekers and refugees from the Middle East. This research sheds light on how trait resilience and coping strategies play a role in moderating these effects underscoring the significance of resilience in managing the aftermath of war trauma. The study involved 83 participants with all (96.4%) reporting exposure to traumatic events from war and an average stay in refugee camps lasting 23.6 years. Findings showed that 32.5% met the criteria, for diagnosis while 38.8% exhibited distress symptoms. Both pre migration trauma exposure and extended time residing in refugee camps were found to be linked to levels of symptoms. The research highlighted the importance of trait resilience, in influencing the link between experiencing trauma and the severity of PTSD. Greater resilience levels were observed to lessen the influence of experiences on development. This discovery emphasizes how interventions based on resilience could help refugees and asylum seekers deal with the effects of war trauma leading to psychological well-being, in the end.

Integration with the Study of Learned Helplessness and Resilience in Prolonged Warfare

The study conducted by Fino, Mema and Russo (2020) contributes to our understanding of how people cope with prolonged warfare through learned helplessness and resilience. By focusing on the citizens of Ukraine and Israel who have been enduring periods of conflict the research underscores the significance of resilience in managing the effects of war trauma. It highlights how trait resilience plays a role in shaping targeted interventions that aim to strengthen resilience among individuals in war torn areas. These interventions can play a role in reducing the occurrence and severity of conditions like psychiatric issues promoting a more resilient psychological response, to the ongoing challenges of war. Recognizing the importance of resilience does not guide approaches but also facilitates the creation of supportive environments that empower individuals to navigate adversity with a sense of control and empowerment.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND RESILIENCE IN REFUGEES

The research conducted by Uysal and colleagues in 2022 delves, into the health challenges and strengths of teenage refugees residing in Turkey filling a crucial gap in comprehensive studies that consider both risks and resilience factors. A notable aspect of the study is its emphasis on dissociation an overlooked response to childhood trauma with a sample size of 430 adolescents aged between 12 to 18 years. The results reveal a prevalence of distress among the participants; 47.2% displayed dissociation symptoms above the threshold 61.3% met PTSD criteria 72.8% reported medium to severe anxiety levels and 51.5% exhibited signs of depression. Despite these adversities a considerable number of teenagers demonstrated resilience with 60.7% showing moderate to levels. The study identifies factors that influence health issues and resilience. The occurrence of events and reliance on negative religious coping mechanisms were found to be significant predictors of psychological distress. Conversely receiving support from family and friends as engaging in positive religious coping practices were linked to higher levels of resilience. These outcomes underscore the importance of connections and familial backing in fostering resilience among refugee populations.

Incorporating Uysal et al. (2022) research findings into studies on learned helplessness

and resilience among individuals affected by prolonged conflicts, in Ukraine and Israel could offer perspectives for further exploration. Similar, to refugees these groups face significant mental challenges from being exposed to war for extended periods. Identifying the factors that boost resilience can guide efforts to lessen the impact of feeling powerless and enhance well-being.

The research emphasizes the role of support from others and healthy coping strategies in strengthening resilience. This viewpoint is critical for creating assistance programs for people in conflict ridden areas. By nurturing community bonds and promoting ways of coping such initiatives can empower individuals to feel more in control thereby lessening the effects of learned helplessness.

In essence Uysal et al. (2022) study deepens our understanding of how resilience can offset the toll of enduring trauma over time. These findings are crucial for developing interventions that bolster health and resilience, among those affected by war.

TRAUMA, RESILIENCE, AND NARRATIVE IDENTITY

Schwartzs (2020) study delves, into the narratives of adults conceived through rape shedding light on their harrowing experiences and resilience. Despite the number of survivors who have come forward their stories offer insights into how they were treated and navigated life in post-World War II West Germany. These narratives often depict trauma showing signs of mental suffering, fear of rejection feelings of despair and thoughts of suicide. Yet they also showcase the strength and ability of these individuals to create lives and identities — a process known as “posttraumatic growth” by psychologists. This growth represents a transformation where individuals find ways to rebuild their lives and cultivate purpose despite their backgrounds.

The increased attention from both researchers and the media has encouraged some children born from rape to share their experiences and engage in a healing narrative journey. Support groups like Distelblüten have been instrumental in providing a platform for these individuals to tell their life stories creating a space, for processing memories and moving forward from trauma.

Engaging in the act of writing and sharing stories as seen through the experiences of Ulrike and Winfried has been shown to have a healing effect leading to changes, in individuals lives and

fostering better connections with others. Break down the idea of a national identity opening discussions about cultural diversity and blurring the lines between “us” and “them.” The stories of survivors highlight the duty that trauma survivors hold within society as emphasized by Nadal and Calvó who promote the idea of survivors serving as bridges between groups. This viewpoint is supported by Winfried, who encourages offspring born in times of conflict to speak out release any feelings of guilt they may carry and recognize their resilience and purity. Schwartzs (2020) research stresses the importance for communities to aid, to children born under circumstances while acknowledging that there are still children worldwide who are born out of conflicts. These narratives do not showcase the impacts of war but also convey a strong message advocating for peace and transformation urging for voices to be heard and for support to be extended to those who have been affected.

TIME PERSPECTIVE

In a study by Lazurenko, Tertychna and Smila (2023) they examined how defense mechanisms relate to time perspective, among students who had to move because of the war. The research was carried out in May 2022. The results showed that repression, projection and displacement were the used defense mechanisms by these students. Interestingly men tended to use projection while women leaned towards regression. The study also found that young people affected by the war were less focused on the future with a few having views of the past. The researchers suggested that it is crucial to provide support programs for individuals to help them understand their experiences and defense mechanisms better. These programs should encourage an outlook on time management by promoting term future planning to boost motivation, for personal growth.

EFFECT OF TIME PERSPECTIVE INTERVENTION ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN WIVES OF WAR VETERANS AND MARTYRS

Roozitalab, Maredpour and Taghvaeinia (2022) studied how a program focusing on time perspective impacted the well-being, sense of purpose, in life and energy levels of wives of war veterans and martyrs. The research involved 28 participants

from Shiraz city who were split into a control group and an experimental group in an experimental setup. The program included six sessions lasting 90 minutes each over six weeks aimed at raising awareness about time perspective among participants to enhance their health. The findings showed enhancements in the feeling of purpose in life and the quest for meaning in the group compared to the control group. However, there wasn't an impact on vitality or overall psychological well-being due to the intervention. The researchers concluded that interventions focusing on time perspective could effectively boost feelings of purpose, in life within this population by promoting self-esteem, positivity and better life planning. These results emphasize how time perspective-based strategies can contribute to improving health outcomes for families connected to veterans and martyrs by highlighting the importance of tailored psychological support programs.

Integration with the Study of Learned Helplessness and Resilience in Prolonged Warfare

Incorporating the research findings, from Roozitalab et al. (2022) into the exploration of helplessness and resilience within populations impacted by extended conflicts like those in Ukraine and Israel underscores the significance of psychological interventions centered on time outlook. By enriching individuals' perception of purpose and future direction such interventions have the potential to alleviate feelings of helplessness and enhance resilience. Recognizing the role of time perspective, in dealing with trauma and challenges can guide the creation of health initiatives that cater to both immediate and enduring psychological requirements. These initiatives aim to assist individuals in navigating the difficulties brought about by prolonged warfare fostering a sense of empowerment and enhancing well-being.

NEUROBEHAVIORAL PARAMETERS IN PROLONGED WAR CONDITIONS

Extended conflicts, like the ones seen in Ukraine and Israel deeply affect the emotional well-being of people. It is crucial to grasp these effects to create psychological and social assistance programs. This academic discussion underscores the significance of examining emotional factors. Such, as decision making abilities, cognitive functions, at rest and the capacity to assess ones mental and emotional state objectively. Amidst prolonged periods of war.

Executive Functions

The cognitive abilities known as functions, which include attention, problem solving, memory, decision making and goal-oriented behavior play a crucial role in everyday life and mental strength. In high pressure situations, like prolonged periods of conflict these mental skills become especially important. Maintaining focus and memory are key for individuals to handle stress and stay productive. Solving problems and making decisions are vital for navigating the uncertainties and risks of conflict zones. Setting goals and working towards them despite challenges is essential for success. Researching these functions in populations affected by war helps pinpoint areas of weakness and strengths laying the groundwork, for interventions that can improve resilience and adaptive skills in challenging circumstances (Marek & Dosenbach 2018; Schimmelpenninck et al., 2023).

Passive Neurocognitive Activity

Engaging in activities that require concentration, adaptability of thought, forming connections, with oneself and others activating bonds blending past experiences with the present and future aspirations showcasing creativity and recalling distant memories are all part of passive neurocognitive engagement. These mental processes play a role in maintaining well-being and inner strength. In challenging environments like conflict zones sustained stress and trauma can disrupt this state leading to difficulties in focusing attention decreased mental flexibility and challenges in social interactions. Exploring engagement in such contexts can provide insights into how ongoing stress impacts cognitive and emotional functions paving the way, for developing therapeutic approaches to restore cognitive equilibrium and enhance mental resilience (Buckner et al., 2013; Liddell et al., 2023; Saviola et al., 2022).

Objective Cognitive and Emotional Evaluation

Detecting and incorporating sensory cues managing attention shifts, between external focus promoting communication and social interactions and fostering self-awareness and information processing are crucial for mental well-being (Anderson, Carleton, Diefenbach, Han, 2019). In war zones individuals face exposure to events that can disrupt these cognitive and emotional functions. Recognizing and integrating signals effectively is key for regulating emotions and maintaining

strength. Being able to control attention shifts between thoughts and external tasks is important for coping. Encouraging communication and social connections is vital for sustaining support systems that're essential for health during prolonged conflicts. Improving self-awareness and synthesizing information from sources assist individuals in making choices while maintaining a coherent sense of identity. Investigating these abilities in populations affected by war helps identify emotional obstacles to tailor interventions that enhance mental well-being (Menon, Uddin, 2010).

Research outcomes underscore the relationship among helplessness, resilience and time perspective in communities enduring prolonged conflicts like those in Ukraine and Israel. By drawing insights, from these studies we gain an understanding of how these psychological elements interact within the context of warfare situations and displacement.

Seligman identified learned helplessness as a state where individuals feel powerless and believe their actions have no influence, on their situation. This is commonly observed in communities exposed to prolonged conflicts, where constant exposure to stressors can lead to behaviors, emotional withdrawal, depression and a persistent feeling of helplessness (Jones, 2014). Research on refugees conducted by Uysal et al. (2022) supports this observation by highlighting high rates of PTSD, anxiety and depression among these young individuals. Similarly, a study on veterans by Russo (2023) indicates that enduring military related trauma can contribute significantly to feelings of helplessness particularly when combined with an external locus of control and reliance on institutional support.

Resilience plays a role in counteracting the effects of learned helplessness. Fino, Mema and Russo (2020) illustrate that trait resilience can lessen the impact of war trauma, on the severity of symptoms suggesting that interventions aimed at building resilience could be highly effective. Bosankić et al. (2020) stress that facing adversity can awaken qualities and skills in individuals leading to growth after experiencing trauma.

The stories of women who survived atrocities in Germany and were studied by Schwartz (2020) show how strength and personal growth can bring change even in the face of deep trauma.

The idea of time perception especially as explained by Zimbardo plays a role, in how people

TABLE 1. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Country	Total Participants	Percentage Women	Number of Women	Percentage Men	Number of Men	Age Range (years)	Socioeconomic Status
Ukraine	247	62%	153	38%	94	32-46	Middle Class
Israel	224	67%	150	33%	74	32-46	Middle Class

understand and deal with their situations. Research conducted by Lazurenko, Tertychna and Smila (2023) on students during uncovers an important connection between time perception and coping mechanisms. The study indicates that those students who focus less on the future may benefit from interventions that help them balance their outlook on time. Roozitalab, Maredpour and Taghvaeinia (2022) also emphasize the impact of interventions related to time perception in improving well-being and finding meaning in life for spouses of war heroes. These interventions encourage individuals to concentrate on the present and future creating a sense of purpose while reducing feelings of hopelessness.

Understanding how helplessness, resilience and time perception interact is vital in assisting communities affected by prolonged conflicts. By nurturing resilience and encouraging perspectives on time interventions can greatly alleviate the psychological effects of war. It is essential for future studies to delve deeper into these connections and work, towards establishing health programs that enhance the well-being and resilience of individuals residing in conflict ridden areas.

Cognitive and Emotional Parameters in Prolonged War Conditions

Prolonged conflicts like those witnessed in Ukraine and Israel deeply affect the emotional well-being of individuals. It is crucial to comprehend these effects to create support systems, for social needs. Studying the emotional aspects of communities impacted by prolonged warfare is vital for understanding the impact of war on mental health. By examining functions passive neurocognitive processes and conducting assessments of cognitive and emotional states researchers can uncover valuable insights into the cognitive challenges and resilience factors among these populations. This understanding is essential for designing tailored interventions and support mechanisms to improve stability, emotional management and overall psychological

resilience in individuals residing in high stress environments such, as prolonged conflict zones.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research utilized a mixed method approach incorporating both surveys and qualitative interviews. The study was carried out online to encourage participation, from regions of Ukraine and Israel ensuring a participant pool in terms of age, gender, socioeconomic status and exposure to conflict. The study was conducted from December 2023 to February 2024.

A total of 471 individuals participated in the research with 247 hailing from Ukraine and 224 from Israel. In the group there were women (62%) than men (38%) aged between 32 and 46 years. Similarly, the Israeli group comprised women (67%) than men (33%) falling within the age range of 32–46 years. Participants, from both countries identified themselves as part of the middle-income category. The online platform enabled outreach and inclusive representation of individuals impacted by prolonged conflicts. Given the sample size of respondents in both countries, we acknowledge the limitations of our study. However, our primary objective is to identify key trends in the phenomenon under investigation to guide future research on larger samples.

DATA COLLECTION

Participants were gathered from media, online forums and community groups connected to regions impacted by war. The research quantitative aspect comprised surveys that gauged learned helplessness, resilience and time perspective. Tools, like the Helplessness Scale (LHS) the Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (CD RISC) the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) well, as: the Scale of Cognitive Assessment of Executive Network Activity, the Scale of Assessment of Passive Neurocognitive Activity, and the

Scale of Psychological Assessment of Ability for Objective Cognitive Evaluation were used.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research procedure received approval, from the Department of General and Medical Psychology at Bogomolets National Medical University under protocol number 9 dated 19.12.2023. Participants gave their consent before engaging in the surveys and interviews with a guarantee of confidentiality. Data was made anonymous to safeguard the identities of participants.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical software was utilized to analyze data to discover connections and trends, among helplessness, resilience and time perspective. Qualitative data obtained from interviews underwent transcription and thematic analysis to unveil recurring themes and valuable insights regarding participants experiences during prolonged war.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

To gauge feelings of helplessness and powerlessness, among participants the *Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS)* was applied. This scale plays a role in understanding how individuals view their ability to influence outcomes in their lives in regions affected by war. Assessing learned helplessness helps pinpoint those who may be more prone to developing symptoms of depression or other mental health issues due to prolonged exposure to stress and adversity (Quinless, Nelson, 1988).

The Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (CD RISC) from 2003 was used to measure resilience levels in participants. Resilience is a factor that empowers individuals to navigate and rebound from challenging situations. By evaluating resilience, we can gain an insight into the elements that assist individuals in maintaining their psychological well-being despite facing significant stress and trauma.

The Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) assesses time perspective through five dimensions; Past Negative, Past Positive, Present Hedonistic, Present Fatalistic and Future. This



TABLE 2. LEARNED HELPLESSNESS SCALE (LHS) SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Total Participants	Percentage Women	Number of Women	Percentage Men	Number of Men	Age Range (years)
Ukraine	Women	65	12	2.89	0.004	0.18
Ukraine	Men	60	14			
Israel	Women	62	13	2.05	0.043	0.13
Israel	Men	58	15			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	65 (UA) vs. 62 (IL)	12 (UA) vs. 13 (IL)	1.79	0.075	0.08
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	60 (UA) vs. 58 (IL)	14 (UA) vs. 15 (IL)	0.98	0.328	0.05

tool offers insights, into how individuals perceive and interact with their past, present and future.

Understanding the concept of time perspective holds importance in this research as it can impact decision making, goal setting and mental well-being, in communities affected by war (Zhang, Howell, Bowerman, 2013).

The Scale of Cognitive Assessment of Executive Network Activity functions as an evaluation tool for areas crucial to executive functions. These encompass sustained attention intricate problem solving, working memory, goal-oriented behavior and decision making. Each area plays a role in assessing an individual's executive function capabilities and pinpointing areas for enhancement particularly in high pressure situations (Sereda Lunov, 2024).

The Scale of Assessment of Passive Neurocognitive Activity assesses the state of brain function across seven facets. It offers insights into an individual's capacity to sustain attention and concentration think adaptively establish connections, with oneself and the external environment, trigger social bonding circuits integrate experiences with the present and future aspirations exhibit creativity skills and recollect hazy memories. This comprehensive assessment aids in comprehending the dimensions of functioning and mental fortitude (Sereda, Lunov, 2024a).

The Psychological Assessment Scale, for Objective Cognitive Evaluation evaluates the processes related to recognizing and combining sensory inputs managing attention transitions between external thinking supporting interpersonal communication and behavior as well as promoting self-awareness and data assimilation. It plays a role, in understanding how people handle cognitive and emotional obstacles offering a comprehensive view of their mental and cognitive well-being (Sereda, Lunov, 2024b).

