

The Global Economy In The Age Of The Pandemic And Beyond: An Interview With Political Economists Gerald Epstein And Robert Pollin



The global economy experienced a massive contraction in 2020, with the overall global GDP falling by 4.3 percent. Compare that with the 2008 global financial crisis, which triggered a 1.8 drop in global output in 2009, and it's bluntly clear why the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) called the global recession triggered by the pandemic "unprecedented in recent history." Moreover, the World Bank sees a subdued recovery in 2021, while noting simultaneously that "if history is any guide, the global economy is heading for a decade of growth disappointments unless policy makers put in place comprehensive reforms." In addition, there are stern warnings from major establishment institutions about the impact of climate change on financial and economic activity that makes one wonder what the future holds for global development and prosperity.

With the above in mind, one needs to ask the following: Why did the ramifications of the CPVID-19 pandemic end up being so great and with far wider reaching effects than any other previous recession? Indeed, in what ways did the pandemic change the world? Moreover, did policymakers utilize all of the tools available to them to diminish the scope of the recession? And what should be done to ensure that economic recovery is steady and sustainable in the post-pandemic era?

In an interview below with C. J. Polychroniou, leading political economists Gerald Epstein and Robert Pollin shed considerable light on the above questions. Gerald Epstein is Professor of Economics and Co-Director of the Political Economy Institute at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Robert Pollin is

Distinguished Professor of Economics and Co-Director of the Political Economy Institute at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

C. J. Polychroniou: The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic caused a massive contraction of global economic activity. In what ways is the Covid-19 induced recession different from previous ones, including the 2008 global financial crisis, and how did it change the world?



Prof.dr. Robert Pollin

Robert Pollin: If we consider the roughly 90-year period from the 1929 Wall Street collapse to the present, it is certainly the case that our current COVID-19-induced recession has been unique. To begin with, it is the only recession that was caused by a public health pandemic. Of course, previous recessions did also have triggering events—for example, the collapse of speculative financial bubbles both in 1929 and 2007 and the near-doubling of global oil prices both in 1973 and again in 1979. But these previous economic “shocks” were occurring within the operations of the economic system, not the public health system.

The public health shock in 2020 produced a cascade of other impacts that were also unique. One was that the speed and intensity of the economic downturn was unprecedented, even relative to the months immediately after the October 1929 Wall Street crash, which ushered in the 1930s Great Depression. Focusing for the moment on the United States, the number of people who lost their jobs and filed for unemployment insurance went from 256,000 in the week of March 14, 2020 to 2.9 million, the following week of March 21, an 11-fold increase. Two weeks later, in the week of April 4, the number of people filing for unemployment insurance spiked still higher, to 6.1 million people. That was a 24-fold increase in the three-week period between mid-March and early April. Over the full year since the

onset of the pandemic, 78 million people have applied to receive unemployment insurance. That is approximately half of the [entire U.S. workforce](#). Moreover, these figures do not include the millions of people who lost their jobs but did not either qualify for unemployment insurance, or didn't apply for whatever reason. It also doesn't take account of the [8 million people](#) who dropped out of the labor force within a matter of two months only, between February and April 2020. Remember that the U.S. experienced this magnitude of job losses over the year since the COVID outbreak despite the federal government mounting stimulus programs in March and December of 2020 amounting to about \$3 trillion (14 percent of U.S. GDP) and the Federal Reserve bailing out Wall Street with another \$3 trillion in bond purchases.

The European economies did not experience such severe spikes in unemployment. For the 27-country European Union, [unemployment did rise](#), but only from 6.5 percent in February 2020 to a peak of 7.8 percent in September, before returning to 7.3 percent as of January 2021. This is despite the fact that the collapse in economic activity (as measured by GDP) was nearly as bad. Job losses weren't as severe in Europe because [several of the countries](#), including Germany, the UK, Ireland, and Denmark operated with work-sharing programs. With work sharing, workers are able to retain their jobs, while moving onto part-time schedules consistent with the decline in their employers' revenue. For example, if the restaurant industry experienced a 36 percent decline in revenue, the businesses did not lay off 36 percent, or thereabouts, of its work force. It rather retained its workforce, but moved the workers onto roughly two-thirds time schedules. The employers then paid workers for two-thirds of their normal pay, while the government work-sharing program covered the remaining one-third. Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, the head of the House Democratic Caucus, proposed such a program for the U.S., but her proposal went nowhere.

Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and India all experienced severe economic collapse during 2020. The expectation is that their recoveries will be slow and halting. This is first of all because, unlike the U.S. or Europe they don't have the financial resources to mount major economic stimulus programs. They also haven't been provided supplies of COVID vaccines at anywhere near the rate as the U.S. or even most of Europe. This is due to the pharmaceutical multinationals hoarding their vaccine patents rather than pushing out the vaccines as quickly as possible to all regions of the world, regardless of any country's capacity to pay for

them.

How long it will take to move the global economy onto a sustainable recovery path will depend, first of all, on how quickly inoculations become universal. Right now, it's clear that protecting the profits of the pharma multinationals is taking priority over the health of the global population and an economic recovery.

C. J. Polychroniou: There is broad consensus that central banks can play a crucial role in supporting economic recovery. Did central banks respond to the Covid-19 pandemic as effectively as they could have? In other words, did they exhaust all of the available policy tools? And, if so, do they need new ones to combat the next economic downturn?



Prof.dr. Gerald Epstein

Gerald Epstein: The Covid-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on the lives and livelihoods of millions of people around the globe. But for the wealthy, and for finance in particular, things have been mostly just fine.

The clearest picture of this contrast appears if one juxtaposes the global unemployment rate with the stock market we have experienced since the outbreak began in February 2020. As the pandemic took off in the Spring of 2020, global stock markets first crashed, and then, by the summer, started their gravity defying ascent. Meanwhile, the global deaths from the pandemic (or unemployment) have jumped and kept growing.

What accounts for this grotesque divergence? One key explanation is the massive financial intervention undertaken by the Federal Reserve (Fed), European Central Bank (ECB), Bank of England (BOE), and other central banks around the globe. When the pandemic first spread to Italy and then was announced by the World

Health Organization (WHO) in February/March, panic gripped the global financial markets and these financial authorities immediately and massively stepped in. This enormous intervention led to a quick and remarkable recovery in global financial market activity and re-energized the “animal spirits” of stock market investors. But these interventions were much less favorable to workers, small businesses, and state and local/municipal governments, who were either more slowly helped by central government programs (in some countries) or not much at all (in others).

The intervention by the world’s major central banks was swift and powerful, much more so than with the Global Financial Crisis of 2007. In late January, 2020, word spread that the Covid-19 epidemic broke out into the open in Wuhan China, but it wasn’t until early February that it was clear that the virus was going to spread beyond China. On February 21, 2020, Italy announced a lockdown in the northern part of the country and then the global financial markets began to fall, and panic soon ensued. Immediately there was a flight to safety, with banks, hedge funds, stock market investors and others selling off their financial assets and buying “safe assets” notably US Treasury securities, German government securities (bunds) and the like. But when price movements and costs in these usually “safe” assets began to go haywire, financial institutions and wealthy investors began a desperate search for cash, in which they tried to liquidate these safe assets and bought the shortest term government assets and held cash assets in major banks. During this period, the corporate bond market experienced major distress as investors worried about the shut-down effects on corporate profits and cash flow, and the ratings agencies began downgrading these corporate securities. In the US, the municipal bond markets were also hit hard around the same time. In turn, the Fed, Bank of England (BOE) and the European Central Bank (ECB) massively intervened in financial markets, lowering interest rates close to zero, buying trillions of dollars of government bonds and other financial assets, and then creating special lending facilities to prevent bankruptcies, liquidity crises and asset fire sales in various financial markets around the world. In the Covid Panic, the Federal Reserve and other major central banks used many of the same tools during the Covid Crisis, as they had used to stabilize and bail-out the financial markets during the GFC, but they also created some new facilities to deal with problems in the financial markets.

Early on, the Fed moved into uncharted territories, attempting to bail-out the corporate bond markets, including junk bonds, where prices were falling and liquidity was drying up. The Fed also established a special facility to help corporations secure loans as their revenues were drying up in another action to serve as an International Lender of Last Resort, through various international lending facilities for the US dollar.

The Fed then broadened beyond the financial markets per se. On April 9th, the Fed, with capital infusions from the Treasury Department, established new facilities designed to help a variety of other economic sectors and groups. These included, the Paycheck Protection Program Liquidity Facility, the Main Street Lending Facility, the Municipal Liquidity Facility; and at this same time, the Fed expanded the amount and duration of several previously created facilities. Over the next several months, through the Summer of 2020, the Fed expanded on a number of these facilities, and loosened various restrictions and requirements as Congress and various groups pushed for broader access.

As an overall summary assessment of the Fed's response, it is important to note that the policies that were oriented toward supporting the financial institutions, corporate bond issues and buyers, and the financial markets more generally were much larger and operated much more smoothly than did the special facilities oriented to small business, workers, and state and local governments. Part of this divergence may be due to the novelty of these latter facilities. But the problems also stemmed from the restrictions and administrative structures connected to some of these facilities. Take for example the Municipal Liquidity Facility, designed to offer credit for cash strapped state and local governments. This facility was established with paid up capital from the Treasury and with authorization to lend up to \$450 billion to state and local governments. Yet, only around \$6 billion was borrowed. The main reasons this facility was so underutilized was that the interest rate charged by the Fed for borrowing was too high for most borrowers and the term of the loan was typically too short to make the borrowing worthwhile. It was almost as if the facility were designed to be underused.

Perhaps the most important initiative taken by the Fed and other central banks in terms of their positive impacts on the majority of people was the financial support given to the large government spending programs that have helped to cushion the devastating blows of the Coronavirus and shutdowns. By keeping interest rates

low and buying government bonds, the Federal Reserve has reduced the burden of government debt and reduced the stresses associated with large scale government spending and borrowing. So while many of the Fed's actions simply propped up the financial markets and the risky activities of major financial institutions, the support of fiscal spending by governments has been very productive.

Financiers and some economists have decried the "threat to Central Bank independence" they believe such fiscal support entails. But what they are really worried about is that the central banks are supporting the needs of the broader economy, rather than the Wall Streets of the world, which is what the typical "independent" *central bank is wont to do*.

C. J. Polychroniou: US-China trade relations experienced much turmoil during the Trump presidency. Can we estimate what has been the impact of the US-China war trade on global growth, and whether we will see a positive turnaround with Biden in the White House?

Robert Pollin: I think it is more constructive to think about US-China trade relations from a different starting point. In my view, the first question to ask is why, for the past 40 years, China has been enormously successful in exporting manufactured products to the high-income countries? The main reason is straightforward: they are producing goods that people in high-income countries want to buy. This is due both to the combination of relatively low cost and high quality of Chinese manufactured goods.

Moreover, whatever else one might say, good or bad, about China's success as an export powerhouse since the early 1980s (and there are lots of good and bad things to say), we need to recognize that it has been the single most important factor lifting more people out of destitution than any other event in human history. Thus, as of 1975, average per capita income in China was \$323 (expressed in 2019 U.S. dollars). That is equal to 88 cents per day. By 2019, average per capita income had risen to \$9,783, or \$26.80 per day. This is a [30-fold increase](#) in average living standards for a population of 1.4 billion people, 18 percent of the world's population.

