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SCIENCE, PEACE AND SECURITY
My personal journey spanning half a century

by

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ABSTRACT

The present talk highlights how my long scientific life reflects the transdisciplinary approach for solving the complicated problems of the world and for the achievement of world peace, predicated in ICUS and PWPA meetings. My background including different university degrees -in natural and social sciences and in the humanities, has helped in my continuous effort to deepen my knowledge of the psychobiological bases of violence in different species and cultures (in the case of the humans), in how to deal with conflicts, especially with terrorism, and learning about new paradigms of the security, so necessary in the present world. Its fruits may be summed up in more than 50 International Conferences on Conflict and Aggression (CICAs) held in 22 countries of all the continents. The most significative one probably is the Seville Statement on Violence (SSV), signed in 1986 and endorsed and disseminated by the General Conference of UNESCO, three years later.

Against those who say that violence and war cannot be ended because they are part of our natural biology and, consequently, wrongly accepted by many as “normal”, the

SSV offers a message of hope: violence is not biologically determined, and, consequently, it is avoidable. We humans, thus, are capable of cooperating and non-violence, and of achieving a world of true and lasting peace.

During the last part of the talk, I shall mention some examples of historically prominent scientists whose lives showed that science and spirituality are not incompatible.

OUTLINE

Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

In one of those ICUS, in Atlanta (1987), I heard from its Founder that we need “multi-disciplinary research for solving the complicated problems of the world”. And this is what I’ve been trying to achieve throughout my more than half-century academic career.

My passion for the conciliation of the scientific and humanistic cultures from a multi-disciplinary approach comes from my early university days when I shared my studies in Medicine with Education and Law and later Security studies. I have been studying and living abroad for most of my working life, thinking from a transdisciplinary perspective. This enabled me to teach Psychobiology to students of Medicine, Psychology and Education; and Risk and Conflict Management to students of Law and Security. This approach gives me an interdisciplinary approach towards those important problems of humanity. I feel like a citizen of the world.

For instance, my Ph.D. in Education, defended in 1968, more than fifty years ago, deals with the European Schools, a clear pragmatic example of intercultural and plurilingual coordination: a proposal of pre-university education in Europe (Ramirez, 1968).

During many years, my social psychological research has been focused towards cross-cultural studies, comparing attitudes and behavior in many different cultures (Europe, China, Iran, Japan, Southern Africa, Southern America, and Canada) (Fung, Li, Ramírez, et al. 2018; Ramírez, Andreu, Fujihara et. 2007). and deepening in the study of human biology (Ramirez, 1978). This has probably been the reason why, in 2013, the World Academy of Art and Science elected me as a Fellow, as it’s generously mentioned in my accreditation diploma: for my “eminence in the arts, the natural sciences, the

social sciences, and the humanities.” They want members who are able to “explore the social consequences and policy implications of knowledge.”

I had also co-edited two books on cross-cultural studies (Ramirez & Richardson, 2001; Ramirez & Abad-Quintanal, 2018), addressing quite relevant issues on the general topic, from an interdisciplinary perspective. After some interesting and necessary descriptive considerations on the current status quo -the world order and some important facets of the current conflictive situation-, we analyzed how the conflicts can be managed in a positive way within different cultures, without forgetting the need for legal and justice systems within cross-cultural conflicts.

CONTROL OF VIOLENCE

My main scientific thread during the last half a century has been the research on aggression and violence from an interdisciplinary perspective. I have studied it in a variety of animal species, from birds to primates, and in many different cultures within the human species. This research has led me to learn how to live with conflict, being aware since the beginning that *Human Aggression is a multifaceted phenomenon*, for using the title of a book of the same name, which summarizes most of my research on human aggression (1996, 2003; Ramírez & Brain (1985, 1986; Ramírez, Hinde & Groebel, 1987).

In the early '80s, I started to organize international conferences on conflict and aggression (CICAs), in order to disseminate scientific knowledge on the topic, based on my own research and that of my colleagues. During the first decade, it was co-organized by the International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA) and the Chilean and Spanish branches of the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA).