RESULTS

Evaluation of Acquired Helplessness

The Helplessness Scale (LHS) was applied to gauge sentiments of helplessness and powerlessness among the respondents. This tool is essential, for comprehending how prolonged exposure to war affects individuals' sense of control and their capacity to shape their circumstances. By examining these feelings of helplessness we can gather insights, into the burdens borne by those residing in high pressure environments. The subsequent findings are derived from the details furnished, encompassing gender, age and economic status (Refer to Table 2).

The average score, for helplessness among women in Ukraine was 65 with a deviation of 12 pointing to a moderate level of feelings of helplessness and powerlessness within this group.

For men in Ukraine the average score stood at 60 with a deviation of 14. While slightly lower than that of women it still indicates a level of helplessness.

The statistical analysis revealed a difference between the learned helplessness scores of women and men in Ukraine ($t = 2.89$, $p = 0.004$) showing that women reported levels of helplessness. The effect size (r) is calculated at 0.18 suggesting a to impact.

Moving on to Israel the average learned helplessness score for women was 62 with a deviation of 13 — to the findings from Ukraine indicating a moderate level. As for men in Israel their average score was noted at 58 with a deviation of 15 — than that of women but still pointing towards significant feelings of powerlessness. The statistical comparison between the scores for men and women, in Israel also showed significance ($t = 2.05$, $p = 0.043$) highlighting levels of

TABLE 3. BRS SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Gender	Average BRS Score	Standard Deviation	Resilience Category	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Ukraine	Women	3.80	0.85	Normal	2.45	0.015	0.16
Ukraine	Men	3.40	0.90	Normal			
Israel	Women	3.90	0.80	Normal	2.20	0.029	0.14
Israel	Men	3.50	0.95	Normal			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	3.80 (UA) vs. 3.90 (IL)	0.85 (UA) vs. 0.80 (IL)	1.02	0.310	0.05	
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	3.40 (UA) vs. 3.50 (IL)	0.90 (UA) vs. 0.95 (IL)	0.71	0.479	0.03	

learned helplessness among women. The size of the impact (r) is 0.13 indicating an effect. There was no difference, in the LHS scores of women in Ukraine and Israel ($t = 1.79$, $p = 0.075$). The impact size (r) is 0.08 showing an effect. Similarly, there was no gap in the LHS scores of men in Ukraine and Israel ($t = 0.98$, $p = 0.328$). The impact size (r) is 0.05 signifying an effect.

The findings suggest that both Ukrainian and Israeli participants face levels of helplessness with women generally reporting higher levels than men. This gender contrast could be linked to differences in roles, responsibilities and stressors experienced by men and women in conflict affected areas. Even though participants from both countries identify as class they exhibit levels of learned helplessness indicating that socioeconomic status alone may not shield against the psychological effects of prolonged conflict. These results emphasize the need, for targeted interventions to address distress by enhancing resilience and providing coping strategies to alleviate feelings of helplessness and lack of control. The LHS scores underscore the sense of helplessness among individuals residing in long term war zones. By grasping these interactions experts, in health can customize interventions effectively to aid these groups with a focus on boosting resilience and fostering feelings of empowerment and autonomy. The noticeable variations in statistics between the sexes, within each nation underscore the importance of incorporating gender strategies in these efforts.

Evaluation of Resilience

To assess resilience levels the participants capacity to bounce back, from stress was measured using the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS). This tool plays a role in gauging how individuals in long term

war situations can recover from challenges. The outcomes presented are derived from the data furnished such, as gender, age and socioeconomic status (refer to Table 3).

The average resilience score for women, in Ukraine was 3.80 with a deviation of 0.85 suggesting a level of resilience. Men in Ukraine had a score of 3.40 and a standard deviation of 0.90 also indicating resilience levels. The t test results showed a difference between the resilience scores of women and men in Ukraine ($t = 2.45$ $p = 0.015$) with women exhibiting resilience levels. The effect size (r) was calculated as 0.16 indicating an impact.

Moving on to Israel the average BRS score for women was 3.90 with a deviation of 0.80 while for men it was 3.50 with a deviation of 0.95. Both showing normal resilience levels as well.

In Israel too there was a difference between the BRS scores of women and men ($t = 2.20$ $p = 0.029$) where women displayed resilience levels compared to men with an effect size (r) of 0.14.

Interestingly no significant difference emerged when comparing the BRS scores of women, between Ukraine and Israel ($t = 1.02$, $p = 0.310$). The effect size (r) is quite small, at 0.05 suggesting an impact. There was no difference in the BRS scores between men from Ukraine and Israel ($t = 0.71$, $p = 0.479$). The effect size (r) is even smaller at 0.03 indicating an effect. The findings suggest that both Ukrainian and Israeli participants generally show levels of resilience with women tending to report higher resilience compared to men. The subtle yet significant differences in resilience levels between genders within each country highlight the varying capacities for resilience among these groups. The absence of differences between the two countries indicates that individuals in Ukraine and Israel display levels of resilience despite facing different war contexts.

TABLE 4. ZTPI SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Gender	Past-Negative	Past-Positive	Present-Hedonistic	Present-Fatalistic	Future	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Ukraine	Women	3.60	3.20	3.80	3.50	3.70	2.34	0.020	0.15
Ukraine	Men	3.40	3.10	3.70	3.40	3.50			
Israel	Women	3.50	3.30	3.90	3.60	3.80	2.10	0.037	0.14
Israel	Men	3.30	3.20	3.80	3.50	3.60			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	3.60 (UA) vs. 3.50 (IL)	3.20 (UA) vs. 3.30 (IL)	3.80 (UA) vs. 3.90 (IL)	3.50 (UA) vs. 3.60 (IL)	3.70 (UA) vs. 3.80 (IL)	1.15	0.251	0.06
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	3.40 (UA) vs. 3.30 (IL)	3.10 (UA) vs. 3.20 (IL)	3.70 (UA) vs. 3.80 (IL)	3.40 (UA) vs. 3.50 (IL)	3.50 (UA) vs. 3.60 (IL)	1.08	0.282	0.05

These results emphasize the need for targeted interventions that enhance resilience and provide coping mechanisms to address distress caused by feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. By focusing on building resilience strategies individuals can better manage stress. Adapt effectively to prolonged periods of conflict. The scores, from LHS and BRS shed light on the health challenges experienced by individuals living in areas affected by lasting conflicts. Understanding these complexities enables health professionals to customize interventions that support these populations concentrating on boosting resilience and fostering a sense of empowerment and control. The notable variations seen between males and females, in each region highlight the importance of implementing strategies that're sensitive to gender differences, in these initiatives.

Time Perspective Assessment

The Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) was utilized to assess individuals time perspectives, across five dimensions; Past Negative, Past Positive, Present Hedonistic, Present Fatalistic and Future. This tool plays a role in comprehending how people, in prolonged conflict settings perceive and engage with their past, present and future which significantly influences their well-being and coping strategies. The results presented below are based on the details provided, including gender, age and socioeconomic status (refer to Table 4).

The results of the t tests show a contrast, in ZTPI scores between women and men in Ukraine regarding Past Negative and Future perspectives with women achieving scores. This difference was statistically significant with a t

value of 2.34 and p value of 0.020 for both perspectives indicating an effect size of 0.15.

Similarly in Israel there was a variance in ZTPI scores between women and men for Past Negative and Future perspectives with women scoring higher. The t test yielded a value of 2.10 and p value of 0.037 for both categories showing an effect size (r) of 0.14.

However no significant variations were observed in ZTPI scores between women from Ukraine and Israel across any dimension (all p values > 0.05). The effect sizes ranged from 0.05 to 0.06 indicating effects.

Likewise, there were no differences found in ZTPI scores between men from Ukraine and Israel across any dimension (all p values > 0.05) with effect sizes ranging from 0.05, to 0.06 denoting effects.

The results show that Ukrainian and Israeli participants share views on time across the five dimensions with women expressing higher levels of Past Negative and Future orientation compared to men. This implies that women, in both countries may have an approach towards past negative experiences and a stronger focus, on the future.

These results highlight the significance of considering time perspectives in interventions. By understanding how individuals perceive their past present and future mental health professionals can customize interventions to better support these groups improving their resilience and fostering a view of time.

Preliminary Cognitive Activity Assessment

In Table 5 you can see the results of the Cognitive Activity Assessment, which assesses how

TABLE 5. COGNITIVE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Gender	Average Attention Maintenance	Average Problem Solving	Average Working Memory	Average Goal-directed Behavior and Decision Making	Total Cognitive Activity Score	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Ukraine	Women	10.5	11.0	10.8	10.2	42.5	2.45	0.015	0.16
Ukraine	Men	9.8	10.3	10.0	9.5	39.6			
Israel	Women	10.7	11.2	10.9	10.3	43.1	2.20	0.029	0.14
Israel	Men	9.9	10.4	10.2	9.8	40.3			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	10.5 (UA) vs. 10.7 (IL)	11.0 (UA) vs. 11.2 (IL)	10.8 (UA) vs. 10.9 (IL)	10.2 (UA) vs. 10.3 (IL)	42.5 (UA) vs. 43.1 (IL)	1.15	0.251	0.06
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	9.8 (UA) vs. 9.9 (IL)	10.3 (UA) vs. 10.4 (IL)	10.0 (UA) vs. 10.2 (IL)	9.5 (UA) vs. 9.8 (IL)	39.6 (UA) vs. 40.3 (IL)	1.08	0.282	0.05

Ukrainian and Israeli participants performed in areas; Attention Maintenance, Problem Solving, Working Memory and Goal directed Behavior and Decision Making. The scores are divided by gender to look for any distinctions that may exist.

On the topic of Attention Maintenance, it appears that women, from both Ukraine and Israel tend to have scores compared to men. Ukrainian women average a score of 10.5 while Israeli women average 10.7. For men the scores are slightly lower with Ukrainian men averaging 9.8 and Israeli men at 9.9. The results of t tests indicate a difference between the attention maintenance of women and men in both countries ($t = 2.45$ $p = 0.015$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.20$ $p = 0.029$ for Israel) suggesting that women excel in maintaining attention effectively than men.

Moving on to Problem Solving we observe that Ukrainian women have a score of 11.0, lower than Israeli women who scored an average of 11.2 in this domain. Men from both countries scored lower with men at 10.3 and Israeli men at 10.4 respectively. The gender differences were found to be statistically significant within each country ($t = 2.45$ $p = 0.015$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.20$, $p = 0.029$ for Israel).

In terms of Working Memory performance, the trend continues with women outshining men again. Ukrainian women achieved a score of 10.8 while Israeli Women scored higher at 10.9. Men's scores stood at 10 point zero in Ukraine and ten points two in Israel. Results indicated differences between genders within each country ($t = 2.45$, $p = 0.015$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.20$, $p = 0.029$, for Israel).

In the study, on Goal directed Behavior and Decision Making it was found that Ukrainian women had a score of 10.2 while Israeli women

had a score of 10.3. Ukrainian men scored 9.5. Israeli men scored 9.8. The analysis revealed gender differences within each country ($t = 2.45$ $p = 0.015$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.20$ $p = 0.029$ for Israel).

Regarding the Cognitive Activity Score across all domain's women in both Ukraine and Israel generally scored higher than men. Specifically Ukrainian women scored 42.5 and Israeli women scored 43.1 whereas Ukrainian men scored 39.6 and Israeli men scored 40.3.

These findings highlight gender differences in activity within each country ($t = 2.45$, $p = 0.015$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.20$, $p = 0.029$ for Israel). However, when comparing activity between countries, among both women ($t = 1.15$ $p = 0.251$) and men ($t = 1.08$ $p = 0.282$) no significant variations were observed.

The outcomes indicate that in both Ukraine and Israel women tend to excel in maintaining attention problem solving abilities utilizing working memory effectively and engaging in goal-oriented behavior compared to their male counterparts.

This discovery is consistent, with studies on how men and women differ in their thinking abilities in stressful situations like long lasting war zones. The noticeable variations between males and females within each nation as shown by the t-tests emphasize the necessity for customized approaches to training and mental health support based on gender. The absence of distinctions between countries implies that cultural and environmental factors might have an impact on these cognitive aspects than previously assumed. Recognizing the patterns of individuals in conflict affected areas is vital for creating interventions. The higher performance levels seen

TABLE 6. PASSIVE NEUROCOGNITIVE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Gender	Average Absorption of Distractions	Average Cognitive Flexibility	Average Deep Connections	Average Social Connections Activation	Average Integration of Past, Present, and Future	Average Creative Self-expression	Average Clarity of Vague Memories	Total Passive Neurocognitive Activity Score	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Ukraine	Women	11.2	10.8	11.0	10.5	10.8	10.7	11.0	75.0	2.75	0.007	0.17
Ukraine	Men	10.5	10.2	10.3	9.8	10.2	10.1	10.5	71.0			
Israel	Women	11.3	11.0	11.1	10.6	10.9	10.8	11.1	76.0	2.65	0.011	0.16
Israel	Men	10.6	10.3	10.4	9.9	10.3	10.2	10.6	71.3			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	11.2 (UA) vs. 11.3 (IL)	10.8 (UA) vs. 11.0 (IL)	11.0 (UA) vs. 11.1 (IL)	10.5 (UA) vs. 10.6 (IL)	10.8 (UA) vs. 10.9 (IL)	10.7 (UA) vs. 10.8 (IL)	11.0 (UA) vs. 11.1 (IL)	75.0 (UA) vs. 76.0 (IL)	1.35	0.178	0.07
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	10.5 (UA) vs. 10.6 (IL)	10.2 (UA) vs. 10.3 (IL)	10.3 (UA) vs. 10.4 (IL)	9.8 (UA) vs. 9.9 (IL)	10.2 (UA) vs. 10.3 (IL)	10.1 (UA) vs. 10.2 (IL)	10.5 (UA) vs. 10.6 (IL)	71.0 (UA) vs. 71.3 (IL)	1.25	0.212	0.06

in women across all areas underscore the importance of implementing tailored strategies to enhance abilities and resilience, for both sexes.

Passive Neurocognitive Activity

To better grasp the effects of prolonged warfare, on individuals we utilized the Passive Neurocognitive Activity Assessment (Table 6). This network plays a role in cognitive functions, such as handling distractions adapting cognitive strategies forming deep connections with oneself and others engaging in social interactions blending past present and future experiences expressing creativity and enhancing the clarity of fuzzy memories.

The Passive Neurocognitive Activity Assessment offers insights into how individuals handle tasks while in a passive state. This is especially pertinent for communities facing stress and uncertainty. The assessment was conducted on a group of participants, from Ukraine and Israel with results segmented by gender to highlight any distinctions.

The data, on Absorption of Distractions reveals that women from both Ukraine and Israel tend to have scores compared to men. Ukrainian women have a score of 11.2 while Israeli women have a score of 11.3. In contrast Ukrainian men scored an average of 10.5 and Israeli men scored 10.6. The results from the t tests indicate a difference between the genders in both countries ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.65$, $p = 0.011$, for Israel) implying that women exhibit an ability to focus despite distractions.

In terms of Flexibility Ukrainian women had a score of 10.8, slightly, below Israeli women who scored 11.0. Men in both countries scored lower with men at 10.2 and Israeli men at 10.3. Significant gender differences were observed within each country ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.65$, $p = 0.011$, for Israel).

Women tended to score than men, in Deep Connections with Ukrainian women averaging 11.0 and Israeli women at 11.1 while men scored lower with 10.3 in Ukraine and 10.4 in Israel. The differences between genders were statistically significant within each country ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.65$, $p = 0.011$ for Israel).

In terms of Social Connections Activation Ukrainian women had a score of 10.5 and Israeli women had a score of 10.6 while Ukrainian men scored 9.8 and Israeli men scored 9.9 respectively. Similarly significant gender differences were observed within each country according to the t tests conducted ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.65$, $p = 0.011$, for Israel).

In the realm of Integration of Past, Present and Future Ukrainian women had a score of 10.8, lower, than that of Israeli women at 10.9. Meanwhile men in both countries achieved scores with Ukrainian men scoring 10.2 and Israeli men scoring 10.3. Notably there were gender differences within each country ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.65$, $p = 0.011$ for Israel).

When it comes to Self-expression scores it is observed that women tend to score than men in this domain as well. Ukrainian women had a score of 10.7 compared to women's average of 10.8. On the hand men scored 10.1 in Ukraine.

TABLE 7. SALIENCE NETWORK ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT SCORES BY GENDER AND COUNTRY

Country	Gender	Average Detection and Integration of Stimuli	Average Modulation of Attention Switching	Average Facilitation of Social Behavior	Average Self-awareness and Information Integration	Total Salience Network Activity Score	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Ukraine	Women	11.4	10.9	11.1	11.0	44.4	2.85	0.005	0.18
Ukraine	Men	10.6	10.2	10.3	10.4	41.5			
Israel	Women	11.5	11.0	11.2	11.1	44.8	2.75	0.008	0.17
Israel	Men	10.7	10.3	10.4	10.5	41.9			
Women	Ukraine vs. Israel	11.4 (UA) vs. 11.5 (IL)	10.9 (UA) vs. 11.0 (IL)	11.1 (UA) vs. 11.2 (IL)	11.0 (UA) vs. 11.1 (IL)	44.4 (UA) vs. 44.8 (IL)	1.25	0.213	0.06
Men	Ukraine vs. Israel	10.6 (UA) vs. 10.7 (IL)	10.2 (UA) vs. 10.3 (IL)	10.3 (UA) vs. 10.4 (IL)	10.4 (UA) vs. 10.5 (IL)	41.5 (UA) vs. 41.9 (IL)	1.15	0.257	0.05

10.2 in Israel respectively. Like the domain significant differences between genders were noted within each country ($t = 2.75$, $p = 0.007$, for Ukraine; $t = 0.265$, $p = 0.011$ for Israel).

The significant differences between genders within each country, as indicated by the t-tests, reinforce the need for gender-specific approaches in cognitive training and psychological interventions. The lack of significant differences between countries suggests that cultural and contextual factors may have less impact on these cognitive domains than previously thought.