By now, it should also be clear that China isn't just selling t-shirts, toys and kitchenware to the high-income countries. We now have the spectacular case of

Chinese solar panel production. Just since 2010, the average global cost of generating electricity from solar photovoltaic panels has fallen by 82 percent, from 38 to 7 cents per kilowatt hour. This is due [almost entirely to innovations](#) in China's solar manufacturing industry.

China's success as an exporter is largely the result of the aggressive industrial policies to which they have been committed, including government subsidies for exporting firms as well as heavy commitments to research and development. China does also [keep labor costs low](#) through aggressive repression of an independent labor movement. But China's economy could now flourish on a foundation of rising wages and living standards for the working class. The country would then depend increasingly on the expansion of its own domestic markets as opposed to remaining so heavily dependent on exports. Transitioning China into a higher-wage economy will then also lead to relaxed trade tensions with the US and other high-income countries.

That said, if the US under Biden wants to start vying with China to produce more efficient and cheaper solar panels, I say let the competition begin. In terms of advancing a viable global climate stabilization project, in which we, first and foremost, stop burning oil, coal and natural gas to produce energy and build a renewable energy-dominant global energy infrastructure, there is nothing that could be more beneficial than to deliver solar energy that is universally cheap and abundant, *whether the panels are produced in China, the US or elsewhere.*

C. J. Polychroniou: A few months ago, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission issued a report titled "Managing Climate Risk in the U.S. Financial System", in which it states that "climate change poses a major risk to the stability of the US financial system and to its ability to sustain the American economy." A similar report issued by the Bank of England, titled "Climate change: what are the risk to financial stability?", also sent stern warning to policymakers on the impact of climate change on the financial system, especially on the banking and insurance sectors. Furthermore, Governor Lael Brainard of the Federal Reserve Board, in a speech titled "Why climate Change Matters for Monetary Policy and Financial Stability", made also a few months ago, even warned about the implications of climate change on monetary policy.

With the above in mind, firstly, what exactly is the relationship between climate change, financial stability, and monetary policy, and, secondly, what are the

specific risks that climate change poses to global banking and the financial system?

Gerald Epstein: The fact that major central banks and other financial regulatory agencies are finally paying some attention to the climate emergency is both welcome and profoundly troubling. It is welcome, of course, because these institutions have enormous power to help address the climate crisis that humanity faces. It is profoundly troubling for at least two reasons: first, because it is so late in the game. The United Nations' Rio Earth Summit was held in 1992, and it has taken almost thirty years for these central banks and other financial institutions to engage with this existential threat. And, second, it is troubling because, so far at least, the central banks' approach to the problem is so narrow and so limited. As your question indicates, the Bank of England's (BOE), European Central Bank (ECB's) and Federal Reserve's (Fed's) focus, thus far, has been on the impacts of climate change on financial stability - period. They have not expressed an explicit concern for the many other economic aspects which climate change is likely to impact and which are actually under their purview: fundamental macroeconomic issues such as unemployment, inflation and economic growth. As Bob Pollin has explained and elaborated in great detail in his work, climate change, if left to itself, will cause enormous economic damage - droughts will lead to famines; rising sea waters will flood coastal cities; forest fires will worsen; extreme weather will get more frequent and more extreme.

It is profoundly naïve, if not malpractice, for central bankers to act as if they believe that these disruptions will not impact inflation (think food shortages) or unemployment (think hurricanes, forest fires, water shortage and coastal flooding), or reduce economic growth (all of the above). The mandate of the European Central Bank is to control inflation. The mandate for the Federal Reserve to maintain price stability and high employment, along with a concern for financial stability. The Bank of England also has multiple objectives in its mandate.

Thus, it seems almost disingenuous for the central banks to suggest that the only climate related concern they might have is to monitor its impact on financial risk. Having said that, there are significant financial risks that can come from the climate crisis. The first comes from issues I have already mentioned and impact the insurance companies. Fires, coastal flooding, hurricane all damage property. If insurance companies don't properly price and ration their insurance in the face

of these risks, then they could be hit by significant shocks. This is made more likely by the fact that there is so much uncertainty surrounding the impacts of climate change on these factors. Second, bank lending and investments in areas impacted by climate change, and other financial bets that banks place in these sectors, such as those associated with derivatives and other complex asset structures, are subject to these risks. And finally, there are the risks associated with investing in and lending to the fossil fuel companies, whose prospects are likely to be limited by government policies designed to keep these fuels “in the ground” thereby creating trillions of dollars of “stranded assets.”

Just as central banks and other financial regulators are supposed to monitor banks and other financial institutions for the risks embedded in their balance sheets from, for example the business cycle (“macro-prudential” risks), so they should try to assess the risks associated with climate change, which is a fact of life probably even more destructive than the business cycle.

And just as central banks have the authority to require that banks raise more capital to hold against their business cycle risk, they should have the authority to raise capital against climate related risks connected to the companies or geographical locations they lend to. In fact, in line with international practices (the so-called Basel Accords) it would make sense to require higher capital ratios for bank lending to fossil fuel companies considering the major global macroeconomic risks and costs they are imposing.

In addition, the ECB has been criticized by Greenpeace and other groups for buying financial assets issued by fossil fuel related companies. Subsidizing such companies by buying their assets is moving in exactly the wrong macroeconomic direction. Central banks should be going in the other direction. Bob Pollin and others have proposed that central banks buy “Green Bonds” to help finance the green transition rather than “Brown Bonds” that finance destructive climate change.

Will central banks do more? It’s hard to say. It is not just inertia that is holding back the central banks. The fossil fuel companies and their political supporters are launching counterattacks against “green” efforts by central banks and other financial institutions, weak as they are. When some large US banks, under pressure from environmental groups, pledged to reduce their lending to fossil fuel companies, the Trump appointed Acting Chair of the Office of the Comptroller of

the Currency (OCC) proposed a new rule that states that “decisions by banks to not serve a specific customer should be based on individual risks, rather than a categorical exclusion.” It is calling the new rule to protect fossil fuel companies as “a measure to ensure fair access to financing” (Rachel Frazin, The Hill, 11/20/20). Along the same lines, Energy Secretary Dan Brouillete compared some banks refusal to finance Arctic drilling to “redlining”, a practice that banks widely used to write mortgages for African Americans (ibid). When the Federal Reserve decided to join a consortium of central bankers working on climate change issues, the “Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS) which includes 75 central banks, worldwide, 47 Republican lawmakers wrote a letter to the Fed condemning their decision. (Frazin, The Hill, 12/10/20). They also opposed the Fed using “stress tests” that include climate risks facing banks.

Similar opposition has come in response to the proposed actions by the ECB to consider refraining bond purchases from fossil fuel companies. Jens Weidman, head of Germany’s central bank wrote that “it is not up to us to correct market distortions and political actions or omissions”. (Martin Arnold, Financial Times, December 15, 2020).

In short, the central banks of the world, especially the Federal Reserve and other rich country central banks that issue global hard currencies, must do more to help reduce the greatest macroeconomic threat our countries and the world face. Limiting their focus to “identifying” “financial stability threats” though a tiny step in the right direction, is ultimately just a face-saving cover for failure to address the politically controversial macroeconomic crisis we face from the climate emergency.

C. J. Polychroniou: A Global Green New Deal is an economic policy strategy that, according to its advocates, can ensure not simply economic recovery but secure prospects for the emergence of an environmentally sustainable and equitable global economy. Bob, you have been at the forefront of the struggle for the transition to a green economy for more than a decade, and have produced scores of commissioned studies on the Green New Deal for various states in the US and countries around the world, so I have to ask you this two-fold question: what are the tangible benefits of the Global Green New Deal for economic development and prosperity, and what’s holding us back from moving away from the fossil fuel economy?

Robert Pollin: The Global Green New Deal first of all means building a new global energy infrastructure on the foundation of high efficiency and clean renewable energy sources, such as the low-cost solar panels now coming out of China. This will create an opportunity to drive carbon dioxide emissions down to zero, which is the first necessary step towards moving onto a viable climate stabilization path. Investing to build the new clean energy infrastructure will, in turn, be a major source of job creation in all regions of the world. It will also mean cheaper energy everywhere. Raising efficiency standards by definition means that it takes less energy to, say, heat, light, and cool buildings or to commute to work or school. We have seen how cheap solar energy has become over the past decade (thanks to China), with the prospects favorable for still more significant cost reductions forthcoming. This will make solar energy much cheaper than fossil fuels, even without factoring in any subsidies, or the benefits of climate stabilization and cleaner air.

The first thing holding us back from advancing the Global Green New Deal is the most obvious. That is the losses that would be faced by the fossil fuel companies. According to the most recent careful work by Tyler Hansen, fossil fuel companies would lose about \$13 - \$15 trillion through not being able to sell the oil, natural gas and coal that they own and plan to sell at a profit.[1] Of that total, about \$3 trillion in losses would be absorbed by private corporations like Exxon/Mobil, Royal Dutch Shell, and British Petroleum, while publicly-owned, government-run companies, like Saudi Aramco, Gazprom in Russia, Petroleos de Venezuela and Petrobras in Brazil would absorb the other \$10 trillion in losses. It is critical to recognize here that while \$13 trillion in losses sounds astronomically large, it is actually quite manageable within the context of the overall global financial market. Assume that these fossil fuel assets decline to zero value over the next 20 years. That means average overall losses of \$650 billion per year for all the public and private companies. These losses would be occurring within the framework of a global financial market whose total assets amounted to \$317 trillion as of 2019. The annual average losses from phasing out the fossil fuel industry would therefore equal about 0.2 percent of the overall market in its current size.

The other thing holding back the Global Green New Deal is the impact that this program would have on workers and communities that are now dependent on the fossil fuel industry. The losses for these specific workers and communities will be

real and significant. We should therefore not be surprised that, for the most part, they are resistant to change. The only solution here is to insist that these workers and communities are provided with generous transition support as the fossil fuel industry phases out. For workers, this means that their pensions will be guaranteed, and they will have the right to a new job at their existing pay levels. As needed, they should also be provided with retraining and relocation support. For the communities, it means investments in reclaiming and repurposing the land now used for fossil fuel extraction and production. Locating new clean energy investment projects in these fossil fuel-dependent regions is one important opportunity that will become increasingly available as the Global Green New Deal advances.

Note:

[1] Tyler Hansen (2021) *“Stranded Assets and Reduced Profits: Analyzing the Economic Underpinnings of the Fossil Fuel Industry’s Resistance to Climate Stabilization,”* manuscript in progress, Department of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

C. J. Polychroniou is a political scientist/political economist who has taught at numerous universities in Europe and the United States and has also worked at various research centers. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Delaware and is author/editor of several books, including *Marxist Perspectives on Imperialism* (1991), *Perspectives and Issues in International Political Economy* (1992), *Socialism: Crisis and Renewal* (1993), *Discourse on Globalization and Democracy: Conversations With Leading Scholars of Our Time* (in Greek, 2001) and hundreds of articles and essays, many of which have been translated into scores of foreign languages. His latest book is a collection of interviews with Noam Chomsky titled [Optimism Over Despair: On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change](#) (Haymarket Books, 2017).