Let me do a digression in order to remember that, even if the founding meeting of PWPA took place in Seoul (1973) mainly with scholars from Japan and Korea, PWPA-International started in one of the ICUS I attended (Philadelphia, 1982, with a forum for peace studies known as The Professors World Peace Academy, which was officially launched in December of 1983 under the leadership of Morton Kaplan, efficiently assisted by Gordon L. Anderson, who is still the editor of its *International Journal for World Peace*, in which I have the honor of being member of its Editorial Council.

Up to now, more than two thousand scholars from many varied scientific disciplines and continents have participated in more than fifty CICAs, held in 22 countries from all the six continents. The most selected scientific contributions from these meetings have also been published in about fifty volumes. We also have a Foundation -CICA International Foundation- aimed at disseminating the importance of knowing scientifically about conflict and aggression and applying it, in a more pragmatical way, undertaking humanitarian projects related to the sustainability of our planet (see: cicainternational.org).

The most significant fruit of the CICAs probably is the Seville Statement on Violence (SSV), written by an international team of specialists from 13 countries and signed in May of 1986, the UN declared International Year of Peace. It was endorsed and disseminated by the 25th General Conference of UNESCO, three years later (Paris, 16 November 1989) for use in programs of education for peace and international

understanding. Last October 2019, the 30th anniversary of this endorsement was celebrated in an ISRA meeting at Jerusalem.

About 200 million people were killed in the 20th century because of violent conflicts. ~~Wrongly~~ ~~Based~~ in a nonexistent human propensity towards violence, many were accepting this as “normal.”; We questioned this from a scientific approach. Did modern natural and social sciences know of any biological factors that were an insurmountable or a serious obstacle to the goal of world peace? After many decades of research on the psychobiological basis of violence, the 1986 SSV scientifically finally stated in five propositions that there is nothing in our biology which is an unsurmountable obstacle to violence and the abolition of war:

1. It is scientifically incorrect to say that we have inherited a tendency to make war from our animal ancestors.
2. It is scientifically incorrect to say that war or any other violent behavior is genetically programmed into our human nature.
3. It is scientifically incorrect to say that in the course of human evolution there has been a selection for aggressive behavior more than for other kinds of behavior.
4. It is scientifically incorrect to say that humans have a ‘violent brain’.
5. It is scientifically incorrect to say that war is caused by ‘instinct’ or any single motivation.

The statement concludes, thus, that we are not condemned to war and violence because of our biology. “Just as ‘wars begin in the minds of men’, peace also begins in our minds. *The same species who invented war is capable of inventing peace. The responsibility lies with each of us*” ([Adams, 1991](#)). That was an urgent and enduring much-needed message.

2. RESEARCH ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY

More recently, besides our usual periodic meetings on different specific topics related to aggression, we have been focusing more carefully on one of aggression’s most extreme expressions -terrorism- by co-organizing with the Society for Terrorism Research (STR), founded in a conference of the American Psychology Association (APA), after the horrible events of the 9/11. This led to seven joint CICA-STR conferences in a row (Antonius, Brown, Walters, Ramirez & Sinclair, 2010; Walters, Monaghan & Ramirez, 2014; see also Ramírez, Morrison & Kendal, 2014).

During this last decade, my research has centered on security and defense, at national and international Defense institutions: in the Spanish military university CESEDEN) and in the probably two more important American think-tanks – with tendencies towards the left and right, respectively: at [International Security Program of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University](#); and at the [Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University](#)). This has led me to focus most of the recent CICAs, jointly with the Nebrija-Santander Global Chair on Risks and Conflicts Management, on topics closely related to Security: security in critical infrastructures; cybersecurity; security and defense in Europe; and the security paradigm in the 21st century (Fernández, & Payá, 2016; Ramirez & Fernández, 2016; Ramirez & García-Segura, 2017; Ramirez & Biziewski, 2019).

At present, we are analyzing the present paradigm shift in Security. For this, we reflect on the trends in the development of mutual relations between main actors of the global game in order to answer the question about the need to modify strategic goals and ways of reaching them, ensuring secure development based on equal rights with global players, and coping at the same time with internal challenges concerning political cohesion, social and economic development as well as security.

We also analyze the many challenges to security: in the positive side of the balance, artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology; on the other side, driving insecurity, social disintegration, global inequalities and corruption, uncontrolled mass migrations, and in particular forced refugees' displacements..., to mention just a few (Ramirez & Biziewski, in press).

Our initiative for security is perseverant because we see it as a solution to conflicts, which is our main present topic of research.