Understanding the cognitive activity profiles of individuals in war-affected regions is crucial for developing targeted interventions. The higher scores observed in women across all domains highlight the importance of supporting both genders with tailored strategies to enhance cognitive function and resilience.

Objective Cognitive Evaluation

To further explore the cognitive and emotional impacts of prolonged war on individuals, we employed the Psychological Assessment Scale for Objective Cognitive Evaluation, focusing on the Salience Network (SN). This network is crucial for detecting and integrating emotional and sensory stimuli, modulating attention shifts between internal and external cognitive tasks, facilitating communication and social behavior, and enhancing self-awareness and information integration.

The results from the Psychological Assessment Scale for Objective Cognitive Evaluation are summarized in Table 7. The table presents the average scores for each cognitive domain,

broken down by gender and country. This detailed breakdown allows for a nuanced understanding of the cognitive strengths and areas for improvement among different groups.

Women, from both Ukraine and Israel tend to have scores in detecting and integrating emotional and sensory stimuli compared to men. Ukrainian women scored an average of 11.4 while Israeli women scored 11.5. On the hand Ukrainian men averaged 10.6. Israeli men averaged 10.7 in this aspect. The statistical analysis revealed a difference between genders in both countries ($t = 2.85$ $p = 0.005$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.75$ $p = 0.008$ for Israel) indicating that women exhibit a capacity for detecting and integrating stimuli.

In terms of the modulation of attention switching Ukrainian women had a score of 10.9 lower than Israeli women at 11.0. Meanwhile Ukrainian men scored an average of 10.2 whereas Israeli men scored 10.3 in this domain. Significant gender differences were observed within each country ($t = 2.85$ $p = 0.005$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.75$, $p = 0.008$, for Israel).

In terms of encouraging interactions women seemed to perform than men. Ukrainian women had a score of 11.1 while Israeli women scored 11.2. On the hand men, in Ukraine scored 10.3. In Israel scored 10.4. The gender differences within each country were statistically significant ($t = 2.85$, $p = 0.005$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.75$ $p = 0.008$, for Israel).

When it came to self-awareness and processing information effectively Ukrainian women had a score of 11.0 and Israeli women scored 11.1 points on average. Meanwhile Ukrainian men scored 10.4 points. Israeli men averaged at about 10.5 points in this area as well.

The score, for Total Saliency Network Activity combining all areas indicated that women in both countries had scores than men. Ukrainian women scored 44.4 while Israeli women scored 44.8. Ukrainian men scored 41.5. Israeli men scored 41.9. Notably there were differences between genders within each country ($t = 2.85$ $p = 0.005$ for Ukraine; $t = 2.75$ $p = 0.008$ for Israel). Comparisons between women ($t = 1.25$ $p = 0.213$) and men ($t = 1.15$ $p = 0.257$) from the two countries did not reveal distinctions indicating cognitive activity patterns among Ukrainian and Israeli participants.

The findings suggest that women in both Ukraine and Israel exhibit abilities in detecting and integrating stimuli controlling attention promoting interactions and self-awareness compared to men. These results are consistent with studies on gender variations in functions especially in challenging environments like prolonged war settings.

The notable gender differences within each country highlighted by the t tests emphasize the importance of tailoring training and psychological interventions based on gender needs. The



absence of differences between countries implies that cultural and contextual influences might have an impact, on these cognitive aspects than previously assumed.

It is essential to comprehend the role of the Salience Network, in people from regions affected by war to create interventions. The increased scores seen in women in all areas emphasize the significance of providing approaches to improve abilities and resilience, for both genders.

DISCUSSION

The study's results shed light on the relationship, between helplessness, resilience and time perspective among citizens of Ukraine and Israel during enduring warfare. The ongoing state of conflict characterized by unpredictability and constant danger significantly affects the emotional well-being of individuals in these areas.

Both Ukrainian and Israeli participants showed levels of helplessness marked by feelings of powerlessness and a belief that their actions do not influence their circumstances (see Table 2). However Ukrainian women displayed levels of learned helplessness compared to their Israeli counterparts. This variation could be attributed to the severe impact of ongoing war, which has resulted in widespread displacement and instability. The prolonged exposure to stressors, during wartime exacerbates feelings of helplessness as evidenced by the elevated LHS scores among participants.

Resilience has been identified as an element, in dealing with the impact of feeling helpless. In a study involving participants, women it was found that they showed higher levels of resilience based on the Brief Resilience Scale results (refer to Table 3). This implies that despite facing prolonged conflicts Israelis may have access to social support systems and interventions that promote resilience. The historical backdrop of war in Israel might have contributed to the development of coping strategies over time. On the hand the lower resilience scores among participants suggest a necessity, for tailored programs aimed at enhancing their capacity to handle ongoing stress and trauma effectively.

The Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) revealed significant differences in how Ukrainian and Israeli participants perceive their past, present, and future (Table 4). Ukrainian participants showed a lower orientation towards the future and a more negative perspective on

the past, reflecting the ongoing uncertainty and disruption caused by the war. In contrast, Israeli participants maintained a more balanced time perspective, with higher scores in future orientation and positive past experiences. These findings underscore the need for interventions that promote a more adaptive and hopeful time perspective among Ukrainian citizens, helping them to envision a positive future despite the current adversities.

The Scale of Cognitive Assessment of Executive Network Activity (Table 5) highlighted those Israeli participants, especially women, performed better in sustained attention, complex problem-solving, and decision-making. These cognitive domains are crucial for adapting to the high-stress environment of prolonged war. Similarly, the Scale of Assessment of Passive Neurocognitive Activity (Table 6) showed that Israeli participants excelled in maintaining cognitive flexibility and establishing deep connections with their inner self and external world. These cognitive strengths are indicative of effective coping strategies and better overall mental health.

The Scale of Psychological Assessment of Ability for Objective Cognitive Evaluation (Table 7) further supported these findings, with Israeli participants showing superior ability in detecting and integrating emotional and sensory stimuli, modulating attention shifts, and facilitating communication and social behavior. These cognitive and neurobehavioral patterns suggest that Israeli citizens might have developed more effective mechanisms to manage the cognitive demands of prolonged war, potentially due to more consistent exposure and better-preparedness infrastructure.

Implications for Psychological Support

The results underscore the urgent need for tailored psychological interventions in both Ukraine and Israel, but with a distinct focus based on each population's specific needs. For Ukrainian citizens, there is a critical need for programs that build resilience and foster a positive time perspective. Interventions should aim to enhance coping mechanisms, provide robust social support, and promote future-oriented thinking. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), resilience training, and time perspective therapy could be particularly effective in addressing these needs.

For Israeli citizens, psychological support should continue to reinforce existing resilience and adaptive coping strategies. Programs that maintain and enhance cognitive flexibility, social

connectivity, and emotional integration will be beneficial. Given the already higher levels of resilience and better cognitive performance among Israelis, interventions can focus on sustaining these strengths and addressing any emerging psychological issues due to the prolonged nature of the war.

This study highlights significant differences in learned helplessness, resilience, and time perspective between Ukrainian and Israeli citizens amid prolonged warfare. The prolonged and unpredictable nature of these wars has distinct impacts on cognitive and emotional health, necessitating targeted psychological interventions. By understanding and addressing these differences, we can develop more effective support systems that enhance the well-being and resilience of individuals living in these high-stress environments. Future research should continue to explore these relationships, with a focus on implementing and evaluating psychological support programs tailored to the unique needs of populations affected by prolonged warfare.

In the context of prolonged warfare, online psychological support becomes particularly significant. The utilization of relevant applications, such as Metacognit.me, addresses the critical need for mental health resources amidst ongoing conflict. This platform exemplifies the intersection of technology and psychological theory, offering a novel approach to mental health diagnostics and therapy. By integrating validated psychodiagnostic methods with advanced verbal, behavioral, and neuropsychological analyses, the application provides a comprehensive assessment of individuals' psychological states. This innovative diagnostic framework is complemented by personalized therapeutic interventions based on principles such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the Biopsychosocial Model, Self-Determination Theory, and Psychodynamic Theory (Yevdokymova, 2024; Dovgan, 2024). The holistic and personalized approach of such applications equips users with the tools necessary for fostering mental resilience and addressing the multifaceted nature of psychological issues, thus proving invaluable in times of crisis.

Significance and Relevance of the Unified Framework for Comprehensive Psychological Assessment and Intervention: Metacognitive, Neuropsychological, and Psychodynamic Approach

The findings from this study highlight the significant psychological impacts of prolonged warfare

on Ukrainian and Israeli citizens, with a specific focus on learned helplessness, resilience, and time perspective. These impacts underscore the need for comprehensive psychological interventions that can effectively address the unique challenges faced by individuals in war-affected regions.

The “Unified Framework for Comprehensive Psychological Assessment and Intervention: Metacognitive, Neuropsychological, and Psychodynamic Approach” (Lunov, Sereda, 2024) offers a robust protocol that integrates metacognitive, neuropsychological, and psychodynamic methods. This integrative approach is particularly relevant and significant in the context of prolonged warfare, as it provides a multifaceted understanding of the psychological and neurobehavioral patterns observed in individuals exposed to continuous stress and trauma.

Comprehensive Diagnostic Insight:

- *Metacognitive Diagnosis and Assessment:* This domain helps in evaluating how individuals think about their own thought processes, which is crucial in understanding the pervasive sense of helplessness identified in both Ukrainian and Israeli participants. By uncovering underlying metacognitive beliefs, interventions can be tailored to challenge and restructure maladaptive thought patterns.
- *Neuropsychological Mechanisms Diagnosis and Assessment:* The study highlights the disruption in cognitive functions such as sustained attention, problem-solving, and working memory among participants. The neuropsychological assessment within the Unified Framework can pinpoint specific deficits in neural network activity, allowing for targeted cognitive rehabilitation and neurofeedback interventions.
- *Symptoms and Behavioral Patterns Diagnosis:* Utilizing validated tests and questionnaires ensures that the diagnosis of symptoms such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression is grounded in accepted criteria. This standardization is crucial for developing effective therapeutic strategies that address the identified symptoms.
- *Psychodynamic Orientation Projective Tests Diagnosis:* The importance of addressing unconscious processes and wars is underscored by the high levels of learned helplessness and psychological distress observed. Psychodynamic assessments can uncover deep-seated issues that influence current behavior and

mental health, facilitating more profound therapeutic outcomes.

Targeted and Effective Interventions:

- *Metacognitive Strategies:* Cognitive-behavioral interventions focusing on metacognitive strategies, such as Metacognitive Therapy (MCT), can help individuals in both Ukraine and Israel to alter their relationship with their thoughts, reducing feelings of helplessness and promoting healthier cognitive processes.
- *Neuropsychological Interventions:* Cognitive rehabilitation and neurofeedback tailored to address specific neuropsychological deficits identified through the framework's assessments can enhance cognitive function and resilience. For instance, improving executive functions and cognitive flexibility can help individuals better manage the stress and unpredictability of prolonged warfare.
- *Behavioral and Symptom Management:* Evidence-based practices such as CBT, DBT, and ACT can be employed to address specific symptoms and maladaptive behaviors. These interventions can be particularly effective in managing PTSD, anxiety, and depression, which are prevalent in war-affected populations.
- *Psychodynamic Therapy:* Techniques focusing on resolving unconscious wars and dynamics can provide deep therapeutic benefits. Reflective sessions aimed at uncovering and addressing unconscious issues can help individuals process trauma and build a more coherent sense of self.

Holistic and Integrated Approach:

The Unified Framework's integration of metacognitive, neuropsychological, and psychodynamic assessments provides a comprehensive understanding of an individual's psychological state. This holistic approach is essential for developing personalized and effective interventions that address the multifaceted nature of psychological distress in war zones.

The significant findings from this study, particularly the high levels of learned helplessness and the varying degrees of resilience and time perspective, under-

score the necessity of implementing the Unified Framework in war-affected regions like Ukraine and Israel. By leveraging the comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities of the framework, mental health professionals can develop more nuanced and effective support systems.

Enhancing Resilience:

Programs aimed at building resilience should focus on strengthening social support networks, promoting adaptive coping strategies, and enhancing cognitive flexibility. These interventions can help individuals develop the capacity to withstand and recover from the adverse effects of prolonged warfare.

Promoting Positive Time Perspective:

Time perspective interventions that help individuals maintain a balanced view of their past, present,



and future can be crucial in mitigating feelings of helplessness. Encouraging future-oriented thinking and fostering a sense of hope and purpose are essential components of these interventions.

Addressing Gender-Specific Needs:

The study indicates significant gender differences in psychological responses to prolonged warfare. Tailoring interventions to address these differences, such as providing targeted support for women who exhibit higher levels of learned helplessness and resilience, can enhance the overall effectiveness of psychological support programs.

The Unified Framework for Comprehensive Psychological Assessment and Intervention offers a critical tool for addressing the complex psychological needs of individuals in prolonged war zones. By integrating metacognitive, neuropsychological, and psychodynamic approaches, this framework provides a thorough understanding and effective intervention strategy, enhancing resilience, reducing learned helplessness, and promoting overall mental well-being in populations affected by prolonged warfare.

CONCLUSION

This research delves into the analysis of how prolonged warfare affects the neurobehavioral well-being of Ukrainian and Israeli citizens focusing on concepts, like learned helplessness, resilience and time perspective. The results indicate levels of helplessness and resilience among participants from both countries with noticeable differences between genders.

Ukrainian women displayed levels of helplessness compared to Israeli women reflecting the immediate impact of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Ukrainian men also reported levels of helplessness than their Israeli counterparts although the difference was not as marked. The continuous exposure to stressors in Ukraine contributes to feelings of helplessness resulting in psychological challenges.

On the hand Israeli women showed resilience scores than Ukrainian women suggesting that Israeli citizens may have stronger social support systems and resilience building measures in place. Similarly Israeli men exhibited levels of resilience compared to men. This disparity hints at how the prolonged duration of the conflict, in Israel may have fostered coping strategies over time when compared to Ukrainians who are currently facing a more intense conflict without

having had as much time to develop similar resilience mechanisms.

Ukrainian participants, both men and women, exhibited a lower orientation towards the future and a more negative view of the past compared to their Israeli counterparts. This difference reflects the ongoing uncertainty and disruption caused by the war in Ukraine. Israeli participants maintained a more balanced time perspective, with higher scores in future orientation and positive past experiences, suggesting better psychological adaptation and coping strategies in dealing with prolonged war.

The cognitive assessments revealed that Israeli women outperformed Ukrainian women in sustained attention, complex problem-solving, working memory, and goal-directed behavior. Similarly, Israeli men showed superior performance in these cognitive domains compared to Ukrainian men. These findings indicate that Israeli participants have developed more effective mechanisms to manage the cognitive demands of prolonged war.

Israeli women also scored higher in maintaining cognitive flexibility, establishing deep connections with themselves and others, activating social connections, integrating past, present, and future experiences, creative self-expression, and the clarity of vague memories. Ukrainian men and women scored lower across these domains, suggesting that the chronic stress of ongoing warfare in Ukraine has a more debilitating effect on passive neurocognitive activity.

Israeli participants, especially women, demonstrated superior ability in detecting and integrating emotional and sensory stimuli, modulating attention shifts, facilitating communication and social behavior, and enhancing self-awareness and information integration. These neurobehavioral patterns indicate that Israeli citizens might be better equipped to manage the cognitive and emotional challenges posed by prolonged war, potentially due to more consistent exposure and better-preparedness infrastructure.

The use of the “Unified Framework, for Comprehensive Psychological Assessment and Intervention; Metacognitive, Neuropsychological and Psychodynamic Approach” is extremely valuable and advantageous. This framework holistic approach, merging metacognitive, neuropsychological and psychodynamic strategies offers an insight into the conditions of people facing ongoing stress and trauma. Through utilizing this framework mental health experts can create impactful support structures boosting resilience

diminishing acquired helplessness and fostering mental wellness.

In summary this research emphasizes the importance of tailored interventions to aid the mental well-being of individuals enduring prolonged conflict situations. The notable discoveries, such, as the prevalence of helplessness and varying levels of resilience and time perspective emphasize the need for implementing the Unified Framework in areas affected by war like Ukraine and Israel. By acknowledging and addressing these distinctions mental health professionals can establish support systems to promote the welfare and resilience of those residing in these high-pressure environments. Subsequent studies should further investigate these connections. Evaluate the efficacy of suggested interventions to safeguard the well-being and resilience of individuals, in conflict affected regions.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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WAR'S EFFECT ON CRIMINALITY

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DWIGHT WILSON

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF UKRAINE

- Email: dwtracker@gmail.com

Dwight Wilson is a Corresponding Member of EUASU. He has spent over a decade working in the private security industry protecting high profile clients and working in high risk areas. He currently works for Valor Force as a security professional. He is an author of two books on human and wildlife tracking, Following Tracks Vol 1 and 2, and has contracted with several government agencies as a professional tracker and instructor. Dwight is a Guro of Filipino Martial Arts with Rister International Martial Arts for more than 20 years experience.



ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how war affects criminal behavior by examining both historical and contemporary conflicts. It focuses on the ongoing war in Ukraine, looking at crime before, and during the conflict. The study also considers the American Civil War, the rise of outlaws in the American West, and the post-World War I crime wave in the U. S. Additionally, it looks at the collapse of the Soviet Union and the role of riots and the “War on Drugs” in shaping crime in America. The article provides insights into how war and social unrest impact criminality, offering lessons for understanding modern wars.