A Green New Deal Is Actually More Affordable In the Long Term Than Fossil Fuels



*CJ
Polychroniou*

With global warming representing humanity's greatest existential crisis, reducing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050, as recommended by the 2018 report of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), should be one of the U.S.'s most urgent priorities. We need a Green New Deal now.

In examining the urgency of this necessity, we must recognize the current state of climate response in this country and around the world. Five years ago, the Paris Agreement on climate change was adopted. It was called "historic" because all members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change committed themselves to limiting global warming below 2 — and ideally to 1.5 — degrees Celsius (2°C) compared to pre-industrial levels. Yet progress toward that goal has been slow, where it has happened at all.

We are just emerging from the Trump era, when the former leader of the world's largest economy and of the most powerful nation/empire in history not only questioned the science around climate change and withdrew the United States from the Paris Agreement, but also dismantled scores of environmental regulations and even reversed an Obama-rule on methane emissions — even though methane, the natural ingredient in natural gas, is 84 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

While some investors are shifting away from the fossil fuel economy, close to 85

percent of global primary energy still comes from coal, oil and gas. And no one should be led to believe that the [temporary decline](#) of greenhouse gas emissions during the COVID pandemic will last once the virus is brought under control.

As a matter of fact, while fossil fuel production needs to be decreased by roughly 6 percent between 2020 and 2030 in order for countries to remain in line with the 1.5°C target, governments are planning instead to increase fossil fuel production by an average of 2 percent annually, [according to a report](#) released by the Stockholm Environment Institute, together with the UN Environment Program and other leading research institutions.

In addition, between 2016 and 2020, the world's largest banks have put collectively [\\$3.8 trillion](#) into fossil fuel companies, a development which may perhaps be the best indication of the toothless design behind the Paris climate accord and why it is naïve and dangerous to rely on the “invisible hand” of the market either for economic transformation or for a solution to the problem of climate change. Indeed, as climate economist Nicholas Stern put it more than a decade ago, greenhouse gas emissions “[represent the biggest market failure](#) the world has seen.”

Meanwhile, climate change denial remains prevalent, including among national leaders such as Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil and former President Trump.

The return of the U.S. to the Paris climate agreement, combined with Joe Biden's [executive order](#) which explicitly recognizes that the United States and the world face “a profound climate crisis” and that tackling global warming will be a central objective in U.S. foreign policy and national security, are surely welcome news, but the efforts to combat global warming need to intensify. We need a well laid out plan for a swift transition away from fossil fuel and towards clean and renewable energy systems. As the World Meteorological Organization warned in a report issued back in March 2020, “[time is fast running out.](#)”

The Green New Deal is the best proposal we have to decarbonize the economy and protect the planet from the dire consequences of global warming, including hotter heat waves, increased tropical storms and floods, prolonged droughts, loss of freshwater, flooding of coastal areas, large-scale migration and potentially, eventually, human extinction.

The Green New Deal is portrayed as unaffordable, but in fact, it is financially

manageable, especially given what is at stake if we fail to stop irreversible and disastrous changes to our climate system. According to leading economist Robert Pollin of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the global economy must spend an average of \$4.5 trillion per year (or 2.5 percent of global GDP) between 2024-2050 in clean energy investments in order to hit the 2050 IPCC emissions reduction target. This estimate is corroborated by the latest study from the International Renewable Energy Agency, which puts the figure that needs to be invested for the energy transition at [\\$4.4 trillion per year](#).

In addition to staving off the worst effects of global warming, the transition to a clean energy economy through the Green New Deal will also boost economic growth by creating millions of new, well-paying jobs in manufacturing, construction, energy, sustainable agriculture, engineering, and other sectors of the economy.

Pollin has shown in various [published studies](#) that the transition to clean energy systems will prove economically beneficial, expanding job opportunities across the economic spectrum. With respect to the United States, the employment opportunities that will be generated from the infrastructure programs designed to move the economy towards clean energy systems amount to millions of jobs.

Additionally, a transition to clean and zero-emission energy systems will substantially reduce energy costs and health care expenses. According to Mark Jacobson, one of the authors of a [Green New Deal energy study](#) published in the journal *One Earth*, the world will spend around \$13 trillion per year on energy by 2050 if we are still reliant on fossil fuels, but the cost drops to \$6.8 trillion if we are using clean, renewable energy. According to the same study, trillions of dollars will also be saved each year in health costs, because the Green New Deal would reduce toxic air and water pollution, which are now responsible for millions of deaths annually.

However, powerful economic interests and lack of political will stand in the way of a shift away from fossil fuels and toward a green economy. These two determinants are intertwined and must be addressed simultaneously if civilization is to continue to exist in any recognizable form.

The fossil fuel industry — which has been fully aware of the damage that its products cause to the environment but managed until fairly recently to hide this

fact from the public — should be treated like a pariah and phased out. Banks and international financial institutions should be banned from funding fossil fuel production. “Environcide,” the deliberate destruction of the environment, should be recognized by international law as a crime against humanity, as Emmanuel Kreike has argued in his new book, *Scorched Earth: Environmental Warfare as a Crime against Humanity and Nature*. In addition, fossil fuel subsidies, which are estimated to run into hundreds of billions of dollars annually, must end.

In sum, all financial and political links to the fossil fuel industry must be severely disrupted if any serious progress is to be made toward building a green economy on a global scale.

The struggle to save the planet is the biggest challenge that has ever faced humanity, and time is running out. In this century, we will find out if our species is equipped to overcome its own narrow interests and work toward achieving a sustainable future not just for us, but for all life on planet Earth.

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C.J. Polychroniou is a political economist/political scientist who has taught and worked in universities and research centers in Europe and the United States. His main research interests are in European economic integration, globalization, the political economy of the United States and the deconstruction of neoliberalism’s politico-economic project. He is a regular contributor to *Truthout* as well as a member of *Truthout*’s Public Intellectual Project. He has published several books and his articles have appeared in a variety of journals, magazines, newspapers and popular news websites. Many of his publications have been translated into several foreign languages, including Croatian, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish. He is the author of [Optimism Over Despair: Noam Chomsky On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change](#), an anthology of interviews with Chomsky originally published at *Truthout* and collected by Haymarket Books.

Alias Bob Dylan - Heimwee naar de verbeelding



Het moet 1964 geweest zijn toen de mythe ontstond dat de jonge Robert Zimmerman, afkomstig uit Hibbing, Minnesota, als een soort eerbetoon aan de Ierse dichter Dylan Thomas, zijn naam had veranderd in Bob Dylan. Tot ver in de jaren zeventig dook het verhaal in allerlei artikelen en beschouwingen over Dylan op. In 1965 had

Dylan al tegen een journalist van *The Chicago Daily News* gezegd: 'I took the name Dylan because I have an uncle named Dillion. I changed the spelling but only because it looked better. I've read some of Dylan Thomas's stuff, and it's not the same as mine'.

Robert Shelton, journalist bij *The New York Times*, begon in 1966 aan een biografie over Dylan (*No Direction Home*. Het boek zou pas in 1986 verschijnen). Verschillende malen liet Dylan aan Shelton weten: 'Straighthen out in your book that I did not take my name from Dylan Thomas'.

Dylan was Shelton sowieso dankbaar, want in september 1961 had Shelton in de *New York Times* de eerste - lovende - recensie over een optreden van Dylan geschreven. Dylan was op dat moment slechts bekend bij een kleine kring van bezoekers van folkcafé's in Greenwich Village. De recensie bracht hem onder de aandacht van Columbia Records en van producer John Hammond en bezorgde hem een platencontract.



Interview

Inmiddels weten we dat veel van wat Dylan in interviews verklaarde met een flinke korrel zout genomen moet worden. Met biografische gegevens is hij altijd uiterst karig geweest en verschillende verhalen die hij over zijn jeugd en puberjaren vertelde, bleken achteraf geheel verzonnen. Legendarisch is een van zijn eerste radio-interviews. Nog voor de release van zijn eerste plaat interviewde presentatrice Cynthia Gooding hem in maart 1962 een uur lang voor WBAI-FM Radio, New York. Onduidelijk is of het programma ooit is uitgezonden maar het is gelukkig wel bewaard gebleven.

[1] Zo vertelt hij Gooding dat hij op jeugdige leeftijd wegliep van huis en enkele jaren met een circus door de Verenigde Staten was getrokken. In New Orleans zou hij op 12-jarige leeftijd kennis gemaakt hebben met oude bluesmuzikanten die hem het mondharmonicaspelen hadden geleerd. Niets van waar: het bleken gefingeerde biografische verhalen. Soortgelijke 'herinneringen' zou hij in zijn beginjaren nog wel vaker verkondigen.



Artiestennaam

Maar als de naam Dylan geen betrekking had op Dylan Thomas, op wie dan wel? Dylan vertelde vrienden dat de naam gebaseerd was op Dillon, de achternaam van zijn moeder. Maar dat was niet waar zo bleek later, de moeder van Robert Zimmerman heette Beatrice Stone. Over de oom Dillion heeft Dylan nooit meer gesproken. In zijn highschool-jaren trad Robert Zimmerman zo nu en dan op schoolfeesten en county fairs op samen met jeugdvriend John Bucklen, overigens niet altijd tot genoegen van het publiek.

Voor iemand die het ver wilde schoppen in de muziek, en dat wilde de jonge Robert, was Zimmerman wellicht geen goeie artiestennaam. In 1958 zei hij tegen Bucklen: 'I know what I'm going to call myself. I've got this great name - Bob Dillon.'

Misschien is de achtergrond van de naam Dylan dan ook veel minder prozaïsch dan vaak gesuggereerd. Robert Zimmerman was in zijn jeugd een grote fan van de westerntelevisieserie Gunsmoke, waarin de rechtvaardige Marshal Matt Dillon

(acteur James Arness) in het westernstadje Dodge City de orde weet te handhaven. Mogelijk is de Dillon/Dylan-naamgeving niet meer dan de jeugdroom een held te willen zijn, of op zijn minst zich te willen onderscheiden van de rest.



Westernseries

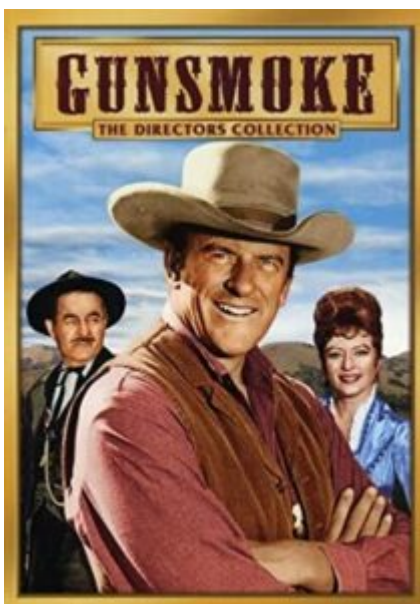
Hibbing, een plaatsje met zo'n tienduizend inwoners was tot bloei gekomen dankzij de omringende ijzerertsminen, maar in de jaren vijftig was de bloeitijd van het stadje al lang voorbij. Voor de opgroeiende jeugd was er niet veel te beleven. Er was een bioscoop, meer vermaak was er niet. In

1952 kon het gezin Zimmerman zich als eerste in Hibbing een televisie veroorloven. De jonge Bob bracht met zijn vrienden urenlang voor het toestel door.

