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Beyond time and experience

**An institutional approach and categorial framework for the analysis of
waiting from a philosophical materialist perspective.**

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of the requirements for the degree

of

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Abstract

This thesis proposes a novel theoretical framework for studying waiting as a multidimensional phenomenon, advancing beyond traditional approaches that often perceive it as a singular, homogenous, and purely temporal event. It asserts that waiting embodies temporal, spatial, and operational dimensions, each with dialectical and dynamic components. Rather than viewing waiting as an ontologically negative or undefined event, it is conceptualised as a material and objective process. Its axiological nature is neutral, not essentially negative or positive, with its classification primarily contingent upon the context. The research underscores several waiting processes as a social institution, emphasising its varied forms in different institutionalised contexts, thereby diverging from approaches that overemphasise these processes' subjective and experiential dimensions.

The thesis, grounded in philosophical materialism, scrutinises the historical evolution of waiting, linking it to secular and non-secular concepts of hope and others, such as expectation and time. It critiques modern perceptions of waiting, especially its temporal hypostasis, advocating for a wider, materialist approach that incorporates often overlooked spatial and operational dimensions while not undermining temporal significance.

The study introduces a set of categories from a philosophical materialist perspective to analyse waiting spaces' structural and functional elements. It explores the operational dimension of waiting concerning institutional structures and suggests that this dimension encompasses both spatial and temporal aspects. Concerning the temporal analysis, the research reveals multiple objective temporalities within the waiting processes, replacing the idea of a single waiting time with the notion of possible multiple times in several kinds of waiting processes.

The final chapter applies these theoretical perspectives empirically, analysing institutionalised waiting processes in the current Cuban context. It successfully inspects the spatial, operational, and temporal components of waiting, prioritising the institutional character of these processes. The thesis concludes that understanding various waiting processes depends largely on institutional nature, including the psychological and subjective behaviours displayed during waiting.

This thesis introduces a new institutional perspective on waiting studies, mainly related to social sciences approaches. At the same time, we recognise the need for ongoing exploration and discourse to further our understanding of this intriguing subject. The proposed materialist approach strives to enrich the epistemological status of waiting studies and augment our collective knowledge.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It is a reasonably widespread view among those who have studied the waiting classify it as a “common human experience”, manifested in everyone’s life in one way or another (Ferrie & Wiseman, 2019). Reflections on this phenomenon are generally related to everyday events (Bissell, 2007) –waiting for a kettle to boil, public transport, medical appointments (Rotter, 2016), etc.– as well as less frequent and more significant ones. In other words, alongside these micro-level waits, short-term waits woven into the everyday experience (*idem*), other waits would be classified as social processes inserted into societies’ *meso* (middle), *macro*, and even *mega*-social dynamics. Here, we find waits linked to personal, family or group processes, and others linked to politics –local and national–, geopolitical relations, migrations, national and international trade, diplomacy and war, among many others.

Due to its diverse types and forms, waiting has captured the interest of multiple fields such as political science, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, film and literary studies, among others. Scholars and authors from these disciplines have identified and analysed the phenomenon, producing a vast array of theoretical and practical material that we can draw upon to approach the topic today.

This wide-ranging academic research into waiting has covered phenomena such as customer queues (Lee *et al.*, 2015; Liang, 2017), the management of operations during delays, backlogs and lethargy by organisations (Chia, 2002; Goldberg & Schwartz, 1977; Sallerberg, 2008), the sociology of waiting time as an element linked to domination (Auyero, 2012; Bourdieu, 2000; Secor, 2007), health care of illness (Ferrie and Wiseman, 2016), migration studies (Musset, 2015; Rotter, 2016; Turnbull, 2016), among many other topics. Here, the importance and prevalence of the waits are emphasised as a socio-group and organisational process, and as an individual experience. Furthermore, other crucial aspects of these studies encompass the reasons for waiting, the nature of the waits, and the significance of waiting for those involved. Also studied are the degree of predictability or uncertainty in the processes, their duration (short-term vs. long-term), and how those waiting experience are affected by all of it, among other factors (Bailey, 2018; Turnbull, 2016; Auyero, 2012; Schweizer, 2008).

Alongside this disciplinary and thematic diversity, or perhaps because of it, the waiting studies present another characteristic which is a wide categorial and terminological diversity. Ideas such as

hope (Appadurai, 2013; Brun, 2015; Zigon, 2020), *expectations* (Coleman, 2020; Gasparini, 1995), *aspirations* (Bourdieu, 2000), *delay* (Schwartz, 1978), *tedium*, *timepass* (Jeffrey, 2010), *ennui* (Secor, 2002, 2007), *boredom* (Benjamin, 2022; Masquelier, 2013; Musharbash, 2007; Schielke, 2008) and many more have been populating the field of analysis related to waiting.

In many cases, this terminological variety is related to the sociology of knowledge that underpins each study. Arguably, selecting some categories over others to underpin the study of waiting is related to the researcher's disciplinary affiliation rather than a coherent positioning towards a theory of waiting. For example, studies of waiting stemming from psychology have asked questions about its impact on the individuals involved in these processes, reflected in feelings of anxiety, impatience, hope, resignation, boredom or fear. The anthropological perspective has focused more on the representation of waiting concerning groups and cultures (Dwyer & Minnegal, 1998; Geißler, 2002; Harvey, 2015; Palmer *et al.*, 2018). The sociological perspective focuses on issues like waiting alone, waiting in someone's company (Auyero, 2012; Rotter, 2016) and stratification of the waiting process (Rotter, 2016; Schwartz, 1974), aspects related to the group's dynamics, the conflictual, competitive or cooperative nature of waiting, etc.

The study presented below adds to the many efforts made to unravel what exactly waiting is and how it is understood as a phenomenon. That is to say, intertwined with other phenomena, of course, but with specific characteristics of its own which, once determined and established, will allow us to approach waiting from within itself and not through related realities, such as the subjectivities of those who wait or the time frames in which these processes occur. Besides, my research seeks to establish some guidelines to objectively determine when we are facing a material waiting process, seeking to offer a group of categories to study these processes in greater depth. Understood in the material/objective sense that I attribute to waits, this categorial arsenal would be helpful in empirical studies in the sciences and disciplines interested in these phenomena.

These initial intentions would have been impossible even to consider had it not been for the increasingly significant accumulation of research, researchers, and approaches to the abovementioned subject. These approaches have been carving out the field of waiting studies from diverse areas of knowledge. Those studies are no more than the continuation of a tradition of waiting analysis, which has its roots in the historical and cultural development of various societies. This tradition goes back even before the unfortunate creation of Hephaestus which resulted in Pandora

breaking the seal of the amphora where Zeus kept all the evils, precisely so that they would be released into the world of the sovereign mortals, to their misfortune and for Prometheus's shame.

According to Hesiod (2020), after seeing how the world was filled with calamities because of her actions, the beautiful wife of Epimetheus saw the *elpis* coming out as the last calamities of the jar. Translated in the Middle Ages as *hope* (Buela, 2021), *elpis* in the original myth would correspond to *prognosis*; in other words, with the faculty of anticipating events, of having an inevitable participation in the future, creating expectations around it. In short, what Pandora releases has been confused with hope, but in reality, it is nothing more than *waiting*, as this idea is often understood today. As Andrew Benjamin said, waiting is: "the crossing of a threshold –a crossing in which futurity is introduced as made possible by the present's potentiality– has to be thought beyond a conception of the future that is already pictured" (2013, p. 212),.

Throughout this study, I explore this tradition of analysis in greater depth. My initial assumptions are as follows. Firstly, that a) waiting is more than just time. Secondly, b) there is not one kind of waiting but many, which are different. Thirdly, c) waiting are objective phenomena. And finally, d) that it is possible to analyse them for what they are, *i. e.*, in themselves. These assumptions have guided my particular approach to the subject, carried out fundamentally from a philosophical materialist perspective (from here on, abbreviated as PhM). This theoretical perspective has also constituted the critical platform on which I have positioned myself by presenting a more or less general picture of the current state of the art in the study of waits, as summarised in the following.

1. State of the art

Waiting has been the subject of analysis and debate in a wide diversity of cultural traditions. Presumably, given its universality, it is present in all human groups that have somehow developed some history or collective memory. If so, it is possible to affirm that multiple cultures have developed theories or ideas about waiting and human waiting. In the mythology and legends of the cultures of the Greco-Roman axis of influence, several examples of waits could be taken as archetypal. Through these, it is possible to glimpse if one has a suitable classification scheme, the different aspects of waiting as philosophies and sciences have subsequently analysed them.

One piece of work, in particular, stands out from the rest for reflecting, very early on, the two epistemic positions in which the concepts and ideas about waiting, even today, could be inscribed, namely, the objectivist position and the subjectivist position. The work I refer to is *The Odyssey*, attributed to the Hellenic poet Homer. The myths alluding to waiting collected here are perhaps the most famous among the literary works of the Western tradition. In this text, Homer presents and analyses two types of waiting. Namely, I would say a social, institutional one, which will be distinguished in principle from purely individual waiting. Paraphrasing Gustavo Bueno (2020), one could say that psychological waiting could resemble a way of *being*, while social/institutional waiting would be more of a way of *staying*.

In the figures of Telemachus and Penelope, Homer symbolises the waits closer to the strictly social/institutional sphere. In both cases, the action is centred on a supreme waiting, symbolised by the return of Odysseus. This waiting will play the role of the first motor or source from which others emanate, which, in the form of ramifications, will shape the dynamics of the text. However, the relationship between the two waiters, the *goals* of their processes and the social roles that each one has to play on then, radically modify both the possibilities and the effective action in one case and the other.

Penelope, who for many embodies the figure of the archetypal waiter mother (Schweizer, 2002), faces a different framework of action than her son. The difference is not due to her status as a submissive woman, as is sometimes assumed (Schweizer, 2008), but to her institutional rank, which differs from that of Telemachus. It is often overlooked that Penelope is not only a woman, she is no less than a queen and the consort of a famous military leader.

Like her husband and son, she too will be subjected to strict legislation that will govern her operative lines of action at all times, even while waiting. Her case stands out for her political skills in resolving her particular situation, where waiting is precisely her fundamental defence and survival mechanism. Consequently, her strategies for dealing with the threats of those who wanted her as a wife have become one of the best-known symbols of coping with a situation of risk through institutionalised waiting. Antinous, son of Eupites, expressed this before the assembly of elders as follows.

[S]he is a very artful woman. These three years past, and close on four, she has been driving us out of our minds, by encouraging each one of us, and sending him messages without meaning one word of what she says. And then there was that other trick she played us. She set up a great tambour frame in her room and began to work on an enormous piece of fine needlework. “Sweet hearts”, said she, “Ulysses is indeed dead, still do not press me to marry again immediately, wait for. I would not have skill in needlework perish unrecorded till I have completed a pall for the hero Laertes, to be in readiness against the time when death shall take him” (Homer, 1887, bk. II).

As can be seen, here, the heroine uses her persuasive skills to turn the situation in her favour by using traditions and ceremonies to be observed. In particular, the tradition followed in some Hellenic villages, whereby it was established that the wife of a warrior should weave a shroud (*soudarion*) to cover the corpse of the husband killed in battle.

As a second archetype of waiting, there is a subjective, psychological waiting, often individual, although not always, as will be seen. This model would have inspired a great diversity of treatments centred on a profound, ontological search for the ultimate meaning of waiting from the subjective point of view¹. Even with multiple differences, many of the approaches to this type of waiting have the human subject, from the individual point of view, at the centre of the analysis, even confusing, on more than a few occasions, the waiting itself with the experiences that the actors who wait have of it.

Waiting is often analysed regarding its effects on individuals, *i. e.*, their psyche or mental plane, especially regarding its “uncertainty” (Dobler, 2020). In this approach, waiting is often associated with negative feelings of grief, *boredom*, pain or strangeness. It is also seen as a kind of punishment or penance that must be fulfilled as a kind of atonement. The harshness and rigour of this condemnation are given precisely by the degree of operability of the subjects linked to the waiting. A diminished operability is a sign of a greater punishment and, therefore, of a sin or fault of profound significance. In the *Odyssey*, this waiting as subjectivity and penance is represented in Odysseus’ waiting on the Isle of Calypso, to which early reference is made already in Book I.

¹ Based on my assumptions, the notion of waiting as purely individual or psychological is an ideological construct, that it is not present on the technological plane (*etic*). Here, all forms of waiting –especially human waiting– are institutionalised. However, this needs to consider the psychological aspect of waiting, and instead, this dimension is shaped and influenced by the institutional channels of social and cultural norms.

[A]ll who escaped death in battle or by shipwreck had got safely home except Ulysses, and he, though he was longing to return to his wife and country, was detained by the goddess Calypso, who had got him into a large cave and wanted to marry him. But it will be in Book V, where it will be explained in greater depth. (...) Ulysses was not within; he was on the sea-shore as usual, looking out upon the barren ocean with tears in his eyes, groaning and breaking his heart for sorrow (Homer, 1887, bk. I).

In the fragments, waiting is depicted as a phenomenon that is beyond individual control and prediction. The presence of the gods and their psychological states, as exemplified by Calypso in this case, provide the only possible explanation for this phenomenon. The waiter, Ulysses's range of action and autonomy is circumscribed to the wishes of the deity who rules the territory where he is. It is necessary to clarify that the singularity of *Ulysses* (the only non-divine inhabitant of the island) is not the factor determining the psychological dimension of the waiting since the *Odyssey* also includes other examples of this type of waiting but manifested in a group manner. For instance, Menelaus and his companions waiting, stranded on the Pharos Island, expecting the everlasting gods' goodness.

A look at literature, philosophy and much of the scientific work devoted to the phenomena of waiting could show this constant oscillation between these poles and their possible intermediate stations. Penelope's waiting is, for example, also that of Florentino Ariza in *Love in the Time of Cholera*, who does not wait for his beloved Fermina Daza self-absorbed and inactive, but raises a fortune, writing "ardent love letters" and recording, with notary-like rigour, the experiences of the 652 "continuous loves" (García, 1988, p. 243) he had while waiting fifty-one years, nine months and four days for Daza to return his love.

That of Ulysses and Menelaus is also the waiting of second lieutenant Giovanni Drogo who, together with his companions, waited "in vain" in the Bastiani fortress for the arrival of the Tartars. In the meantime, Drogo looked at "that damned plain always deserted" and the "wall clock in front of the desk" of the colonel, who "continued to grind out life" (Buzzati, 1990, pp. 136-137).

In all these cases, the literature only accounts for how human waits manifest in a rather descriptive exercise without dwelling on ontological dalliances about their nature and ultimate characteristics.

Science and philosophy have tackled these other aspects of the waits, which the literature has preferred to avoid. Here, the conceptual approaches to waits are perhaps as abundant as the

approaches taken. Even so, it is possible to establish a group of constants and coincidences within this extensive diversity.

Firstly, the most interesting research emphasises a conceptualisation of waiting that ontologically defines it as a time-related phenomenon. In other words, waiting is viewed as a specific form of time or as socially or individually established temporalities. Moreover, it is common for this time to be interpreted as having particular characteristics regarding its morphological constitution. Namely, waiting time is a dark, *liminal* (Sutton *et al.*, 2011), indeterminate, dead (Gray, 2009), slow, delayed and static time, among other characteristics where its ambiguity and evanescence will always stand out.

Bissell (2007) examines the concept of waiting as a matter of temporality, assuming that it is tied to objective factual circumstances. We can refer to this understanding as a “chronometric” conceptualization. This perspective frames the analysis of waiting within the context of an external, sometimes regular or “ideal time”, which is conceived in linear sequences and set apart from other experiences. These temporal structures are disrupted, halted, or even “broken” by the act of waiting.

Some scholars utilize the notion of a “temporal rupture” to underscore how waiting represents a slowed or stagnant time that exists alongside other, faster events and practices (*idem*). Harold Schweitzer (2008) further emphasizes this idea by stating that “the person who waits is out of sync with time, outside of the ‘moral’ and economic community of those whose time is productive” (p. 8).

In general, these approaches share the same basic idea. There is an objective time frame, and the waiting emerges on this, or at least closely related to it. With different degrees of freedom and autonomy, the individual will always be inserted within these dialectical relations between “the normal” and the waiting time. These characteristics would make waiting involved in everyone’s lives in one way or another; hence it is a “universal experience” (Bissell, 2007, p. 283).

Regarding this universal “experience” of waiting, some approaches stress its temporality precisely due to closeness to the individuals. In other words, they stress the personal *agency* or even the psyche of the waiter. From this position, some objectivity of time will also be admitted as a phenomenon of perceived reality. The fundamental difference concerning time here is its nature. Here, individual, social and natural times could coexist in parallel, converge or even oppose each other. “Life, especially the good life, needs time, and it also needs a lot of different lived forms of

time. Forms of time (...) are identifiable qualities of people's subjective perception of time and subjective experience of time" (Geißler, 2002, p. 132).

As I have pointed out, both time and waiting constitute phenomena open to change and transformation, even for psychological liberation. In such a sense, it is pointed out:

[W]aiting is not simply a passage of time to be traversed. (...) is more than merely an inconvenient delay. It is more than a matter of time. (...) [W]e might think of waiting also as a temporary liberation from the economics of time-is-money, as a brief respite from the haste of modern life, and as a meditative temporal space in which one might have unexpected intuitions and fortuitous insights. Waiting, (...) must be relearned as a form of attention" (Schweizer, 2008, p. 2).

This subjectivation varies in essence from the previous positions. Here time ceases to be, in principle at least, an objective phenomenon in the sense of belonging to external reality. It could be assumed that it is primarily located in another or other dimensions of reality. In this way, the possibility arises multiple temporalities coexist. All of these would be different not only in their origins but also in their morphological nature.

The third type of analysis will attempt to establish a certain intermediate point between these extremes. Here, the idea of waiting constitutes a critical factor in understanding the intersection of sociological categories, such as class or status, with other psychological ones of the type of expectations. Bourdieu (2000) explains it clearly while trying to clarify the matter of degrees of freedom and their nature. "I have so far argued as if the two constitutive dimensions of temporal experience, expectations and the objective chances, or more precisely the actual or potential power over the immanent tendencies of the social world which governs the chances attached to an agent (or his or her position) were identical for all" (p. 216).

Bourdieu clarifies the "immanent" existence of a framework of possibilities for action, depending on a specific social reality. Even so, it does not end the subject's capacity for intervention, leaving room for social action. These capacities are expressed precisely in the control that specific agents (political, economic, ideological) exercise over many of the elements that make up social mobility. In this way, waiting is a social temporality associated with expectations, with that in which hopes are placed; it is not closed to the capacity for individual action.

In general, it is possible to affirm that the concept of waiting as temporality, when clearly stated, has generally started from a type of theoretical position relative to time as a phenomenon of reality. In other words, the idea of time managed by the analysis, on several occasions, has been decisive in building or selecting a particular concept of waiting.

Closely related to this duality in the concepts of waiting—as either socio-objective or subjective-individual temporalities—is the issue of the origin of waiting as a phenomenon. Here, too, a similar division can be found. In other words, when identifying the source from which waiting originates, we can categorise the range of approaches into two dominant strands: socio-anthropological and psycho-phenomenological.

I have established this classification based on the understanding that each particular analysis explicitly or implicitly manifests different perspectives on the relations that waiting presents in its appearance, both with individual subjects and with the social groups that interact within it. Consequently, the different existing perspectives assume waiting as a phenomenon whose nucleus is either a) in the psycho-individual, b) in the social realm, or indistinctly in both². The inclination towards one or the other perspective will often determine the priorities in the approach. On the one hand, the emphasis will be on the particular waiting subjects' psychic, emotional, and experiential processes. On the other hand, the significant references will be on the institutional or organisational aspects that interact with these processes.

When it is understood as a subjective (phenomenological) dynamic (a), the waiting has been studied primarily with the cognitive dimension of the subject. From this perspective, even objective components of waiting are analysed as perceived by individuals through reason. Here, the relationship with the outside world is univocal (in one direction), from the outside world (the reality) to the inside (the subject). The objective dimension of waiting (*e. g.*, logistics, spaces) is seen as trigger of the psychic processes that, once initiated, can only be explained subjectively. These concepts of waiting can shape existentialist interpretations of the phenomenon (Pickering, 2016).

² It should be noted that a third perspective attributes the essence of waiting processes to physical and natural factors. As waiting is primarily understood as a temporality, the various approaches begin by adopting a particular view of time and then frame waiting according to this view. In adopting this analytical process, time is viewed as a physical phenomenon, which implies the possibility of a waiting process corresponding to this type of temporality.

An example of this approach can be found in the play *Waiting for Godot*³ (Beckett, 1998). Martin Esslin (2001) wrote about this play, locating the waiting in the realm of almost mystical experiences: “waiting is in a certain way *to experience the action of time*⁴, which is constant change. Nevertheless, as nothing really ever happens, that change in itself is an illusion (...). The more things change, the more they are the same. That is the terrible stability of the world”.

Other authors like Pickering (2016) also focus on the experiential component of waiting, defining the phenomenon as “the tension between the future orientation and present experience” (p. 453). For Gregor Dobler, “the conceptual core of waiting” could be synthesised in its “future orientation, passivity, uncertainty, stasis, and absence of intrinsic value” (2020, p. 3). According to Dobler, “we wait for an event or a state of being that has not yet arrived, but that nevertheless becomes the focus of our attention (future orientation)” (*idem*).

Peter D. Dwyer (2009) tries to present this thesis with some objective logic, basing his analysis on the subject’s capacity for action as a distinctive element in waiting processes. His distinction between active and passive situational waiting reflects the kinds of choices that actors make, and it also refers to the contexts in which we wait and the potential consequences of our waiting.

From a similar position, Crapanzano (1986) defined waiting as,

a sort of holding action –a lingering (In its extreme forms waiting can lead to paralysis). In waiting, the present loses its focus in the now. The world in its immediacy slips away, it is derealised. It is without *élan*, vitality, creative force. It is numb, muted, dead. Its only meaning lies in the future– in the arrival or the non-arrival of the object of waiting⁵ (p. 45).

Here the author focuses on the psychological reaction waiting produces in the individual (the present loses focus, becomes numb, muted and dead). The objective situation needs the subject’s reaction to

³ Fictional characters created by Samuel Beckett engage in various discussions and encounters while awaiting another person, Godot, who never arrives.

⁴ The emphasis is mine.

⁵ Cited by Rotter, 2016.

become visible. According to this perspective, waiting is seen as unfavourable because it is not desirable, and it is more a delay in action or “in the arrival of the object” than an object or action.

Other authors (Gasparini, 1995; Geißler 2002; Saybaşıllı 2011) also focus on the individual and the impact that the waiting will have on them. In these cases, the stance is less subjectivist. Although the waiting’s psychological, emotional and symbolic aspects are addressed, space is left for interaction between the subject and reality. Even when the subjective dimension is still at the forefront, waiting processes are framed by social structures. The individual subject is seen as a social actor. Even so, aspects such as the impact of the waiting time on individual experience (duration) or the consequences of waiting conditions for subjects are not considered.

There are some coincidences in the approach of authors who conceive of waiting as a subjective or experiential phenomenon. First, there is a value judgement about waiting, that is, waiting is defined as good or bad. Negative evaluations are based on “temporal uncertainty” (Rotter, 2016) or the undesirable, unproductive waste of time (Schwartz, 1974; Gasparini, 1995) that comes with waiting. Positive evaluations like that of Benjamin, as referenced by Saybaşıllı (2011), associate waiting with a threshold of potentiality that has to be imagined beyond a concept of the already pictured future. Similarly, Diaz (2017) notes that waiting can be creative and voluntary so that time is not measured, and the rush disappears. Second, subjective positions focus on the subject’s expectations and experience as their object of analysis. In doing so, they position waiting between hope and resignation, *boredom* and desire, fulfilment and futility across mental and emotional plans (Schweizer, 2008).

Third, while focusing on the experience of waiting, these approaches usually establish the position of the waiter’s reality as a relevant aspect of this experience. Pierre Bourdieu writes about a “law of human behaviours, whereby the subjective to the objective probability of hope of profit tends to be adjusted to the objective probability of profit governs the propensity to invest (money, work, time, emotion, etc.) in the various fields” (2000, p. 103). Here, Bourdieu positions waiting as a phenomenon between subject experience and objective reality.

On the other hand, the objective or social approach to the study of waiting (b) (Auyero, 2012; Ferrie and Wiseman, 2016; Rotter, 2016; Turnbull, 2016; Bailey, 2018) conceives of waiting as a phenomenon that is external to subjectivity. Accordingly, waiting processes are understood to originate from the culture, group or society surrounding the individual. Here, waiting is seen as

external to individual determination and control. Waiting is interpreted as a phenomenon of a sociological nature, observable in a reality where subjects intervene as social actors.

Waiting situations could be related to quotidian waiting events (Bissell, 2007). For instance, the waiting processes for the kettle to boil, for public transport to arrive, for appointments, medical test results, etc. All of these are catalogued as short-term waiting processes that are part of the everyday experience of living in society (Rotter, 2016). Here, the subject's position is only analysed in terms of their adaptation to the waiting processes of society.

From this perspective, a object-subject relationship is observed as oppressive for the latter. As Rotter (2016) notes, in waiting events, the individual plays only a tiny part and exercises limited control in complex, interdependent societal processes. Consequently, waiting can be conceptualised as a passive state where people lack agency. Hage (2009) argued that waiting involves a significant degree of passivity, and things beyond our control, out of our hands, things we can only wait for and wish for to happen, as opposed to actively doing something to make them happen.

Regardless of the discipline in which the study is grounded, objective approaches to the study of waiting understand society as a complex system of interdependent relations in which the individual plays only a tiny part, which forces them to wait upon others to perform their roles in the system (Rotter, 2016). There is often "no alternative for the subject than to wait, without space for personal action or initiative" (Vanstone, 2020, p. 19).

In general, authors writing from this perspective are less interested in personal experience and focus more on the structures of society that generate waiting processes. Bayart (2007), as referenced by Bailey (2018), sees waiting as a consequence of the increasing bureaucratisation and regulation of time over the 20th century in western society. This bureaucracy is the source of several waiting settings (traffic jams, queues, welfare offices), shaping how people experience social life (Turnbull, 2016, p. 62).

In the globalised world, the phenomenon gets even more complicated. Nowadays, conditions and experiences of long-term waiting have become commonplace for whole populations, which have become stockpiled and forced into latency (*idem*). In this context, specific social structures have been developed to underpin and frame processes of waiting, which can be analysed as external to individual experiences. As Rebeca Rotter (2016) notes, these waiting structures are located in social

spaces, where there is waiting for the arrival of a physical object, an event commencement, a particular state achievement, a circumstance change, and many others.

Studies of waiting as an objective phenomenon are frequently located in organisational contexts such as social assistance offices, prisons, public hospitals, migrant and refugee centres, etc. Some of these studies have included analysing waiting as a coercion and social control mechanism. Barry Schwartz (1974), for example, pointed out that:

[W]aiting presupposes and occurs within an established context of power relations and is to be understood in terms of these relations. Power, to repeat, entails among other things the capacity to provide scarce services which people must wait to receive. The significance of the service for the individual and the social power of the dispenser therefore hinges on its desirability (pp. 856-857).

As waiting becomes located within social structures, power becomes visible as a force that shapes the processes, allowing for exploration of why we wait and whether we have a choice in these phenomena (Fujita, 1985). Hence, topics such as power relations between social agents are recurrent (Schwartz, 1974; Saybaşıllı, 2011; Auyero, 2012). These connections are stratified in multiple ways, such as class, race, sex, nationality, ethnic origin, etc. Khosravi (2014) points out that “waiting is an exercise of power, one that manipulates others’ time” (p. 66). According to Bourdieu (2000), this is simply a way to experience the powerlessness of some social agents.

Several authors focus on “the social, occupational and organisational context of the wait” (Bailey, 2019, p. 593). In most cases, they address material factors that frame and condition the agency of individuals in waiting. These conditionings include aspects of the physical space where the waiting takes place and social or cultural aspects related to the specific location of the waiting process in the social structure.

Regarding the physical location of waiting, some authors use the idea of a situated waiting theory related to the overall context in which the waiting occurs (Granqvist and Gustafsson, 2016) *e.g.*, urban populations in hardship waiting for services from the state, lines, waiting rooms, rural contexts of waiting, etc. (Auyero 2012). On the other hand, the social context of waiting is distinguished between (a) occupational contexts (Bergmann, 1992; Sorokin & Merton, 1937), related to workplaces (Blount and Janicik, 2001); (b) organisational context, which links waiting time with the

competitive structure of industries and organisations (Schwartz, 1975); and (c) social waiting, which analyses situations where waiting is seen as a socially constructed phenomenon.

Some authors have attempted to classify processes of waiting according to their context. In general, a distinction can be observed between waiting contexts where actors have some control or agency and those where the uncertainty level increases while control and agency decrease. On the one hand, Gasparini (1995) talks about *equipped waiting*, referring to the capacity actors and organisations have to prepare for upcoming waiting processes. In this way, individual agency and the context of waiting are intertwined. Becoming equipped for the waiting allows the actor to create a strategy whereby time is filled to reduce the waiting's cost and unpleasant effects (*idem*).

Similarly, other categories such as anticipation (Ferrie & Wiseman, 2016; Rotter, 2016), activity (Gustafson, 2012), opportunity (Sull, 2005) or resting (Gasparini, 1995) are sometimes used in connection with waiting, based on its context. On the other hand, an added negative connotation is attached to waiting in contexts where taking any action to control the process is impossible. An example is when “people queue in order to ensure a space in the distribution of goods or services, that its demand exceeds the supplies, but even though they wait with no guarantee of being served” (Schwartz, 1974, p. 843).

Alongside these positions, other approaches maintain a specific demarcation between waits of one type and those of another. Here, Peter Dwyer (2009) and Dobler (2020) establish some differentiation between *existential* waits (Dwyer, 2009; Dwyer & Minnegal, 1998) or *attitudinal* (Dobler, 2020) and *situational* (Dwyer, 2009) or “specific actions” (Dobler, 2020). These categories could be coordinated with some waits that present subjective/individual characteristics and others of a different nature, where the fundamental aspects will be more of a social nature.

From this point of view, it is even suggested that there are processes where both aspects are present. Here, as in most cases, the subjectivist distinctions and their objectivist counterpart are never presented in their pure state. Both poles have varying degrees of crossover between them. Moreover, the degree of closeness to the extremes will differ in each position. Aspects such as the

waiters' possibilities of *agency*, their willingness to wait, the material conditions of their subjection, etc., are determined precisely by the different possible combinations⁶.

Gasparini (1995) notes that, generally, waiting studies have classified waits as a complex phenomenon. According to Bailey (2018), waiting is a multi-layered, textured experience. For this reason, in its study, various features are interconnected, namely: the waiting itself (in an ontological sense), the individual (the subjective experience of those who wait), the time in waiting and the waiting context (social context in its broadest sense). This interaction will lead to a wide range of analyses of the waiting situation in multiple ways, to which attitudes and behaviours are linked at different scales, both group, social and individual (Bailey, 2018).

Another of the characteristics that can be observed in existing approaches to the phenomenon of waiting is the focus on these processes as fundamentally temporal phenomena. In the studies of waiting, time has frequently been one of the most explored categories. Esslin (1993; 2001) has pointed out that waiting was to experience the action of time, which is constant change. Several studies have focused the analysis on rhythm, duration, chronology or delay.

In this regard, Schwartz (1974) notes:

Delay is a relevant sociological datum because it is general throughout society, is a measure of access to goods and services, and indexes the efficiency of the organisations which distribute them. Above all, delay entails two kinds of very conspicuous costs. Having nothing to do with waiting as such but rather with the losses occasioned by it, value foregone through idleness is an extrinsic disadvantage (p. 842).

Since waiting cuts across all the interstices of daily life, it can be classified as intersectional time (Garparini, 1995):

Waiting may refer either to social or natural events. We wait for someone to arrive at a meeting; we await our turn in a waiting room to be seen by a doctor; we wait for water to reach boiling point in a kettle; we wait for snow to come in winter in order to go skiing; and sometimes we have to wait for

⁶ In my study, it is argued that the concept of waiting along the subjective-objective dichotomy is limited. Waiting is not a univocal idea but an analogous one. In other words, it cannot be resolved in a single dimension of reality, and its definition cannot be delimited as objective or subjective.

snow to stop falling before driving along mountain roads. Similarly, (...) a pregnant woman waits for nine months for a baby who (...) is going to (...) change the structure of the family (p. 30).

Some scholars that address both the individual's experience and their social agency in the process of waiting have inquired about "the status of the person waiting, the perceived agency of the person waiting, and individual temporal orientations" (*ibidem*, p. 38). Other authors focus on whether the waiting is perceived as a positive or a negative experience, and frequently establish a relationship with the waiting actor's position within social structures. Javier Auyero, for example, notes that:

Poor people's waiting shares many of the traits of masculine domination. It is inscribed in the mental and bodily dispositions of both dominant (*i. e.*, men, state agencies) and dominated (women, those who wait), and because of this inscription both groups tend to naturalise or eternalise this relationship of domination. Those that are forced to endure long, routine delays come to see waiting as unavoidable, as a sort of habitual practice that is taken for granted (2012, p. 19).

This example highlights another commonly analysed aspect: social actors' agency in waiting processes. Authors like Minnegal (2009) argue that waiting is often conceptualised as wasted or empty time, away from productive activity, whereas Rotter (2016) proposes that in many cases, social actors choose to enact their agency during the waiting process in order to alleviate negative experiences associated with waiting. The author proposes three dimensions of this agency: an amplified awareness of what people want, waiting as a period of intense activity and a tentatively productive undertaking. These dimensions give meaning to everyday life and enable a focus towards desired futures (Rotter, 2016). Gasparini (1995) also understands waiting as an agentic process, and those who wait are perceived as active producers of social meaning. Similarly, Ferrie & Wiseman (2016) consider that, under certain conditions, people can fill waiting time with various activities.

These positions reveal the last of the common characteristics of the concepts of waiting, which pertains to the axiological representations of these phenomena. Generally, studies have conceptualised waiting as a negative experience due to the state of suspended action it entails for individuals. Waiting has been described as "dead time" (Moran, 2013), a temporal "aberration" (Schweizer, 2008) and an "unwilled" event (Bissell, 2007).

Waiting is perceived as useless or wasted time, sometimes associated with “institutional or organisational settings” (Gasparini, 1995; Schweizer, 2008; Sellerberg, 2008). There is also a strong association between waiting and *boredom*. The person who waits is seen to pass the time merely, and this temporal path cannot be spent doing anything more useful (Moran, 2005). Schwartz (1974) notes that “after a certain point, waiting becomes a source of irritation not only because it may in itself be wearisome, boring, and annoying, but also because it increases the investment a person must make in order to obtain service” (p. 844).

Along these lines, Gasparini (1995) points out that “what really matters is the cost of one’s waiting experience, not just in money but in frustration, anger and other stresses” (Larson, 1988, p. 62). Tang (2012) connects these experiences with how people wait and conceive of them among the aspects related to “the nature of the waiting”. These distinctions include how the waiting process is conducted (alone or with others), if the waiting goes by as a single action (pure waits) or if it occurs while doing other activities (busy waiting).

As a partial summary, it can be affirmed that despite the wide disciplinary diversity in the existing approaches, and independently of particular inclinations, there is a group of characteristics that generally distinguish studies of waiting. Consequently, it is possible to establish at least five theoretical aspects that define waiting within existing research. Namely, that waiting is:

1) *A phenomenon of an essentially temporal nature*. Waiting is considered as something that belongs to time or temporal phenomena, as a temporality.

2) *A fundamentally experiential or phenomenological phenomenon*. Here the *emicist* conception (*emic*, according to Pike’s [2015] classification), which places the experience of individual subjects as the only possible place where a particular objective materiality of waits can be found, is hypothesised.

3) *A morphologically univocal phenomenon*. Waiting is postulated as essentially the same phenomenon, which only varies in terms of the contextual envelopes (always accidental) in which it manifests itself. We mostly speak *of* waiting in singular.

4) *An axiologically pernicious phenomenon*. Waiting is seen as a harmful phenomenon that negatively affects those who “suffer” and should be avoided as far as possible.

5) *An ontologically negative phenomenon*. Waiting is defined as something that is not (a non-time). It highlights “that which is not done” or “that which does not happen”. Waiting is a time in which something does not happen, or someone does not appear, and as such, it is indeterminate in itself

All these characteristics, considered essential in waits, have been the basis for the particular approaches to this object of study. To a greater or lesser extent, and in the face of different problems, different researchers have agreed that when we speak of social and human waits, we refer to a phenomenon that brings together all, or at least several, of these characteristics.

2. Beyond the Surface: Addressing the Gaps in Waiting Research

Even though I have pointed out that waiting is increasingly analysed by various specialists from different disciplines, there is still no theory of waiting understood as a social phenomenon in itself. At least, there is no adequately agreed theory used by the majority of studies. Instead, it is possible to find a wide diversity of concepts, ideas, notions, relationships, etc., linked to these phenomena, often in an *ad hoc* manner and without a clear theoretical basis for why one particular notion is adopted and not another. In other words, the sciences and other disciplines, especially the social ones, do not have a theory of waiting that could be labelled as: sociological, psychological, anthropological or of any other kind. Even with these theoretical limitations, it is fair to point out that the social sciences stand out the most in producing theoretical/practical results on waiting studies⁷. Epistemologically, this plurality of approaches is one of the reasons why, when we speak of waiting, seen in the abstract and without specificities, we refer to a cluster of things that have a family resemblance to each other rather than a univocal concept.

This distinction is crucial because it highlights one of the obstacles that must be overcome if we are to rethink the general analysis of this phenomenon. Specifically, I refer to the possibility of waiting being scientifically treated as a phenomenon in its own right. To use Gustavo Bueno's (2019) terminology, it would be necessary to establish a focus of analysis and establish a proper

⁷ In this regard see, Schwartz 1975, Auyero, 2012, Dwyer, 2009, Bailey, 2019, Janeja & Bandak, 2020, among many others.

gnoseological statute for waiting. This measure would enable waiting to be approached based on the characteristics that these phenomena present in itself.

Given that I will use a particular idea of science that is defended by Gustavo Bueno's Philosophical Materialism⁸, I will say that the sciences cannot operate (work) only with ideas (which are the material of philosophy) but must do so with concepts, terms and categories (Bueno, 1993, 2013, 2021). In other words, various approaches to the phenomenon of waiting should aim to clearly define their categorial and conceptual scope in relation to waiting, in order to adequately delimit their field of study.

With such statements, I do not mean to say that the research so far carried out on the subject in waiting is incorrect, not at all. I am pointing out that philosophy and the sciences have their own areas of reality⁹, which, although not close to other disciplines, must be conceptually and categorially delimited to achieve greater effectiveness and a better understanding of these phenomena.

Considering all of the above, it is possible to make the following statement. Regardless of how much has been said about waiting and its characteristics, it is common among existing research that it only delves into waiting as such beyond its temporal characteristics and the subjective perceptions of these processes. Generally, when this question is approached, the starting point is a specific and already established idea of waiting, which combines some, or perhaps all, of the characteristics mentioned above. However, it is often overlooked to offer a clear and distinct explanation as to why these, and not others, are the ontological cores of this phenomenon.

In other words, when reference is made to waiting, it is often assumed that one knows what is meant. This type of reasoning is based on the assumption that waiting is too apparent a phenomenon to require explanation. The most common argument for this is that almost everyone has "experienced" waiting, *i. e.*, has some "experience of waiting", and therefore knows what it is. However, starting from this principle and generally assuming that waiting is a phenomenon linked to

⁸ Some authors, also call Bueno's materialism as "Discontinuous Materialism", for an explanation of this see: Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara *et al.*, 2022.

⁹ The significance of philosophy in addressing these issues is well-founded, as noted by Merton, Bunge, Bueno and other scholars. A strong feedback exists between philosophy and scientific research because every science is supported on philosophical assumptions (ontological, epistemological,gnoseological, and methodological), whether they are implicit or explicit. . These assumptions either aid or impede the scientific construction process.

time, more in-depth analyses revolve around determining the characteristics that waiting has as a temporality and then moving on to study its repercussions on the subjects who “experience” this kind of “temporal state”, particularly in socio/cultural and existential situations.

The problem with this approach is that leaves out a set of phenomena and processes in the analysis, which are also part of waiting, but cannot be reduced to any of these gnoseological and ontological assumptions. In other words, there is much more in the waits than just a given amount of time and the individual experience about it. Concisely, in this regard, I argue that waiting exhibits a plurality in its morphology that cannot be reduced to just a single type of phenomenon.

Along the same lines, it is increasingly evident that, neither axiologically nor ontologically, the waits are necessarily negative phenomena. All these issues have already been perceived and commented on by various authors (Auyero, 2012; Dobler, 2020; Gasparini, 1995; Hage, 2009; Janeja & Bandak, 2020), who have been trying to establish analytical assumptions similar to those I have proposed in this research. That is to say, to delimit the borders of a field of study, that of social and human waiting, constituting a genuine object of study for the disciplines and sciences concerned.

Given that waiting is a relatively recent topic within the social and human sciences, we are still treading the logical path that leads to forming a topic demarcated from others. This demarcation is incomplete because waiting has not yet been appropriately categorised as a phenomenon. To a large extent, this is the result of the almost-preeminent use of the waiting conceptualisation associated with the time as described above. This inclination towards the temporal has categorially linked waiting to a specific field that has already been defined within the *gnoseological space* of the social and human sciences. I am referring, specifically, to the studies of temporalities and social time.

Temporality is usually understood as notions of time or conceptualisations of the temporal phenomenon in a specific socio-historical (Iparraguirre, 2022) or socio-cultural context. In this area of knowledge, waiting processes are usually framed as an object of analysis. When we speak of waiting as a specific time, what is generally ignored is that waiting is a type of temporality where specific rationally conducted actions (Stasik *et al.*, 2020) (proleptic operations) occur. In the same way, the given space, which is distinct from the rest of the existing places where the time and operations of waiting occur, is not generally considered.

If one does not start from this three-dimensional concept (tempo/spatial/operational), one runs the risk, as is generally the case, of going in search of the factual indicators of this “waiting time”

beyond the waiting as such. That is to say, one seeks to apprehend waiting, temporally conceived, in the only place where it is possible to locate it, abstracted from all materiality. Moreover, this place is none other than the mind, the consciousness, and the psyche of the subjects who “experience”, almost always in a harmful way, the waiting time. This, then, would be another central characteristic that gnoseologically defines the study of waiting today. Its extreme psycho/phenomenal approach, or centralisation of the subjective dimension of these processes¹⁰.

However, it is fair to point out that more and more disciplinary approaches are beginning to sense problems with this way of dealing with waiting. Consequently, various researchers (Auyero, 2012; Bailey, 2019; Hage, 2009; Janeja & Bandak, 2020; Lindón, 2019) have proposed broadening the field of waiting to include other aspects and phenomena associated with it, which may exceed the capacities of strictly temporal categories.

Bandak & Janeja argue that “waiting should be conceptualised both as a figure in itself and as a trigger for various forms of social energies” (2020, p. 1), an approach that other authors have shared (Auyero, 2012; Dobler, 2020; Hage, 2009; Lindón, 2019; Musset, 2015).

If such a transformation is possible, it cannot be achieved within the analytical coordinates used by current studies on waiting. It cannot be achieved from a purely temporal analysis perspective and even less so from the often-prevailing psycho-phenomenological perspective. Consequently, I propose a complete paradigm shift in this research. Here, waiting as a topic of analysis moves from the field of temporalities to a different one, allowing us to broaden the field of study and include all materials and phenomena currently left out of the analysis due to the limitations of the temporal approach and those present in the currently hegemonic experiential perspective.

In what follows, I will delve into how my research proposes to realise this reconfiguration of the field of waits.

¹⁰ To clarify:, studies on waiting mainly focus on *experiential* aspects, but we cannot definitively link this to the field's inherent epistemological traits and temporal connections. The hypothesis is doubtful, as it occasionally holds for such analyses. A shift in social sciences' approach to waiting is apparent in reviewing studies. Pre-1980s research adopted an objective perspective, emphasising material and structural phenomena over individuals' psychological nuances. Post-1980s, *experiential perspectives* gained prominence. This trend likely stems from a broader shift in social sciences, especially anthropology, where *experience* has become increasingly central. I have yet to explore this deeply; further investigation from sociology or philosophy of scientific knowledge perspectives is warranted beyond this study's scope.

3. A New Paradigm for Waiting Analysis: A Tripartite Model of Time, Space and Operations

Waiting processes can be part of a myriad of phenomena. For instance, immigrants who wait at a border for legalisation of their migratory status must invest much time in this process. It is also probable that this waiting has not been pleasant, as several kinds of research point it out (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020; Conlon, 2011; Correa *et al.*, 2013; Musset, 2015). However, in any case, this waiting process, as totality, cannot be understood just by analysing the invested time in the waiting and the involved waiters' feelings. In order to understand waiting processes like the mentioned before, it is necessary to consider other phenomena, such as the area or space where the waiting takes place and its material characteristics. In other words, if the waiting place is big enough to contain the waiters and has the logistical capacity, if there is water, food, shelter, chairs, mattresses, or if it is cold, humid, hot, etc.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider the dynamics and actions that the process demands of the social actors involved in it. As Gregor Dobler points out, "people can do quite a lot of different things while they wait" (2020, p. 2). Those actions, or operations as I call them, are also an essential part of any waiting process and could include checking a waiting list, positioning in a particular place inside a waiting room, finding information about the process, fighting to improve their status inside of it, or even praying to the god of their faith while wait.

These aspects, among others, are part of the waiting but are not necessarily related to their temporality. These aspects are not random phenomena that involve or interconnect the waits. Besides, many of them also have the particularity of being objective phenomena. In other words, they are not just determined by the feelings or experiences of the waiters. On the contrary, they are parts of the process itself and demand to be explained by its characteristics and not by a simple coordination with the process's time or subjective experience associated with it.

One issue highlighted by the literature review is that current theoretical frameworks, which predominantly focus on the temporal and phenomenological aspects of waiting, can only address certain dimensions of the field of waiting processes, but not all. Various aspects of waiting cannot be adequately captured merely through temporal, psychological, or positive/negative experiential dichotomies. In this context, there is a need to refine the analytical tools employed in the study of

waiting in order to more effectively account for the full complexity of social waits and their associated phenomena. This refinement will enable a more comprehensive articulation of the data gathered during the empirical analysis of these processes.

In this regard, it is possible to argue that the shortcomings of the current theories of waiting can be summarised as follows:

- a) Lack of a comprehensive definition of waiting as a social process (not limited to temporality or subjectivity).
- b) Lack of clarity about the typologies within the process of waiting (is there one type of waiting that manifests itself in multiple social phenomena, or diverse types of waits?).
- c) Insufficient understanding of the position of the waiting in a gnoseological space (how the waiting interconnects with other phenomena).

These limitations, coupled with the characteristics previously mentioned in waiting studies, prompt this thesis to propose a new analytical perspective for analysing waiting. My theoretical proposal aims to provide a more robust and comprehensive framework, grounded in gnoseological, epistemological, and, consequently, methodological assumptions, for examining the issue of social and human waits. Specifically, I propose a redefinition of the prevailing assumptions in waiting studies that have come to characterize existing analyses. For this critical exercise, I situate the analysis within the philosophical materialist perspective, as articulated by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno Martínez (1924-2016) and developed throughout his lifetime¹¹.

In the reformulation of this framework, I put forth the argument that:

- 1) Rather than considering the waits phenomena *of an essentially temporal nature*, they should be considered temporal, spatial and operational phenomena.

¹¹ In the body of this research, we have used the labels Philosophical Materialism and Discontinuous Materialism interchangeably. The latter is the label proposed in “Contemporary Materialism: Its Ontology and Epistemology”, Romero, G.E., Pérez-Jara, J., Camprubí, L. (eds); published in 2022 by Synthese Library, vol 447. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-89488-7_3.

- 2) Rather than understanding the waits as *an experiential or phenomenological phenomenon*, I propose to analyse them as processes that transcend the psychological dimension, materialising in the objective of social reality as social institutions.
- 3) Rather than claiming that the waits are *a morphologically univocal or singular phenomenon* (the waiting is essentially the same phenomenon always), I propose to analyse it as a plural phenomenon. There are many kinds of institutionalised waiting.
- 4) Rather than classifying the waits as *axiologically pernicious phenomena*, I maintain that the waits are, in principle, neutral phenomena that are not always axiologically positive or negative but depend on each particular case.
- 5) Finally, rather than conceiving the waits as an ontologically negative (*uncertain, dark*) phenomenon, the waiting is defined here as a positive and materially recognisable phenomenon.

This theoretical proposal could enable a more accurate empirical approach to the issues related to social waiting. Moreover, it might facilitate the inclusion of many of the materials and phenomena that can be found in the field of waiting, which are left out by current theoretical approaches.

Even so, this reversal is not intended to deny the link between waiting and the assumptions already attributed to it by existing research. Furthermore, I do not seek to deny the relevance of the analyses carried out so far; quite the contrary. Through a philosophical critique of the approaches made, I seek to reinterpret many of the postulates that have been held, only in a different direction from those that have been expressed.

From this framework, the stance I will maintain throughout this research is that establishing a genuine gnoseological and ontological status for waiting necessitates two fundamental actions. The first action involves translating the study of waiting from the domain of temporalities to an entirely new field within the gnoseological space of social and human sciences. Specifically, I propose that social waiting, viewed as a distinct object of analysis in the social and human sciences from a categorial standpoint, should be approached as a subset within the gnoseological field of social institutions. This repositioning would enable an expansion of the field to accommodate a multiplicity of phenomena, including temporal ones, that interact within the waiting processes. In this context, I

assert that waiting phenomena are more than merely temporal, and their complexity cannot be reduced to or solely explained by the categories that temporal studies provide, even though I do not dismiss the importance of these for understanding waits.

In clear and concise terms, the hypothesis that has guided me throughout this study is that the waiting processes examined by social and human sciences are objective, institutionalized phenomena. In short, these processes constitute material social institutions that transcend the subjective experiences of the social actors involved.

Secondly, these waiting processes cannot be reduced to their temporal dimension alone. Although the *time* of waiting is undoubtedly significant, I have argued that waiting is ontologically constituted, in addition, by a *spatial* and an *operational* dimension, without which it is impossible to explain these phenomena, their characteristics and their interrelations with other aspects of reality.

Based on these hypotheses, this study aims:

- I. **To introduce a new approach to analysing human social waiting processes from an institutional perspective.**
- II. **To initiate the construction of a theory of social and human waits understood as temporal, spatial and operational phenomena.**
- III. **To propose a theoretical system of categories to enable a more comprehensive and systematic empirical approach to the waiting from the social sciences, utilising the institutional and tempo/spatial/operational perspectives presented here.**

In the forthcoming sections, I will elaborate in detail on how I intend to achieve these objectives.

4. Philosophical Materialism and the Analysis of Waiting: The Pertinence of Discontinuous Materialism

To fulfill the objectives of this study, I have incorporated various concepts, terminology, and categories from the framework of Philosophical Materialism, with a particular emphasis on the system developed by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno.. Also known as *Discontinuous*

Materialism (DM)¹², this is a philosophy that rejects the hypostatisation of any element, property, state or relation of reality. A variety of philosophical materialism identifies being with matter in its broadest sense and denies the existence of disembodied living beings and hypostatised ideas. The system defends the role of philosophy in contemporary society by analysing and systematising ideas. It emphasises the importance of philosophical systems that represent a *mapa mundi* of a 'critical nature' when confronted with alternative perspectives. The main criterion for determining the partial truth of a philosophical system is to discard alternatives that lead to contradictions and dead ends critically. According to this system, the work of a true philosopher is compared to that of a metascientific detective (Pérez-Jara, 2022).

Bueno's philosophy also emphasises, as an essential structural dimension of material reality, the principle of *symploké*¹³. In agreement with this principle, I consider that plurality of materialist worldviews cannot be reduced to a handful of possible ontologies and that rigorous philosophy is necessarily systematic and involves the critical discarding of alternative worldviews.

About DM (PhM), as a philosophical current, it is possible to affirm that Materialism is not one, but many (Ongay, 2013, 2022; Pérez-Jara et al., 2022). To succinctly summarise the explanation, one could say, in agreement with Jara (2022), that:

[P]ositively, Materialism, in general, names the branch of philosophical worldviews that identify being (the "ὅντος" of ontology) with matter, understood in its broadest sense as changeability and plurality (partes extra partes). Negatively, Materialism denies the independent ontological existence (from human conceptual imagination) of disembodied living beings and hypostatised ideas (p. 109).

¹² This philosophical framework is often called 'Discontinuous Materialism' (DM) in the English translations and commentaries of Bueno's work (Camprubí, 2022; Ongay, 2022; Pérez-Jara, 2022). In Spanish, it is termed 'Materialismo Filosófico' (Philosophical Materialism -PhM-). Throughout this paper, I will predominantly use the term DM for the convenience of English-speaking readers, as this is the most commonly used English designation. The term DM only emerged in 2022; hence, papers authored before this date primarily use the label PhM. I have decided to retain this label to showcase the research's evolution.

¹³ The principle of *symploké* was introduced into the Western philosophical tradition by Plato in his Sophist (251e-253e). It points to the discontinuous nature of reality where not everything is connected to everything, but neither is everything disconnected from everything else. Plato thus confronts the monism of his time by opposing a discontinuous pluralism.

Gustavo Bueno's DM is a philosophical system based on a materialist approach, as opposed to idealism, spiritualism, monism and formalism. It also distances itself from the Positivist Materialism of the Marxist tradition, as it crystallised in the Soviet historical and dialectical Materialism (Alvargonzalez, 2020). In practice, this takes the shape of a philosophical system that breaks the dichotomy between the spiritual substance (non-material) and the material substance (non-spiritual).

DM is a non-reductive materialism, which offers a notion of matter broader than tangible objects that the so-called "material turn" tend to limit itself. Gustavo Bueno posits that matter encompasses other realities, including non-tangible physical matter. According to Javier Pérez Jara (2022), these non-tangible realities are material due to their plurality and changeability; moreover, their existence depends directly on the physical matter that supports them without exhausting them (Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara *et al.*, 2022).

In his characteristic logical symbolic language, Gustavo Bueno proposed to allocate the matter to his ontology's core. At the bottom of it, it is possible to find the idea of "World" or Anthropic Universe (M_i), the idea of Transcendental Ego (E), and the idea of ontological-general Matter (M). Two of these ideas (E and M_i) can be opened into another three. Those are the ideas of M_1 , M_2 and M_3 , representing the three genera of materiality. The core ideas of Bueno's DM (M, E, M_i) "can unfold into six: <M, M_i , (M_1 , M_2 , M_3), E>" (Pérez-Jara, 2022, p. 115).

At this point, Bueno's philosophical system uses Christian Wolff's traditional distinction between *general* and *special* metaphysics in a new and different way (Wolff, 1736). For Bueno, *special ontology* deals with the contents of the anthropic universe or world. Since Bueno held that these three genera (or dimensions) of materiality constitute the World (M_i), represented by him as M_1 , M_2 and M_3 , the special ontology will analyse these genera.

The Spanish philosopher Javier Pérez-Jara summarises these three genera of materiality in Bueno's system as follow:

M_1 : Physical matter. From quarks, leptons or electromagnetic waves to cells, stones, mountains and globular clusters. M_1 can be divided into two main categories: (a) phenomenological, which is constituted by the "organoleptic world" (mountains, trees, rocks, visible stars, etc.) and (b) non-phenomenological (from electromagnetic waves outside the visible spectrum to nuclear forces and the core of the Earth itself).

M₂: Psychic matter. From perceptions, memories, and kinesthetic experiences to abstract thoughts and reasoning. M₂ can be divided into (a) the psychological contents of my own subjectivity and (b) the psychological contents of the subjectivity of other humans and animals.

M₃: Eidetic-abstract matter. From religious archetypes, the grammatical structure of languages, and the conceptual artefacts of mathematics and symbolic logic to scientific concepts and philosophical ideas.

M₃ can be divided into: (a) those contents that have already been formulated as such and (b) those contents that have not been formulated as such but maybe (2022, p. 117).

According to Bueno (1972), the main theoretical enemy of any analytical perspective considering this *special ontology* is to hypostatise any of these three genera. This particular statement is essential for my theory about the waiting processes. Here, I argue that in the waiting processes, various kinds of materiality interact among them. As I have analysed before, one of the main problems of the current waiting theories is the hypostasis they made of one specific content of this process.

As I have pointed out, this subject experience usually constitutes the primary indicator for analysing a waiting process. In this regard, I do not deny the existence or even the importance of these experiences, but I oppose the centrality given to them in several studies. In philosophical materialistic terms, it could be said that this hypostasis of the subject experience results in conceptualising the waiting as an M₂ materiality. The problem with this procedure is that in the waiting field, other materials are also essential for the process, which cannot be reduced just to the psychological experience of the subject, or, said in DM terms, to M₂.

As I have indicated, within a waiting scenario one might encounter various elements, ranging from a chair, a table, or a water dispenser to a physical waiting room or a specific timeframe displayed on a banner, which outlines the scheduled temporal structure of the process. All these materials could be considered as M₁ materiality. Moreover, in the waits, it is possible to find other kinds of materials related to the third genera of materiality, such as a mathematical equation to calculate the number of people to attend during a day in a service store, or a particular idea of waiting employed by a group of people in a particular situation, that could be included in the third genera M₃.