Keywords

War, Criminality, Ukraine, Corruption, Reconstruction, Money, Consequences

INTRODUCTION

What effect does war have on criminality? This question was once posed by Dr. Oleg Maltsev during an international conference where I had the honor of participating. The answer seems quite simple but the more I thought about it I realized that this would be peeled back like an onion with several layers. Not being familiar with the criminal element, law enforcement, or the war actively taking place this would be difficult. To address

this challenging question, one must turn to the annals of human history, a narrative densely interwoven with wars. Each of these conflicts, without exception, bore witness to criminal phenomena that warrant closer examination. Understanding the interplay between war and crime in historical contexts offers invaluable insights, as history, with its cyclical tendencies, often repeats itself.

So I decided to investigate the history of the largest war fought here in the United States, the American Civil War. How did this war affect those that fought in it, law and order and the criminals? I also wanted to deal with America’s most recent wars and look at the effect it had on those that served. The aim was to draw lessons that are not only applicable to the ongoing war in Ukraine but also to other conflicts that are currently unfolding, as well as potential future ones. Additionally, this investigation will help in understanding violence as a whole and how to confront it. This is the focus of my series of books, “Dealing with Violence,” which I am currently writing and will consist of several volumes.

What can we learn to better address the challenges of the current situation and its aftermath? I also wanted to investigate what might happen in the event of a national economic collapse. Finally offer some possible future outcomes this war will have on crime in Ukraine and around the world.

In this article, I will explore several key themes relating to the interplay between war and criminality, analyzing both historical and

contemporary events. The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, which began in February 2022, will serve as a focal point for examining crime before, and during war. The American Civil War provides another perspective on how societal upheaval can lead to the emergence of different criminal phenomena.

The historical battle against outlaws in the American West, particularly the efforts of groups like the Texas Rangers, will be discussed. I will explore the crime wave that followed World War I in the United States, the collapse of the Soviet Union, focusing on the surge in organized crime that accompanied this period. Finally, I will examine modern issues such as riots in America and the "War on Drugs," and the street gangs and outlaw motorcycle clubs. The issue of war crimes will not be explored in this article, as it is an area rich with varying viewpoints and ongoing debates (Maltsev & Lopatiuk, 2023), and I consider it to be a subject that merits a distinct, in-depth investigation.

METHODS

In this study, a combination of historical analysis, qualitative data analysis, and an interdisciplinary approach is employed to examine the relationship between war and criminality. The historical analysis focuses on key events, such as the American Civil War, the rise of outlaws in the American West, and the ongoing war in Ukraine. Primary and secondary historical sources, including official documents, legal records, and personal accounts, provide insights into the socio-political contexts of each conflict.

Qualitative data analysis involves the examination of media materials, such as news reports, propaganda, and public discourse, to understand the shifting narratives surrounding crime during wartime. This helps to uncover the underlying mechanisms that influence criminal behavior in times of conflict. The interdisciplinary approach integrates sociology, history, and criminology, drawing on theories of social control, deviance, and law enforcement to explain how wars disrupt societal norms and create conditions for crime.

RESULTS

Wars often lead to widespread corruption, especially in military procurement and resource management, while criminal groups exploit chaos for activities like drug trafficking and arms smuggling.

Economic damage is significant, with destruction to infrastructure and key industries, and the mobilization of millions for military service strains the labor market. Displacement of families adds to economic hardship and social pressure.

New military technologies, such as drones, change warfare tactics, while private military companies complicate the conflict dynamics. Socially, war causes mass displacement and long-term psychological trauma, especially for veterans and civilians (Gavrilenko, 2023). Internationally, war escalates tensions, reshaping geopolitical dynamics and shifting alliances. The recovery process is long and challenging, leaving lasting impacts on the nation's future.

In general, wars profoundly affect every aspect of life. They lead to shifts in social and economic structures, with crime and corruption often rising in the wake of conflict. As lawlessness spreads, the danger to civilians increases, and security becomes a constant challenge. These changes have lasting effects, reshaping societies and economies and leaving long-term scars that can impact generations to come.

The study highlights several key trends affecting crime and security. First, technological advancements, particularly in drone usage, have led to significant changes in criminal behavior, with drug cartels using drones for surveillance and smuggling. Law enforcement agencies have quickly adapted to this new threat, using drones for surveillance and crime prevention. The increasing use of AI in drone technology is predicted to transform warfare and criminal activities, with potential consequences for law enforcement and criminal organizations.

Furthermore, societal impacts of war, such as in Russia, reveal a troubling trend where criminals involved in violent crimes see military service as a way to avoid punishment and gain societal recognition, thereby influencing post-war criminal behavior. These findings suggest that as technology evolves, both criminal tactics and responses from law enforcement will continue to adapt rapidly.

DISCUSSION

The history of Ukraine begins long before 1991, when it declared independence from the Soviet Union. However, let's start from this pivotal moment. After the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine, as a newly independent nation, faced the challenge of deciding what to do with the nuclear weapons left

behind from the Cold War. In 1994, the Budapest Memorandum was signed, under which Ukraine transferred all its nuclear weapons to the Russian Federation in exchange for assurances of peace between the two nations.

Ukraine has endured famines, epidemics, two world wars, a civil war, and the 1917 revolution. Its people are tough, hardworking, and innovative. The famines are particularly significant: in 1922–1923, after World War I; in 1946–1947, after World War II; and the famine of 1932–1933, known as the Holodomor. The Holodomor, a man-made famine, is viewed by some as engineered by Stalin, while others attribute it to the rapid industrialization and collectivization of agriculture. Millions perished in these tragedies. In 1922, Ukraine became a republic of the Soviet Union, officially known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

In 2014, Russia seized control of Crimea, a Ukrainian peninsula primarily home to an ethnic Russian population. It was quickly occupied by Russian troops. During the same year, Russian separatists in the Donbas (eastern Ukraine) region fought against Ukrainian troops. Over 14,000 people were killed in the next eight years. Wagner PMC (Private Military Contractor) was used by Russia to help equip, train, and work with the separatists. “Yevgeny Prigozhin stated that it was he who had founded the Wagner Group, specifically to support Russian forces — the “little green men”—in the war in Donbas, in May 2014” (Mauceri, 2023).

Over the next several years, according to the Crisis Group, “the fighting transformed into a trench war, with roughly 75,000 troops facing off along a 420-km-long frontline cutting through densely populated areas. The war ruined the area’s economy and heavy industries, forced millions to relocate, and turned the conflict zone into one of the world’s most mine-contaminated areas” (*Conflict in Ukraine’s Donbas: A Visual Explainer*, 2024). Only the war machine profits.

In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Many thought the Ukrainian government would quickly fall, but it didn’t. The Ukrainian military has fought bravely against overwhelming odds. NATO has been quick to condemn and sanction Russia but has yet to put troops on the ground. They have instead confined themselves to limited military aid packages, training, and support for Ukrainian troops. In an article on the Crisis Group website, “They (NATO), therefore, try to balance military support to Ukraine and the risk of escalating the conflict” (*Ukraine*, 2024).

Something that doesn’t get talked about enough is the incredible job the Ukrainian logistics are doing. They are keeping the troops supplied, fixing and maintaining vehicles and armor, weapons systems, helicopters, aircraft from all across Europe, including from Russia and the United States. They are also changing warfare with the use of small drones, sea drones, and aerial weapons. This must be a training and logistics nightmare, but they are doing it. They are still in the fight.

As General Omar Bradley of the U. S. Army during World War II famously stated, “Amateurs talk strategy, professionals talk logistics.”

Russia deployed over 25,000 mercenaries from the Wagner (PMC) to spearhead the fighting in and around Bakhmut. Wagner recruited criminal prisoners to fight in Ukraine; the promise was a reduced prison sentence or released when they returned from the fighting. The ICC (International Criminal Court) and other agencies within the international and Ukrainian communities are actively investigating war crimes committed by Russia.

In an article from US News, “Global aid to Ukraine has reached a staggering 253 billion euros committed as of January 15, 2024, or about \$278 billion, according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy” (Wolf & Davis Jr., 2024).

This number will increase as the war continues, destroying homes, villages, towns, and cities. A nation’s future can be robbed from its youth as “the war machine keeps turning,” from the song “War Pigs” by Black Sabbath.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

War can be measured in lives lost, material lost, and territory lost or controlled. Some leaders are willing to sacrifice more resources than others to achieve military objectives. Most wars are fought over resources, or access to resources, which is an oversimplification of a complex issue. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is measured in the same way. However, gathering accurate numbers is difficult.

“Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that 31,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed in action in the two years since Russia launched its full-scale invasion.” From the same article, “Independent Russian news outlet Mediaset said on Saturday that about 75,000 Russian men died in 2022 and 2023 fighting in the war.” “A United States intelligence report declassified

in mid-December 2023 estimated that 315,000 Russian troops had been killed or wounded in Ukraine" ("Zelenskyy Says 31,000 Ukrainian Soldiers Killed in War With Russia," 2024). Current estimates are closer to 500,000 as of March 2024, from an independent news group I follow on Telegram. One thing I can agree with is the following statement found in Newsweek: "Nobody really knows accurate numbers" through the fog of war, said Kurt Volker, former U.S. special representative for Ukraine negotiations" (Cook, 2024).

When Russian forces failed to achieve key objectives at the initial invasion, they were forced to retreat in some areas and reconsolidate their forces. As this happened, the war ground to a static war of attrition. Massive trench lines and defensive positions were built on both sides. Heavy armor became targets for artillery, mortars, and an incredible new weapon that had shown itself on the battlefield.

Changes in Warfare

This has been a long time coming, in my opinion: drone warfare. The United States has deployed UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) around the world. Most are used for intelligence gathering; some are armed with missiles and can engage high-value targets. Special Operations have been using smaller aerial drones, like RC planes but more sophisticated, to gather real-time intelligence on an area before beginning operations. However, the quadcopter changed the ability of the drone to hover in an area, helping to direct troops, artillery, mortars, and rockets with greater accuracy. Intelligence gathering has changed.

The next advance was being able to arm small quadcopter drones to drop ordnance or target armored vehicles, but also enemy personnel. Less expensive, home-made drones, referred to as kamikaze drones, in various sizes, were put into use. Other advances have also been made: larger drones will carry smaller drones into an area to extend the operational range. They are working on drones capable of carrying injured troops off the battlefield, ground drones for resupplying front-line troops, sea drones, underwater drones. Drone warfare is here — now what? This will undoubtedly change crime behaviors.

Crime Before the War

Ukraine, before the war in the east started in 2014 and before the invasion from Russian forces in 2022, was much different than the current situ-



ation, just a few years into the war. Because of its geographical location, seaports, and airports, it has been used as a transit nation for everything from human smuggling and trafficking to importing counterfeit goods and the drug trade.

Corruption in Ukraine prior to the war was present in every aspect of life, including government, elected officials, and the justice system. These state-embedded actors were either directly involved in criminal activity or facilitating criminal markets, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and smuggling goods. "Mafia-style groups continue to wield political influence and have access to all levels of state power in Ukraine, which grants them protection and support in both their illegal and legitimate businesses" ("Global Organized Crime Index: Ukraine," 2023).

Human trafficking is a worldwide problem. Ukrainian trafficking victims are exploited for sex work and forced labor in Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and other parts of Europe, as well as the Middle East. "Ukraine is believed to have one of the largest arms trafficking markets in Europe. While it has long been a key link in the global arms trade, Ukraine's role intensified after the 2014 conflict in the eastern part of the country" ("Global Organized Crime Index: Ukraine," 2023).

Cybercrimes in Ukraine: "Prior to the war, Ukraine had been used as a testing target for cyber warfare by countries such as Russia, Iran, North Korea, and China, as it had similar infrastructure to that found in Western Europe and North America, but limited resources to counter such attacks." These types of crimes include malware and ransomware ("Global Organized Crime Index: Ukraine," 2023).

In a report from the U. S. Embassy, western visitors and tourists to Ukraine, before the war, reported being the victims of crimes like pick-pocketing, credit card and ATM fraud, as well

as marriage scams. However, violent crimes, including armed robbery, drugging and robbery of unsuspecting victims, and shootings, have occurred (“Victims of Crime,” n.d.).

My research didn’t reveal anything odd about crime in a nation that has access to the Black Sea, access to Europe, and to the Middle East and Asia. I see reports like this in my own home nation, the United States: some corruption is hidden better than others, some organized crime goes unchecked, human trafficking and sex work and exploitation, drug trafficking, violence, mass shootings, and street crimes. Port cities like Miami and Houston, or border cities like El Paso and Eagle Pass, will have problems with crime. Criminals are always in a cat-and-mouse game with law enforcement. The mouse tries to figure out how to get the cheese. The cat is always changing tactics to catch the mouse.

How will the war change criminality in Ukraine? Will Ukraine suffer from mass shootings or terror attacks like other Western nations after the war? Will the Ukrainian economy crash, sending many people looking for a means to survive and rebuild, turning to crime as a way of supporting themselves and their families? What will the future hold for Ukraine?

CRIME DURING THE WAR

The Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, Ihor Klymenko, stated during an interview with Reuters amid Russia’s attack on Ukraine in Kyiv, Ukraine, March 30, 2023: “The situation with crime is completely under control in our country today.” Like many people, I am concerned about the future of Ukraine after the war and the long-term effects it will have on every aspect of life.

“As Russian forces headed towards Kyiv at the start of the war, the government urged Ukrainians to take up arms and distributed thousands of rifles and shotguns to civilian defense forces in the capital and other cities.” More than a year later, all these weapons are accounted for, as are other weapons that Ukrainians already had in their possession, Klymenko said (Harmash, 2023). Most Ukrainians were new to firearm ownership. How much training did they receive? Officials say that all the issued firearms have been turned back in and are accounted for. Really? How good was the record keeping? I have heard from some Ukrainians who are worried about crime after the war, especially involving firearms.

When the Ukrainian government passed out weapons to citizens of defense forces to defend themselves and Ukraine from the advancing Russian military machine, I could think of no better reason for the Second Amendment in the United States Constitution. “A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed” (*Bill of Rights: The 1st Ten Amendments*, n.d.). Protecting your life and your loved ones is a right granted to us by God and protected in our Bill of Rights. The United States has an estimated 400 million privately owned firearms. I will be interested to see how gun ownership is viewed after the war.

Cost of War

The true cost of war is measured in the number of deaths, injuries, and missing persons, as well as the loss of material, infrastructure, resources, and financial assets. To date, no war has surpassed the cost of World War I, the so-called war to end all wars, fought from 1914 to 1918, until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. World War II resulted in over 60 million deaths, including an estimated 38 to 55 million civilian casualties, caused by military actions, disease, and famine. World War I is estimated to have caused 10 million military deaths, 7 million civilian deaths, and around 21 million wounded, with 7 million missing or imprisoned. The monetary costs of these wars, when adjusted for inflation, are staggering: World War I is estimated to have cost over 300 billion USD, and World War II, 4 trillion USD (World War I vs. World War II, n.d.).



These figures do not include the costs associated with post-war reconstruction. The scale of destruction left in the wake of these conflicts is beyond comprehension unless one has witnessed it firsthand or experienced it directly. As financial resources flow, so too does corruption. In times of desperation, criminality tends to thrive. These are the undeniable realities. War, desperation, and violence profoundly alter lives.

During my time in West Germany, I was stationed in Aschaffenburg with the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment. The local training area still held remnants from past wars. I did not fully appreciate the historical significance of the site until I met some local residents who shared that battles had occurred there. I was also shown the locations of old bomb shelters. As one traveled across Europe, the damage from past wars was evident in the fields and cities, despite widespread reconstruction. This was just over 40 years after the war ended in 1945 and the Cold War began.

"February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine in an escalation of the Russia — Ukraine War that started in 2014. The invasion became the largest attack on a European country since World War II" (Fitzgerald & Davis Jr., 2024).

War costs money. Reconstruction costs money. Nation-building, in which the United States has engaged during the Global War on Terror, costs money. Everything revolves around money. Wars are fought. Money is spent. The September 11th terrorist attacks launched the United States into war against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, with the goal of finding Bin Laden and freeing the Afghan people from the Taliban.

Brianna Ehley wrote a 2015 article for *The Fiscal Times* reporting: "scrutiny of the U.S.'s rebuilding mission in Afghanistan — raising questions about whether we're any closer to achieving a stable and sustainable country hundreds of billions of dollars (and tens of thousands of lives) later. Overall, the U.S. has poured more than \$104 billion into Afghanistan since 2002" (Ehley, 2015).

When the final US forces evacuated Afghanistan, within two weeks the Taliban had seized control of the nation once again and we left behind millions of dollars in equipment, and hundreds of people whose lives were placed in danger because of working for coalition forces. Not to mention the thousands of lives lost during the conflict.

When the final U.S. forces evacuated Afghanistan, within two weeks the Taliban had seized control of the nation once again, and we left behind millions of dollars in equipment, as well as hundreds of people whose lives were placed in

danger because of their work for coalition forces. Not to mention the thousands of lives lost during the conflict.

In 2003, the United States went to war in Iraq to overthrow a dictator. Saddam Hussein had become a problem. After the initial combat operations, money began to flow into Iraq. "It has been called the largest airborne transfer of currency in the history of the world" (Javers, 2011). In a conflict zone, money is spent not only to fund the war and reconstruction, but also to pay for information and to win favor. "One contractor received a \$2 million payment in a duffel bag stuffed with shrink-wrapped bundles of currency" ("How The US Sent \$12bn in Cash to Iraq. And Watched It Vanish," 2007).

This was doing business in a conflict zone and had become common practice for the CIA as well as the military. Accountability was one of the problems with doing business in cash. I'm not sure when war became such a cash business.

Cargo planes with pallets of shrink-wrapped money flew into both conflict zones, and I'm sure around the world as needed. Trillions of dollars were spent. One article in *The Guardian* stated, "The U. S. flew nearly \$12 billion in shrink-wrapped \$100 bills into Iraq, then distributed the cash with no proper control over who was receiving it and how it was being spent" ("How The US Sent \$12bn in Cash to Iraq. And Watched It Vanish," 2007).