3. CONFLICT AND PUGWASH

Peace and Conflict Studies has emerged as a major academic discipline. My own university has its own Nebrija-Santander Chair on Risks and Conflict Management, focused mainly on Security issues and on a deepening in the knowledge of the Global Commons.

In 1985, I got a Professional Award on international conflicts by the East-West Center, established by the United States Congress (Ramírez & Sullivan, 1987); and ten years later I was appointed in Jerusalem Co-Chair of the UNESCO Committee on Science for Peace (Becker & Kouzminov, 1997).

Since three decades ago, I'm a member of the Nobel Peace laureated Pugwash Movement (1995), and chair of its Spanish National Group. As you may remember, we started on 9 July 1955, during the darkest days of the Cold War, with a manifesto delivered in London by Bertrand Russell, and later termed Russell-Einstein Manifesto. Two years later, in 1957, a conference of scientists, held in the small village of Pugwash, Nova Scotia was a catalyst for the formation of a unique and innovative transnational organization, under the name of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs.

Once they had understood the dangers of nuclear weapons exploded in Japan, the main aim was the need to avoid war in the nuclear age. Today more than ever our attention and efforts are still dedicated to control the risks of a nuclear conflict and endorse any activity in favor of non-proliferation of any weapons of mass destruction. For instance, it would be convenient to elaborate an assessment on the nature of challenges for disarmament at the beginnings of the new decade, including the one within the Korean Peninsula.

But, without leaving aside our original effort related to the nuclear issue, in the face conflicts in the world, we also foster creative discussions among scientists and policy makers on ways to increase the security of all sides and promote policy development that is cooperative and forward-looking. One of our primary missions is to 'tame' conflicts in the word, finding peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute. In this context, we also have a long-standing tradition of promoting "dialogue across divides". Using the final words of the Manifesto, we have to renounce war as a mean to

solve conflicts and “appeal as human beings to human beings: Remember your humanity and forget the rest.”

4. SCIENCE AND RELIGION

As I already said at the beginning, I gave a talk called: *The Limits of Science and the Benefit of Unified Values* in a previous ICUS. There I recognized that universal truth is beyond the scope of the scientific enterprise. Consequently, we all have to have faith, which, as you remember, means belief in what we don't know. Faith is a normal part of the human condition. Of course, the believers, who have religious feelings or religious needs, have faith; but those that don't feel religious, also believe, for instance in the acceptance of science because, otherwise, they would not accept any scientific evidence that they had not personally studied.

Saying that then, I would like to add that there are other ways of knowing than the vision of science. Most of us have to admit that our search for a sense to life needs something that may surpass the limits of science, ethics, philosophy, art... and theology, i.e. a transcendent view of the human being.

The history of science is full of contributions made by very devout Christians, who showed that, far from being a hindrance to scientific advances, Christianity has been an active and fundamental part of them. As examples of this interconnection between science and faith, I want to finish my intervention mentioning some historical models of important scientists who were also Catholic priests. They made transcendental contributions in different scientific disciplines in different centuries and in very different contexts (see: Del Villar, 2019).

5.1. **Nicholaus Copernicus (1473 –1543): father of modern astronomy**

Copernicus, *Mikolaj Kopernik* in Polish, mastered very varied disciplines and developed the heliocentric theory, in which the planets and the Earth revolve around the Sun and where he defined the movement of rotation and translation of the Earth.

He graduated in Canon Law from the University of Ferrara (Italy) and also completed two Medicine courses in Padua. Thanks to these latest studies, he worked as a doctor for the various bishops who occupied the episcopal seat of Warmia (a country that is situated in present-day Poland). Pierre Gassendi, the author of the first biography of this Polish genius, even affirmed that Nicholas Copernicus practiced free medicine for the benefit of the poor.

- In the field of cartography, he produced maps of the central-eastern region of Europe in collaboration with the best cartographers of the time.
- In the field of diplomacy, he held important and varied positions of responsibility (administrator, chancellor, commissioner), performing a very remarkable work in conflict resolution.
- Also, in the field of economics, he also wrote documents on currency and inflation.
- But where he stood out especially is in astronomy, where he developed the heliocentric theory. With a rudimentary observatory and in very adverse weather conditions (the region where he lived has few days when the sky is completely clear), he calculated that the distance from the Moon to Earth was 60.3 times the radius of the Earth (in fact the average is 60.43, and the calculation of the great

astronomer Ptolemy was 48). Historians place Copernicus's heliocentric model as the event that triggered the scientific revolution, that is, the rise of modern science.