Bueno also developed a theory of sciences called the *theory of categorial closure* (1991-1992). In this theory, each scientific field constitutes a categorial closure, defining a “circle or category of

immanence in which operations with kinds of terms cut at the field's scale give way to the same kinds of terms" (Camprubí, 2022, p. 253). According to Alvargonzalez (2023), this theory constitutes a pluralistic gnoseology; that is, it is based on the multiplicity of the sciences and underlines their material, corporeal, operative components. The theory of categorial closure is synthetic and constructive when underpinning the study of the gnoseological status of the so-called "human sciences" to understand and discuss the internal limits of their scientific nature.

Applying this theory to my study subject allows me to consider waiting as a *gnoseological field*; in other words, delimit all the waiting-related materials (terms, categories, relations, but also objects, dynamics, etc.) into a particular area. Based on the tenets of DM, Gustavo Bueno presupposes that every gnoseological field relates to an ontological field or space. For Materialism, the sciences and academic disciplines are not understood as "ideal constructions", or "chains of propositions" separated from reality (Bueno, 2019). On the contrary, these are the mechanisms of active transformation of particular "unclaimed" contents in various areas of reality into other contents to which they are linked.

According to Bueno, scientific and disciplinary operations occur in a gnoseological field. Like a garden or an agricultural field, this space is not a "natural" space but a worked (ploughed, tilled, cultivated) one (Bueno, 2019). These actions are conducted with sets of given terms that maintain relations with each other and give rise to transformations of specific terms into other terms also belonging to that territory.

For the DM, given that "no science can exhaust its always 'superficial' field" (Bueno, 2013), every gnoseological field is perpetually situated within a gnoseological space. In other words, a science's gnoseological field is limited not only by the reality itself but also by other scientific fields. Accordingly, it is not only the pre-scientific disciplines but also the antecedent disciplines that are included in the gnoseological space.

According to this theory, the waiting process can be considered a particular *field* shared by different disciplines and sciences in a specific *gnoseological space*. Similarly, it is possible to paraphrase Bueno's view on happiness and argue that waiting can be viewed (like happiness) as a philosophical idea shared by several disciplines where one or more techniques can be applied. As Bueno pointed out in the case of happiness, those techniques could come from "positive sciences or,

by extension, disciplines that, while not strictly scientific or technical (...), have or seek to have a deep connection with certain scientific disciplines” (Bueno, 2019).

In the waiting case, it is possible to include mathematical algorithms to organise queues and waiting lines, architectural strategies, or build methods to design waiting spaces to contain hundreds of waiters, or even decoration and interior space procedures to entertain and calm people who have to wait for services and goods.

As occurred with the waiting as gnoseological space, this philosophical system also provides other concepts, categories and terms useful as the building blocks used to developing a new theory of waiting. This new approach defines human waiting processes as *social institutions* operating across the *anthropological space*. In Bueno’s philosophical anthropology, anthropological space is an abstract space “delimited by three axes named after their pictorial representation: circular (the relationship of humans to humans), radial (the relationship of humans to things) and angular (the relationship of humans to non-human persons, such as real animals and mythological daemons and gods)” (Bueno, 2019).

The *theory of institutions* developed within Bueno’s DM will allow us to (a) critically analyse the existing theories and materials about waiting and (b) organise the theoretical and gnoseological fields¹⁴ of waiting. In other words, the project aims to expand the analytical structures with which waiting has been studied, offering new coordinates to the field.

Bueno’s theory of institutions (Bueno, 2005) is essential to this study. In it, Bueno maintains that what distinguishes human rationality from other animals is its institutional character and proceeds to offer an analysis and classification of institutions and their role in anthropology. Bueno (*idem*) argues that institutions should be considered the core morphological category of anthropology, although he acknowledges that other non-institutional contents of anthropological-cultural origin can also be the subject of philosophical anthropology. According to Ongay (2007), Bueno’s theory defines institutions as teleological, normative and practical human action figures. For example, it is also a differential category of anthropological material concerning animal cultures. In other words, Bueno uses the concept of institution as a universal category to delineate human

¹⁴ The scientific field is understood here in the sense of Philosophical Materialism, further explained.

rationality as a distinctive attribute of humans concerning animals. For Bueno, humans enact their rationality through institutions (*idem*).

In understanding Bueno's concept of institutions, two other concepts are essential, *i. e.*, *anthropological space* and *ceremony*. The idea of *anthropological space* is relevant, as it is the ambit in which institutions exist. Moreover, ceremonies are essential because, as Bueno defines them, they are one of the two main kinds of institutions (Bueno, 1984), presented by him as *ceremonial* and *non-ceremonial*. Anthropological space and ceremony concepts have also been related to the waiting processes in my study.

Even with all that has been pointed out, I do not consider this project strictly pioneering. Indeed, several studies from the social disciplines perceive the institutional character of the waiting processes. I even dare to say that most of the research carried out in anthropology and sociology has already approached the phenomena of waiting from an institutional perspective but without framing it thus. Various authors (Auyero, 2012; Bailey, 2018; Gasparini, 1995; Schwartz, 1974) have perceived a "regulated", "ritualised", "organised" and "meaningful" character in the waiting that shows its "institutionalised" nature. The problem is that those aspects are analysed without using the category institution in any of these cases. I believe many of the theoretical difficulties of the current studies derive precisely from this unawareness.

There are several gnoseological consequences in analysing the *waiting processes* from the standpoint of DM and defining it as an institution. First, this approach differs from the phenomenological notions of waiting, which have prevailed in anthropology, sociology, philosophy and psychology. Second, DM offers conceptual tools to cover the study of waiting in the gnoseological field with one coherent theory instead of fragmented theories for diverse waiting instances. The theory of institutions stemming from DM allows us to systematise many aspects addressed by the studies of waiting in a dispersed and unsystematic manner. Third, using the theory of institutions stemming from DM, the waiting could be defined as an entity of a dialectical nature, *i. e.*, not constrained by the objective/subjective dichotomy.

Finally, there is another reason to use Bueno's DM in my study. Bueno built his system, considering it a politically and world-implemented philosophy. With it, Bueno considers the institutional character of the philosophical tradition and the necessity for the philosophies to deal with the realities surrounding humans in every socio-historical context. Bueno argues that ideas, as

fundamental philosophical materials, are interwoven in the human world, and it is the philosopher's responsibility to critically and dialectically engage with them. In this regard, he proposes a return to the public agora to debate and confront the ideas materially rooted around us. He emphasizes that "thinking is always to think against something or someone".

In summary, Bueno's DM allows us to (a) critically analyse the current state of the waiting's social sciences and philosophy research, (b) introduce a new theoretical perspective for the analysis of the waiting processes based on an institutional perspective and in the inclusion of other dimensions (space and operations) different from the temporal hegemonic in the current studies and moreover, (c) to create a system of theoretical and operational categories to inform the study of waiting as an institution in empirical research from the social sciences.

5. Thesis structure

This research is presented in a 'PhD by Publication' format, chosen for its ability to highlight discrete yet interconnected results. This format was particularly suitable for this study as it allowed a flexible exploration of multiple topics within the same theme, focusing on specific aspects without being constrained by a rigid plan. This approach was crucial during the global pandemic, a period marked by lockdowns and societal upheaval, which made the empirical research plan unpredictable in the best of cases and directly impossible in others.

The structure of this thesis represents one of many possible alternatives. Word count limitations and the expansive nature of the research subject meant it was impossible to include all the work done in the main body of the thesis. Therefore, this document comprises a curated selection of papers written over the past four years. The presented order of these works aims to balance a) theoretical papers and b) categorial ones.

The theoretical (a) primarily focuses on the critique and epistemological analysis of the field of waiting studies, emphasising disciplinary tendencies, topics of interest, and general approaches within the field. On the other hand, the categorial ones (b) mainly focus on the empirical research of waiting and the potential for developing more precise categories.

These papers employ a dialectical analysis of existing studies and theories, emphasising empirical findings, which are then reinterpreted using other categories. From the methodological

perspective of this research, the dialectical method is not intended to detract from other research; quite the opposite. Critically deconstructing these theories, studies, and authors is my way of acknowledging their significance and honouring their contributions.

The structure and organisation of the material could have been different, which would have, in turn, influenced the tone and disciplinary approach of the research. In this regard, an anthropological or sociological approach could have organised the materials differently without necessarily being wrong. The philosophical character that this structure follows is just one among others possible.

Therefore, besides the main papers, I have included supporting papers that provide more theoretical and categorial information on most topics. Readers who feel a section needs theoretical information can refer to the papers in the appendix for further details. Likewise, for those interested in additional categories beyond those presented in the analysis of any particular dimension of waiting, more information can be found in the appendix. However, other papers, essays, and book chapters have been excluded. Their absence is not just due to space constraints but also to emphasise that this research is merely an introduction to the topic and that further work should, and undoubtedly will, continue.

In line with the above, the final research report presents the findings distributed across six papers, divided into four essential topics, distributed into six chapters.

Chapter 2, titled “Waiting in Context: A Critical Exploration of its Theoretical Underpinnings and Historical Evolution”, is related to some historical aspects of the evolution of waiting as an idea. Here, I have analysed philological and doxographical aspects of the waiting as ideas and concepts. Moreover, some of the main terms and concepts related to waiting have been exposed, analysing the most prominent modulations of the waiting concept presented in the current studies and throughout history.

Along with these historical/conceptual aspects, I will also introduce in this first section some of the particular features of my theoretical approach to the waiting studies in this first section. In this regard, I will analyse the institutional perspective I propose for analysing waiting processes, which will also be achieved along most of the paper in this report.

These questions and more were attained in the articles:

- ✓ “From the eschatological Hope to the working time. Sociological notes on the Christian origins of the contemporary idea of waiting”
- ✓ “Waiting as institution. Notes for an institutional analysis of human waiting”

In conjunction with this chapter, the appendix includes an article titled "Beyond Temporal and Experiential Aspects: Critical Notes on the Idea of Waiting Handled by the Social Sciences" (See, Appendix VII, Complementary paper 3).

This chapter provides an exhaustive analysis of the primary characteristics of current waiting studies, with a particular focus on the social and human sciences field.

Chapter 3, “Exploring the Topography of Waiting: Analysing Categories and Terms from a Materialist Perspective for the Spatial Dimension of Waiting”, delves into crucial aspects associated with the spatial dimension of waiting processes. In this part, I explore various theoretical attributes of the approaches to this subject, proposing new categories and terminology that could be beneficial in examining this aspect of the waiting process. The article that encapsulates these vital questions is “The topography of waiting: Categorical notes for the analysis of waiting spaces”.

The phrase “topography of waiting” encompasses all approaches that pertain to the unique dimension of waiting processes, which is essential to understand these phenomena. Based on the analysis conducted in this chapter's main article, I have also included an additional article, “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories useful for their study”, which can be found in *Appendix V (Complementary paper 1)*. In this appended article, I present other potential categories that could be useful in the analysis of the spaces of waiting.

Chapter 4, “Beyond Time: Operational Aspects of Waiting Processes and their Institutional Frameworks”, corresponds with the operational aspects of waiting processes. This operational viewpoint on waiting processes stands as a significant contribution to this field of study, given the conspicuous lack of material and research addressing this aspect as a unique and vital part of the waiting process.

In the corresponding article, I have examined how the operability of waiting has been portrayed in existing waiting studies. Additionally, I have proposed a novel way to understand this topic, introducing categories to classify related specifics. This pivotal issue has been explored in the

paper “Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes”.

In parallel to this topic, I have also included in *Appendix VI (Complementary paper 2)* of this thesis an additional paper presenting other categories, terms, and concepts that could be of use in this context. This paper is titled: “Institutionality as an operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study”.

Chapter 5, “Temporal Perspectives on Waiting Processes: A New Theoretical Framework and Analytical Categories”, introduces my theory of time within the context of waiting processes, highlighting its significance and main characteristics. Given the centrality of temporal aspects in contemporary waiting studies, coupled with the considerable number of papers addressing this topic, this section comprises the most substantial articles of the report. Here, I not only present my theory regarding the temporal aspects of waiting processes but also propose a set of categories to examine this dimension.

Furthermore, I have conducted a critical analysis of temporality, introducing a theory that aims to understand not time itself, but the process of temporalisation. In other words, I explore the process of assigning a temporal structure to certain phenomena from a socio-anthropological perspective. These subjects are addressed in the papers: “From temporality to three-dimensionality: A critical reconsidering of waiting processes as social phenomena” and “Some useful concepts, notions and categories for the study of the temporality of waiting”.

The concluding chapter, **Chapter 6**, “Analysing the Institutionalisation of Waiting in Cuba: Some Empirical Case Studies Examined from a Philosophical-Materialist Framework”, functions as the discussion chapter. Here, I utilise the results derived from all previous sections and provide an overarching summary of the entire research. While a typical discussion chapter would compare the findings with existing theories and scholarship, the unique nature of my study - in which I introduce a novel approach to examining human waiting processes from a philosophical materialist perspective - necessitated a distinct approach.

Having critically engaged with authors who have previously investigated waiting processes and having developed the categories and perspectives proposed in this study based on my critique, I

found it superfluous to reiterate this type of analysis in the discussion chapter. Instead, I opted to critically examine my own categories by scrutinising empirical and objective waiting processes, testing their applicability in describing real-world waiting scenarios.

This approach provided valuable insights into the practical application of my theoretical framework and its effectiveness in real-world waiting situations. In the Discussion Chapter, readers will also gain a comprehensive understanding of all preceding chapters of my research and their implications for the study of waiting processes. To address these topics, I have composed the following texts:

- "Waiting as a Concept and as a Practice: A Brief Analysis of Historical and Contemporary Uses in Cuban Politics, Society and Culture."
- "The Waits of 'La Coyuntura' and the Waits of the Pandemic in Cuba: A Critical Discussion on the Institutionalisation of Waiting in Cuba. Three Case Studies"
- "Waiting for Bureaucracy in Cuba: Notes on the Spaces of Waiting and their Importance in Researching These Phenomena."
- "Waiting for the Blackout and Waiting for the Light to Come On: Notes on Waiting Operations."
- "The Waiting for Dollars in Cuba: Notes on the Temporality of Waiting."

Each of these short essays focuses on one of the main topics developed in the body of the thesis. In this sense, they encapsulate the interrelations among the idea of waiting and other concepts such as hope or expectations, the institutional nature of some waiting processes, and the spatial, operational and temporal dimensions of waiting processes, respectively.

Chapter 2. Waiting in Context: A Critical Exploration of its Theoretical Underpinnings and Historical Evolution

This chapter delves into the multifaceted nature of 'waiting' as a concept, examining its theoretical characteristics. We will traverse its historical development and social ramifications whilst interrogating prevailing paradigms that attempt to comprehend and analyse this phenomenon.

The inaugural article, "From Eschatological Hope to Working Time: Sociological Notes on the Christian Origins of the Contemporary Idea of Waiting," scrutinises the evolution and contemporary interpretation of waiting processes within social science research. This piece has been chosen to be included in the publication "Environmental Hope: Socio-Anthropological Approaches of Religion," edited by David W. Kim and Duncan Wright, both from the Australian National University.

The following article, "Waiting as an Institution: Notes for an Institutional Analysis of Human Waiting," proposes an avant-garde theory for examining social and human waiting, straying from the prevailing temporal perspective.

In essence, this chapter delivers a comprehensive and pioneering exploration of waiting. Through the lens of a philosophical materialist perspective, it introduces an institutional theory of waiting processes. This viewpoint disrupts and reshapes our understanding of what may appear as a fundamentally experiential process, transforming it into an objective and tangible subject for academic examination.

Title: From the eschatological Hope to the working time. Sociological notes on the Christian origins of the contemporary idea of waiting

Abstract

This paper critically investigates the historical evolution and current perception of waiting in social science research. It highlights connections to notions of Hope¹⁵, time, and subjectivity, primarily derived from a social context that encourages their perpetuation. Through the lens of Gustavo Bueno's philosophical materialism, it suggests waiting evolved from a theological inversion of eschatological Hope, moulded by post-feudal industrial modernity and Protestantism's ethos. The prevalent understanding of waiting emphasises temporal aspects and subjective experience, causing ambiguities in research. The paper aims to deconstruct these ideas using a materialist perspective, urging a deeper comprehension of historical and complex processes.

Keywords: *Waiting processes, Subjectivity, time, Eschatological Hope, Philosophical Materialism.*

1. Introduction

This chapter analyses some of the historical developments of the relationship between the notion of hope and the contemporary notion of waiting. Developing this historically grounded perspective on waiting is essential given the attention that notions concerning waiting have and continue to receive in social science research. Therefore, the central thesis of this chapter provides further contextual depth and consideration to these debates by arguing that the origins of the current temporal notion of waiting can be located within the historical evolution of the eschatological Hope. The chapter charts the appearance of the very concept of Hope as it was understood among the first Christians, to its secularization around the 17th and 18th centuries in what Gustavo Bueno has called a “theological reversal process”, which will be discussed further along. This process encompasses several doctrinal

¹⁵ Throughout this treatise, I shall draw a distinction between Eschatological Hope in the religious sense, understood as a theological virtue, and secular, profane hope. We'll distinguish these by the use of capital and lower-case letters respectively.

and conceptual changes inside Christianity, such as the Augustinian reconceptualization of time and the doctrinal revolution introduced by Christian Protestantism in Europe and North America in the early modern era.

Etymologically, the verb *to wait* in English is derived from the Old French verb *waitier* (to observe). In the noun's function (*wait*), it corresponds to the Old French *gait*, which means to watch or observe an entrance or place of access (Harper, 2019). This noun usage is initially related to specific functions such as that of a watchman (a guard). In both cases, if we follow the Old High German *wahta* (*wacht* in modern German), the word similarly indicates being attentive, on guard, or vigilant (Partridge, 1958). These meanings were common throughout the Middle Ages, at least until the beginning of the 13th century. The waiting, then, referred to specific tasks, activities, and/or those who carried them out, and usually referred to the act of guarding or to the people who guarded the entrances to towns or cities (Harper, 2019).

The Spanish language, however, offers another perspective on the word 'wait'. The first meaning of the term is related to the transitive verb *esperar* (waiting) and refers to the act or effect of waiting, or "remaining in a place until (someone or something) arrives or until [something] 'happens'" (RAE-ASALE, 2021). In this transitive sense, the word *wait* is derived from the Latin word *esperare*. This Latin voice uses the Indo-European root *spe*, which means expanding, unfolding, and extending. In its meaning, the Latin usage is also connected with words taken from Greek, such as σπασμός (spasm), σπαθί (sword), and χώρα (space), among others (Echegaray, 1888; Aders, 2021).

Among the Greeks, perhaps the closest term to waiting is Ελπις or *elpis*, commonly translated as "prognosis", the last of the "evils" locked in the amphora by Prometheus before being released by Pandora (Hesído, 2000; Plato, 1997). This would be the last of the "ills" released by the ill-fated Pandora. According to some authors (Buela, 2021), this term has been erroneously translated as "hope". The error lies in this being a Christian concept that the Greeks did not necessarily have. Moreover, Hope is held as a virtue (even in a theological sense) and not as an "ill", so it logically should not have been locked in Pandora's amphora (or box). Hence, it is assumed that it was *prognosis (elpis)*¹⁶ and not *Hope* that was the ill which was enclosed in the box.

¹⁶ In Gorgias (d5 a e2) Plato makes Zeus affirm, through the mouth of Socrates: "men must be deprived of the foreknowledge of the hour of death (...). Prometheus has therefore already been ordered to deprive them of this

Regarding *Hope*, the first meaning in the dictionary relates to “the desire and search for a future good, difficult but not impossible of attainment” (Cross, 1997, p. 790). However, this subjective and rather contemporary rendition is derived from the original Christian sense. As a theological virtue, Hope refers to a state of trust in the beatitude of the Lord, his return to earth, the forgiveness of sins, and the soul’s salvation. It sometimes was also used in the sense of the divine goodness to bestow certain gifts, in principle always spiritual (Jones, 1961).

The idea of desacralised Hope, as it appears to be known and used today, could only emerge after what the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno (1972) calls the *theological reversal process*. According to Bueno, “theological reversal” is the process through which theological concepts cease to be only those of which “God has spoken” (as a transmundane entity) and therefore become the way we speak about the world in a non-ecclesiastical sense. In other words, God’s point of view becomes the place from which we, as humans, contemplate the order of the world. Through a “theological reversal process,” the idea of God gradually fades away until it is diluted in the world, in Man, or both simultaneously. For this reason, in a mainly social and political world, it is not surprising sociologists such as Emile Durkheim (1995) argued that God is often understood as society itself.

Throughout this paper, a series of arguments will be presented to show the historical evolution of the notion Hope into the current notion of waiting. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, *Hope* was a theological concept, the meaning of which was exclusively linked to the religious sphere. Only after going through a process of theological reversal, this eschatological Hope became a non-eschatological concept, and thus the previous doctrinal concept was transformed into worldly *hope*, applicable to the sphere of everyday life. This begins to support the argument that the current use and meaning of ‘waiting’ derives from the theologically reversed idea of Christian Hope, which, after the Middle Ages, becomes eminently temporal. This derivation occurred after the ancient notion of waiting related to objective material processes becomes fundamentally related to time.

The relationship between the ideas of Hope and waiting analysed here occur in specific socio-historical and cultural contexts. These include the institutional de-structuration and reorganization of Christianity that required conceptual transformations in some ideas linked to the Christian

knowledge”. A similar idea could be found Hesiod. In both cases, the *elpis* (waiting with prognosis) has the quality of nullifying human freedom because if humans know their destiny, they will not have to work for it.

institutions and practices. This de-structuration can be divided into three stages. The first began with the spread of the notion of Hope stemming from St. Paul of Tarsus and his interpretation of the role of faith in salvation. The second happened with the development of the idea of time within dogmatic theology, principally through the writings of St. Augustine (Bourdieu, 2000; Entralgo, 1957; Gasparini, 1995). The third and last stage is related to the irruption of Protestantism as well as industrial, economic and political revolutions of the time, which preceded the emergence of capitalism as a hegemonic mode of production. In this last stage the concept of eschatological hope undergoes what Bueno calls “process of theological reversal” (Bueno, 1972). This results in the eschatological notion of Hope being assimilated into the temporal (non-eschatological) perception of *hope*, typical of “modern rationality”.

Throughout these processes the idea of Hope can be connected with other phenomena such as time, waiting and spirit (i.e., subjectivity, psyche), among others. This chapter refers to this contemporary waiting as a *hopeful temporal waiting* where (psychological) subjectivity is the distinctive heuristic referent. What follows is an analysis about when, and under what conditions, these ideas have been and continue to be interrelated.

2. Faith, Hope and messianism from the apostles to St. Paul

Scholars such as Entralgo (1957), Gasparini (1995), and Bourdieu (2000) suggest that the origin of waiting as a temporal concept could be found in Christianity, specifically in the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In principle, the relationship between *waiting* and *time* can be found in the relationship that researchers have made between *hope and waiting*, especially based on readings from the apostle St. Paul (Entralgo, 1957). This link is easy to understand in Spanish, given the phonetic relationship between *espera* (wait) and *esperanza* (Hope).

As a theological virtue, Hope is related to the return of the *Messiah*. The Christian’s life should therefore be a life of Hope. This idea may come from certain Jewish traditions¹⁷ and did not fully

¹⁷ The question of strict adherence to Christian teachings may be related to what Flavius Josephus calls the Judaic “fourth philosophy” or doctrine of *zealot* or simply *zeal*. This originally pointed to the strict observance of the commandments of the Torah and the unshakeable faith in the right to a Judea free from all foreign domination.

develop in Christianity until the Middle Ages. Although St. Paul constantly alludes to Hope and its characteristics, his references are mostly related to the Christians' social experience and in an instrumental sense. In other words, he understands Hope as a practical tool in the Christian's life. The concept does not yet have the subtleties that it will acquire later in history.

In the apostle St. Paul, the notion of Hope is not dogmatic (in the sense of theological dogma) but rather heuristic or pedagogical. It implicitly refers to social, historical and even political processes rather than time itself, in a conceptual way, even if it explicitly refers to time. St. Paul developed his particular theory of Hope (closely related to his vision of faith) in the heat of the dialectics and struggles between the different factions of primitive Christianity in the first century (Aslan, 2013; Puente Ojea, 1984). For this reason, St. Paul's ideas and references were almost always related to the practical life of the members of his followers' groups, the time during which Christian doctrine was still being constituted.

In one letter to the Romans, for example, St. Paul notes:

(...) I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us. For the anxious waiting of the creation earnestly desires the revelation of the sons of God (...) For our salvation is in Hope; and a hope that is seen is not hope, for how is it possible to hope for a thing that is seen? But to hope for what we do not see is to wait with patience (Romans Ch. 8. 1961 Ver 16-17).

As it can be seen from this Biblical passage, both time and waiting are mentioned within the same idea related to hope. However, this relationship has a different meaning to the one that might be attributed contemporarily. St. Paul uses the Greek expression *ho nyn Kairós*, by which he refers to the present time's derivation, i.e. the origin of the present as coming from a 'specific moment' (*Kairós*).

For Roberto Navarrete (2012), this specifically messianic *kairós* (an *occasion*) does not constitute another passing of time (*chrónos*), nor a determined or determining point of passing time, but a "contracted and abbreviated *chrónos*" (2012, p. 323). In other words, this is the moment that marks a time that has already *come to pass*, i.e. a passage of time that began with the coming of the Messiah that will finish upon his return. According to the same author, the relation between *kairos* and

chronos constitutes precisely the distinction of Pauline messianic time. This concept is distinguished from others such as the Aristotelian in which the *ho nyn* (the time, the moment) lacking all '*kairos*' (of *occasion*), is understood as mere succession (Navarrete Alonso, 2012).

This relation means that messianic time will not be, as is sometimes thought, a time of waiting or existential time. It will instead be a historical time, i.e., the time in which history is taking place. Hence, its *kairos* (*event or occasion*) extends over a time that is no longer homogeneous and empty (i.e., merely chronological) (Navarrete Alonso, 2012).

From the Pauline perspective, *Hope* would be more a mode of *being* than of *passing*. This perspective means that, in reaching the state of Hope or "living in Hope", the Christian does not technically 'await' a determined destiny, but this Hope is already in itself a form that takes part in Grace. For St. Paul, *Hope* is a necessary *station*, or a part of beatitude itself. This Pauline notion of Hope (waiting for beatitude) conflicted with other existing perspectives on waiting at the time.

For the historical Jesus, as for the apostolic triad James/John/Peter and the rest of the original twelve, it can be suggested that his primary role was liberator of Jerusalem (the promised land) and the Jewish people as a chosen people. From this notion, which is close to Jewish orthodoxy, messianic waiting cannot be abstract or personal. It is instead a particular and concrete one, whose *raison d'être* is both social and political. The Messiah is to be both the King of the Jews and the one in charge of establishing God's kingdom (the government) on earth. Or, more specifically, in Jerusalem.

On the other hand, within the concept offered by St. Paul, Hope offers fewer concrete possibilities of temporal and spatial abstraction than that of the other apostles. His ideas form part of the long list of transformations from the original form of Christianity, aimed primarily at its de-Judaisation. These reforms were one of the factors that enabled its subsequent universalization.

These and other objective interpretations, or reforms, of the doctrine, would make the Pauline thesis consistent¹⁸ with the historical and material conditions of the time. In 70 B.C., after Jerusalem's reconquest by the Roman legions, the city was burnt to the ground and its temple destroyed (Josephus, 1978; National Geographic, 2019). These events would provoke a kind of collective trauma

¹⁸ Firstly, St. Paul's experience (multicultural, one might say today) in evangelising processes would make him understand the possibility of adapting Christianity to other contexts, if it was stripped of the territorial (cultural) features of its place of appearance.

among many of the Jewish people (Aslan, 2013; Harris, 1989). By raising the city and the wider territory, the Jewish political society (Bueno, 1991) was also destroyed. In addition to this, the political structures that had maintained a certain dialectical relationship with the Empire for centuries were destroyed as well. These conflicts led to the Jewish population being definitively expelled from Jerusalem, leaving them scattered and fragmented in multiple territories.

The people-without-a-territory syndrome ended up reviving the darkest phobias in the Jewish tradition. The exodus's phantom was once again embodied, and the once "Jewish exceptionalism" as a "chosen people" was vigorously challenged. This process constituted a severe blow to the unity of the Jewish ethnic nation, for this nuclear idea was one of the binding element par excellences of its political society. In other words, this was one of its founding myths, called upon to stand as a fundamental pillar in the future constitution of an independent Jewish kingdom or state.

In the context of the Great Revolts (1st century A.D.), the objective possibility of creating this kind of material (i.e., real) political kingdom or state was almost impossible (Kessler & Wenborn, 2005). The Paulist Christians maybe envisioned this better than his contemporaries of the cause (Aslan, 2013). The Kingdom of God could not be political since their traditions and culture were devastated, nor could it be geographical because of the absence of a territory (promised land). Thus, the Kingdom could only exist in time (future in this case) and in spirit, i.e. in the community or "church" of Christ composed of his faithful and followers.

There was also a sociological reason for this doctrinal reform. Many of the later continuators of these original churches are third or fourth generation Jews and Gentiles from the populations of other cities in the Empire. It is they who organised and structured the canonical texts as they are known nowadays. After the exodus caused by Jerusalem's capture and destruction in 66 A.D., Christian preaching moved to other parts of the Empire, especially Asia Minor. Hence, those who practice Christianity are often closer culturally to the Greeks, Romans and other ethnic nations of the Mediterranean than the Semitic peoples or Jews themselves.

In short, it is possible to say that the Pauline idea of *Hope* arises in the context of the struggles and dialectics, both political and doctrinal, of early Christianity. This idea seeks to distance itself from the concrete messianic sense (the Messiah as the political king of the Jews in Jerusalem) held by the early apostles (Aslan, 2013; Harris, 1989). St. Paul's proposal offers the first greater abstraction of the

Christian doctrine. This transformation will allow the export of the message to the non-Jewish sphere of the Empire, making possible a greater extension and diffusion.

3. Hope, time, and spirit from St. Paul to St. Augustine

According to Giovanni Gasparini (1995), the Pauline idea of Hope remains in scholastics such as St. Augustine, albeit with some significant differences. If, as previously explained, St. Paul proposes an idea of Messiah that is very different from the one traditionally established by Judaism¹⁹, St. Augustine extends the abstraction to the very Kingdom of God, separating it from the kingdom of men.

Here it should be remembered that after the adoption of (Pauline) Christianity by Rome, the Roman roads were opened to spread throughout the Empire. As is well known, this constituted most of 'the known world' at the time. This connected Empire would allow the 'enthronement' of the Roman Christian Church as a Catholic ('universal') Church. In this way, Christianity inherited the 'generative' character (Bueno, 1991) already possessed by the Roman Empire itself.

Another novelty introduced by St. Augustine is that he incorporated much of Greek Platonism and Neoplatonism into his philosophical system. These philosophies allowed him to give theoretical and doctrinal substance to his ideas in a degree of abstraction that was impossible for the apostles. The very idea of conceptual dissolution between the 'city of God' and its human-run counterpart in the world is an example of the theoretical and metaphysical sophistication of St Augustine's doctrine.

For this author, it is not the Kingdom of God that will come to us but we who must go to it. In Saint Augustine, the Christian message takes on an even less historically specific tone than St. Paul, adapting itself to the multiple social, political and cultural scenarios, now accessible thanks to the Empire. Moreover, temporally/spatially de-localised, the doctrine becomes more resistant to the time's frequent socio-historical and political turbulences.

Historically, the social and political context in which St. Augustine spent his life and developed his work was no less turbulent than the one experienced by St. Paul at the beginning of the first century

¹⁹ Linked to Jewish political society.

A.D. In a nutshell, it could be said that both characters produce their doctrines at the end of their respective worlds. From a materialist point of view, it could be proposed that doctrinal evolutions proposed by St Augustine and St Paul respond to particular needs of restructuring the common traditions in their respectively political societies in the process of upheaval and dissolution.

While St. Paul witnessed some of the events that brought the Jewish people's political organisation to a halt, St. Augustine saw the Roman Empire's final decay around the 5th century²⁰. At this time, 'the fears of Rome'²¹ (Eliade, 2001; Ongay, 2017) materialised in the form of growing social instability. The internal struggles between the factions in power and the consequent gradual deterioration of the layers of Roman society's body politic foreshadowed a similar situation faced by the early Christians. This time, however, the dimensions were far more significant. A growing atmosphere of suspicion pointed precisely to Christianity, particularly Christians, as the cause of the Roman Empire's decadence.

As happened in the Pauline era, a re-abstraction of Christian doctrine was necessary in St Augustine's epoch. In this context, the doctrinal transformation of the notion of *time* is essential in response to this historical challenge. St. Augustine would have to explain if this socio-political crisis were a signal of the end of times, the moment of Hope, or was it just another time in history? In any case, it was necessary to find a way to show when this time, the time of Hope, or the *kairos*, would occur, and how Christians could recognize it.

To explain these phenomena, St. Augustine proposed the idea of the *timelessness of God*. In this way, the temporal dimension of Christian practice was transformed, and the idea of Christianity's de-spatiality was radicalised. In other words, he did something similar to what was previously suggested

²⁰ In fact, his own death in 430 A.D. comes after the fall of Rome and in the context of the siege of the city of Hippo by the Vandals under King Genseric.

²¹ Romans held a conviction about Rome's impending demise, rooted in when Romulus founded the city. Two myths supported this. The first, derived from Romulus's encounter with twelve eagles, suggested a predetermined lifespan for the city. The second, the "Magnus Year", proposed a universal *ekpyrosis* ending all history, including Rome's. However, Rome's actual fall significantly outlasted these prophesied timelines (Eliade, 2001).

by St. Paul: he de-attached Christianity from a particular territory and applied it to an historical²² (time) dimension.

St. Augustine used a rational explanatory scheme based on Greek philosophy. Ideas such as *time*, *moment*, *space*, *place* and *being* are intermingled to shape the Augustinian theological notion. Here is when the relations between *Hope* and *time* (social time) begin to forge their interrelated philosophical and doctrinal development. This process also opened the door for a further set of interrelationships between the notions and practices of *time* and *waiting*. This made possible by St Augustine's establishment of the relationship between the time and a third element: *space*²³. *Hope*, then, acts precisely as a catalyst of both concepts (waiting/space and waiting/time) acting like a state where both phenomena (the space and the time) can converge without contradictions.

For St. Paul, *Hope* was a *mode of being*. His notion still retained much of the Jewish historical pragmatism. *Hope* was simultaneously a way of being in the present within the pending beatitude of the return of Jesus Christ. However, it can be suggested that this return was still understood in a somewhat historical and perhaps geographical sense. That is, it was socio-temporally and socio-spatially located. With St. Augustine and his psychological/spiritual notion of time, the idea of *Hope* was wholly transformed. For St. Augustine, *Hope* should acquire an even less concrete and historically determined meaning in Christian doctrine.

Having done that, the problem to be solved will be the reliability of the referents for this eschatological *hope*. St. Augustine answers this question in such as way:

“(...) I measure, but something in my memory, which there remains fixed. It is in thee, my mind, that I measure times. (...). In thee I measure times; the impression, which things as they pass by cause in thee, remains even when they are gone; this it is which still present, I measure, not the things which

²² Saint Augustine, aligning with Mircea Eliade's (2018) 'historicist tradition', refuted archaic cyclical time perceptions. While God exists outside time, human history is punctuated by singular events (kairos) such as the fall, incarnation, end of time, and God's kingdom return. These one-off events, unique and irreplaceable, steer history's course. They determine man's fate and species evolution, constituting 'the history of life' (Eliade, 2001, p. 129).

²³ In fact, these must be linked considering that, as mentioned prior, at this time, waiting was assumed from a spatial or operational point of view (related to certain activities) rather than a temporal one.

pass by to make this impression. This I measure when I measure times. Either this is time, or I do not measure times” (St. Augustine, 2005, bk. XI 210).

According to this, since *time* (mainly present time for St. Augustine) is where the events of transcendent reality occur. Only in memory (as a decoding mechanism of the soul) could the subdividing operations occur that give us the illusion of a temporal passing or movement. From this point onwards, what we would measure when we measure the present time (where *Hope* and *waiting* are inscribed) is nothing more than impressions or effects that meet this transcendent reality that lives in our mind. From this perspective, the “passing” of time is transferred from an ontological to a phenomenological plane. In other words, the signs of the passing of time are no longer pursued in the external (material-objective) plane, in nature or history, for example, but in the impression left by this passing of time on our consciousness/soul/spirit. In short, we go from *being* in time to possessing time. *Hope* goes from being a somewhat objective phenomenon to acquiring subjective qualities. Rather than a state in which one is, it constitutes a quality that one possesses. In this way, St. Augustine paves the way for two new meanings for hope and for waiting, respectively, which are both subjective and linked to the temporal dimension.

As expected, such a system presents enormous problems when applied to material phenomena. One of them is philosophically related to the validity of this knowledge, i.e. its status as a truth-producing element. However, according to St. Augustine, the external world is blurred as a substratum of reality. So, how can we prove that the materials coming from the spiritual, extra-worldly realm are reliable? How can we be sure that they are not misunderstood by giving them a non-existent fulcrum of truth?

St Augustine’s answer is to incorporate part the Aristotelian notion of time²⁴ into his system. Hence, the real sustenance and the possibility of the truth of ideas, sensations, and images, among other things, is given by memory. Because it is closer to the soul, the memory will access these realities by

²⁴ For Aristotle, the connection between time and the soul invites contemplation. Time is considered omnipresent - on earth, sea, and sky - because it signifies movement, and these elements are movable. The coexistence of time and movement, potential or actual, is evident. If no soul existed, the existence of time is questionable, as without a counter, there can be no countable, thus no number. If only the soul or its intrinsic reason can count, time's existence without a soul is improbable unless the movement can exist soullessly. Time is the countable 'before and after' inherent in the movement (Aristotle, 2014. Physics Book IV. 223a).

submitting the contents it possesses by way of the soul's judgment. Within Augustine's theological framework, the soul is created by God and is closer to Him. God, for His part, is the home of the one proper knowledge. Hence, the only way to truth is through the soul and the memory. Thus, for St. Augustine, correct thinking is in fact a precise remembering. It is a re-observing of truths that the soul knows beforehand or a 're'-knowing (St. Augustine, 2005). In this way, the spiritual/mental/memory plane is considered the most direct path to obtaining time-related truths. The same applies to Hope, and thus, as we will see later, to waiting.

St. Augustinian's thesis attempted to deal with a multitude of problems being faced by Christians in the Empire, and in the absence of any signs of divine intervention. Hope traditionally rested on the Catholic doctrine of the possibility of God's corporeal human individuality, represented in the person of Christ (second in the trinity). St. Augustine proposes a doctrinal prevalence of the third person of the trinity (the Holy Spirit) over the second by introducing his social (spatial) and temporal (historical) de-localised notion of Hope. In other words, rather than Christ's return, the Christian now waits/Hopes for the coming of the Holy Spirit upon him.

St. Augustine prepares the way for the survival of the Christian faith in the face of the foreseeable de-institutionalisation that his time foresaw in the socio-political landscape. If the question of religiosity was a matter of the State in the Empire, we can assume that the Church's organisational role was vital. No wonder St. Augustine feared, and rightly so, that the future survival of the ecclesial institution depended too heavily on the survival of the Roman Empire's political society with which it was highly intertwined.

With the return to the individual as the bulwark of faith, St. Augustine proposed that the Church's material-political organisation should, to some extent, diminish its ultimate power to hold the truth of the faith definitively. If the doctrine were in danger due to the Empire's instability, it could remerge in its followers' spirit (conscience) and be re-organised again under another type of socio-political structure. History would prove him right.

5. Secular and eschatological hope; the influence of Protestantism on today's understanding of waiting

Even though some of St. Augustine's ideas are essential for the transition of the eschatological Hope to a non-eschatological one, and from a spatial/operational waiting to a mainly temporal one, he does not transform both ideas because he was not temporally available to do so. In other words, St. Augustine's conceptualisations of Hope were a snapshot in 4th and 5th century AD time. Moreover, he was not present when a kind of *waiting* appeared and was interwoven with a *secularised version of hope*. It took centuries alongside an immense multiplicity of socio-historical situations and progressive modulations for those ideas to become commonly understood. In this paper, it is hypothesised that the final mixture process took place at the dawn of modernity and was linked to Protestant values (its ethos), which will now be addressed.

As signalled earlier on, Gustavo Bueno points out that what many refer to as "modernity", i.e., a system of ideas, has its origin in the process of *theological reversal* that took place after the transformation of many ideas from the medieval world (Bueno, 1972). How the emergence and centralized '*raison d'état*' (*ratio Imperi*), of so called 'modernity' overwhelmed the Catholic Church on a global scale as an ecumenical institution must be acknowledged because it led to the Church losing the power and political functions it had enjoyed in many countries for centuries. This secularization process of the State took place in the context of two essential factors. The first was the full consummation of the Spanish Empire, and the second was the Protestant Reformation. Both events, in many ways, were dialectically intertwined (Guerrero & Insua, 2003). Exacerbating this were also the disputes posed to the clergy by other actors and rising powers. Here the commercial bourgeoisie and monarchy/estate regional clerics, among many others, mainly from Northern Europe, stand out. Their struggles against the Catholic Church were due to structural reasons and the appetite for quotas of power, property, and economic resources that the Catholic clergy possessed on the continent and in the newly discovered territories.

The associated dialectics among these actors would, in part, be the driving force behind unprecedented developments in science, technology, philosophy, arts, industrialization, thought and commerce. However, this new context presented another distinction. In addition to the specific need in the sciences to describe (measure) phenomena, there is now the manifest intention (often ideologised and propagandised) to make this same knowledge (and "progress") communicable and comprehensible. In other words, the function served to withdraw the monopoly of knowledge from any corporation, even if they are interpreters of the word and mind of God. A democratisation (or de-

institutionalisation) of this nature was not exclusive to this historical period in the Western sphere, not even in the so-called Christian world. The “need to free” people from old institutional ties has always been the only possible way if it is necessary to tie them to new ones, or even to preserve some of the old knots partially. As has been discussed, in seeking to adapt to socio-cultural, political, and historical contexts, the Church itself had undergone other profound transformations before.

This time, the same strategy was being followed, but with a different objective. The intention was not, as before, that the Church as a whole (Catholic/universal) institution should survive. On the contrary, what was intended to survive was a particular splinter of the Church. In other words, an attempt was being made to detach specific social contexts (territories) from the organisational (political) bonds of the Church to reabsorb them into the new socio-political and cultural reality of the nation-state. In its beginnings, the idea of the nation-state was similar to that of a splinter religion, and not by chance, had Protestantism as its ideological basis (Guerrero & Insua, 2003).

All these transformations brought with them an enormous multiplicity of ideological developments. The very ideas of *Hope, time, waiting*, among many others; were not excluded from this maelstrom. Here it must be made clear that the self-styled ‘modern world’ does not, in principle, aim to eliminate these ideas inherited from the Catholic/scholastic milieu. Instead, its efforts adjusted many of these to the new socio-political and historical contexts, as material conditions allowed.

To cite one example, Sir Isaac Newton takes up much of the scholastic idea of time, albeit theologically inverted, and presents it in his Principia (*scholia* of book III of the *Principia*). Both Newtonian time and space are conceived as *sensorium dei* (Herder, 2017), which is very similar to the idea developed by St. Augustine centuries before. Since God is partly man (in the second person) world, nature, and society (“we see God in all things”, Malebranche will say²⁵), his manifestations, even those intangible or spiritual processes, can be analysed and perhaps explained.

For this enterprise, the protagonists of the theological reversals produced from the XVI to XVII century onwards had objective tools beyond the possibilities of scholastics such as St. Augustine. In this sense, it is necessary to mention the progress made in our ability to measure time (Mayr, 1986).

²⁵ Quoted by G. Bueno in: Essay on the categories of political economy 1972. pp 34.

Specifically, the invention and development of the clock constituted a milestone and a watershed in the notion of time itself (Harvey, 1994).

Alongside these ideological processes, the consolidation of capitalism as a mode of production in Western societies was initiated and fostered in multiple nation-states. The various debates about time and its commensurability constituted a veritable field of geopolitical struggle²⁶.

In terms of conceptual development, many of the notions (some of them problematic) previously used to describe time itself were maintained. For the most part, the focus was on describing, classifying and organising the perception of time and implementing *ad hoc* categories to ensure its functionality in particular aspects of life. It could be said that a pragmatic view of time was adopted. In this context, the non-eschatological hope and waiting notion's, enter in modernity gravitating around the temporal dimension of the human life. As suggested before, St. Augustine laid the foundations for this transformation.

3.1. Work, faith and predestination for Luther and Lutheran Protestantism

On issues such as Hope and social time, Lutheranism distances itself from St. Augustine but retains some of St. Augustine's postulates. For the early reformers, the temporal still manifests itself somewhat objectively and not in the "spiritual" sense attributed to St. Augustine. Luther, however, maintains the Augustinian idea that time, even objective time, can only be perceived and apprehended through individual understanding.

In practice, this Lutheran temporal is a manifestation of its general opposition to the magical-ritualistic or liturgical ceremonialism typical of medieval Catholicism. Lutherans would enhance the importance of *Grace* for the salvation of the soul. Moreover, they would lead to the reinforcement of the active component of the believer's *Hope* on two planes: a) on the *objective material* plane, i.e., in the earthly world, and b) in the *spiritual*.

²⁶ A good example is the international agreements reached for a proper, internationally accepted time standardisation in 1884, which places the Greenwich Observatory as the international meridian (Galison, 2004).

In the specific question of Hope on the first type [objective material (a)], it seems that Luther intended to slightly diverge from both the notions of the apostolic age present in the New Testament and those of St. Augustine. For Luther, *Hope* is the radical union between *being* and *staying* in the world. The idea of a *state of Hope* has no significance if the Christian does not essentially show that they, as well, have been transformed in the process. If the conscience were to attain any conscious beatitude, and assuming it was accurate, it could quickly turn into personal joy and thus reduce attention to God. In Lutheran doctrine, even if works in themselves do not save, for this is God's task and possibility alone, to *act* is essential for the good Christian (Han, 2015). With Luther, the very act of working in the world becomes an execution of God's will.

Hope, then, should be considered an 'active' form of temporal waiting, the kind that multiplies God's glory, but not only within a spiritual dimension. From this point on, all human activity can be linked to Hope, in the eschatological meaning. At the same time, human activities can entail hope, in a manner not directly related with the eschatological meaning of this word. In other words, in the Lutheran doctrinal perspective, all *worldly waiting* is henceforth *waiting with hope*.

A practical consequence of this doctrine can be seen in Protestantism's rejection of indifferent attitudes toward work and/or professions. For Luther, the only real alternative of human activity for salvation will be to exercise Faith in God through work in the world. That is, to '*pro-fess*' (*pro-faith*) a work to which God has *called* us while waiting for the final judgement when we will know whether we have been 'graced' with the salvation of our soul (Weber, 2001).

Waiting in the old sense, *spatial/operational waiting*, was in Luther's eyes waiting without *faith*. Because of its attitudinal passivity towards God's glory, this waiting is not correctly *pro-fessional*²⁷. Hence, it can be qualified as a strictly sinful act and an unmistakable sign of an '*ungrateful*' being (Ongay, 2017). In short, since salvation is given in an extra-worldly way, in God's inscrutable will (outside the world), acting constitutes a way of expressing faith and also a way of controlling, disciplining and tempering the individual character.

In summary, in Luther's interpretation of the concepts of Hope and time, Augustinian formulas survive, moderated by his personal interpretation. In his philosophical system, into a continent and a

²⁷ The word *professional* is related to the Spanish word "*profesión*", which is related to an encouragement (*pro*) of the faith (*fe*).

singular content within the “methodical proceeding” of work, temporality is conceived of individual *profession*. Hence, time and waiting can be combined and conceived as fundamental parts in the system/machinery of the new *professing* of Christians’ salvation.

Operational waiting as a rational pause (moment of observance by the subject of the work he/she performs) and spiritual Hope (rejoicing in the work produced, enjoyment of the sensation of beatitude) will be understood in a negative sense. Since this manifestation of faith (i.e., *profession*), is a continuum, it should not be interrupted either by achieving specific material results or even by the ‘feeling’ of believing that one is in the presence of God. For this reason, any pause in this way of being and those who cause it, will be regarded as highly detrimental and therefore rejectable.

3.2. *Work, time and waiting for Calvin and the later reformers*

Following the proposition of the co-evolution of a non-eschatological hope and a pure temporal waiting within Lutheranism facilitates a more straightforward understanding of their later developments. In Lutheran Protestantism’s continuators, the ideas concerning the relationship between eschatological Hope, non-eschatological hope and temporal waiting will be reaffirmed. At the same time, other aspects of this relationship will be enriched, creating different nuances.

Regarding the importance of time in work and the role of both (time/work) the individual *Hope* for salvation, Lutheranism did not make the last development. Max Weber points out that Luther:

“developed the notion (...), quite in harmony with the prevailing tradition of the Middle Ages, as represented, for example, by Thomas Aquinas, he thought of activity in the world as a thing of the flesh, even though willed by God. It is the indispensable natural condition of a life of faith, (...)” (Weber, 2001, p. 40).

The distinction by Weber is that he considers these activities morally neutral. In other words, it is not Luther who sanctifies individual work. Calvinism, and especially some post-Calvinian cultivators (Janáček, 1966; Walzer, 2008), decreed the total dissolution of all scholastic foundations. In Calvinism, only the Lutheran assertion that fulfilling one’s duties in the world is the sole means of aggrandising and glorifying God survived without interpretative variations. This mandate is *His* will

and, ultimately, the only meaning of human existence (Weber, 2001). Hence, every profession is lawful and has absolutely the same value before God.

Here the profane, i.e., *spiritually passive*, 'waiting' is to be censured insofar as it constitutes an interval which the subject experiences as 'lost' in some way. A perfectly measurable vital time, which he will not be able to 'invest' by working for God's glory and the salvation of his soul, i.e., by multiplying his accumulated goods (or gifts) through work. Similarly, Benjamin Franklin, quoted by Weber, tells us:

"He that idly loses five shillings' worth of time; loses five shillings and might as prudently throw five shillings into the sea. He that loses five shillings, not only loses that sum, but all the advantage that might be made by turning it in dealing, which by the time that a young man becomes old, will amount to a considerable sum of money" (Weber, 2001, p. 16).

In a word, for Benjamin Franklin, "*time is money*" (Weber, 2001, p. 104). Weber (2001) calls this sort of mystification of the idea of work 'professional asceticism' and Iñigo Ongay (2017) 'hyperbolic valuation of work'. During Calvinism, this will undergo a truly extreme exacerbation (Walzer, 2008). Phenomena such as idleness (or the waiting itself) were "understood as a satanic remnant to be swept away from the surroundings of a republic of saints (...)" (Ongay, 2017, p. 4). Baxter's *Christian Directory*, or *The Eternal Peace of the Saint*, points out:

"Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins. The span of human life is infinitely short and precious to make sure of one's own election. Loss of time through sociability, idle talk, luxury, even more sleep than is necessary for health, six to at most eight hours, is worthy of absolute moral condemnation"²⁸.

The Middle Ages were held as an example to diametrically conflict with this attitude. Puritan Protestants conceived this age as inactive, full of non-participating men, where respect for tradition was analogous to respect for fathers and lords (Walzer, 2008).

Another friction point was in the anti-clerical matter of *professing*, emphasised in almost all these denominations. The 'interpretation' of the divine message can only be made in a purely subjective

²⁸ Cited by Max Weber (2001) *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. p. 104.

and introspective way, through the individual conscience. In order to 'hear' the inner voice, the approach to this consciousness will always be a personal task.

Calvin radicalises the Lutheran idea, which removes God from any social or organisational understanding. This doctrinal measure was a decisive factor in the dialectics with Catholicism and even against other Lutheran proposals or 'officialised' Protestantism.²⁹ This notion took many of the Puritan-Protestant practices back to the Old Testament doctrines of the Judaising type. It would end up producing what Weber calls an 'unworldly asceticism'.

Of course, all of the above directly affected the notion of *Hope*, time, and therefore waiting. As noted above, Luther inherited and developed a temporal notion of Hope in which it was temporally and spatially delocalized. This notion was the one proposed by St. Augustine. Although Luther qualified it in his own way, he certainly did not stop progressing the conceptual evolution of the matter. On the other hand, Calvin did not even recognize this as a matter requiring explanation (Walzer, 2008).

For the Genevan, methodical, systematic, constant and disciplined action would suffice as an effort to attain salvation. Moreover, certain 'mysteries' of God (including time) were not analysed. Two reasons are alluded to in this regard. The first is that it is arrogant to claim to be able to understand the mind of God. The second is precisely for temporal reasons since any analysis with such a degree of metaphysical depth is a waste of time and energy, which should be spent on other matters.

Calvinists were inspired by the idea that God, as an active entity and creator of the world and the social order, seeks the positively expedient as a means of honouring His majesty. Hence, it is enough to observe, or rather 'hear', his word. This voice manifests in the world through the Christian's conscience and the 'gifts' given to him by God himself.

To a certain extent, this puritanism is an agnosticism. For the *non-elect* (the *dis-graced*), what the elect (*a-graced*) find in the scriptures and the environment is not at all comprehensible. Likewise, for the one who possesses Grace, it is incommunicable in its true essence. In this sense, Weber points out, quoting Baxter:

²⁹ Weber calls this process the 'disenchantment' of the world.

The purpose of this silent waiting is to overcome everything impulsive and irrational, the passions and subjective interests of the natural man. He must be stilled in order to create that deep repose of the soul in which alone the word of God can be heard (Weber, 2001, p. 96).

Another notion is interwoven here that advocates that only in attentive silence can the echo of the “Voice of the Spirit”, i.e., ‘The Word of God’, be heard. Sometimes, even biblical dogma (the dead letter) loses its centrality to witness the individual ‘conscience’ of those who possess and practice the true faith. The Christian’s urgent mission is to verify God’s Grace upon himself, and this is only empirically perceived by way of his gifts. These, in turn, come from organised activities.

Given the Calvinist perspective described, it is easy to understand that anything that goes against the processual cycle of *glorifying work/listening to the divine word*, is an element to be repudiated and avoided. This is where temporal *waiting* comes in, i.e., waiting that is characterized as social/work-related/political. In its desacralised sense, pure temporal waiting, without Hope, must be doubly condemned. In the first place, because it hinders the spread of God’s glory if his gifts are the concrete indications of the *possession of* Grace. Therefore, to have to wait is a sign of *disgrace*. Second, these gifts are signals that publicly show God has removed the condemnatory marks (Weber, 2001). In sociological terms, they are a marker of status. They had the personal theological role of giving subjective certainty that one is on the right track while also fulfilling the social role of demonstrating this to the community and/or society.

We can guess what impact this had on the average European’s mind in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. In this context, the living and political God of the Middle Ages was not yet completely dead. The pure profane and temporal waiting, related to the interruption of methodical activity, would come to constitute something like a process of immersion in the believer’s most significant uncertainties. It would be the self-awareness that every moment lost makes one a sinner and therefore a probable candidate for eternal damnation (Han, 2015). The only way to resolve both dangers was by the dull, impersonal, uninterrupted performance of work, i.e. by the employment of time in a *profession*.

All of the above, taken together, gives us an idea of the notion of waiting in latter Protestantism, the final episode in the crystallisation of a time-related and strongly subjectively inclined perspective on waiting. Although neither Luther nor Calvin theorised about the nature, characteristics, or

justifications of waiting, it is possible to find its validity in the leading elements of Protestantism and the institutions and social phenomena in their ideological orbit.

At the strictly material level, various authors have pointed out some of the processes involved in these rationalities (Bourdieu, 2000; Galison, 2004; Harvey, 1992; Mayr, 1986; Ongay, 2017). The technological advances associated with the measurement of time stand out. Barry Schwartz points out that this way of thinking about and experiencing everyday affairs was undoubtedly made possible by the watch's perfection and diffusion, which coincided with the development and spread of the industrial process. Similar to Schwartz, David Harvey (1992) notes the following:

Ironically, the explorations of the calendar and time measurement that the monastic orders had promoted in order to impose religious discipline were appropriated by the nascent bourgeoisie as a means to organise and discipline the populations of mediaeval towns to a new-found and very secular labour discipline. 'Equal hours' in the city, (...), 'announced the victory of a new cultural and economic order (Harvey, 1992, p. 228).

These technical advances in the availability of accurate timepieces must be seen in tandem with a new kind of appreciation of punctuality. This is part of a whole ethic that is becoming more generalised and demands "(...) the existence of a generalised ethic which, by demanding full utilisation of time (and restrictions on its waste) through reliable and systematic enterprise, exploits the potential correlation between chronometry and punctuality" (Schewartz, 1975, p. 154).

Precepts of this nature constitute the material sources of the obsession that Anglo-Saxon Puritanism manifests for time and accuracy. "Be very watchful redeemers of your time, and make conscience of every hour and minute, that you lose it not, but spend it in the best and most serviceable manner that you can" (Baxter & Virtue, 2012, sec. XXII p. 115). In this sense, it is noteworthy that many of these puritans were precisely the industrious watchmakers.³⁰

³⁰ Barry Schwartz (1975) suggests that the French watchmaking trade, though originally formed in Catholic areas, was largely advanced by a Protestant influence. With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, many Protestant watchmakers relocated to Geneva, Calvin's city, turning it into the global timekeeping hub.