Hij keek naar musicals en *variety shows*, maar zijn voorkeur ging uit naar westernseries als *Wyatt Earp*, *Kit Carson*, *Davey Crockett*, maar vooral de serie *Gunsmoke* was zijn favoriet.

Vertraagd geweld

Van de serie *Gunsmoke* werden tussen 1955 en 1975 635 afleveringen gemaakt. Met kijkersogen van nu, ruim zestig jaar later, oogt de serie als uitermate braaf. In de volgens een vast stramien opgebouwde afleveringen werden de problemen in het keurige, burgerlijke plaatsje Dodge City op een beschaafde manier door Marshal Dillon opgelost. Daarbij vielen natuurlijk wel schoten en doden vielen er ook, maar zichtbaar bloed vloeide er nooit.



Voor veel acteurs en regisseurs was de serie het startpunt van hun carrière. Bijvoorbeeld voor Dennis Weaver, die in de jaren zeventig de succesvolle serie *McCloud* maakte, en voor regisseur Sam Peckinpah. Peckinpah had al naam gemaakt als scenarioschrijver van tientallen afleveringen van de populaire westernserie *Broken Arrow*, maar voor *Gunsmoke* mocht hij het als regisseur proberen. Tussen 1955 en 1958 regisseerde hij elf afleveringen. Daarnaast maakte hij afleveringen van de westernseries *The Rifleman* en *The Westerner*. In de

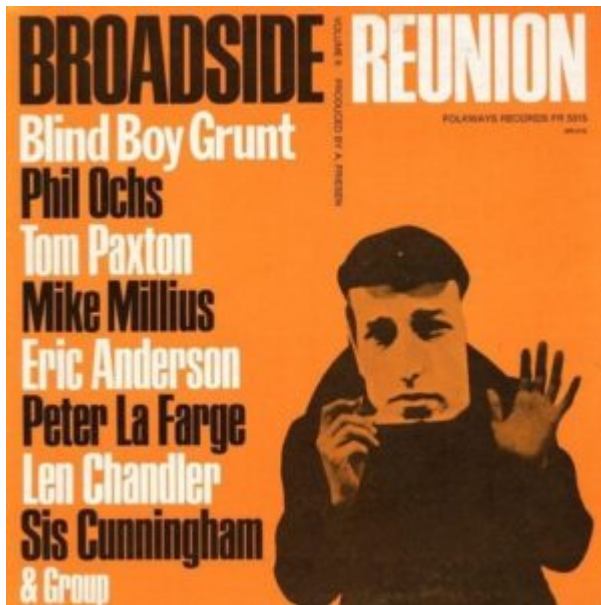
jaren zestig regisseerde hij de westerns *Wichita*, *Major Dundee* en *Villa Rides*. Bekendheid kreeg Peckinpah in 1969 als regisseur van de snoeiharde western *The Wild Bunch*, waarin hij alle film- en westernwetten overtrad door geweld vooral zo bloedig mogelijk in beeld te brengen, het liefst vertraagd vertoond en vanuit verschillende camerastandpunten gefilmd. In de jaren zeventig zou vertraagd geweld Peckinpahs handelsmerk blijken te zijn. Hij maakte onder meer films als *Straw Dogs*, *The Getaway*, *Bring me the Head of Alfredo Garcia* en *Cross of Iron*. In 1973 maakte hij zijn laatste western, *Pat Garret and Billy the Kid*, met in de hoofdrollen James Coburn en Kris Kristofferson.

Dylan, bevriend met Kristofferson, toonde interesse in een rol in de film en kreeg via de producer het script toegespeeld. Hij ging naar een voorstelling van *The Wild Bunch* en raakte zozeer enthousiast over de stijl van Peckinpah dat hij meteen erna de song *Billy the Kid* schreef. [2] Peckinpah was onder de indruk van het nummer en draaide het vrijwel continu.

Dylan mocht de soundtrack voor de film schrijven en kreeg zowaar een rolletje toebedeeld, als Alias, een hulpje van Billy the Kid.

Pseudoniemen

Alias. Hoe toepasselijk kan een naam zijn, want in de loop der jaren bediende Dylan zich van vele pseudoniemen. Hij noemde zich Elston Gunn toen hij in 1959 drie dagen lang deel uitmaakte van de begeleidingsgroep van vroege rocker Bobby Vee, totdat hij uit de band werd gezet omdat hij teveel aandacht van het publiek opeiste. Als Tedham Porterhouse speelde hij in 1964 harmonica op de elpee *Ramblin' Jack* van Ramblin' Jack Elliot. In datzelfde jaar speelde hij als Blind Boy Grunt enkele songs op een plaat van het folktijdschrift *Broadside*.



Op de elpee *The Blues Project. A Compendium of the Very Best on the Urban Blues Scene* uit 1965, met o.a. Geoff Maudaur, Dave van Ronk en Eric von Schmidt, speelt hij piano als Bob Landy.[3] 'To musicians, his piano playing is almost legend', staat vermeld in de hoestekst. In 1972 verscheen hij als Robert Milkwood Thomas (!) op de plaat *Somebody Else's Troubles* van Steve Goodman. Als Lucky Wilbury maakte hij deel uit van *The Traveling Wilburys*, de groep met George

Harrison, Jeff Lynne, Roy Orbison en Tom Petty (1988), op hun tweede plaat heette hij Boo Wilbury (1990). Onder de naam Sergei Petrov schreef hij mee aan het scenario voor de film *Masked and Anonymous* (2003), waarin Dylan de rocklegende Jack Fate speelt. De afgelopen decennia produceerde hij zijn eigen platen onder de naam Jack Frost.



Speelfilms

Bob Dylan is een filmliefhebber, dat is bekend. In 1956, na het zien van de film *Giant* met James Dean, wilde hij niets liever dan de nieuwe James Dean worden. Zijn rebellie uitte hij dan wel niet als filmster maar als folk- en rockartiest, zijn liefde voor film en met name voor western is in zijn songs terug te vinden.

Michael Gray, auteur van de indrukwekkende studie *Song & Dance Man III. The Art of Bob Dylan* (2000), was de eerste die merkte dat sommige passages in Dylansongs een opvallende overeenkomst vertoonden met dialogen of zinsneden uit speelfilms. Nauwgezette

studie bracht aan het licht dat Dylan uit maar liefst 61 speelfilms citaten in songs heeft gebruikt, of verwijst naar filmtitels.[4] Negen daarvan zijn westerns, negentien titels - waarvan zes films met Humphrey Bogart - stammen uit de jaren veertig en vijftig, de periode van de film noir, bijvoorbeeld *Casablanca*, *To Have and Have Not*, *Shoot the Piano Player* en *Rear Window*.

Enkele voorbeelden:

The Big Sleep (1946)

Bogart: 'What's wrong with you?'

Bacall: 'Nothing you can't fix'

Dylan in *Seeing the Real You at Last*:

'At one time there was nothing wrong with me,

That you could not fix'

The Oklahoma Kid (1939)

Cagney: 'You want to talk with me'

Bogart: 'Go ahead and talk'

Dylan in *Tight Connection on my Heart*:

'You want to talk to me

Go ahead and talk'

The Lusty Men (1952)

Mitchum: 'Broken bottles, broken bones, everything is broken'

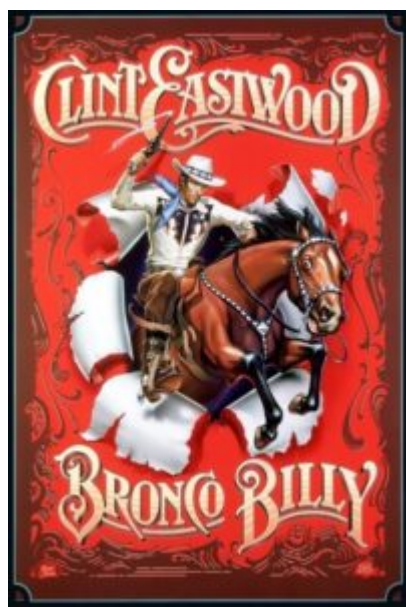
Dylan in *Everything is Broken*:

'Broken bottles, broken plates,

Broken switches, broken gates

...

Everything is broken'



In *Bronco Billy* (1980), een film over een rodeocowboy (eigenlijk een moderne western) zegt Clint Eastwood: 'I'm looking for a woman who can ride like Annie Oakley and shoot like Belle Starr'.^[5] In de song *Seeing the Real You at Last* (1985) zingt Dylan:

'When I met you baby

You didn't show no visible scars.
You could ride like Annie Oakley
You could shoot like Belle Starr'

Het zou zo een citaat uit een film met Humphrey Bogart kunnen zijn.

Amerika

Meer nog dan Dylans soundtrack voor Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid ademt zijn achtste elpee John Wesley Harding de sfeer van een westernfilm uit. Titel en titel song verwijzen niet alleen naar outlaw en gunfighter John Wesley Hardin (1853-1895), een song als *The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest* roept beelden op van een westernstadje waar oplichters, mysterieuze godsdienstpredikers en zwervende outlaws de dienst uitmaken. Beelden zoals we die wel kennen uit klassieke westernfilms. Op de plaat heerst een geheimzinnige, soms onheilspellende sfeer, waarbij een Bijbels noodlot ieder moment lijkt te kunnen toeslaan. (De plaat bevat zo'n zestig verwijzingen naar de Bijbel, maar dat is een ander verhaal.)



Big Pink - Woodstock

De elpee dateert uit dezelfde periode (1968) waarin de beroemde *Basement Tapes* werden opgenomen. Dylan en The Band namen ruim honderd songs op in de kelder van het huis Big Pink in Woodstock. De in 1975 uitgebrachte plaat *The Basement Tapes* was hiervan slechts een magere selectie. De in 2014 uitgebrachte box *The Basement Tapes Raw, The Bootleg Series Vol. 11* bood bijna alle opgenomen songs. De opnames lijken die van John Wesley Harding in een breder kader te plaatsen. Oude folk- en blues songs en nieuwe songs van

Dylan schetsen het beeld van een verdwenen Amerika, een negentiende eeuwse gebied bevolkt door outlaws, hobo's, landarbeiders, slaven en immigranten. Ballades uit de Appalachian Mountains, countrysongs, murderballads, kinderliedjes en gospelsongs vertellen de geschiedenis van dat verdwenen Amerika. *The Basement Tapes* weerspiegelen dat verleden en maken de luisteraar deelgenoot van die geschiedenis, alsof het filmbeelden zijn van een nog te maken epos over een mythisch, vrijwel vergeten land. Een land dat misschien alleen in de verbeelding bestaat. In die verbeelding kan Marshall Matt Dillon de orde handhaven.