Without accountability, who knows where it went, what it was spent on, and how much was funneled into criminal enterprises. No one in government was even held accountable to the American taxpayers.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

War and conflict gave birth to the United States. Even before the Revolutionary War, we had skirmished with the native tribes. We are a nation built on blood, sweat, and tears. War always brings about change, some good and some bad. Small conflicts like the Lincoln County War gave rise to legends like Pat Garrett and the outlaw William Bonney, known as Billy the Kid. The Mexican War and Indian Wars gave us lawmen like the Texas Rangers. The American Civil War gave rise to the notorious outlaw Jesse James. The war between the states was the bloodiest war fought here in North America.

"Pulitzer Prize-winning author James McPherson writes that "The Civil War started

because of uncompromising differences between the free and slave states over the power of the national government to prohibit slavery” (*Civil War Facts*, 2011).

This divided a nation and brought about fighting between northern states and southern states. The Army of the Confederate States, southern states, attacked Union forces, northern states, in Fort Sumter in South Carolina in the spring of 1861 and the next four years of war would be fought between brothers, families, towns and states. Missouri, the state where I grew up, “sent 39 regiments to fight in the siege of Vicksburg: 17 to the Confederacy and 22 to the Union” (*Civil War Facts*, n.d.). War divided a nation.

Union forces of the north would enlist over 2 million men to fight, and the southern forces would muster just over one million. An estimated 620,000 soldiers died during the war from combat, illness, starvation, or accident. “A recent study puts the number of dead as high as 850,000” (*Civil War Facts*, 2011). The war ended in the spring of 1865.

Reconstruction

War has several phases. The buildup of forces, gathering of intelligence, the invasion and domination of the enemy forces, the occupation and finally reconstruction. After the war, fences need



to be mended, towns, and homes rebuilt. This period lasted roughly until 1877. The distrust, and resentment along with opportunity in the west brought many former soldiers into the territories. Those that stayed in the southern states were left dealing with newly freed slaves and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan. Confederate war veterans were eventually given United States veteran status in an attempt to heal the nation.

Where money flowed, so did the swindlers, thieves, and other criminals.

According to Wikipedia, the federal budget before the Civil War in 1860 was roughly \$63 million. After the war, the annual budget during Reconstruction exceeded \$300 million (about \$6 billion today). The cost of rebuilding after a war is enormous. Where money flows, so does criminality.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Texas Rangers (the Good)

The Texas Rangers came into being as a group of men that were selected by Stephen Austin in 1823 to protect settlers coming to Texas from the Indians. They would range out in front of and around the wagons and protect the caravans. They became known as 'Rangers'. These horseback patrols used Indian fieldcraft, Mexican military and vaquero (cowboy) knowledge, and used the minutemen structure and firearms technology. "Later authors will say that a Texian ranging man could 'ride like a Mexican, trail like an Indian, shoot like a Tennessean, and fight like the devil'" (*Texas Ranger History*, n.d.).

The rough men of the Rangers would participate in the Indian Wars, the Mexican War and survive the Civil War in Texas to become a law enforcement agency and go after notorious outlaws and cattle rustlers. Bringing law and order to battle-hardened outlaws required battle-hardened lawmen.

Today the Rangers are an elite law enforcement and investigative agency within Texas. There are very few Rangers, last I heard their numbers were just over 100 to cover the entire state. The Texas Ranger Museum is in Waco, Texas and well worth visiting.

Interesting Fact: Ranger units were the first to field the Colt .36 caliber five-shot revolver in the fight against the Comanches. A few years later they fielded the improved six shot revolver made by Samuel Colt in 1847. They would change the

current method of fighting from horseback to combat against the Comanche warriors.

Jesse James (the Bad)

Growing up in southwestern Missouri, it was impossible not to hear tales of the notorious outlaw Jesse James. Jesse was born in 1847 in Kearney, Missouri. At the start of the Civil War, his older brother Frank left to serve in the Confederate Army. "In the summer of 1863, the James farm was burned, and Jesse was brutally attacked by Union soldiers. Jesse tried to enlist with his brother but was turned away by William Quantrill, a leader of a Confederate guerrilla unit. However, he was allowed to join up with 'Bloody Bill' Anderson and his Bushwhackers, another guerrilla unit operating in Missouri. Eventually, both brothers fought under Quantrill's Raiders during their infamous attack on Lawrence, Kansas. Known as the Lawrence Massacre, the raid caught Union soldiers by surprise. On that day, August 21, 1863, over 160 men, women, and children lost their lives" (Biography.com Editors, 2014).

The war and killing had changed men like Jesse James. During the war, he had many violent encounters with Unionists and Jayhawkers, a militia loyal to the Union cause. "From 1860 to 1882, the James Gang was the most feared band of outlaws in American history, responsible for more than 20 bank, train, and stagecoach robberies and the murders of countless individuals who stood in their way. They stole an estimated \$200,000. They were legends in their time, popular in Missouri for actively trying to further the Confederate cause" (Biography.com Editors, 2014).

Jesse James died in April of 1882, shot in the back of the head when he turned to straighten a picture on the wall by Robert Ford, a member of the James Gang. Jesse's brother Frank would turn himself in and be acquitted at trial.

Billy The Kid (the Bad)

Born in late 1859 as Henry McCarty. He started his criminal career at a young age and was given the nickname "the Kid," which stuck. He was first arrested for theft at 15 but escaped from the Silver City jail. This wouldn't be the only time he'd escape from a jail. Eventually he would change his name to William H Bonney, which was easier to do in those times, new town, new name, and a new start.

In 1877, he was arrested for possessing horses belonging to John Tunstall which then hired him as a cowboy and gunman. This was common

during this time; ranchers would hire gunmen to keep control over the area they used to graze cattle.

On February 18, 1878, John Tunstall was killed by a posse working for Sheriff Brady of Lincoln County. This started the Lincoln County War. Several of Tunstall's men were appointed "special constables" by Justice of the Peace John Wilson, giving them the power to make arrests and go after the men who killed Tunstall. The "Regulators" were a deputized posse that included William Bonnie.

By July of 1878, the war would come to an end. "New Mexico Governor Samuel Axtell visits Lincoln out of concern over the mayhem and cancels Squire Wilson's appointment as Justice of the Peace, effectively turning the Regulators into outlaws." Billy the Kid continued life as an outlaw (*The Life and Legend of Billy the Kid*, n.d.).

July of 1881 in Fort Sumner, Sheriff Pat Garrett killed Billy the Kid. He was shot in the back and was unarmed; some say Billy never died. It all added to the legend of Billy the Kid. He was no hero, just an outlaw, created by circumstance and war.

Ku Klux Klan (the Ugly)

The Ku Klux Klan or KKK was started in 1866 just after the Civil War in Tennessee and lasted until the 1870's. It was structured as part of the "Invisible Empire of the South". It was started up again in 1915 and is still part of hate groups in America along with groups, like the Skinheads, Neo-Nazis, Aryan Brotherhood (prison) that support a white supremacist agenda.

The Klansmen, "Dressed in robes and sheets designed to frighten superstitious Blacks and to prevent identification by the occupying federal troops, Klansmen whipped and killed freedmen and their white supporters in nighttime raids" (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024). I think no matter what war and no matter who wins or loses there will always be groups that will organize for any reason. After World War Two Nazi groups became Neo-Nazis. Hate will always exist in some form or fashion. Always.

AFTER WORLD WAR ONE: PROHIBITION (1920-1933)

After World War I, the United States adopted the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution in late 1919, ushering in the Prohibition Era nationwide.

This amendment legally prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages, aiming to protect individuals and families from the perceived scourge of "drunkenness." Prohibition officially began in 1920 and lasted until 1933, when the Twenty-first Amendment was ratified, repealing the Eighteenth Amendment and allowing alcohol to flow freely in America once again (Peterman, n.d.).

It began in 1920 and lasted until 1933, when the Twenty-first Amendment was ratified, repealing the Eighteenth and allowing alcohol to flow freely in America once again. The American Mafia took full advantage of the situation, running underground gambling and drinking establishments. The drink of choice for many was moonshine, a clear to cloudy liquor depending on the ingredients, ranging from 40 to 80 percent proof by volume, and distributed illegally by bootleggers. This period gave rise to infamous mobsters like Al Capone, Bugsy Siegel, Lucky Luciano, Machine Gun Kelly, and Pretty Boy Floyd. It is important to note that the word "mafia" is perceived differently by each individual. The paradox of Baudrillard is particularly well illustrated through the concept of the mafia (Maltsev, 2020). Personally, when I think of the Mafia, it's this classic roaring twenties image I envision.

At the end of Prohibition, the outlaws Bonnie and Clyde began their multi-state crime spree in 1930. Bonnie and Clyde were killed in 1934 when Texas Ranger Frank Hamer, FBI agents, and a posse of local law enforcement gunned them down in an ambush near Sailes, Louisiana.

SOCIAL UNREST

Collapse of the Soviet Union

In 1987, then-President of the United States Ronald Reagan, made his famous speech in West Berlin; "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." He was referring to Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (History.com Editors, 2022).

I was a young soldier in 1987, serving in West Germany with the Third Infantry Division. Our mission was to be prepared to defend our NATO allies against Soviet and Eastern Block aggression. A few years later, something happened that I would have never imagined; the Berlin Wall came down. It was November of 1989 followed by the reunification of Germany. In December 1991, the red and gold hammer-and-sickle flag of



the USSR was replaced by the tricolor flag of the Russian Federation. The Cold War had ended (*The Collapse of the Soviet Union*, n.d.).

However, the economies of Eastern European nations struggled. “Between 1989 and 1991, the gross national product in Soviet countries fell by 20 percent, ushering in a period of complete economic breakdown” (*Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, n.d.). This led to widespread corruption in government and a power vacuum that was quickly filled by criminal enterprises. History is full of such examples.

I can only imagine what it must have been like to be a soldier in the service of the Soviet Union, only to change the patch on my arm to that of the Russian Federation. “Am I going to get paid?”—this is what would be going through most people’s minds, even soldiers. Money means food. Money means shelter. Money means security. “Government payroll services almost completely disappeared, so ex-KGB officers, police officers, and Soviet Army soldiers flooded the mafia’s ranks in search of steady employment.” Enter the Russian Mafia, which we referred to in the United States as the Red Mafia. “When the Soviet government fell, the Russian mafia, which had struggled to survive during the height of communism, stepped in to fill the power void” (*Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, n.d.).

For the next decade, the Russian mafia expanded its influence and integrated itself into var-

ious aspects of everyday life. In 1999, Vladimir Putin took office as President of the Russian Federation. The Red Mafia remains active, continuing the activities typical of criminal organizations, though its influence is no longer as powerful as it once was — similar to the diminished presence of the Italian or Sicilian mafia after World War I and II. President Putin referred to the collapse of the Soviet Union as “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century” (Myre, 2021).

In 2014, with the aid of Private Military Contractors from Wagner forces, aggression began in the eastern parts of Ukraine. Former diplomat Donald Jensen remarked, “We don’t expect Russia to be Western. But you expect it to be a positive contributor to global peace and security, and I just don’t see that happening” (Myre, 2021).

Most people hoped the Russian military buildup was merely a power move, a display of strength. However, the invasion of Ukraine officially began on February 24, 2022. Russian troops entered Ukraine in full force, expecting a quick and decisive victory, with plans for a three-day battle to capture the capital, Kyiv. What followed was the largest war in Europe since World War II, resulting in the greatest loss of life on the battlefield and one of the costliest wars in modern times. How will this war end? When will it end? How will it impact the citizens of Ukraine and Russia? How will it affect criminality in both nations?

RIOTS IN AMERICA

Protests are relatively common in the United States. Most are peaceful and localized, although some take place simultaneously in major cities across the nation and even internationally. In May of 2020, George Floyd died while in police custody, sparking another round of protests that spread nationwide (Wikipedia contributors, 2024).

Many protests have evolved into riots due to widespread looting and destruction of property. This social unrest has been primarily directed at police and the government, but private businesses have also suffered. “Arson, vandalism, and looting that occurred between May 26 and June 8 caused approximately \$1–2 billion in insured damages nationally, the highest recorded damage from civil disorder in U.S. history, surpassing the record set during the 1992 Los Angeles riots” (Wikipedia contributors, 2024). During the 1992 LA riots, store owners and community members armed themselves to protect their businesses and property.

Riots can cause major disruption to essential services. Utilities, such as trash pickup and sanitation — services people often take for granted — can be severely disrupted. The most critical disruptions, of course, are to emergency services. In an emergency, you expect to be able to get help from fire, ambulance, or police. However, these services become highly restricted in areas affected by riots due to the dangers posed to responders. Bricks, fireworks, and even gunshots. Protesters showing up with masks, goggles, and homemade riot shields are typically seeking confrontation.

Most grocery stores only keep about three days’ worth of food in stock. What happens when the lights go out? What happens when people become desperate? What happens when 911 doesn’t answer the phone? Criminals will always prey on the vulnerable and seek any advantage they can exploit. They will fill a power vacuum whenever it exists.

The economic collapses in Argentina, Venezuela, and the Soviet Union created opportunities for criminals. Black markets flourish during times of war. Long lines for bread and other basic life necessities become common. Selling toilet paper from the trunk of a car. During the pandemic, there were lines for water, hand sanitizers, and toilet paper — problems that cause the public to panic. The pandemic, without a doubt, disrupted the fabric of societies everywhere — not only in the U.S. — and examining

its widespread effects on a global scale is crucial for understanding its full impact (Lepskiy, 2020).

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

War on Drugs

One of several unintended consequences of the direct or indirect effects of wars and military training is not only the advancement of battlefield tactics, strategy, and technology but also how criminals and criminal organizations conduct business. For example, in 1970, the United States Congress passed the Controlled Substances Act in response to soldiers returning from the Vietnam War with substance abuse issues. The following year, President Nixon officially declared the War on Drugs (Pascual, 2021).

The CIA and special operations units were heavily involved in the drug war in Mexico, Colombia, and throughout Latin America. In the early years of the War on Drugs, the cartels were smuggling marijuana, cocaine, and heroin. Today, they import hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of methamphetamine and fentanyl into the United States. They are also responsible for human trafficking, sex trafficking, and prostitution (Williams, 2024).

The U. S. involvement led to the hunt and killing of Pablo Escobar in Colombia in 1993 during a shootout. Following this success in Colombia, during the Clinton Administration, then-Secretary of Defense William Perry visited Mexico to finalize an agreement to supply anti-drug aid and training to the Mexican military. “You were looking for general ways to engage, military to military,” a Pentagon official said. Within months, the first group of young Mexican Army officers began training in anti-drug operations at Fort Bragg, N.C. (Golden, 1997).

As a result of training Mexican Special Forces, Los Zetas (Spanish for “the Zs”) were formed in 1997. Mexican soldiers left the military and joined the drug war, but on the other side. Los Zetas began as an enforcement unit for the Gulf Cartel, but in 2010, they broke away and formed their own crime syndicate. “The group was known for its violent tactics and tight organizational structure. The emergence and evolution of Los Zetas can be understood as both a symptom and a cause of the militarization of the Mexican drug wars” (Williams, 2024).

Because of the War on Drugs, the cartels have become billion-dollar criminal organizations.



Corruption in Mexico extends from government officials to law enforcement and the military. In a *New York Times* article, the writer discusses recent events in Mexico: "Some of those risks have resounded in recent news reports: the jailing of army generals on charges of protecting major drug traffickers; allegations that military officers have been linked to the torture and disappearance of criminal suspects; failures of due process and proper legal procedure by soldiers stepping in for the police" (Golden, 1997).

Street Gangs and Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs

Returning World War II veterans took to the streets, riding motorcycles and forming motorcycle clubs. Later, returning Vietnam veterans were recruited and joined various MCs (Motorcycle Clubs) or formed their own. Attracted to the counterculture, some became outlaws. Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs like the Hells Angels, Banditos, Cossacks, and others grew quickly in numbers and spread nationwide.

Street gangs like the Bloods and Crips, as well as prison gangs like the Mexican Mafia and Aryan Brotherhood, send members to the military for training or to college to learn skills needed to advance their criminal empires. They even go so far as to ensure their members have no identifying

tattoos or criminal records. The result is better-trained, weapons-proficient, and disciplined members — all of which pose a greater threat to law enforcement. CBS News reported that in an FBI report, the agency warned: "Military training could ultimately result in more sophisticated and deadly gangs ... as well deadly assaults on law enforcement officers" (Klatell, 2007).

Training can include combat skills, logistics, intelligence, and even emergency medical skills — skills that may not seem valuable to industry but can be extremely beneficial to criminal groups and organized crime. "The FBI points out that many gangs, especially the bikers, actively recruit members with military training and advise young members with no criminal record to join the service for weapon access and combat experience" (Johnson, 2011).

FUTURE OF CRIME

Predicting the future is a chance business, but in the security industry, we pay attention to everything happening locally, regionally, and even internationally. If something is happening on the other side of the world, it will eventually affect my client and my scope of work. So, we track trends. When analyzing trends, it's important to pay attention to the news and consult multiple sources. I especially rely on my network of colleagues in the industry or in similar fields. I also refer to specialists when dealing with technology. Prevention is always key. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is my personal mantra.

Every advancement in technology leads to advancements in criminal behavior and crime. One example would be the use of small commercial drones, or Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), on the battlefield. Drones are used to guide infantry through trenches and built-up urban terrain. Thermal imaging and infrared technology allow drones to be used in firefighting efforts and even active shooter responses. A bomb squad robot was used to kill an active shooter barricaded suspect responsible for killing several officers in 2016. Drones are a modern advancement, much like GPS (Global Positioning System) was for my generation. GPS is now commonplace, but when I served with the infantry in the 1980s, it wasn't. That's how important I believe drones will become.