Shaped by the socio-cultural context, waiting becomes a negative condition of professionalised time, insofar as it is an indicator of inactivity and, therefore, of the waste of potential goods.³¹ On the other hand, it is in this same context that profane waiting and eschatological spiritual Hope are assimilated, later to the point of the two terms losing their respective meanings, as is the case today. They now refer not to their sacramental origin but to entirely intra-mundane processes. In other words, eschatological Hope becomes a theologically reversed and profane type of *hope*, which can acquire both a social/individual and a mental/spiritual character.

From this perspective, *Hope* is so diluted in *human world* losing its substantive condition as the 'The *Waiting*' (the main and most important one) above all others. Hope was placed in the arrival of God in the past, but nowadays more often associated with individual and group or social goals, desires or projects. Wage increases, political propaganda, health improvements, immigration reforms, among others, fill both individuals and groups with hope. Thus, capitalist modernity does not eliminate passive spiritual faith, in the Augustinian sense. In a "modern world", the social practices associated with this spirituality have moved from the eschatological to the secular sphere, i.e., to the world of the social, the political, the economic. In other words, the individual subject can now hope for whatever he/she wants (the coming of the Christian God, the Viking Ragnarök, the arrival of Martian flying saucers, etc.), while operating in his/her material, social, labour and economic reality.

4. Conclusion

This paper has examined some critical aspects in the historical development of the links between the ideas of Hope, waiting and time. In summary, and using the framework of Gustavo Bueno's philosophical materialism, it is possible to conclude that the most commonly used idea of waiting nowadays stems from the theological reversal of the idea of eschatological Hope. This reversed *hope* will be assimilated by the temporal notion inherent in the post-feudal industrial modernity and which has solid links to the ethos of Protestantism.

³¹ Hence, production time (related to the action of the worker) together with exchange circulation time (linked to the action of the market), will constitute essential elements in the new economy. These are basic pillars of the concept of 'capital turnover time' (Harvey, 1992).

This process synthesises an originally technical idea of waiting associated with space and certain operations (hunting, for example) and a particular temporal notion of the theological metaphysics of medieval Augustinianism. Once this assimilation has taken place, the spatial and operational dimension of waiting tends to be minimised, thus producing a hypostasis of its temporal dimension. This conceptual transformation is linked to doctrines, ideologies and philosophies which emerge and are established as a result of the social environment that generates and sustains them. The contemporary idea of waiting, and the way in which it is commonly used in social and human sciences, resulted from this transformation.

The motivation behind this work is to demonstrate that contemporary social sciences generally have a limited understanding of waiting and its multiple sociocultural, political and economic dimensions. These limitations usually revolve around an overdetermination of the temporal aspect of waiting and the subjective experience of the individual actor as the dimensions where the phenomena associated with waiting occur. Because it is based on this notion, the vast majority of research on social waiting in Anglo-Saxon academic circles tend to be biased by “the phobia associated with the loss or deprivation of time”, which in our modern societies is underpinned by the Protestant tradition and its “moral preciousness of time” (Gray, 2010 p. 170).

This process, which this work calls *substantiation of time in waiting*, as well as the multiple historical processes that have generated it, is still ignored by most contemporary studies on this subject. From the critical analysis of each of the notions involved in the formation of the current idea of waiting, placed in their historical context from a materialist perspective, this approach seeks to dismantle the metaphysical notions that constitute a real obstacle for the sciences that intend to analyse and understand social waiting. From a materialist perspective, this work proposes that waiting should be studied beyond the dimensions of time and subjective experience. This approach can contribute to a more complete and coherent analysis of the idea of waiting and a more accurate conceptualisation of it in the social and human sciences.

Title: Waiting as institution. Notes for an institutional analysis of human waiting.

Abstract: This essay proposes an alternative theory for analysing social and human waiting that breaks with the prevailing temporal approach. I suggest relocating waiting as a subject of study from the area of temporalities to that of social institutions. My approach draws on the theory of institutions offered by Discontinuous Materialism³² (DM) to analyse waiting processes. I argue that this perspective overcomes the gnoseological problems that current temporal theories of waiting have in the material field of these phenomena. The essay analyses the categories and concepts related to DM, such as φ -components and π -totalities, anthropological space, and ceremony. It shows how they can be applied to waiting processes. This work also critiques two theoretical pillars on which current research is based: the idea that waiting is a fundamentally experiential and subjective phenomenon and the view that waiting constitutes ontologically negative (temporal) phenomena. The proposed institutional theory transforms waiting from a nebulous, liminal, and temporal phenomenon to one with materially visible and determinable contours. The essay concludes by demonstrating how the institutional character of waiting can further refine and delimit their specific field while also situating social and human waiting within a broad and diverse gnoseological field.

Key words: *Waiting processes, Institution, Anthropological space, Ceremony.*

1. Introduction

Although widely used in social sciences, the concept of institution remains ambiguous and carries multiple meanings, creating challenges for scholars. The term's legal etymology has expanded into fields such as anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, and cultural studies, each with unique approaches to institutions based on different theoretical traditions.

³² Discontinuous Materialism is a non-reductive materialism, which offers a notion of *matter* broader than tangible objects that the so-called "*material turn*" tend to limit itself. Gustavo Bueno conceives as a matter of tangible materiality and other realities, including non-tangible physical matter. According to Bueno's ideas, non-tangible realities are material due to their plurality and changeability; moreover, their existence depends directly on the physical matter that supports them without exhausting them (Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara et al., 2022).

Classical theoretical traditions like Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, Znaniecki, and Parsons have shaped anthropology and sociology's views on institutions. In sociology, distinct understandings of institutions appear in Selznick's organizational studies, contemporary neo-institutionalism, and rational choice approaches (Carabaña et al., 1999).

Herbert Spencer (1873) initiated the study of institutions inspired by biology (Bueno, 2005). Durkheim defined *sociology* as the "science of institutions, their genesis and their functioning" (Durkheim, 2001, p. 31). Weber (2019) considered institutions vital for characterizing society, while Parsons argued that they occur in integrating action and social systems (Parsons & Mayhew, 1982).

Other approaches have explored similar concepts, such as neo-institutionalists and organizational studies emphasizing adaptability (Nonet & Selznick, 2017; Terry, 1993), and the rational choice approach in political science focusing on individual interests (Shepsle, 1989).

Many analytical approaches to institutional studies focus on institutions' historically objectified nature. However, this perspective may overlook institutional articulation and its role in social evolution by assuming that institutions are predetermined within a specific time or social space. Sociology provides comprehensive approaches to studying institutions. However, it can lead to reductionist interpretations that confine institutional reality to sociological phenomena, thereby restricting institutions to human-human relations within anthropological space. This perspective can sometimes narrow the scope of extra-somatic culture, reducing objective institutions (such as coins and buildings) to mere instruments or material parts of social institutions, rather than acknowledging their independent significance.

This paper explores institutions and their diverse meanings in social sciences. We will begin by discussing Gustavo Bueno's theory of institutions, which addresses the challenges of analysing connections between subjective (social) components and objectified components of "human culture." Bueno's theory considers non-social (biological, physical, chemical) influences on human culture and acknowledges human-nature relations, avoiding issues of categorial imperialism or sociological monism that can arise from an overly narrow sociological perspective. We will also explore Bueno's theory of φ -Components and π -Totalities, Anthropological Space, and Ceremonial and Non-Ceremonial Institutions.

We will then examine the cumulative characteristics of institutions and their usefulness for studying waiting times. Specifically, we will discuss the hylomorphic structure, morphological cultural units of

systematic order, the coexistence of institutions, rationality, normativity, and axiological condition. These concepts provide a framework for understanding the interrelatedness of institutions and their role in shaping social systems.

This article aims to apply Gustavo Bueno's theory of institutions to social and human waiting, considered as social institutions. This work falls within the traditions that advocate for practical and useful philosophy, and the analysis of the categories and concepts of social sciences is part of that intention. Therefore, I will examine the categorial arsenal of waiting studies, exploring how some epistemological standpoints have shaped the gnoseological waiting field, conditioning the research until nowadays. By providing a comprehensive overview of the institution's idea and its significance in the waiting processes studies, this article seeks to contribute to the practical analysis of these social phenomena.

2. Gustavo Bueno's theory of φ -Components and π -Totalities, Anthropological Space and Ceremonial and Non-Ceremonial Institutions.

DM employs Gustavo Bueno's theory of φ -Components and π -Totalities to distinguish between physical/natural and cultural materials and phenomena. This breaks with the traditional division between nature and culture and allows for operationalizing the phenomena within each category. Bueno proposes the differentiation between the φ -type and π -type totalities, or the conjugated parts of a complex, where the body as a spiritual body (πνευματικό σώμα) is related to itself through the mediation of the spirit of human culture (1978b, p. 63). These categories group together corporeal phenomena (φ) and spiritual/cultural phenomena (π), respectively, and help us distinguish between what is truly anthropological and what is not.

In the first place, those of a corporeal type can be found (physical, morphological, physiological), denominated by Bueno as *ϕ -phenomena* because of the initial letter in Greek of the word *physis* (φύση), regularly translated as *nature*. Secondly, there are the *phenomena π* of a spiritual or cultural type (linguistic, artistic, religious, ideological), denoted by the initial Greek letter π of *pneuma* (πνεύμα) or *spirit*. In this way, it is said that “anthropological realities or concepts are either of a φ nature (as *genitor*) or of a π nature (as *father*)” (*Idem*).

By considering these relationships between components and totalities, Bueno clearly distinguishes between what is truly anthropological and what is not. As I shall try to show, this analytical scheme

lies at the heart of my categorial construction. Furthermore, it is the technology with which I propose to study and analyse the waiting spaces. Based on this articulation between component parts, which are in no way dichotomous but complementary, the categories proposed below are structured based on the idea of *anthropological space* and the materials of which it is composed. These will be of type π or φ , whether related to the culture (π) or the physical (φ) characteristics of the space. As I shall try to show, this analytical scheme lies at the heart of my categorial construction.

Now, let's examine how Anthropological Space³³ functions in this context. This space is not a singular essence that existed beforehand, but rather a collection of various anthropological materials. As Gustavo Bueno stated, it should be understood as a “plurality of anthropological material” (Bueno, 1978 p. 59). This category assumes that humans exist in contexts encompassing other non-anthropological entities, and it serves as the gnoseological concept that envelops anthropological fields or materials within these contexts. The idea of Anthropological Space helps us understand the complex relationships humans have with various non-anthropological entities, illustrating the interconnectedness of human existence. That it means that individuals are not absolutes, since they are enveloped by realities other than themselves (plants, animals, stones, stars, etc.). Human contexts are such because they are also given vis-à-vis other non-anthropological entities, contexts and material (Bueno, 1978a).

To better understand the concept of Anthropological Space and its multidimensional nature, Bueno suggests a heuristic mechanism that uses a circular scheme to organize the space. This scheme is based on axes that represent the different relationships between humans and various phenomena. According to this, anthropological space is traversed by three fundamental axes. Namely, 1) the circular axis [C], 2) the radial axis [R], and 3) the angular axis [A]³⁴. These axes represent the relationships between human's anthropological realities with other non-anthropological terms. The circular axis [c] represents relationships between humans, encompassing political, legal, economic, and other types of relations; this axis transcends subjective sociological or psychological

³³ The term “anthropological space” is used in place of other terms, such as “human”, in order to express a pluralistic, non-monist ontological conception. This opposes definitions that view anthropology as the study of a closed entity, separate from the phenomena that surround it.

³⁴ These axes can be dissociated but not separated. This dissociation is possible in the form of two by two and one by one, resulting in seven different types of figures. This includes three types of one-dimensional figures (C, R, A), three types of two-dimensional figures (CR, CA, RA), and one type of three-dimensional figure (CRA).

concepts. Bueno terms this the “order of circular relations” (Bueno, 1978b, p. 60; García Sierra, 2021c).

The second axis, the *radial axis* [R], establishes connections between anthropological realities and non-anthropological terms such as entities of nature such as the wind, the rivers, the plants, the rocks, etcetera. Bueno emphasizes the importance of considering these relations within other relevant contexts beyond the human-nature dichotomy.

The third and final axis in Bueno's theory of anthropological space is the *angular axis* [A], which deals with relationships between humans and non-human entities that exhibit behaviour beyond human control or prediction, which Bueno calls *numens*³⁵. He argues that these numinous entities are at the centre of religious phenomena and that anything that falls under the framework of relationships between people and numens must have a religious aspect.

The idea of anthropological space is important because it can organize and classify materials, phenomena, and entities with which humans are linked in their historical and existential development. From this point of view, humans cannot be seen as isolated entities, apart from the constitutive links with other materials that surround them. This idea is crucial for studying waiting since these phenomena are also part of the evolving space of humans, and waiting can be categorized in their respective anthropological axis, as we will have the opportunity to demonstrate.

According to Gustavo Bueno, ceremonies are “figures of human action” subject to norms that imply operative sequences of a transitory nature that are internally closed from their configuration. In a few words, ceremonies are a particular kind of institution, ceremonial institutions. Ceremonies are framed in a certain process where operations of different kinds are concatenated following an order and a structure established a priori. Bueno distinguishes four moments for ceremonies, from which different ceremonies are configured and classified according to different criteria. Those are the *constitutive*, *distinctive*, *variational* and *contextual moment* (Bueno, 1984).

Bueno's theory identifies three types of ceremonies, *circular*, *radial*, and *angular*. *Circular* ceremonies correspond to the *agere* (to do), *radial* ceremonies correspond to *facere* (to make), and *angular* ceremonies are those in which human actors enter into play (in the strict sense of the

³⁵ Bueno categorizes certain animals as numinous entities, which were regarded as sacred by primitive humans and were believed to possess genuine intelligence and willpower. Human behavior towards numens is not imaginary or phenomenological, but involves actual actions like flattery, deceit, struggle, hatred, or friendship.

Game theory) with animals, as beings with wills and intelligence and not, for example, as mere accumulations of protein. The *angular* ceremonies are also those related to non-human intelligence, similar to those devoted to certain religions.

In connection with waiting processes, Bueno's ceremonial theory could fulfil the current theoretical vacancy for describing human waiting processes in general and not just in specific terms. Several waiting processes could be described as circular, radial or angular ceremonies depending on what kind of human relations these processes encompass.

In summary, Bueno's theory provides a multi-dimensional perspective for understanding human culture (π) and its relations with non-anthropological (φ) realities through the concept of anthropological space and its axes. Moreover, his analysis of ceremonies offers a useful framework for describing phenomena, such as waiting processes, based on the kind of anthropological relations involved. Waiting processes could be described as circular, radial, or angular ceremonies concerning what kind of human relations these processes encompass. In the following section, we will explore how Bueno's theory can be applied to social and human waiting processes.

3. Cumulative characteristics of institutions and their usefulness for the study of waiting times.

Another aspect to be taken into account in Gustavo Bueno's theory of institutions is that of the components of institutions. This compositional structure of the institutions is what Bueno (2005) calls the "cumulative characteristics of institutions". These cumulative characteristics also make possible to differentiate institutions from other materials, processes and phenomena in anthropological space, which may even be social but not institutional. This structure constitutes one of the fundamental pillars when constructing operational categories for the study of waiting from the perspective I propose here. In the following, some aspects that characterise these components will be pointed out and illustrated with examples that are useful for studying waiting.

3.1 Hylomorphic structure

According to Bueno's theory, the “hylomorphic³⁶ structure” is the first cumulative characteristic of institutions, indicating the complex nature of these phenomena and the impossibility of conceiving of them as simple entities. As “corporeal totalities in which matter and form can be distinguished” (Bueno, 2005, p. 21), their hylomorphism is not of an Aristotelian type. In this case, it does not refer to substantial matter and form, so they are not properly Aristotelian substances.

Gustavo Bueno proposes the principle of incommensurability of matter and form as a fundamental aspect of hylomorphism in the materialist sense. In this view, an institution imposes an order on a given matter, but the matter may not be willing to submit to this order, resulting in a structure that does not fully reflect the integrity of the institutionalized matter.

The principle discussed earlier is crucial for my proposal. Research on waiting often leans towards either an individualistic psychological stance or an objectivist one emphasizing the sociological aspect. These perspectives treat actors and social organizations as separate entities, using an oppressor/oppressed schema that fails to capture the complexities of institutionalized waiting. The distinction between phenomena φ and structures π can be helpful when applied to waiting. Palmer, Pocock & Burton (2018) argue that 'tactical waiting' in the business world consists of postponing certain operations to outmaneuver competitors. This form of waiting is managed and planned similarly to how a predator waits for its prey.

The hylomorphic distinction in institutions is crucial for identifying often overlooked differentiations. The question arises about how “tactical waiting” differs from other types of waiting. Although there may be formal similarities, they cannot be conceived as identical. The material distinction lies in the institutional character of human waiting. Strictly speaking, a predator does not wait institutionally as a human hunter does. Otherwise, we would be reducing a complex waiting process such as a business transaction, involving numerous economic, financial, sociological, political, and geopolitical factors, to something more simplistic.

³⁶ Hylomorphism is Aristotle's ontological theory that every concrete substance is made up of both matter and form, with exceptions for prime matter and God(s). It was popularized in the 19th century and remains a relevant topic in contemporary philosophy (Pérez-Jara et al., 2022, p. 14).

It is important to recognize that instincts, emotions, and feelings may be present in the actors involved. However, the mentioned elements constitute determining contexts of social action that condition the manifestation of these subjective phenomena.

Incommensurability can also be observed in the institutional waiting during human maternal pregnancy. Biological phenomena (φ) such as foetal development stages or morphological transformations of a woman's body don't fully explain the social processes associated with pregnancy waiting. Additionally, institutional structures like maternal leave, ceremonies, prenatal exercise routines, and prescribed medication don't provide a complete understanding either.

To grasp the whole process, it's essential to analyse and relate different factors, since each factor can correspond to various social institutions within anthropological space. Institutions often extend beyond their forms. For instance, a growing belly could be attributed to other health issues, not just pregnancy.

Moreover, some φ phenomena may appear linked to π elements (certainty of pregnancy, preparing for the baby, nesting), but they could also be part of an “imaginary pregnancy.” In such cases, a woman's behavior aligns with established ceremonies and institutional structures and may even cause limited physical changes, but the biological processes (φ) aren't fully completed.

When Analysing the hylomorphism of institutions, it's important to remember that the relationship between matter and form isn't always harmonious. Tensions between these elements are widespread; sometimes, those tensions are the real cause of institutional transformation. Referring to dialectics of this nature, Gustavo Bueno points out that such permanent conflicts between the “overflowing matter and the continent form” of institutions constitute one of the reasons for their failure. Hence, institutions cannot be eternal, and the conflict between them must be seen as being involved in the tension between the components of each institution (Bueno, 2005).

When studying waiting, it is not only possible but necessary to establish categories that reveal existing tensions as dynamic and formal parts of institutionalized waiting. An example of this is the institutionalized waiting at a border. As a regulated institutional process, it cannot fully encompass the interactions between the actors involved in waiting. The dynamics and conflicts between border agents and visa applicants, or even among members of the same groups, cannot be fully contained or regulated by this institution.

Dynamics and conflicts may occur between migrants who wait and compete for limited interview, processing, and visa quotas granted each day, month, or year. Conflicts can also arise between border agents over control of certain economic activities related to waiting, such as influence peddling, selling positions in queues, and improving waiting conditions. In Bueno's words (2005), "an institution, in terms of its form, cannot (...) entirely incorporate all its parts (to its matter), and this is as much as to say that institutions do not exhaust the matter they organize and that this matter always overflows the institutional form" (Idem, pp. 21-22).

3.2 Morphological cultural units of *systatic* order

The second characteristic involves institutions as morphological cultural units of *systatic order*³⁷. According to Bueno (2005), institutions are "observable corporeal structures" (p. 22), highlighting their explanatory and rational nature. This means that institutions can be understood not only from an external viewpoint (*etic*) but also from the perspective of the actors involved (*emic*), albeit to varying degrees. In essence, institutions exhibit a certain logic for those connected to them. From an *emic* perspective, using Pike's (2015) classical terminology, institutions must incorporate at least the relevant components of elementary institutions³⁸. This *emic* perspective can have different levels of precision, ranging from direct operational (technical-practical) awareness, essential to carry out the institution, to the knowledge of its more complex implications with other institutions in the system.

Javier Auyero provides an advantageous example of this when he analyses the waits for government assistance among families and individuals in poor neighborhoods in Argentina. In this regard, one interviewee notes:

³⁷ *Systatic totalisations* are attributive constructs of parts that interact following an internal law, such as a circumference or a helium atom. Do not confuse with '*systematic totalisations*', which are totalisations that group parts without causal codetermination or structural intersection, such as the functional system of conics or the third period of the Mendeleev table. Both types of totalities are gnoseological constructs, but while *systatics* refer to immediately phenomenal terms, *systematics* must refer to third-level relations. Both can interweave in more complex structures, and the difference between them could be presented as effects of a "reflexive recurrence", that is, *systematics* as re-totalisations at another level of the *systatics*. See: <https://filosofia.org/filomat/df050.htm>

³⁸ *Elementary institutions* are complex entities that cannot be broken down into other institutions, while complex institutions are combinations of different elementary or complex institutions. Identifying an elementary institution can be challenging as it requires recognizing its *emic* components, especially when agent subjects are involved and not separated from the institution.

"I'm used to waiting," (...) "I have to wait everywhere. But the worst thing is that they make you go here and then there. (...)" I came two weeks ago; they told me to come back in three days. I came back and the office was closed. I returned the next day, and they told me there were no funds in the program. (...) "you have to wait, because that's how things are here. You have to come many times because if you don't show up, you don't get anything" (Auyero, 2012, p. 20).

This example shows chains of operations established in an institutional manner, the "logic" of which is recognised by the actors involved in an *emic* sense. It should be noted that this rationality must be set out in principle, which does not mean that it is not more or less variable in terms of its exact fit with the *etic* logic that the institution presents. The fact that there are variations (even contradictions) of scale in the rationality of the interacting actors for a given institution does not eliminate its institutional condition. In fact, it does not eliminate the possibility of success of the different actors involved in the institutionally prescribed processes. An institution can be poorly rationalised by an actor who otherwise participates in it most efficiently.

Consider the case of a footballer shooting at the goal, with the goalkeeper waiting to stop the shot. The waiting goalkeeper may know very little about the physical processes at work in the ball's trajectory or the mathematical equations applicable to it. He may even be completely unaware of the historical logic or cultural context behind the rules of the game governing that particular operation. However, this does not prevent him from executing the action of stopping the ball accurately.

Similarly, on an *etic* level, the player's ignorance does not prevent a physicist, mathematician, or game commissioner from applying the laws and regulations associated with the action in their terms. This last point, concerning the causality of institutional processes, is crucial because while actors immersed in waiting processes may have their feelings, reasons, logic, discourses, and perspectives, scientific thought is not bound by them, even when it takes them into account.

This reasoning does not imply that the *emic* viewpoint should be dismissed as "irrational." Instead, its rationality is attributed to the place it occupies within the phenomenon as a whole. That is, it has to be "enclosed" within the researcher's *etic* research categories.

Several researchers frequently incur this mistake in their research on waiting today. The reasons for this error are many and varied, but at least one of them lies in the gnoseological perspective followed by most of the waiting studies that have been discussed. In the same vein, when many research studies claim to be analysing processes of social waiting, in reality they are investigating only a part of

these: the experiences that the actors have of them, but not the process as a whole. This occurs due to a hypostasis of subjective experience as the sole heuristic entity for the objective analysis of waiting processes.

Researchers often make the mistake of focusing solely on actors' subjective waiting experiences instead of Analysing the process as a whole. This behaviour is due to a limited gnoseological perspective that treats subjective experience as the only entity for objective analysis. It is striking that this categorization is used at the *etic* level without further critical-analytical qualification by the researcher, who incorporates *emic* criteria as the essential foundation of their ontological concept of waiting.

It can be concluded that these gnoseological problems lie in the absence of a systematic theory that equates the (*emic*) perspective of the actors with the objectively given material phenomena of waiting. In other words, a theory that coherently integrates the subjective rationalities of the processes involved in the analysis without reducing the complexity of the phenomena to the *emic* dimension.

3.3 *The coexistentiality of institutions*

As a third cumulative characteristic of waiting, Bueno points to the coexistent nature of institutions: "To exist is to coexist and, therefore, institutions, if they exist, it is because they coexist with others" (Bueno, 2005, p. 23). This statement, however, does not mean that any institution has to be connected with all of the others. The set of institutions of the anthropological material cannot be considered a total institution. On the other hand, if the set of all institutions is not an institution, any random subset of institutions is neither an institution, which does not mean that there are no complex institutions or even complexes of institutions. In other words, sets of institutions that are linked together in some, but not all, of their parts.

Just as the subjects of a group are interdependent in some aspects between them but not with each one of the group members, this occurs particularly in complex societies. In DM terminology, this specific type of connection is referred to as *sinecoidal* connections³⁹.

³⁹ The term "sinecoidal" or "sinechoidal" refers to the relationship between a term and a group of terms, where the term is connected to some terms in the group but not all simultaneously, allowing it to be "free" with respect to a specific term while still dependent on the entire set. (García Sierra, 2021h).

Bueno distinguishes between complex institutions, such as a tenement house made up of various institutions, and families of institutions, such as musical instrument families, which are not themselves institutions. He also notes the existence of systems of institutions, such as the system of elementary institutions of kinship or the intrasystemic system of vowels in Romance languages. (2005, p24). For waiting analysis, these subtle distinctions are of great interest, and various authors have recognized this, at least in practice. When discussing specific waiting situations, they have highlighted the institutional amalgamation that these processes exhibit.

When the unhoused or underhoused millions in Mumbai - or Delhi or Calcutta or Capetown or Johannesburg or Durban - mobilize to demand better housing, they know they will endure an unknown period of waiting: waiting for policymakers to agree on a plan, for funders to shake up the complacency of local and national governments, for builders and contractors to construct new housing, for their own turn at the head of the queue (Appadurai, 2013, para. 25).

Here the *coexistentiality* of the institutions to which I am referring is clearly observed. In the fragment, Arjun Appadurai gives an account of the interconnections and coexistentialities of multiple institutions around which a process of waiting is also institutionalised. These complexes of institutions include institutions that can be both simple and complex. At the same time, they not only intersect and interconnect at different points objectively with each other but also articulate the very actions of multiple social subjects. In this respect, the author goes on to point out that due to a wait that can take years or even decades, families and actors involved in this process must not only become familiar with these institutional articulation mechanisms- i.e. modulate in their systemic ordering, as it was seen earlier - but also have to adjust their particular situation. According to Appadurai, it is this articulation that forces them to “learn to regard their own temporary dwellings (institutions too) as parts of a temporary condition which is sure to change” (Appadurai, 2013). Sophie Day, in her research on hospital waiting within the NHS in London, introduces the concept of “triage (trier: to separate, sift, select)” (Day, 2019, p. 179) to analyse waiting and its components. Triage can serve as a classification tool for examining waiting processes and as a mechanism by which other institutions carry out triage. “Waiting constitutes one prospective view of triage, which exceeds the linear order of a queue (ordinality) in processes that rearrange and sift the assembly” (2019, p. 179).

Similarly, waiting at an airport is a complex institution interacting with multiple others. These interconnections can be analysed from different viewpoints and objectives. For example, a

sociological perspective might focus on the relationship between social class and airport waiting time or consumption behaviour. This complex institution involves waiting lists, information boards, clocks, telephone applications, boundary gates, VIP lounges, shops, and cafeterias, among other elements. If the research focused on the appropriation of space and group dynamics of waiting at the airport from an anthropological perspective, the approach would need to be different. It would be necessary to analyse the circular institution of the waiting room, which is a complex institution and part of a family of institutions, including airport lounges such as waiting rooms for international or domestic flights, VIP lounges, and transit rooms, among others. The researcher would need to differentiate between these various institutions while considering their similarities based on their familiarity.

3.4 Rationality

The fourth characteristic of institutions highlights their intrinsic rationality, independent of individual subjects' particular conceptions. However, this does not mean institutions are absolute entities detached from time or space. Instead, they are objective processes materialized through the operations of multiple actors who may be more or less conscious of them. This rationality is a distinguishing element of humans from other animals.

It is essential to clarify that this rationality is not understood in a strictly Aristotelian sense; instead, it is interpreted institutionally, differentiating it from other rationalities found in nature. According to DM, human rationality operates dialectically through a process consisting of three moments:

1. The moment of the operative position of parts, involving composition and decomposition (or destruction) of parts concerning others, serves as the primary institutional structuring.
2. The moment of counter position with the environment or surrounding parts.
3. The moment of controlled re-composition of counterposed parts in the initial totality.

Gustavo Bueno (2005) uses an extended example to illustrate the movement of rationality in institutionalized waits. However, few explicit attempts have been made to establish the rationalities behind such waits. Ambiguity attributed to waiting often prevails because of the subjective perceptions of social actors immersed in waiting processes. Vincent Crapanzano (1986) describes waiting as a holding action where the present loses focus, and the world slips away (p. 45). John

Wiseman, quoted by Kevin Gray (2009), suggests that queues/waiting manifest a congruence between individual and collective rationality (p. 90). Wiseman sees queues as possessing collective rationality when compared to the alternative chaos in circumstances where individuals perceive queuing as a rational alternative for themselves.

However, these concepts could be problematic as they attribute rational qualities to actors without establishing the origin of this rationality. Is the rationality of the wait due to biological, maybe spiritual, waiter rational nature? They pose a challenge because they assume rationality precedes the institution itself without clarifying its essence or origin.

From a materialist standpoint, the thesis attributing rationality to individual or collective actors cannot be accepted. If we observe rational processes in institutional waiting, such as a queue, it is because this rationality is already implicit in the institution itself, constituting an essential condition for its existence as a social institution. In line with my position, Barry Schwartz points out that “In an integrated network of queues, the output of one unit becomes the input of another, one might assume that a perfectly integrated system would eliminate delay altogether” (Schwartz, 1978, p. 5). In other words, as I have noted, the process has an internal logic independent of the particular interpretations of the actors involved.

While insightful, Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of waiting treats waiting as a homologous phenomenon, limiting our understanding of the processual totality. Other scholars, like Alicia Lindón, Kevin Gray, and Javier Auyero, offer different perspectives on waiting, highlighting the importance of meaning, cultural structures, and internal rationality in waiting processes. However, each approach has limitations and challenges, such as the difficulty of understanding the origin of rationality in the waiting process. From a materialist standpoint, institutional rationality is an essential condition for social institutions independent of individual actors' interpretations. The waiting processes' internal logic plays a crucial role in shaping actors' perceptions and interactions, regardless of whether they perceive waiting as rational. The more rationally structured waiting processes become, the more conflict arises due to the disruptions they create in relation to the rationalities of the involved actors.

3.5 Normativity

The fifth characteristic of institutions refers to their *normativity*, understood as certain identical transformations produced by those fundamental factors from which the institution derives. This

means that institutions can replicate based on rational patterns. Normativity is linked to logical or formal universality, which does not necessarily entail a material homologation of concrete manifestations. An institution's repeatability relies on a normative formal model, meaning that even if material manifestations differ, they still qualify as an institution if they share the same formal, normative structure. For example, a Maori "hongi" greeting may vary in its material manifestation, but as long as it follows the same formal, normative pattern, it can be considered an institution. Institutions are normative phenomena, attached to their own internal purpose or telos, and their normativity is immanent rather than imposed from outside. By entering into composition with other institutions, the formal model adapts to the situation while maintaining its telos. For example, an improvised violin and piano concert may have cultural value but cannot be considered an institution since it cannot be repeated according to a normative formal model. The normativity of institutions is not based on material universality but on logical or formal universality, allowing for morphological diversity. Institutions have their own norms that cannot be reproduced by following the norms of other institutions.

Concerning waiting, it is possible to exemplify it in the following way. A waiting, even if it is as a group (inserted in the circular and even angular axis), cannot be classified as an institutionalized waiting by the mere fact of being a social phenomenon unless it complies with the normative criterion both in its monitoring and in its implementation. Nor does this mean that it is irrational in whole or in part, but simply that it does not conform to rules that permit its repetition, at least formally. This case is what is called "spontaneous waiting" or "*ad hoc* waiting" which, for various reasons, can occur in social environments. These waiting processes might be part of operational chains that require specific pauses, but they don't need to be repeated or considered in future iterations of these chains.

An example of spontaneous waiting is when a Cuban friend had to pause and wait inside heated stores during a Canadian winter as she could not endure the harsh weather. Similarly, foreigners in Cuba seek air conditioning to cool down during the summer. These behaviours do not necessarily constitute institutions as they are *ad hoc* strategies agents implement outside a given social space. However, practices like drinking mulled wine or a Cuban mojito to heat or cool down are institutions indeed.

Waiting in the senses above, although perfectly social and even plagued by rationality and operational calculation -does not last too long so the itinerary at hand is not interrupted, or

alternatively one can consume something simple in the air-conditioned place in order to justify one's presence there- is not strictly regulated. Here, the pattern is entirely punctual, as it responds to concrete (sometimes radial) stimuli, where the morphologies are open and present as many possibilities as the real situations where this type of waiting process is generated. Hence, the waiting mentioned above does not strictly constitute an *institution* or a *ceremony*.

However, some waiting comply with the normative characteristics that have been pointed out, allowing their repetition in different geographical and temporal spaces but also for the very reproduction of the institution and its durability over time.

In the analysis of queues as a waiting process, various researchers have observed normativity. Kevin Gray identifies a "normative structure" in queuing, which "requires each member to continue standing in line for the time needed to reach the service point at the head of the queue" (Gray, 2009, p. 174). Gray notes that queues/waiting "belong to a form of normative order that exists because there is a common, largely shared understanding of the right way to behave" (MacCormick, cited in Gray, 2009, p. 168). Gray's analysis tends more towards a principle of rational choice of those involved, who are inclined towards a shared social rationality as a more convenient "alternative" (Gray, 2009, p. 194).

The issue is that institutional normativity, as understood in Gray's terms, becomes attributed to factors like moral values or individuals' decisions. This perspective is articulated on a quasi-Kantian idea, in which such factors seem to function in regulating subjects' actions during waiting processes. According to the DM theory, normativity is in the institution itself, not in the waiter's mind or any rational consensus reached because of the process.

Barry Schwartz (1978) argues that waiting processes are objectively produced by social processes, articulated by the organization's workers. However, other authors, such as Brady (2002), Gray (2009), and Larson (1988), suggest that waiting norms respond to ethical or economic structures. Waiting processes can be regulated by different normative structures related to moral, cultural, status, situational, proxemic, and organizational norms. In Cuba, for example, queuing orders are based on moral priorities, while in some travel waiting lists, those who have received news of the death of a close relative or must travel for a medical appointment are given priority. Normativities can be classified as implicit or explicit, and organizational or non-organizational, depending on their integration with the organizational functioning of social institutions.

Brady's (2002) investigation into the waiting process and queues associated with consuming a particular film product reveals explicit and implicit non-organizational normativities. People recognized mechanisms to generate and preserve these rules and regulations, such as having friends hold their spot in line, taking turns representing their group in the line, forming groups, and deciding how many tickets each person could buy. Another example of explicit normativity is seen in the testimonial of a respondent from Grand Rapids, where the theatre gave away wristbands with a number on them two weeks before tickets went on sale, and the line started based on the selected number.

In conclusion, waiting norms respond to socially established institutions, and their regulation can be explicit or implicit and organizational or non-organizational. These norms can relate to different factors, and their application can vary across contexts. While Schwartz (1978) suggests that social processes produce waiting processes objectively, other authors point out that waiting norms are not always based on the first-come-first-served principle and are influenced by various ethical and economic structures. With these examples, I have tried to account for some of the various genres of normativities possible in waiting processes. In what follows, I will analyse the last of the cumulative characteristics that institutions present in the light of the analysis of social and human waiting, as I have been conceiving it so far.

3.5 Axiological condition

The last characteristic of institutions to be analysed is their axiological condition (Bueno, 2005). Institutions can possess both values and counter-values, but they are not neutral. This characteristic does not imply that value is constant; an institution's value may change over time (Bueno, 2005). In the case of institutional waiting, this characteristic is fulfilled and evident, like a few others. Here, more than in any other quality, the axiological dialectic in symploké is present in waits as institutions stand out (Bueno, 2005).

Regarding the origin of the particular valuations of waiting, different authors have proposed different phenomena as the basis, and some point to cultural or socio-historical mechanisms (Day, 2019). In this regard, Sophie Day notes that waiting is often associated with "the other" side within the British NHS, and in a society that perceives itself as just and potentially democratic, people should strive to leave such processes behind (Day, 2019).

In other cases, the axiological condition of waiting has been associated with the internal structure of the waiting process. “In active waiting, there is a calculated cost that is connected to how long people are prepared to wait. As long as waiting is meaningful, people willingly wait” (Brun, 2015). According to Kevin Gray, the regulations established in some waiting lines, such as the FCFS, are irreplaceable tools given their “ethical simplicity” (Gray, 2009). Gray argues that the principle of ordinality evidences “a profoundly equalitarian character” of social processes, making waiting processes “one of the great levellers of humankind” (Gray, 2009).

Concerning the axiological quality of waiting, it should be noted that the very idea of currently used waiting entails a negative conceptualization due to the particular historical evolution it has undergone. This notion has a close relationship with the eschatological idea of Hope and with the temporal concept present in Calvinist Puritan Protestantism, which, in turn, has a particular relationship with the ethos of capitalism and modernity itself (Weber, 2001). In this context, Sophie Day highlights that for those who wait, waiting is generally considered “dead time,” a form of entrapment that emphasizes inferiority and consumes one's life, while for managers, it can be quantified and audited like other commodities (Day, 2019).

These assessments have been taken in many cases as the factors that make institutionalised waiting processes of social control by particular groups, entities, and social segments. The fear of waiting in this sense, makes actors’ behavior predictable and manipulable in various ways (Auyero, 2012; Schwartz, 1975). The axiological condition of waiting is linked to the conditions (spatial, temporal, operations, etcetera.) existing where people wait (Brun, 2015).

4. Waiting as a ceremonial and non-ceremonial institution located in anthropological space.

When studying waiting, it is essential to differentiate between ceremonial and non-ceremonial institutional waits as they differ in their defining dimensions of time, space, and operations (Bueno, 2005). The analysis of waiting is useful in structuring research based on gnoseological interests. Additionally, some authors have recognized the ceremonial nature of particular waits even without adhering to the proposed coordinates. For example, Barry Schwartz uses the term “ceremonial waiting” to emphasize the symbolic dimension of some waits and the operations they involve. He

suggests that a willingness to wait can symbolize deference to the authority that imposes the wait (Schwartz, 1975, p. 41).

Similarly, Ferrie & Wiseman (2019) argue that waiting can sometimes generate euphoria or gratitude towards the person causing the wait rather than being a detriment to the one waiting. By making others wait, the person demonstrates that their conduct is not subject to others' desires, reinforcing that access to them is a privilege. Those receiving attention should be grateful, even if it involves a delay. Similar waiting processes are found in sports, scientific activity, religion, and other fields, generally framed within the convergence of radial and circular axes in the anthropological space. We can also find well-structured ceremonial waits. Some authors have recognized the ceremonial nature of certain waits, even without adhering to the previously proposed coordinates. Barry Schwartz, for example, uses the term “ceremonial waiting” to emphasize the symbolic dimension of some waits and the operations they involve. He suggests that a willingness to wait can symbolize deference to the authority that imposes the wait (Schwartz, 1975, p. 41).

Similarly, Ferrie & Wiseman (2019) argue that waiting can sometimes generate euphoria or gratitude towards the person causing the wait rather than being a detriment to the one waiting. By making others wait, the person demonstrates that their conduct is not subject to others' whims, reinforcing that access to them is a privilege. Those receiving attention should be grateful, even if it involves a delay.

The key difference I establish with the “ceremoniality” described by these authors is that I emphasize its institutional nature while situating it within a specific axis of the anthropological space. Waiting processes are analysed according to their condition as institutions embedded in the circular, angular, or radial axes.

Ceremonial waits on the circular axis can include waiting in halls adjacent to government offices, where explicit and implicit normativity governs the process dynamics. Movement in queues and service prioritization occurs for established reasons (age, illness, physical condition, etcetera.).

Ceremonial guidelines dictate behaviour in specific space areas, such as when and how to present identification and documents.

Ceremonial waits on the angular axis appear in initiatory, liturgical, and curative rites. Waiting is often integral to scheduled operations within a larger ceremonial institution. For instance, the angular ceremonial waiting during the “vigil of Saint Lazarus” in Cuba is liturgical. Attendees wait

hours until midnight, participating in scheduled rituals⁴⁰ like dances, religious songs, prayers, masses, conversations, and food distribution. When midnight arrives, the waiting ends. During the vigil, participants pray to the Saint for the healing of the sick, preserving family health, luck, and even the care of household pets, particularly dogs (Cribeiro, 2014; Murphy, 2017).

The distinctions between ceremonial and non-ceremonial components within institutions are noteworthy. Several institutions, such as the mentioned ceremony, encompass both ceremonial and non-ceremonial parts. While the ceremony is generally regulated, some aspects, like the order of operations, are more flexible. In other social waits, this phenomenon can also be observed. Thus, it is essential to identify the ceremonial components of a wait (rites, routines, cyclical behaviours) and distinguish the non-ceremonial parts (operational or otherwise).

These concepts can be relevantly applied to canonical waits, for instance, those of Odysseus and Penelope. Odysseus' waiting on the island of Ogygia, hosted by the nymph Calypso, is institutional. Although the island is governed by a deity with established rules, there are dynamics and rules governing relations between gods and men. However, the waiting is not ceremonial. Calypso did not impose any sequential rite on Odysseus, even as he was seen "afflicted by his fate, shedding abundant tears every evening gazing out to sea" (Canto V. Vers. 148).

Penelope's waiting on the island of Ithaca, amidst strong political tensions, is a circular and ceremonial institutional waiting in multiple aspects. The mortuary weaving ceremony exemplifies this. It required her to observe strict political-administrative regulations, such as considering a substitute for her husband and abiding by the council of elders' decisions.

A contemporary example is evident in F. Neil Brady's investigation of queuing processes. Brady identifies the first-come-first-served (FCFS) principle as a generative element of social ordering, which prevents pure competition from taking over a queue. This principle could be considered a ceremonial institutional waiting. While Brady attributes an "abstract" individual character to the FCFS principle, it works in these circumstances because it is an institution responding to another established institution. Waiting is an interconnected institution with elements such as behavioural norms, organizational systems, and structuring objects or instruments. This process is not spontaneous or abstract, as it may appear at first glance like the lines animals form when crossing a

⁴⁰ See explanation of the ceremony "exit of cars stopped at traffic lights" in Bueno, G. (1984), p. 15.

river. Although there may be formal similarities between human and animal lines, the material distinction is significant.

The presented theory's significance lies in providing a systematic structure for comprehending waiting processes without resorting to metaphysical assumptions or reducing behaviors to psychological traits. Rather, it acknowledges the institutional nature of waiting and its inherent rationality, hylomorphism, and systemic ordering as characteristics of institutions.

However, this ordering is not fixed; waiting must adapt to various contexts, undergo changes, and subject its rational articulation to other institutional logics. Waiting is always correlated with the real material conditions of the contexts in which it is manifested. This dialectical confrontation occurs in social action and includes participants from external logic, individual or institutional, and natural factors such as physical or biological elements. Moreover, the dialectic intertwining with other existing institutions could affect the institutional waiting in its morphology.

These interweaving are the field of work for social analysts. Grasping waiting as institutions in symplekē, intertwined with other human institutions, is crucial. In this context, dialectical materialism (DM) is an invaluable tool for critical analysis.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this paper was to offer a perspective from the analysis of the processes of social expectation, which constitutes an alternative to what is currently used by the vast majority of studies on this subject. My proposal consisted of relocating the gnoseological field of social waiting. Specifically, processes as a subject of study, moving it from the area of temporalities, where it is currently located in the social and human institutions field. In other words, I have proposed that social waiting should be reinterpreted as fundamental social institutions, and not as mere temporal processes that traverse social subjects or groups of subjects.

To reinterpret waiting processes as social institutions an analysis has been made from several interpretations and theories on social institutions. After this conceptual review, I have disembarked in the theoretical corpus proposed here to carry out the analysis of waiting. Specifically, this paper offers to use the theory of DM institutions for the institutional analysis of the waiting process.

Moreover, this paper has analysed some concepts and categories related to the DM theoretical perspective. These were necessary to understand the system proposed as a substantive theory in this

paper. Specifically, the categories φ -components and π -totalities, “anthropological space”, and “ceremony” were analysed. All these notions, essential in the anthropological theory of DM, were coordinated with processes of social waiting to prove their relevance in these studies. In the same way, these categories were interwoven with each other in the light of examples also related to social waiting processes. Through this coordination, it was possible to confirm the relevance of the categories, components φ and totalities π , in classifying the different materials that make up the waiting field. This distinction constitutes a fundamental factor in establishing the localisation of the waiting in one of the axes of the anthropological space. Similarly, it allows us to clearly and distinctly expose whether part of the materials and phenomena were found to correspond, and in what way, to a ceremonial or non-ceremonial institutional waiting, according to the established classification.

Once all the theoretical aspects mentioned above were clarified, an exposition and analysis of the theory of DM institutions were carried out.

The presentation of the theory was made by reconstructing the idea of waiting from an institutional perspective. With this re-exposition of the idea of waiting, my aim has not only been to offer a theory of social and human waiting, but also to critique two of the theoretical pillars on which current research is based. On one hand, we refer to the conception of expectations as fundamentally experiential and subjective phenomena; and, on the other hand, to the idea that expectations constitute ontologically negative (temporal) phenomena. From the proposed institutional theory, expectations cease to be phenomena that are subjective and empirically evident only through the testimony of the subjects involved in these processes and become objective entities recognised as such. The aim here is not to deny the psycho/phenomenological position of the acting subject (or patient) in these processes. Instead, the primary outcome has been to relocate these subjective and perhaps personal interpretations within an adequately structured scheme of analysis which is based on an external objective phenomenon on which this subjectivity is effectively constructed.

Moreover, the institutional classification of the waiting could provide an ontological positivity which is often lacking in the current studies. In this sense, the waiting will go from being an undefined, nebulous, liminal, etc., (temporal) phenomenon to having materially visible and determinable contours. Besides, this perspective could show that temporally, spatially and operationally, the waits find their rationality in the institutional framework that sustains it and not in the mind or psychology of the individuals who interact within it.

Having finished the exposition of the institutional theory of DM applied to waits, it was necessary to analyse each of the “cumulative characteristics of institutions” in accordance with this theory. This exercise was done by coordinating specific materials and empirical waiting cases analysed by the social sciences. This coordination has made it possible, on the one hand, to present the theory of DM institutions in their particular aspects and, on the other, to demonstrate their relevance when applied to the study of the waiting processes.

Finally, after detailing the institutional character of the waits, analysed in terms of an internal aspect of the theory of institutions, we refer to the ceremonial or non-ceremonial structure of institutionalised waits. This aspect is vital in that it further refines and delimits the specific field of the waits. This perspective would make it possible to establish concrete classifications of institutional waiting processes while differentiating one process from another clearly and distinctly.

In short, this paper has attempted to establish coordinates that allow to situate social and human expectations within a gnoseological field that is sufficiently broad, diverse and defined to admit the multiple materials that expectations encompass. With this, we do not intend to enclose the analysis of expectations within an institutional fence that does not acknowledge waiting processes as other types of phenomena that are not institutional. On the contrary, the intention here has been to materially define a type of waiting process that is not subject to ambiguities. From this platform, it is possible to analyse other phenomena that could also be classified as waiting, where only the specific waiting is different from institutionalised waiting. The thesis that we have defended here is that through this perspective of analysis, where expectations could acquire what Gustavo Bueno calls an actual “gnoseological status” from the point of view of the Social and Human Sciences. In this sense, this should be the next necessary step that research in this fascinating field must take.

Chapter 3: Exploring the Topography of Waiting: Analysing Categories and Terms from a Materialist Perspective for the Spatial Dimension of Waiting

This chapter delves into the innovative examination of the spatial aspect of waiting within the social sciences. It critically interrogates space and its entwining with waiting processes, offering a fresh lens that transcends the conventional perception of waiting as solely a temporal event.

The chapter incorporates the article "The Topography of Waiting: Categorical Notes for the Analysis of Waiting Spaces." It acknowledges the need for more analytical categories to probe the spatial dimension of waiting. The paper advocates a systematic analytical framework, introducing the term "topography of waiting" to envelop the categories, terms, concepts, labels and even studies that denote the physical, vital, and territorial spaces where waiting transpires. The importance of spatiality in social waiting and its intricate link with temporal and operational aspects is accentuated here. This paper paves the way for future research, offering directions for honing analytical tools.

Building on this foundation, Appendix V (Complementary Paper 1) presents a second article, "The Spaces of Waiting: Some Notions and Categories Useful for Their Study." This piece provides a suite of additional notions and analytical categories that aid the empirical study of waiting spaces, utilising the perspective of Philosophical Materialism (PhM).

In summary, Chapter 3 thoroughly explores the spatial aspect of waiting, providing an innovative standpoint to shape future investigation in the field. Through its systematic analysis and novel conceptualisation, the chapter unveils the intricate interplay between space, place, and waiting processes, significantly contributing to the social sciences.

Title: The topography of waiting: Categorical notes for the analysis of waiting spaces

Abstract

This paper explores the underdeveloped spatial dimension of waiting within social sciences. By acknowledging the scarcity of analytical categories to study this phenomenon, the paper presents a systematic analytical framework that examines waiting as a social phenomenon with temporal, spatial, and operational dimensions. The paper introduces the category “topography of waiting” to encompass the spatial aspects of these processes, including the physical, vital and territorial spaces in which waiting occurs. The author highlights the ontological importance of space for social waiting and its interconnection with these processes' temporal and operational aspects. This paper serves as an initial attempt to provide general guidelines for developing efficient analytical tools to investigate further the spatial aspects of waiting, recognising the need for continued research and refinement of the proposed categories.

Key Words: *Waiting processes, Spatiality of waiting, Social institution, Topography of waiting.*

1. Introduction

In the book *Geografía de la Espera*⁴¹, Alain Musset (2013) points out that very few studies have been carried out on the places and territories of waiting. According to the prominent Mexican geographer Alicia Lindón, “although the temporal dimension of waiting is fundamental, it is necessary to consider that waiting is not exhausted in its temporality: any reference to time is also a reference to space, due to the inseparability of the two” (2019, p. 42). In different ways, both authors uniquely highlight the importance of considering space in studies on waiting processes and agree that the treatment given to this dimension in studies on human waiting is still limited.

Authors that have addressed space and waiting have done so both directly, in research on social waiting processes, and tangentially, by investigating the spatial aspect of social processes related to

⁴¹ The Geography of Waiting.

waiting. Disciplines such as sociology - Schwartz (1974) - and anthropology (*e. g.*, Auyero, 2012) have also studied the existing relationships between these phenomena.

However, due to the scarcity of studies addressing the spatiality of waiting, the analytical categories to approach this phenomenon are still scarce. This is one factor that hinders an uptake of research in this area. As there are not enough introductory methodological tools that facilitate an empirical approach to the problem, there are few researchers willing to work both in the construction of new tools and in the dialectical critique that allows for the refinement of existing ones. It is worth highlighting the valuable exceptions of Latin American researchers who have tried to provide some response to this problem, at least in an introductory way (Correa, Bortolotto, & Musset, 2013; Lindón, 2019; Musset, 2015), pointing some of the importance of this issue.

In this paper, I am also addressing the problem spaces in the waiting processes in an introductory manner and without the intention of closing the debate. My aim is rather to offer some general guidelines that will help develop efficient analytical tools. Specifically, my proposal is inserted in a systematic analytical scheme that builds upon but diverges from the position traditionally assumed by waiting research.

From my perspective, waiting is not understood as an exclusively temporal phenomenon. On the contrary, it is conceived in such a way that it includes *temporal*, *spatial* and *operational* factors simultaneously. Thus, and following Gustavo Bueno (2013), I affirm that these dimensions are *dissociable* from each other since they respond to different moments. This statement does not mean that they are *separable*⁴² since temporal waiting is always framed in a space (more or less defined) and determined by a specific set of operations (more or less standardised).

This perspective responds to the conception that I have adopted for analysing human social waiting. According to it, waiting is not understood as a subjective or psychological phenomenon but is conceived objectively and materially. Specifically, it is conceived as a *human social institution*, regarding to the classification of institution offered by Philosophical Materialism. According to this

⁴² In Philosophical Materialism, *dissociation* and *separation* are distinct. Dissociation is a dynamic process where essential characteristics disassociate from their original context or form over time. Separation is a static state, a fundamental distinction between two or more entities. For instance, coins' faces can be analysed individually - dissociated - but not separated from the coin, as they form part of the whole (García Sierra, 2021c).

proposal, the *institutional* character that is granted to human and social waiting distinguishes it from other possible kinds of waiting⁴³.

In this way, my approach presents space as an essential premise of analysis and not as a secondary or accidental aspect of waiting; a space conceived in a physical/geographical or territorial sense and not merely topological⁴⁴. In this sense, the space has an ontological centrality of the first order and cannot be seen apart from the *temporal* or the *operational* aspects of the waits. This is the reason why I articulate the spatial dimension in the waits as a constitutive element among these processes, conceiving it objectively intertwined with both the *temporal* and the *operational* aspects.

Within this frame, I propose the term *topography of waiting* as a notion that seeks to encompass all the spatial aspects of waiting. For this purpose, I rely on the Aristotelian idea of *topos* (τόπος)⁴⁵, which can also be understood as *locus* (place) or *spatium* (space) in Latin. On the other hand, *graphic* or (*graphie*) is commonly linked to writing and, consequently, to that which can be read. For this reason, it is also associated with what is descriptive or communicable through symbols or figures with meanings. The *topographical dimension* of waiting includes the physical/vital/territorial spaces in which waiting takes place, the material components (humans, objects, institutions) related in/to these spaces.

2. A categorial proposal for the study of space in waiting process

The lack of research on the spatiality of the waiting process has left several phenomena and materials that have not been critically addressed. In what follows, I outline primary introductory categories to classify some of these phenomena and materials that inhabit *waiting spaces*.

⁴³ The distinction between human social waiting and ethological waiting is notable, with the latter covering waiting processes in animals and humans, linked to behaviours like stalking, hunting, defence, attacking, and mating. This distinction defines the boundaries of both waiting's gnoseological space and the topographical space examined by behavioural sciences. Though I cannot deeply analyse this distinction, its importance in differentiating institutional and ethological waiting processes is evident.

⁴⁴ I make this clarification because, in research on waiting, it is common to encounter references to waiting as a space for decision-making, action and interaction, reflection, and as a liminal space, among others. These topological meanings are not analysed in this context.

⁴⁵ From the Aristotelian canon, place (τόπος) is defined as the "first immobile surface that envelops the body" (Aristotle, Physics: 209b).

Insofar as I conceive waiting as *social institutions*, the spatial, the temporal and the operational are closely linked since every human practice (operative) takes place in a given time and space. For this reason, even though this paper deals only with the spatiality of waiting, the categories I propose may apply in other contexts. These analogies could occur both with operational sequences and various temporal phenomena.

For expository and organisational purposes, the proposal is grouped into two categorial nodes. In the absence of any other type of classification for these nodes, I have used the labels *structure* and *function*⁴⁶, common classifiers in sociology and anthropology. These notions of *structure* and *function* are, moreover, presupposed to be co-determined. In the words of Gustavo Bueno, these terms are *conjoined concepts*⁴⁷ (Bueno, 1978), at least when used within the fields of biology, sociology, and perhaps anthropology. This co-determination allows us to sustain the analytical relations and interrelations between both categorial groups (functional and structural), as well as with other dialectics belonging to elements or dimensions other than the spatial (temporal or operational, for example).

In what follows, I analyse each of these labels and their corresponding subcategories. I do not cover all possible subcategories, nor do I attempt to provide a finalised account of those I do cover. On the contrary, my aim is to initiate discussion about all possible uses, or even alternative, to the proposed categories. The specific ones offered here could be expanded, depending on the needs of each research project, or even dialectically transcended if more explanatory alternatives are offered.

⁴⁶ I use these concepts more in a biological sense than in engineering, architecture, or mathematics. However, architectural structure analogies can be applied when studying certain waiting spaces, particularly when analysing empirical aspects of specific processes. For example, when examining organisational aspects of waiting processes in designed spaces (waiting rooms, bus stations, bus stops), the features displayed by organisers can be understood as structure in an engineering sense. This interpretation is possible since the area notion can be static (descriptive, non-pejorative) by referring to the space's intended volume of people. This analysis doesn't prohibit other types concerning the dynamics of processes that the structure aims to address.

⁴⁷ Gustavo Bueno defines *conjoined concepts* as "circles of dialectical pairs of concepts such that the terms (A/B) of each pair alternatively (disjunctively) support the complete system of the connecting schemas (metameric and diameric)" (Bueno, 1978b, p. 88). They are concepts whose co-determination and occasional juxtaposition make it hard to distinguish one without the other. This applies to phenomena where relations between serial parts P1, P2, P3...Pz only make sense concerning another concept. A classic example is the conjugate concepts of a straight line and a point, where a straight line is a sequence of points, and a point is an intersection between straight lines. Other *conjoined concepts* examples include pairs like corpuscles/waves, soul/body, rest/movement, subject/object, or structure/function.