Noten

[1] Het interview met Dylan is te beluisteren

op <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=483m8ADfG48>

[2] Bob Dylan: Billy the Kid (audio)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEi83f_CEqM

[3] Geoff Mudaur,

Downtown Blues, on piano Bob Landy
(audio) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCSsCK86ldc>

[4] Movie quotes in Bob Dylan songs <http://www.geocities.ws/linwood/cinema/Dylan-Film/>

[5] Annie Oakley (1860-1926), legendarische Amerikaanse scherpshutster. Belle Starr (1848- 1889), outlaw, maakte deel uit van de bende van Jesse en Frank James.

De oudste bewegende beelden van Dylan (ca.1961)

The Current Hardships Facing Palestinian Refugees



[The United Nations' Relief and Works Agency](#) (UNRWA)—known as the main international relief and human development organization for Palestinian refugees—defined Palestinian refugees as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1

June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.” However, most notably, Palestinians displaced because of the 1967 war, and subsequent hostilities, are not referred to or registered as refugees by the Agency, but they are eligible to receive services by UNRWA. Despite this fact, within segments of the international community, Palestinians who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1967 war, and subsequent hostilities, are also regarded as refugees.

In the five areas where UNRWA is in operation, namely, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), the hardships faced by the Palestinian refugees has worsened in recent history.

Most recently, with respect to the coronavirus pandemic, the Palestinian refugee population is increasingly in a vulnerable position with little-to-no access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Within the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank, [COVID-19 cases are surging](#) with more than 2,236 fatalities and 16,000 active cases in these areas (including East Jerusalem). Meanwhile, Israel has been [internationally lauded](#) for carrying out the world’s speediest vaccination drive, with over 90 percent of Israelis above the age of 50 having been fully vaccinated as of February 2021. However, Israel has denied Palestinians living within the occupied territories significant access to the vaccines as Israel argues that the Oslo Accords places responsibility on the Palestinian Authority regarding issues of public health. But even under the Oslo Accords, Israel does have a commitment to help Palestinians living in the occupied territories fight the pandemic. [Article 17, stipulation 6 of the Accord states:](#) “Israel and the

Palestinian side shall exchange information regarding epidemics and contagious diseases, shall cooperate in combating them and shall develop methods for exchange of medical files and documents.”

Moreover, given that Israel is the occupying power—under international law, namely, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, Israel has a responsibility to ensure the welfare of the population which it is occupying—namely, the Palestinian people in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. The West Bank remains occupied by Israel which “controls entrance and egress, much of the infrastructure, the roads, the currency...in short, all the means of Palestinian independence”—as pointed out by [Mitchell Plitnick](#), the former US director of the Israeli human rights organization, B’Tselem. In the case of Gaza, Israel since 2007 has imposed a land, air, and sea blockade of Gaza. Most notably, the effects of Israel’s blockade, coupled with Israel’s routine bombing of Gaza, has crumbled its infrastructure, led to massive poverty, food insecurity, [and resulted in less than 4% of the water in that territory](#), consisting of nearly 2 million people, being fit for human consumption. Israel thus, in addition to the West Bank, also continues to occupy the Palestinians living within the Gaza Strip, and therefore, Israel as their occupier has a responsibility to vaccinate Gazans. In February 2021, Palestinian officials condemned Israel for [blocking the entry of 2,000 coronavirus vaccine doses](#) into Gaza to assist its health workers. Despite evidence to the contrary, even if Israeli claims with respect to the Oslo Accords is valid, this is irrelevant, as stated by scholar [Yara M.Asi](#), “the [Geneva] convention specifies that no agreement between the parties supersedes its protections while occupation continues. This would include the Oslo Accords, signed in 1995 as an interim agreement.” Furthermore, Israel, instead of first seeking to vaccinate Palestinians in the occupied territories, [pledged](#) to provide its spare vaccines to foreign allies such as Honduras and the Czech Republic.

In areas outside of the occupied territories, such as Lebanon which is home to an estimated 207,000 Palestinian refugees, according to UN figures, it has been [reported](#) that “Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are three times more likely to die with COVID-19 than the population as a whole.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations’ Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), responsible for providing healthcare and education to millions of Palestinians living both inside and outside the occupied territories, was [“recognized as a major contributor](#) to the containment of the COVID-19

virus”—having quickly adapted its provision of services in compliance with the World Health Organization recommendations. UNRWA [implemented](#) remote education curriculum practices, adopted door-to-door delivery of food and medicines, as well as innovative health and psychosocial support hotlines which have been regarded as a significant lifeline to the refugee population during the pandemic. Moreover, UNRWA is also responsible for [waste disposal and sanitation services](#) to Palestinian refugee camps across the Middle East — “this includes disinfectant treatments to roads and installations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

However, due to the United States’ complete [termination of funding](#) to UNRWA under President Trump in 2018, the operations of the Agency were almost brought to a complete halt.

When the pandemic broke out, UNRWA was operating on a shoestring budget with Elizabeth Campbell, UNRWA’s director in Washington, [stating in May 2020](#) that due to America’s termination of funding, “We are basically operating on a month-to-month basis. Right now, we have funding to pay our 30,000 health care workers until the end of this month.”

Even once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, it does not appear that there will be any end in sight to the suffering faced by Palestinian refugees. The hardships faced by Palestinian refugees will continue until the central issues of contention are fully addressed within a final settlement to the conflict. The central issues of contention as it pertains to Palestinian refugees is, firstly, the right of return, secondly, the right of Palestinians for compensation from Israel due to the destruction of Palestinians’ homes, and their livelihoods as a result of the 1948 war, the 1967 war, as well as further hostilities, and the third issue of contention is the assimilation and resettlement of refugees in different countries. Most significantly on the first two points, there is serious doubt as to whether right of return and compensation (both issues which are notably embodied within United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194) is politically feasible and there is doubt as to whether there are legitimate frameworks within international law that firmly allows stateless Palestinians to successfully advocate for the right of return and compensation.

The Taba Summit is widely regarded as perhaps the closest instance that a final settlement to end the longstanding conflict was almost reached between the Israelis and the Palestinians. At the time of the Taba Summit, the Israelis

expressed an understanding on the issue of compensation, with Israel advocating that an international commission be created to gather, verify, and pay individual compensation claims. However, at that time, you had a government in Israel that, at least, gave the public impression that it was willing to negotiate on key issues required to reach a permanent settlement to the conflict. Presently, however, the center-left parties in Israel, such as the Labour Party, are a shell of its former self and a significant segment of the population in Israel strongly supports Benjamin Netanyahu and his far-right Likud Party, which has been expanding Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, further jeopardizing any viable solution to the conflict. There is also disunity among the Palestinians with friction between the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza. Lastly, unless the United States is willing to apply meaningful pressure on Israel to seriously negotiate a final settlement with the Palestinians, an end to the protracted refugee crisis will not be possible.

Essay Essentials Forensic Expertise. About the Ideal of an NFI - Handbook on Forensic Expertise



*“Alfa-Bèta-Circle”, Ills. Hans Jakobs,
2020*

Introduction

This essay [1] is an unorthodox attempt to write a *handbook on forensic expertise* [2]. My intention is to bring about a real improvement of understanding for all criminal justice professionals, the “users of forensic expertise” in criminal procedure; in my opinion a timeless and very useful ideal.

In the light of my recent attendance at trials of 24 Dutch criminal cases it has become clear to me that, in almost every criminal case, a greater understanding and clearer explanation is desirable of natural sciences as practiced in technical laboratory research and executed on traces within the Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI) in the truth-finding process in criminal law. The name for this kind of research into traces as part of the criminal process is Criminalistics.

Criminalistics is the natural scientific aspect of the forensic sciences. It focuses on natural scientific research on evidence on behalf of truth-finding in criminal law. And It is directed towards the significance of the results of such research for that truth-finding. [3]

The explanation of an expert in court (art. 339, paragraph 1, sub 4), and the expert’s report, the written documents (art. 339, paragraph 1, sub 5) are the two different kinds of legal evidence, regarding the expert. Limited to these and combined with the judge’s own observations, the declarations of the suspect, and the declarations of a witness (art.339, paragraph 1, sub 1, 2, and 3), these five

constitute the - limited - means of legal evidence as recognized in the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure.

Even though forensic research is also carried out by other authorities, such as the Police, (semi) private institutes, - laboratories, - individuals and Universities, I have decided to take the NFI as my starting-point, for two reasons:

1. In 2020 the lion's share of the forensic research concerning traces in connection with criminal offences in the Netherlands is still executed - on a high scientific level - by the NFI.

This research is commissioned by the Public Prosecution Office at the stage of investigation and prosecution, at the request of the examining magistrate / inquiry judge, the judge and, in some cases, also at the request of the defence.



2. In 1995 I had the privilege of being allowed to initiate and draw up a book of reference [4] about forensic expertise as practiced then by the predecessors of the NFI, called '*The Forensic Laboratories*'. I distinguished at the time 31 areas of expertise, and in close cooperation with 31 experts a powerful source of knowledge was created at the service of the sitting and standing magistracy, and recommended as literature for the Police Academy.

After 25 years, in my view, it is now the right time to redefine the current conditions for a better understanding of the forensic kinds of expertise in the shape of:

[A Blueprint, describing the essentials of background-knowledge, theory, practice and science, for each field of expertise.](#)

In order to illustrate the importance of a systematic composition of a reference book and a textbook about forensic expertise, I have arranged the arguments into four groups.

A. Why? Finding reasons,

B. What? Table of contents, strengthening the beta-sciences and techniques,

C. How? Method, describing essentials in the connecting [Blueprint](#),

D. What for? Improving the understanding of the target audiences and thus enlighten the criminal procedure.

A. Why? Finding reasons.

Signals from the Dutch criminal trials 2014-2019

From the end of 2014 to 2020 Ir. Huub Hardy [5] and myself were present at 24 heavy criminal cases in Dutch courts and tribunals [6] [[Appendix 1 Dutch Criminal Cases](#)]. We made an inventory, a close analysis and minutes of the cases. These criminal cases were selected on the basis of the role of the experts in the proceeding. In such trials, more often than not, the judicial experts were physically present and made declarations in court.

[My focus in these cases was on the communication, i.e. the dialogues between experts and lawyers, as I heard them in court and saw them with my own eyes. I made notes from which lawyers' needs in practice were found and from which lawyers' wishes could be distilled.](#)

In 9 of the 24 criminal trials (almost 38 %) judges, public prosecutors and barristers asked clearer literal explanations from the experts, specifically linguistic, such as: 'no jargon please', 'clearer terminology', 'layman language please', 'what is the meaning of', 'report is hard to read', 'what precisely do you mean', 'closer explanation please'.

In 17 of the 24 criminal trials (almost 71 %) experts turned up in court. Judges, public prosecutors and barristers asked them intensively, not only about their use of language, but also, at length, about the significance of working methods and skills, and about the professional background and experience of the expert.

The lawyers, usually alpha-trained, put many probing questions to the forensic experts (who had usually been trained in beta science or in technique) such as:

* what is the background-science of this expertise?

- * how do the various methods of expertise / research operate?
- * how do the underlying instruments and apparatus function in this expertise?
- * can you explain the difference in research on the source-level [7] and on the activity-level [8] ?
- * what is the meaning of contamination [9] and secondary transfer [10] ?
- * what is the background-science of this expertise ?
- * explanation new - recently developed- forensic techniques?
- * explanation of Bayes Theorem [11] with the use of hypotheses, formulated in the conclusions of the forensic reports,
- * what is the training, the experience, the background and the CV of the expert?