The Mexican cartels have already started using drones as aerial surveillance platforms, but also for delivering narcotics across the border

into the United States — by air, underground (through tunnels), and underwater (via submarines). International law enforcement agencies have been quick to adapt. “They are used by law enforcement too, from heat-seeking drones spotting indoor cannabis farms in the U.K., to drones being used by police to catch street drug dealers in Kyrgyzstan, in Central Asia” (Daly, 2024). The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI have called unmanned aerial systems (UAS) one of the top national security threats to the United States (Giaritelli, 2018; *Border Patrol Reports That Cartels Are Using Drones to Guide Migrants Into US*, n.d.).

Right now, drones are controlled by human operators making decisions. However, I foresee that soon, some — if not all — drones will become more autonomous, using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to complete missions. This shift will impact criminal organizations, law enforcement, and militaries worldwide. It is likely one of the most significant advancements I’ve observed. Drone warfare will eventually evolve into autonomous machine warfare. As of April 15, 2024, I read a news article stating that Ukraine is incorporating AI into a new line of drones currently in production (Barnes, 2024).

We are poised to witness rapid advancements across several technological fronts. These include the growing sophistication of artificial intelligence, digital and cyber warfare, and the integration of robotics and automation systems driven by autonomous technology. Such battlefield advancements will inevitably influence criminal tactics, including home invasions, armed robberies, carjackings, rape, and murder. The use of forensic techniques has evolved beyond fingerprints to analyzing DNA from blood, skin cells, and other bodily fluids. Surveillance cameras and detection systems will also continue to advance significantly.

A recent account from Russia highlights concerning trends in the country’s approach to criminal justice and military recruitment. Anton Gerashchenko, a former advisor to Ukraine’s Minister of Internal Affairs (2021–2023), reported: “A clear pattern has already emerged in Russia: murderers and rapists kill and are not afraid of prison, because they go straight to war and then come back with honors. A Russian Krasnoyarsk EMERCOM cadet who raped and killed a 16-year-old girl said in court he wanted to go to war to ‘redeem himself.’ “Today in the courtroom, the accused was smiling” (Gerashchenko, 2024).

CONCLUSION

At the end of the war, how will all those involved, whether directly or indirectly, be affected? One of the only certainties in the universe is change. The real question is how both people and criminals will adapt, and how society as a whole will respond to those changes. This brings us to the idea of cause and effect — a continuous cycle of change, adaptation, response, and problem-solving. Alongside the inevitability of change, there are several guiding principles that I hold to be significant. These are concepts worthy of consideration.

Criminals are always learning and adapting. No one wants to get caught or go to prison, which is why tactics and techniques must continually evolve. This is what I refer to as “the game of cat and mouse.” The mouse seeks the cheese and adapts, becoming more clever to avoid capture. The cat, recognizing this, adapts its methods to catch the mouse. This ongoing exchange is the game that criminals and law enforcement constantly play.

Whenever there is a power vacuum, someone will inevitably step in to fill the void. If one criminal is removed, another will quickly take their place. This is a matter of supply and demand. The question is, why are so many drugs crossing the southern border of the United States? The answer lies in the persistent demand for these substances. If the demand ceased to exist, the suppliers would disappear as well.

Follow the money. Wherever money flows, corruption and crime tend to follow. This principle holds true regardless of the situation. By tracing the money trail, you will encounter either legal or illegal actions. Take, for example, a government representative who, despite earning a fixed income of \$180,000 per year, amasses a fortune of over \$120 million over the course of 30 years. I’ll leave that question for you to ponder.

When you are broke and hungry, you will do whatever is necessary to acquire the basics for life: food, water, shelter. Once those are attained, many people simply want more. Some resort to force and violence, while others are better at confidence schemes, extortion, blackmail, racketeering, and dealing in counterfeit goods. Some are organized and structured.

A robust economy helps lower crime rates; however, criminal activity will always exist, even in a strong economy. Strong social structures are also important — family, education, religious institutions, and opportunity. All of these factors play a role in the outcomes of change.

I wanted to include historical examples from the American Civil War and its impact on post-war life and reconstruction. Such examples can be identified before, during, and after periods of war. I think examples can be found before, during, and after wars. Legendary outlaws, like Jesse James, Billy the Kid, even Wyatt Earp and Doc Holiday could be counted. Law enforcement agencies like the Texas Rangers, or even the Pinkerton Detective Agency shaped America after war. Hate groups like the KKK sprung up. War creates unintended consequences, such as the rise of criminal organizations like Los Zetas and the Cartels, the expansion of the Russian Mafia during the collapse of the Soviet Union, or the rise of the American Mafia during the Prohibition period. Things will change — war has a profound effect on criminality.

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MEDICALIZATION AS A CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY

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MARK HORVATH

ESTERHÁZY KÁROLY CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, INSTITUTE
OF FINE ARTS AND ART THEORY

- Email: purplemark@hotmail.com

Mark Horvath is a researcher, philosopher and art theorist based in Budapest. Mark is interested in the Anthropocene, post-anthropocentrism, postmodern social and political theory, in particular the work of Guy Debord and Jean Baudrillard. Mark has published numerous scholarly works, many co-authored with Adam Lovasz. Mark and Adam have written the first Hungarian-language textbooks on posthumanism and New Realism/s.

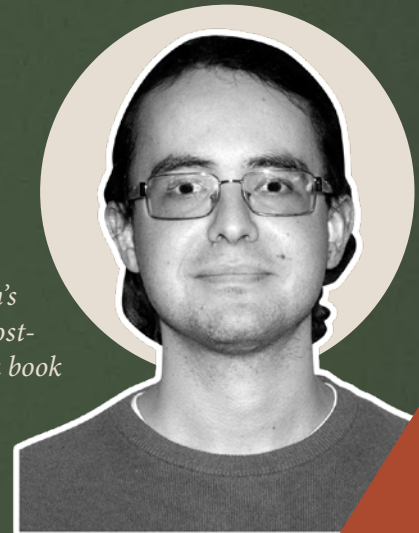


ADAM LOVASZ

EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY, INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1422-0381>
- Email: adam.lovasz629@yahoo.com

*Adam Lovasz is a researcher and philosopher based in Budapest. Adam's interests include Object-Oriented-Ontology, New Materialism, post-anthropocentrism and process philosophy. Adam is presently writing a book entitled *On Nature* and also co-writing a book with Mark Horvath about the topic of absentology. Adam is author of *Updating Bergson* (2021) and *The System of Absentology in Ontological Philosophy* (2016) and has also published in numerous peer-reviewed journals.*



ABSTRACT

Representatives of the medicalization thesis in sociology propose that in modernity the human condition is increasingly translated into quantified and medical terms. Problems are increasingly reduced to issues of individual and public health. On the one hand, this results in an increase of government intervention in the lives of citizens, concentrating power in the hands of experts, while politics legitimates itself via medical expertise. On the other hand, subjects themselves demand medicalization as a form of recognition. Medicalization as a sociological paradigm problematizes the modern drive to

construct issues in medical terms. However there are no easy answers, as alternative medicine too is a form of medicalization. More reflexivity is warranted when it comes to problematization and categorization of phenomena associated with the human condition.

Keywords

medicalization, modernity

INTRODUCTION

According to sociologist Peter Conrad, “medicalization” broadly refers to the social process by

which the human condition as such in modern societies has gradually come to be defined as a specifically therapeutic or medical issue (Conrad, 2007). It should be emphasized from the outset that medicalization is typically identified as a social construct, that is, this phrase refers to epistemological categorizations perceived as being end products of certain institutional frameworks. This by no means implies any ontological denial of the phenomenon's existence in itself. Adherents of the medicalization hypothesis also do not deny the subjective experience of persons who perceive themselves as being ill or in need of treatment. Medicalization is not therefore a completely relativist knowledge claim regarding the existence or non-existence of phenomena outside mechanisms of categorization. What this approach *does* highlight, however, is the crucial role cognitive framing processes play when it comes to how modern society handles issues related to the human condition. The human body has always been prone to diseases and syndromes. Medicalization, on the other hand, means more than questioning the historicity of the epistemological criteria used in the diagnosis of diseases: the critical edge of this approach is manifested in the way it thematizes medicalization as *over-medicalization*. Although certain examples can be mentioned (homosexuality, masturbation) that have gone through successful demedicalizations, exiting the scope of pathologization and medical care, overall the range of human phenomena subject to medicalization has been expanding rather than contracting (Conrad, 2013).¹ Medicalization can be used productively to reflexively critique modern power/knowledge structures.

METHODS

In this research, we conducted a literature review of the medicalization literature, referencing both the general framework, as elaborated by Professor Peter Conrad and his students, as well as specific examples to elucidate how medicalization can and has been used to analyze specific cases. What we are interested in is the way in which modern

societies categorize problems and dysfunctions of the human condition in specifically scientific and medical ways. Of special interest for us is how many social institutions have an interest in medicalization. This research trend can be used effectively for conceptualizing power in the 21st century, as well as problematizing what the human condition means.

RESULTS

Through an analysis of this corpus of sociological literature, we can find see how both medicalization and demedicalization operate in the context of modernity. While there are no easy answers as to precisely which phenomena ought to be medicalized in the first place (problematic examples abound), an awareness of the mechanisms of medicalization and demedicalization can help make decision-making and activism more cogent and reflexive, providing various political actors with conceptual tools needed to account for the shifting processes of knowledge and power. In our view, medicalization as a social science paradigm can have diverse applications, especially in relation to future pandemic situations. The COVID-19 global pandemic seems to fit into a longer term tendency, which can be characterized as the medicalization of biopower. This can prove fruitful in later research, when it comes to describing the complex relationship between political and scientific forms of power. Of special importance is the delocalization of medicalization: as distinct from the 1970s, today alongside the state, other actors too, even individual subjects themselves, have a vested interest in continued medicalization of human problems.

DISCUSSION

The Medicalization of Life

Potentially, even human characteristics and behaviors considered completely normal until now

¹ Even in the case of "successful" demedicalizations, the potential for remedicalization is always prevalent. The issue of male circumcision is a case in point, which was progressively repathologized from the HIV/AIDS pandemic onwards (Carpenter, 2010). According to some, the ongoing search for a genetic basis for homosexual orientations could potentially contribute to the remedicalization of homosexuality (Conrad & Angell, 2004). That being said, pessimistic forecasts for the remedicalization of homosexuality as a consequence of HIV/AIDS never came to fruition (See: Dennis, 1997). What these examples show is that demedicalization too is not a one way-street and is not resistant to remedicalization.

can become pathologized, such as aging or death.² According to Jennifer Harding, by the 1990s, medicalization had already reached such an extent that it was impossible to isolate non-medicalized elements from the medicalized ones (Harding, 1997). Even if it does not promise complete elimination of undesirable factors, mainstream Western medicine does acknowledge and promote the postponement of fate as an explicitly or implicitly affirmed normative basic value. Moreover, the imperative to increase the secularized and quantified “life expectancy” of the general population is for the most part not even questioned or reflected upon by even practitioners of so-called “alternative” medical techniques. More often than not, medical professionals of all stripes generally accept that medicine ought to have a key, even central role, in the regulation of human life. When, instead of searching for the ultimate truths, we are curious about how to actually live our individual or collective lives, what rules to follow, what is correct human behavior, what is the secret of a good life, then nowadays we turn to representatives of the medical sciences or lifestyle consultants for help, expecting useful answers from these fields. A philosopher or sociologist cannot compete with a physician. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear that increasingly no social sector can rival medicine in terms of credibility, legitimacy and public trust. This expansion of medical powers carries enormous risks, noted by a large segment of the sociology profession. In this article, we shall deal with two interrelated strands of inquiry. On the one hand, we hope to show how medicalization can be critiqued, while also accounting for the way Western subjectivity is constituted by medically informed biopolitics. On the other hand, our aim is also to how how Michel Foucault’s work intersects with the key concerns of medicalization scholars, and in what ways the insights elaborated by this research can be deepened via a productive hybridization with Foucault’s biopolitics framework. The COVID-19 crisis underlines the dependence of modern subjectivity upon a medicalizing biopolitics for its legitimacy. Medicalization research helps us realize that the social control phenomena associated with the pandemic are radical manifestations of pre-existing biopolitical power structures.



From Medical Imperialism to Self-Medicalizing Docile Populations

The first serious social scientific criticisms of the perceived supremacy or hegemony of medicine in Western secularized societies were formulated during the 1970s. This was a period when numerous social movements, such as the anti-psychiatry movement, questioned the knowledge monopolies of experts. Critical theories that emerged in this era were primarily conceived in a libertarian or even anarchist spirit, drawing attention to the simultaneous expansion of the powers of the state and institutionalized medicine. Indeed, these early writings primarily conceived of medicine as being a social control mechanism, an instrument of power wielded against non-conformist minorities or individuals labelled “deviant” (Zola, 1972; Conrad, 1975). Anarchist theorist Ivan Illich wrote of “medical imperialism,” a supposed tendency on the part of the medical profession to increase its power at the expense of society as a whole, playing into the technocratic desire for control on the part of the state (Illich, 1976). In these early discourses, medicalization appears as the imperialism of the medical profession, as well as a power control mechanism imposed on society from without, by expert classes in collab-

² Adherents of transhumanism, for example, look forward to a techno-optimistic cornucopian future where death has been defeated by the advance of medical technologies. The idea of human immortality brings with it important biomedical questions that lie outside the scope of this essay.

oration with ever more powerful governments. In this respect, Thomas Szasz can be highlighted as a prime example of early critics of medicalization, who developed a systematic critique of the so-called "therapeutic state" and its institutions (Szasz, 1977). However, it soon became clear that focusing on the therapeutic state alone is not enough. Medicalization is about more than just a political struggle over the precise boundaries of medicine, although this too is an important component of the broader theme of medicalization. Technocracy can function in the smoothest possible manner if the population voluntarily demands endless treatment, and subjects consider their own lives as worthy of being prolonged in time, motivated by a secularized fear of death. The population itself demands, and even actively participates in, the medical categorization and management of human phenomena and problems.³ Medical power is more than a mere tool in the hands of an authoritarian state. At the risk of stating the obvious, when we speak of medicalization, we are talking about more than the mere self-interest of the medical profession: we are dealing here with a comprehensive, internalized *episteme*, on a civilizational scale.

If we suffer from an illness, condition or syndrome, we understandably wish for relief, and in late modernity, medicine can be considered the function system of society that, due to various reasons, shoulders the primary responsibility for reducing suffering. We do not wish to dispute the legitimacy of medical science or the validity of the desire to reduce human suffering to an acceptable level. But it is all too simple to forget that all care is palliative, to a greater or lesser extent. What counts as an optimal human lifespan, for instance, is open to debate.⁴ According to proponents of the medicalization thesis, the integration of the human condition into medicine has become all-encompassing in scale. According to David Armstrong, medicalized modernity can be summarized as "a world

in which everything is normal and at the same time precariously abnormal" (Armstrong, 1995). Suspicions of over-medicalization are most likely to arise where categorizations become unforeseeably broad and unstable, while changing over a very short period of time. We may cite the classic example of ADHD (attention deficit disorder) in the 1980s. A single definitional change in the DSM-III manual, the gold standard for the diagnosis of psychological ailments, permitted 50% of children to be categorized as potentially suffering from "attention deficit disorder" (ADHD), exponentially increasing numbers eligible for medication (Conrad, 2007). Did the number of children suffering from ADHD really increase many times over in 1987? The probability of this is quite low indeed.

In addition to the therapeutic state, there are many other drivers of medicalization in late modernity. For example, drug manufacturers are among the main financiers of advocacy organizations dealing with adult ADHD (Conrad, 2005). This raises questions regarding the displacement and multiplication of the focalization points of medicalization. No longer are we confronted by a centralized power structure. The expansive tendency of medicalization has certainly not abated, but according to Conrad, we may discern many centers working towards the same goal, and compared to the 1970s, it can be interpreted as a being much less state-centered process. Medicalizing tendencies certainly are attributable to the bureaucratized, centralizing therapeutic state. The process is not solely driven by the representatives of medical science, although the latter are also primary "gatekeepers" of relevant medical knowledge. But role of the private sector has increased in its scope, especially as a result of deregulations in the 1980s and 1990s. Pharmaceutical manufacturers and health insurers also have a vested interest in translating all human problems into medical terms. The expansion of health insurance to cover ever wider areas does

³ Such examples from the relevant literature include the institutional acceptance and medicalization of PTSD by war veterans' advocacy movements, AIDS by gay rights movements, and PMS by women's rights movements (Scott, 1990; Kayal, 1993; Rittenhouse, 1991). In large part, government funding for issues is more forthcoming if these are framed in explicitly medical terms. A more recent example is the framing of "systemic racism" in the United States as a "public health" issue (Mendez et. al., 2021). An intriguing possibility is the potential medicalization of racism, which brings with it a host of issues, such as the potential for blamelessness being imputed to ill persons "diagnosed" as being "racist." For a forceful critique of the medicalization and individualization of racism see: (Wellman, 2000).

⁴ Indeed, the very category of "optimality" is a social construct. On the frontiers of anti-aging medicine for instance, proponents of amelioration clash with adherents of optimization (Mykytyn, 2008).

not bode well for proponents of demedicalization.⁵ Humanitarianism and the profit motive are inseparable.