3. Structural elements of waiting spaces

The structural notion of biology allows us to point out certain objectual elements (even solid objects, things) whose interconnections sustain or give form (physical or organisational) to the whole of the institutional and spatial totality. Unlike other fields, such as architecture, biology refers to a dynamism inherent to certain structures (cellular, for example) that can be assimilated, in some sense, to that found in waiting processes and their respective spaces.

Both static and dynamic material phenomena of the spaces present in the waiting area can be grouped. Static factors include the area of a building, the number of chairs in a waiting room, its size in square metres, and the access doors to the common area, among others. On the other hand, dynamic phenomena refer to, for example, the multiple operations –movements, territorialisation, spatial operations– that the actors involved in waiting must carry out in relation to these structural elements.

As can already be seen, what I refer to here as *structural elements of waiting spaces* present a wide range of possibilities in practice. They constitute multiplexes of very diverse and dynamically interwoven phenomena and materials, which emerge or are established in relation to other (sometimes functional) phenomena with which they interrelate and co-determine in a *symploké* manner. For this reason, I propose three categories to group the most relevant aspects of these elements. Spaces can be structurally classified according to their: a) *anchorage*, b) *accessibility* and c) *proxemic adequacy*. In what follows, I elaborate on this distinction.

3.1. Anchoring. Spatially monotopic and polytopic waiting

The first of the categories that I propose within the structural elements of the space of waiting is *anchoring*. I have taken this term from the geographer Alicia Lindón. According to the author, *anchoring* in waiting refers to the need for waiting to be circumscribed to a specific space. She points out that

it is intrinsic to waiting that it occurs in some territory, whether it is a micro-territory, such as the crossing of two streets where a person is waiting, or the event being waited for may involve an area of

the city⁴⁸ (...) waiting can be anchored in a place of small dimensions (as a spatial scale of an experiential type) or in extensive territories, passing through many intermediate dimensions (Lindón, 2019, p. 48).

My proposal acknowledges Lindón's emphasis on the importance of attending to the spaces in which the waiting is "necessarily" anchored. However, as I have explained above, I defend the importance of the spatial in a different sense. In my case, this dimension must be incorporated as a constitutive and essential element and not as another aspect of the waiting process. I also do not share the view that waiting "always occur[s] in a place, a territory, a crossroads" (Idem). As I understand the waiting, these are *not* "always" anchored to a place. Indeed, they can manifest themselves in multiple places at the same time or successively.

Therefore, I believe that some specifications should be added to the very useful notion of *anchoring* of waiting to enhance its utility for research. As a result, I propose that when the *spatial anchoring of waiting* is analysed, it could be done in two ways: a) *waiting with monotopic anchoring* and b) *waiting with polytopic anchoring*.

The aim of these distinctions is to classify waiting based on the number of spaces or places they cover. When the waiting takes place in a single space, I speak of *monotopic anchor waiting*. The processes and operations that take place involve this single space. This is the case of waiting in hospitals, prisons, or bus stops, among others.

The *monotopicity of anchoring* does not have to affect necessarily the temporal dimension. The duration of the wait can be long, medium or short, depending on the establishing parameters. The *monotopicity of anchoring* neither is a signal of a negative or positive type of waiting, axiologically speaking. For example, recovery in a hospital after a successful kidney transplant operation can be considered positively from this axiological point of view. This is not only because of the success of the transplant but also because this process cancelled out a previous wait for a donor. On the other hand,

⁴⁸ While I adopt Lindón's category, I must clarify my disagreement with her global approach. A common issue among waiting researchers is not clearly distinguishing between objective and subjective waiting and overlooking "technological" or "operational" waiting. Lindón tries to bridge this gap by distinguishing between waiting processes related to hope and those with a more material and external nature. However, this distinction falls short due to the unclear definition of hope and failure to differentiate between "hopeful" and "material" waits. I suggest using the institution category as an objective criterion for studying "social human waiting" more effectively.

waiting in jail for the enforcement of a court sentence is negative compared to another similar wait, within the context of impending conditional release.

In contrast, *polytopic anchoring waiting* takes place in multiple places at the same time or take place sequentially (*i. e.*, in chains of consecutive waiting). Some organisational waiting includes processes that are linked together in multiple spaces. These may or may not be intertwined in a single waiting process. However, several times, the waiter has to wait for the resolution of some part of the process while waiting in a different space for the resolution of another one. Sequential waiting is common in some institutional processes linked to state organisations. For example, the kind of “wait” for government social aid, access to social security, migration processes, hospital services among others.

Javier Auyero (2012) and Ana Secor (2007) describe multiple examples of how government social aid and access to social security generate polytopic anchoring waiting process. The researchers present data on social actors in need of government assistance who move around multiple offices and ministries scattered throughout Buenos Aires and Istanbul, respectively, trying to conclude processes of waiting for social assistance. Another example is described in the ethnographical works of Sophie Day (2019) in the NHS⁴⁹ in the UK, discussing the waiting of patients with cancer. One of the testimonies collected by her accurately describes this kind of waiting.

[W]e had to wait and wait. So today, they told me to take the results with me. [The man was himself taking the results from one clinic, where a long line were waiting for their bloods, to the chemotherapy unit] It was around 10:00 a.m. at the time, and the couple were going to hurry off to the chemotherapy suite in another part of the hospital to check that the script materialized (Day, 2016, p. 174).

In all these cases, regardless of the differences, it is possible to observe the common pattern of the multiplicity of spaces that surround the waits that I intend to group in the proposed category.

⁴⁹ National Health Service.

3.2. Accessibility

The second aspect raised is linked to the ease or difficulty of access to the places where waiting takes place. According to my proposal, accessibility can be of two types: 1) *physical or corporal accessibility* and 2) *social accessibility*. This distinction is based on a duality that can refer either to a type of corporeal organisation (*i. e.*, related to biological bodies), or to cultural formations, sometimes referred to as *social bodies*.

Physical accessibility refers to the possibilities presented by the spaces to offer viable material access (even in the sense of mechanical insertion) to the bodies of the social actors interacting with the process. These actors may be groups or individuals. As one might expect, factors related to the *localisation* and *ubication* of spaces play a prominent role here. Therefore, Alicia Lindón points out that in order to “spatially understand waiting”, it is necessary to consider whether it occurs in *outdoor* (open) and *indoor* (closed) places and whether its visibility is *wide* or *restricted*. According to Lindón, “this condition of exteriority and/or interiority can be a modelling of the waiting itself” (Lindón, 2019, p. 47). In other words, that some characteristic of the physical shape (more open or closed) of the places can qualify the waiting process contained into them.

From what Lindón points out, the importance of aspects such as communication, isolation, the number of access points (entrance doors), etc., can be glimpsed. Here it is necessary to specify that although these aspects are not neutral, they are not axiologically negative *per se*, as Lindón seems to presuppose. The visibility, openness, ventilation, etc., of spaces must be classified axiologically on an *ad hoc* basis and always in relation to other factors that allow us to establish specificities in each case. While these aspects may constitute elements that make waiting more comfortable in certain cases (a hospital waiting room, for example), in others they may be highly detrimental given the same characteristics. If we think of a bunker during a bombing, for example, the existence of windows open to shrapnel or lights that reveal their *localisation* can be fatal for the actors waiting for the event to end.

Regarding *physical accessibility* to waiting spaces, I propose a subdivision between a) *close* and b) *distant* access, according to geographical *localisation*. To determine if a *waiting localisation* fits in a) or b), it is necessary to establish *ad hoc* criteria depending on the characteristics of each study. In other words, to establish if the waiting place is *close* to or *distant* from what? Where the person lives,

the place to work, the children's school, the markets, etc.? Research that mainly takes into account individual experience, which is frequent in studies on waiting, can use the opinion of the actors involved as a criterion. In other words, their experiences and representations about the possibilities they have to access the place. If, on the other hand, the research is framed within the study of other types of structural factors, different than the exercise of the actors, organizational aspects for example, other elements must be considered. For instance, it can be useful to consider nearby elements or *meso* (middle) or macroeconomic systems. These might be the logistical possibilities of a space or territory, the existence of transport networks, or the accessibility of specific social groups to certain services.

In both cases (*close* or *distant*) it is also important to bear in mind that there are objective differences among spaces, regardless of the criteria used. For this purpose, a third element or ad hoc variable should be established as a new standard of measurement.

The criterion offered here, *close/distant*, and other alternative ones, such as *easy/difficult* to access, or Lindón's criterion of *open/closed*, cannot be used without establishing some relation, duly explained, with other reference variables. Thus, a place is only more or less *close/distant*, *easy/difficult* to access, *lighted/dark* or *open/closed*, in relation to other similar spaces or in relation to the criteria of some actors, to increase objectivity.

These categories can also be used when analysing other aspects of spaces or even other dimensions of waiting. Thus, the spatial accessibility of a waiting can directly influences its temporality (by lengthening or shortening its duration) or its operational dimension (by increasing or decreasing the number of operations in the process).

Sarah Turnbull (2016) offers another example of this. Studying waiting processes in immigration removal centres (IRCs) in the UK, she observed how detainees were intentionally kept at a distance and spatially isolated from their communities. The aim of this practice was to keep them as calm and docile as possible during the waiting period. This was carried out by granting greater or lesser access to the "physical *localisation*" of the centres where the process of managing the wait –i. e., the migration process– took place. The rationale behind the practice was that when the detainees were inside the spaces, they were more easily agitated since they felt closer to reaching their goal and ending their wait.

Social accessibility, on the other hand, aims to classify the accessibility of space according to social stratification criteria. In this case, spaces can be differentiated as places of access: a) *public* or b) *private*.

Public access spaces are open to most of the population without establishing distinctions prior to access. This includes waiting rooms of various types, squares, parks, streets, public service buildings or windows, prisons, government offices, etc.

Private access spaces are limited to certain individuals or groups. They can be of three types, depending on their use:

- 1) *Guild*. Access is most often granted through membership (halls of political, religious, cultural, sporting, or other organisations).
- 2) *Residential*. Private homes, family meeting places, institutions for people with specific characteristics, *e. g.*, people with addictions, etc.
- 3) *Individual*. VIP lounges of airports, companies, businesses, etc.

Depending on its social *ubication*, each space presents differences in relation to its internal dynamics, regulations and forms of organisation of waiting. In many cases, the *ubication* and the specific *situation* where people wait is determined by factors such as the waiting person's capital (economic or social). In this sense, Barry Schwartz points out that in waiting "faster alternative services are available to those who want and can pay for them. In fact, the availability of such alternatives is itself variable. Waiting is therefore affected not only by clients' resources and consequent ability to go elsewhere for service but also by the opportunity to do so" (Schwartz, 1974, p. 851).

3.3. *Proxemic adequacy of waiting spaces*

Proxemic adequacy is closely related to the previous categories. I have taken this term from the work of the American psychologist and anthropologist Edward T. Hall; specifically, from the theses outlined in his now classic book *The Hidden Dimension* (1969). Here, Hall describes the keys to understanding the importance of the physical distances between the bodies for several animals and how such distances are also important for humans. These distances are fixed by real norms, which he calls *proxemic*; the study of which is called *proxemics*.

Hall (1990) explains proxemic patterns among humans and other animals: “Proxemic patterns play a role in man comparable to display behaviour among lower life forms; that is, they simultaneously consolidate the group and isolate it from others by on the one hand reinforcing intragroup identity and on the other making intergroup communication more difficult” (Hall, 1990, p. 147).

One of the fundamental aspects of Hall’s insight is that proxemic norms vary from one culture to another and that various factors influence these differences: “Even though man may be physiologically and genetically one species, the proxemic patterns of the Americans and the Japanese often strike one as being as disparate as the territorial display patterns of the American grouse and the Australian bowerbirds” (Idem).

To support this thesis, Hall explains how the American is taught that breathing in people’s faces is reprehensible behaviour. This kind of behaviour allows for a certain tolerance at most in conditions of fraternal or sexual intimacy. According to Hall, when it occurs in public, “the intensity and sensuality is overwhelming [for the American] and [he] has trouble paying attention to what is being said and at the same time coping with his feelings” (*ibidem*, p. 49).

An illustrative example of this claim is found in the accusations against then US presidential nominee Joe Biden during the 2020 election campaign. He was accused of “reprehensible conduct” with young women on his *staff* and with others with whom he had contact. The argument consistently raised against him was that the president was intruding into someone’s personal space in order to “smell their hair” (Bruney Gabrielle, 2019; Olmstead, 2019). Regardless of whether the accusations are true, what is significant is the allusion to the “attempt to sniff” (Idem), and the transgression of another’s “personal distance”, both of which are considered culturally inappropriate.

This “personal distance” is Hall’s term for the distance where both individual and collective alarms go off, indicating that someone or something has trespassed into our “personal space” (Hall, 1990). This is what Heini Hediger (1955), from an ethological point of view, calls “critical” or attack distance. For humans, these distances have personal as well as group and socio-cultural components. According to the theses outlined in Hall (1990), this critical distance is the first primer for a potential reaction to possible threats. It is in this space that reactive operations in the face of danger take place, which is why it has also been called “flight” or escape distance (Hall, 1990).

In his studies, Hall identifies four types of social or “proxemic” distances: *intimate, personal, social* and *public* (Idem). The exact distances in each case, measured in metres or centimetres, vary from one society or culture to another. Thus, even though I find that from one individual to another these distances also alter, it is possible to establish general guidelines that describe the culturally accepted distances of one cultural group compared to others. On this, and quoting Thoreau’s *Walden*, Hall points out: “Individuals, like nations, must have suitable broad and natural boundaries, even a considerable neutral ground, between them” (Hall, 1990, p. 95).

Proxemic distance is of fundamental relevance for groups. It is a notion that allows us to determine objectively when a group of people occupying a physical space are, according to certain criteria, in overcrowded conditions; in other words, when proxemic distances are being violated in such a way that the physical well-being of the people occupying a space is undermined. According to Hall, “[w]hen crowding becomes too great as a result of population buildups, interactions intensify, leading to greater and greater stress. As psychological and emotional stress builds up and tempers wear thin, subtle but powerful changes occur in the chemistry of the body” (Hall, 1990, p. 5).

Among humans, proxemic distance has certain particularities related to the “institutional”⁵⁰ aspect of our behaviour. According to Hall, different perceptions of the surrounding world produce diverse ideas about what, for instance, constitutes crowded living. Even so, the differences with other animals are formal rather than material in that the behaviours can be considered similar in their origins. Likewise, behaviours associated with territorial instincts present in countless species can also be seen among human cultures. As is the case with other animals, the demarcation of space occurs in groups as well as individually.

Antony Giddens notes that “[t]he regionalization of the body (...) has a spatial counterpart in the regionalization of the contexts of interaction. Regionalization encloses zones of timespace, enclosure permitting the sustaining of distinctive relations between ‘front’ and ‘back’ regions” (Giddens, 1986, p. 124). In other words, humans have forms of organization and delimitation of the spaces at social, grupal and also personal levels. This phenomenon is easily observable in airport, train or other terminal waiting rooms. There, waiting passengers organise their living space on a

⁵⁰ We say institutional and not *cultural*, because according to the most recent ethological research many animals also possess culture and therefore manifest cultural behaviours.

micro spatial scale, placing bags and suitcases, as well as moving seats or other objects, to delimit their *personal space or environment* (Musset, 2015).

Alain Musset makes a pertinent point about these establishments of personal limits and frontiers:

[F]amilies have a formidable weapon at their disposal: children. By their screams, their noisy running, their tears, they automatically expel all newcomers from their self-proclaimed strongholds. By spilling, on the floor and on the seats around them, mountains of crumbs, ice-cream and ketchup stains, they mark their territory in a perhaps unconscious, but always very effective way –even after their departure (Musset, 2015, p. 310).⁵¹

As might be expected, the proxemic distances are of great importance in waiting processes. In studies on waiting, frequent reference is made to the axiologically negative status assigned by the waiters to waiting processes. Thus, it is common for the stressful characteristic of waiting to be highlighted. This stress associated with waiting is usually linked to feelings and emotions experienced because of an alleged *existential uncertainty* generated by the sense of *interruption of the future*, of *perpetual present*, or of *liminality* that waiting produces.

However, *proxemic* analysis of the space where many waiting processes take place may yield objective results that point to exogenous factors as the causes of much (though not all) of this perceived stress. The *proxemic norms* of socially accepted distances in each society (Hall, 1990) are a partially ignored factor in the studies noted above. The reasons for this absence may lie, again, in the persistently *psychologicistic*, *mentalist* and perhaps *spiritualistic* approach present in such research. Hence, everything that transcends the mere subjective framework, such as the spaces of waiting or the material bodily relations between subjects, has been consistently neglected.

Important issues such as olfactory distances, the ambient temperature of waiting spaces, the physical arrangement of objects in the waiting area, the constitution of waiting spaces or territories as *sociofugal* or *sociopetal* spaces (Hall, 1990), among others, are unresolved issues in the analysis of

⁵¹ Translation from the original, in Spanish: “(...) las familias gozan de un arma formidable: los niños. Por sus gritos, sus carreras ruidosas, sus lágrimas, expulsan automáticamente de sus bastiones autoproclamados todos los recién llegados. Al derramar, en el suelo y sobre los asientos de su alrededor, montañas de migajas, manchas de helados y de ketchup, marcan su territorio de manera tal vez inconsciente, pero siempre muy eficaz –incluso después de su partida”.

waiting. In my opinion, the scrutiny of these elements can contribute greatly to the understanding of waiting, even if what is intended in principle is to account for the “personal experience” of the social actors immersed in these processes.

4. Functional aspects of waiting spaces

This section explains some of the functional aspects of waiting spaces. The waiting spaces' *dynamicity*, *flexibility* and *adaptability* can characterize a function here. Moreover, it establishes the impossibility of seeing some parts or operations inside of these in isolation from others, similar to how we observe the interdependence of some organs in biology⁵².

On the other hand, I want to denote the capacities that certain parts of a system can have to replace the functions of others. For the *functional aspects* of waiting spaces, I propose a classification consisting of: 1) *numerical distribution in relation to demand*, 2) *durability*, and 3) *degree of presence*. In all three categories, a series of characteristics are grouped together to indicate the dynamicity, flexibility and interrelation between the parts of a waiting space.

4.1. Demand-side distribution

In this section, I start with the core assumption that every waiting space, once designated as such, is intrinsically linked to the motives that lend purpose to the whole process. This connection remains constant, irrespective of whether the space was initially designed for these objectives or repurposed later. As a result, when individuals wait within an institutional setting, they inevitably anticipate something or someone to whom they have attributed a certain degree of expectation.

By their nature, human social waiting processes almost always involve more than one actor. Moreover, they are linked to institutions and organisations that define and structure them morphologically. Hence, the waiting has been related by some authors (Day, 2019; Gray, 2009;

⁵² In this respect, I want to clarify that I am not suggesting a simplistic organism analogy or reducing social phenomena to biological categories. I recognise that human social phenomena cannot be reduced to the organic components of individuals interacting within them. Moreover, I don't view society as a positivist super-organism. I use these comparisons only to aid concept comprehension.

Schwartz, 1975) to the laws of economic supply and demand. This is further supported if we consider that the objects, phenomena that generate waiting, are often goods or services that are scarce or difficult to access (Schwartz, 1974). Taking this into account, we can approach the *distribution of waiting spaces* in relation to their *demand*.

To improve the utility of the notion of the *distribution of waiting spaces* in relation to their *demand* I propose a new and simple subdivision. Spaces can have either a) *sufficient* or b) *insufficient* distribution in relation to existing demand. Sufficient spaces are when the number of spaces covers the existing demand in a relatively efficient way. Otherwise, when the spaces do not meet the demand (*i. e.*, amount of public AID offices in a poor city, number of tents in a refugee camp, places for caring for victims after a natural disaster) they are considered insufficient.

This aspect is of vital importance as it has a direct impact on aspects such as the actors' perceptions of the waiting process, the social dynamics (power/subordination relations) within the waiting process, and the economic networks, both *formal* and *informal*, that are established in the waiting process (*e. g.*, influence peddling, advancing the process through a monetary exchange, buying advantageous positions). All these factors are influenced by a sufficient or insufficient distribution of spaces in relation to the demands that justify waiting.

Related to this, I see that much of the research on waiting, both in sociological and psychological terms, raises the importance of the relationship between waiting and power (Auyero, 2012; Schwartz, 1974; Secor, 2007) Some of these studies even assume that waiting constitutes a mechanism of social control. Authors such as Javier Auyero (2012), Ana Sector (2007), Ketherine Verdery (1996) and Barry Schwartz (1974) analyse the distribution of goods or services, focusing on the existing power relations between the organisations (state or private) in charge of distributing goods or services to the social actors who demand them. For example, Barry Schwartz states:

The enormous amounts of waiting time expended in dealings with public people-serving bureaucracies is directly related to monopolization of the various services which they offer or impose. Monopolization accords governmental units the power to maximize their efficiency of operation by minimizing service costs and, in so doing, maximizing client waiting. This 'optimum solution' is exemplified by bureaus which distribute welfare benefits to long lines of disadvantaged people (Schwartz, 1974, p. 851).

In general, researchers have mostly focused on governmental and private organisations. Examples include organisations related to public services (Auyero, 2012), such as social welfare (Secor, 2007), health, sanitation (Day, 2016), education, etc. In the private sector, the analysis of organisations involved in transport (passenger and freight), legal services, health, and marketing of basic necessities are prominent.

In some cases, the distribution of spaces linked to waiting processes cuts across state and private organisations. When waiting is linked to cultural or civic institutions, for example, both public and private organisations can contribute to the distribution of spaces. This type of collaboration occurs in a a) *cooperative* or b) *conflictual* way.

Cooperative collaboration consists of waiting during which spaces present dynamics governed by timetables (structured or not) subject to purposes (defined or undefined) of a public or private nature. These instances of waiting are characterised by the need for cooperation between public entities (security, planning, sanitation, services, health, etc.) and/or private entities, including economic, civic or cultural. The aim of these entities is to ensure that waiting spaces are distributed as efficiently as possible in relation to the goal of the process in question. This includes waiting processes linked to traditional public festivities, patriotic celebrations, or political or scientific events, among others. One example is the public sightings of space module launches, where an authorised and institutionally organised public occupies a space to wait for the ascent of a space module until a certain height indicates that the proposed objectives have been met, that the wait is over, and that the place in question must be vacated.

On the other hand, *conflictual* collaboration brings together waiting that are related to processes of non-conformity that may occur, for example, during political or social institutions. In these cases, waiting spaces are linked to conflict scenarios. In several cases the distribution and organisation (*localisation*) of these waiting spaces are not directly in the hands of public governmental or private economic organisations, but rather in the hands of trade unions, associations, lobbying groups, etcetera. In such circumstances, it is common for antagonistic relationships to arise between the organisational elements structured around waiting. While in cooperative environments activity is usually aimed at expanding or increasing the efficiency of the number of spaces related to waiting, here, the intention is to contract them or at least hinder their spontaneous proliferation. Examples include spaces linked to protests by social groups, strikes by

workers, students, retired people, etc. that may occupy squares, streets, buildings and other spaces, waiting for their demands to be met. Here, the relationship between demand, measured through social participation, and the number of spaces where it is manifested can be analysed in a similar way to the cooperative case. The distribution of spaces in relation to demand may be sufficient or insufficient depending on the number of claimants linked to the social action or the tactical objectives of the protest.

In short, when analysing spatial distribution in relation to the demands of waiting, both empirical material factors (timetables, organisationally fixed *localisations*, the origin of the wait, etc.) and representational and evaluative factors of the actors involved in the process should be taken into account. Moreover, as we have seen with regard to the previous categories, the distribution of spaces in relation to demand is a *syncategorematic* category. That is, if the appropriate parameters for its measurement are not established, it is not possible to research it effectively.

4.2. *Waiting Spaces Durability*

The assumption that waiting processes only occur in places that are intended and designed for waiting is inaccurate. In many cases, waiting occurs in seemingly random and unplanned places. Alicia Lindón refers to these spaces as “*ad hoc* places” (Lindón, 2019, p. 47) while Alain Musset points out that “a waiting situation⁵³ can encourage the unexpected use of any kind of space, a use that (temporarily) superimposes itself on its ordinary use” (Musset, 2015, p. 317).

In contrast to these *ad hoc* places or unexpected uses of spaces are established and recognised waiting spaces (offices, organisational headquarters, some public spaces, etc.). Generally, these are places established with the aim of lasting for many years. They are spaces that host waiting times which, due to their frequency of occurrence, demographic scope, and social importance, require a spatial organisation of longer *duration*.⁵⁴

In terms of the spaces’ duration over time, I propose a distinction between: 1) *instituted spaces* and 2) *occasional spaces*.

⁵³ A process from my analytical perspective.

⁵⁴ This “duration” refers to the space of waiting, and not to the waiting itself. In other words, it is not the temporality of waiting that we are aiming at.

Instituted spaces are designed to host relatively frequent waiting processes, that have been occurring prior to the construction or establishment of the place. They are usually recognised as common and accessible to a wide range of social actors. Generally, as with established waiting spaces, they are designed to exist over fairly extensive periods of time as well as having a complex degree of structuring. Instituted spaces include waiting rooms in hospitals, prisons, airports, public offices, among others.

In addition, they could be also spaces that, for socio-historical reasons, have not been architecturally designed for waiting purposes, but became waiting spaces or places in a particular moment. One example is those informal passenger pick-up points, in rural communities of some countries. These spaces, due to the repetitive use, geographical *localisation*, sociocultural (ceremonial), among other reasons, are sometimes established as waiting places. Other examples include urban spaces conceived for other purposes but reconverted into waiting spaces due to the constant execution of the same process on their premises. The latter case is illustrated by the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Here, there is a *polytopic* institutional waiting, in which the grandmothers of Argentinians who disappeared during the military dictatorship wait to receive news of their relatives.

Contrary to *instituted spaces* are *occasional spaces*, *i. e.*, those that only sometimes constitute themselves as such. On these, Alain Musset points out that “[i]n addition to the places designed institutionally to organise the waiting of groups on the move (waiting rooms, shelters, administrative holding centres, etcetera.), ‘unexpected’ territories of waiting may arise, whose existence depends on the interruptions and blockages that often impact any type of movement” (Musset, 2015, p. 316)⁵⁵.

These spaces, appearing occasionally and possibly due to special circumstances, can be located both in open spaces or inside buildings conceived for other purposes. The proposed classification of

⁵⁵ Translation from the Spanish original: “Al lado de los lugares diseñados de manera institucional para organizar la espera de los grupos que se mueven (salas de espera, albergues, centros de retención administrativa, etcétera.), pueden, entonces, surgir territorios ‘inesperados’ de la espera cuya existencia depende de las interrupciones y de los bloqueos que suelen impactar en cualquier tipo de traslado”.

occasional spaces captures the specificity that they are places that arise in specific, precise situations and, in general, do not extend over a prolonged period of time⁵⁶.

Occasional spaces include open spaces or buildings that have become temporary shelters during climatic or military catastrophes, temporary concentration points for illegal migrants at the borders of various countries, public spaces or squares that, for a short period of time, become waiting spaces for the fulfilment of certain demands, or even areas outside offices or waiting agencies that, for reasons of schedules, delays or capacity, cannot be occupied during the entire process.

For example, it can be cited the occupation of the Zócalo in Mexico City in 2006. On this occasion, supporters of the presidential candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador occupied this space for two months while waiting for votes to be recounted (Milenio Digital, 2019). Once Obrador's defeat was ratified, the wait was over and with it the occupation of the space.

These *occasional spaces* can, in turn, be subclassified in two groups according to the type of *appearance*: a) *spontaneous* appearance or b) *planned* appearance.

Occasional *spontaneous* spaces correspond to circumstantial waiting processes that have not been duly planned as such, but rather arise spontaneously in a specific place. This can be the case of waiting in queues of cars stuck in traffic due to the interruption of road movement, either because of an accident or for other reasons.

Occasional *planned* spaces involve processes that take place in areas planned in advance for waiting. This includes very specific cases of short-term waiting for which planning and spatial structuring is done in advance. This group includes, for example, public areas in squares or streets, or car parks or open spaces in buildings (labour or organisational) that become concentration or evacuation points in the event of certain hazards, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, fires or similar.

Differences in the duration of waiting spaces, whether *occasional* or *instituted*, are intertwined with both *formal* and *structural* aspects of waiting processes. For example, in a structural sense, the physical characteristics (architectural or environmental) of the *anchorage* of the waiting place, as well as its *proxemic adaptation*, can modify the dynamics that take place in its *surroundings*. For example, waiting in spaces protected from the rain, sun or cold necessarily has different temporal

⁵⁶ When one of these spaces extends its duration over time, it is classified as an instituted space. The differentiating criterion here can be established to the extent that its institutional complexity increases –according to Gustavo Bueno's criteria– and its extension in time.

characteristics from others without such protection. Something similar occurs with the dynamics of waiting processes, which may be subject to different degrees of pressure (stress) depending on the possibilities of certain spaces to extend or reduce their *duration*.

4.3. Degree of attendance

Another aspect of waiting related to the functionality of space has to do with the presence of the social actors where the process takes place. The presence of the person waiting is not equally required in all processes. Institutions such as prisons or hospitals, for example, demand a quasi-mandatory presence. On the other hand, processes that used to demand physical presence in specific *localisations* are today increasingly replaced by multiple or flexible spatialities. This is made possible by the widespread use of computer media and new technologies (Sellerberg, 2008). These reduce the need for physical presence by transferring the process to areas chosen by the actor. Other spaces, on the other hand, demand a mixture of face-to-face and non-face-to-face waiting. In general, the process in this case is shared between spaces defined for this purpose (offices, buildings, companies) and spaces chosen by the actor (private homes, parks, urban areas, among others).

Based on these premises, we can also define the waiting spaces according to their degree of presence as a) *face-to-face*, b) *non-face-to-face* and c) *semi-attendance*.

It is necessary to analyse the degree of presence, since the way in which the presence of the space is articulated affects the typology of waiting. There is a difference between waiting for the enforcement of a criminal sentence under a parole regime (*i. e.*, in a home) and only making regular visits to an office or police station –waiting in semi-presential spaces– and waiting in a prison where presence in person is obligatory. Nor can waiting in which the verification of a bureaucratic process requires the recurrent presence of the interested party in the offices of the organisation –waiting in face-to-face spaces– be compared to waiting in which the process is initiated and followed in its entirety online, via the internet, without requiring the presence in any physical space –waiting in non-face-to-face spaces–.

The differences between these and other possible combinations call for different types of organisation, social dynamics, use of resources, etc. Moreover, different symbolic interpretations emerge on the part of the social actors involved. In some cases, it is even possible to establish a

certain correlation between types of presence in the spaces and certain behaviours of social groups. Javier Auyero (2012), citing Loïc Wacquant (2009) and Alice Govman (2009), mentions the “devastating” consequences of mass incarceration (face-to-face waiting) for the African American in contemporary USA (Auyero, 2012, p. 159). Ann-Mari Sellerberg (2008) offers the following example:

In the seventeenth century, at the royal court of Sweden, aspirants waited –day in, day out– in ante-chambers and corridors. Waiting for preferment, office and the like invariably demanded their physical presence. They waited for an opportunity to put themselves forward for a post, stationing themselves along the route the king would take through the palace when processing to dinner, for example (Sellerberg, 2008, p. 357).

According to my classification, waiting for courtiers is face-to-face waiting. At the other extreme, many organisations during 2020 and 2021 have found it more efficient and safer epidemiologically to have those waiting for their services not be *in situ* (*i. e.*, in the organisational space where the process is managed). The COVID-19 pandemic as a health emergency has generated this perception.

In summary, waiting spaces should also be classified according to the need for the physical presence of the waiting actors. The different levels of presence that I have described influence the process in different ways. Temporally, for instance, they can lengthen or shorten its duration. Besides, operationally, they could increase or decrease the need for new operations, as well as complexify or simplify the implicit (sometimes ceremonial) ones, that the waiting process already had.

5. Degree of institutional structuring of the space

Above I have proposed factors that offer possibilities for general categorization of waiting. Up to this point, broad ideas can be outlined concerning waiting spaces. However, some research requires more precise analyses. This is the case for those that seek to understand interactional or dynamic aspects, which transcend the purely *formal* or *structural*.

For this type of analysis, I have considered the label *degree of institutionality* or *degree of institutional structuring* of the space. This integrates aspects that concern both the *structural* and

functional aspects of the waiting spaces that I have analysed above. Various authors have offered notions that seek to address similar issues.

Deleuze and Guattari (2002) talk of *vectorial* spaces and *metric* spaces. With these, they intend to denote the differences between spaces with greater or lesser institutionalisation or territorialisation between different societies or groups (*turbas* and *turbos* in their typically variegated language). In other words, between *bands or herds of atoms*, where space is *smooth (vectorial, projective or topological)*, and *large turbulent organisations*, where space is *striated (metric)*. According to these authors, among other differences, spaces are distinguished by the rationality implicit in their occupation. Hence, “in one case space is occupied without measuring it” and in the other, “it is measured in order to occupy it” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2002, p. 368)

Geographer Alicia Lindón, based on the concept of territorialisation, introduces a dual scale to indicate the differences in intensity of the dynamics that define this process, *weak* and *strong* territorialisations. To a certain extent, she refers to something similar to what Giddens points out in relation to the degrees of institutionalisation of spaces. In relation to *weak* territorialisations, Lindón tells us:

Weak territorialisation refers to spatial anchoring of a phenomenon in predominantly locational terms. This can be the case of an encounter between several people for which a place is established. The definition of the location usually responds to various reasons, such as availability, accessibility, suitability of the place for the activity, habituality, among others. It is quite possible that holding the meeting in such a place will have some influence on the meeting itself. However, it is quite possible that, once the meeting is over, the place will bear little material trace of the activity that took place there. This is what I mean by little or no territorialisation (Lindón, 2019, p. 48)⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ Translation from the original, in Spanish: “*La débil territorialización se refiere a anclajes espaciales de un fenómeno en términos predominantemente locacionales. Este puede ser el caso de un encuentro entre varias personas para el que se establece un lugar. La definición de la localización suele responder a diversas razones, como la disponibilidad, la accesibilidad, la adecuación del lugar a la actividad, la habitualidad, entre otras. Muy posiblemente, la realización del encuentro en dicho lugar tendrá alguna influencia en el encuentro mismo. Sin embargo, es muy posible que, una vez terminado el encuentro, el lugar no guarde mayores huellas materiales de la actividad allí realizada. A ello nos referimos con escasa o débil territorialización*”.

In other words, the weakness or strength of territorialisation lies in the capacity of spaces to show the (institutional) traces of the human activities that take place in them. In a similar sense, Edward T. Hall (1990) speaks of fixed character spaces and semi-fixed character spaces. According to Hall, the differences between the two largely determine the dynamics that are manifested, from the simplest (the physical movement of bodies, for example) to others of greater complexity (such as the economic activities that take place).

In all these cases, it is noteworthy that human social spaces present dynamic particularities that intertwine space and operations in very complex ways. The spaces of waiting do not escape these characteristics which is why several authors (Lindón, 2019; Gasparini, 1995; Musset, 2015) have dealt with this particular issue.

In this regard, issues such as logistics, communication, regulations, efficiency in use, *localisation*, the presence of basic infrastructure, and socio-cultural dynamics in the space, among other aspects, have been presented as factors to be considered when explaining the spatial-operational complexities of waiting.

Giovanni Gasparini uses the category “equipped waiting” to refer to this issue (Gasparini, 1995). In his categorisation, the author considers those measures or actions that are taken in certain spaces with the aim of facilitating human waiting. By *equipped* waiting spaces he means, “comfortable spaces (...) in stations, airports, offices or out-patient clinics, in which waiting is overtly accounted for, and coped with, by providing a range of possible activities for waiting people” (Gasparini, 1995, p. 35). Taking Gasparini’s proposal into account, I call this aspect of the spaces the *logistical dimension* of waiting.

In the cases where this matter has been mentioned, the aim of the different authors is to analyse the types or forms of appropriation of spaces through their transformation. Therefore, I take for granted that such transformation is not accidental but is subject to social purposes (even when these are primary) that transcend the merely psychological or mental framework of particular subjects and are inserted in other areas of human culture such as politics, religiosity, etc. In other words, this appropriation or territorialisation of spaces (including the spaces of waiting) is institutional (and not merely *ethological*) as long as it responds to objectives that transcend the subject who performs them, *i. e.*, it involves third parties and goes beyond the precise instant where it is executed.

Thus, under the heading of *degree of institutional structuring*, it could be included both the actions that Alicia Lindón describes for territorialisation (weak or strong) and the particulars that Gasparini points out within *equipment*, as well as other aspects that new research may demand in relation to its analytical objectives and particular approaches.

Moreover, according to the *degree of institutionalisation*, waiting spaces can be classified according to three gradations: 1) *primary structuring spaces*, 2) *secondary structuring spaces* or 3) *tertiary structuring spaces*.

In order to determine these three *degrees of structuring*, I have used the theory of institutions proposed by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno (2005) as a guide. I have considered both the two types of institutions he proposes (ceremonial and non-ceremonial) and the six *cumulative characteristics*⁵⁸ with which the author himself defines institutions in his “Essay on an anthropological theory of institutions” (2005).⁵⁹ Therefore, for the gradation of the spaces I take into account both the existence of connections between *ceremonial* and *non-ceremonial* institutions, the number of these, as well as the characteristics they present (level of complexity) in relation to the waiting process as a whole.

Taking these factors into account, *primary institutional structuring spaces* may include those waiting places with a *simple* institutional structure and operation. That is, waiting places that do not present elements that evidence a clear definition of the characteristics of the type of institutional waiting that they entail. For example, those spaces where *non-ceremonial* institutions predominate over *ceremonial* ones but where both are rather scarce. Thus, the rules or regulations governing waiting are not precisely determined, nor is the morphology of the space (its boundary areas) clearly delineated. In addition, there are places where the rationality of the waiting space does not correspond in an immediately discernible way with any of the *structural* or *functional* characteristics of the space itself.

⁵⁸ For Gustavo Bueno, institutions have the following characteristics: 1) they have a “*hylemorphic structure*”; 2) they are *morphological cultural units of a systemic order*; 3) recurrence or *coexistenciality*; 4) *rationality*; 5) *normativity*; and 6) *axiology*.

⁵⁹ In this paper, I do not delve into the equalisation of each of these characteristics with waiting, as I will devote an entire paper to this topic, in which I will analyse in detail the particularities of the institutional conception of human social waiting.

Based on this, *primary institutional structuring spaces* generally lack mechanisms for visual or auditory dissemination of the regulations or norms that govern waiting. In most cases, communication takes place in an informal and unstructured manner. Generally, these are spaces that present an *ad hoc type of* organisation without following many pre-established guidelines. This does not mean that they lack all normativity, but rather that it is not institutionalised to the level of, for example, a *written* rule or regulation. In this sense, normativity is established *on the spot* and in relation to the minimum needs of the social organisation of the actors involved. It is, therefore, common for the organisation of the process to be carried out by those who are waiting, rather than by professionals assigned to this task. In some situations, the regulations used are not designed for the specific waiting process and respond to institutions other than the process. For example, in some crises, ethical and moral norms establish orders, such as those that give preferential treatment to women, the elderly and children.

On the other hand, these spaces have very limited logistical resources, often in possession of the waiting actors. For example, there is a lack of economic activity, both formal and informal, in and around the waiting area. Basic infrastructures, such as toilets, roofs and demarcated areas, are limited or non-existent.

Examples of these kind of waiting spaces include public places with occasional crowds waiting for information on political, social, or cultural events or for basic resources in extreme situations, wars or natural disasters or boarding points for informal or semi-formal means of transport in areas far from cities, among many others.

The spaces of *secondary institutional structuring*, on the other hand, present a medium degree of complexity. In these, moderately established forms of social organisation are manifested. The normative mechanisms (rules, laws) are structured in a more efficient, rational and precise way so that the waiting process, in its functionality, is more regulated. For this purpose, these waiting processes have somewhat complex tools or systems, such as visible or known timetables or schedules.

In spaces of *secondary institutional structuring*, infrastructural elements, where they exist, are simple (ceilings, delimited areas, seating, etc.). Aspects such as aesthetics or comfort are not addressed since resources are applied to covering basic needs strictly related to the aim of waiting.

The spaces exhibit elementary logistical elements (such as toilets, drinking fountains and roofs) to go beyond, but not too much, waiting in a purely mechanical way.

Spaces of *secondary institutionality* may also have structured communication systems, formal or informal, with a certain degree of accessibility for most of the actors. While information may be scarce, it must exist. For communicating this information, the space relies on fairly rudimentary technical means. The information may refer to timetables (delays, arrivals, opening, closing, etc.), as well as to the rules governing the waiting space or place.

The social dynamics within these spaces present a certain structure coherently articulated with the particularities of the process. Procedures such as queuing, grouping or ungrouping, establishing priorities by demographics, gender, or physical condition, etc., are organised by some established rules and may be communicated by staff to those who interact with the process for the first time.

Generally, these waiting spaces are the result of processes that, due to their recurrence, end up being established institutionally. Both the actors involved and other interested entities (the state, for example) can be the protagonists in their instrumentalisation and improvement. *Secondary structuring spaces* may or may not be the result of the evolution of *primary institutional spaces*.

Examples include some bus, train or boat transport stations that have grown out of the *localisations* of recurrently used waiting spaces. This can also include waiting spaces outside some embassies, government buildings or military bases that gather large crowds of people waiting for various reasons.

Alain Musset provides an example of such a place by describing how informal economic activity is organised in and around the waiting spaces for drivers on the US-Mexico border:

Here the system is that each shop has its own salesmen, and each salesman has to sell in front of his shop. You can't sell from below, and you can't sell from above because there is a hierarchy; there are rules that have to be followed (...). So, in order not to have a fight and to get along well, well, the people, this..., we made this decision, well, these rules (key informant) (Musset, 2015, p. 320).

All this informal activity is managed and organised by two trade unions, "the CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers) and the members of the CROC (Revolutionary Confederation of Workers and Peasants)" (*ibidem*, p. 321). According to Musset, this structural division of the "client" delivery

process is established according to the *localisation* of the car in the waiting area⁶⁰. Even so, the regulations established for the control of these activities have not been set by these organisations. Possibly, they have been created *ad hoc*, due to the recurrence of moments of conflict over time. This indicates precisely the evolution from a space of *primary structuring* to one of *secondary structuring*.

Finally, the degree of *tertiary structuring* refers to spaces where there is a high degree of complexity in the management of waiting. These spaces have generally been conceived, designed and constructed beforehand. Their appearance can be due to previously recurring processes (evolution of secondary or primary structuring spaces) or not.

In these spaces, infrastructures often meet standards that go far beyond the mere satisfaction of climatic protection or physical security needs. These often extend to other possibilities of stay that may even make the waiting process enjoyable. The *localisations* within the premises are subdivided by *accessibility* (general lounges, VIP lounges, etc.). In all cases, the organisation of the space has been carried out following a high degree of rationality, including factors such as staff flow, environmental capacity, lighting, proxemics, among others.

Generally, there are constant means of communication in these spaces that efficiently update people on their status with respect to waiting schedules. These can be electronic visual/audio (posters, electronic screens, light signals, loudspeakers, etc.) or analogue/human (information boards, customer service tables and windows, etc.). More recently, modern computer and digital media such as websites, mobile applications, virtual windows, and robots, among others, have become increasingly common.

In relation to logistics, properly accessible distribution points that go beyond the mere basic elements can be observed. Generally, in these spaces, logistics is organised in well-established mechanisms of the formal economy, which function in synchrony with the rest of the existing dynamics in the waiting space.

Regulations of these spaces are established in advance and with a high degree of rationality. They are conceived not only in terms of *practical* needs related to waiting but are intertwined with *third-degree* objectives that respond to processes that go beyond those framed in the waiting space

⁶⁰ In this particular, “those of the CTM, located closer to the international gate” have more possibilities to sell their products when the waiting time is shorter and the queues are shorter, as cars have to stop there even if the traffic is favorable.

itself. For example, the entertainment industry (movie theatres), luxury goods, massage, gaming or hotel and catering industries, etc., which develop *in* and *around* the waiting lounges of large airports. These often become *attractors* in their own right, as they no longer cater exclusively to those who are waiting for a flight.

As places or spaces of tertiary structuring, waiting rooms in modern train stations, airports, lawyers' offices, private clinics, etc. are all examples.

The determination of the degree of structuring of waiting spaces is a very necessary task in many cases. Aspects such as the *duration*, the perception of the actors, the *logistics*, the organisational elements, as well as the social dynamics of these places can be established relationally. In this way, the purely descriptive aspects of the waiting spaces are transcended, analysing more complex elements to understand these processes better.

6. Conclusion

As some authors state, although waiting is a topic addressed by the social sciences, it has not yet been developed to its full potential (Auyero, 2012; Bailey, 2018; Sellerberg, 2008). In this paper, I put forward the idea that waiting is not exhausted in its temporal dimension since, along with it, the space where it takes place must be taken into account.

This spatiality of waiting, although it has been recognised by some authors, has not been properly systematised (Díaz, 2017; Gasparini, 1995; Lindón, 2019; Musset, 2015; Schewartz, 1975) and does not currently have categorial tools that allow us to delve into the subject in a precise manner. For this reason, I have advanced the topic by providing some general coordinates that make it possible to begin this task. Operationally, I have called the set of factors related to space within the processes of waiting *topographical elements*.

To this end, I appealed to the use of the conceptual and analytical tools offered by Philosophical Materialism. I presented a group of categories that serve both as a basis for the analysis of aspects related to spaces and as dialectical support from which to advance in the further development of and advancement beyond these same categories. In their elaboration, I considered previous approaches to the question of space within the specific field of research related to waiting. I also proposed new

categories that can be used to analyse both *structural* and *functional* aspects of waiting spaces, or establish systematisations between more complex aspects in this field of studies.

With this contribution, I do not intend to conclude the debate. It is necessary to continue developing the subject due to the particularities that could present many possible cases and the scarcity of research that uses this perspective. My main objective has been to establish some directions from which to start to deepen understanding of the spatial aspects of waiting. It is still possible to expand the study of waiting spaces to other aspects that have not yet been addressed. From my point of view, the fundamental area that I regret not having covered is related to the subject and their interpretation of waiting from the point of view of space. For this, in principle, it would be necessary to develop a *topology* of waiting processes. In any case, the subject remains open, and this is precisely what makes it fascinating.

Chapter 4: Beyond Time: Operational Aspects of Waiting Processes and their Institutional Frameworks

This chapter offers a fresh perspective on the study of waiting, shifting from the conventional focus on time to examining the operational aspects of waiting processes. It includes the article "Beyond Time: Some Analytical Categories for an Operational Analysis in Social Waiting Processes." This piece introduces the foundations of categorial examination of social waiting processes from an operational viewpoint, a novel approach in this field. This paper is under consideration for publication in the Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, specifically in the Special issue (Dec. 2023): "Emergenc(i)es," edited by Dr Amy Whitehead and MSc Cameron Dickie, both hailing from Massey University.

In the same vein, Appendix VI (Complementary Paper 2) presents a second article, "Institutionality as an Operative Framework of Social Waits: Uses and Possibilities of a Materialist Approach to its Study." This piece delves deeper into the operational dimension of waiting processes. It champions the significance of operations in moulding and defining these processes, viewing operations as an integral nexus of space and time. The research puts forth an operational theory providing an objective reference framework to distinguish waiting processes from similar phenomena such as tedium, boredom, pauses, limbos, or hopes. The article contributes to developing a more holistic theoretical framework for studying waiting from a materialist perspective. The proposed operational theory and categories help alleviate the terminological confusion surrounding waiting and provide valuable parameters for classifying empirical phenomena across diverse contexts.

*In conclusion, **Chapter 4** reframes the study of waiting processes, emphasising their operational aspects. The article within this chapter contributes to a richer understanding of waiting as a social institution, providing a materialist perspective poised to propel future research in this field.*

Title: Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes

Abstract

This paper aims to initiate a categorial construction for studying social waiting from an operational perspective. The theoretical position used is entirely new in social waiting process studies, as it discards the theory that waiting is a fundamentally temporary phenomenon. Instead, waiting is analysed using a perspective that considers time, space, and operations equally important. From a Philosophical Materialist perspective, this research proposes a set of analytical categories that facilitate operations analysis within empirical studies of waiting processes.

1. Introduction

Waiting has been attracting increasing interest among sociological and anthropological studies. However, there is still a limited amount of anthropological works that addresses waiting “as an analytical category in its own right” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 4). The analysis of social waiting processes has been inscribed in a paradigm that links it fundamentally to temporal factors, which means that its study is based on so-called social “temporalities”. Due to the much longer history of the temporal paradigm within the social science disciplines, the analysis of waiting has borrowed most of its categories from existing precedents in studying time and human temporalities.

Even though these tools are undoubtedly valuable, they are also limited. Several⁶¹ empirical studies analysing waiting processes have highlighted their complexity, as well as their multidimensional nature, whereby a theoretical system that relies exclusively on temporal categories of analysis becomes insufficient. For these reasons, some authors have begun to highlight the limitations of the exclusively temporal approach in waiting studies (Hage, 2009; Janeja & Bandak, 2020;

⁶¹ For an approach to the current anthropological and sociological research on the waiting topic, see *Waiting*, edited by Ghassan Hage (2009), *Ethnographies of Waiting. Doubt, Hope and Uncertainty*, edited by Manpreet K. Janeja and Andreas Bandak (2020), and *De los lugares de espera a los territorios de la espera. ¿Una nueva dimensión de la geografía social?*, edited by Alain Musset (2015). All of these books are compendiums of papers based on waiting studies.

Lindón, 2019; Musset, 2015). In short, each new study carried out shows us that the phenomenon of waiting is more complex than it was considered until very recently, supporting the idea that temporal explanations are not enough to describe all its nuances.

Consequently, this paper is set to create a system of categories that can capture the operational dimension of waiting in its full complexity. The paper proposes that the *operational*, *temporal*, and *spatial* dimensions of waiting constitute the three pillars that can sustain genuinely comprehensive analyses of waiting processes within social and human sciences. Starting from this premise, this paper proposes a gnoseological approach to waiting from an operational perspective, contributing a set of analytical categories to better understand the operations inherent in waiting processes. This will allow researchers to rely on a system of categories designed around the process of waiting as the primary object of study, instead of analysing it from the standpoint of other phenomena that have waiting as a secondary or related process. In this paper, this system of categories is built using the Philosophical Materialist (PhM) system developed by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno (1924-2016).

2. The ideas of operations in waiting studies

In general, authors who have studied social waiting processes have realised the existence and importance of operations within these processes. The ongoing problem, however, is that the operations have not been coherently articulated in these processes due to the analytical perspectives applied. This means that the aforementioned centrality of the temporal dimension of waiting has been a limitation of past waiting research. This concept of waiting has hindered the development of a perspective capable of integrating operations in the waiting process beyond being a mere by-product or consequence of experiences “constructed” around time.

Until now, the operational articulation of waiting processes has been reduced to the mere mention –and occasional quantification– of certain actions carried out during a specific waiting time. In other words, there has been an emphasis on describing all the phenomena related to waiting as a “temporality”.

For example, Kevin Gray, when analysing waiting processes in different queues, found that the value of time (considered subjectively) explains the operational morphologies of waiting. In this

regard, Grey points out that time has a particular value since it is “a generalised resource whose distribution affects life chances with regard to the attainment of other, more specific kinds of rewards” (Gray, 2009, p. 170). For Gray, time is “the sine qua non of access to productive achievement and personal fulfilment” (Idem) since it constitutes the dimension where human actions (operations) take place in the function of objectives of some kind. Given its finiteness and irreversibility, time is not only a scarce resource, but it is “the scarce resource” par excellence⁶². According to these premises, the actors involved in waiting have the fundamental objective of reducing the time required to fulfil the process. Waiting is therefore equated to wasted time.

In the same vein, Vlad Lungu (2019) argues that how time is understood is essential to understanding how we wait. Both ideas find a correlate in Bourdieu’s approach to time:

The rarity of a person’s time, and therefore the value set on his or her time, (...) which is the most precious, because most personal, gift (...) is a fundamental dimension of the social value of that person. This value is constantly underlined on the one hand through solicitations, expectations and requests, and on the other hand, through what is received in return, such as, (...) the price set on labour time, but also symbolic services (...) the form of deferences reserved for “important” people, who are known to be in a hurry (...) and to regard their time as precious (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 226).

In this approach, the importance of time in relation to waiting is overemphasized. Focusing solely on this valuational notion, even in a subjective and psychological sense, detracts from the fact that there are other reasons why the waiting has occurred in the first place. That is to say, the waiting has internal objectives that follow its own logic and demand, from the very beginning, necessary operations. These occur within the strict framework of the waiting process and are independent of

⁶² The universality of time's value is debatable. Time, viewed in this utilitarian way, is a specific phenomenon in so-called Western societies (Ferrie & Wiseman, 2019; Geißler, 2002; Pickering, 2016). This perspective is perhaps most strongly tied to Anglo-Saxon societies, with prominent traces of their Protestant *ethos* (Weber, 2001). Gray acknowledges this, stating: "In an increasingly frenetic society, we have become 'time-poor' and thus more time-conscious. The phobia associated with losing or being deprived of time is reinforced by residual folk memory of a religious era—perhaps most closely linked with the Protestant tradition—which emphasised the 'moral preciousness of time'. The Protestant work ethic and the belief that each must ultimately account to God for time usage combined to generate an enduring detestation of idleness" (Gray, 2009, p. 170).

the values or concepts –temporal or otherwise– of the *waiting actors* or *waiters*⁶³. From a materialist point of view, these operations are governed by a *logical or objective purpose* inherent to the waiting itself. This idea will be returned to in more depth. Here, it is only necessary to convey the common and misinformed perspective among many authors in believing that time is “lost” during waiting. This concept implies the invalidity of any understanding of time as an essence that possesses a value in itself, independent of its operations.

From another point of view, Barry Schwartz argues that social processes, among which waiting is included, “may be conceived as a set of operations which consume time” (Schwartz, 1978, p. 4). Applying this to waiting, he considers the specific activities or operations within it. Schwartz finds a relationship between the sequential order of the operations, their coordination, and the amount of time available to them. These all then correspond with other social dynamics to which these processes are linked. Specifically, Schwartz points to the organisational character in which some waiting processes occur. In this way, and as organised (or *institutionalised*) processes, waiting “also displays tendencies and rules which safeguard the efficiency of social organisations by controlling the temporal cost of its operations” (Idem).

This perspective can be labelled as structural functionalist, since it omits the will or psychology of the social actors from the operational morphology of waiting, even though it recognises the existence of these actors. Schwartz proposes assigning a particular hierarchy to operations while still considering waiting as essentially organisational temporality. In this regard, he explains that the operations that take place in libraries, for example, are more immune to time than those that take place in hospitals or fire stations. Hence, it is to be expected that the institutional waits associated with these different spheres have temporal-operational relations that differ from one another.

Based on this insight, it is essential to emphasise hierarchy in the operational and temporal morphology of waiting. Consequently, it is necessary to speak of an “operational stratification”. Specifically, it is proposed two classes based on the segmentation of waiting operations into “random” and “ordinal”. The first, “random” class, describes certain operations that do not require a structured chronology within the process but are carried out randomly. The second “ordinal” class occurs when the operations are carried out following a certain logically established order. Both

⁶³ I am using *waiter* according to the terminology offered by Giovanni Gasparini in “On waiting”, *Time & Society* (1995). Javier Auyero (2012, p. 9), also used by Bourdieu (2000), use the term *patient* referring the same actor.

classes are in close relation to the *intentional aims*⁶⁴ of the waiting process and the *preceding, present, and subsequent operative courses*⁶⁵.

Despite the advancements by Schwartz (1978), he does not yet represent waiting as an operational phenomenon itself. While he analyses waiting from multiple perspectives, Schwartz places the standardised, structured or systematised operability of waiting as pertaining to organisations where the waiting takes place, and not in the process of waiting itself. In other words, Schwartz does not consider waiting to have an institutional logic and rationality of itself, independent of its relation to the institutions or institutional frameworks (commercial organisations, in the case analysed by Schwartz) where it takes place.

Rather than focusing on how waiting processes affect valuable⁶⁶ time for organisations, groups, or actors (waiting as wasted time), I propose focus on the value of the operations carried out in the time covered by the waiting process. By value of operations instead of time in the context of waiting we can think about how (a) projected operations are not carried out as expected, affecting value and (b) additional operations that were not foreseen are required as part of the waiting process. I find that this second aspect is frequently overlooked.

For example, let's analyse the time of a market analyst. This time is valuable only insofar as it is valuable trading time, *i. e.*, time spent studying or learning about stock market fluctuations, the prices of specific stocks, the best moment to invest, etc. It is these operations, and not others, that are of value. These operations take place in a given period, as their value is articulated to time-bound events. However, the same individual could be performing other operations (*e. g.*, going for a walk) in a similar period which do not have equivalent value. It is the operations he performs and not the time he spends performing them that drive value (*e. g.*, what he charges for one hour of work).

Additionally, the value of operations is context specific. For example, it is possible to say that, in

⁶⁴ See below "3.4. Intentional objectives: aims, plans and programmes".

⁶⁵ See below "3.1 Operations, referent, referential and turning points; their relevance as categories in the study of the waiting process".

⁶⁶ This value sometimes is mostly economic, but also could be moral or even ontological. These are cultural characteristics of western societies, mostly since the arrival of modernity. It is a remaining of the Christian (mostly Protestant) idea of the salvation. In this sense, time is one of the most precious assets we have as human beings because is the phenomenon that marks the opportunities, we have to obtain the salvation of our soul.

general, the time the market analyst spends going for a walk does not have monetary value, but this would not be the case for a dog walker.