But what you may not know is that he was a canon of the council of Frombork, the seat of the bishopric of Warmia. There are indications that suggest that he could also be a priest.

4.2. **Marin Mersenne (1588 –1648): the father of the “scientific community”**

The Frenchman Marin Mersenne was a monk of the congregation of minima, between the XVI-XVII centuries. He is famous for:

- Mersenne's prime numbers, basic for mathematics;
- his research on the propagation of sound (he found that sound propagates at the same speed regardless of the source that originates it or the direction in which it propagates);
- his studies of musical theory (some consider him the father of acoustics);

In the sixteenth century a guild mentality that guarded technical secrets still prevailed and countries and professional associations did not reveal their discoveries; but that began to change with religious people like Mersenne, who was a friend of the philosopher and mathematician René Descartes and his study partner in the Jesuit *College of La Flèche*.

Mersenne exchanged their discoveries among scientists from various countries. The messages and ideas of Roberval, Descartes, Gassendi, and Pascal came to his cell, sometimes in person, sometimes in writing. In the beginning, his group was called *Academia Mersenne*, although when joining the Dupuy group it was renamed as *Academia Parisiensis*: scholars from different disciplines collaborating! In 1666, this led to Colbert creating an official scientific institution: the *Academie de Sciences de France*. That is why it is considered that Mersenne was the creator of the concept of “scientific community”: a work for the advancement of science, sharing discoveries, without national or trade secrets,

4.3. **Nicholas Steno (1638-1686): geologist, anatomist, biomechanic ... and blessed**

Danish Nicholas Steno (*Niels Steensen*, in Danish) devoted himself fully to research, and in just ten years, he became an essential figure in three scientific disciplines:

- The first one is geology. Through his work *De Solido*, sought to understand how the land was formed and its evolution over the years; through this it was no longer necessary to resort to historical documents or the Bible to have this information: he enunciated the four fundamental laws of stratigraphy.
- The second science is anatomy. Europe was amazed by its skills in dissection, an art through which it revealed unknown aspects of the heart, brain, and glands. In a Parisian newspaper, it was said of him: “he exposes everything in such a vivid way that (...) it remains only to wonder why all previous anatomists have escaped that.”:
 - he discovered the *ductus Stenonianus*, a duct of the mouth that starts from the parotid gland;
 - he was the first scientist to observe the ovarian follicle; and in addition,

- he developed a model to explain the functioning of muscle biomechanics and was also the first to describe a heart malformation called Fallot tetralogy.
- The third science is biomechanics. He developed a model for the muscle that, 300 years after his death, was demonstrated correct through numerical computer calculation methods.

At the height of his career, he became Catholic and eventually became a priest and later a bishop and apostolic vicar in the Nordic countries in the seventeenth century. Thanks to this and his full involvement in this position, he became a blessed. In a letter, the Jesuit Atanasius Kircher, considered by some as the Leonardo Da Vinci of the seventeenth century, congratulated Steno for having converted to the faith.

4.4. Ruđer Bošković (1711-1787): the grandfather of atomic theory

Ruđer Bošković was an 18th-century Jesuit from the Republic of Ragusa. It was he who developed the first atomic theory with a certain foundation, which has inspired the discovery of the laws of electromagnetism and the theory of relativity.

- Although his writings belong to what is called speculative science (he did not have much evidence to support his claims), the truth is that the theory he developed in his book *Theoria Philosophiae Naturalis* stimulated great scientists who used his work as a reference: Volta, the inventor of the battery, Michael Faraday, father of electromagnetism and electrochemistry, and also Albert Einstein himself relied on it to try to create a unified field theory, that linked the electric and gravitational fields.
- Bošković was also an excellent astronomer: he devised a geometric method to determine the equator of a rotating planet from three observations of its surface and the orbit of a planet from three observations of its position.
- Also, his skills as an engineer-architect are clear in that he designed a system to save the dome of the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome from its collapse.