Women's reproductive health has been an area of interest for the pharmaceutical industry for a very long time. Nowadays female contraceptive medicine is in the crosshairs of certain tendencies within the feminist movement that thematize the objectification and medicalization of female bodies (Grigg-Spall, 2013). Medicalization, of course, is not restricted to women or other subaltern groups. As a result of the authorization of Viagra in 1998, the aging male body also became the subject of pathologization. Demand for the medicalization of the human phenomenon extends to all genders. With the arrival of sexual performance enhancing drugs, the terrible truth was revealed: half of late 20th century North American men were exposed as sexually "suboptimal," so they needed a potency increase (Conrad, 2007). While sexual "potency disorder" can be assumed to be a biogenic and not psychological problem, Viagra as a "self-affirming destigmatizer" helps to reveal

underlying problems evaluated as existing, opening the ground for gender self-optimization and supposedly positive self-constructions (Conrad, 2007). The subject, at least in a Western cultural context, seeks to optimize itself. Destigmatization of existing suboptimality goes hand in hand with market expansion, and in this way everyone wins. Before we interpret this example solely as constituting an example of market hypertrophy, it is worth paying attention to the emerging pattern: the prerequisite of medicalization is the destigmatization and pathologizing of conditions previously accepted as fateful, and a subsequent communicative reframing of formerly providential circumstances as being changeable, treatable and open to amelioration.

In late modernity, government becomes, to quote Michael Oakeshott, "an association of human beings undergoing treatment" (Oakeshott, 1975). Politics, social policy in particular, are increasingly reduced to a permanent therapy of the populace. Of course, the ambition of life regulation is much broader than the extent of



⁵ Without wishing to dispute or, worse, downplay the validity of the subjective experiences of those suffering from depression, a most serious illness, similar suspicions - individualization, depoliticization of social dysfunctions, excessive pharmacentrism - can nonetheless be raised in relation to the treatment of depression via biochemical means (Bröer & Besseling, 2017; Conrad & Slodden, 2013; Mulder, 2008).

the therapeutic and/or welfare state alone, although due to the centralized health insurance structures, the state, especially in the context of Western Europe, is never far from the center of the biomedical complex. After all, a key question in the case of all medicines is to what extent should they be covered by health insurance, who should pay how much and why. Such economic considerations, while ostensibly related to decentralized institutional systems such as the market, are actually indicative of a "teleocratic drift" or path dependence. By "teleocratic drift" we understand the increasing subordination of society to the fulfillment of specific goals. According to Oakeshott, while liberal societies leave it to the individual to pursue individual goals and do not prescribe common goals, illiberal societies develop common plans, which force the population to act collectively in order to fulfill them. The danger of this lies in the fact that priorities may become uncertain, i.e. if society focuses its resources on the current agenda, other areas may be neglected. Teleocracy thus leads to an overall less complex social structure than more decentralized, pluralistic social alternatives. (Oakeshott, 1975). For example, the population as a whole may be compelled by governmental violence to concentrate its attention exclusively on public health and public hygiene, to the detriment of other considerations. Such a concentration of societal attention, while occasionally undoubtedly necessary in the case of public health emergencies, brings with it enormous social costs in the form of structural imbalances, blind spots and double binds.

Health, and public health in particular, has become a meta-value of sorts, accepted by practically all social actors, enjoying an almost universal legitimacy. From this monotony even alternative or "holistic" remedies do not offer any refuge. We can talk, for example, about "deprofessionalization without demedicalization" in connection with "holistic" or "traditional" healing methods informed by New Age and similar spiritual/alternative medical trends (Conrad, 2007). There is no aspect of subjectivity that cannot be pathologized, and the mobilization of alternative healing techniques is not in itself sufficient to demedicalize a certain human phenomenon. The distinc-

tion between normal and pathological⁶ can be applied to any phenomenon, provided that the appropriate diagnostic categories exist. It should be emphasized that when we talk about "medicalization," we do not necessarily mean "overdiagnosing." The first is a qualitative concept intended to both critique and describe the process whereby even the most basic human phenomena *can*, but not necessarily *do*, become categorized as pathologies amenable to therapy. On the other hand, "overdiagnosing" is a quantitative concept referring primarily to debates surrounding the identification of concrete phenomena within the scope of already medicalized areas of human life (Hofman, 2016). Medicalization as a sociological paradigm problematizes the way modern society translates all undesirable phenomena, sensations, and conditions into medical terms.

CONCLUSION

In late modernity, knowledge is increasingly open to contestation. Alongside positivist and scientific forms of knowledge, alternative medicine has appeared, leading some medicalization theorists to propose "medical pluralism" as a description of the present situation (Correia, 2017). Instead of countervailing or balancing medicalization, alternative medical knowledges have resulted in a further expansion and complexification of the medicalizing tendency outlined above. What this indicates is that there are no easy answers when it comes to medicalization. Modern subjects demand solutions to problems of the human condition — the best we can do is increase awareness of the manifold power relations associated with knowledge.

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⁶ The first serious philosophical examination of this binary was carried out by philosopher of science Georges Canguilhem, who was incidentally (also) Michel Foucault's doctoral supervisor (see Canguilhem, 1966/1978).

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MEDIA AND GENERATIONAL CONFLICT: FROM ETHNOGRAPHY OF DEVIANCE TO CYBERNETICS

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NELLO BARILE

IULM UNIVERSITY

- Email: nello.barile@iulm.it

Nello Barile is Associate Professor at the Department of Communication at IULM University (Milan), where he teaches Sociology of Media and Sociology of Fashion. His research interests include sociology of media and communication, culture, fashion, consumption, and politics. He has published numerous books, articles, and short essays in Italy as well as in USA, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Brazil, and Russia. One of his latest books is “Communication in the New Hybrid Ontologies: From Platform to the Metaverse” (2022), published by Bocconi University Press.



ABSTRACT

The media have played a central role not only in defining identities but also in managing the conflicts they trigger. This is particularly evident in the 1960s, when the generational conflict supported by the modernization of society and consumption was clearly delineated, but it persists today in a completely different era. Not only because of the considerable transition from a vertical to a horizontal society, from the centrality of institutions and of the “father” to an inclusive and in its own way problematic democratization. Our era is also crossed by a general feeling defined as retromania (Reynolds, 2011), capable of pervading every area of daily life, communication, consumption and fashion. For this reason it may make sense to “unfreeze” from the past a book that aimed to take stock of the issue of youth subcultures, beyond the brakes and inhibitions of a more institutional sociology. Herein lies the value of a reflection that manages to avoid involvement in the same panic that it studies, such as the excessive enthusiasm of some exponents of Cultural Studies for youth cultures. This study deals with the new youth formations of the Sixties, namely the epic of the Mods and the Rockers, whose epic clash on the English beaches is explained for the first time within a more general framework. Against the banal description of media as “mirrors” or “shapers” (Hodkinson, 2016) of social phenomena,

a more complex interpretation suggests that they are circular and adductive means where a specific social identity can be manufactured according to social trends.

Keywords

Deviance, Moral Panic, Mass Media, Labelling Theories, Cybernetics

INTRODUCTION

The popular book entitled *Folk Devils and Moral Panic* was originally published in 1972 by MacGibbon and Kee and republished in 1987 by Blackwell Ltd., and has been reprinted more recently by Routledge (Cohen, 2011/1972). It demonstrates an almost sublimated interest in the phenomena of deviance and control developed by criminology, which Cohen had taught in the violent South Africa of Apartheid (his country of origin) but which, following his move to the United Kingdom, he was able to reformulate and adapt to the changed context. Therefore, we could define the process that directed the sociologist’s research as bottom-up approach: from the first articles on the detailed description of deviance in the English subculture of the Teddy Boys, leading towards a more systematic elaboration thanks to structural-functionalism and catastrophe theory. In this sense, it represents

the missing link in sociological reflection on subcultures. However, these are not the only references present in Cohen's study, which incorporates fields of knowledge that are often distant. Of course, the theory of catastrophes, criminal psychology, theories on the media, the analysis of subcultures, ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism, the relationship between the control of deviance and systemic theories, the analysis of the content of political communication, urban sociology and finally the issues inherent to the imaginary and tourist promotion of cities, or what today is usually defined as city branding. These are all disciplines and areas of interest that the scholar engages with in research project that, chapter after chapter, becomes increasingly complex. Particularly, the theory of moral panic triggered by popular demons, expressions that somehow recall Lombroso's "moral madness", once associated with other more traditional popular demons such as that of the prostitute (Simone, 2017). If in Lombroso's positivism deviance was intrinsic to the deviant subject, here however, the idea of a social construction prevails and develops within the framework of catastrophe theory, expanding to the point of conditioning the functioning of the entire social system.

Never has the term 'framework' been more fitting than in this case to describe a process, given that the author himself admitted to having discovered this theoretical model "towards the end of writing the research on Mods and Rockers" and to have been "immediately struck by the parallels" between "moral panics" and "reactions to natural disasters" (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. xxxiii). Cohen focuses on various occasions on the analogies and differences between natural disasters, which give rise to scenes of objective panic, and those induced by youth deviance, which in fact generate a very specific type of panic, not by chance defined as "moral". The book begins with a historical examination of the events on the English beaches, gradually elaborates this material thanks to the theoretical references cited above and culminates in an in-depth study of the subcultures examined, almost as if he wanted to voluntarily move the focus of the research work to

the last chapter. In this introduction I will therefore try to follow the same procedure adopted by the author, but in reverse. I will first focus on the analysis of English subcultures, moving on to an examination of theoretical models, until arriving at our present, in which examples of popular demons and moral panics are now multiplying thanks to a media regime very different from that of our author's time.

METHOD: COMPARING DIFFERENT ETHNOGRAPHIES

The study of youth groups and cultures is closely linked to the evolution of sociological thought itself and with its ability, especially in the American variant, to satisfy pragmatic directions and needs. For this reason, this line of research originated in the USA, within the activities of the Chicago School, which, particularly with the famous text by W. Footwhite (recently translated into Italian), represented the first analytical contribution to the study of youth gangs. These gangs began to reflect in a problematic way on young age groups, associating them with the problem of urban deviance (Cristante, 1983). This legacy of the Chicago School resonates strongly in

the research of Stanley Cohen, who, in a completely different geographical and temporal context, cites works by other scholars from the same School to support his approach. But the complexity of new youth phenomena cannot be addressed using a classic approach to deviance and not only because the United Kingdom of the Sixties is completely different from the USA of the Thirties

The cultural and media context has certainly changed, becoming more complex by the emergence of what sociologists define as new socialization agencies, but above all, the focus of study has changed. A composite youth culture, deeply immersed in the process of modernization, is heavily influenced by it yet unable to fully align with its demands. This indefinite and elusive object puts the social sciences of the time into crisis, which respond by recovering a method — urban



ethnography — that anthropologists had originally developed to study other cultures, whether native or distant from the West (Marcus & Fisher, 1998) and which is now being readapted within the metropolises to study the new strangers: teenagers. These are the same teenagers who, as McLuhan (2002/1964) observed, realized after the launch of Sputnik that Western cities were transforming into stages where they were invited to craft and perform their spectacular identities.

The distance between Stanley Cohen and the tradition of the Birmingham School is not merely nominal but also purely methodological. The differences between the two approaches include not only theoretical references and a deeper interest in stylistic and consumer dimensions but also the methodology — or more specifically, the relationship between the observer (the scholar) and the object of investigation (the subculture). For the authors of the moral panic framework, the object was treated as neutral, emerging from processes of negotiation between the socio-cultural background of young people and the labeling dynamics imposed by institutional systems and the media. In contrast, Cultural Studies exhibit a significant degree of empathy toward youth culture in its various expressions. This bias is explicitly criticized by Cohen, perhaps even beyond his own intentions.

Social scientists are clearly not immune to this sort of involvement with their subject of study. The researcher who, beyond himself, hopes that the phenomenon will take a particular form in order to prove his theories or achieve some more ideological satisfaction, is the most (and only) obvious example of such involvement. I myself cannot claim to have always observed the Mods and Rockers without any such involvement (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 158).

For Cohen, such involvement does not only concern the sharing of a common background — that is, when the researcher comes from the same context as the object of observation — but in case studies of deviance, it can also be induced by either contrast with or fascination for the social and cultural diversity of the object in question. Thus, “when the object of study is deviance, there is the risk of other types of involvement,” as noted by a researcher quoted in the text, for whom the author states that “many criminologists have an intense (and perhaps indirect) personal interest in the criminal exploitation of their subject. Many are fascinated voyeurs of the criminal world” (Cohen, 2002/1972).

RESULTS

Contrary to Cultural Studies, which would have embraced an excessively empathetic vision of the subculture, at the risk of being sucked into the ethnographic practice of going native, Cohen, while recognizing the dangers of possible fascination, maintains a detached gaze, much like what a certain positivist sociology would call the “objective observer.” Among the scholars who have highlighted this methodological difference, partly siding with Cohen’s approach, Sara Thornton (1996) has most effectively described the issue. If in Hebdige homology is an internal construct of the subculture, produced by its dialectical opposition to the dominant culture (the so-called mainstream), or in another way the final result of applying various bricolages, in Cohen, homology is produced elsewhere and is composed of the selection of a central axiological nucleus and the peripheral values associated with it, according to the object in question. This is because the identity of the subculture is the result of a complementary process of mirroring, in which institutional actors (institutions, media, public opinion, etc.) are decisive, but so are the methods used (inventory, symbolization, labeling, etc.).

As will be seen in the introduction written by the author, the category of moral panics is extended from the specific context of youth subcultures to more current types of popular demons. Cohen cites satanic sects, single mothers and more recently hackers, “freeloader” immigrants or cases of Islamic radicalism. A category that could be further extended to even more current phenomena, from the black bloc to the protagonists of populisms that have emerged throughout Europe. Moreover, the model of moral panic could be particularly useful today for legal and/or media sociologists to examine the processes of demonization and panic that have produced the phenomenon of new populisms. Cohen partially touches on this issue, especially when in the introduction he criticizes the “Darwinian” individualism that inspired the neoliberal rhetoric from Thatcher to Blair and that made the very “name” of the deviant disappear, legitimizing particularly repressive social policies, perhaps even harsher than those examined in this book. The general framework within which Cohen re-adapts the question of moral panic is the Beck-Bauman’s notion of the “risk society” (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. xxx), whose effect of increasing the fears and cognitive instability of the global citizen gives rise to new and more varied typologies of moral panic. A question

that also calls into question the differences between digital media and old mass media, together with the possibility of adapting Cohen's model, designed for the old media system, to the nascent world of the web (McRobbie & Thornton, 1995). With the most recent shift to social networks, the same problem arises again but on a larger scale, since these media are a tool for generating and propagating new panics from below and in peer-to-peer mode, whereas the old moral panic was instead managed by the top-down communication infrastructure of traditionalist and mass media.

DISCUSSION

The Object of Investigation: Youth Subcultures

A brief overview of youth subcultures is particularly important to understand various junctures of Cohen's text, especially because, although the book systematically discusses some subcultures, the author only delves into this topic in the final chapter of the work and in the most recent introductions. Furthermore, Cohen almost never uses the concept of subculture. It appears in the introduction and then at the end of the text but only for reasons that are completely marginal compared to the semantic richness of this term. In fact, it is intended to indicate the theoretical matrix (Subcultural Theories) rather than the object itself, or to reinforce the discourse on deviance as in the expression "subcultural drug taking" (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 231). This notable absence is justified not only by the fact that the original 1972 edition was published in a period in which this concept had not yet fully penetrated the academic debate. Cultural Studies were practically in their infancy and the famous collection of essays edited by

S. Hall and T. Jefferson (1976) entitled *Resistance Through Rituals* had not yet been published. However, the work of Phil Cohen (1972) dates back to the same year when he proposes the concept of style, the conceptual linchpin of Dick Hebdige's work, who in fact explored both the general dimensions of subcultural life worlds — such as the two complementary modes of identity construction that he recovers from Levi-Strauss — namely homology and bricolage — and the peculiarities of each subculture. Cohen often uses concepts as synonyms that have taken on very different connotations over the course of the development of cultural studies and marketing studies. Referring to the aesthetic characteristics of "his" Mods, he speaks indiscriminately of lifestyles, consumer styles, fashions, manias, fads, whereas cultural studies have preferred to distinguish these terms and assign a specific meaning to the subcultural dimension: that of the politics of style. But perhaps this is only a recent achievement of Cultural Studies and subsequently of Fashion Studies that at that time would have been difficult to elaborate. Cohen also underlines the centrality of the stylistic dimension, even though he calls it "fashion", so much so that changes in fashion can mean something much deeper and more permanent, assimilating them to historical breaking points such as the phenomenon of the Beatniks in America.

Cultural Studies have explored the fundamental distinction between fashion understood as symbolic and systematic obsolescence imposed by consumer society and style seen as a form of "resistance", autonomous aggregation and conflict against that system. If the concept of subculture refers to the totality of expressive, value and behavioral forms of a given group, the concept of "street style" instead captures the specificity of expressive and dress codes. The concept of style conflicts with that of fashion because it calls into question the process of programmed and symbolic obsolescence of goods, aiming to build a "true" identity that resists time and claims an antagonistic position against the so-called mainstream. It is possible to reflect in terms of an evolutionary curve of subcultures (and therefore also of their styles) because the history of street styles takes place over the second half of the twentieth century, by virtue of various elements that come into play to alter their nature. Today it is increasingly difficult to identify new types of styles as well as subcultures related to them. This is a difficulty that is as much methodological as phenomenological, which is dictated by the definition of the concept as well as the disappearance of clearly defined



styles from the stages of the world's metropolises. Ted Polhemus himself, who mapped the previous manifestations, denounces the difficulties of such an undertaking in the Nineties. Thus the declining part of the subculture curve coincides with a sort of disintegration of the phenomenon as its spread into the territories, once protected, of commercial fashion. The birth of street styles is commonly traced by scholars to the period shortly before the Second World War, when the subculture of Zooties was born in America, an expression of the ambitions of social ascent nourished by the African-American populations living in the metropolises. The fundamental characteristic of this style was indeed the excess of fabric in the preparation of the clothes, which, in a period of economic restrictions, was considered by the dominant culture as an anti-patriotic gesture, but which highlighted the need for integration in the attempt to ascend to a higher social class. The history of street styles has had fertile ground in post-war England where, among other things, the greatest number of youth subcultures were born.