Some authors include the operational dimension of waiting in addition to its temporality in their studies and reflect on how the operations that take place in a waiting process determine its morphology. However, many studies lack the appropriate categories to capture this analysis in its full complexity. For example, Catherine Bailey (2018) agrees with Lijun Tang (2012) in arguing that waits can be classified, in a sense closely linked to their operativity, into what she calls “pure waits” and waits that take place at the same time as other activities. In other words, some waits take place outside of any activity and others take place while other operations are being carried out (Tang, 2012). Tang elaborates on this idea and points out that, in some waits, the person waits “in its ‘pure’ sense” and remains inactive, since waiting “is the only action, the concerned individual is ‘doing’” (2012, p. 225). In other waiting processes, the author positions some operations that subjects perform outside the waiting, suggesting that the waiting process must be emptied of any operative components to be “waiting as such”. In other words, waiting must have a passive morphology. For Tang in instances where waiting seems to entail some activities or dynamism, it is because the subject is impelled by operative courses external to the waiting process, which move the subject to “act”. In the same way, waiting could show dynamic components when the acting subject himself does his part, in a voluntarist way, and takes action in the waiting, almost always in an axiologically positive sense, as self-improvement or personal growth. It is interesting to observe that the empirical observations presented by both Bailey (2019) and Tang (2012) somewhat contradict the passive nature they assign to the processes of waiting they describe. However, it is apparent that the categories that underpin their analysis are unable to capture the active nature of the waiting process they describe.

If waiting is an object that can be studied by science, it must be somehow observable, describable and measurable. This is not practicable if waits are conceived of as “pure” (in the sense of liminal, unproductive time), *i. e.*, operationally empty, as proposed by Bailey (2019) and Tang (2012). If there are no operations to measure and the only object that exists in this “liminal time” is the perception, or mental state of the subject, then the study of waiting would be outside thegnoseological scope of the social sciences. However, I propose that this is not the case, and that within the process of waiting, there are multiple dimensions (operational, spatial and temporal). In

short, I conceive of the process of waiting not as a “parenthesis” in action, an empty space in between operations, but as a process that is operational in and of itself. Therefore, the operational dimension of waiting is not external to it, but an inherent dimension, which needs to be analysed in relation with others (*i. e.*, time and space).

Mikio Fujita (1985) presents yet another way to approach the operational aspect of waiting. This author analyses the issue from an interesting viewpoint. Instead of focusing on the existence or absence of operations in waiting, or the value of the actors involved in the processes assigned to them, he focuses on the operational aspect concerning waiting circumstances. That is, he leans towards assuming activity in the sense of operational interweaving that we mentioned earlier, as operations of other processes that, for some reason, subjects must carry out while they wait. Hence, the operational issue would fall into one of the author’s two classifications to characterise waiting. Namely, according to the ‘*what*’ or the reason for waiting (Schweizer, 2008) –in DM terms, its *objective purpose*–. Or, on the other hand, according to the *how* of waiting, that is, based on the ways in which waiting takes place (its *logical purpose*, viewed from my analytical perspective). For Fujita, the operational aspect of waiting would predominantly fall into the *how* of waiting, although it is related to the reasons that motivate waiting and the *what* of them. Therefore, Fujita finds a certain dependency relationship between *how* and *what* we wait for.

The problem with this approach is that the nature of this dependency relationship between the *what* and the *how* needs to be explained in depth. Nor is it analysed why it is only sometimes present or what other factors, besides the operational ones, are interfering in the morphology of the waiting process, viewed from the standpoint of this relationship, which is considered essential. This evasion would be interesting to observe and could theoretically yield many results, and it would expose the objective morphology of waiting in its existing modulations. Although these notions point out several aspects of interest, they suffer from the essential monism characterising most analyses of waiting in social and human sciences. By considering waiting as somewhat a closed entity in itself, without paying attention to the temporal, spatial, operational, etcetera, junctures that link it to other social, cultural, and even natural processes, actual waiting, as manifested in reality, is overlooked in an attempt to adjust it to the theoretical canon that is held in advance. From my perspective, I understand that the relationships observed between purpose or intention (*what*) and processes and morphologies (*how*) are nothing more than the existing link between the objectives (*prolepsis*) of

operations and the *goal-oriented purposes* to which they necessarily point. As we will see later, these relationships that Fujita glimpses are of great interest, as they allow coordination with other relationships that we will establish following DM analytical coordinates.

Giovanni Gasparini (1995), from another perspective, proposes the category of *situated waiting*, which can be viewed as a synthesis of Fujita's (1985) *what* and *how of the waiting* proposal. According to Gasparini, the wait's *what* and *how* could be related to the *kinds* and *forms* they objectively adopt in the social sphere. In other words, concretely, the process materially takes place. Waiting is thus determined by the cause that initially provoked it. Gasparini proposes a scheme of five causes of delays in social organisations⁶⁷ and attributes their occurrence mostly to the "implementation" mechanisms of certain *service activities* (*i. e.*, operational processes). These are followed by the implementation of other processes to counteract the detrimental effects (delays, lost time) caused by the former. Consequently, the waiting is a kind of lapse (generally considered temporary) between different types of operational processes.

However, as I noted above, there are also operations related to the process itself in this lapse. Harold Schweizer (2008), like Gasparini, admits this possibility. Nevertheless, for Schweizer, these operations aim primarily to avoid the waiting process itself. In other words, the objective operational promoter of the waiting is based on the (generally subjective) avoidance of the process. This avoidance can be both social/objective and psychological/subjective. Furthermore, it is oriented towards avoiding both the waiting itself, the socio-institutional process in a material sense, and the detrimental effects it provokes (*i. e.*, 'time' *irretrievably wasted*). To carry out these actions, the social actors prepare themselves to face the waiting and devote to it –consciously– the least amount of time possible. Concerning this idea, Gasparini proposes the category of "equipped waiting" to refer to waiting where there is a circumstance in which the actor develops a plan or strategy. According to the Gasparini, this planning makes it possible to "occupy time", thereby reducing the "costly or unpleasant effects" of waiting. He adds that "during 'equipped waiting' a series of activities can be performed by the individual, such as personal activities (eating, resting, sleeping), communicating,

⁶⁷ The five causes he proposes are: 1) the actual scarcity of goods and services supplied compared to the demand for them; 2) a monopoly of the services supplied; 3) bad or inefficient functioning of a service activity; 4) time limitations in the supply of services, *e. g.*, when they are only accessible in restricted daily or weekly time-zones; 5) uneven time access between different customers and service users (Gasparini, 1995, p. 32).

speaking and listening, reading and studying, and even working with a personal computer or other suitable equipment” (Gasparini, 1995, pp. 35–36).

Gasparini’s position is useful for us because it points out an aspect that I consider to be of substantial importance: actions or operations that are carried out in waiting do not occur at random but are the result of rational and logical processes and are implemented individually or in groups. Despite its utility, this position presents the problem of excessive subjectivism. In other words, although the operational character of waiting is recognised, its effective realisation is associated with the actors’ will. Additionally, this position does not fully take into account, at least in *representation*⁶⁸, that this operational framework (despite its subjectivity) is framed by organisational structures (legislation or regulations), cultural structures (ethical and moral norms), as well as by the characteristics and limitations of the space (*interior, contour, surroundings*⁶⁹) in which waiting takes place.

However, the actors must deal with concretely existing dynamics that are not linked to the actions they carry out in an elusive function because waiting itself also demands operations. The condition of waiting to involve social processes demands it to operate in reality and not in the subjects’ minds. These structural operations are essential when it comes to explaining waiting itself. Using the Philosophical Materialism, these social waiting processes can be described as *institutional ceremonial* or *institutional non-ceremonial*. Likewise, they can be neither *institutional* nor *ceremonial* at all. It is the task of researchers studying waiting to distinguish between these typologies and establish the appropriate classifications of the dynamics present in a given process. From an institutional perspective on waiting, this operational planning is rational, logical and possible only insofar as the waiting already is all of these things itself. In other words, the waiting presents an

⁶⁸ Gustavo Bueno's PhM identifies two forms in which an idea can be presented: *exercise* and *representation*. Exercise refers to the practical use of an idea without explicitly defining its characteristics, while representation involves critically revisiting the idea and defining its fundamental features. In this way, Bueno emphasizes the importance of both practical application and theoretical understanding.

⁶⁹ Gustavo Bueno uses notions of surrounding, *contour*, and *interior* to describe various spatial positions. Extending these terms, initially used in architecture and art, to aspects like bodies, parts, wholes, concepts, and concept fields, he enables a logical analysis of relationships between configurations, continuities, and crucially, discontinuities in his materialist philosophy. For more information, visit <http://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df090.htm>. For a comprehensive analysis of these categories related to waiting, see "The spaces of the waiting. Some notions and categories of Philosophical Materialism useful for their study".

internal logic with which the actor establishes a dialectical relation by establishing planning subject to *aims*. In other words, what the actor implements in the waiting are *proleptic operations*, explained in more detail below.

Finally, in an operational sense, waiting has also been seen as a mechanism of social control. Accordingly, it is understood that the operations linked to these processes are implemented as devices for directing or forcing the operational courses of certain social groups, almost always minority groups (migrants, the poor, women, “racialised people”, etc.). From this perspective, operations of the waiting can hinder free social action, either because these operations produce domination incidentally, or because they were purposefully planned (and executed) by power entities as acts to suppress the freedom of specific (minoritarians) social actors. Along these lines, Michel Foucault (2011) points out that state agencies operate mainly in controlling the customs, habits, and ways of acting and thinking of those in need. Anna Secor supports this position, explaining that in everyday life the state makes us both *run* and *wait* uselessly and for various reasons (Secor, 2007, p. 41). Its sole purpose in doing so is to maintain an iron grip on our actions. For Secor, the stories of the daily waiting times of many people bear witness to this. This multiplicity of social actors is obliged to move from one government office to another throughout the day for different reasons. These movements become obligatory operations that are part of a process of waiting in which these agents are necessarily involved. Secor points to the case of waiting for the aid or social assistance some women in Istanbul, Turkey, have to endure. It is described as “go today, come tomorrow” without obtaining concrete results for their actions or able to stop them. Javier Auyero (2012) agrees with Secor that these temporal dynamics of waiting constitute examples of what he calls the *sociospatial constitution of power*, through which the state exercises oppression and control over individuals.

Research by Secor (2002, 2007) and Auyero (2012) is of indisputable value for the present research because of the ethnographic material they provide, which is very useful in demonstrating the theoretical perspective defended by this article. Considering that both authors share a temporal concept of waiting, it is possible to see mechanisms for controlling temporalities according to their analyses. However, it is improbable that the mechanism for manipulation they describe rests in temporal control of powerful actors. The control must lie in the very operations themselves if there is any subjection in a given case. The objective and material act of having to go to the office every day, as a concrete operation and not a hypothetical one, constitutes a factual mechanism of exercising

power over others. The time invested in this “control exercise” is undoubtedly a factor to be considered, but not the only one, and perhaps not the most important one.

In summary, it is possible to affirm that the institutionalisation of waiting and the operations within waits have not been sufficiently explored in previous studies. Authors who have studied the elements related to the operations in the waiting and its institutionalisation have not developed them to their full potential. Given the analyses carried out and the shortcomings discussed here, I can hypothesise that the development of a clear idea, or even a defined conceptual position of the operations in the waiting process, has been truncated by the theoretical biases accompanying studies on waiting⁷⁰. In what follows, I will develop an alternative theory to these positions, putting operations that occur during waiting at the centre of the analysis. This relocation will make it possible to approach any phenomenon involved in waiting in a dialectical and systematic way, including time and experiences.

3. Waiting and operations: A Philosophical-materialist categorial proposal

3.1. Operations, referent, referential and turning points; their relevance as categories in the study of the waiting process

It is a widespread idea that waiting is a kind of *state* to which the subject arrives, induced by a specific situation mostly external to their will. According to Harold Schweizer, “waiting is not a passage of time to be traversed but a condition of our being” (Schweizer, 2008, p. 128). It is rarely considered that waiting is also a factual and objective institutional process in which the subjects participate with varying degrees of intentionality but always operatively. In other words, the idea that to wait is also to participate is underemphasised; whether it is pleasant or not, planned or not, or whether the participants have more or less freedom of action are separate issues to be considered. Even so, I take for granted that once in the process of waiting, the social actors must necessarily act (*i. e.*, they must

⁷⁰ When the theoretical bases underpinning existing research are mentioned, it is about a set of postulates that more or less generally underpin current studies. Among these, we could highlight what we have called the hypostasis of time in waiting times, which leads to the substantiation of waiting time as the only important factor in these phenomena. For a more in-depth critical analysis of these theoretical bases, see: Avila (2022). “Waiting as temporality and the temporality in waiting. A critical approach to the idea of time in waiting”.

operate). For this reason, it is emphasised that in waiting, actions are mostly “operative”, and carried out by an “operative” subject.

Operations cover a vast spectrum of typologies, from “surgical” operations, where objects are brought together and separated, to “proleptic” operations, which involve drawing up plans and programmes subject to specific aims. Based on the ideas of Gustavo Bueno (1992), the waits are processes in which the subject permanently configures what could be qualified as “intentional objectives”. Intentional objectives are, in turn, dialectically connected with objectives set by other subjects who may aim to achieve their own goals. Thus, the plans of actors can move in different directions: they may be parallel, interconnected, intertwined and, at times, in open contradiction or hostility. The confluence of these objectives shapes the *consumptive end*⁷¹ - the very final - of the waiting process. In other words, the point where waiting culminates, *i. e.*, where it temporally, spatially and operationally *aims*.

Together with the initial moment, this ending point indicates the place where waiting is finally constituted *delimiting* or *defining* it concerning the rest of the phenomena of reality. Therefore, both the idea of the *end*⁷² –to which I will return later– and waiting are themselves *syncategorematic*⁷³ (Bueno, 1992). That is to say, the *end* and the *waiting* must always be the end and waiting of something since there is no absolute end or absolute waiting. In this respect, Gustavo Bueno points out that the “*end of something*” takes on meaning as an *end* only by reference to this “something” (1992, p. 7). In this way, the idea of *end* applied to the processes of waiting acquires a specific categorial meaning. This, in turn, refers to a process that is also particular (“waiting for something specific”, and not abstractly or generically). The end is the first criterion I use to define waiting from the analytical coordinates I am proposing. The end of the process to which I refer when I speak of waiting thus constitutes its “referent”. For DM, the *referent* is the reason why “something” can be thought of as “the support or logical subject of an end” (1992, p. 8).

⁷¹ This term corresponds to the worldly meaning of end as “finish” or “completion”.

⁷² Here, the idea of “*end*” is used in its double meaning of both an end as a final or culminating point, and an end as a purpose, objective or goal.

⁷³ *Syncategorematic* expressions lack meaning on their own but can impact the meaning of a larger expression, whereas *categorematic* expressions have their own meaning and can stand alone. For example, the word “liberty” is *syncategorematic* as it depends on the context to acquire a specific meaning such as liberty to act, own, or speak. In contrast, words like “dog” or “table” are *categorematic* as they have a clear meaning and can be understood regardless of the context in which they are used.

This end boundary is abstract or logical and materialised through tangible objects, processes, or moments: a door, a fence, a document, a border, a ceremony, or a date on the calendar, among others. I call these object materialisations *referential*. The *referential* are present throughout the body of the process as elements of identification of parts or moments that, for some given reason, have operative force within the waiting. In short, the *referent* marks the *consumptive end* of any process –the waiting, in my case– and the *referentials* are material indicators of where this occurs in time and space⁷⁴.

In another sense, as an entity that gives body and internally unifies the process, the *referent* is related not only to the acting subjects but also to objective elements beyond the waiting actors (*i. e.*, both internal to the process and external to it). This relationship also contributes and qualifies, in a *configurational* sense, since it takes place within the boundaries imposed by the context outside the process (its *surroundings*). Hence, it has some dialectical and conflictual links with environmental factors external to the waiting process. These relationships are essential for understanding the internal processes of waiting, as the influence of this environment crosses the procedural parts and the actors involved in the waiting itself. That is, waiting is also acted upon (operated) by all forces that establish a dialectic relationship with the *referent*. In other words, the *referent* marks an end but also a “boundary” (1992, p. 9) for the waiting process. Furthermore, the referent marks an end in operational terms (the end of the operative courses) and limits *temporal* and *spatial* segments. According to Bueno the *referent* also indicates the limits of “the surface of a bounded space through whose extension the action (the ‘pressure’) of the exterior is determined in enveloping limits which are synthetically identified with the limits determined by the reaction (or resistance) of the interior multiplicity” (1992, p. 8). This means that the dialectics and operative actions within the waiting process also play a role in determining these final limits.

In short, a given wait finds its final closure, as a totality, in the *referent* that indicates the empirical *consumptive end* of the process. However, this closure (an end of the waiting process) is ultimately gateway to connected, but different processes. In agreement with Gustavo Bueno, it could be pointed out that referents constitute a *simultaneous* or *successive* multiplicity. In other words, the *referent*, as a final configuration, if it is to be an end as such, is more than just the culmination or

⁷⁴ In this particular, it is important to note that referentials can denote both intermediate *ends* of any kind and the *consumptive end* or *referent* of the process.

cancellation of operative courses internal to the waiting process. Also, waiting constitutes dialectical linkages with the “outside world” after the process itself. In this sense, the *referent* is linked to “a term or set of terms”, which can be both results and contexts external to the process itself, but which unify waiting in its *processual* (courses of operations) and *configurational* (spatial/temporal context) multiplicity. These processual realities, external to the waiting process itself, exert constant pressure to break the borders of the wait, both at the wait’s *contour*⁷⁵ (the margins that define and distinguish the waiting process from other adjacent processes of reality) and the wait’s closure, its referent (the end of the wait, or any of its process).

An empirical example can help explain this. Considering the wait at Kabul airport in the last days of August 2020, it can be said that it was an institutionalised waiting whose *preceding inflection point* was the seizure of the capital by Taliban militias. This waiting had as its *consumptive end* the “exit from Afghanistan” of the US military and others involved in the process. Here, the benchmark was the total evacuation of U.S. troops and collaborators, materialised in the *referential*: effective boarding, take-off and transcendence of the air borders of Afghanistan by the aircraft used in this operation. The process of objective waiting was constituted (defined) on this *referent*, which *delimited* the operations of the “waiters” (the actors), giving shape to an institutional process that could be called “waiting for the evacuation of Afghanistan”. The operational achievement of this referent (effectively getting out of Afghanistan) also marks the *consumptive end* or conclusion of the wait in both *time* and *space*. In the same way, this *referent* indicates not just the goals or purposes but the *end* of all internal operations in the process (the *present courses of the wait*). Moreover, it also influences multiple operations external to the process, affecting the waiting in multiple ways. A good example in this context is a situation described by Stephen Losey as a testimony of his efforts to help a staff member waiting to be evacuated:

My phone lit up (...) with a call from Afghanistan. The number belonged to Said, an interpreter from Kabul who had worked for the U.S. military a decade ago. But the voice on the other end of the phone wasn’t Said’s. An American Marine was urgently asking me who I was. I told him my name and identified myself as a reporter with Military.com. I asked whether Said was there and if they were at Abbey Gate,

⁷⁵ The *contour* is the surface or line of separation or dissociation between the contained space (*interior*) and the enveloping space (*surrounding*).

one of the main entrances to Hamid Karzai International Airport, which currently serves as the only way out of the country for many Afghans. (...) The Marine on the other end of the phone confirmed that's where they were. I asked how I could help. (...) He called someone else over, a first lieutenant, and I could make out something like, "We got a Pentagon reporter here" (Losey, 2021).

Here we see how internal operational courses (said being at the gate, talking with the marine) and external courses (the call coming into phone) interact dialectically in the waiting process.

Another issue that is closely related to the above is the transmutation of the referent once it has been reached. It could be said that the *referent* of waiting is transformed into a subsequential turning point once transcended. It is here, in the referent, that the wait's operative courses start to change their expected route, modify their previous inertia, and a new course is initiated. These emergent courses may be foreseen or unforeseen by the subject, but they will certainly demand a proleptic position on the part of the subject as soon as they occur. Once the operative prolepsis has been established, a preceding turning point is again constituted, but this time to give way to other courses, thus completing the cycle. In the case of waits, this last (now preceding) inflection point will mark the beginning of either a new wait or a process that will be different from the wait both temporally, spatially, and operationally.

Consequently, I diverge from the idea, frequently found in social research, that waiting is a parenthesis, a dead, empty or liminal time. My idea is that waiting takes place at a certain point of operative inflection where specific courses that precede those of waiting are diverted to give way to other operative courses. These new courses become the *present operative courses*, *i. e.*, the internal ones, specific to the waiting already in process. Once these courses have been overcome (the *referent* has been transcended), they will turn at another *inflection point* towards *subsequent operative courses*, whose *inflection points* have been precisely the referent of the waiting process, now dialectically transformed, as it was explained before.

In any case, I still have to clarify the impact of traces left by the *present operative courses* (*i. e.*, those that take place in the *waiting interior* or interior) when they end abruptly after the achievement of the referent. That is when the objectives of the wait are achieved. In this regard, it could be said that once we enter the *subsequent courses* (after the waiting), we may still find

remnants of some of the previous ones⁷⁶ now transformed into *subsequent operative courses*. Where the referent becomes blurred, both the *surrounding* environment, (*i. e.*, outside the waiting process) and the totality of the processes and operations within the waiting have an even more direct influence, which is why the pressure is often greater than in other parts of the waiting process. It is precisely here that the transmutation of the referent into an *inflexion point* of new operative courses, this time consecutive to those given in the waiting, begins. In this way, those courses shape the dialectic relationship between the preceding inertias and the thrust of the external operative courses that are already distinguishable from the previous ones. Even so, these *subsequent courses* have in their morphology, to a greater or lesser extent, contacts and influences with processes linked to the referent (that no longer exists). This dialectical relationship between different courses in different moments of the waiting process occurs because the *referent* had relations precisely with one of the courses outside the waiting process. Here, the *referent* became the last essential point where the operations are structured. These *points* which have key significance for the operative structure of the waiting will be called *anchorage points*.⁷⁷ “I couldn’t breathe calmly again until I knew that the plane was leaving Kabul; even in the plane there was a lot of tension”, as stated in testimony given by some of the passengers (Bayer, 2021). The statement demonstrates a remnant of the *referent*. These traces in the *operative courses* following the waiting are the echoes of the last anchor point, which was gradually erased as the plane moved away from the airport. The airport and its vicinity were the *interior* and *surrounding* of the waiting. Kabul represented the *contour* of the waiting process. In this space, even at the end of the waiting were some repercussions, for example, some gunfire signals made by one of the forces involved in the conflict during one airborne evacuation (Reuters, 2021)⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ These courses, before the referent, were the *present courses* of waiting, now transformed into *consequent courses* of operations to this one.

⁷⁷ Anchor points will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.3 below.

⁷⁸ On 27 August, various sources reported that shots had been fired during the take-off of one of the Italian air force’s evacuation planes, which could have been aimed at the aircraft. It was later confirmed that the shots were apparently not aimed at the aircraft but were in response to various attempts to move people away from a certain point near the airport.

3.2. Prolepsis and anamnesis in the waiting process

The previous section has set the theoretical boundaries that allow delimitation of the waiting processes. With these limits established, some of the mechanisms through which the internal materials of these processes take a specific form will be analysed. Previously, it was pointed out that waiting has in the *preceding inflection point* its starting point and in the *referent* the moment of closure. Although these both delimit and define a wait, waiting also involves other moments that imply operative sequences.

Several authors have commented on these in studies on waiting. Jo Ferrie and Phillippa Wiseman explained that waiting, as a time “between the present and that perceptible point in the future” (between the *preceding inflexion point* and the *referent*), can be thought of in graduated stages. These stages allow waiters “to locate themselves in relation to the endpoint” (Ferrie & Wiseman, 2019) and can be calculated directly as lengths of time.

I diverge from the definition set out above, albeit recognising this strictly temporal characteristic as an aspect of waiting. However, I argue that these chronological sequences do not occur at random but are conducted by a subject who operates with a specific end (referent) in mind. Given the type of operations that any actor carries out, an endpoint is not just an end but responds to a very particular type of *outcome*. In Bueno’s DM, this endpoint is called “*proleptic goal*”, since “(the composition between the *referent* and the *end* takes place through the mediation of an *operative subject*, which is who applies the *end* to the *referent*” (Bueno, 1992, p. 11). Before explaining what characterises this *outcome*, I must point out some distinctive aspects of the type of operations that *end* with the process. I am referring, in particular, to the *proleptic operations*.

From the DM paradigm, all operative behaviour is already proleptic. However, it is not necessarily normative because it is *operative* and *proleptic*, at least not in the strict sense of human normative *prolepsis*. We must distinguish between two types of operations relating to two different levels of operative behaviour. According to Gustavo Bueno (1984) the first typology is purely *apothetical* (in the distant) operative performance. I understand this to constitute prolepsis in a broad sense. It corresponds, for example, to the situation of a bird “building” its nest or a chimpanzee selecting ideal branches to reach fruits or “fishing” for ants in an anthill. This behavioural

operationality is similar to that of a Neanderthal man carving “standardised” stones. Ethologically, all of these operations are at the same level.

On the other hand, the second type of operation is constituted by *proleptic* conduct, *sensu stricto*, since they are *teleological-causal* (Bueno, 1984, p. 17). In other words, these operations are in a relationship through re-presentation for a specific purpose. This *representation* of outcome cannot, under any circumstance, refer to future objects since this object does not yet exist (but will in the future). Hence, the *representation* of any object is only possible by referring to past objects. I call this representation *anamnesis*. The term *anamnesis* (initially coined by Plato) translates from Greek as *remember*. It refers to “knowing as remembering” as a “soul’s dialogue with itself”. In the operative sense given to it by DM, *anamnesis* also incorporates the Epicurean meaning as a correlate to *prolepsis* or “anticipation”, “project”, “programme” or “plan”. *Anamnesis* refers to forms or models already completed (past) insofar as it is only from them that we can understand the constitution of *prolepsis* (*plans* or *programmes*). According to this idea, the projected future is not creating or anticipating a fantasy as an effect of the *anamnesis* (García Sierra, 2021a). In this sense, it is said that it is a *re-presented* future. Through *anamnesis*, the previously organised objects present in the current operation can be transformed, modified, reiterated, altered, etc., through a combinatory exercise with new materials. Neanderthal man did not represent into himself (in his mind) the axe he was going to build; his hands were *directed*, not by the future axe, but to the past form of a known axe or some other similar instrument. Hence, I can affirm that the *prolepsis* proceeds from the *anamnesis* (Bueno, 1984, p. 17).

Closely related to the above, *prolepsis* must be allocated at the moment in which the apothetical (at distance) object, already classed, is re-constructed through a plan. In this act, other objects of its kind must necessarily be segregated. It is this internal segregation that constitutes the plan of the *norm*. For this reason, human *prolepsis* is presented as a concept related to that of a *norm* or *rule*. In this respect, Gustavo Bueno affirms: “All human *prolepsis* is normative, even if it is so to different degrees” (Idem). These norms give a specific and unique character to certain human *proleptic* actions; that is, they make them institutional. This normative *prolepsis* guides the Neanderthal axe-maker.

It is to this or a similar axe and not to his particular future axe that the forging operations are projected. The above is of fundamental importance for the study of waiting. Waiting has been

primarily analysed in relation to time, and it is common to find allusions to a particular projective moment, *i. e.*, to points or moments in time occupied by the waiting subject's waiting. The waiting is often considered "a link between the present and the future" (Gasparini, 1995, p. 30). Hence, "the fact of waiting, in any situation, implies that an actor is oriented towards the future" (Idem). In this respect, Nermin Saybaşı points out that "'waiting' is the other name for the condition of possibility that has at every minute a potential to bring us a future which is not a pre-existing one" (2011, p. 361). For Saybaşı, as for other authors (Bourdieu, 1999; Crapanzano, 1986; Gasparini, 1995), the references are always in the future in planning and waiting.

My theoretical perspective suggests taking the opposite perspective. Up to now, projection in waiting processes has been presented in relation to the future. What I propose differs in that the operations carried out in the waits are rather related to the past. This "going back" to what has been experienced or known is called *anamnesis*. This anamnesis is precisely what makes the waiting process logical, rational, and knowable. On the other hand, anamnesis allows many of these waiting processes to be normative phenomena.

This idea also connects with the institutionalised character of the social and human waiting, a thesis I have been defending in previous articles⁷⁹. If the social actors involved can identify a certain logic, legality, and norm in the waiting process and act accordingly, it is not because they anticipate their future but because they are aware of their past. In this past, they find similar institutional situations that allow them to draw up schemes of action, operational courses, and prolepsis. This proleptic planning is not only done in response to specific processes but is also done in response to other actors involved in similar operations. That is, the subject is confronted with other possible interpretations, more or less effective relative to her own, with which she will have to deal dialectically and thereby transform (or not) her behavioural action.

3.3. Anchor points and demarcation operations in waiting areas

⁷⁹ See Avila Castellanos (2021). "The spaces of waiting. Some notions and categories of Philosophical Materialism, useful for their study".

Moving on from my explanation of the nature of the operations implemented within waiting processes, in this section I analyse the morphology of these actions in more detail. Starting from the concept of waiting as an institutional phenomenon, waits possess a particular *hylomorphic condition* that allows us to identify and dissociate some of their parts. If waits are *proleptic operational* phenomena, they have a destination. Above, the idea of the referent was mentioned as the final destination of all the operative courses, but here it is worth asking: What happens with the internal courses that do not end, nor aim, in principle, at the referent? To analyse this aspect, we have to first establish the points which close the particular courses upon themselves, just as the referent does concerning the processual totality, making them identifiable phenomena. The waiting process can also be described and measured (Álvarez Álvarez & Barreto Argilagos, 2010) from these determinations' points. I call these closures or particular operative culmination points: *anchor points*.

The *anchor points* in an operational process have the characteristic of being both *starting* and *ending points* of operative courses. In terms of their time-space positioning, they can be *internal* or *external* to the waiting process. *Operative vectors* of two types connect internal anchor points: a) *projected* and b) *achieved*. Additionally, *external anchor points* connect the waiting *referent*, in its *subsequent inflection phase*, with other possible *referents* belonging to *operative courses subsequent* to the waiting process⁸⁰.

Concerning their positional functions, these anchor points can also be *topological*, *topographical*, or both simultaneously. In other words, they constitute both markers of logical meaning (*topological*) and indicators of geographical *localisation* (*topographical*). For this reason, anchor points can be identified with referents of both cultural and physical/natural phenomena. Thus, we can distinguish between *logical demarcation operations* and *territorial demarcation operations*, which make respective use of *referential of logical demarcation* and *referential of territorial demarcation*.

The logical demarcation operations are those that coordinate one's own operational courses with other operational courses with which one establishes dialectic relationships during the waiting

⁸⁰ These are the *external anchor points* that are beyond the *referent*. Such external points always have a *projective vectorial* relation to the operations of subjects immersed in what we call the *concave* perspective of waiting. At the same time, they can sustain also a *vectorial relation* by *achievement*, that it is more related to waiters immersed in what we named the *convex* perspective of waiting.

process. These operations can be internal and external adjustments concerning the position of the course(s) with which one interacts. In other words, they can be aimed both at restructuring one's prolepsis and at projecting (sometimes changing, diverting and even slowing down or eliminating) proleptic operations for its execution once the waiting process is over. Sometimes these operations are juxtaposed with *operations of territorial demarcation*, taking the form of a *topological referential*. This indicates that the prolepsis or operative courses of other subjects take into account that a specific position within the process has been spatially and operationally occupied.

These *territorial demarcation operations* aim to demarcate, communicate, or orient the *situation* in the waiting process (spatially speaking). These actions can be either a) organisational/legal or b) moral/cultural.

The former (a) are found in the form of information windows, written records, computer software, information screens, warning devices (luminous or vibrating technology, customer alerts, electronic queue managers), mobile applications, etc.

Among the second (b), we find referential operations such as verbal announcements, conversations, mentions to *localisation* by spatial markers (*e. g.*, near a door, next to a plant, next to the toilet, etc.), presence records (your luggage in a seat, a picture of a place), group recognition (actions that announce –verbally, by body language, by some object– to a group that you are there), individual announcements (telling someone you are there), etc.

Neil F. Brady offers the testimony of actors in a waiting process where certain operations of *territorial demarcation* (of an organisational/legal nature) and *logical demarcation* are revealed at the same time:

[M]y girlfriend and I were hungry, so we walked down the street to the McDonalds that was close by; after about an hour, we got back, and the line had moved up. All we had to do was compare the number on our card to the numbers of the people that were in line to figure out where in line we were (Brady, 2002, p. 160).

In the example, the actors not only seek to *allocate* themselves in the process by comparing the organisational demarcation markers (numbered cards), but also refer to the *localisation* itself as a *situation*, *i. e.*, a positioning relative to others. The operations involved (*e. g.*, “checking the numbers” of others, determining “our place”) are at the same time a territorialisation of waiting (Lindón, 2019;

Musset, 2015) and a restructuring of the logical courses that drive the process. These courses occur in accordance with the prolepsis (here, we are in evident proximity to the referent or end) and with the prolepses of other participants in the waiting process.

Another specific example of *logical demarcation* can be seen in the following case. According to Richard Larson, some police departments in American cities managed demands for police service through what he calls a “differential police response strategy” (R. C. Larson, 1987, p. 900). This measure “deliberately” delayed specific lower priority calls for service by thirty minutes to two hours, a practice done even when sufficient police officers and police cars were available. These operations were intended to make officers available for possible short-term high-priority incidents and other essential police tasks. Citizen surveys showed that in these lower priority incidents, “waiters” showed no dissatisfaction with the late response of law enforcement. This was the case even if they were delayed by more than an hour, as long as citizens were informed of the estimated magnitude and reasons for the delay. According to Larson, this process of informing made citizens more cooperative and satisfied than when no information was provided, even if the response took less time.

Larson attributes these favourable results to the fact that the *feedback* given to consumers provoked a sense of social justice and attention to their demands. Without denying this possibility, from the DM perspective one explanation is that, through certain operations, waiters have been offered the possibility of establishing *logical demarcations* that are more accurate to the waiting process.

Considering that these demarcation operations occur at the anchor points, the question is how one point communicates with another before addressing why this particular connection is established. The answer to this question lies in the logical vectors that the operative subjects trace between the anchor points, which guide their operative courses within the process. Through this vectorial connection, operational segments are also created. These do not only serve as links between the different points but are what make subjects’ expectations genuine vectorial phenomena. These logical interconnections are another characteristic of waiting that support their gnoseological status in the context of scientific analysis. In other words, from each of the anchor points, the different vectors that guide the operations are launched. These vectorised operations have precisely one anchor point at the end of each segment. These anchors constitute the tensioning points that mark the purposes of the waiters. In turn, the interconnection of these must end in the

referent. This does not mean that all the points are connected to each other, only that the chains established between them must eventually end at the referent.

As I have already noted, this final referent is the exit door, so to speak, of the process of waiting and, at the same time, the point of restarting, the consequent inflection, of other proleptic courses *subsequent* to the waiting. To denote this *end* of waiting as a processual totality, it could be used the notion of the *isological culmination point*. This point is where waiting *ends* or concludes temporally, spatially and operationally. Although here it takes the form of a culminating moment, of the closure of the waiting as a specific phenomenon, at the same time, it constitutes, as I have already pointed out, a point of inflection. In other words, a place in space/time where the subject, rather than returning to an initial point prior to the waiting, finds themselves in a different place. It is here that new operative courses will begin, materially different from the waiting and the processes that preceded it. The waiting would be something like what Ilya Prigogine (2018) describes as a “dynamic system” that tends towards irreversibility, with the *inflection points* being the irreversible phenomena. Hence, returning, going back, to the moment before the waiting is spatially, temporally and operationally⁸¹ impossible. When referring to the initial points mentioned in some scholarly texts, they are no more than a literary or hypothetical resource.

However, this apparent intention to return is not always futile even if it is impossible. It is precisely the anamnesis that, to a large extent, it produces, which allows the specific prolepses which intervene in the waiting process. Hence, I can make the assertion that this return occurs only in representation since, in practice, the process of waiting is composed solely of operations of *progressive transformation*. These operations are more or less effective and occur in dialectic relationship with multiple other operations in a specific context. This process of progressive transformation of the *anamnesis*, is similar to what Gustavo Bueno calls *diamorphosis*, referring to how the present reabsorbs past phenomena through formal recompositing of the parts of the previous phenomenon in the present. That is to say, parts or components of an object (*e. g.*, a Doric column) or a specific process (*e. g.*, the performance of a symphony) formally incorporate parts of architectural and musical structures, respectively. This assimilation from the past is done to compose

⁸¹ This condition of irreversibility, which seems a self-evident truth and common sense, is often unknown to those who go through processes of waiting. Odysseus never returned to the happy Ithaca of his dreams, but to another where, had not the sublime Athena intervened, he would have met certain death at the hands of Penelope’s thirsty suitors.

the objects and processes in the present⁸². In the case of the waiting, *proleptic operations* within particular processes always consider formal parts of previous processes, which are incorporated into the *operational logic* of the present.

On the other hand, we must not lose sight of the fact that these processes are sets of operations that advance in dialectic relationships and confrontations with other institutional operational courses, both from the standpoint of waiters and organisational norms. In addition to this, there are more *prolepses* of the social actors who are waiting or outside the waiting process and may or may not interfere with the operations related to the waiting process. All of these actors, operating within the frames of the referent, strive to achieve their objectives by constructing and reconstructing multiple operations, base of previous knowledge and experiences⁸³.

This shared tension in pursuit of the *referent* makes it possible for the operability within the waiting to be evolutionary and not regressive since this closure differs in an absolute way from the turning point that started the process. Therefore, even when it seems that an actor returns to specific anchor points –spatial, for example– in the waiting process, this is only in appearance because both the *situation* and *ubication* are always different, as well as the temporal positioning. In reality, the actor has merely transformed the previous anchor point into the starting point of a new vector or a different operative course.

3.4. Intentional objectives: aims, plans and programmes

Previously, all discussion has been related to the vectors' forms, closures or anchors, and their possibilities. This section shifts to a description of their contained materials in more detail. Vectors are morphologically the forms where the waiting processes' intentional objectives are contained. According to the definition offered by Gustavo Bueno, *intentional objectives* can be of three types: *aims*, *plans*, and *programmes*. The *aims* are “the objectives in their relation to the proleptic subject that proposes them (*finis operantis*)”. The *plans* are constituted by “the objectives in relation to the

⁸² For an in-depth analysis see Bueno, 2010; García Sierra, 2021b, at: <https://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df094.htm> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qk-GE138CbY>.

⁸³ In Gustavo Bueno's terms, it is possible to say that they are built by “diamorphosis”.

other personal subjects they affect”, while the *programmes* are “the objectives considered concerning the proposed materials (*finis operantis*)” (Bueno, 1992, p. 11).

These categories are essential for the theoretical strategy proposed here. To a certain extent, it is possible to affirm that if a particular process does not have operations structured based on *aims*, *plans*, and *programmes*, it cannot be considered a waiting process. This applies at least to the categorial sense I am proposing in this paper. In any case, such a process failing to meet these criteria can be considered a different phenomenon.

In literature and some metaphysical philosophies, it is possible to find phenomena, considered waiting processes, where the “waiting” takes place without the actor executing proleptic operations based on intentional objectives. In this kind of waiting, sometimes subjects do not know what they are waiting for or even that they are actually waiting. From the DM perspective, these cases would be described as waiting without referents. This makes them fall under the category of *theoretical limit waiting*, waits only possible in abstract fields of analysis and with no possibility of materialisation in reality. Since waiting itself is often *hypostasised* in one of its dimensions (time), it is logical that from this first misunderstanding, other subsequent hypostases arise in the form of impossible waiting in reality. In literature, this kind of waiting is more clearly seen, for example as reflected in the famous play *Waiting for Godot* (Beckett, 1998). The waiting with categorial possibilities, which I consider should be of interest to the social and human sciences, must possess an operative structure if they are to be analysable as materials of the field of these sciences. In other words, they must possess intentional objectives of some kind, given in the form of aims, plans or programmes, which articulate the operative courses of socially classifiable “subjects”. Therefore, these actors must be classifiable in themselves, and in their actions and behaviour as social actors. In other words, they must be something different from the closed and atomised “individuals” who “experience” reality in an “autonomous” and singular way. I consider that this *anomic* agent, whose waiting process is centred in their singular experience, is outside the categorial scope of the social sciences. In this particular, I propose that categorial waiting must possess *intentional objectives* of some kind, given in the form of *aims*, *plans* or *programmes* that articulate *operative courses* of a particular type.

Gustavo Bueno also offers another classification that makes it possible to specify each typology of *intentional objectives*. According to Bueno, both *aims*, *plans* and *programmes* can either be of a *total* or *general* type or a *partial* type (1982, pp. 21-22). In line with the subject of my analysis, the

total or *general aims* in a waiting process are those *intentional objectives* that can be linked to operations carried out by all the actors involved in the process. Besides, *particular aims* are described as those that articulate operations in which not all the subjects engaged in a process are involved.

The example used previously can be drawn on again here, *i. e.*, the evacuation of coalition personnel and Afghans collaborating with the occupying troops planned through the Kabul airport. It is possible to state that all the social actors waiting (the waiter) involved in the process carried out operations to enter the airfield and reach the runway where the planes were located. These operations were articulated for *total* or *general purposes*, relating to the totality of those involved in the institutional waiting process, which I will call “waiting for humanitarian evacuation”. However, the instructions given to U.S. citizens and other nationals, or specific support personnel of the occupation forces, were particular (*i. e.*, *partial*) instructions. These instructions were to “report to a certain gate at a certain time” *with their passports in hand* (Packer, 2021). These concrete directions led to the implementation of operations motivated by *partial aims*, *i. e.*, directed at only a part of the totality of the subjects involved in the process, which had to establish operational courses according to *plans* and *programmes*, also *particular* or *partial*.

Nigel Walker, a humanitarian agency worker in Kabul, said that when he tried to access the airport on the days of the evacuation, he had to perform *planned* operations to keep his foreign identity secret. According to him, for the rest of the *waiters*, “the presence of people like us, who would potentially get out, caused a frenzy in the crowd, (...). It was dangerous for everybody in that crowd if foreigners were there” (Vlamiš, 2021). In order to gain access to the door indicated by the diplomatic staff, Walker had to cover his face and remain silent for as long as possible so that his identity would not be revealed, given the Afghans’ reactions to the existing *programme* of the preferential (*partial*) evacuation of foreigners.

In the example above, the *prolepsis* articulated as concrete *plans* and operations in relation to people (desperate Afghans). In other words, those operations were articulated attending to other people and their *plans* or *partial programmes*. According to Gustavo Bueno, *plans* affect subjects in two ways. First, plans affect subjects in terms of from which (“*a quo*”) the plan is conceived. In other words, the subjects are affected as they are the place from which the plan is conceived. In this case, plans can be called *aims*, *i. e.*, *subjective aims (finis operantis)*. Second, *plans* affect subjects in terms of to which (“*ad quem*”) the plan is conceived, as actors are components of an objective institutional

totality involving courses, plans, programs, etc. Thus, we can speak of *objective* plans that must necessarily take into account in their *finis operis* (*objective purpose*) the other subjects and their respective *plans*.

Let us analyse another example for further clarification. *The Atlantic* magazine followed in real-time the story of Khan, a translator for the U.S. embassy in Kabul. After obtaining a visa to travel to the U.S. during the evacuation chaos, he attempted to leave Afghanistan with his family through the airport. According to Packer (2021), Khan attempted to gain access to the airport just after the fall of Kabul, as he had tickets and visas for himself and his family (*finis operantis*). However, his *operations* were unsuccessful. Thousands of people consisting of “all kinds of Afghans [who] were trying to escape” as well as “Taliban fighters outside the gates” prevented him from doing so. As *The Atlantic* reports:

After nine hours in stifling heat, without water or food, Khan and his family had to return to their rented room. (...) The next day, Khan returned by himself to the airport. The crowd outside was even larger, and armed Taliban fighters were threatening anyone who tried to get through. “Going to airport is just waste of time and facing threats” (Packer, 2021).

It is possible to see the intersection of the two types of *plans* described above in the events narrated. Khan’s subjective *plans*, his *finis operantis* –based on having his papers in order, his American visa, his purchased tickets– had to be brought into accord with the objective plans that the process of *waiting for humanitarian evacuation* presented. This plan included the confluence of multiple operational courses and subjective plans, which gave material form to the process and demanded objective planning (*finis operis*) that conformed to the existing reality.

For their part, *programmes* are composed of prolepsis of people referring to impersonal terms or people “insofar as they can be treated as impersonal terms”, *i. e.*, subjects, buyers, refugees, applicants, etcetera (Bueno, 1996, p. 421). According to Gustavo Bueno, *programmes* could also be classified as a) *generic* and b) *specific*, in the same sense that *plans* were classified above.

An example of both types of *programmes* can be found in the royal court of Sweden in the 17th century. Here, applicants for positions in some of the kingdom’s offices waited for days in the antechambers and corridors of the palace. The wait, the *purpose* of which was to obtain a promotion or office, required the applicant’s physical presence. Those present complied with the *generic*

programme for aspiring to a post, namely, positioning oneself and waiting “along the route the king would take through the palace when processing to dinner” (Sellerberg, 2008, p. 357). The *programmes* went from being generic to taking on a specific character from this point on. When the king would hurry past, the aspirant had to exchange a few words with him and then apply for the particular post he aspired to. The strategy was mediated by multiple other factors (the monarch’s mood, the royal activities planned for the day, pressure from other aspirants, etc.) that lent specificity to the particular post he was applying to. After this moment –anchor point– the programme became *generic* again since there was nothing left to do but wait for a subsequent notification that the application had been granted.

Concerning both *plans* and *programmes*, the discussion above regarding the *prolepsis* and *anamnesis* is fulfilled. No plan or programme can be created out of nothing. These are always “past models proposed, subsequent transformations, and unexpected results” (Bueno, 1992, p. 11). Here it must be emphasised that the *finis operis* (*objective purpose*) does not, in any case, coincide entirely with the *finis operantis* (subjective end). The future arises precisely from the resulting novelty of the application of past models to new situations.

Anna Secor, in her research in Istanbul, relates repeated situations where the waiters (women, in this case) are *kicked around* from one government office to another and forced to move around for “documents, money, and influence through the offices and waiting rooms of government buildings, state ministries (...) and courts” (2007, p. 38). She labels them as *experiences of waiting*. From the DM perspective, Secor gives a perfect account of *proleptic operations* driven by *aims*, *plans* and *programmes*. These offices are not mere unimportant spaces but constitute *anchor points* within a process of institutional waiting. The *referents* here could have been accessing a state aid scheme, housing, or a job. However, what is important to note is that the referents were preceded by multiple vectorised operations, the exposition of which Secor perfectly carries out.

4. Conclusion

This paper has aimed to initiate the debate surrounding operations in waiting processes due to the significance of understanding these phenomena from human and social science perspectives. Based on Gustavo Bueno’s Philosophical Materialist system, my working hypothesis is that the waiting

processes can achieve a precise gnoseological status only through the combined analysis of operations, time and space. This notion accurately establishes waiting processes as an object of study within social and human sciences.

Regarding the internal morphology of the waiting process, a set of categories and terms has been established for the detailed analysis of its operations, *i. e.*, to study their parts as precisely as possible, given the available theoretical tools and empirical material. Operations have been typified as *proleptic*, and each part has been analysed, following their *operational courses* until they reach their *consumptive end* or closure, their *referent*.

Concerning its specific outcome, I have emphasised that waiting is permanently embedded in institutional *proleptic structures*, even though each social actor may present their logic about the process. Besides, I have proposed the categories *prolepsis* and *anamnesis* to analyse the relations among the subject's intentions and objective (socio-institutional) structures of possibilities.

Furthermore, to illustrate in detail other aspects of the operational segmentary in waiting processes, I have presented the categories *anchor points* and *demarcation operations*, which point to the topological configuration of the operations in a waiting process.

Lastly, and related to the institutionality of waiting, I have studied the specific operational coherence within these processes, even when it involves multiple strategies. Here, my conclusion was that these strategies are structured for the operative subject's intention to fulfil what has been called intentional objectives, which could be presented in three types: *aims*, *plans*, and *programmes*.

Chapter 5: Temporal Perspectives on Waiting Processes: A New Theoretical Framework and Analytical Categories

This chapter sets out to stimulate a paradigm shift in the understanding and analysis of waiting processes. It challenges the traditional focus on temporal analysis, instead proposing a comprehensive approach that considers time as merely one significant dimension of waiting, alongside space and operations.

The first article in this chapter, "From Temporality to Three-Dimensionality: A Critical Reconsideration of Waiting Processes as Social Phenomena," seeks to redefine the ontology of waiting. Rather than conceiving of waiting as a phenomenon unfolding in time, it suggests that time is a dimension of waiting.

The chapter continues with "Some Useful Concepts, Notions, and Categories for the Study of the Temporality of Waiting," which critically interrogates the concept of time in social waiting processes. The paper introduces an array of analytical categories, including chronology, chronography, and chronometry, which afford a more nuanced comprehension of waiting time.

In essence, Chapter 5 offers a fresh temporal perspective on waiting processes, presenting a novel theoretical framework and analytical categories. By challenging the conventional understanding of waiting as solely a temporal phenomenon, this chapter lays the groundwork for future research that considers the three-dimensional nature of waiting, making a substantial contribution to the field.

Title: From temporality to three-dimensionality: A critical reconsidering of waiting processes as social phenomena

Abstract

This paper aims to initiate a paradigm change in the temporal analysis of waiting processes. By reconsidering the ontological dimensions of waiting, including space and operations in addition to time, the paper challenges the current gnoseological state of the art in research on waiting. From a philosophical materialistic perspective, it challenges the common assumptions about waiting as a temporal phenomenon and offers an alternative perspective. The paper argues that waiting is not in time, but time is a dimension of waiting. It also suggests that the time of waiting is always ontologically positive and institutionalised. By shifting the focus from individual experience to institutionalised waiting, the paper expands the analytical scope of waiting studies beyond the gnoseological field of temporalities.

Keywords: *Waiting Processes, Time, Institutionalisation, Anthropological Space, Discontinuous Materialism.*

1. Introduction

This paper is framed within the field of studies on social waiting processes. Specifically, it will address the temporal analysis of these phenomena. The primary aim is to critically evaluate the existing approaches to time-in-waiting processes and initiate a debate on the necessity for a new theoretical paradigm for its analysis. The proposal presented here constitutes a step towards a general reconfiguration of the gnoseological field of waiting studies in social and human sciences. The transformation proposed seeks to reinterpret, firstly, the very ontology of the waiting phenomenon by shifting the classical understanding of waiting as primarily a matter of time (Beckett, 1998; Brekke, 2004; Dwyer, 2009; Dwyer & Minnegal, 1998; O’Kane, 2020; Rundell, 2009; Saybašili, 2011; Zigon, 2020) to admit that, in addition to the temporal, these processes also possess two other constitutive dimensions: space and operations.

Until now, time has been considered the central element of waiting, perhaps the only one deserving scientific attention, even though space and its importance have been directly addressed by various authors (Lindón, 2019; Musset, 2015) and operations have been considered (Bailey, 2019; Day, 2019; Fujita, 1985; Schwartz, 1978; Tan, 2009), although more in practice than in representation. Time remains the central dimension in the analysis of waiting. For this reason, any attempt to thoroughly analyse these phenomena from a perspective other than the exclusively temporal one needs to begin precisely with the time-related ideas, concepts, terms, categories, etcetera., used in waiting studies thus far.

The first thing that could be said in this regard is that existing approaches often already start from the assumption that waiting processes themselves, rather than possessing a given time that must be attended to (which is not denied here), are themselves a type of time with particular characteristics (Schweizer, 2008). In other words, waits are a temporality. This *hypostasis*⁸⁴ constitutes one of the most significant limitations of the scientific approach to waiting processes concerning social and human sciences. Much of the existing research is in the analytical approach corresponding to social temporalities precisely because they presuppose an ontological temporal condition for waiting in advance. Hence, the conceptualizations of waiting as a time or temporal phenomenon emerge in socially and culturally constructed reality. This dynamic, it could be asserted, has been gnoseologically defining the study of waiting up to the present day.

However, when one speaks of waiting as a specific time, it is generally overlooked that waiting, although it could certainly be a type of temporality, is not so in the abstract. That is, if waiting is time, it will be so within the framework of a specific process, of certain rationally conducted actions (*proleptic operations*⁸⁵ [Bueno, 1992]), and not others, which take place in a given space, differentiable, for its part, from the rest of the existing places. My working hypothesis in the approach of waiting as a phenomenon is that this tridimensional understanding of the waiting is more

⁸⁴ *Hypostasis* (hypostatisation) is the process by which an abstract property, relation or attribute is “substantiated” which, in itself, is not in any way substance. Since, in many cases, “substantiation” does not consist in conceiving as substance what is an accident or a relation, but in conceiving as simple or exempt attributes or relations what are nothing but attributes or embedded properties or relations, it is preferable to use the term “hypostatisation” rather than “substantiation” (García Sierra, 2021g). For more information see: <https://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df004.htm>.

⁸⁵ For an in-depth analysis of this category, see: Avila (2021). “About what we do when we wait. Notes for the operational analysis of waiting processes”.

accurate than the currently used to capture the material aspects of these phenomena. The previous is true, even for the exclusive waiting analysis.

Consequently, the factual indicators of this “waiting time” are often identified by researchers, not in the waits themselves, but in the only place where it is possible to locate a time with such levels of abstraction from all materiality: in the mind, consciousness, and psyche of the subjects who “experience” this time. In other words, the generally used paradigm of analysis suggests that if waiting is identifiable, rationalizable, and apprehensible, it is so because there are individuals who witness it. In this context, it is the “experiences” of waiting that can be verified through research techniques, primarily discursive, which confirm that waiting is real.

This way of approaching the subject has meant that, in most cases, when research claims to be studying waiting, in reality, what is being addressed in its analysis are the experiences that certain individuals have of a process of reality that they describe as “a situation of waiting”. When this is done, it is compressing the whole in just one of its parts, since experience matters in waiting but does not encompass these processes in their totality⁸⁶.

This represents the second central characteristic that gnoseologically defines current waiting studies: the focus on the phenomenological or subjective dimensions that these processes undeniably possess⁸⁷. In other words, waiting is assumed, more often than not, not only as a time but above all as a time of a subjective nature, which, more than in physical reality, takes place in the mind of the individual to whom it is linked.

The latter relates to two other characteristics associated with waiting as temporality, its (1) univocity and (2) ontological negativity. Regarding the first, (1) it is possible to point out that waiting is generally considered a given time and only one. That is to say that it is a time univocally established and manifested in a closed and whole way. This means that we can always speak of one and the same

⁸⁶ For an in-depth analysis of this category, see Avila (2023). “Some useful concepts, notions and categories for the study of the temporality of waiting”.

⁸⁷ Although waiting studies often concentrate on the experiential aspect, we can't definitively attribute this to the field's internal gnoseological characteristics and its link with temporalities. While these internal gnoseological traits may be a factor, the inconsistent presence in analyses raises doubt. Reviewing existing research shows this as a recent development in social sciences waiting studies. Pre-1980 approaches display a more objective perspective, centring on material and structural phenomena rather than individual psychological specifics. Post-1980s, experiential perspectives increasingly emerged. Delving deeply into this topic requires a thorough sociology or philosophy of scientific knowledge approach, which remains to be undertaken.

time of waiting, although it is qualified by the particular material conditions in which this time takes place.

Regarding its *ontological negativity* (2), waiting has often been conceptualised as a negative, liminal, diffuse, *peripheral*, ambiguous at best, temporal phenomenon (Bissell, 2007; Dwyer, 2009; Saybašili, 2011). As has been pointed out, waiting processes are often regarded as a *non-time* or a *dead time*, which we know exists because there are testimonies that affirm that. This ontological negativity is what, in the majority of cases, causes waiting to be considered, in addition, as also an *axiologically* negative or harmful time (Gasparini, 1995). These characteristics complete the picture of the current gnoseological state of the art in research on waiting.

According to these premises mentioned above, an extensive range of analyses are turned to look for this temporally defined waiting in the processes and dynamics of social reality. Structured waiting processes are analysed from multiple disciplinary perspectives in their different modulations. These range from sociology to anthropology, psychology, literary studies, economics and statistics, and many others. Along the way, waiting times have been located within power dynamics, urban and city studies, governmental and business organisations, migration processes, cultural traditions of specific communities and numerous other areas of social and human studies.

In this wide disciplinary and thematic diversity, the common point is almost always the ontological approach to waiting as a temporal phenomenon. However, time itself is analysed and conceived in very different ways. The analytical diversity of the temporal is an essential factor when critically analysing existing studies on waiting. Here, some of the main differences between one concept of waiting and another are found. In other words, on several occasions, the distinctions between different perspectives on the treatment of a waiting process do not lie so much in the way in which these phenomena are conceived in themselves as in the understanding of time that each one handles⁸⁸.

This paper's proposal configures a different approach to the temporal analysis of waiting. It aims to initiate a paradigm change in these studies, using a perspective different to those used until

⁸⁸ Let's examine two examples: Pierre Bourdieu in *Pascalian Meditations* (2000) and Harold Schweizer in *On Waiting* (2008), both prominent in waiting process studies. Both conceive waiting as a temporal phenomenon, with Bourdieu's approach being sociological and Schweizer's grounded in a phenomenological conception of time.

now. Thus, it starts setting up a group of working hypotheses that aim to respond to the theoretical characteristics described above and which can be summarised as follows.