What it all comes down to, is that I personally observed a clear need of a more intensive insight into the practice and the theory of forensic expertise within the courtrooms.

From this we may conclude that the classical "alfa-beta-gap" needs a better bridging and that this fascinating paradox - in 2020 - deserves closer attention than it is getting at the moment.

Since 2010 I have been developing a so-called Blueprint, which is intended to raise to a higher level the understanding between alpha and beta. This Blueprint will offer a chronological, systematic survey of the basic ideas that underpin each field of expertise.

This uniform will describe the essential characteristics of the expertise. Its contents is to be formulated in close cooperation with the forensic experts.

In this way, a structured explanation of matters which are often hard to understand, will be offered to the lawyer in criminal procedure; of forensic expertise, being a piece of evidence.

Truth-finding can be lifted to a higher level [12] if forensic expertise will be understood more closely and more critically. Improving the understanding of the forensic sciences and their applied forensic expertises on the lawyer's side, will establish a positive impact on three crucial parts of the criminal trial:

1. The communication, the dialogue between lawyers and experts,
2. The interpretation of the forensic expertise by the lawyer,
3. The truth-finding.

Signals of the ministerial improvement process regarding the future of the NFI,

anno 2019

In his vision of forensic research the Minister of Justice and Security [13] shares his view of the future for the NFI with the House of Commons [Second Chamber].

Some interesting points from this vision:

1. *A system of steady provision of information* is crucial if one is to come to a better and more efficient collaboration in the chain.
2. Contemporary investigation demands that forensic expertise will be available right at the start of the process; *a complete and prompt offer of forensic expertise* should be accelerated and enlarged.
3. *The NFI-Catalogue of available services* is not merely a static device. There should be a *permanent recalibration of "sourcing"* - *who delivers what?* - by NFI, or by Police- and (semi) private labs, and this needs constant attention.

These three political recommendations all are relating to the delivery of the many types of forensic research of traces within the chain of criminal procedure, with the NFI as a main addressee. Next to them there are more available suppliers, depending on special experience and knowledge, also seen logistically [Police] and scientifically [Universities].

And this is exactly what the pivot of my plan is; to produce a forensic book of reference from all Dutch available forensic expertise, with all "knowledge and science held by the NFI" taken as a starting point. Together with all other Dutch available expertises, next to the NFI, be described in a uniform and carefully worded book, and - thus reinforced as insightful and dynamic information - will be put at the disposal of all the partners in the chain.

Viewed objectively the various NFI-expertises can be considered an essential link in the criminal chain of evidence, in which it serves as a scientific and supportive element.

A well-founded arrangement and selection ['triage'] of applicable forensic expertise, based on insight and understanding, must be found right in the beginning of the process- quick and playfully - by all chain partners. Together with the above mentioned personal and political signals, this objective circumstance is a sufficient reassuring reasoning on top, for the meaningfulness of a systematic way of editing a Handbook on Forensic Expertise.

B. What? The table of Contents; strengthening of the beta-sciences

The intended forensic reference book will cover the following:

1. All fields of forensic expertise practiced within the Netherlands Forensic Institute [14]; from forensic anthropology to wildlife forensics [[Appendix 2 Forensic Research Netherlands Forensic Institute](#)] will be the starting point of the content of the handbook to be edited.

The NFI laboratory research is based on a variety of beta knowledge, including technical sciences and biology, chemistry, medicine, mathematics and natural sciences. It will all be described - in collaboration with the experts - as completely, systematically and transparent as necessary to be essential.

All NFI-expertise - mostly beta-information, knowledge and science - are described carefully in essentials and thus serves, reinforced, all lawyers, mostly alpha-users. The constant dynamic factor is that scientific standards and norms keep growing together with the development of the fields of expertise [15] .

2. The forensic applications of expertise which are executed by the Police, (semi) private institutes and private individuals, must also be summarized.

3. The various Universities in our country who are offering possibilities, where solid and impartial forensic research is executed, must be summarized .

For example, The Maastricht Forensic Institute (TMFI) and the Forensic Leiden DNA-Research Institute (FLDO) [16] . They all play an important role within the development of forensic sciences - and are as such indispensable for the defence - as a second opinion of equal weight. Such counter-expertise will ensure a fair trial with equality of arms. [17]

4. Newly developed forensic techniques: recently discovered and often still being under construction, scientific techniques with promising forensic application, are important to mention. Many of them were presented at the University of Amsterdam [18] between 2014 and 2020. [[Appendix 3 New forensic techniques](#)].

A very recent example of this is the drastic reduction of the time scheme round the Post-Mortem Interval (PMI) [19]. In a case of a committed crime it is now reduced to an average of 45 minutes; this used to be a few hours.

The new method, which can reduce the circle of suspects considerably, is being developed by researchers of the Amsterdam-based University Medical Centre, the University of Amsterdam and the NFI. The new PMI-method works with a thermic

camera or a censor taped on the body. More factors play a role, such as the question: was the body left behind fully dressed? Was it found lying in water? This specialism is to be mentioned within the field of forensic pathology.

5. Juridical background information.

For each field of expertise a clear image should be sketched of the legal context in which the forensic research is situated, for the benefit of the forensic expert himself.

Forensic expertise takes place against the background of legislation, jurisprudence / case-law and against professional literature and magazines. Where possible, a linking-text with "Text and Comment" of the Code of Criminal Procedure must be realised. Also, for each field of expertise a worked-out legal model of such a case should be presented.

In this way the whole range of specialized skills will give shape to an intensive inventory of the available forensic expertise in the Netherlands. At the same time it will all be a part of the table of contents of the on-line forensic book of reference to be created.

C. How? The Method; [the connecting Blueprint](#)

The existing professional NFI-appendices are now very diverse and described in a non-homogeneous style. They differ in terms of description order, layout, photos, graphics, drawings, length, naming and design.

[In 2010 I made a start in developing a so-called Blueprint; a forensic "informative infra-structure" consisting of 12 sections. A description of background-knowledge and science, theory and practice per field of expertise, built up according to a fixed structure.](#)

Together with two forensic experts, who were practicing in 2010, I have written Two Concepts of Blueprints in English [20] :

1. With Professor George Maat (LUMC, NFI): 'Forensic Anthropology'.
2. With Drs. Will Fagel (NFI): ' Forensic Handwriting Expertise'.

[From 2014 to 2020](#), by making notes of registered needs and wishes, I amassed a detailed knowledge of the lawyers' demand-side. On realizing the diversity of the needs for these [I expanded further the existing Blueprint, under compassion with the lawyers' wishes, and add some 9 items, to reach an amount of 21 sections, as](#)

a total in the Blueprint anno 2020, for the time being.

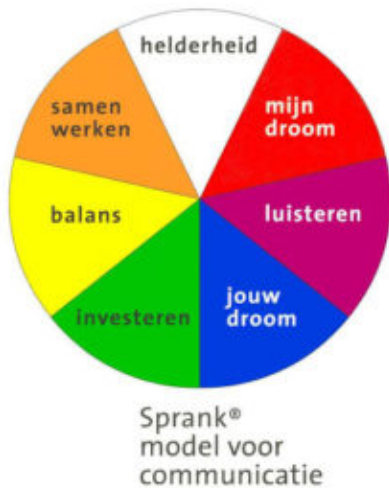
The “Blueprint 2020” aims at a transparent and uniform structure, a simple chronological lay-out, a differentiated survey and a scientific and scholarly insight into all practical, theoretical and legal aspects per field of expertise. To manufacture in an atmosphere of mutual coordination and close cooperation with the NFI-experts, the Blueprint will function as the constructive core of this Essay.

The [Blueprint](#) insight is provided into the practice of the forensic experts’ supply side of both the NFI-expertises possible and of its limitations. By means of a description that is permanently kept up to date, an all encompassing source of information and knowledge in each field of expertise will come into existence.

It informs the reader of the actual state of the background and the limits in each field of expertise. Also, it provides insight into instruments and apparatus used, it explains research analyses and methods and how conclusions [21] are drawn. And it gives insight into professional literature as well as into legal and scientific background and available laws and case-law for each field of expertise.

Thus the practical needs are met for ‘detailed knowledge of, on the one hand, the diversity of the demand-side and, on the other, of the possibilities and the restrictions of the (forensic) supply-side’ [22] . All these elements are deemed necessary in the discussion of a more equitable division between the demand and the supply of forensic expertise.

[It is the ideal of the Blueprint to bring about an optimal bridge-connection between the beta’s supply of forensic expertise \(NFI\) and the alpha-lawyers’ demand of forensic expertise, to be used in the chain of evidence.](#)



*Note 23 - Spank Model for
Communication*

In the final [Blueprint](#) the actual needs and proposals of the NFI-experts will have to be incorporated, so that the final contents will be an all-encompassing clear source of shared information and knowledge.

[Within this framework my Blueprint-proposal will have to be discussed with the NFI, by listening to the NFI-needs and -wishes of the experts, investing time in this process and thereafter to take stock and work together towards the aimed essential clearness as the final purpose of the Blueprint.](#)

As science, technique, and insights move forward continuously a paper version of a book will be soon out of date, and an on-line version of a Blueprint-bundling of all practised fields of expertise within the NFI might be the preferred format. The future of each [Blueprint](#) will be a dynamic process, in which forensic applications will be deleted, replaced and added on a regular basis. [A uniform explanation of the essentials of the various expertises will be realised under the slogan 'unity in diversity'.](#)

The famous Dutch pathologist-anatomist Dr. Jan Zeldenrust [24] pointed out already in the twentieth-century, that great value should be attached to the fact that a physician as expert 'should be a speaker of Dutch so that the medical layman will understand what he has to say.' This is a valid point when it comes to the medical expert, but it is still equally relevant for all other kinds of forensic experts.

Written in lay-language on an academic level, the Blueprint is meant for all lawyers and everyone else involved professionally with forensic expertise. It will be edited in a way to reach clearness in every field of expertise so that the “difficult stuff” will be understood optimally.

[\[Appendix 4 Blueprint Per Area of Expertise.\]](#) .

D. What for? Improving the understanding of the target audiences

A book of reference will be a collection of all Blueprints together, filled with information on all different sorts of forensic expertise. It is intended to provide a uniform insight into the practice of all forensic expertise and will create the possibility of equitable communication between the partners in the chain of custody.

Thus a Handbook of Forensic Expertise may function as a strategic instrument to optimize the connection between the several chain-partners within the criminal procedure.

In this way in future also the bond between the lawyers themselves may improve. By creating a better understanding of forensic expertise, a clearer and more critical dialogue between the lawyers themselves will be possible. Future assignments of research, including wishes, directed to the NFI [25] , will have to be shared by the public prosecutor with the defence, as actually prescribed by the New Code of Criminal Procedure. A greater understanding - prior to the application - will result in a sharper joint formulation of the investigation assignment to the NFI.

The existence of a current “state-of-the-art” survey of forensic expertise, may possibly serve as the solution of cold cases [26] [27] [28] and possible judicial errors [29] within criminal law and may even be suitable to avoid these errors.