In the mid-1950s, the Teddy Boys, young proletarians who found themselves in a period of economic boom, with greater purchasing power, left their mark on the streets. The 'Edwardian youth' took its name from a high fashion collection known for being inspired by the particular elegance of Edward VII, whose fate was not happy, so much so that in the post-war period, London teenagers were able to buy those clothes at the stalls of charity shops. The Teddy Boys reinterpreted the contents of that collection by inserting elements borrowed from American culture such as jeans or leather ties, thus challenging traditional English culture, which was resistant and worried about the invasion of goods and lifestyles from overseas. Among these, leather ties, jeans and thick-soled wingtip shoes stood out. The jacket with the silk collar became wider and the tie was replaced by the leather lace (boot lace). The black suede shoes with thick rubber soles, the very famous Brothel Creeper (Fiorani 2004), were used because the thick soles guaranteed greater grip on wet surfaces, especially in critical situations such as brawls. The hair was long and sophisticated, in stark contrast to the short cut imposed on young men conscripted for military service. The typical hairstyle included a long and showy quiff called "duck arse", the sideburns were long and very thick. The Teds made their first appearances on the post-war London stage between 1954 and 1956.

The object of analysis of Cohen's book is the clashes between Mods and Rockers on the English

beaches in the first half of the Sixties. Two very different subcultures — one that parodically imitates the style of the middle class and the other that is inspired by the rebelliousness of Marlon Brando's *The Wild One* — that only apparently come into conflict over a question of style. According to Sarah Thornton (1996), in fact, at the beginning, the two groups of young people did not identify themselves in opposing factions and coexisted peacefully. Only following the labeling procedures implemented by the media, especially the local press, did they begin to perceive themselves as belonging to two different worlds. The question of authenticity increasingly becomes the pivot around which a certain "subcultural capital" is defined (Thornton, 1996). The generational clash from the Fifties becomes the engine of new lifestyles and therefore of new consumption, and is expressed horizontally in the compensatory clash between subcultures.

The origin of the Mods is reconstructed by Cohen in various phases of transition from the Fifties to the Sixties. Their name is an abbreviation of the word "Modernists," which indicated an intermediate subculture that reacted to the aesthetic exaggerations of the Teddy Boys. These young people appeared on the scene claiming, like the Teds, a foreign-loving matrix that drew on other cultural universes but which flaunted the same attitude of breaking away from official culture. An impeccable style that was apparently integrated into the practices of civil life but which adopted a different metric, accentuating some elements thanks to the use of gadgets or pins that redefined their image in a deviant perspective. But unlike the Americanism of the Teds, the young Mods adored as objects of worship some typical products of Italian manufacture: clothes, shoes, Lambrettas, or Vespas. The Italian scooter itself soon became the icon of a youth intent on transgressing the consolidated values of English culture in order to influence that popular imagination characterised by a strong chauvinism which branded scooter drivers with the stigma of being "effeminate" (Hebdige, 1988).

A revolutionary vehicle that was designed to ensure mobility for the fairer sex and therefore could not be seen favorably by the moral defenders of tradition and not only, given that as Cohen noted "the owners and manufacturers of scooters often complained about the bad publicity they were getting" (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 84). The sharpening of the conflict with the other famous subculture of that period — the Rockers — completed the process of labeling by the media and pushed the Mods

to evolve into two unpredictable configurations: on the one hand the "hard" Mods who returned to the origins of the working class mimicking the style of the working class hero and therefore transform themselves into Skinheads, on the other the "soft" Mods who assumed a much more sophisticated style and flowed into the psychedelic and flower power movement. The examination of this evolution, which authors such as Dick Hebdige pay tribute to the seminal effort of Stanley Cohen, was indicated through an alternative path by Phil Cohen, whom our author did not have the opportunity to know. As the author noted, "...if you had asked a nineteen-year-old in 1966 if he considered himself a Mod, he would have said that he had been but the Mods were dead", so much so that by 1967 most of the young people in Brighton no longer identified with that style.

The Hippie movement — which derived from some previous subcultures including the Beatniks, the Folkies and the Psychedelics (Polhemus, 1994), and above all from the "soft" wing of the Mod movement (Hebdige, 1979) — developed its own style in coherence with a broader political project, which therefore determined the passage from the subcultural dimension to the more properly countercultural one. Their vision of the world was fundamentally neo-archaic (Morin, 1962), denouncing the dysfunctions of the average lifestyle in Western societies. Hippie clothing hinted at an alternative lifestyle and recovered fabrics and garments imported from Asia, or belonging to other ethnic cultures, to support the utopia of escape from the industrialized West. The Seventies betrayed both the utopian aspirations of the flower power movement and their austere and sloppy look. With Glam, the new youth was concerned with issues closer to their personal experience, deepening the leitmotif of sexual liberation combined with a clear interest in an excessive and spectacular aesthetic.

Every gesture of these young people aimed to question gender differences. The images of radically androgynous pop stars, from Bolan to the New York Dolls, scandalized public opinion, reaching levels that only Punk could later surpass. The remarkable spectacularization of performances and the theatricalization of clothing — which tended to cancel or redefine the human figure — found its exemplary manifestation in Ziggy Stardust, David Bowie's alter ego, who came down from space to become a rock star. Punk marked a point of no return in the epic of subcultures. It was an artistic experience that continues to impress the global collective imagination for its irreverence,

which in some cases remains unsurpassed. Journalists identify the year of birth as 1977, when the album *Never Mind the Bollocks* by the Sex Pistols was released, but the genesis of the phenomenon dates back to a few years earlier and is still debated between those who consider it a derivative of American Glam and Garage, and those who claim its British origin. Vivienne Westwood has claimed in several interviews to have invented Punk (cooperating with her partner Malcolm McLaren), or at least to have provided the youth of King's Road with the tools to express their identity. Minimal music, based on linear harmonic progressions composed of a few chords, was consistent with the principle that also governed clothing: no particular technical skills were needed to express one's discomfort, everyone could assert their identity in an absolutely free way. Therefore, even clothing was sparse, irreverent but absolutely plural. Behind the stereotype of the young man with the leather jacket and the crested hair that recurs in the *Greetings from London* postcards, there was a multiplicity of forms, the result of the juxtaposition of contradictory elements found in charity shops. A multifaceted style, often so essential that it does not contemplate any of the frills that are usually listed in this regard. The documentary importance of *Jubilee* by Derek Jarman lies precisely in having returned an original and in some way authentic image of this style. The subcultures that originate from it, including Dark (in English *Goth*), New Romantic or New Wave will insist as much on the theatrical aspect as on the introspective one.

Hip Hop was also born in the late Seventies, and has demonstrated, over the last few decades, a longevity and continuity unusual for any other street style. With it, the last glimmers of the golden age of spectacular subcultures are consumed and in some way the process of convergence between the brand system and youth cultures is pre-figured. At the beginning, Hip Hop was a philosophy strongly suspended between an antagonistic soul — which matured in the ghettos of US metropolises as a response to the discrimination of the dominant culture — and a playful soul, which with the passing of time will become predominant. The set of languages that compose it, from writing to breakdance to turntablism, was made famous by the driving force of rap music.

During the Eighties, a certain balance was achieved between the more militant soul, with a strong political connotation, and the more playful one. The latter, over time, became predominant, so much so that, during the Nineties, it became the distinctive sign of this style. In

clothing, the so-called B-Boys made extensive use of tracksuits, sports shoes, caps with visors, chains and jewels, or decontextualized and recontextualized elements in their look such as the stars of Mercedes cars or the alarm clocks around their necks, launched by Flavor Flav, vocalist of Public Enemy: a clear gesture of fetishistic reappropriation of a commodity, a sign of the cultural subordination that had subjugated the “black nation” since the colonial era. In the Nineties, the concepts of subculture and street-style entered into crisis, so much so that Ted Polhemus himself in an interview a few years ago (Barile, 2001) declared that it was no longer possible to continue mapping these phenomena. The crisis of subcultures is mainly due to two concomitant processes: on the one hand, the growing value of communication, which rapidly circulates the signs of the various ‘stylistic islands’, encouraging hybridisation and crossover operations in the two different modalities of style surfing and sampling’n’mixing (Polhemus, 1994); on the other, the growing collusion with the system of global brands (Barile, 2022) which draw fully on this heritage in what Naomi Klein (2000) has defined as a process of “co-optation of youth culture” and which Stanley Cohen had already eminently identified in his examination of the commercialisation of Mod culture.

From Catastrophe Theory to Cybernetics

The key that Cohen offers to scholars of youth subcultures may be the most original, disenchanted and analytically effective approach to overcoming some drawbacks present in other methodologies. Although the theory of moral panic has been superimposed and confused with the interests and research methods of the Birmingham School, there are more points of divergence than similarities between two. If in fact these two orientations share a strong interest in the same object — youth cultures — they diverge both in the methodological approach and in the framework of theoretical references. As I have already mentioned in the previous section, with respect to the theoretical framework, Cultural Studies draw notoriously on a neo-Marxist strand that moves from Gramsci’s concept of hegemony through Althusser’s ISA to a conception of the relationship between language and subjectivity borrowed from Jacques Lacan (Moore, 1990), while Moral Panic is much more inclined to draw on the theoretical framework of institutional sociology mostly influenced by structural-functionalism and symbolic interactionism. Therefore, there is no

connivance or complacency in the analysis of the actions of the protagonists of the riots described by Cohen, nor any form of indulgence. The popular demons described in the book are neither agents of a counter-power that resists the framing of society nor outcasts, the final waste of a failed process of socialization. They are the result of mutual monitoring procedures, of young people on other young people, of the media on young people, of society on young people through the media. Even the procedures of control and sanctioning of deviance are not always obvious and ruthless but demonstrate at every level the presence of the random element, of the error of perception and of stereotyping. Hence the warning of the author who finds himself examining “objects” that are not entirely “alive and real” but as natural events redefined through the gaze of a social reaction that is opposed to them.

“Organizing the book in this way implies that in the first part the Mods and Rockers will hardly appear as “real, living people” at all. They will be looked at through the eyes of the social reaction and in this way they will appear as incorporeal objects, Rorschach stains on which the same reactions are projected” (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 20).

Another major reference that hovers throughout the text is cybernetics, a science invented by N. Wiener (1989/1950) in the 1950s, particularly similar to systemic theories and catastrophe theory. But beyond a theoretical interest in this discipline, its tools are strongly criticized by Cohen, who speaks of it as a set of excessively “schematic and mechanistic” models (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 11). On closer inspection, if the first adjective conveys the meaning and functioning of cybernetic models, the term “mechanistic” is partly inappropriate in the sense that this discipline, while applying indifferently to electronic circuits, living beings and machines, suggests models of functioning that are completely different from the typically mechanistic ones of Newtonian physics, Cartesian psychology and positivist sociology. However, what the author appreciates about this approach is the description of catastrophic events as “a typical sequence of reactions that could take place at this point and that would have a spiral, extreme, avalanche effect” (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 11). In other words, what arouses the interest of the sociologist is the notion of positive feedback which, far from being accurately described in the book, is rather implicitly suggested to show how a process of successive

solicitations tends to distance the system from its equilibrium, pushing it towards disequilibrium and disintegration. But Cohen cannot help but underline the substantial differences between the patterns that preside over the development of natural events and those that instead affect society in the form of cultural catastrophes.

To express the difference in another way, while the disaster sequence is linear and constant — in each disaster the warning is followed by the impact which is followed by the reaction — deviance models are circular and amplifying: the impact (deviance) is followed by a reaction which has the effect of increasing the subsequent warning and impact, setting up a feedback system (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 18).

“Feedback” is in this case the way in which the system reacts to the deviation from equilibrium induced by the phenomenon of deviance, triggering a series of procedures that tend to sanction, stereotype and contain the deviance. The following diagram summarizes and describes in an exemplary manner the process of positive feedback that is the basis of the model developed by Cohen who, however, did not want to codify this procedure in purely cybernetic terms. “Positive” feedback does not indicate a process with a value connotation (positive as in favorable or desirable) but rather the sense, the direction of a progressive deviation of the system from its position of equilibrium, due to an emerging factor. This factor, which in this case is the phenomenon of juvenile

deviance, is processed within a circuit in which each stage amplifies the unbalancing potential of the previous one (for this reason positive). As in the following graph, drawn up to better illustrate the mechanics of moral panic in a real loop that is triggered starting from the onset of the deviant act, but which then continues to function in a self-referential and potentially catastrophic circuit.

If the original edition does not problematize the origin of the concept of “moral panic”, in a note in the introduction to the third edition the author admits to having “probably derived” it from Marshall McLuhan’s famous *Understanding media* (2002/1964). This fact should not be surprising, not only because at that time the times were not yet ripe for McLuhan to be considered an essential reference in the debate on the media, but also because, far from considering the Canadian mediologist as a structural-functionalist, his links with cybernetic and systemic thought are quite evident. More than the definition of moral panic, the concept of *breaking point* is very close to McLuhan’s system, this too in a certain sense circular and expansive so that with the uncontrolled growth of a phenomenon something unexpected happens: the phenomenon turns into its opposite. Cohen also stresses that, unlike natural disasters that usually follow a linear pattern, deviance models adhere to “circular and expansive” models. Circularity itself is taken into serious consideration not only by systemic and cybernetic

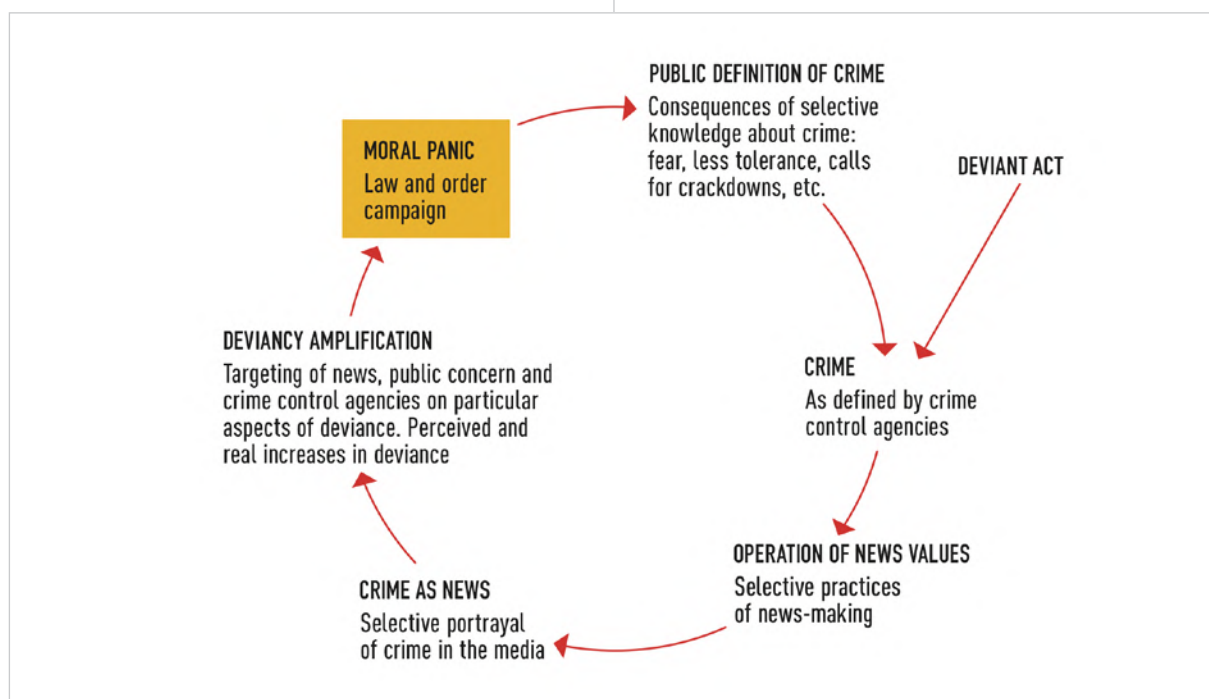


FIGURE 1. MECHANICS OF MORAL PANIC. (TAYLOR & WARD, 1995, P. 478)

theories but also by the methodology of the most advanced social research that has long ago overcome the debate between induction and deduction to focus on the concept of abduction (Campelli, 2011). Furthermore, the way in which the function of the stereotype is considered closely resembles a classic epistemological theme of institutional sociology, namely the so-called Thomas theorem much discussed by R. K. Merton (1949). The stereotype is therefore primarily a tool of knowledge, even if reductionist and tautological, later also becomes a tool for reproducing power. To grasp this transition, it might make sense to move from sociological to anthropological and psychological reflection, thanks to the category of fetishism.

The labeling procedures activated by the media are, in fact, a process of symbolizing certain traits of subcultures, which are emphasized in order to redefine the global form (gestalt) in a negative value sense (the popular demon). This is similar to the seizure of Jean Genet's belt and Vaseline recounted by Hebdige (1979), around which a power struggle is hinged between the writer's tormentors and his "tactical" possibility of defining a space of freedom through deviance from the norm. As Cohen emphasizes, quoting Becker: "The deviant is a subject to whom the moral label has been successfully applied: deviant behavior is the behavior so labeled by people" (Cohen, 2002/1972, p. 50).

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Anschrift:
Neuwiehler Str. 33, D-51674 Wiehl

Telefon: +49 (0)151 54284669
E-Mail: hello@sci-result.de

Geschäftsführer:
Sergej Engelmann

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