- a) In contrast to the widespread concept that waiting is essentially a temporal issue, here it is considered that waiting is a temporal, spatial and operational phenomenon. If, for gnoseological reasons, one of these dimensions is to be used as a starting point for approaching the others, I suggest that those operations, and not time, have the most appropriate characteristics for such an enveloping function. This is so because, for ontological reasons, operations are impossible apart from a space that contains them, a time that guides them and experiences to which they refer.
- b) The perspective here is pluralist regarding the idea that waiting is a univocal temporal phenomenon, a single waiting time. Rather than speaking of one waiting time, the view defended here is that there are many possible times, in many different kind of waiting processes, interaction and dialectic with other temporalities of institutions that are waiting but which intersect at different times and in different spaces with it. Therefore, it speaks of *waiting* and its *times* in the plural, not singular.
- c) In the face of the closed and ontologically negative conception of waits, the hypothesis here is that these are, in principle, ontologically positive phenomena, even in their temporal dimension. That is to say that they are perfectly identifiable in themselves. This statement means that concerning the gnoseological closure or delimitation of waits, they are not temporally *amorphous* phenomena in their internal morphology, that is, flat or unidimensional. In other words, rather than conceiving the waiting processes as temporally homogeneous phenomena, here they are conceptualised as *dialectical* and heterogeneous *processes* made up of parts. In other words, instead of referring to waiting times, the theory here sustained speaks of temporal processes in the waits.

The following will expand on the assumptions mentioned earlier. Drawing on my chosen philosophical system, Gustavo's Bueno Philosophical Materialism, also known as *Discontinuous Materialism*. This philosophical system is a non-reductive materialism that offers a notion of matter broader than the tangible objects that the so-called "material turn" tends to limit itself to. Gustavo

Bueno conceives *matter* as tangible materiality and other kind of realities, including non-tangible physical matter. According to Bueno's ideas, non-tangible realities are material because of their plurality and changeability; furthermore, their existence depends directly on the physical matter that supports them without exhausting them (Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara, 2022).

Discontinuous Materialism recognises that the world we perceive, and which science expands, is not the absolute world, and it rejects both idealism and reductive materialism. This perspective highlights that animals and humans introduce certain epistemological distortions in the world as they sense and categorise it, while simultaneously acknowledging that the reality underlying their perceptions would persist without them (Camprubí, 2022, p. 255). This relationship between phenomena given in a certain way (in themselves) and the interpretation (gnoseological distortion) of them by humans is one of the characteristics of reality, especially the temporal one, that I will take into account in my analysis of waiting times, as I will explain in what follows.

Using this philosophical perspective, I will begin by providing critical commentary on specific concepts of time that have been explored in research on waiting to date. Secondly, I will analyse the most prevalent concepts of waiting as temporality, challenging the commonly used classifications of socially-given waiting time. The primary objective of this critical re-evaluation is to emphasise the need to reconsider how time is conceptualised in the studies of waiting processes, recognising the waiting processes as phenomena in itself. Acknowledging time's specific yet fundamental role in waiting processes is essential to achieving an accurate analysis. Through this, it is possible to explore other aspects of the temporal dimension of waiting processes that has yet to be investigated and to introduce a categorial and terminological proposal for approaching this dimension.

2. Time in Discontinuous Materialism

One of the main characteristics of the modern interpretation of time has been to conceive it as a plurality rather than a univocal phenomenon. Under this premise, the multiplicity and variety of the temporalities have been increasingly recognised as opposed to the one-sidedness sustained by other approaches, sometimes regarded as "classical", especially from the physical sciences. Thus, even some well-known physicists speak at length about the multiple temporal possibilities of reality. Ilya Prigogine (2018), for example, states that:

We have astronomical time, the time of dynamics, and (...) also an internal chemical time. (...) With life, the situation changes radically; with the inscription of the genetic code, we have an internal biological time that continues throughout the billions of years of life itself. This autonomous time of life is not only transmitted from one generation to another, but its concept is modified. There is an evolutionary refinement (...); one generation succeeds the next and enables the same kind of operations to be carried out in ever shorter times (Prigogine, 2018, p. 61).

Although Prigogine continues to consider time as an objective phenomenon, that is to say, external to man, whether in the form of biological, chemical or physical time, he recognises that there could also be a specific social participation in the configuration of time. Even though this intervention would not take place in time itself, it could at least occur in the operations by which that this time forms patterns, which leads to an improvement in both the understanding of time and its use. From a socio-anthropological point of view, Prigogine's allusion to generational succession and "evolutionary refinement" points to the mechanisms humans use to signify or even create (depending on the analytical perspective) social time itself⁸⁹.

In accordance with the terminology of this research, these would be the times associated with anthropological space. That is to say, the times that mark man's relations with the phenomena that surround him, including the relations between men themselves. In this matter, from the point of view of DM, two aspects are fundamental. The first relates to these relationships, which are necessarily operational and fundamentally institutional. This is fundamental since there is no human temporal or spatial framework ontologically prior to or apart from the operations and institutions that take place in this⁹⁰, which in turn constitute the pieces that precisely link any temporal structure. That is to say that operations and events, in general, can only exist in a given institutional space and time. In turn, these spaces/times are not prior or previous forms to all events or the operations themselves given in reality, nor are they external to them, but they constitute the very connection of the phenomena and their interrelationships with each other. However, Gustavo Bueno points out that, even with what

⁸⁹ The distinction between some times and others refers to the distinctions between concepts of time. The sciences, techniques, the arts, etcetera handle those concepts. The ideas of time, which have these concepts at their core, end up transcending them. The critical analysis of these ideas will be dealt with by philosophy.

⁹⁰ For the analysis of social and human waiting processes specifically, this point will be essential, as it shall be seen below.

has been said, the reference to space and time in phenomena does not necessarily have to be redundant if it is approached correctly: that is to say if the author takes this reference as an implicit determination of the very nature of these relations between events (1978a, p. 15). In other words, these relations are understood as pointing to sequences that are not merely chronological or external but internal to the events themselves. “Internal” here does not refer to a psychological, phenomenological or metaphysical type of relationship. Internal here refers to the “logics”, *i. e.*, the operative “rationalities” of the subjects and the institutional rationality of multiple phenomena in interaction with these phenomena. If this rationality is phenomenal, it is so only insofar as it is structured around “motives, plans, prolepsis, utopias or ideologies, which link some events to others, in a ‘representative’ space-time” (Idem), which in turn takes shape and form through social institutions.

With G. Bueno, the Kantian concept of *phenomenon* can be explained, in its conceptual framework, to illustrate this mechanism. According to Kant, the phenomenon occurs on the *aesthetic* plane of *spatio-temporal* representational intuition. That is to say that phenomena manifest themselves in the manner of (phenomenal/representational) “intuitions” given in *space-time*. What is important here is that it is this phenomenological order that demands (at a perceived distance, in space and time (*apothetica*⁹¹) ‘re’-presentation (to present once again), since “only in representation is it possible to order events or happenings precisely as *phenomena*” (Idem). In other words, here can be seen that properly restructured Kantian theory can bear some fruit. If re-presentation is understood in its material fulcrum; in that case, it can be seen as it is performed not by using any innate or metaphysically aprioristic quality but through very objective and material mechanisms, processes and phenomena, which give flesh and bones to any “re-presentation” of any phenomenon. These mechanisms in question are precisely the social institutions in whose logic are to be found not only the keys to phenomenological re-presentation (as it is understood) but also the mechanisms or ways of transmission of human phenomena themselves. Namely the logic of any phenomenon, re-presented in the consciousness, can neither be reduced to the biological mechanisms involved in its apprehension (sight, hearing, touch, etc.), even when their existence and importance cannot be

⁹¹ For a more comprehensive explanation, see note 139 in: “The Spaces of Waiting,” Section 4.1, “Interior, Surroundings and *Contour*”.

denied nor to spiritual aprioristic faculties of any nature. If phenomenological representation is possible, it is because man is capable of establishing a relationship between the phenomena of reality itself through anamnesis linked to institutions (canonical, if you will) that a man himself already masters this through his operative practice in the anthropological reality that surrounds him.

In the phenomena associated with time, this is particularly clear. If it can be said today that Plato is as much or more alive than he was in the time of the Academy, it is because his influence reaches us through generational transmission. A transmission that is not mental, spiritual or genetic but takes place through countless institutions such as books, lessons, archaeological objects, written testimonies, myths, works of art, politics, films, recordings, and many more. All of these factors are what makes its permanence possible in contemporary culture in a much clearer and more palpable way than any genetic material or behavioural practice performed by the best adapted of the hominids preceding *homo sapiens*.

In human social waiting, this process is completely ignored in most existing studies. It is commonly considered that waiting processes are temporalities that appear, both in subjects and institutions, in an unforeseen way and that is captured through the experience (almost always suffered or endured) of individuals who are immersed in a temporal situation (the waiting) that is materially anomalous, liminal, diffuse, pernicious, immeasurable, etc.

From the materialist temporal perspective here defended, this assumption is categorially denied precisely because, as has been explained, the re-presentation, even temporally, of the waiting is only possible as a rationalisation of already known situations. That is, as a reminiscence of an analogous material process given in reality. For this reason, it is considered that waits are neither in the mind, soul, nor in any abstract reality but materialised in the form of institutions, since these institutions govern human relations with the phenomena of anthropological space. That is to say that waits, seen in the analysed sense, do not constitute the temporality of particular institutions or subjects, and they will not even be the temporal institution that denotes relations between particular institutions and subjects. The thesis here shows that waits are institutions of multiple particular types, which can be associated with a space, a time and a set of rational operations. In this regard, the waits comprise institutional complexes and interrelations that, among other characteristics, present a type of temporality that is different from the previous institutions or institutional processes that preceded it, that will succeed it or that involve the waiting processes themselves.

The waiting is considered as a temporality within given institutions because it is not understood that when a “rupture” in time is perceived phenomenally (an interruption is observed in the development of certain operations), what often occurs is an interweaving of two different institutions. In other words, a crossing of the waiting, already institutionalised, to another institution, where both have different temporalities. Hence, precisely because of this interception, a *precedent* temporal ordering is replaced by another temporal ordering of a new type, which is different from the previous one. This new temporality is simply the temporality of waiting, which is not to be confused with - or reduced to - the waiting as a process in itself. As noted above, the totality of waiting is always more than just some of its component parts.

In short, the morphological/temporal changes observed in an existing institution related to a waiting process are nothing more than the meeting point between the preceding institutional operational pattern and an entirely different one imposed by the waiting. These processes have to be analysed as such in its totality, including the temporal, if it is to be explained.

Another essential issue to take into account in the analysis of time from materialist coordinates is that, as Gustavo Bueno points out, time cannot be understood linearly in the manner of a pure temporal succession in a vacuum, as Newton’s ideas of absolute time or Kant’s idea of time as an *a priori* form of understanding seem to suggest. From the DM, time is conceived in a morphological sense (as anthropological time) and not linear or flat (Bueno, 2014). Therefore, if the successions of phenomena are presented to us temporally organised linearly, they correspond to psychological successions, which produce a specific geometrical, linear and flat mental styling (without forms or reliefs), which in no way corresponds to the temporal reality of the particular phenomena⁹².

Prigogine (2018), even from physical coordinates, recognises the morphological condition of time, which to a certain extent breaks with a large part of the conceptions existing until then. In this sense, he notes: “in five mechanically measured minutes of a Beethoven composition there are slower times, accelerated times, backward turns, premises of what will happen next, all of this in the five minutes of astronomical time” (2018, p. 62). With such a statement, what Prigogine is referring to, rather than to time itself (in a chronometric sense), is precisely the operations performed by the performers, adjusted to the plan of the play, that is, to its score. These are the nuances that

⁹² I refer to the existence of phenomena that we call temporal, linked to biological, thermodynamic, astronomical, atmospheric and other processes.

modulate and shape the forms of a given time, in that they situate it in an operational as well as an institutional context.

This morphology can be observed not only in chronometric time, as in the case of the operations of a symphony, but also in a chronological, *i. e.*, historical sense, which is of the utmost importance. This is what Gustavo Bueno points out, pointing precisely to time as “operative time”, and its possible chronological manifestations. It is possible to establish a “now”, a “before” and an “after” within the operations themselves. These parts correspond in operative time to those parts of the practical space where these operations take place, with the here (now), there (after) and there (before). Expressions such as “here, at this precise time”, “I will be there tomorrow”, “there in my childhood” or “there in the time of the patriarchs” show, respectively, such a correspondence. This question is essential for the subject of this article (the time of the waits) because it connects the constitutive categories that the waits present. In other words, they make it possible to articulate the essential correspondence between space, time and operations given in the waiting processes.

In the case of time, Bueno presents this relation by alluding to the spatial morphology of time, which “pragmatically involves movement” (2014, p. 112) or, in this case, the operations involved in waiting. For Bueno, this movement (operational) is also morphological⁹³ precisely because it is dialectically and recursively given in material space and time. Gustavo Bueno perceives this distinction already in Aristotle’s definition of time. In Aristotle, time is “the number of movements”, according to the before and the after (Aristotle, 1995, bk. IV. 219a-220b). Whether it is given as a repetitive cycle of physical/natural referential, such as those that have been analysed, or artificial (mechanical) ones, such as clepsydras or mechanical clocks, thus, it would be more accurate to speak of a spiral time instead of a linear time. In this time, the spiral course makes the “now” correspond to a rotation of a “there into a here”. That is to say, an *after* that manifests itself as the previous “here” (Idem).

In the case of operative subjects, the weight of this spiralised time is manifested in the rationality associated with the operations carried out within it. That is, in the capacity that men have to establish past-present relations in order to “predict” the future to a certain extent. Herein lies the finalism associated with human actions. In Bueno’s words, it is interpreted “*Homo sapiens* as a

⁹³ For a morphology of operations in waiting, see: Ávila Castellanos (2021). “Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes”.

propositional operative subject, organised according to ends which are given within an animal kingdom or a natural empire (of Nature)” (Bueno, 2014, p. 112). In order to understand these dynamics Bueno proposes the category of “*goal-oriented purpose*” as the “first analogue” of possible *finalities*⁹⁴, which is understood as a property of operative subjects which can only manifest itself “in physical time and corporeal space”. In other words, every *goal-oriented purpose* is framed in a pragmatic time. Here, the operations of one or several subjects in the present (here/now) presuppose an already given (there/after). They direct their acts precisely in the function of such presuppositions⁹⁵.

Gustavo Bueno links the idea of rationality (or “ratiomorphism”) of the subject to these temporal characteristics of human behaviour. This “ratiomorphism” is precisely defined by the rotation of the *after* as a premise of the *now*. In his words:

An individual is rational (as is the citizen who is going to take the plane or the thief who plans a robbery or a [murderer] perfect murder), because (regardless of the ethical, moral or legal qualification of his rational conduct) such a subject, supposing the after, plans or programmes the objective (rational) steps to reach it, perhaps choosing among various *equifinal* routes. This is why planning and programming supposes a rotation in spiral time that proposes (propositionally) the after, as an aureolar reality (already given), as a condition of what must be done from now on in order to arrive objectively at the aureolated “after”. The propositional action then ceases to be a “mental action”, or a “subjective cause”, and is transformed into a series of objective causal actions that condition the hereafter (Bueno, 2014, p. 113).

Hence, the Aristotelian thesis on the universality of finality (“all people work according to an end”) could be interpreted differently. Specifically, in the sense of: “every movement that comprises a

⁹⁴ Gustavo Bueno contends that “finality” should be considered an analogical notion of simple or compound proportion, rather than a singular concept. To discuss “finality of Nature” or a “final cause”, one must specify the finality’s modality and identify relevant “parameters” and their “modulations”. Bueno suggests goal-oriented purpose as the primary analogue of finality, applicable to operative subjects, whether human or animal. This approach enables the derivation of its “modes” from the initial analogy, as opposed to beginning with a vague idea of finality and determining its meanings as mere specific modes (Bueno, 2014, p. 111).

⁹⁵ The matter of the purposes of the waiting will be analysed later on and will also be kept in mind when explaining the materialistic determination of the duration of the waits.

‘before’ and an ‘after’ has a morphological and not a linear⁹⁶ (flat) directionality” (Idem). That is, a vector rather than a scalar orientation. From a scalar perspective, the movement itself disappears. An arrow, for example, cannot move in a scalar manner, but only vectorially, from the arc to the point of aim, and not towards others, regardless of whether it reaches it or not. Hence, says Bueno, “the distribution of the impacts of archers assumes the format of a random distribution of these impacts” (Idem).

This matter is of the utmost importance for the central theme of this paper. In waiting processes, the plans and programmes that guide the operations of the subjects involved in the process are conceived and executed in a time that is always vectorised. In other words, the passage of time in a waiting process, even when it is noticed and even suffered by the subject, is always linked to specific operations that occur (or not) during this process. The *waiters* of a given waiting process do not *suffer* because of a time that passes without further ado and over which they have no control; they suffer because this time is the time of specific operations that enter into contradiction with other possible operations that the subject might want to be carrying out. That is to say that the waiting time is not an empty, dead, liminal, indeterminate time, etc., but it is always a particular time that passes in the function of some operations and not others, in a given space and not in another.

In conclusion, the purpose of the DM’s analysis of time is to understand its intrinsic connection with the phenomena of which it constitutes its possibility. Rather than analysing time in its abstract sense, even as a plurality, it is essential to understand the relations of these times to the particular phenomena and spaces in which it is inextricably implicated. As a result of this perspective, when referring to the times important to people, it must be borne in mind that they are relevant insofar as they are part of a space, always anthropological, linked to human operations. These operations can have as their backdrop both the links of men with physical/natural phenomena (radial relations), as well as those between men themselves (circular relations) or between men and other non-human personalised entities, such as wild animals (angular relations). The latter two types of relations (circular and angular) correspond to the times of most interest to the social and human sciences, without this meaning that the former (radial times) are entirely outside the latter’s scope. Although dissociable, all these times are inseparable from each other. If one starts by recognising that in social

⁹⁶ Gustavo Bueno uses here the term: “*lisológico*” (flat) in opposition to “*morfológico*” (morphological). As there is not straight translation for this word, we have used linear or flat referring the same idea of “*lisológico*”.

systems, time is closely linked to the relationships between the factors that make up the system, one can say that this time is determined to a large extent by the nature of these relationships.

In the case of the waits, it is possible to say that, for example, *circular waiting* is characterised by the fact that it presents standardised durations and temporalities presented in institutions, even legalised ones, which frame the behaviour of humans during this process, while at the same time structuring the process itself. Something similar happens with the *angular* or *radial* type of waiting and the possible combinations between all of these, but incorporating other operations of operative subjects, both human and non-human, which are not always institutional, but does not mean that they cannot be rational⁹⁷.

3. Temporality in waiting: an analytical proposal of time in waiting processes from the coordinates of the DM

From the DM, it is more fitting to discuss the temporality of waiting rather than describing waiting as a type of temporality. In other words, waiting is characterised by having, among other aspects, a specific time frame and a spatial frame where certain operations occur, constituting it as such rather than being part of time itself.

The thesis defended here is that waiting processes must be approached from a broad categorial perspective to acquire epistemological status in social science. This approach allows for the necessary dissociation among waiting dimensions while preserving their intrinsic inseparability. Waiting concepts must be reworked based on alternative hypotheses from this starting point. In this paper, it is posited that multiple objective and material features of waiting processes cannot be encapsulated into an exclusively temporal perspective, at least not from the analytical standpoint used here.

Thus, numerous objective and material waiting features cannot be reduced to an exclusively temporal perspective of the coordinates analysed. A fundamental issue with the dominant temporal concept of waiting is that it refers to something akin to an existential or lifetime duration when

⁹⁷ In the anthropological theory of DM, institutions are the truly distinctive category of human beings, among others, such as culture or rationality. From this perspective, both rationality and culture are also exercised by other members of the animal kingdom that are not properly human. What is not found among them is the capacity to establish institutions around these practices.

discussing time in waiting. The challenge here is that, as waiting is conceived as a temporality, establishing ideas to measure the time or duration of the process or any of its parts becomes extremely complicated. This is because categories used to measure physical, psychic and social time often overlap, making it impossible to distinguish how and why they differ.

In this regard, the Bergsonian idea that different emotional attitudes are directly related to time takes precedence. Social time is not equated with mathematically quantifiable units of time but rather as “an experiential dimension of social life, which may only partially be measured by watch and clock time” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 18). The drawback of this idea is that it never establishes to what “partial” extent clocks can measure one time and another. If, as presupposed, almost everything in waiting is time, when measuring durations, it turns out that one material phenomenon cannot be distinguished from another mental or emotional one.

The concept of duration needs to be revised to resolve the issue. The proposal defended here aims to dissociate one type of time from another without losing its inseparability. Along these lines, it must be noted that Bergson, in his dialectical confrontation with Einstein, primarily alludes to a perceptual or psychological, “representational” duration. However, he does not outright eliminate the possibility of a different understanding that measures everything that, temporally, is not “duration” (Bergson, 1965; Canales, 2015).

Arguably, many waiting studies are generally limited because they lack a robust categorial apparatus. Although empirical research has analysed many cases and possibilities, the fundamental limitation remains linked to the partiality of waiting's temporal analysis. This theoretical stance prevents the inclusion of multiple materials from the epistemological field of waiting that cannot be reduced to time.

Considering this limitation, the following sections propose aspects of an introduction to a temporal analysis perspective that remains categorially open to interchange between planes within waiting studies. This proposal seeks to enable waiting studies to cover a broader spectrum than current approaches allow. In summary, the perspective offered here aims to facilitate temporal dissociation from waiting without losing sight of its inseparability from the space where waiting occurs, and the operations executed therein.

3.1. *Waiting as a finalistic time*

A key characteristic of waiting time is that it has a specific end, more or less anticipated, associated with the operations that the process demands. From the theoretical perspective maintained here, waiting time, in order to be the time of waiting as such, must have a designated purpose. This specific purpose will be called the “referent”, which refers to the set of plans and programmes followed by the waiting operative subjects. Several researchers perceive this internal structure of waiting processes, even in their temporality, but they must use clear categories to delineate it. For instance, Rebecca Rotter (2016) highlights that waits present varied forms and contain certain predominant temporal structures. According to her, waiting is always “directed towards something”; that is, whenever waiting occurs, it must have a particular end or purpose, a referent, which could be “the arrival of a physical object, the commencement of an event, the achievement of a particular state, a change of circumstance, and so on...” (2016, p. 86). She further notes that waiting has a temporality “in terms of both duration and tempo” (Idem). In other words, and using the terminology employed here, it has its own chronology and chronometry. Peter Dwyer (2009) states that waiting can be “instrumental” insofar as one waits for specific, known, and tangible objects or final goals: the arrival of a train, a doctor’s appointment, or the birth of a child. Instrumental/situational waiting can have a positive modality, infused with desire because it is directed towards something longed for, or a negative modality, directed towards something fearful.

From the perspective used here, these ends must be known to those waiting, even if only partially. Thus, both eternal waits and waits where one does not know what is waiting for or even does not know that one is actually waiting, constitute extreme theoretical examples of waits, an empty class just possible as an abstraction. In other words, empirically impossible waits, without prejudice to the role they may play, as a possible idea, in literature and the arts in general. For instance, the well-known case of Vladimir and Estragon’s waiting in *Waiting for Godot*, a borderline waiting often cited in research.

Empirical waiting processes, which are of interest to the social and human sciences, must have, temporally, both a beginning and a culmination. From the DM perspective, this final point has been called the *consumptive end*. This *end* brings the wait to a conclusion temporally, spatially, and

operationally. The existence of both moments, beginning and end, are essential precisely so that waits have closure as such and can be identified as phenomena in themselves.

Considering the letter, it is possible to point out that a waiting starts when there is a “turning point” in a certain concatenation of operations. In other words, when a specific set of operations are demanded in a particular space, distinct from previous operations concatenated among a purpose. This operational deviation, recognised as *a posteriori* and called a *waiting process*, will have its own temporal *closure* in the *end* or *referent* that gives meaning to the process as a whole.

The time of waiting, in principle, will be the temporal space between the *preceding turning point* (or beginning) and the *referent* (or material end) of the waiting. These aspects of waiting processes should be considered in their analysis.

However, this does not deny the possibility of different levels of knowledge about the temporal length of the waiting among the operative subjects involved in the process. Speaking of ‘indeterminate’ waiting times is possible but in the subjective plane. Objectively, the waiting is always determined. In other words, it could be individuals or groups for whom the total duration of the process could be entirely or partially unknown, but it does not mean the process itself does not have an end. Vincent Crapanzano calls these kinds of processes “existential waits” because “the object is not known, is hidden, or is unknowable, but is regularly given a symbolic object, expressed in abstract terms such as the end of the world, death, and eternal peace” (1986, p. 47). From the perspective defended here, this kind of wait is not waiting as such, at least from a categorial perspective, which is not to say that there is not some phenomenon in what Crapanzano identifies. Just it is not an operational waiting process.

In this case, it is more accurate than *indeterminate* time in the waits to speak of waits with varying degrees of determination. For example, the fascinating study by Sara Turnbull (2016) in an immigration detention facility describes a process of waiting with a varying degree of unpredictability or indeterminacy concerning its total duration, as this waiting can range from hours to years. This indeterminacy limits the agency of detainees and leads to a perpetual state of “gridlock”.

However, even if it is ambiguous, vague or somewhat indeterminate, there is still an institutional time frame to guide the operations of this process, which is considered a waiting process. It is another matter whether this framework is adhered to more or less rigorously in practice, but what is emphasised here is that for this process to be waiting, there must be a specific time

reference around which to establish prolepsis (plans and programmes). This kind of analysis could only occur if there is a spatiotemporal point of reference so that the operative subjects can rationalise the process in general and its (even temporal) parts. Considering this temporal structure, it is possible to speak of a delay or advance of one of the parts or the end of the waiting. If this is not known, it cannot be said that the waiting is delayed, short, long, and so on.

With this, however, it is not denied that there are waits which, due to their indeterminate time/duration, can cause harm to those waiting involved in them. On the contrary, what is pointed out is that it is because there is a certain temporal structure, more or less known, which can be modified, lengthened or shortened in some of its parts that this harm can occur.

Turnbull (2016) points out, for example, that in the process of waiting for immigrants detained in facilities for this purpose, uncertainty is not only an accidental aspect of the process but is fundamental to its functioning. In many cases, a low degree of temporal determinability functions as a mechanism of “*triage*”, filtering and selection in waiting processes. This is the case of a mechanism narrated by a Cuban migrant detained in a centre for irregular immigrants in the U.S.A., who recounts that there is a mechanism whereby detainees can terminate their process by simply inserting a letter in a designated mailbox, informing the immigration authorities of their desire to be repatriated to their country of origin (Y. F. Rodríguez, 2019). According to the testimony, this mechanism is most frequently activated whenever there are breaches in the timeframes set within the waiting processes. In other words, those waiting must articulate their time structures according to their plans and programmes. The effectiveness of the planning of waiting operations is often directly proportional to the degree of information one has about the institutional mechanisms that govern the process, both formally and informally. Through this theorem, it can be understood why waiting environments such as those described can be so stressful.

3.2. Waiting as institutional/anthropological time

As pointed out above, from the perspective employed here, the conceptualisation of time in waits should be linked to that of the space where it occurs. In the same way, space and time improve their scope and perceptual materiality under the operational perspective used here. Otherwise, it would be an abstract waiting, of which much can be said from literature but little from the social and human

sciences. If it is said that waits are temporalities, which is not denied in principle, it must first be mentioned that they are a precise time. In other words, they are a human temporality, but why? How do they manifest themselves as such, and what processes are they established in particular given times?

Waits have commonly been considered dead, liminal, uncertain, non-times, etc. That is to say, temporally, they have been considered ontologically negative phenomena, this negativity, together with the subjective experience of the actor, being precisely what makes their determination possible. This paper's position is precisely the opposite of that. Here, it is sustained that adverse determinations are doubtful and verifiable, if not outright false. This theory seeks to establish the waits' ontological positivity, including their temporality. If waits are temporal, they are so insofar as they are a time for themselves. The waits do not constitute or form part of an abstract time to which some authors refer. On the contrary, they are temporalities insofar as their times are inserted in particular spaces or zones of *anthropological space*, enveloped by the relations that this space articulates.

What is meant, then, when it is pointed out that waiting has an anthropological time? It means that for waiting, it would be spoken, in principle, of a time different from physical, astronomical, or biological time, even though it is not impossible that waiting time can be coordinated with these at certain moments and processes. This conceptualisation also affirms that waiting and its corresponding times are not given in the soul, the pure spirit of the subjects, or even in their minds or psyches. They, the waiting and its time, materialise in reality in the form of operations governed by norms, that is to say, derived from routines given in a specific geographical and socio/anthropic space. It is precisely these operations that manifest both a specific *chronology* and a particular *chronometry*.

In other words, they are operations that have a duration concerning the operations of other phenomena and the duration of the internal parts of the waiting process. This aspect is essential. After all, if we speak of waiting as temporality, it is precisely because it can denote parts or moments, also temporal, within a process or sequence of operations that take place in temporally identifiable rhythms a posteriori or even fixed a fortiori. Because of this sequential order, it is possible to speak of the temporality of waiting.

To put it differently, the internal temporality of waiting is dissociable but not separable from the process as a whole, constituting it as a totality. Similarly, it is essential to find in each case the coordination between the times of the processes and the institutions (with their particular times) with which this specific waiting interacts. Moreover, it must be pointed out that the relations among time, space, and operations could vary among the processes. The waiting location within some *axis* of the *anthropological space* or the particular axis (or axes) traversing the process will also influence its dimensional relations. In this regard and bearing in mind the established relationship between space and time, it is productive to consider what Gustavo Bueno says.

According to this author, “space, insofar as it is ‘space travelled’, implies time; and a time that is not so much metric or astronomical, but anthropological (and anthropological time implies the coordination between the movements of the different operative subjects)” (Bueno, 2000, para. 46). That is to say that “a walker, as a being that moves in time” and whose displacement is considered “characteristic of his praxis”, can only be qualified as such a walker when the path he moves can be traced in the terrain of terrestrial things. This can only be done “by walking”, using specific operations that are temporally and spatially localized (Bueno, 2000, para. 17).

Temporally speaking, these distinctions play a significant role in studying waiting. Thus, it is possible to speak, for example, of waits with circular temporality, waits with radial temporality, and waits with angular temporality. In the same way, it is possible to use the other seven possible figures resulting from the combinations of the axes of the anthropological space. As an example of waiting linked to radial temporalities, it could be said that the waiting is associated with agricultural cycles or the reproduction of domesticated animals; those cycles are related to processes such as the germination of plants, the meteorological seasons, and the gestation times of species, among others.

Among the waits of circular temporality, an example is the waiting of a refugee to obtain asylum in any state. Here, a positive temporary process is associated with the completion or closure of specific migration procedures, legislative measures established for deadlines, national and international law, etc. Similarly, temporary guidelines are established in many countries to grant different statuses to migrants in those states. These may include, for example, three to five years to obtain temporary resident visas, two years after obtaining a temporary resident visa to obtain a permanent resident visa, and five years to apply for citizenship of the country of residence.

Instead, the perspective supported here emphasises the need to analyse waits as part of social, institutional, and operational frameworks that involve various actors and structures. The focus is on understanding the role and impact of waits within these broader contexts, identifying the entities that transform or influence processes and their courses. In doing so, the analysis goes beyond the subjective experiences of individual actors, acknowledging the existence of regularities and repetitive morphologies in the internal structure of waits connected to other social phenomena.

This approach recognises the importance of personal time perceptions and the multiplicity of notions of waiting with their corresponding times. However, it asserts these perceptions and notions function within institutionalised, socially pre-established temporalities. According to Norbert Elias, human relations are always regulated and even subjected to a collective temporal scheme (1993, p. 140), without which it would be impossible for individuals to function and for society to maintain itself.

Therefore, the concept of “personal time” is understood here in the sense of the ancient etymology of “persona” (*per-sonare*), which refers to the mask used in theatre to play a specific role in front of the public. In other words, the personal aspect of time is always presupposed in dialectic with other personal entities, groups, or both.

In this regard, the challenge lies in determining the characteristics of this related structure and identifying the tools and focuses of attention necessary for conducting this analysis. From the outset, the hypothesis widely held in many social and human sciences studies that such determination is possible only based on the actors’ experiences is rejected. Instead, the analysis should consider the broader social and institutional context and the operational frameworks within which waits occur, encompassing individual experiences and the interactions and regulations that shape them⁹⁸.

This paper argues for a different direction in its thesis. According to it, waiting processes can be analysed as objective phenomena, which does not imply ignoring subjective experience. On the contrary, this proposal seeks to include subjective experiences alongside other multiple material phenomena within the systems of objective relations in which waiting is dialectically inserted. In

⁹⁸ Circumscription in this context concerns the temporal aspect of waiting and the Kantian conception of time that dominates many works on waiting. The Kantian idea that time is essentially “the form of our inner intuition” (Kant, 1997, pp. 79–80) and would disappear without our specific sensibility underlies much of the analysis in contemporary social and human sciences. As Kant states, time is not inherent to objects, but rather to the subject who intuits them.

other words, the most pertinent way to analyse waiting would be from an institutional approach. That is to say, as impersonal, rational structures of material reality are given apart from particular psychological individuals.

Therefore, if waits are institutions that affect subjectivities, it is not so much because of their ambiguity or operational or temporal vagueness. They can affect precisely because of their reality as a set of rationally and socially recognised behaviours, norms, patterns, and dynamics imposed by the objective frameworks of relations in which we move as social actors.

These waits interest social sciences since they are open to being categorised and, therefore, can be analysed with these disciplines' gnoseological tools. In the same way, it is only based on these already institutionalised waits that we can determine both those that have reached the level of ceremonial waits and those that, even though they are waits, are neither ceremonial nor institutional.

In this way, it can be affirmed that the waits, rather than being a time in themselves, are institutions that possess a time of their own. Simultaneously, they are inserted in and in a dialectical relation with anthropologically localised cycles and temporalities. They are often embedded in temporal chains of always-operative subjects. "Subjects", not "individuals", insofar as these actors are precisely subject to these objective spatial and temporal operational frameworks, with which they must be inevitably in a dialectical relation.

Although not described from these coordinates, these characteristics of waiting have been perceived by multiple investigations and collected using different ways and theoretical resources. Catherine Bailey (2019) notes that particular short-term waiting occurs in organisational settings (*circular axis* of anthropological space in DM terms). In these, the waiters have to wait "for colleagues to respond to emails and requests for information", "for meetings to start", "to hear the outcome of a tenure application", "for their computer to download updates", "for new ideas to emerge" and also "for a cup of coffee" (Bailey, 2019, p. 2). These processes account for standardised and rationally established operations, even ritualised, ranging from raising hands, taking notes, interrupting speeches, to making specific gestures, etc., where the internal temporal structure is subject to precise normative durations, which regulate and/or frame the operations carried out.

From a different perspective, Sophie Day (2019) proposes the medical category of *triage* to visualize those waiting processes where time is a mechanism for organizing operations or those

involved in them. This would be the case of patients waiting for transplants, for example, where the organization of services and operations is established, or at least should be established, according to multiple variables, including the waiting time a particular *waiter* can withstand.

Waiting constitutes one prospective view of triage, which exceeds the linear order of a queue (ordinality) in processes that rearrange and sift the assembly (triage, trier: “to separate, sift, select”). (...) Triage involves active calibration and commensuration across the hyphen⁹⁹ between equality in the sense of sameness, where units are equivalent and can be substituted, and equity in the sense of difference, where units cannot be substituted for each other, eliciting different responses. A triage reorders, frames, or temporarily interrupts this mixture, “the hyphen”, in the wait (Day, 2019, pp. 180–181).

That is, triage “reorganizes, frames or temporally interrupts this mixture” in waiting, introducing a correlational separation, a hyphen (“the hyphen”), between the constituent elements. Day notes how in London hospitals, chemotherapy units organize the waiting process through “a combination of rationing, ordering, pricing, and withholding”, *i. e.*, institutionalized operations. These operations, as well as the temporal structures that result from them, enable the triage or sifting of the actors involved in the process in question, and it is this that constitutes this waiting as such.

Nevertheless, the most illustrative example is Edward T. Hall (1959) describing an institutional/ceremonial wait performed by the Pueblo (Anasazi) natives of New Mexico in the southwestern United States. According to Hall, the Pueblos believe that events begin when “the time is ripe” for them to do so, and not before. In this regard, he recounts how he attended a Christmas dance in one of the towns near the Rio Grande in the first half of the last century. That ceremony included some ritual dances syncretistically adopted by the white inhabitants of the village in their festivities as a political gesture to strengthen the ties between the two communities and create cooperative bonds between them. According to Hall, spectators from both groups would wait hours for the participants to appear and perform the ritual dances, with no idea exactly when the dances would begin.

⁹⁹ The hyphen here refers to the punctuation mark used, for example, to separate syllables in a word, while keeping them somehow related.

Outside everything was impenetrably quiet. Occasionally there was the muffled beat of a deep pueblo drum, the opening of a door, or the piercing of the night's darkness with a shaft of light. In the church where the dance was to take place a few white townsfolk were huddled together on a balcony, groping for some clue which would suggest how much longer they were going to suffer. "Last year I heard they started at ten o'clock." "They can't start until the priest comes". "There is no way of telling when they will start". All this punctuated by chattering teeth and the stamping of feet to keep up circulation. Suddenly an Indian opened the door, entered, and poked up the fire in the stove. Everyone nudged his neighbour: "Maybe they are going to begin now". Another hour passed. Another Indian came in from outside, walked across the nave of the church, and disappeared through another door. "Certainly, now they will begin. After all, it's almost two o'clock". Someone guessed that they were just being ornery in the hope that the white men would go away. Another had a friend in the pueblo and went to his house to ask when the dance would begin. Nobody knew. Suddenly, when the whites were almost exhausted, there burst upon the night the deep sounds of the drums, rattles, and low male voices singing. Without warning the dance had begun (Hall, 1959, pp. 31–32).

According to Hall, these dances followed no timetable but started when "things" were ready (1959, p. 32). From the DM perspective, the interpretation could be as follows. This example, illustrating the institutionalization of waiting and its corresponding times, demonstrates how a ceremonial institution intersects multiple axes of anthropological space depending on the perspective of the interacting actors. For the Natives, the wait was angular, as it responded to a ceremony of this nature. According to Norbert Elias, "a dance of this kind was experienced as a communication and perhaps an identification with ancestral spirits or, at any rate, with the spirit world. The participants started dancing when they were in the right mood" (1993, p. 138).

For the non-native participants in the ceremony, waiting, however, was circular since it responded to a mechanism for consolidating social relations and political action to maintain community cohesion and avoid inter-ethnic conflicts. Interestingly, according to Norbert Elias, these dances eventually became folkloric spectacles attracting curious onlookers from neighboring villages and tourists visiting these regions. As a result, the ceremony transformed from a ritual activity into a source of economic resources for the participants. Materially, the process remained the same, but as the ideological slant changed, it was formally transformed, shifting its location in anthropological space from the angular to the circular axis.

Similarly, the waiting associated with this institution also underwent a radical change. For the participants, the wait was no longer the angular wait for the arrival of animal spirits and ancestors but a circular wait for the quotas of the public attending the ceremony to be filled. For the attendees, on the other hand, the wait shifted from the circular axis to the angular one, as they were now waiting to witness the ceremonies of communication between the Pueblo and their gods and ancestors.

These processes of transformation of waiting can be understood using a perspective that has already been applied to the waiting space, but this time applied to the waiting time. From the DM perspective, the notions of *concave* and *convex*¹⁰⁰ operational space are applicable. In the first example, the *concave* perspective corresponds to that of the whites, who had to wait for the Indians to begin their dances (operations) to finish their wait. The latter would handle the *convex* perspective of time, as their relationship with the temporal structures of the process would be relative to the process itself and not the operations and times of the white spectators. In the second case, the character of each of the temporalities associated with it is transformed. The operations of the Pueblo dancers would take place in the *concave* temporality of the waiting process, while the perspective of the whites would occupy, this time, the *convex* position.

In summary, from the perspective defended here, waits are temporalities not because they occur within human temporal structures, but precisely because they are institutionalized temporalities. This is not only a fundamental characteristic of waits, but, in my opinion, it constitutes the pillar of their epistemological and categorial status, which allows them to be established as a distinct field within social and human sciences.

To support this thesis, it is crucial to first define the type of institution (ceremonial or not) being discussed and where it fits within the anthropological space. Only by considering these factors can we provide specific materiality to the waiting process, allowing for its analytical apprehension. Once the institutional affiliation of the waits has been established, the process can be temporally framed,

¹⁰⁰ The *concave* and *convex* perspective of waiting refers to the relations between the operative subjects in these processes. The difference between some subjects and others would be a function of their operational projection (their plans and programmes) concerning the consumptive end of a waiting process. The subjects whose proleptic operations are projected to reach the waiting referent are those in the *concavity* position of the process. On the other hand, those who do not direct their operations towards the final or refractory end of the waiting process will be in the *convex* position.

adjusting to the required operations based on its institutional characteristics. Which processes are articulated within this institutional wait that adjusts to other processual courses possessing their temporalities in the function of other totalities? In other words, to speak of waits in terms of objective materialities, it is necessary first to see them within or concerning other processes.

For instance, we can consider the institutional waiting, often ceremonial, practiced by a woman's relatives during childbirth operations. In this context, hospital waiting rooms are where families wait, and certain operations are allowed at specific times, such as whispering in the evenings, conversing normally during the day, entering or exiting at certain times, and accessing particular spaces at specific times, among others. The same applies to certain angular ceremonies sometimes practiced during labor in some cultures. These ceremonies have a beginning and culmination associated with the radial times of the biological process itself but are not entirely subject to these processes in their internal rhythms. In this case, practices such as praying, chanting, singing, dancing and invocations occur. In some religions, these practices are performed to call upon the help of Protector Saints or anthropomorphic or zoomorphic deities (*e. g.*, in Hinduism). They are carried out at different moments in the waiting process for the arrival of the future group member. Here, the purposes may differ at different moments or after given temporal segments (delays, for example) during labor.

Similarly, not angular but circular, the very technological operations of a midwife or even an obstetrician or gynecologist, who follows normative guidelines such as separating the child from the mother after birth, might also be temporized or segmented into institutionally fixed periods. An example is the time set for the child to begin breathing independently, which is typically signaled by the baby's cry. If this occurs at a different time, the midwife or doctor will perform certain operations to elicit this signal, depending on socio-cultural rather than biological factors.

4. Conclusion

This paper has aimed to provide a new perspective on the temporal dimension of waiting processes, drawing from the substantive theory of Discontinuous Materialism. The paper critically addresses some fundamental points underlying different concepts of waiting as temporality and emphasises the connection between time and anthropological space in analysing waiting.

The main thesis defended here is that waiting is not merely a temporal phenomenon but a social and institutionalised process with time as an important dimension. Moreover, this paper recognises the plurality of waiting times, acknowledging that there can be multiple times within the same wait. According to the proposed theory, institutionalised waiting processes can be classified into two types: ceremonial and non-ceremonial, each with different temporal characteristics.

The paper asserts that the time of waiting processes is ontologically positive and objective, as it relates to concrete operations carried out by the operative subject within the tempo/spatial/operational framework of waiting. Additionally, this paper emphasises that the acting subject must adapt to the institutionalised waiting time, which allows for varying degrees of operational freedom.

The classification of institutionalised waiting processes presented in this paper does not negate the existence of non-institutional waiting; instead, it highlights the importance of focusing on waits relevant to the anthropological field within the social and human sciences. This approach allows for a much-needed analytical expansion of waiting studies, which the exclusive focus on temporalities has limited.

In summary, this paper advocates for a broader understanding of waiting processes, recognising the interrelations among their specific times, spaces and operations. It encourages researchers to avoid misconceptions, exclusively associating waiting times with psychological, social or physical phenomena. Instead, it views waiting as a unique phenomenon with multiple associated times established, transformed and changed based on various factors and the particularities manifested in each process context.

Title: Some useful concepts, notions and categories for the study of the temporality of waiting

Abstract

This paper critically examines the concept of time in social waiting processes, as understood in existing studies, and proposes a set of useful categories for analysis developed from a philosophical materialist perspective. Moving beyond the conventional understanding of waiting as an experienced time, the paper argues for a more comprehensive approach to the temporality of waiting that incorporates its unique characteristics as a distinct process. Introducing categories such as chronology, chronography, and chronometry offers a more nuanced understanding of waiting time, addressing objective and subjective aspects. This framework encourages further exploration and analysis, shedding light on the complexities of waiting as a multifaceted phenomenon that warrants a deeper understanding beyond conventional temporal conceptions.

Keywords: *Waiting Processes, Temporality, Philosophical Materialism, Chronology, Chronometry.*

1. Introduction

In “On Waiting”, Harold Schweizer (2008) reflects on waiting’s nature, stating that it is more than “a certain amount of time”; it is “experienced time” (Schweizer, 2008: 127). From this, we can conclude that waiting is a phenomenon somehow related to time and has certain distinctive qualities that set it apart from other time types. Schweizer suggests that waiting is, fundamentally, a time marked by a subjective nature, in other words, mainly characterised by particular emotions, thoughts and ‘experiences’ arising in the individual waiter during the process.

In this paper, I will assume that the first thesis is true. However, my focus will be on exploring it while denying the validity of the second thesis. Specifically, I aim to examine whether waiting has an objective temporality in addition to the *subjective experience* of time that the waiter undergoes. If such temporality exists, I would like to see its role in waiting and how we can identify, characterise, describe, and measure it.

These questions are the key issues addressed here. This paper will give weight and positivity to the hypothesis that objective time exists in the waiting and will introduce guidelines and categories to apprehend these temporal aspects. Taking a materialist philosophical approach, I view waiting not as a temporality type but as a process with a specific temporal framework. Waiting processes are more than just social or experiential time. On the other hand, they are phenomena in themselves that have a given time, distinguishing them from others. In the same line, waiting can also be conceived as a processes within a specific spatial framework, where various operations occur, and the combination of all factors constitutes them.

From this perspective, I defend that waiting must be analysed from a broad categorial perspective to acquire a gnoseological status for science. This viewpoint helps distinguish crucial aspects of waiting from epistemological notions, allowing their separation without compromising their interconnectedness. In this sense, It's important to acknowledge that waiting is not solely a matter of time, and other factors are at play. Taking a Discontinuous Materialist¹⁰¹ approach, I will consider multiple objective and material features contributing to waiting.

As we have seen, one of the characteristics of the dominant temporal conception of waiting is that it equates waiting times with existential or lifetime durations. The problem with this approach is the complexity when attempting to establish ideas to measure waiting time objectively. This difficulty arises because categories used to measure physical, psychological, and social time are generally the same, making it impossible to distinguish how or why one type of time differs from the others.

Bergsonian ideas such as *duration* (Bergson, 1965) applied to the waits suggest that various emotional attitudes are directly related to time; therefore, social time should not be equated with mathematically quantifiable units of time but as an “experiential dimension of social life, which can only partially be measured by clock time” (Janeja and Bandak, 2020: 18). However, this idea poses a challenge, as it does not establish to what extent clock time can measure one time type versus another. Equating waiting times with existential or lifetime *durations* ignores the unique temporal framework characterising waiting as a distinct process.

¹⁰¹ This paper is situated within a specific philosophical system, classified as one of many materialisms. Specifically, it refers to the philosophical materialistic perspective developed by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno Martínez (1924-2016), recently labelled as Discontinuous Materialism (DM), a name that will be used henceforth.

Bueno's perspective, Discontinuous Materialism, contrasts with traditional materialist perspectives that reduce all phenomena to a single material substance, emphasising the importance of ontological discontinuity and the critique of idealism (Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara, 2022).

The idea of duration does not solve the problem. Instead, I will propose dissociating each kind of time from the rest without ignoring their essential inseparability. This proposal seeks to achieve one of the fundamental issues with waiting studies: the need for a robust categorial framework to distinguish between these differences. While empirical research has analysed numerous cases, limitations persist due to the partiality of the temporal and subjective approximation to waiting. This theoretical perspective hinders the inclusion of various materials and phenomena in the gnoseological field of waiting that cannot be reduced to time.

With this limitation in mind, this paper proposes aspects of an introduction to a temporal analysis perspective that remains categorially open to interchange between planes within waiting studies. This approach aims to cover a broader spectrum than is currently impossible with existing methods. In this regard, I will not suggest that every approach should adopt the specific terms presented here. However, they could provide insight into some phenomena present in waiting's temporality, crucial for a coherent understanding of waiting, both temporally and in its multiple facets.

In summary, the perspective presented here seeks to dissociate waiting's temporality from the temporal experience associated with these processes. Simultaneously, I will be attentive to the inseparability of the times of the waits (both in plural), proposing a group of categories dialectically related among them and inseparable from other aspects of the waiting. Among these last, we could have the space for the waiting process and its operations. Discontinuous Materialism offers suitable tools for achieving this goal, and thus I will use this theoretical perspective.

2. Chronology, chronographies, chronometry and time demarcation referentials within waits

In the case of waiting's temporality, various classifications can be established. A vast amount of material is discussed regarding waiting times, making the gnoseological field extensive. Nonetheless, a classification can be offered that organises the set of time-related materials within waiting into

three distinct groups. These can be coordinated based on conceptual classifications revolving around waiting time and other materials belonging to an *extra-somatic culture* (Bueno, 1991)¹⁰².

A tertiary division will be proposed to distinguish a *chronology*, a *chronometry*, and a *chronography* of waiting. Each of these dimensions corresponds to a set of notions, ideas, and concepts that comprise its semantic constellation (Pearson and Johnson, 1978). It is possible to collect objective materials from the waits that are generally left out of existing analyses, primarily due to the hypostatic approach of the temporal in waiting. The category “referential” (Ongay, 2013) is used by Discontinuous Materialists to denote the factual corporeal materials involved in the parcelling out of sequences, moments, logics, etcetera. Thus, referentials of temporal demarcation can be established and classified according to multiple characteristics while being analysed in their relationship with each of the dimensions mentioned above.

Two broad categories of referentials can be identified based on temporal referentials: 1) anthropic and 2) non-anthropic. Anthropogenic type (1) referentials can be subdivided into a) institutional (ceremonial and non-ceremonial) and b) non-institutional. Similarly, non-anthropic type (2) referentials can be subdivided into a) physical/atmospheric and b) biological¹⁰³, directly related to the mechanisms of temporal duration. Both types of referentials can be intermingled, and the mechanisms of temporal demarcation can also be combined.

Each dimension mentioned above contains material mechanisms that indicate the existence or allude to distinct parts of the waiting process. *Referential objects* are the corporeal objects that the subjects participating in the waiting process use to perform their operations. Technological objects such as clocks, sirens, luminous announcements, written texts, and verbal communications can be referents of temporal demarcation.

Additionally, extra-cultural (natural) phenomena such as astronomical phenomena, tidal changes, animal sounds or behaviour, and changes in the morphology of some plants can also act as referents. These objects function simultaneously as mechanisms or objects of logical demarcation of

¹⁰² Gustavo Bueno's "extrasomatic culture" refers to all human-created objects and tools that exist outside of the human body. These elements form part of a society's culture and are crucial to understanding its way of life and historical development.

¹⁰³ In my (2023) unpublished work, "Processes and Mechanisms of Temporalisation: Some Categories for its Analysis," I examine various temporalisation mechanisms employed by different cultures to establish their temporalities. I identify key mechanisms such as mechanical, biological, atmospheric, and astral, among others, with possible combinations of these mechanisms. I posit that these mechanisms represent the technological origins of numerous time-related concepts and ideas that emerge subsequently.

operations in the space/time of waiting and points of attraction and transformation of the symmetrical temporal rhythms of the process.

In summary, this classification does not intend to establish permanent or momentary temporal chaos or create a *chronographic* or *chronological* indeterminacy. On the contrary, it aims to establish new temporal, spatial and operational orders, which balance it according to its characteristics far from breaking with the system. The variations introduced from the *temporal demarcation referentials* are not a factor of disorder but instead a particular ordering coherent with the waiting process, even if it differs from other temporal orderings or analogous sequences. In particular, these waiting internal temporalities will differ from *preceding* and *consequent* sequences. The *referentials of temporal demarcation* in the waiting are irreversible phenomena, denoting specific temporal segments and preventing a return to any previous temporal framework both within and outside (previous the beginning of) the waiting process. In this context, when someone suggests the possibility of returning to a time prior to a waiting moment, it is simply a metaphorical way of speaking, as such a return is impossible.

2.1. Chronology of waits and their demarcation referentials

In the analysis of the temporalities of phenomena, the determination of parts or moments is generally a matter of great relevance. Similarly, the establishment of connections between these parts and the sense or logic of these connections has also been an aspect addressed in various approaches. In this sense, Edward Hall (1959), for example, discusses the characteristics of the category “season” as one of the oldest types of temporalisations. According to Hall, this category was meant to “mark the time of ploughing, planting, cultivating and harvesting, as well as when the land could rest”. This institution survives in our days in the form of “hunting, fishing, skiing, tourism, or Christmas seasons, as well as traditional seasons of summer, autumn, winter, and spring” (Hall, 1959, p. 170). In this sense, Hall points to an institution that structures a set of operations performed at a certain time and not at another in a logical and enveloping way. These operations are related to internal parts or variations of the same process, more or less complex but objectively identifiable.

Henri Bergson uses the category of *durée* to denote that, besides the observable temporality, there is another type of temporality marked by subjective human experience, which interacts with

these “external” and objectively differentiated times. Bergson contrasts mechanical and quantifiable time, which ebbs and flows in speed and intensity. This “mechanised” time can be cyclical, repetitive, linear and cumulative. On the other hand, *durational time* can be fast or slow, oriented towards the future or the past, intentional, marked by motivations of the “why” and “what for” types (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 89). These distinctions have shaped the approaches to studying time in waiting, as a significant emphasis is given to the experience of this time in existing analyses. However, as noted consistently, the waiting processes also surpass the experience of waiting in its temporal dimension.

This fact was frequently recognised by researchers of the sixties and seventies of the last century, such as Barry Schwartz (1974, 1978) or Richard Larson (1988) (even though the latter was a psychologist), who in their research, paid particular attention to the material structure of the times in the waiting processes, without failing to recognise the psycho-phenomenological implication of the actors involved. More recently, authors such as Bandak and Janeja have begun to explore the possibility of establishing categorial delimitations that allow for analysing both objective or processual time and experiential or psycho-phenomenological time. In this sense, these authors speak of *politics* and the *poetics* of the time of waiting, referring to one dimension and the other, respectively.

In a nutshell, temporality of waiting has been analysed categorially, with attention given to both objective time and psycho-phenomenological experience, with researchers such as Schwartz, Larson, Bandak and Janeja contributing to this field.

2.1.a. Degrees and types of temporal structuring of waits

From the DM analytical perspective, I do not find an absolute separation between the psycho-phenomenological and the material/objective dimension of waiting time, be it social, physical or biological. This assumption does not mean that those dimensions cannot be dissociated and analysed in terms of their particular characteristics at different times. In this sense, and following again the system to which I adhere, I do not consider that there is a temporality that responds to a “material” or objective time and another, essentially different, to a subjective “immaterial” time. Rather, it is the same time that takes on different forms depending on the analytical coordinates or objectives from which its explanation is structured. However, above all, this time is pluralised based on the behaviour

of the phenomena, which, when put in relation, allows for the establishment of logical or transformational patterns.

In this sense, the first thing to do is to observe how the temporal sequences are articulated within the process. The waiting may present different degrees of determination according to multiple factors that will have to be determined, but what is certain is that it always presents a particular objectively apprehensible structure. In terms of its temporal determination, for example, we find waiting periods with gradations that it is possible to classify as a) high, b) medium, and c) low, depending on the institutional organisation of the waiting period, in terms of the coherence of its internal functioning.

Thus, it will be necessary to establish as a point of reference the institutional structure of the waiting process and not only the subjects' experience immersed in it. This reference may be variable and subject to the needs of each particular investigation. In this sense, temporal normativities, accessibility, and the presence and types of referentials, among many other factors, can be considered in the classification. Also, on the part of the actors involved, it is essential to consider the knowledge of these logics in both the *concave* and the *convex*¹⁰⁴ dimensions.

In this line, some authors have approached the question in exciting ways and using diverse categories. Of all of them, a very outstanding case is that of Edward Hall, who in his analysis of temporalities from a cultural point of view, proposes categories that are pertinent in many cases. In this sense, and when discussing socially established times, he presents some waiting situations and how these are logically regulated socially. Thus, Hall points out that, in North American culture, for example, “If you are five minutes late for a meeting and have kept ten people waiting”, it is comparable to making them lose “an hour of their time” (Hall, 1959: 181).

Hall does not directly place the reference point in the institution, but it is possible to do it. If this “loss” of time is understood in such a way, it has something to do with the temporal structure managed from an institutional conception of time. When this time is mentioned, it is not referring to any time but to a specific corporate time. Here it is not only the time of individual productive subjects

¹⁰⁴ The *concave* perspective in the analysis of waiting processes focuses mostly on the subjective or personal sense, with operative courses anchored primarily in internal vectors of the waiting process. In contrast, the *convex* perspective is almost always institutional. It tends to maintain the order of the system within the waiting process, establishing ordering factors within it and incorporating proleptic operations external to the waiting process.

that is important, but that of groups of these subjects as a whole in their connections with the operations carried out in the company.