A different category of individuals who would be interested in a forensic book of reference are the NFI-experts themselves. They too ought to be well informed of both the level of the expertise of their colleagues - related to the Inter Disciplinary Forensic Research [IDFO] [30] - but also of the legal background of the criminal trial, in which context their expertise will serve.

A Handbook of Forensic Expertise will give insight into the complete range

of multidisciplinary forensic research; this runs from Crime Scene to the final verdict.

This covers the demand of the Council of the Judiciary, which means that the level of forensic knowledge of the judges must be high enough for them to be able to approach contributions of the experts critically. This requires all judges to be familiar with the most important methods of research. [31]

A Handbook of Forensic Expertise in a Dutch and in an English version, can serve the following purposes;

1. It will be a book of reference for all lawyers in the legal process [32] ; judges, public prosecutors and barristers,
2. It will be a book of reference for NFI-experts, a peer NFI-insight, particularly when it concerns interdisciplinary forensic research [IDFO],
3. It will serve as a book of reference, including the practice aspects, of the forensic and technical police, [33]
4. Students at the Police Academy will use it,
5. Students of Criminalistics and Criminology at academic institutions and post-academic studies will study it,
6. The lawyers at the International Criminal Court [34] will need and use it as book of reference,
7. As a complementary service it will be useful for the NRGD [35] .

The NRGD in Utrecht offers forensic experts the possibility of standardization and regulation in their field of practised expertise. Thus the NRGD offers a possibility to deal with certification and admission to the NRGD-list, which grants the individual expert a quality in criminal law.

The description by the NRGD of the ten areas of expertise, already accredited, can be used, (partially) to fill out the relevant Blueprints. Also, future Blueprints will be at the service of the NRGD, thus achieving an obvious process of Dutch cross-fertilization from which both the NFI and the NRGD will profit by unifying and clarifying national 'forensica'.

In this context the Forensic Science Regulator [36] , a governmental organisation in Birmingham, England (founded in 2008), can be compared with the NRGD.

By means of 'Codes of Practice and Conduct' it demands from the forensic experts that they live up to the high and uniform standards of conduct for the quality of

individual behaviour and of professional methods in its organisations. It demands solid, effective and transparent reporting in criminal courts.

The Forensic Science Regulator aims at uniformity of individual behaviour and of the forensic process of research, within the world of forensic expertise, within the UK.

The NRGD aims at this by setting uniform expert-certifications in each area of expertise, in The Netherlands. While the proposed Blueprint tries to achieve a uniform way of describing the essentials per field of forensic expertise

In combination above mentioned 'uniformities' aim at a subject I wrote about in 2000, the so called 'double transparency' in the [European] forensic expertise:

- 1) transparency of available qualified experts,
- 2) transparency of available methods of forensic research.

With the manufacturing of [the Blueprint-bundling](#), a uniform transparency of expertise-essentials will be created; reason why a better understanding and a better interpretation of the forensic reports by criminal lawyers will be enabled.

[37]



"Alfa-Bèta-Circle", Ills. Hans Jakobs, 2020

Conclusion

With the editing of a clearly written Handbook containing all NFI Forensic Expertise, a positive impulse may be given to the attitude of the NFI, known as a

little customer-friendly attitude [38] . Of course with the passage of time more professional forensic data have become available.

Now it will be a matter of arranging and systematizing the already existing NFI-information per field of expertise, to pour that information into the uniform of the pivotal, definitive version of the Blueprint, in close collaboration with the experts concerned.

As an actual source of consistent information the NFI-Catalogue of forensic expertise will be the focus for the outside world, particularly where it concerns the chain of evidence. [39]

At the same time “the need of an explanatory mechanism and knowledge” [40] will be fulfilled, with regard to the so-often consulted NFI-forensic expertise areas. An important purpose formulated in the “Law Expert in Criminal Cases’ (2010) will be honoured: the improvement of the communication [41] between expert and jurisdiction.

An additional positive aspect is that also the insight into Criminalistics will increase.

All essentials on forensic expertise will come together in the Blueprints by way of a logical and systematically described process. It will serve its purpose as an educational tool and may be helpful in the future of the university study ‘Criminalistics’, that will be insightfully safeguarded.

An NFI-reference book, edited by collecting all the Blueprints that describe essentials per field of expertise, thus basically is a sum of simple ideas [42] . It will achieve as its end-result a well-structured Handbook Forensic Expertise; the realisation of a timeless and useful Ideal.

Voorschoten, November 12th, 2020

Recommended Background Literature

Aben, Diederik and Meulenbroek, Lex, *A Haystack filled with Needles, The use of genealogical DNA-data-banks, in tracing and identification*, Publisher Paris, December 2019

Broeders, Ton, *Developments in Criminalistics, From Fingertrace to DNA-profile, from certainty to probability*, Oration on the occasion of his appointment as

Special Professor in Criminalistics, Leiden University, 19 November 2004.
Eco, Umberto, *The Enchantment of Lists*, Publishing House Bert Bakker, 2009
Fresco, Louise, *Cross-fertilization*, Prometheus, Bert Bakker, Amsterdam, 2014
Groeneveld, Robert, *The art of investigation and science, Instruments for the intelligent criminal judge*. Farewell Lecture as a Professor Criminalistics, Leyden University, 7 December 1999
de Keijser, J.W., Elffers, H., Kok, R.M., Sjerps, M.J., *Almost understood?* Boom Legal Publishers, The Hague, 2009
van Koppen, Peter, *Convincing Proof*, New Amsterdam Publishers, 2011
Bernard - Robertson / G.A. Vignaux / Charles Berger, *Interpreting Evidence, Evaluating Forensic Science in the Courtroom*, Second Edition, John Wiley & Sons Ltd, Oxford, UK, 2016. de Spinoza, Baruch / Benedict, *Ethics (1663 - 1675)*, Publishing House Bert Bakker, Amsterdam, 2004
Thorwald, Jurgen, *Das Jahrhundert der Detektive*, Droemer Knaur, Zurich, 1973
Uges, Donald, *Perfect as murderer or toxicologist, A matter of the dose or the teaching*, Oration at the acceptance of the Professorship in clinical and forensic toxicology, State University of Groningen, 2 June 1998
Van de Voorde, Wim, *Handbook Forensic Medicine*, die Keure, Bruges, Belgium, 2010
Yasar Iscan, Mehmet & Steyn, Maryna, *The Human Skeleton in Forensic Medicine*, Third Edition, Thomas Publisher Ltd, Illinois, 2013

[By way of finding what alpha-lawyers need, beta-sciences will be able to gather strength, by describing the forensic essentials in the connecting Blueprint, the understanding of the target audiences will be enhanced and criminal proceedings are lightened.](#)

Notes

[1] An essay is a contemplative text in prose in which a personal view is given on a contemporary issue. The term is derived from the French 'essai', an attempt or probe. The creator of this literary genre is Michel de Montaigne, whose first edition of "*Essais*" appeared in France in 1580.

[2] Forensic expertise: expertise = research by experts, forensic = at the service of the 'Forum' / the Court in old Rome.

[3] Prof. Dr. Ir. Charles Berger, *Truth-finding to a Higher Level*. Inaugural Address delivered by Charles E.H. Berger at the acceptance of the renewed appointment as extraordinary professor Criminalistics at Leyden University, on

behalf of the Foundation Criminalistics, on Friday 3 February 2017, p.3

[4] *Focus on Forensic Laboratories, An acquaintance with practised expertises*, Livia Jakobs, Ed., Wolters Noordhoff, Groningen, 1995. A special incident is, on May 10th 1995, during the Symposium "Focus on Forensic Laboratories", on the occasion of the 50th anniversary, this book was presented to the then Minister of Justice, Mrs. W. Sorgdrager; see Note 39)

[5] Ir. H.J.J. Hardy, former coordinator Research & Development NFI and Teacher Forensic Science, University of Amsterdam

[6] H. Hardy and I are grateful for the attentive mediation of Forensic Staff Members: Anique Henderson MSC Courts Utrecht and Arnhem]; Michelle Claushuis MSC [Courts of Appeal Amsterdam and Leeuwarden]; Wanda Remijn MSC [Courts Lelystad and Rotterdam].

[7] Research on source-level: What is the origin, the source of the trace?

[8] Research on activity-level; In which activity did the trace originate?

[9] Contamination: any substance inadvertently introduced into or onto an item of evidence after its recognition by a responsible party. Keith Inman, M.Crim., Norah Rudin, Ph.D., *Principles and Practice of Criminalistics, The profession of Forensic Science*, CRC Press, London, 2001, p.211

[10] Secondary transfer: this refers to a fragment transferred from its source A to target B, and then transferred from target B to target C. Detecting the fragment from source A on target C leads to the inference of contact between A and C, when in fact no such contact has been made; Keith Inman, M.Crim., Norah Rudin Ph.D., *Principles and Practice of Criminalistics, The Profession of Forensic Science*, CRC Press, London, 2001, p.96

[11] Thomas Bayes (1702-1761) English statistician / philosopher. The Theorem of Bayes in the shape of odds [the hypotheses are part of this] is as follows: Posterior odds = Prior odds X likelihood ratio. In other words: the expert decides, on the basis of his research, the diagnostic value of his observation = the likelihood ratio = LR = the evidential value. The "new" odds / the posterior odds follows from the "old" odds / prior odds multiplied by the likelihood ratio / LR / the evidential value.

[12] Professor Dr, Ir. Charles Berger, *Truth-finding to a higher level*, Oration Leiden University, February 3, 2017.

[13] Minister of Justice & Security Mr. Ferdinand Grapperhaus in his letter to the House of Commons, Second Chamber, July 1, 2019. <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-33628-63.pdf>

[14] Zie www.nfi.nl

- [15] Prof. Dr. Mr. Hans [J.F.] Nijboer, *Forensic Expertise*, 4th edition, Gouda Quint, Deventer, 2009, p. 36
- [16] Since 1994 run by Prof. Dr. P. de Knijff, professor of population and evolutionary genetics at the department of human genetics of the Leiden University Medical Centre, LUMC.
- [17] Article 6, European Convention for Human Rights [ECHR], *Treaty of Rome*, 1950.
- [18] Series of Lectures: Frontiers of Forensic Science, University of Amsterdam, and Forensic Symposia of the Co van Ledde Hulsebos Centre (CLHC) Amsterdam, Amsterdam Centre for Forensic Science and Medicine. Teamleaders: Prof. Dr. Maurice Aalders and Prof. Dr. Arian van Asten, with thanks to both for their hospitality we enjoyed at the University of Amsterdam, mostly in 'The Science Park'.
- <https://www.clhc.nl/shared-content/news/news/2020/09/1st-ffs-session-in-new-academic-year-2020-221.html?origin=Bz1gpBgwThqTdnLkMIFl%2FQ>
- [19] Prof. Dr. Maurice Aalders et al., Reconstructing the time since death using noninvasive thermometry of the human body and numerical analysis, *Science Advances*, American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, Washington DC, 29 May 2020 <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/6/22/eaba4243.full>
- [20] Both Concepts of [Blueprints](#) are for your perusal at the author
- [21] Mr. Paul Acda, *NFI Digital Magazine* 6, 2019; Comment on readability of NFI-reports
- [22] Prof. Dr. Amade A. M'charek, Second Triannual Signalling for Forensic Research, executed and commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and Security, June 24, 2019, p.23 <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/blg-892793>
- [23] The Sprankmodel is developed by Katri Schweitzer and Roeland Schweitzer, Schworks, 2002
- [24] Dr. J. Zeldenrust, *Murder analyzed*, Stubeg, Hoogezand, 1988, Introduction J. Zeldenrust.
- [25] *Trouw*, de Verdieping, p.1,2 en 3, 12 november 2020, In that article the future plans for a revision of the present Code of Criminal Procedure (1926) are described. Under the guidance of the Rector Magnificus of Maastricht University, Rianne Letschert and in consultation with the Minister of Justice and Security Ferd Grapperhaus. Among other, there is a tendency towards a greater attention for the suspect, to the extent that 'the public prosecutor must more readily share with the defence the assignments for research, for instance the assignments to the NFI to analyse certain traces more closely. In this way the defence can

participate in the NFI-research assignment and possibly make suggestions for adaptations.'