4.5. René Just Haüy (1743-1822): the father of crystallography

René Just Haüy was a French priest, canon of Notre Dame. He lived in a very complicated political time, during which he demonstrated an attitude of a saint. He lost his pension and was imprisoned for refusing to swear an oath to the Constitution that was approved in the French Revolution. It was a miracle that he was not executed. His friends mediated to avoid it, but he refused to leave jail until the other priests and prisoners who shared a cell with him were released. He also did his best to save the father of chemistry, Antoine Lavoisier, who was finally guillotined.

In the scientific field, he became an authority thanks to his great four-volume work, *Traité de minéralogie*. In this work, among other things, there was a connection with the aforementioned Nicholas Steno, which defined a law according to which the crystals of any chemical or mineral species have a constant and characteristic angle of that species. Haüy, supported by that law, extended it by observing that the relationship between the parameters of all the faces of a crystal on the same axis always gives rational numbers that can be determined by three integers. He also developed a rigorous classification of minerals following a model in which he determined certain geometric

characteristics and studied various properties such as the pyroelectricity of minerals. For all this, he is considered the father of crystallography.

Together with Lavoisier and other scientists he also defined the metric system and discovered the law of rationality of indices.

4.6. Gregor Johan Mendel (1822-1884): the father of genetics

This 19th-century Austrian Augustinian friar defined the fundamental laws of genetics.

- He is famous for establishing the fundamental laws of genetics, for whose elaboration he spent six years doing experiments. Only in the case of peas, he studied about three hundred thousand samples, which allowed him to obtain exact proportions that other scientists could not reach by doing less rigorous studies. Due to the novelty of their finding, the scientists of the time did not appreciate his work; It took 35 years to recognize that new science, genetics, had emerged.
- Curiously, Mendel died as a figure of recognized prestige in a completely different field, that of meteorology, where he published several works that pointed to the possibility of predicting weather statistically.
- Mendel was also a great beekeeper and studied the crossing of races from various regions of the world.

He became abbot of the monastery of Brno and many people attended his funeral, including many of the poor around the monastery, with whom Mendel had always behaved kindly and tried to help them.

4.7. Georges Lemaître (1894-1966): the creator of the Big Bang theory

This Belgian priest, a member of the brotherhood of *Les amis de Jésus*, was the creator, at the beginning of the 20th century, of the Big Bang theory, based on the expansion of the universe from a point, against the idea established in his time that the universe was static.

- His contribution was to convince other scientists that the universe expands and has an origin, something that was very complicated. Albert Einstein, in his first encounter with Lemaître, told him that his mathematical calculations were good but that his physics was abominable. However, over time they became great friends and Einstein recognized the great work of his colleague. Lemaître played a role in protecting Einstein from Nazism.
- Lemaître was also a master of mathematical calculation, and his contributions served to know more about cosmic rays or the concentration of matter in galaxies and nebulae.
- Due to his humility, his figure is less recognized than he should. For example, Hubble's law, which explains the expansion of the universe, was named for many years even when Lemaître was the one who enunciated it for the first time. But the Belgian priest did not want to claim the authorship and only now, in 2018, the International Astronomical Union has decided to rename it as a Hubble-Lemaître law.

Lemaître was also a man of intense prayer (he celebrated Mass every day and spent an hour praying) and also worried about bringing God closer to the Chinese community living in Belgium.

As I hope the previous examples have shown, Science is not incompatible with God. The more you know more about Science, the more you are fascinated by divine work. On the contrary, as Benedict XVI reflected, “Science without God leads to Auschwitz”.

5. FINAL REMARKS

Summarizing my scientific journey, for more than five decades I’ve dedicated myself to crafting solutions in response to the new changes developing and molding the world, in an unending effort to achieve peace through rules and institutions. More specifically, from the very beginning, I tried to enhance knowledge about the causes and control of aggressive behavior, first, and conflict resolution later.

- As a scientist, I have a truly interdisciplinary in academic formation and interests.
- As a citizen, I belong to multiple international and interdisciplinary societies, and help found some of them, like STR and CICA.
- In my personal life, I have traveled practically all over the planet, and lived in many countries, doing research and teaching at universities in Europe, America, and Australia.

So, who do I feel I am? I reckon, just a citizen of the world, an endless traveler, *einer Forshungsreisender*, linking interdisciplinarily communities, disciplines, cultures, people, languages..., with the main goal of reducing risk and conflict to humanity.

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