Hence the significance of the delay in a chronological sense (five chronometric minutes = one chronological hour) is seen in the light of the connections of this particular temporal structure (that of a meeting) in its insertion in other temporalities, such as a productive eight-hour working day, time spent in space (meeting room), productive, service, financial processes, among many others, which are paused or modified during this waiting.

Hall (1959) calls these temporal programming patterns, classifying them as formal and informal, which can be explicit or implicit. This classification aids in understanding the internal logic of waiting time processes. Temporal programming of waits can be structured formally or informally and manifested implicitly or explicitly across different gradations.

Some research may require categorisations related to these temporal structures. In these cases, categories can be established according to subjects' knowledge of temporal morphologies. For example, in some UK migrant detention centres, waiting times are characterised by limitations in subjects' capacity for action, with high degrees of temporal programming and formal, explicit structures.

These structures can be analysed from both convex and concave perspectives. Convexly, one can perceive the lines that materially outline the temporal structure; concavely, one can observe the functional articulation of the same architecture. The degree of flexibility of these temporal structures can vary, resulting in open or closed temporal structures in waiting processes.

Giovanny Gasparini (1995) notes that waiting can be managed by actors who may temporise, advance or postpone, decisions to gain time in specific situations. In each case, it is essential to establish the degree of openness or closure of waiting, referring to the possibility for actors to modify the temporal structure of the process through their operations.

2.1.b. Chronological morphology of waiting. Monochronic and polychronic waits

Having established a first approach to the degrees to which the temporal programming of waiting can be structured, it is possible to make some distinctions concerning their temporal morphology. That is to say, delineating the internal anatomy of the sequences that phenomenically

make up the process in question. In this sense, two main classifications are proposed. Namely, firstly, waits whose temporality is morphologically simple, and it is possible to call *monochronic waits*. These are those where the process is temporally structured in a simple sequence that goes from beginning to end without interruptions or segmentation into internal parts.

Secondly, we will have temporally compound processes, which we will call *polychronic waiting*.¹⁰⁵ These are those in which the waiting has a temporal structure divided into different parts or sequences, which establish different operations, and which sometimes even require a different spatial positioning for each of these parts or moments.

Waiting with a complex temporal or polychronic structure can, in turn, be divided into two types according to the functioning of its parts. Thus, they may be waiting composed a) synchronically or b) diachronically. The former (a) would be characterised by articulating several processes in the same temporal sequence. In other words, at one time, there is waiting for two or more processes that form part of the same global waiting. In this case, we find multiple circular waits, where the actors initiate several chains of operations leading to different parts of the process and simultaneously wait for the results of one or more of these to initiate other different sequences. Such waiting is common in legal or bureaucratic/governmental procedures, where multiple documents, permits, registrations, etc., are often required and do not depend on each other. Here, actors often initiate several of these procedures in parallel to gain time compared to the overall process, where it is necessary to have all these parts completed to conclude it.

In the case of diachronic waiting (b), these are those whose parts or temporal sequences occur consecutively and not in parallel with other parts of the same process. That is to say that one sequence follows the other without operational overlaps, even when the waiting has more than one. To cite an example of this type, we can mention the radial waiting for the birth of a human puppy. This constitutes a waiting that is 1) polychronic and b) diachronically organised. In this case, both segmentary and diachrony are established concerning factors such as foetal development or weeks or months of gestation. These are distinct sequences but can only occur one after the other, as they are co-dependent and consecutive.

¹⁰⁵ The categories *monochronic* and *polichronic* are not of my creation but are a reinterpretation of the categories used by Edward Hall for the temporal characterisation of cultures. See: Edward T. Hall, *The silent language*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, INC., (1959).

In summary, understanding the degrees and types of temporal structuring and the chronological morphology of waiting processes is essential to comprehend their internal logic and experience fully. The analysis of waiting processes should consider both the objective time and the psycho-phenomenological experience of the actors involved.

2.2. *Chronography of waiting times and their demarcation referentials*

The *chronical* logic of the waits has been previously analysed. Waiting with formal and informal temporal structures, which could be both *explicit* and *implicit*, was mentioned. However, as Javier Auyero (2012) sometime “the state tells its subjects, either implicitly or explicitly, with words or actions: ‘Wait, be *patient* (waiter) and you might benefit from my (reluctant) benevolence’” (Auyero, 2012, p. 14). He refers to waiting processes in specific organisations used as a mechanism of social control. Here, an important question is how and where the state says such things. In what “implicit or explicit” way does an organisation or social institution communicate to groups or individuals a particular operational line wrapped in a specific temporality.

In the case of the waits, the question can be even more specific and refer to the specific mechanisms used by the actors involved in the waiting processes to obtain information that allows them to structure a certain temporal logic based on which to operate. In other words, they allow them to draw up plans and programmes, however minimal they may seem, according to certain temporal sequences. This issue is vital since it is a core part of the star topic in the current research on waiting. Specifically, it is explaining the “temporal experiences” related to waiting, or perhaps, as it is also conceptualised, waiting as a temporal experience in itself.

However, there is a notable lack of a category that expressly accounts for these mechanisms of communication that reflect the logical structure of institutional time in the waiting processes. For this reason, it is proposed the label *chronography of waiting* precisely as that dimension that collects and analyses the mechanisms that in a waiting process mark, show, expose, communicate, etc., the temporal (*chronological*) logic that internally governs material waiting as such.

The knowledge of the *chronographic* aspects of waiting, thus understood, is fundamental. In the internal objective dialectical relations (institutional), as well as in the relations established with these aspects by the subjects who interact in the waits, that the so-called subjective “experience of

time” is shaped. In the same way, all these interactions influence, in a sort of circularity, the material factual mechanisms themselves (normative, for example), which temporally govern waiting. In other words, the dialectics associated with the *chronographic* dimension of waiting are an essential factor both in the subjective temporal understanding of the waiting actors and in the objective material configuration of the institutionalised time of waiting as such.

The idea of a *chronography of waiting*, as is understood here, is intended to distance itself from phonetically similar categories such as “tempographies”, sometimes used in research on waiting, but in a very different sense from the one here attributed to it. Usually, when similar categories are used, they aim to describe temporality on the subjective experiential level. Javier Auyero (2012), for example, points out the concept of “tempography of domination” as “a thick description of how the dominated perceive temporality and waiting, how they act or fail to act on these perceptions, and how these perceptions and these (in)actions serve to challenge or perpetuate their domination” (Auyero, 2012, p. 4).

However, it must be specified that the *chronography* includes the subject and his experience. Such as *topography*, for instance, is conceived for the real operative subjects who have to walk on the field. Hence, the roads described the existing reliefs and accidents for the knowledge of those travelling along them, not an abstract terrain. In the same way, the *chronography of waiting* is designed to describe the mechanisms of transmission and communication of the existing temporal logics in a waiting process, traced according to the operative subjects interacting with them.

Although this aspect is not frequently “represented” in research on the timing of social processes and waiting in particular, we must recognise that it is in some way perceived and thus exercised in many cases. Edward Hall (1959), for example, referring to the '*Informal patterns*' of time in the socio-cultural processes, tells us that “they are seldom, if ever, made explicitly” (Hall, 1959, p. 181). According to Hall, these “exist like the air around us” (Idem) and manifest themselves when subjects “deviate” from the course they set. From a materialist perspective, it is possible to say that the temporalities of specific processes, including waiting, are institutionally regulated and that variations concerning this temporality are an attack, not against an abstract time pattern, but against the temporal pattern of a given social institution.

The question, then, is to determine the means or mechanisms by which these normativities are made known in the particular case of each institutionalised waiting. In this case, it could be used as a

resource that has already been employed concerning other categorial aspects of analysing the waiting processes. Specifically, the idea of *referential* is pointed out, but this time applied to the *chronography of waiting*. Chronographic referentials are understood as those *referentials* denoting concatenations between different moments or temporal spaces within a waiting process. These will be organised according to a particular order, which can be expressed in multiple ways. Among other well-known referents, it is possible to mention: *visual*, *auditory*, *audiovisual* and *rhetorical*; chronographic referentials. Here information boards, written documents, film materials, computer *software*, images, maps, signs, symbols, the information provided by organisational agents, customer service windows, etcetera can be found. In addition, narratives, testimonies, verbal communication, stories, anecdotes, and songs could be found, among many other things. It is also necessary to point out that multiple types of *chronographic referentials* can and do occur in waiting processes.

Norbert Elias (1993), for example, points out that a clock face on a tower constitutes a socially institutionalised means of orientation. In this case, he refers to a mechanical device that moves equally and constantly. This device transmits an institutionalised visual message to each person who can connect these sight patterns with the correct memory pattern" (Elias, 1993, p. 34). Here, the station clock message can make the individual both move and prepare for a wait (long or short) at a point near the station. This message is a visual chronographic referentials from the perspective used in this paper. However, this reference could not be understood separated from the arrivals and departures of trains as such. Neither from the loudspeaker announcements (*auditory chronographic referential points*) that terminals often also have. Moreover, it could be classified as such, a station employee who, in response to a passenger's question, informs about timetables, delays, suspensions or changes in the departure of certain trains. Or the conversation of another passenger who is also waiting in the terminal can constitute *rhetorical chronographic referentials*.

In New Zealand and other countries, electronic boards at bus stops along the streets display bus arrival times, bus delays and the minutes remaining before the bus arrives. These could be categorised as *visual chronographic referentials*. However, on the same shelves that hold these displays, there is a button that, if pressed, an electronic voice can be heard describing precisely what the display announces. In this case, the chronographic referential is mixed, both visual and auditory.

In another possible example, Giovanni Gasparini (1995) notes, specifically concerning waiting processes he has experienced, that in several Italian railway stations, waiting as an institution is temporally regulated and standardised. Its temporal structure is known through visual chronographic referential points in this case. In particular, an indicator is used on the screen or board announcing train departures and arrivals, which indicates the delays on each of the existing routes. In this case, according to Gasparini, since the delay is assumed to be a completely normal phenomenon and not exceptional, it has been incorporated in a normalised and institutionalised way into the station routines. In this case, and from the point of view of Gasparini's (*emic*¹⁰⁶,) experience, the mechanism of announcing the delay constitutes a *visual* chronographic reference. However, from the point of view of the writer of this paper or of some readers who are reading this text and are interested in travelling by train in Italy, the information provided here constitutes a *rhetorical chronographic referential* since it could not be visually structured a temporal logic, as we have not seen the mentioned blackboard. However, it is possible to know that it is necessary to wait for trains there, as Gasparini's testimony reflects this. Hence our operations can be similar to anyone who studies by seeing the visual mechanism described.

2.3. Timing of waits and their demarcation referentials

Barry Schwartz (1978) highlights the importance of considering that “time is allocated and consumed in sequence as well as by volume” when analysing waiting time. Thus, he emphasises the need to establish categorial criteria for analysing the internal time of waiting, not just chronologically, but in terms of its extension or volume, which can even be mathematised. We believe this is a fundamental aspect and propose adding a third criterion of analysis, which we call “chronometric,” to complement the chronological and chronographic dimensions of temporal analysis. This criterion measures objective time segments in specific time units, such as days, hours, minutes, and years.

To operationalise this dimension, we will use the referential category we have been using, but this time it will be associated with the chronometry of waiting time as we understand it. We will analyse all the elements or mechanisms that establish or stipulate the objective rhythms within each

¹⁰⁶Pike (2015) distinguishes between *emic* and *etic* perspectives, where the former focuses on understanding a culture or behaviour from within, while the latter focuses on an external viewpoint.

temporal segment of the waiting time. These mechanisms of chronometry can be mechanical, biological, atmospheric, astral¹⁰⁷, or behavioural, referring to specific operations, actions, or ceremonies executed by operative subjects.

To classify these *chronometric* referential points, we can use the categorisation we have used in other works to locate temporal markers in a general sense, given in an anthropological context of temporalisation. However, this time we will use them for the internal chronometries of waiting times. The chronometric referential points can be mechanical, biological, atmospheric, or astral. We can add another reference point that we call behavioural, linked to specific operative subjects' operations, actions, ceremonies, etcetera.

In general, there are various chronometric referential points within waiting processes, including sounds, images, clocks, applications, mobiles, electronic devices with light, sound, or both, sirens, bells, human operations, voices, animal behaviour and operations, as well as phenomena linked to physical/natural, biological, and astral transformation cycles, among others. The presence of one of these referential points in a specific waiting process does not exclude the possibility of using others. Using multiple timing mechanisms and different referents in the waiting process is common.

2.3.a. Cardinal and ordinal *chronometric referentials*

Another aspect to consider when analysing the chronometry of waits based on their *referential points* is their operational morphology. In other words, how they are structured in their operation, as this feature is, in many cases, a vitally important issue when configuring a waiting's temporality. In this sense, it is necessary to establish in the first instance whether the *chronological referentials* function in a) a *cardinal* or b) an *ordinal way*. That is if the sequences are established one after the other or are manifested based on specific events or moments that do not follow a fixed linear order. Alternatively, as is often the case, the waiting has sequences of both types, where both cardinal and ordinal sequences set the rhythms within the process.

¹⁰⁷ In the specific construction of these chronometric *referentials*, I have used the classification already used in another paper, "*Processes and mechanisms of temporalisation, some categories for their analysis*", to denote temporalisation processes from an anthropological perspective.

In this sense, the waits that have *cardinal chronometry* are those where the internal rhythms cannot be established in a stable and perhaps mathematically fixed way but are governed by specific events, chains of operations of the actors involved, organisational measures, spatial transfers within the process, among many others.

Martin P. Nilsson (1920) points out that among the Ainos, for example, the timing is made based on essential and striking events present in the minds of all community members. Thus, not days or years govern the course of time and its operations, but the reference is to particular relevant events. According to Nilsson, if asked how old someone is, the answer would be that he was born after catching a giant fish or in a year when there was too much or too little snow (Nilsson, 1920, p. 93). When there are many notable years, the temporal relationship is established up to where the succession of extraordinary events began. At this point, it is then established as the basis of the calculation. In some waiting processes, one can observe that something similar happens. Enough examples of *radial referentials* to waiting for biological or climatic phenomena, migrations, blooms, seasons, etc., have been already given as the starting point of certain proleptic operations, such as hunting, gathering fruits, furs, etc.

Nevertheless, it is not only in *radial* processes that we see these cardinal chronometries present; they are also present in multiple circular processes. In this sense, it could be cited as an example of some processes made by emigrants for obtaining residence in the USA who have to wait for a series of communications from the competent authorities, which do not have a fixed time established. For this reason, this chronologically *polychronic* wait is *timed* by employing the *cardinal referential* “steps in the process”. These operations are *chronographically* materialised in the form of a yellow envelope letter with the stamp of the immigration service (USCIS¹⁰⁸), known in the jargon of emigrants and of those who are immersed in this institutional wait as the “torch count”¹⁰⁹.

The *chronometrically ordinal* waits are those whose temporal structure can be established by mechanical *referentials*, for example, because their sequences are established linear and mathematically verifiable. These are the cases where it is possible to establish duration in ordinal terms: two hours, three days, or a year. Alternatively, in organised cycles or fixed sequences: three

¹⁰⁸ United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

¹⁰⁹ The reference to torches comes from the fact that the stamps on these envelopes have the image of the torch of the Statue of Liberty as their central theme.

days after the start of the procedure, sixty working days after the first response, and one month before the conclusion of the process.

Similarly, in processes where both types of timing are combined, *cardinal parts* (“wait until you are told you can come to the office for an interview”) and *ordinal parts* (“after the interview, you will receive an answer in 25 working days”) can be found. In this case, the time demarcation *referentials* are both sequential and cardinal.

Nevertheless, it could be the case that they are only of one type. For example, the circular institution “waiting for immigration procedures” is generally not marked by a sequential temporalisation but by a cardinal one. Here, cardinality is given by the achievement of certain operations, which are not tied to constant sequential periods, but variable. In these cases, the researcher's task will be to establish the causes of this variability when seeking to explain the phenomenon in question or propose ways to resolve such a process early.

To sum up, the chronometry of waiting times can be analysed based on cardinal or ordinal referential points. Understanding the operational morphology of waiting times is essential for configuring the wait's temporality and proposing ways to resolve the process early.

2.3.b. Time length. Long-, medium- and short-term waiting

When talking about the timing of the waiting, and taking into account what has been previously stated, one must first determine whether dealing with a *monochronic* or *polychronic waiting*, since the timing of these waits applies to both typologies. The difference lies in the number of *time segments* (TS) to be considered, where the former is mono-segmental (TS=1)¹¹⁰ and the latter pluri-segmental (TS>1). Based on these premises, one can move on to a recurrent and somewhat defining aspect of the temporality of the waiting, precisely its length. This aspect has been analysed in the literature on waits as their *duration*.

Several authors have addressed this issue in their analyses of waiting time, finding different ways to establish when a wait is long, short or of another nature. In this sense, the most common position is the experiential psycho-phenomenological one. That is, taking as a reference the

¹¹⁰ TS stands for "temporal segment".

experience or opinion of the waiter. As is to be expected, this position presents all the problems that can be associated with individualistic subjectivism, being extremely difficult to approach categorially because of the variations that can be found from one subject to another. Faced with this risk, various authors have tried, even from these coordinates, to find anchors that justify the objectivity of individuals' criteria or subjective experiences. Alfred Gell (2021), for example, offers an explanation based on culture, finding relations between individual expectations and the surrounding socio-cultural structure, where the latter is to a certain extent subject to the former. In this sense, he notes:

In fact, to say, 'I've been waiting here for ages' is much more informative, in context, than to say, 'I've been waiting here for 11 minutes and 36 seconds', since the intended message is about the relationship between the expected waiting time and the time actually spent waiting, not about the duration of the wait itself. (...) Someone who says, 'I've been waiting here for hours' having waited a total of 45 minutes is neither lying nor misusing the English language. Five minutes can mean anything between two minutes and twenty, depending on the circumstances; guessing the actual duration intended requires a deep knowledge of the pragmatics of English and the workings of the everyday world (Gell, 2021, p. 107)¹¹¹.

The ideas seen in Gell (2021) are similar to those defended by authors such as Hall (1959) when he speaks of formal and informal patterns of time or Bourdieu himself when he refers to the *habitus* applied to social times. Without denying the importance of the surrounding culture in institutional temporalisations, this preponderance in the temporal configurations of particular processes is not shared here, not even concerning the phenomenal conception of the actor. From the DM perspective, the key is not so much in the general cultural signs implied in the discursivities “I have been waiting here for ages”, as Gell et al. point out, but in the contextualisation of this rationalisation: 'I have been waiting here for ages “here”'. It is this '*here*' that we believe matters in the rationalisation and indicates the actual patterns of comparison of each process. A '*here*' would point to a socio-geographical and cultural context, primarily to a particular institutional and operational environment. That is, to a particular institution.

Giovanni Gasparini (1999) is one of the authors who have paid attention to this aspect of waits. In this regard, he proposes two categories for determining the lengths of waits, the simplicity of

¹¹¹ In this paper, all references to Gell's book are based on the 2021 edition, which is a revised version of the original publication. For the sake of clarity, the first edition was initially published in 1992.

which does not detract from their clarity or relevance. This author proposes to classify waits in terms of length simply as “short-term” and “long-term” waiting. For the author, the former is generally limited to “no longer than a day and usually consists of only a few minutes or a few hours”. In the case of the latter, long-term waiting exceeds a single day's time and can last for weeks or months.

For Gasparini, and here he is right, the transition from a short to a long wait “does not necessarily imply a worsening of the waiting experience” (1995, p. 36). In saying so, he is careful not to circumscribe the reference pattern exclusively to the experiential subjectivity of the waiters. The determination lies in the capacity of some waits to change the status of the actor involved in it, while those of short duration will maintain it as such. According to Gasparini:

Long-term waiting creates a relatively stable condition. This in turn can lead to reclassification and possibly, or ultimately, a social role: for example, an individual who has been unemployed for many months becomes defined as a member of the 'unemployed', a status which is reflected in official European Community statistics (Gasparini, 1995, pp. 36–37).

Even without denying, in principle, that what Gasparini describes can happen, i.e. that some waiting processes provoke sociological changes in the actors involved, what seems problematic in this proposal is the limitation of the length of the waiting processes to this criterion, especially when it does not explain why a year, for example, should necessarily change the status of a subject who waits differently than a day or a month.

For example, take the case of a person waiting on death row for his sentence to be carried out. Whether the waiting lasts a year or twenty years will not change his status or the outcome of his sentence. Here, the length of the waiting is determined by other factors, related not so much to chronometric time, measured in ordinal terms of days, months or years, but in cardinal terms. That is to say, in temporal segments that determine the operations both in the *concave* dimension of the waiting (on the part of the prisoner, for example) and by other *convex* actors also linked to the process. Among the latter, it is possible to find lawyers on appeal, activists against capital punishment, politicians convinced of the excessiveness of the sentence, etcetera. Moreover, it could also be found that organisers of the execution (doctors, executioners, guards, prison staff), governmental entities that plan and authorise the death sentence process, and relatives of the alleged victims, among many others.

According to this perspective, the objective coordination elements determining the length of waiting times must be established at two levels: one internal to the waiting process and another external to it. Internally, it is crucial to determine “with respect to what” the wait is long or short. This aspect is often determined by specific plans and programs based on certain anticipations (*prolepses*) that the actors and institutions participating in the process carry out from their respective positions. However, this should not be understood in an experiential or psychological sense¹¹², but rather objectively as rational planning adjusted to the waiting process's institutional possibilities. These institutional possibilities form the basis for establishing projects to overcome or modify the process.

This dynamic is closely related to the ends analysed earlier when explaining the characteristics of the *ends* of waiting times and perhaps when discussing the purpose according to the DM. Therefore, the objectives of the operations and their respective adjustments to specific plans and programs constitute a significant chronometric reference for waiting times. Regarding the matter and forms of waiting times, the answer lies in the institutional perspective proposed here for its analysis, particularly regarding the institutionalised proleptic operations that individuals carry out in the waiting process. The determination must be made based on the architecture of the waiting process itself as an institution.

From this perspective, it is possible to analyse the temporality of waiting, understanding it as a material phenomenon categorisable by social sciences or disciplines. In other words, the temporal dimension of the waits is inserted into the institutionalised operational chains of reality and not reduced to a particular subjective/experiential conception of the acting subjects. However, this assumption does not mean that there is no certain experience, even personal, associated with waiting times or that this experience is unimportant. We point out that the multiple phenomena associated with this process, even temporal ones, cannot be encompassed or reduced to the phenomenological singularity of a particular subject or even a group of them.

On the other hand, if the aim is to determine the temporal length of the waiting period, another type of reference must be taken into account, in addition to the proleptic operations internal to the process mentioned above. Here it is essential to note the relations that the waiting period establishes with other institutions that intersect the process and those that are intersected by it. In

¹¹² These premises generally take the concept of duration (*durée*) of Bergsonian origin, which I have already mentioned before.

other words, it will always be necessary to refer to the temporality of the waiting in the sense of an institutional structure (phenomenological, as understood by the DM), which encompasses a set of operations that are always proleptic concerning other institutions, whether similar or not. The structure, in this sense, is assumed from the characteristics that the DM recognises. Roughly speaking, that is a system of relations between parts of a phenomenon seen in its surrounding context. This last point is essential since waiting cannot be analysed by itself, as proposed here, if the context (always institutional) in which it is “located” is not considered.

This institutionalisation of the waiting proposed here is not, as has already been pointed out, an occurrence or innovation of this paper. It is constantly exercised and even recognised in its importance by numerous studies. Among these, those that consider the time invested in waiting processes as a central determinant of other institutional processes stands out. From these processes (different but interconnected with the wait), the waiting can often be dissociated but never wholly separated. In this sense, the time dimension represents a key variable for evaluating certain services. Within these, the waiting is often considered fundamental to understanding even economic and productive fluctuations. Thus, several authors (Gasparini, 1995; R. Larson, 1988; Schwartz, 1974) point out that delays can be considered a cost for individuals, groups and even organisations involved in waiting. In the words of Giovanni Gasparini, “waiting may represent a 'time tax' on the goods or service being asked for” (1995, p. 32), as well as an additional cost for the unit or subsystem causing the delay and the social system.

In this sense, the objection that could be made consists of questioning waiting as the cause of these difficulties when the analysis revolves around the waiting time instead, that is, its temporal dimension, which, as has been illustrated, is not the only one involved in waiting. In any case, what is essential is that the durational extension of waiting, both in the global and in its partial segments, can undoubtedly constitute a limitation for the productive uses of time in institutions other than the waiting itself. This type of relationship must be established when timing the waiting periods to determine their length and to know whether the waiting period is long, medium or short. The idea here is that if waiting is short or long, it will be so concerning both the time of its internal operations and that of other similar institutions and their respective operations.

Edward Hall (1959) offers an example that can be considered extremely convenient to summarise a little of what has been pointed out above. According to an account collected by this

author in one of his texts¹¹³, a Sioux community leader hired by the local municipal authorities to collaborate in the labour insertion of the indigenous community related his experience as follows:

What would you think of a people who had no word for time? My people have no word for 'late' or for 'waiting,' for that matter. They don't know what it is to wait or to be late. (...) I decided that until they could tell time and knew what time, was they could never adjust themselves to white culture. So I set about to teach them time. There wasn't a clock that was running in any of the reservation classrooms. So I first bought some decent clocks. Then I made the school buses start on time, and if an Indian was two minutes late that was just too bad. The bus started at eight forty-two and he had to be there" (Hall, 1959, pp. 35–36).

The testimony is very revealing, because here the cultural, institutional transmission of the ideas of *time*, *waiting*, *delay*, etc. was not carried out through rhetorical techniques, but through the use of objective mechanisms that reveal much of what this paper has discussed. In this sense, chronographic and chronometric *referentials* were employed: "first, I bought some decent watches". There was an objective immersion in the institutionalised operations where these categories took place: "I made the school buses leave on time, and if an Indian was two minutes late, it was a pity. The bus started at eight forty-two, and he had to be there". These *referentials* and operations, put in relation to the categorial nuclei that signified them, made the actants apprehend the temporal structures that governed these processes. Finally, temporal structure, chronography, was revealed internally: "The bus started at eight forty-two" and concerning other intersecting temporalities: "if an Indian was two minutes late, it was a pity". In other words, two minutes was already considered a "long" wait from the convex point of view of the bus leaving for the city, a pattern that was assimilated by the worker who intended to take it.

The length of waiting can be determined by internal and external institutional *referentials* and operations, and it can significantly affect productivity and costs. The cultural transmission of the concept of time and waiting can be achieved through objective mechanisms and institutional references rather than subjective experiences or opinions.

¹¹³ See Edward Hall (1959), *The silent language*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, INC.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper proposes a set of categories to provide a more comprehensive and coherent perspective on time in waiting. Specifically, it hypothesises that waiting time has a *chronology*, a *chronography*, and a *chronometry*. It examines the existence of an objective temporality in waiting without ignoring the subjective experience of time.

The *chronology* of waiting time includes the segments or moments that constitute waits and the logic in which these parts are concatenated or related to other temporal phenomena external to these processes. This paper proposes utilising a tripartite division to classify waiting as having a high, medium, or low chronological structure. It has also been proposed to use monochronic or polychronic categories to denote the chronological morphology of waiting.

The *chronography* of waiting time encompasses the mechanisms that denote or make known the chronological logic of the waiting process, identifying how objective temporality manifests itself in the waiting process.

The *chronometry* of waiting time demarcates the duration of the objective segments manifested in the waiting process as specific temporal units. It has also been proposed to classify the temporal duration of waits as long, medium, or short.

The idea of a referential has been used to classify the components present in each of these dimensions. This label belongs to the terminology of Discontinuous Materialism and has been used as a chronological, chronographic, and chronometric demarcation referential in waiting.

This paper proposes an all-encompassing framework for analysing the waiting process as an objective time. My analysis introduces guidelines and categories to understand and categorise waiting time in its fundamental aspects. Rather than offering definitive conclusion, this paper invites further exploration of the subject from different perspectives, considering multiple objective and material features that contribute to waiting and analysing the temporal aspects and the multiple facets that constitute it.

Chapter 6: Discussion and conclusion.

This final chapter of the thesis provides a comprehensive discussion and synthesis of the research conducted. Unlike traditional discussion chapters that juxtapose findings with existing theories, this chapter critically examines the novel categories and perspectives developed in the thesis, applying them to empirical and objective waiting processes.

The chapter is structured as a series of essays, each focusing on a main topic developed in the thesis. Notably, each essay is a standalone study on the presented topic. Based on the empirical evidence, the aim is not to derive conclusion from historical, sociological, or anthropological perspectives but to demonstrate how research from these gnoseological spaces could analyse empirical waiting processes using the perspective proposed in this research and employing the categorial framework developed.

The first essay, "Waiting as a Concept and as a Practice: A Brief Analysis of Historical and Contemporary Uses in Cuban Politics, Society and Culture," sets the stage by exploring the broader socio-cultural and political implications of waiting in the Cuban context. This essay is complemented by another one in Appendix I (Case Study 1), titled "From the Secular Hope to the Institutional Waiting in Cuba. Some Notes for Its Analysis". Here, the diversity of conceptualisation of waiting and their interrelations are analysed by evaluating some of the waiting conceptualisations made by scholars referring to Cuba's historical/political waiting.

The second essay, "The Waits of 'La Coyuntura' and the Waits of the Pandemic in Cuba: A Critical Discussion on the Institutionalisation of Waiting in Cuba," shifts the focus to the institutional aspects of waiting, using the institutional perspective developed in the second chapter.

"Waiting for Bureaucracy in Cuba: Notes on the Spaces of Waiting and their Importance in Researching These Phenomena," the third essay, addresses the spatial dimension of waiting. It analyses the role of physical spaces in institutionalised waiting processes and related paperwork in the contemporary Cuban context. This essay is supplemented by a short Case Study in Appendix II (Case Study 2), titled "Topographical Notes on a Process of Waiting for a Passport Update in the City of

Camaguey, Cuba". In this case, a specific empirical case is presented using the categories developed in Chapter 3.

The fourth essay, "Waiting for the Blackout and Waiting for the Light to Come On: Notes on Waiting Operations," delves into the operational aspects of institutional waiting for blackouts and lighting in Cuba. This essay is supported by a short Case Study in Appendix III (Case Study 3), titled "Waiting for the Blackout and the Lighting in the City. The Operations of Waiting in Three Micro-stories". Here, specific empirical waiting processes are analysed using the categories developed in Chapter 4.

The fifth and final essay, "Waiting for Dollars in Cuba: Notes on the Temporality of Waiting," explores the temporal dimension of waiting. It briefly describes the institutional waiting process to buy foreign currencies in the context of the Cuban migratory crisis of summer 2022. A short Case Study in Appendix IV (Case Study 4), titled "Waiting for Dollars at the CADECA in 'República' Street," supports this essay. By presenting a specific empirical case of this waiting, the intention is to demonstrate the utility of the categories discussed in Chapter 5 in such studies.

Each section concludes with a partial summary that recapitulates the main ideas, concepts, and categories developed in the articles discussed in each thesis chapter.

In summary, Chapter 6 offers a thorough discussion and conclusion to the research, encapsulating the novel theoretical framework and its application to real-world scenarios. Through this chapter, the thesis significantly contributes to studying waiting processes, providing a comprehensive understanding of their spatial, operational and temporal dimensions, from a materialist and institutional perspective.

Analysing the institutionalisation of Waiting in Cuba: Some Empirical Case Studies Examined from a Philosophical-Materialist Framework

1. Introduction

In recent years, Cuba has experienced a series of social-historical events and transformations that have significantly impacted various aspects of the island's social panorama. Waiting has emerged as a unifying theme permeating many processes and situations throughout this period. This phenomenon has become particularly prominent in the last five years due to three significant events that have affected Cuban society.

In December 2019, a digital media outlet published an article discussing the economic situation in Cuba from an average Cuban's perspective. This article highlighted the various crises experienced by Cuban society due to a rapidly declining economy (Erika, 2019). According to macroeconomic data, the island's economy has significantly weakened for almost five years (R. T. Pérez, 2016). Furthermore, the economic relationship with Venezuela, Cuba's main trading partner, decreased from 22% to 8% of the Cuban GDP between 2012 and 2017 (Mesa, 2019).

By the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, shortages in Cuba were causing waiting situations indicative of an impending severe economic crisis. In May 2019, the BBC reported long queues for buying essential goods in Cuba and the effects of government-announced rationing of basic commodities (BBC News World, 2019). Amidst this crisis, in September 2019, Cuban President Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez announced a "temporary energy situation" and a series of economic measures, including rationing of electricity, fuel, food and the operation of numerous state entities and public services (Redacción Digital, 2019a, 2019b; Torres, 2019).

Cuban social media users labelled the waiting processes associated with this scenario as "conjunctural" or circumstantial waiting, with 2019 being remembered as the year of "La Coyuntura" (conjuncture). In 2020, the "conjunctural" crisis remained unresolved, and the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted Cuba and its economy even more severely. Tourism, Cuba's second-largest source of economic income, saw a 68% decline in visitors during the first eight months of 2020 (J. L. R. Rodríguez, 2021). Additionally, between 2020 and 2021, Cuba implemented internal measures to address the emergence of COVID-19 cases, leading to mobility restrictions and confinement policies

(Aguilar-Guerra & Reed, 2020). After controlling the virus for most of 2020, Cuba experienced a surge of infections in 2021, further exacerbating the already precarious economic situation (Burki, 2021).

Both the distancing measures and the shortages inherent in this situation significantly increased the social waiting processes Cubans experienced daily. The Cuban case partially supports the theories of Barry Schwartz (1974, 1975, 1977, 1978), who identifies a correlation between waiting processes and difficulties, shortages or slowdowns in the supply chains of products or services. Consequently, 2020 and 2021 (especially the latter) were the years of the “Pandemic waits”.

The current socio-political, economic, demographic, cultural and ideological landscape in Cuba is largely the result of the accumulation of these three consecutive phenomena, or periods, and the various processes and dynamics they have generated. The first event is the economic crisis between 2018 and 2019, known in Cuba as “La Coyuntura” (the conjuncture) (Mesa, 2019). This crisis was further exacerbated by the government measures taken to curb the Pandemic (Mesa Redonda, 2020). These situations were then compounded by the process of general reconfiguration of the country’s economy and finances, which began in 2020 and is known in Cuba as the “Tarea Ordenamiento” (Ordering task) or simply as the “Ordenamiento” (ordering) (Bravo, 2021; Canal Caribe, 2021; Febles, 2020; Marín, 2021; MEP, 2020).

For the subject of this research, the significance of these processes and dynamics lies in the fact that many of them have been experienced as waits. This matter is evident in that two of Cuba’s most renowned singer-songwriters, Silvio Rodríguez and Carlos Varela, have composed songs dedicated to waiting during this historical period. In his latest album, titled “Para la Espera” (For the waiting), Rodríguez (2020) explores the idea of waiting as a form of hope. In his song “Danzón para la espera” (Danzón for Waiting), he blurs the lines between individual hopes and social aspirations, creating a poetics that incorporates both without apparent contradictions. Based on this interpretation, Rodríguez sings:

A love to say I am waiting for you

A skin where to learn fragrance

(...)

A *danzón* to wait for the dawn

A glow where to start from zero

(...)

(Chorus): The *danzón* goes away

(To say: “I am waiting for you”)

(Chorus)

(To learn fragrance)

(Chorus)

(To start from scratch in the distance)

(Chorus)

(For the lonely)

(Chorus)

(And for Hope) (See Appendix 1)

Carlos Varela’s song “El Bostezo de la espera” (The Yawning of Waiting) takes a more direct approach to the socio-political implications of waiting than Rodríguez’s approach. Varela advocates for the melancholic and passive side of hopeful waiting, sometimes associated with long-term political struggles.

I was happy

Barefoot among the cyclones

When we had nothing

The songs were enough

And yesterday I went out and I only saw on the balconies

The yawning waiting, the fear

And wreaths of flowers. (...)

The yawning, the bloody waiting,

And wreaths of flowers (See Appendix 2)

Varela and Silvio utilise the concept of waiting, which has gained popularity both within and beyond Cuba. This concept is often invoked in relation to specific historical, cultural or political phenomena within the country. Despite their varied perspectives on waiting, most authors who have addressed the topic in Cuba concur that waiting, in its various forms, plays a significant role in the Cuban sociohistorical and cultural landscape. Moreover, waiting transcends intellectual discussions and manifests itself in ideas that permeate everyday social life on the island. It is evident in numerous

institutions that articulate the Cuban socio-anthropological panorama, such as quanta, proverbs, jokes, songs, sayings, and, more recently, even memes, gifts, postcards and social media posts, among others.

Waiting is approached in two main ways. The first refers to waiting as a kind of secularised *hope*. The second refers to the practical waiting of everyday life, which is associated with social processes that can take on different forms. I have identified these as *operative* and *proleptically structured waiting*. The former is often linked to the political and historical destiny of the Cuban nation, as seen in the case of the singers mentioned above. This type of waiting is highly abstract, and its material concreteness is difficult to establish. Nevertheless, a vast amount of material employs the idea of waiting with these characteristics.

Successive generations of Cubans have been unable to shape their own destiny, leaving them masters of waiting. They have learned the art of patience and the hope for a better future, gradual changes in living conditions, and the chance to travel abroad. However, they have also been discouraged from taking risks, believing in chance, or taking an active role in shaping their future. Numerous Cubans persist in waiting for a miracle (Armengol, 2015).

This behaviour is not exclusive to intellectuals; it is also evident in the everyday discourse of certain groups in Cuba. As international media reports: “Osniel, a private entrepreneur, believes that (...). People mistakenly believe they are beholden to the rulers when it is the other way around. Changing this mentality will take ten, twenty or fifty years (...). And the fact is that many Cubans live waiting for a miracle” (García, 2018).

These ideas employ abstract categories like “Cuba hopes”, “Cubans hope” and “In Cuba, one hopes” to represent complex notions that necessitate philosophical analysis for complete understanding. Waiting cannot be considered as playing a significant role in the description of Cuban history as a process. Invoking waiting as an element ingrained in the national subconscious to explain the past and present is an alluring mystification employed by some Cuban writers, but it amounts to nothing more than a deceptive posture during times of change (Vázquez, 2009).

However, as I have previously noted, this is not the sole approach to conceptualising waiting. Earlier, I referred to the blending or interchange that sometimes occurs between certain hopes/waiting and other types or characteristics of hopes. These waits of the second type,

operationally proleptic waiting, have also been the object of attention, analysis and objectification in cultural and artistic products.

From this perspective, already at the beginning of the 2000s, the young singer and poet William Vivanco (2018) sang in the first verses of one of his very popular songs (“Alegrón”):

*Tripeando*¹¹⁴ they move around Havana,
Wanting to have a productive day.
But the morning starts among the poison of old classic cars.
I see those people who live with less
Just hallucinating a chimera,
In the midst of the spell, the trade of waiting is born.
And Havana wants joy, almendrón¹¹⁵ (See Appendix 3).

The examples mentioned earlier depict a silent, lethargic, passive and grey waiting that is nevertheless hopeful. However, waiting in Cuba transcends being just a state; it is a social “trade” manifested in a whirlwind of images, sounds, smells and dynamics. As Vivanco sings, Havana desires “Alegrón” to work on its waiting, showcasing a permanent festive claim.

Nonetheless, some might argue that such claims are merely poetic evasions of a state that is, in reality, axiologically harmful. Even though it is musicalised, painted, danced and sculpted, it exposes the “defects” and ontological imperfections of the Cuban being. For example, historian Rafael Rojas criticises this festive spirit of waiting that Vivanco sings. As Rojas states:

For example, the art of waiting has become a recurrent craft in Cuban culture. (...) [C]itizens live by waiting: they await a change, for them indiscernible, whose unknown effects do not always compensate or alleviate their daily discomfort. This domestication of waiting has some ancestry in the dual Spanish and African roots of island culture. It comes from the old legacy of laziness and apathy, laziness and

¹¹⁴ *Tripeando* is an aglisms made with the English word *trip+ando (ing)* in its present continuous form, like *trip+ing*, but mixing the Spanish and English form in a single word, *tripeando*.

¹¹⁵ “Almendrón” means *big almond*. It is the name given in Havana to the famous old cars from the fifties that still circulate for the city as private taxis.

stoicism, patience and play, utopian vocation and the nefarious paternalism-infantilism binomial, mysticism and fantasy; in short, of *choteo*¹¹⁶ and *gozadera*¹¹⁷ (2014, loc. 2195).

Numerous authors share similar hypotheses to Rojas's, such as Leonardo Padura (2008), Leal (2022), Valentini (2022), Vázquez (2009) and Žižek (2002). These interpretations coexist and evolve alongside the specific material social dynamics that give rise to waiting in Cuba. Individuals and social groups in Cuba experience these dynamics, forming their own ideas and conceptions of waiting, independent of what the national "Intelligentsia" thinks.

Although Rojas's interpretation may not be entirely accurate, he is right in highlighting that humor, "choteo", mockery and social derision are valuable empirical mechanisms for Analysing processes of waiting. In the Cuban context, especially in the past five years, the materials examined show that humorous formats, such as written, visual and audiovisual media, have been most effective in characterising the most common *proleptic waits* in Cuba in significant quantities.

A myriad of memes, caricatures, television shows, posts and other media have tackled this issue. For instance, humorous singer and composer Alejandro García (2021) and singer-songwriter Kelvis Ochoa in his song "Tarzán de las colas" (Tarzan of the queues) describe in a metaphorical and playful tone how *operational waiting* in queues functions in Cuba, particularly in the context of the Conjunction/Pandemic/re-ordering¹¹⁸.

She leaves at five o'clock in the morning
for the market where she usually shops

¹¹⁶ *Choteo*, a form of Cuban humor, uses jokes, wordplay and visual elements to discredit and mock its targets. Its anti-authoritarian nature refuses to take anything seriously, even if it deserves genuine attention. Choteo aims to reduce or humiliate the supposed greatness of its target, displaying irreverence and frequently discrediting them (Hidalgo, 2012, para. 3; Salois, 2022).

¹¹⁷ *Gozadera* in its Latin Spanish meaning, point to a "good time" or "party". Drive from derives from the verb *gozar* (joy).

¹¹⁸ The song "Tarzán de las colas" (Tarzan of the Queues) satirises the extensive queues prevalent in Cuba, criticising the so-called queue-jumpers or queuers (individuals who earn their livelihood by holding places in queues for others) against the backdrop of the country's current situation and the ongoing pandemic. By using humour and sharp wit, Virulo's song underscores the struggles ordinary Cubans encounter in dealing with the intricate realities of daily life, including the pervasive waiting lines for essential goods and services. Through his poignant lyrics, Virulo illuminates the societal problems in Cuba stemming from the persistent economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

And even at that early hour
she's already late to get a spot in the queue.
I don't understand why so many people arrive
If you can't do anything before five.
They suddenly come flying in, all at once
take all the spots, locking you out
It's a mystery, this shocking tumult
Hard to solve even for Scotland Yard.

(See Appendix 4)

In addition to humor, it is crucial to recognise Cuban journalism's role in depicting the realities of waiting in various aspects of daily life in the country over the past five years. Cuban state press has primarily utilised what I have called the *convex* perspective to analyse and characterise the most well-known and discussed waiting periods, such as "La Coyuntura", the Pandemic, and the "Ordenamiento".

In 2022, Granma, the official media of the ruling Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), echoed Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez's words, stating: "It is impossible to quantify the anguish generated by the blackouts and the instability of the electricity service, the shortages and long queues to buy essentials goods, the obstacles to the life projects of families and, especially, of young people" (Granma, 2022).

In this context, the politician attributes the origin of the multiple crises experienced by a significant portion of the population to the socio-historical and geopolitical space outside national borders and beyond government control. As I noted earlier, social strata have no differentiation in locating the causes of waiting.

Non-state media, on the other hand, have been more critical in holding government authorities responsible for the shortages suffered by Cubans and the waiting processes they generate, as shows the following press extract:

Dagoberto was supposed to wait for death by taking his grandchildren to school and watching baseball games in the comfort of his home. However, material hardship forces him to work two jobs to survive. "At night, I am security at an agro-market. In the morning, I sell my daughter-in-law's homemade yoghurt.

Although my pension of 500 pesos [national currency] is one of the highest, it is not enough. My wife suffers from arthrosis, and my two children survive thanks to the 'invention'. We almost always eat eggs, rice, beans, and some food. We are having a hard time", confesses Dagoberto (García, 2018, para. 3).

From different perspectives –one *convex* and the other *concave*– both fragments suggest that waiting is not merely passive expectation but an active and operational process in which actors must take concrete actions to achieve established goals. The axiological interpretation of these processes may not be pleasant or easy, but what is essential is that waiting is described as a dynamic process, distinct from the poetic lethargy often associated with literature, some artistic expressions and certain historical essays on Cuban themes.

During my research, I interviewed Bernardo Alfonso, a 69-year-old retired Cuban, who masterfully summarised waiting in its operational sense as he experiences it in his daily struggle.

We are Institutionalised in waiting. We've dealt with bureaucracy, especially in the public sector, which has almost always generated it (...). These situations have created resilience for Cubans living in a country with one of the lowest suicide rates in the world. The reason? We are always waiting for something – whether it's coffee, cigarettes, sugar, toiletries, or even housing, civil registration and identity cards–. When Cubans undertake tasks, they also carry out alternative tasks to avoid "going blank" and losing precious time in obligatory waits. In the places where people wait, new friendships and even love relationships arise (...). There is much ground to cover on this subject.

Many of the notions I have analysed throughout this work are compacted in this reflection. The idea of waiting distances itself from any metaphysical or abstract interpretation. For Bernardo, waiting is an institution whose material execution demands time, operations and the occupation of a specific space from those involved. This idea of waiting is what I have analysed in this research and forms the basis of the articles collected in this text.

Taking all of the above into account, I can partially conclude that the waiting processes in Cuba are approached from at least two different perspectives. First, as secularised hopes linked to the historical, political and socio-cultural spheres. Second, as operational waiting, encompassing a vast multiplicity of specific socio-anthropological aspects of everyday life on the island. Based on this, it is possible to put forward at least two working hypotheses.

Firstly, many instances of waiting in Cuba are not viewed as sporadic or emergent phenomena; instead, they are considered objectively recognisable materialities of the Cuban social context. In the categories I have dealt with, I would argue that many of these waiting instances constitute genuine social institutions. From the theoretical perspective used in this research, it is precisely this material/institutional existence that allows us to articulate and perhaps manage emerging and concrete processes present in the reality of individuals and social groups.

Secondly, the study of several waiting situations in Cuba can be approached through the categories, terms and concepts developed throughout this research, given their institutional character. Based on these premises, I will analyse most of the theoretical assumptions gathered throughout the eleven papers of this research in the form of a dialectical discussion.

Rather than presenting a summarised list of the concepts and categories used, I employed a different methodology. Since my research is already a theory in itself and has been posed in a permanent dialectic with existing theories and research, it seemed more pertinent to place it against the backdrop of concrete examples of material reality. Specifically, I will use Cuban social reality as an empirical context to exercise some of the categorial tools I have developed in this study.

In this regard, I will discuss a series of waiting processes that have occurred predominantly within the context of Cuba from 2018 to 2023. The majority of categories, concepts, and terms proposed for the study of waiting in this research will be presented, using these real-world cases as the perfect foundation for their analysis.

In terms of methodology, this research will use a mix of content analysis, surveys, and observational techniques. Based on the philosophical materialistic perspective I have been using, I will pay attention to the social and material crystallisation of the studied ideas. In the body of the thesis, I have critically analysed mostly examples, concepts and categories extracted from the existing waiting gnoseological field (previous research and approaches). In this section, I will move forward and confront the categories developed through the previous analysis with entirely unstudied empirical waiting processes. This procedure is entirely consequent with the philosophical system employed here. For the DM, the origin of the ideas is entirely rooted in the dialectical relations of the material and human world, and it is there, in that *symploké*, where the philosopher has to deal with them.

Concerning it, I employed content analysis to examine the agora where waiting-related ideas appear. In this sense, various media forms, including press articles, videos, audio, and social media posts, were analysed. Additionally, we conducted open-ended interviews with individuals who have encountered waiting in a range of contexts, and both participant and non-participant observations were conducted in Cuban social waiting spaces.

The analysis will adopt a systematic approach, moving from broad to specific. In this regard, I studied certain institutional waiting processes in Cuba, initially outlining their main institutional features before delving into specific aspects of interest in each case.

The findings will be organised into six sections, each concentrating on a distinct aspect of waiting in Cuba. The first section investigates the interplay between hope and waiting, drawing inspiration from the work “From Eschatological Hope to Working Time: Sociological Notes on the Christian Origins of the Contemporary Idea of Waiting”. This section will explore how *waiting* and *'hope'* are intertwined in literary texts, historical essays, and academic discussions about Cuban historical and political evolution.

The second section examines the institutionalisation of waiting processes, building on the theory developed by Gustavo Bueno. In “Waiting as institution. Notes for an institutional analysis of human waiting”, this topic is addressed throughout the study and is analysed using empirical materials related to waiting for essential supplies during the Pandemic crisis in Cuba.

The third section focuses on the spatial dimension of waiting processes based on the theoretical assumptions proposed in this research. The theoretical assumptions presented in the articles and “The topography of waiting: Categorical notes for the analysis of waiting spaces” and “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories useful for their study” will be briefly discussed in light of an empirical case study of waiting for bureaucratic procedures and documentation in Cuba.

In the fourth section, the operational dimension of waiting will be discussed. The theoretical assumptions will be presented for addressing this dimension and a set of categories, terms and notions that could be used in research on waiting processes. The articles “Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes” and “Institutionality as an operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study” will be discussed in relation to an empirical case study of waiting for blackouts and lightning during the summer of 2022.

The fifth and final section analyses the time dimension of waiting processes. The articles “Rethinking waiting: A critical analysis of temporality and its limitations in understanding waiting as a social phenomenon”, “From temporality to three-dimensionality: A critical reconsidering of waiting processes as social phenomena” and “Some useful concepts, notions and categories for the study of the temporality of waiting” will be used to discuss the empirical materials collected from the study of a case of waiting in Cuba related to the purchase of foreign currency following its authorization in August 2022.

In summary, this discussion presents a critical and dialectical analysis of empirical waiting processes as the ideal framework to condense the theoretical assumptions developed in the articles of this research. It covers various topics, such as the relation between hope and waiting, institutionalisation, and the spatial, operational and temporal dimensions of waiting. It offers a novel theoretical approach to studying waiting processes.

2. Institutionalised Waiting for Essential Goods during “La Coyuntura” and Pandemic in Cuba: A Philosophical and Socio-anthropological Analysis.

*In this section, I will discuss and conclude the articles in **Chapter 2**, Waiting in Context: A Critical Exploration of its Theoretical Underpinnings and Historical Evolution. Specifically, I will apply the categories developed in this chapter's articles related to the institutional understanding of the waiting processes. I will discuss this perspective by analysing the institutionalised waiting process for obtaining essential goods in Cuba.*

2.1. Introduction

The process of waiting in Cuba is considered a historical institution, facilitating the development of logic and discourse around waiting processes, as evident in popular philosophies, jokes, sayings and aphorisms (See Appendix 5). Various art forms, including literature, film and music, have portrayed waiting in Cuba. From an organisational standpoint, numerous regulations, political pronouncements, norms and empirical field studies attest to this social reality while attempting to explain, understand, and address it appropriately (See Appendix 6).

This paper suggests employing an institutional perspective based on Gustavo Bueno's (1984, 2005, 2009) theory of institutions, considered more comprehensive than the current temporal viewpoint. The institutionalisation of waiting as a crucial factor for social and human sciences interested in these phenomena is based on a key hypothesis defended in this research. This hypothesis proposes that it is necessary to reformulate the analytical perspective used in the study of waiting, an issue other authors have also acknowledged and demanded (Correa et al., 2013; Janeja & Bandak, 2020; Lindón, 2019). However, it is worth noting that none of the critical approaches suggests a reformulation as radical as the analytical perspective proposed here.

In summary, my thesis posits that the waiting of interest to social and human sciences can be considered social institutions. Another kind of waiting, characterised by unique, emergent, and unrepeatable phenomena, often purely subjective, cannot be addressed by social sciences due to the impossibility of categorial analysis and empirical material comparison. Therefore, it could be argued that the waiting experienced by isolated subjects punctually, in a single moment of their biographies, cannot be considered as waiting as such, or at least not as waiting apprehensible by the disciplines responsible for analysing the society.

In the following sections, I will review some of the premises put forth in the theory of waiting, as outlined in my institutional theory for the analysis of waiting. To do this, I will use examples from institutionalised waiting processes for obtaining essential goods (hereafter IWOEG) during "La Coyuntura" and the Pandemic in Cuba. This research aims to contribute to understanding waiting as an institution in Cuban society and explore potential solutions to address the issues it creates. By delving into the various aspects of waiting, including its history, cultural implications and the factors contributing to its persistence, this study hopes to provide valuable insights for policymakers and social scientists alike.

2.2. Hylomorphic structure of institutionalised waits to acquire essential inputs during the "Coyuntura" and the Pandemic in Cuba

In Philosophical Materialism, institutions are considered "corporeal totalities in which a matter and a form can be distinguished" (Bueno, 2005, p. 21). For Cuban waits, their hylomorphic structure differs from the Aristotelian type, as it does not indicate a substantial matter or form. Rather, in the case of

Cuban waits, their hylomorphic structure becomes apparent when viewing queues as quasi-living entities with their own identity. Social dynamics assume a material institutionality, developing a nearly distinct social personality. Consequently, “las colas” (the queues) in Cuba can be categorised as benevolent or wrathful, supportive or indolent, kindly or violently malignant.

This characteristic is exemplified in a scene from the Cuban film “Lista de Espera” (Waiting List) directed by Juan Carlos Tabío (2000). In this scene, Rolando, a con artist pretending to be blind, tries to get ahead in a queue without an official ID to accredit him as blind.

Saleswoman: *I can't do anything without a handicapped ID, he can't travel and he knows it.*

Emilio: *Girl, can't you talk to the administrator?*

Saleswoman: *No, let him talk to 'the queue', if the queue is happy and authorises it, I'll sell him the first ticket.*

Foreigner: *Do not talk to the queue, look for the administrator!*

Saleswoman: *I don't have to look for anyone, I know the regulations (...) [T]he queue is the maximum authority in these cases.* (Tabío, 2000, n. Min 6:14-6:33).

As institutions, waits are not strictly Aristotelian substances, but they possess a *matter* and a *form* that, although inseparable, are perfectly discernible. This principle is evident in IWOEG during the “Coyuntura” and the COVID-19 Pandemic in Cuba. This is illustrated in a press report where the journalist shares their experience of participating in one of the many waits endured by large population sectors during those days.

In stores (...), crowds of people wait for hours to buy mainly food and hygiene products. People search for patches of shade and huddle together. (...) [Dozens of people appear] when you think it's your turn because they were on the opposite sidewalk or somewhere else; because they marked their spot in this queue and in others at different markets, and they come and go to check if it's their turn. The first ones arrived at six in the morning. (...) None of them agreed on anything with the other, but they arrived almost simultaneously, still under the moonlight. The store opened at 9:00 a.m., and from Monday to Saturday, it closes at 5:00 p.m., and on Sundays at noon. (...) It is rare for someone to mark a spot only for themselves: those who have someone else usually mark at least for that person, in order to bypass

the purchase limits, set by the State and to be able to take another jar of mayonnaise (Melián et al., 2020, para. 4)

The *hylomorphic structure* of these IWOEGs has normative forms that result from both *convex* structures and concave dynamics. In the mentioned case, waiting processes were institutionally shaped by state *convexity*. However, the *concave* dialectics of the waiting actors shape the morphological finish that the process exhibits (See Appendix 7). Understanding both *convex* formal structures and concave material dynamics is fundamental, for there is a dialectical sympleké that, while discernible in multiple parts or moments, cannot be radically separated from each other.

Likewise, a waiting process cannot be solely reduced to the dialectics between material and formal phenomena. Each of these parts also has dialectical relations internally, as well as with other phenomena external to the waiting process itself. The researcher's work will largely involve precisely determining which of the existing parts in the structure of the waiting process they are analysing plays which role in it and why. They must describe and explain the dialectic relations between the *matter* and the *form* of the waiting as an institution.

In my proposal, I have drawn from DM a categorial tool that I consider useful for describing the parts of a waiting. These categories enable an initial classification, considering both formal and material aspects of these processes while maintaining awareness of their hylomorphic interconnection. I refer, specifically, to the distinctions between φ -phenomena and π -structures (See Appendix 8).

In the initial testimony, the person waiting navigates φ -phenomena ("seeking patches of shade"), employing astronomical temporalisation mechanisms ("still under the moon"), articulating clusters of "piled up" physical bodies. These phenomena interconnect and become dynamic within π (cultural) structures, shaped by the process's institutional reality. "At 9:00 a.m. they opened the shop, which from Monday to Saturday closes at 5.00 p.m. and on Sundays at noon (...) whoever has another person usually marks at least for that one, to circumvent the limits".