[26] Prof. Peter J. van Koppen, Leader of the Project 'Reasonable Doubt' by students of the Free University of Amsterdam.

[27] Lex Meulenbroek and Diederik Aben, *A haystack full of pins*, Editor Paris, December 2019, in which the use of genealogic DNA-databanks is described, after American example.[pending legal regulation in The Netherlands].

[28] Carina van Leeuwen, forensic - cold case - detective at the Amsterdam Police, hopes to solve cold cases by using public DNA-databanks, in the future.

[29] Prof. Gert-Jan Knoops, Plenary Lecture November 13, 2017, Leiden University, "The Knoops Innocence Project" as Dutch part of the International Innocence Network of the Cardozo School of Law, New York, 2012.

[30] Drs. Jan A. de Koeijer, Forensic Expert, Interdisciplinary Forensic Research, NFI.

[31] Mr. Dr. R.A. Hoving, *Expert Evidence in Criminal law*, Dissertation State University Groningen, June, 1, 2017, p. 67.

https://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/42081819/Complete_thesis.pdf

[32] Mr. H.W.J. de Groot, former counselor of the Amsterdam Court, From Practice. A robbery during a drugsdeal and a burglary; twice a judgement on quicksand?, *Expertise en Recht*, 2020,4, pp. 141-147. Page 147: "that research shows that legal professionals often have a poor understanding of forensic reports". This statement supports, once again, the sum of conclusions from our research into criminal cases 2014-2020, on which one of the motivations for the [Blueprint](#) lies.

[33] Prof. Dr. Christianne de Poot, *The reconstruction of criminal facts*, Oration to Professor Criminalistics by special appointment, Free University of Amsterdam, 4th October 2017.

[34] Mr. Christina Ribeiro, Public Prosecutor International Criminal Court (ICC), "*Forensic science at the ICC*", Lecture Frontiers in Forensics, Amsterdam University, 18 September 2019; In her lecture she asks herself: if the solid and reliable NFI-forensic expertise-reporting is understood for a 100 % by all judges?

[35] Mr. Michel Smithuis, medical doctor, n.p., director and founder of the 'Nederlands Register Gerechtig Deskundigen', 2010. The NRGD is responsible for the accreditation and the certification of forensic experts in order to achieve excellence in areas of expertise to serve in Dutch criminal trials. Meanwhile accreditation is possible in 10 fields of forensic expertise.

<https://www.nrgd.nl/zoek-ee-deskundige/grenzen-per-deskundigheidsgebied.asp>

[x](#)

[36] Forensic Science Regulator, Director Dr. Gilian Tully, Birmingham, UK; www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forensic-science-regulator

[37] Jakobs, Livia .E.M.P. en Sprangers, Wim .J.J.M., A European View on Forensic Expertise and Counter Expertise, Criminal Law Forum, An International Journal. The official Journal of the International Society for the Reform of Criminal Law, p.390, Volume 11, No.3, 2000.

[38] Prof. Dr. Amade A. M'charek, *Second Triannual Signalling of Forensic Research*, executed and commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and Security, June 23, 2019, p. 22. <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/blg-892793>

[39] Mrs. W. Sorgdrager, Chairman, First Visitation-Round, Visitation-Commission NFI, 13 juni 2019, p.3. 3

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2019/07/01/tk-bijlage-visitatiecommissie-nfi-rapport-2019/tk-bijlage-visitatiecommissie-nfi-rapport-2019.pdf>

[40] Mr. Diederik Aben, Public-Prosecutor High Court, Lecture Post Academic Education, *About Law of Evidence, proof and interpretation of evidence*, Leiden University, 11th December 2017.

[41] *Law Expert in Criminal Cases, Memory of Explanation*, 2009. <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-31116-3.html>

[42] Baruch / Benedict de Spinoza, *The Treat about the Enhancement of the Mind (1662 - 1677)* Historic Editor Groningen, 2010, "a true idea is simple, or a combination of simple ideas", p. 79



Livia E.M.P. Jakobs

Freelance Lawyer / Researcher

Leiden University, The Netherlands, Law, Criminalistics as Selected Subject: Cum Laude

Leuven University, Belgium, Post Graduate, Multidisciplinary Forensic Research
Forensic and legal practice research, on behalf of insight into Criminalistics.

Would A Bobi Wine Presidential Victory Bring Freedom And Prosperity To Uganda?



Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu—better known to the public as Bobi Wine—is a singer turned politician who is currently campaigning in the January 2021 general election to oust Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni who has been in power for more than 30 years.

Bobi Wine, with a widespread following and popularity among a significant segment of the Ugandan population, has emerged as a strong challenger to Museveni. As a musician, many of Wine’s songs take a socially conscious tone by speaking out against poverty, and in favor of freedom and democracy for Ugandans. Wine grew up in one of the nation’s poorest neighborhoods in the capital city of Kampala and his rise from poverty to being a successful singer, and then an elected Member of Parliament, has been viewed as an inspiration to many of his followers who regard him as [*‘the Ghetto President’*](#).

Since Wine's election as Member of Parliament in 2017, he strongly opposed authoritarian measures imposed by Museveni such as the President's decision to remove age limits and Wine publicly rallied against the President's decision to impose a [social media tax](#) to stifle opposition towards him on WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter.

During this time, Wine also created a national movement called "People Power"—a movement consisting of, as [The Economist](#) describes, "a messy coalition of established politicians, frustrated graduates, and the hustlers of his ghetto hinterland."

The purpose of the movement is to bring awareness to Museveni's improper governance and to challenge conventional politics. In response to Wine's public demonstrations against Museveni, Wine has been subjected to state-sanctioned torture and repeated arrest. Most notably, in August 2018, allegedly on the orders of President Museveni, the Ugandan Security Forces [fired live bullets](#) into a crowd of Wine supporters, killed Wine's personal driver, invaded the hotel that Wine was staying in and proceeded to arrest and subsequently torture him and his colleagues.

On July 24th, 2019, Wine announced his bid to run for president in the 2021 general election. In July 2020, Wine announced himself as the leader of the rebranded and previously obscure political party, the National Unity Platform (NUP). The formation of such a party, with its conventional structure and authority over candidates, comes in contradiction with the spirit of Wine's People Power movement aimed at challenging conventional politics. In addition, it has been reported that Wine's new party has engaged in transactional politics. For instance, Derrick Ssonko, who is a mechanic, felt inspired to run for local councilor, "but the party ticket went to a rival who paid a bribe. He worries that the NUP is 'old wine in new bottles' even though everyone he knows will vote for it."

During his Presidential campaign, supporters of Wine have been met with police violence. In November, [54 people were killed](#) as supporters called for the release of Wine from detention.

Wine had been arrested at a campaign rally. Uganda's security forces have routinely prevented Wine from attending his campaign rallies and the President has prevented Wine from appearing on TV and radio stations. Most recently, the United States' Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, [publicly condemned](#) tactics

within Uganda to suppress free and fair elections. In addition, Eliot Engel, the chairperson of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, has requested that the US [impose sanctions](#) on several Ugandan security officials in response to “a worsening of human rights in the country.” In order to prevent Museveni from rigging the election, [Wine has said](#) that he hopes for an overwhelming turnout at the ballot box to make it difficult for Museveni to do so.

Uganda consists of a nation where 80% of the population is under the age of 35, and for these individuals, Bobi Wine brings a great deal of hope for a better life. The disparity in the demographics has created a generational divide whereby Museveni is viewed as unpopular among the youth but is viewed as popular among older rural voters who view regime change as [“a hauntingly perilous idea”](#)—linking such change to the years of bloody horror that preceded Museveni. However, it must be met with cautious optimism whether, as a politician, Wine would be able to deliver on his promises or whether Wine’s victory would mean a continuation of corrupt politics. In [Wine’s campaign manifesto](#) he states, *“Our promise to the youth of Uganda, we shall ensure we find meaningful employment for you. We want to create at least 5 million jobs. We shall invest in technology and a massive scale of industrialization.....A vote for NUP is an assurance that citizens will never be persecuted for disagreeing with the government. A vote for NUP is a vote for the protection of our natural resources as a country which Gen. Museveni now treats as his personal wealth. A vote for NUP is a vote for the closing of the income gap between the rich and the poor.... Our promise to all Ugandans is that we shall safeguard their land. We shall put an end to the enormous scale of land grabbing. If it is done, justice must prevail... The National Unity Platform is committed to working with all Ugandans to improve their lives. We believe that immediately after taking over government, every Ugandan from Kaabong to Kisoro, from Yumbe to Busia will experience meaningful change in their way of life.....”*

Despite such progressive electoral promises, it remains publicly unclear as to how Bobi Wine proposes to accomplish them. Wine’s political headquarters has images of pan-African heroes like socialist leader Thomas Sankara, but Wine has also been known to collaborate with free-market thinktanks. Wine said that his goal is to rebuild public institutions and end decades of personalized rule, but Wine himself has also said, “I don’t have a very radical programme.” In President Museveni’s first year in office, he published a book entitled, *“What’s*

Africa's Problem?—in which he stated, “The problem of Africa, in general, and Uganda in particular, is not the people but leaders who want to overstay in power.” Bobi Wine’s call for freedom, democracy, and prosperity for Ugandans were the same political views that Museveni had once politically embraced long ago, but gradually, with time, Museveni became a corrupt authoritarian leader—if Bobi Wine won, would he be capable of ending the repetition of that authoritarian cycle?

—

Pitasanna Shanmugathas is a second year MGA student. During his undergraduate studies in political science and criminology at the University of Toronto, Pitasanna volunteered with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, primarily providing support to refugees fleeing persecution in their native countries. Pitasanna is the director of a social media group, consisting of over 2,500 members, that speaks out against past and ongoing human rights abuses in Sri Lanka carried out by both state and non-state actors — as director Pitasanna has interviewed Sri Lankan politicians, journalists, and activists to bring greater awareness to the country’s ethnic tensions and human rights abuses. In 2017, Pitasanna launched a petition, which was later introduced in Parliament, calling on the Trudeau government to accept Rohingya refugees into Canada. His career goals include working with organizations to protect the rights of refugees and minority communities and advocating for constitutional reform in nations besieged by conflict.