In concluding this section, it is important to highlight a key aspect of the hylomorphism of institutions, as understood by the DM, which is highly relevant to the concept of waiting. This concept relates to the incommensurability principle between matter and form, as proposed by the DM theory for institutions. As Gustavo Bueno (2005) points out, "an institution is an order imposed in some way

on a given matter; but matter does not have to be willing, in general, to submit to this order. Matter may continually overflow it” (2005, pp. 21–22). This principle holds significant implications for my proposal. Notably, research on waiting frequently fluctuates between a psychological individualist approach and an objectivist perspective emphasising the sociological dimension. These approaches treat actors and social organisations (including institutions) as separate entities, often portraying the latter as oppressive forces and the former as the oppressed. However, this simplistic schema fails to capture the complex and dialectical relations in Institutionalised waiting. This oversight occurs because matter often overflows the established forms due to the tension created by adapting to formal structures and the internal dynamics and contradictions inherent in these structures.

An example of this can be found in testimonials shared on social media regarding certain group behaviors that exceeded the established regulations for waiting processes.

“Incredible but true: This crowd is not there to buy food or toiletries but to buy rum in the Sierra Maestra shop in Santa Clara on Virtudes Street at the corner of Independencia. I think it is time to regulate this drink by the supply book, and thus avoid crowds and hoarding (...) Who would have the idea of selling alcoholic beverages in this way? Why are there so many checkpoints on the highway and other measures?” (CiberCuba, 2020, para. 2). (See Appendix 9)

Although this example can also be analysed from a normative perspective that Institutionalised waits present, it more effectively illustrates how the subject matter of waits often transcends the established formal order.

2.3. IWOEGs as morphological cultural units, of a systemic order

Regarding the institutionalisation of waits, I have also analysed their status as morphological cultural units of a systemic order. According to Bueno (2005), institutionalised waits are “observable corporeal structures” that can be analysed from materialist perspectives. As such, they possess explanatory and rational qualities, and can be understood both from external (*etic*) and internal (*emic*) perspectives.

These characteristics can also be observed in the institutionalised waiting processes that occurred during the conjunction and the Pandemic in Cuba, particularly in the IWOEGs.

The shortages cause long queues, (...) sometimes two or three times longer for items such as chicken, detergent, flour, or butter. They are queues with a life of their own, some that start in the early hours of the morning, with “rotations”, rotators –and hoarders loitering around–, others with shifts and vigilant police to ensure that no fights break out and that people keep their distance. There are queues in the sun and in the shade, and also kilometres-long queues that some have baptised with a very eloquent category, “panic-terror queues” (Vicent, 2020)

As evidenced by the example, IWOEGs present a certain logic for those whom they bind. This logic gives formal structure to the process and establishes the guidelines even for non-compliance or violation¹¹⁹.

This *systemic ordering* is so apparent in these waiting processes that social actors can precisely represent them using figurative linguistic mechanisms such as analogies, similes, abstractions and other structures that attest to these *logics*.

In one press report, an IWOEG is described using metaphors related to the art of fishing, formalising and materialising the process. The report compares the IWOEG to the circular waiting of Santiago, the protagonist of Hemingways novel *The Old Man and the Sea*, which differs from the angular waiting presented in the story. The act of going out to look for food is referred to as “going fishing or hunting”, with the only difference being that the operations are circular in IWOEGs, whereas they are circular/angular in Hemingway’s story. This metaphorical comparison highlights the ritualistic and repetitive nature of IWOEGs, which have become a regular feature of daily life for many Cubans.

¹¹⁹ To prevent hoarding during the Pandemic, the government implemented a distribution rule allowing each person to buy only two packets of chicken. However, people who go to supermarkets with their families often ignore this measure and even pay third parties to wait in line and get their share of the product, as reported by the CiberCuba editorial office (2019).

I disembark mid-morning at the FrutiCuba. The first thing I spot is a lorry unloading goods at the shop that people have christened the “Meat Museum”, especially because of the prices of the “tilapia de potrero” [beef]. “I’m sure I’ll catch chicken needle here”, I said to myself. However, it took a long time. After unloading, counting and/or weighing, then setting prices, organising the *molote*¹²⁰. In summary, it was more efficient to move on to another fishery and save time (Arencibia, 2020).

Here, certain characteristics and operational characteristics are described, also evidencing an *anamnesis* on the author’s part, which allows him to establish a certain *prolepsis* regarding his particular waiting.

Logical mechanisms for describing and rationally presenting waiting processes, such as the one mentioned above, were widespread during the Pandemic and the situation in Cuba. The most common ones could be found in the form of memes, stickers, videos, drawings and caricatures (See Appendix 10).

2.4. Coexistence or recurrence of IWOEGs

Concerning the recurrence of IWOEGs as institutions, it is important to consider that “to exist is to coexist and, therefore, institutions, if they exist, it is because they coexist with others” (Bueno, 2005, p. 23). However, this does not imply a general institutional concatenation of reality. As Bueno (2005) has pointed out, the set of institutions of anthropological material cannot be considered a total institution due to the principle of *symploké*. In other words, the set of all institutions is not an institution, and any random subset of institutions need not constitute an institution. Nevertheless, this statement does not imply that there are no a) *complex institutions* on the one hand and b) *complexes of institutions* on the other.

IWOEGs materialise as complex institutions and complexes of institutions. As the first type (a), these waiting processes refer to the distributive totality of multiple waits to purchase or acquire goods. These waits include waiting in physical queues, online, by household, family, neighbourhood, zone, municipality and others.

¹²⁰ *Molote* means crowd.

From the perspective of these waits as complex institutions (b) in themselves, we have, for example, the ceremonial dynamics of queuing, the ethical and moral norms formally and informally established for queue management, the spaces where queues take place, the physical control instruments of the queue as a material reality that occupies a given space, among others. For instance, “In the ‘Ideal’¹²¹ market El Marvy, located on the ground floor of a rationalist building, Customs officials (...) were responsible for the queue order, following wooden barricades (...), zigzagging like in airports” (Melián et al., 2020, para. 37).

To these *wooden barricades*, as non-ceremonial institutions, it is possible to add, in the case of the waits analysed, supply books, tickets, torpedoes, fault lists, mobile applications, information banners and many other materials (institutions) that form an essential part of the waiting processes (See Appendix 11).

This institutional interweaving is only sometimes harmonious or free of tensions. Some of the institutions present in the waits are not to the waiters’ liking, which does not make them alien elements, but rather “natural” generations, so to speak, of the very material complexity of these institutions. The most significant example of this is the “colero” (queuer)¹²² institution, which appeared due to the dynamics in which these processes operated during the situation and the Pandemic. “The queuer is a harmful species, difficult to eradicate, emerging from a scenario marked by shortages in state units of sale due to economic crisis, increased blockade measures, and the Pandemic” (J. M. Martínez, 2022, para. 1).

Anita, a 31-year-old Cuban woman, wrote in the press that “[t]he queuer exists because what little there is, we have to take in queues” (*idem*). She attributed the systemic morphological unity to the queuer institution, precisely due to the material scarcity suffered by the Cuban economy, which provokes waiting processes with certain characteristics.

The existence of queuing was so material that in August 2020, the Havana city authorities created another institution coexisting with the waiting processes described above, known as “Operación de lucha contra los coleros” (Operation against the queuers). This included groups of

¹²¹ IDEAL is a brand of mini-markets in Cuba.

¹²² *Colero* is a person who work as a *queue doer*. In Cuba this is an informal job that is part as I have classified in the economy of the waits.

state-salaried people known by the acronym “LCC”, Brigadas de Lucha Contra Coleros (Brigades for the Fight Against Queueers), public order and military forces (See Appendix 12).

In addition, computer applications were used (another institution). Among the latter were Ticket¹²³, Colas.cu, TeToca, Porter@¹²⁴ and many others, as reflected in the following dynamics described in a newspaper report. “Yesterday you bought ground meat, today you can only buy tomato puree”, warns an employee after scanning a woman’s identity card waiting to enter a store in Centro Habana (J. D. Rodríguez, 2020, para. 1).

Additionally, during the Pandemic, the waiting in Cuba were influenced by various institutions, including those that were not directly related to the waiting processes themselves. The Pandemic, as a social institution (ϕ), was a complex, large-scale institution that significantly impacted and shaped these waiting processes. Older people, pregnant women and those with young children continued to queue despite health warnings, and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) expressed concern about the risk of contagion in these queues (Redacción de CiberCuba, 2020). Within this context, the institutionalised waiting processes in Cuba, such as the IWOEGs, can be considered one of the many systemic institutions that were part of the larger “system of institutions” described by Bueno (2005).

2.5. Rationality of IWOEGs

The fourth characteristic relates to the “intrinsic rationality” of institutions (Bueno, 2005), existing beyond individual subjects’ conceptions¹²⁵. This trait is easily observable in institutionalised spaces with frequent waiting and specific operational techniques, mechanisms and processes. For instance, airport areas or document processing offices. In these spaces, waiting-managing mechanisms operate even without material presence. The protagonist of “El trámite” (The Procedure) shares his government office experience: “[T]hey told me there was a queue to answer the questions, and I said

¹²³ <https://ticket.xutil.net/>.

¹²⁴ <https://www.apklis.cu/application/cu.control.queue>.

¹²⁵ This does not mean that individuals have no impact on the various forms, including the logical or rational structures, of institutions. Quite the opposite, it's the collective anticipatory actions of active participants that shape the rational framework of institutions. This is because it arises from the rationally institutionalised actions of human beings. We are not refuting the existence of other potential rationalities, or suggesting they are alien to humans. However, we are asserting that what differentiates humans from other animals is that humans are creatures whose rationality is fundamentally institutional in nature.

there was no one in the queue, but they told me I had to wait my turn anyway”¹²⁶ (Salazar, 2022, p. 124).

This example demonstrates waiting rationality transcending material expectation itself, leaving traces even when the expectation doesn’t fully materialise. Among the waiting scenarios I’ve analysed, there are other examples. “Even though the streets remain almost completely militarised, there are crowds around the shops at all hours to see what is arriving. In other words, there is a long wait even when there is nothing to buy because, at any moment, a lorry with highly demanded products may arrive” (González, 2020, para. 7).

Waiters also understand and anticipate these internal logics, enabling them to organise their operations in time and space. One example of this waiter understanding the waiting logic was reflected on the On May 3, 2020, the Facebook page “El Chago-Santiago de Cuba” posted photos (See Appendix 13) of people waiting in an IWOEG in one of the city’s shops early in the morning. The post stated, “Since before 5:00 a.m., people are already in the queues at the shops in #SantiagodeCuba... Somehow people are finding out that they will be selling meat. A word from the people in line is that they’re selling pork chops today” (DDC, 2020, para. 4). However, there had been no official announcement at the time of the post. In the comments, it was clear that some people had been waiting for up to three days, using the shop entrance as a reference point based solely on the logic of the waiting process, highlighting the interconnection of these waits with other institutions. The rational logic of “if there is a long queue, they will get something” illustrates the queues’ functioning and interdependence with external phenomena, such as the dynamics and rhythms of essential supply and assortment. The shop was later shown to be open with a long queue “organised” by tickets, indicating that “something” had indeed been brought in¹²⁷.

This case illustrates how, by understanding the normative logic of processes, waiters develop proleptic plans based on their anamnesis. Such planning would be unattainable if each waiting was a unique, unrepeatable event with no logical order or objective structure. This is also evident in

¹²⁶ Airports often have mazes of cordoned-off pathways leading to departure or arrival gates, designed to manage large crowds queuing for check-in. However, these routes often stay in place even when the areas are empty, requiring adherence to the same protocol. Similar situations can be found in government, banking, and postal service offices. Patrons may need to book appointments, input details into a system, or take a ticket, even if there's no queue. These crowd management procedures persist, regardless of actual demand.

¹²⁷ The chronicle of the waits for essential goods, narrated in the language of seafarers and fishermen, analysed above, also reflects this logic.

creating computer applications using cybernetic or mathematical calculations to manage queues and other waiting processes. One of the developers of an app for managing waiting in Cuba, said, “We decided to create this app to maintain order in establishments selling products, providing a technological solution without making it too complicated or requiring hardware resources (servers, networks, etc.)” (J. D. Rodríguez, 2020, para. 7) ¹²⁸.

These applications act as mathematical tools, accounting for, organising and processing pre-existing dynamics and organisational structures. In numerous ways, these dynamics and structures were already functioning coherently and effectively within waiting processes. The applications refine, regulate, and reorganise the pre-existing logical patterns demonstrated in each process, as exemplified by the dynamics in waiting situations.

A policeman [appears and says]. Good morning to the queue and went to stand at the entrance of the shop (...). The one controlling the queue (...) shouts and demands orders from 80 people full of sun and desolation at 11:30 a.m. The drama is because it is Sunday. “The last one can’t give more numbers in the line”, orders the policeman. “Maybe we’ll make an effort and pass on to those who are left”. After a while, he explains that they have put some mince and butter in the jam area to save time. He asks who wants mince and butter. All of them do.

Nevertheless, everyone also wants mayonnaise and tuna (...). The policeman promises to let everyone through, but quickly, so that no one gets too excited because there is not enough. He starts to pass us five by five (Melián et al., 2020, para. 12).

From the agent’s greeting, “good morning to the queue”¹²⁹, it’s evident that there’s a structure of norms and rules to be followed. These norms govern the institution rather than the waiting itself. Therefore, there’s no need for debates or micro-democratic processes to agree on legislation. Signals,

¹²⁸ Created as a technological solution for maintaining order in retail establishments, the Portero app scans QR codes on ID cards to manage queues and store data in a database. This data helps authorities manage queues and collect information on user behavior.

¹²⁹ In Cuba, waiting in queues takes on a unique institutional nature where the queue itself becomes a subject of rights and a social actor open to direct communication. People can reward or punish the queue, impose or remove regulations, and rules. The queue’s behaviour is flexible or unyielding depending on the situation, adding to the complexity of waiting processes in Cuba.

small nods and brief notifications suffice to make the introduced changes understandable. These variations, anticipated in the process, constitute morphological possibilities within the internal logic of waiting.

The contextual variables mentioned provide sufficient information: “80 people” + “full of sun and desolation” + “at 11:30 a.m.” + “because it is Sunday”, indicating the process will take longer than expected. The remaining information serves as operational complements, modulating the implementation of the central idea, “The last one cannot give more numbers in the line”. The waiting concludes when the last person present at the announcement purchases their goods.

2.6. IWOEG regulations

This characteristic suggests that institutions can repeat themselves following specific “rationalised” guidelines. The normativity of waiting is associated with universal logical-formal manifestations, contrasting with concrete singularities. However, this logical-formal universality doesn’t mean all waiting experiences are identical. Institutionalised waiting’s repeatability has a normative character as a formal model, without necessitating material uniformity in concrete instances.

Based on this premise, Cuba’s IWOEGs offer ample evidence of their normativity. Waiting materialises in various queues and manifests in multiple ways. Analysis of Cuba’s digital channels and social networks supports this assertion.

During the analysed period, there was a proliferation of social media accounts that provided information regarding the availability of certain products in different parts of the cities and the country. Relevant information was also shared on the guidelines established to carry out waiting processes. The most popular of these accounts was @dondehay (Where is there...?), widely used on social networks such as Facebook¹³⁰, WhatsApp and Telegram. Hundreds of groups still use this tag today. “On Telegram: @DondeHayEnLaHabana (8,993 members), @donde_hay (2 754), @dondehay (1 102). (...) @DóndeHayGasolina (1 333), (...). On WhatsApp: Qué Hay Playa 1, Qué Hay Playa 2, and so on in each municipality. These groups have 257 members, hence the numbering” (Melián et al., 2020, para. 55) (See Appendix 14).

¹³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/search/groups/?q=d%C3%B3nde%20hay%20mlc>.

This normativity is also transmitted through active information mechanisms. These operations are essential to maximise queuing strategies and select the relevant ones. These channels inform in real-time about queue dynamics, the number of waiters, the approximate waiting time, particular regulations established for the process, the number of shifts allowed per person, prioritised waiters (elderly, minors, pregnant women, etc.) and even the weather conditions of the place or logistical possibilities in the surroundings of the waiting spaces.

These information channels are possible due to the known formal-logical structure normalising the processes. Thus, even with a multitude of different waiting processes in each chat, communication is enabled because differences are material, not formal. In essence, waiting content varies, but formal mechanisms remain consistent, giving IWOEGs a similar morphology (See Appendix 15).

In many of their integrating parts, these regulations have a *convex* origin. An example of this is in the commentary of Cuba's Prime Minister, Manuel Marrero Cruz, who in 2020 announced on "Mesa Redonda", the star debate, analysis and political commentary programme on Cuban TV of various products in the country would be regulated. In his words, "to avoid hoarding and the agglomeration of people during the crisis", stipulating the following regulations: "A maximum sale per person will be established for the liberated products in order to avoid the concentration of people and hoarding for commercial purposes" (Mesa Redonda, 2020, min 5:32-6:05).

These are accompanied by informal concave regulations, whose reproducibility and compliance are often more stringent. They may have various origins, including ethical, moral, socio-cultural, idiosyncratic and ethnoreligious, norms and institutions experiencing these waiting processes. These dialectics appear in the process's operational, temporal, and spatial aspects, as shown in the German channel DW's documentary, "Cuba: High prices, lines and shortages"¹³¹, Michel Maikel, a food queue waiter, tells DW:

Now there is chicken, to buy (...) we have been queuing (...) since yesterday (...) so that today, when it opens at 9 o'clock, everyone knows who they are going after. (...)

¹³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ya46bmRa0os>.

It's just before nine in the morning the shop opens and the shifts are organised [says the narrator] We're already organised, some say, but a lady goes forward to take one of the ticks that the official hands out and the queue protests and stops her. (DW Documentary, 2022, min. 1:12-1:18).

At another point in the footage, a loud "Nooo" is heard during a queue while some waiters cut off a woman, claiming that she is trying to "sneak in". The woman responds that she is in front, and the official stops the process, saying, "I need you to get in". The older woman takes a ticket, and another woman jumps up and says she goes first. The organiser of the process asks the waiters to move "over there", clearly indicating that these operations do not correspond to this *localisation*, given that they are outside the waiting space, and order must prevail here. For this type of organisational management, the waiters must move further away to another point in the surrounding area¹³²(See Appendix 16).

2.7. Axiological status of IWOEGs

The final characteristic analysed was the axiological status of institutions, including IWOEGs. These institutions may possess both values and counter-values but are never axiologically neutral. This statement doesn't imply a constant value or quality. As Bueno (2005) suggests, an institution's value may change over time, "similarly to a company preparing for a stock exchange listing" (2005, p. 29).

This characteristic is reflected in the IWOEGs in many examples. One of these can be found in the public testimony gathered on the Facebook account of a worker of the Union of Journalists of Villa Clara (UPEC), in an event he observed in 2020 (Leonor, 2020). "I don't know how to say it. It saddens me, amazes me or angers me. But Santa Clara, this is not how we will achieve it. It's so easy to comply because they are not taken care of most of all. Just 'Stay At Home'"¹³³. Here, the testimony

¹³² The images show that less chaotic operations are associated with an organised waiting area. In such settings, the process runs smoothly and without tension between waiters and their waits. Those who enter the *interior* service space do not experience any conflicts. Waiting is almost at its *end*, where both the process and the norms governing meet in the *referent*.

¹³³

<https://www.facebook.com/upec.villaclara.cuba/posts/pfbid0fBs1VyaJrxyh9gur1QShBYJWv7S87dVPRPDhh79Tx6q6McbhvyYDUGigjiTHrdfrl>.

axiologically describes the observed waiting as irresponsible, given the number of COVID-19 infections in the country.

The normativities and formal overflow of the process by its materiality, in terms of *systemic ordering*, become evident. The post reflects the counter-values of the described process (contagion, irresponsibility) and the values of the “ideal” normative (formal) morphology. “Stay at home”, wait confined there and abide by the established norms. In the inharmonious coexistence of two morphologies of the same institution (IWOEG), *symploké* emerges as axiological value judgments. The witness, in this case, complains that the process is carried out in this way, going beyond the established regulations and having as a reference another institution, the Pandemic, and the recommended confinements.

In another instance, the axiological reference pertains to certain aspects of the institution, as illustrated in this story published on Facebook and reported by a media outlet.

Good evening group, today in La Epoca [shop, there was] a great lack of respect. At 5:20 a.m., my dad marked¹³⁴ me in the shop since I live in the Bahia, and it is supposed that before 5:00 a.m., you cannot be on the street, nor is there transport. Well, at La Epoca at 5:00 a.m., they picked up the ration book and gave a shift to 80 people (...) as if we were animals, (...) we have to put up with this mistreatment and abuse (...). Is it necessary to be 13 hours outside a shop (...)? The truth is that it is disrespectful, and the saddest thing is that we can all complain, but at the end of the day (...) we will have to spend hours and hours in a shop again (...) to get these items” (E. Díaz, 2021, para. 2).

The axiological indicators encompass a) temporal references (*e. g.*, specific times mentioned); b) spatial –location– “I live in the Bay” (*i. e.*, distant from the waiting area); and c) operational aspects (*e. g.*, picking up the card and allocating turns). All these references come from the axiological qualification of the process: “a huge lack of respect”, “they treat us as if we were animals”, “we have to put up with this mistreatment and abuse” and “the saddest thing”.

Despite the examples, waiting processes aren’t always negatively axiological. Sometimes, they take on a positive character, as demonstrated by this reader’s testimony in a Cuban newspaper.

¹³⁴ It refers to asking for the last person in the line.

Queues, dear journalist, are a sign of a civilly conceived organisation in all parts of the world (...). Now, if your article is to criticise the queues “Cuban style”, where one marks for two and gives entry to three or four of their relatives or friends, or other cheeky people who don’t even ask for the last one and sneak in, then I do agree with you. The differences in queues abroad are not different from many that are decently done in Cuba (Sánchez, 2016, para. 1).

Or from a journalist in the Cuban news system, who expressed the following: “It is better that (the queues) stretch for streets and streets and almost for kilometres. When they are like this, it is because they generally comply with physical distancing (...). Since we will have to live among them (queues) (...), it would be better to foster a culture of queues and see their good side when they have it” (Ramos, 2020, para. 13).

In conclusion, the examples demonstrate that institutionalised waiting in Cuba exhibits the axiological quality discussed earlier. Although not axiologically neutral, these waiting processes aren’t inherently negative.

2.8. Ceremoniality of IWOEGs and location in anthropological space

The final aspect addressed is the distinction between ceremonial and non-ceremonial institutionalised waits. This distinction is crucial, as these institution types have different characteristics in the times, spaces and operations linked to the waiting. Determining whether the process being analysed is of one type or the other will allow us to organise the materials found in the field according to the epistemological interests of each study.

According to the DM, ceremonial institutions are distinct from non-ceremonial institutions. Ceremonial institutions involve human (operative) conduct internally, *i. e.*, in their genesis (Bueno, 1984, 2005). This concept aligns with the classification of waiting processes in general and the Cuban context analysed.

Most of the waiting processes I have analysed correspond to ceremonial institutions, as the fact that they are complex institutions attests to this. IWOEGs are circular ceremonial institutions due to their anthropological space location, involving many non-ceremonial institutions,

including waiting processes. For example, some operations (institutionalised waits) need not necessarily be considered ceremonial, such as pausing in a queuing process. While this act of pausing might correspond to the ceremonially of the overall process, the operations that the subject performs during this pause need not be ceremonially patterned or requested by the waiting process in itself.

A study exploring this aspect from social and human sciences perspectives, like anthropology, could use multiple viewpoints and approaches. For instance, they could examine the different ceremonial routines in the various parts of the waiting spaces, as we saw in the example given in the DW documentary mentioned above. There, the organiser of an IWOEG outlines the operations that can and should, be carried out in each *ubication* of the waiting space, considering whether they occur in the *interior*, the *contour* or the *surrounding area*. Similarly, waiting could be analysed not in its constituent spatial parts but as a total ceremony in a single homogeneous space, as evidenced by the following example.

The journalist (...) has been going out on foot twice a week in search of food for his family (...). As there is no transport, he must walk about three kilometres to the market in the Plaza de la Revolución, then a couple of kilometres to Ferreiro –the second city centre– where there are shops, and another kilometre and a half to the Plaza de Marte –the first city centre– along which route there are markets and cafés (...), where they usually offer meat, agricultural or processed products. According to his calculations, adding a few metres is seven kilometres from the room where he sleeps. The round trip adds up to 14 kilometres (Melián et al., 2020, para. 76).

Research in sociology, geography or urban studies¹³⁵ could investigate these aspects. The breakdown of waiting spaces into the categories of *localisation*, *ubication*, and *situation*, which are extensively analysed in another article, could be helpful for such research. Researchers could ask: Where are the waiting spaces the “journalist” describes located? Are they in urban, rural, central, peripheral or other areas? What is the exact *localisation* of the journalist’s home and point of departure relative to the places he mentions?

¹³⁵ This could involve conducting research similar to that of Javier Auyero, Alicia Lindón and Alain Musset, whose work we have extensively quoted and analysed in this paper.

However, the ceremonial operations present in waiting can be explained from a spatial perspective and temporally. The ceremony is often structured clearly and institutionally, with proleptic operations to be carried out at the beginning, middle or end of the waiting process. These operations are different at the middle or end of the process. The following example situates the ceremonial process implied by operations carried out at the margins of the preceding turning point, when waiting begins.

As a rule, he goes out with 300 pesos, a homemade mask, a “Thaba” backpack, two cloth bags for each hand and five or six plastic bags in case he acquires grains, so they do not mix with each other. He usually wears Bermuda shorts because of the heat and an attractive jumper that does not multiply or reaffirm the sense of uncertainty or hopelessness. He also wears a blue L.A. cap from Mayors Leagues, looking as good as new, and a Kobo eReader to read while walking and queuing (Melián et al., 2020, para. 82).

Here, they account for specific *logistical* operations that might be thought to precede the process itself but which in fact, fall within the field of phenomena that populate the waits I have discussed.

Of all the research I have analysed in this paper, it seems that Anna Secor’s work has dealt with phenomena similar to those described above. Her texts, “The veil and urban space in Istanbul: Women’s dress, mobility and Islamic knowledge” and “Between longing and despair: State, space, and subjectivity in Turkey”, narrate precisely the ceremonial nature of certain waiting processes in Turkey. For this kind of research, the categories and organisational system proposed could be useful.

In summary, it is established that IWOEGs during the Cuban Pandemic were genuine institutionalised waiting processes. In other words, processes that comply with the set of cumulative characteristics that, according to the theory of DM, transform certain social phenomena into human institutions. According to this same theory, it is even possible to affirm that these waiting processes are not only institutions but also *ceremonial institutions*.

3. First Partial Conclusion

This section critically analysed the theoretical and conceptual aspects of waiting in its different definitions as a concept and idea. The assumptions defended were those set out in the papers, “From the eschatological Hope to the working time. Sociological notes on the Christian origins of the contemporary idea of waiting”, “Waiting as institution. Notes for an institutional analysis of human waiting” and “Critical notes on the idea of waiting handled by the social sciences, from a philosophical-materialist perspective”.

❖ The first of these articles critically analysed some of the possible etymological/categorical origins of the idea of waiting, its relations to other ideas and its evolution over time. Based on this analysis, it was possible to conclude that:

- ✓ That the idea of waiting originally has a technical origin, associated with space and certain operations such as hunting, vigil or observation.
- ✓ This technical *waiting* subsequently presents a link between the ideas of *hope*, *time* and *subjectivity*, which leads to the abstraction of the spatial and operational dimension of waiting, and hypostatizes its temporal dimension.
- ✓ The dogmatic metaphysics established by St. Augustine, with antecedents in Paul of Tarsus and later developments in Protestantism, survives deep in the concepts of secular waiting in use today.
- ✓ The currently assumed waiting idea appears through a process of *theological inversion* of the idea of eschatological hope, sifted by a temporal understanding characteristic of post-feudal industrial modernity, with strong links to the ethos of a part of Protestantism.
- ✓ The dialectics described above forge waiting ideas commonly used in the social and human sciences. Among other characteristics, it stands out for the centrality it gives to the temporal dimension of waiting and for the position occupied by the subjective experience of the individual actor as a catalysing space for the set of phenomena associated with waiting.

❖ The second article analyses the institutional dimension of waiting, and through its results, it is possible to conclude that:

- ✓ Certain empirical waiting processes can be analysed from an institutional perspective that goes beyond the temporal approach that dominates existing research and limits the analytical scope of these enquiries.
- ✓ Philosophical Materialism's theory of institutions allows for analysing multiple waiting processes from an institutional approach.
- ✓ I do not consider all human waiting to be social institutions, but there are a good number of waiting that certainly are, and it is precisely these that would fall within the gnoseological space of the social and human sciences.
- ✓ Institutional waiting can be analysed deeply based on the categories and conceptual tools available to these disciplines or sciences.
- ✓ Institutionalised waits are presented in the two typologies that DM recognises for institutions in general. In other words, the institutionalised waits appear as ceremonial and non-ceremonial.
- ✓ The use of the institution category makes it possible to classify specifically human waiting before other possible ones such as zoological or instrumental technological waiting.
- ✓ The institutional theory of waiting constitutes a proposal for a general reconfiguration of the gnoseological field of these phenomena as an object of study for the social and human sciences. It was proposed to transfer the approach of waiting from the gnoseological field of temporalities to the field of social institutions.

❖ The third article offers an idea of waiting from the coordinates of Philosophical Materialism. Faithful to the method that this system employs, based on the premises that “nothing comes from nothing” and thinking is “thinking against something or someone”; the alternative I offer was built on the dialectical critique of the ideas and positions held by existing research. I sought not only to overcome their deficiencies but also to recognise and ponder their importance. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that:

✓ There are five key features of the existing research on waiting. These are:

1) *Waiting is a temporal phenomenon*, and this hypostasis of the temporality of waiting is one of its fundamental gnoseological characteristics. It originates in the particular historical, conceptual path of this idea and has resulted in the application of concepts used by studies of temporalities to analyse social and human waiting.

2) *Waiting is an experiential phenomenon*; however, existing analyses have emphasised the subjective perspective of the waiter. I propose that waits are objective, institutional and operationally structured phenomena from my analytical coordinates.

3) *Waiting is a morphologically univocal phenomenon*. Concerning the morphology of waiting, I believe that it is an *analogous rather* than an essentially *univocal* phenomenon, and this means that waiting must be assumed morphologically *plural*. There is not one waiting but many.

4) The waits are *axiologically pernicious phenomena*. To those who conceive of waits as axiologically harmful processes, my position is that their nature is variable. Although they are not axiologically neutral, waiting does not necessarily have to be negative as a matter of principle. Waiting can often open up the possibility of creative, learning or conflict resolution processes, as several authors have pointed out (Appadurai, 2013; Gasparini, 1995; Procupez, 2015).

5) *The waits are ontologically negative phenomena*. In contrast to the ontological negativity commonly assumed for waiting, my criterion is that they are *positive* and *material* phenomena. In other words, they are perfectly discernible in reality as a whole. Therefore, and following the system in which I am moving, waiting are phenomena related to the three existing types of materiality (M_1 , M_2 and M_3) proposed by the DM.

❖ Finally, this article establishes the parameters of a theory that integrates and articulates the totality of the characteristics I recognise in waiting. It puts forward the following theses.

- ✓ In order for waiting to acquire gnoseological status for science, it must be approached from a categorial perspective and not as an idea, as it is mostly done today.
- ✓ The waits need to be reworked based on different assumptions than those used so far.
- ✓ Studies of waits lack categories to bring together the multiple objective and material features of the waiting field that cannot be reduced to a temporal, perceptual-individualistic or negative perspective, and this is the perspective defended in this research.
- ✓ Waiting processes should be approached from an integrative temporal, spatial and operational perspective.
- ✓ Conceiving social waiting –studied mainly by the human and social sciences– as social institutions. This reframing allows us to approach waiting positively, as a phenomenon in itself (institutional), subverting the idea that these constitute ontologically negative phenomena –a temporal non-being (Schweizer, 2008), indefinite, a time other (O’Kane, 2020), decaying, ambivalent (Hage, 2009), liminal (Gray, 2010), liquid (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020), transcended, dead time (Jeffrey, 2010)–.
- ✓ The institutional perspective I propose waiting can be analysed from its perspective as an objective and perfectly discernible reality in the broad field of anthropic phenomena.

4. Waiting for Bureaucracy in Cuba: Notes on the Spaces of Waiting and their Importance in Researching these Phenomena.

*In this section, I will discuss and conclude the articles in **Chapter 3**, Exploring the Topography of Waiting: Analysing Categories and Terms from a Materialist Perspective for the Spatial Dimension of Waiting. The categories developed in this chapter articles will be applied to the institutionalised waiting process for Bureaucratic procedures in Cuba.*

4.1. Introduction

Upon examining institutional waiting processes, I have identified three key dimensions: spatial, operational and temporal. Contrary to time-focused concepts, my theory suggests a tripartite division, viewing waiting processes as a combination of these dimensions.

I explored the spatial aspect in the articles “The Topography of Waiting” and “The Spaces of Waiting”, introducing a theory for studying waiting spaces from a philosophical materialist viewpoint. This approach addresses areas of analysis that existing approaches still need to cover. The primary difference between my proposal and others is the theoretical starting points used. My perspective considers space as an equally essential constitutive dimension, while others mainly attribute essential temporality to waiting.

Using the Cuban context as a foundation, I will examine the main aspects addressed in these studies, referencing real cases reported primarily by journalistic sources and field data I obtained through empirical techniques. I employed observational method techniques, specifically participant observation (Álvarez & Barreto Argilagos, 2010), and techniques associated with the survey method, specifically unstructured, open-ended interviews (Basu, 2013), for data collection.

Before exploring spatial categories, I will highlight elements of institutionalising waiting processes, specifically institutionalised waiting for processing documents in bureaucratic entities (IWPDBA) in Cuba. The temporal context for this analysis is the current one, following the previously mentioned Coyuntura and the Pandemic.

The current context in Cuba is characterised by economic shortages and limitations. In popular jargon, this moment is known among Cubans as the “Ordenamiento” crisis (See Appendix 17), a term

derived from the Cuban government's description of a deep financial, monetary and economic reorganisation process initiated in 2020 but implemented in full in 2021.

4.2. Bureaucracy in Cuba as a source of institutionalised waiting

Among all the cases discussed in this final section of the research report, the IWPDBA may be the most characteristic and paradigmatic of the Cuban context. These waits are predominantly examined in relation to bureaucratic paperwork connected to the government. References to this phenomenon span various formats and topics, ranging from culture, folklore and idiosyncrasy to politics. Consequently, the IWPDBA has been portrayed through various mediums, including newspaper articles, literary works, historical documents, philosophical treatises and works of art. One noteworthy example is Cuban cinema, particularly the film “The Death of a Bureaucrat”¹³⁶ (1966) by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea (Titón), which captures the essence of this phenomenon.

The film narrates the bureaucratic difficulties a family faces so that the widow of a prominent proletarian can collect the labour pension to be inherited after her husband's death. Juancín, the deceased's nephew, faces the daunting task of navigating various offices filled with institutionalised civil servants who, hidden behind signatures, stamps, templates, and procedures, lead lives unrelated to their work activities. These civil servants redirect the waiting individual to another office, perpetuating a cycle of waiting areas that eventually leads back to the starting point. Compounding the problem, each location displays posters and adverts promoting the “death of bureaucracy”, which is deemed inappropriate for a socialist and proletarian society.

In Salvador Salazar's (2022) short story “El trámite” (The Procedure) from the book *La pausa. Relatos de la Cuba inmóvil* (The Pause: Stories of Immovable Cuba), he delves into the complexities of the IWPDBA in Cuba by examining waiting through various dimensions. The opening line of the story – “Nothing is less pleasant than a queue” – highlights the axiology of waiting, while the text illustrates normativity with phrases like “Someone asks the last”. The systemic morphological unity is shown when Salazar writes, “I'm among the first five in the queue, (...) so I'll just wait for the office to open and do my paperwork” (Salazar, 2022, p. 121) (See Appendix 18).

¹³⁶ <https://vimeo.com/201279715>

Furthermore, the ceremonious nature of waiting is demonstrated by “I woke up at five in the morning” and “I had the foresight to ask my predecessor who I was after”, while the disruptive consequences are evident in “since then I haven’t gone to the toilet”.

As can be observed, both the film and the story reveal, using Cuban *choteo* as an expository framework, many of the aspects I gathered in the field materials. The spirit embodied in “The Death of...” persists, acknowledging bureaucratic activity as a reality in itself. In other words, IWPDBAs in Cuba, with their hylomorphic institutional structure, possess their own legislative morphology (See Appendix 19).

The normativity of this institution is established in Cuba through a digital platform and “apps” for managing requested paperwork. Interestingly, the real tool, GESTRAM, has a name similar to the fictitious department (DEPATRAM)¹³⁷ in “The Death of a Bureaucrat”, aiming to solve document processing issues (See Appendix 20).

4.3. The topography of waiting applied to the institutionalised processes of waiting for bureaucratic paperwork in Cuba

In a 2022 article, the state media Cubadebate published an extensive piece analysing several IWPDBAs. It mentions many aspects I examined in the institutional waits, albeit without using my categories. Regarding time and operations, for example, one citizen notes that to process a document, applicants “get up early”, and that in the corresponding offices: “They start at one o’clock in the afternoon, 20 people at a time, but they are very slow. Yesterday I came and left the queue halfway because I had to pick up my child from the children’s circle. At 3:30, not even a third of the first group had entered” (Fuentes, 2022, para. 12).

Many interviewees had applied online via GESTRAM (2019), but complained about delays, stating that it “always takes a week or even longer” (Idem), and that the process relies on the office’s efficiency. As can be seen, *operationally* and *temporally*, in the opinion of the waiters, the time in the waiting for paperwork have remained the same with the measures implemented by the state *convexity*. Spatially, the situation isn’t improved, as an interviewee involved in a divorce related

¹³⁷ Translated into English from its Spanish meaning, this acronym means “Department of paperwork”.

IWPDBA with an absent ex-partner explained. She was informed of court backlogs causing delays and experienced months of waiting, when it could have been resolved at a notary's office. She described the bureaucracy and constant redirection as exhausting and bullying.

This testimony, using my categories, gives an account of the *anchorage* of the spaces of these waiting spaces, an aspect included in the topic of *structural elements* of waiting spaces. In the text "Topography of the waits", I proposed that the spaces be analysed, based on their constituent elements, as elements 1) *structural* or 2) *functional*.

4.3.a. Structural elements of waiting spaces

The *structural elements of waiting spaces* (1) are characterised as both a) *static* and b) *dynamic* material phenomena. *Static* phenomena (a) are phenomena such as the area of a building, the number of chairs in a room, the size of square metres of a place and the access doors to space, among other factors. On its hand, the *dynamic elements phenomena* (b) refer, for example, to the multiple operations –movements, territorialisation, spatial uses– that the waiters have to carry out in their relationship with the *structural elements*.

4.3.a.1. Anchorage, accessibility and proxemic adequacy of waiting spaces

Dynamic and static elements reveal additional waiting space characteristics: a) anchorage, b) accessibility and c) proxemic appropriateness, with further subcategories.

In the text, as mentioned above, the *spatial anchorage* of this IWPDBA was partly mentioned. According to the interviewee, "they send you from one place to another (...). It's all (...) a lot of fuss". This allusion allows us to classify the *anchoring* of this process as *polytopic*, that is, where the process takes place in multiple places simultaneously.

With polytopic anchoring, subjects move between locations while procedures continue. Cuban IWPDBAs often require waiting for multiple processes in different spaces. For instance, people waiting in a queue for an IWPDBA may also buy items at nearby shops simultaneously, as seen in this testimony:

After she finished in the gas queue, Mirta had to rectify her appointment at the notary's office (...). It was almost midday, she had been queuing since 10 a.m., but her day (...) began almost at dawn, (...) when her son-in-law took her on his motorbike to the Capri distribution area to get a turn at the passport office (E. C. Pérez, 2023, para. 1).

To justify decisions such as the mentioned, Cuban popular wisdom uses the phrase “you have to combine what is useful with what is pleasant” or “you have to be in all (or everything) at the same time”; concerning the act of carrying out several necessary, expected tasks at the same time.

The second aspect that characterises the static/dynamic structural relations of waiting spaces is linked to the ease or difficulty of *access to* where the process takes place. For its categorisation, we have proposed the label *accessibility* of waiting spaces. In principle, this *accessibility* could be of two types: 1) *physical or corporeal* and 2) *social*. This distinction refers, on the one hand, to a type of corporeal organisation, *i. e.*, relating to biological bodies, and on the other hand, to cultural formations –sometimes referred to as *social bodies*–.

Physical accessibility (1) relates to the waiting space and specific areas within it.

In solidarity with the fellow employee, the fellow administrator decided categorially that no other user (...) would pee in that toilet forever and ever, amen. And that is how that drab office located next to a park in La Víbora stopped offering its toilet to users who, like me, have the misfortune of pissing before starting a procedure. “But you can go to the nearby mortuary parlour”, the employee finally tells me. And I quickly walk the three blocks that separate me from the mortuary (Salazar, 2022, p. 123).

In the fragment, we can observe both the *physical accessibility* to one of the particular places of the waiting space (“the bathroom”), as well as the type of space as a whole (areas with basic services, such as public mortuary parlours with bathrooms). This accessibility, as can be seen, alludes to the physical space and its characteristics to contain the waiters¹³⁸.

¹³⁸ Processing offices in Cuba are often *polytopic* due to fragmented operational processes. The last spaces are typically the smallest and reserved for waiters already immersed in the process, taking short breaks while printing documents and uploading information to the cloud or central computer system. In such cases, the reference point is no longer the start but rather the conclusion of the process.

Concerning *social accessibility*, the second classification aims to catalogue accessibility to space according to stratification criteria. In this case, spaces can be differentiated as places of access: a) *public* or b) *private*. The former (a) includes spaces open to access by the majority of the population. The latter (b) is limited to certain individuals or groups and can be of three types, I. *Guilds*, II. *Residential* and III. *Particular*.

In the analysed waiting spaces, public access (a) is most important, though stratified access can still occur within waiting areas. For example, in waiting processes, it is common for certain priorities to be established to distribute goods and services in high demand, especially during scarcity. The composition of the groups varies according to the context. However, priority is usually given to people with physical disabilities, pregnant women or women with children, and people over 75 years of age, among others. When the services begin, these groups tend to occupy spaces spatially distinct from the rest, such as at the beginning of the waiting lines, or in other ways closer to the *referent*.

In Cuba, such stratification is known as “impedidos” (handicapped) queues or spaces. These would have priority in any waiting process according to certain parameters established beforehand. The integration of these strata and their gradations in establishing hierarchies vary from one process to another (See Appendix 21).

“Proxemic *adequacy*”, based on Edward Hall’s (1990) “proxemic norms”, classifies culturally established social distances in physical spaces and is particularly relevant for IWPDBAs in Cuba, such as those related to migratory paperwork. Due to urgency, these IWPDBAs often occur in temporary spaces near Immigration Offices in various Cuban cities, where operational dynamics involve close physical proximity and inefficient spatial distribution. A July 2022 press report described a chaotic scene during passport application rectification (See Appendix 22), with hundreds of people crowded around a platform, shouting names amidst deafening noise (Donate, 2022).

Similarly, a 2021 article reported comparable dynamics in front of the Panamanian embassy in Havana. Crowds of worried people, many with documents in hand, gathered in Zapata Park, shouting “We want to travel!” (Vicent, 2021). This not only highlights the proxemic characteristics of such spaces but also the plans and goals waiters project once the process is completed, which become operative vectors from the proposed theoretical coordinates.

4.3.b. Functional elements of waiting spaces

In order to classify the functional elements of waiting spaces, I have proposed three classifications based on 1) *numerical distribution in relation to demand*, 2) *durability* and 3) *degree of presence*. Each category groups together a series of characteristics that indicate the dynamicity, interchangeability and interrelation between the parts of a waiting space. Applying this theory to the IWPDBAs in Cuba would yield results such as the following.

Regarding distribution related to demand (1), a) sufficient or b) insufficient, IWPDBAs spaces often show chronic insufficiency (b) in handling processes, as seen in a 2022 newspaper report. The notary's office in Ciego de Ávila¹³⁹ experienced overwhelmed phone lines, with people repeatedly calling for appointments. Crowds at the boulevard led to early morning queues, appointment resales and disorganisation due to the increasing demand for notarial paperwork (G. S. Martínez, 2022).

For the *durability* (2) (appearance and extension in time) of waiting spaces, I have proposed two very simple categories that reflect the tempo-extensional characteristics of these spaces. Namely, waiting spaces a) *instituted* and b) *conjunctural*. The former (a) are places intended to host waiting processes prior to or after their construction. Their permanence generally covers more or less extensive periods and is almost always complexly structured. The second (b) appears in a conjunctural, occasional or special circumstance manner. They are characterised by places that arise in specific, precise situations and generally do not extend over a prolonged period.

Cuban IWPDBAs typically have both types of spaces. These critical processes extend over time, causing waiting processes with a dynamic where demand exceeds supply. Adding the difficulties encountered in service delivery results in more complex and delayed processes. Consequently, both organisations and their waiting spaces are surpassed by the number waiters¹⁴⁰.

¹³⁹ Ciego de Ávila is an eastern province in Cuba.

¹⁴⁰ Overflowing spaces designated for long queues and crowds during crises have led to complaints from those outside the process, as we previously discussed. Processing of goods also faces a similar situation, requiring an operational structure outside the waiting area. *Ad hoc* dynamics emerge to manage the critical architecture of the waiting process, occupying spaces that may return to their previous functions once the critical period subsides, as described in various chronicles, reports and testimonies.

Similar examples are prevalent in Cuban media and social networks during early 2023, following the announcement of a humanitarian visa programme for citizens of Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Haiti by Joe Biden's administration (Periódico Cubano, 2023). This development generates waiting processes "to buy stamps" (Redacción de CiberCuba, 2023), to "apply for a criminal record certificate" (ADNCuba, 2023) and to "get a passport" (J. Pérez, 2023). In all these waits, the common denominator is that the spaces instituted for this purpose are overflowing due to the extremely high number of people waiting for these services.

The final category for the functional analysis of waiting spaces is their degree of presence (3), which addresses the necessity (or lack thereof) for physical attendance or presence of waiters at the waiting process location. This presence is not uniformly required in every waiting process, and even within the same process, it may be needed only at specific times.

This degree of presence also reveals differences in demand, seen in both a) *convex* and b) *concave* dimensions of waiting, depending on the processes. *Convex* dimensions are operationally regulated by agents not waiting for a process, typically organizational agents. For instance, consider Aminaél Rodríguez Castillo's case, who requested certification of his birth registration at the Civil Registry of his municipality. Even after three months, he couldn't access it. When he visited the registry on 21 September, it wasn't ready, and he was advised to use the Ministry of Justice platform for a faster process. However, when he returned on 7 October, the certification was still not sent. He later found out that the platform only catered to certain municipalities. By 24 November, his document remained unavailable at the Old Havana Civil Registry (J. A. Rodríguez, 2022).

This example demonstrates that *convex* dimensions don't necessitate an individual's physical presence on site, allowing them to wait elsewhere, like at home, until their work is done.

Conversely, *concave* dimensions require face-to-face presence during specific moments, demanding the person waiting to be present at the location where the process occurs. A relevant example is found in a press article on waiting for passports at processing offices in eastern Cuba's Holguín province. The article describes a queue where people's names are called, with non-responders crossed off the seemingly endless list. Those who confirm their *situation* on the queue receive a numbered card, allowing them to book a place at the Identification, Immigration, and Foreigners' Processing Offices (OTIIE) the following day. The narrative highlights individuals' differing situations and the impact of the process's normative structures on waiting spaces (Donate, 2022).

“You have to cross off those who are not there”, shouts a woman (...). “I have been in several queues, and when a list is made, it is to lower the position. The one who does not answer is eliminated”, says the woman (...) [A] man who has just arrived and has been eliminated asks to be left on the list. “I am one of the first. I’ve been queuing for several days. I arrived late today because I was working, and I live far away”. (...) [A] young woman says: “I left my daughter with a neighbour to come to the queue. Whoever doesn’t answer is eliminated. That’s the law” (Donate, 2022, paras. 3–4).

As seen in the above examples, the degree of presence in waiting spaces is influenced by the process's normative structures. These categories could be instrumental when analysing institutional structures from a sociological perspective or examining sociocultural dynamics from an anthropological standpoint.

4.3.c. Degree of institutional structuring of the space

In waiting space analysis, a new tool, the degree of institutional structuring, was introduced to categorise organisational phenomena, addressing aspects beyond functionality and structure. A three-tier classification (primary, secondary and tertiary) was proposed, based on Gustavo Bueno’s theory, identifying two institution types and six cumulative characteristics. I considered Alicia Lindón’s (2019) “territorialisation” and Giovanni Gasparinni’s (1995) “equipet” while developing this tool, addressing *waiting space logistics* and required inputs for these processes.

Moreover, institutional structuring was assessed by examining intersections and cumulative characteristics between institution types and evaluating waiting process complexity. To illustrate this concept, an example can be taken from the IWPDBA space described in “El trámite” story, where certain elements provide clues about the *degree of institutional structuring of the space* where the events occur.

At half past eight, thirty minutes after the time indicated on the sign on the door, a man comes out of the office and tells us to organise ourselves in three queues, depending on the procedure we want to carry out (...). I take advantage of the office’s opening and approach a cleaning lady who begins

sweeping the doorway. I ask about the bathroom. She looks at me (...) and finally tells me that there is a toilet (...) but (...) it is not for the users, only for the workers (Salazar, 2022, p. 121).

Based on the parameters established in the reference text, the space described in the story “El trámite” would be classified as a space of secondary structuring. This statement means that the space exhibits moderate complexity with reasonably established social organisation forms. The normative mechanisms within the space are structured efficiently, rationally and clearly, as evidenced by the instruction to “organise ourselves in three queues, always depending on the procedure we want to carry out”.

Furthermore, there are structured communication tools, both formal and informal, including visible or known timetables or schedules accessible to most actors. For example, in the story, a man comes out of the office and gives directions, even though it is thirty minutes past the time indicated on the sign on the door.

In addition, the space has basic logistical elements such as toilets, drinking fountains and ceilings that transcend the waiting purely mechanically. As the story describes, “I take advantage of the office opening and approach a cleaning lady (...) I ask for the toilet (...) she tells me (...) that there is a toilet”. Although in the story, one of these elements, the toilet, is not available for users and is only for workers, the fact remains that it exists.

Overall, these characteristics indicate a space of secondary structuring, where normative mechanisms, communication tools and logistical elements are well-established but not as extensively as in primary structuring spaces.

Analysis of this nature can be applied to each established degree of institutional structuring in waiting spaces. The corresponding article provides further examples for each degree of structuring. However, it is important to note that the parameters set forth do not aim to be definitive or exhaustive, but rather to establish a framework for measurement that can be adapted to the specific objectives of each investigation.

4.3.d. Localisation, ubication and situation

Various categories have been proposed to study spaces of waiting. In “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories from Philosophical Materialism, valuable for their study” (See Appendix V, Complementary paper 1), I proposed six categories used by DM that point to spatial aspects present in the waiting process. The categories are:

- *Localisation*
- *Ubication*
- *Situation*
- *Interior*
- *Surrounding*
- *Contour*

These categories offer a framework for analysing the spatial aspects of waiting processes, allowing researchers to gain insight into the social, cultural and political dynamics shaping these spaces and user experiences with unprecedented detail, as illustrated in this journal extract: “[I]n the middle of Fifth Avenue, at 24th Street, (...) a police cordon is blocking the way (...). In Zapata Park, in front of the Panamanian Consulate, there is a crowd of young people with worried faces. Hundreds of people, many holding documents, suddenly start shouting in unison: ‘We want to travel, we want to travel!’” (Vincent, 2021).

In waiting spaces, ubication pertains to the specific place where the body is located, such as a city park or the perimeter of a government office (Vincent, 2021). Distinguishing between localising (*locus*) and ubicating (*ubi*) is crucial, as localising is a descriptive term that remains axiologically neutral concerning other phenomena. For instance, a body may be localised in Zapata Park, in front of the Panamanian Consulate (Vicent, 2021), the OFICODA in La Lisa (J. A. Rodríguez, 2020) or a park in La Víbora (Salazar, 2022). These categories allow for a more comprehensive and nuanced spatial analysis of waiting processes.

However, the *situation* (*situs*) within waiting spaces implies additional valuations. The idea changes completely when we say something is “situated” in a specific place. This notion of *situation*, relating to the act of *situating*, no longer belongs to merely descriptive language but involves a valuational action. A situation is pointed out at a certain point in space, which determines it somehow, for better or worse. For example, “I arrived at 6 a.m., and I am the 12th in the queue. To pick up the documents, if you’re not among the 20 numbers, you came just for fun” (Fuentes, 2022).

Situation implies organisation and point ordering. While *ubi* refers to place inclusion, *situs* also considers the order of localised parts relative to the surrounding space.

These classifications can be applied in both global and specific contexts. They can classify parts of the enveloping space where the waiting occurs, such as a country, a city, a municipality, a neighbourhood or a street, as well as specific internal (surrounding) parts of a waiting space.

[A] man comes out of the office and tells us that we have to organise ourselves in three queues, depending on the procedure we want. (...) He mumbles the instructions, and even I, the fifth in the queue, need help understanding it. (...) There is a queue for paperwork one, three, and five; another for four and nine; and a last one for the rest of the paperwork (...); the first thing to do is to classify my procedure in the list, (...) and then get in the corresponding queue. Moreover, to do all that in less than thirty seconds because people are already moving like the Queen of Hearts playing croquet. I am slow, and I discover that in the new distribution of the world, I have dropped from number five to number twelve (Salazar, 2022, p. 121).

In this example, reference is made to both *localisations* and *situations* internal to the described process. In the former, the expectant person must place himself “inside the list” corresponding to his procedure. In the latter, the subject mentions that he is “fifth” in the queue at one moment, to become twelfth after “the new distribution of the world”, *i. e.*, the spatial reorganisation of the waiting process.

4.3.e. Interior, surroundings and contours

The following categories primarily pertain to a focused analysis of the *ubication* where the process takes place. These categories are *interior*, *surroundings* and *contour*, as used by the DM. The aim is to characterise the phenomena from different spatial perspectives, which are always established in relation to other phenomena. The *interior* denotes the entities encompassed in the node (process, phenomenon or entity) that occupies the space (Bueno, 1993, p. 1411). In the case of waiting, the *interior* refers to the material operations and processes that occur in the space and the *ubication* where ceremonies are conducted to regulate or manage certain types of waiting. In IWPDBAs, the *interior* refers to the contained spaces or the internals, where specific processes are

expected to occur as is pointed in the following journal report. “As part of the fight against the queuer, Fara Iglesias González, coordinator of Programmes and Objectives of the Provincial Government, pointed out the maintenance of operations inside shops, shopping centres, pharmacies, and points of sale of liquefied gas, among other objectives, to continue neutralising their actions” (J. M. Martínez, 2022).

In the fragment, reference is made to certain dynamics in the *interior*, “inside the tents” of the waiting space. However, even this category can be used to refer to other areas, for example, those where waiting ends as such¹⁴¹.

The *surroundings*, on the other hand, are constituted by “the set of all the entities that, not belonging to the node [process, entity or phenomenon], nevertheless maintain significant interactions with it” (García Sierra, 2021d, para. 2). The surroundings of a waiting space encompass the external objects and phenomena that, without being directly linked to the waiting process, interact, harmoniously or in conflict, with a good part of the elements of the *interior* and its *contour*, modifying them in many cases.

Since five o’clock in the morning, the side of the playground in front of the ‘*Trámites*’ Offices (...) has been filled with people (...). [as] the minutes pass the number increases (...). The long queue stretches the entire length of the park’s pavement facing Peralejo Street. Older people sit on a wall in front of a house. The crowd (...) obstructs the traffic in the street (Donate, 2022, para. 18).

In this fragment of a chronicle describing a waiting process, the operations and dynamics taking place in an office interior where formalities are recounted are mentioned. This place is just one of several stations in this process. Within this *interior* space organisation, there are likely to be other *localisations* where operations related to this waiting also occur.

Similarly, the *contour* category is where specific dynamics occur, constituting the limit or boundary between the *surroundings* and the *interior*. Referring to the spatial internal physical

¹⁴¹ In the abovementioned story, the location where a service or good is received during the waiting process becomes crucial. As illustrated by the quote, “At last, it’s my turn. And I passed quickly, papers in hand, (...) in front of the official on duty: ‘-No, comrade, you can’t do this procedure today, (...). Come another day’” (Salazar, 2022), the outcome of the process and the success of the waiting experience are determined by the place of waiting. Therefore, the waiting location is of utmost significance.

boundaries of a particular waiting process, the *contour* of the waiting space includes, for instance, the walls or partitions of a waiting room or the border fence separating immigrants waiting for asylum from their geographic destination. In the case of waiting for procedures, for example, the *contour* of the space could be the entrance door of a government office. In popular Cuban jargon, this *localisation* is referred to as the “hot zone”, where the process’s least harmonious (or more violent) dynamics take place. Its liminal space condition means that it is the point where the regulations of an operational space (the surroundings, for example) begin to blur, and those of another (*interior*) begin to take effect. In Cuba’s institutional culture of waiting, contours are frequently dynamic and socially conflictive places, and this unrest is reflected in the example we are analysing.

In a general sense, my proposal seeks to conceive waiting and its spaces from an institutional point of view, trying to integrate several of its fundamental aspects. The spatial categories analysed – *interior*, *surroundings* and *contour*, as well as those of *localisation*, *ubication* and *situation*– respond to the need to address the multiple levels that differ from each other, dividing and stratifying the waiting spaces. These subdivisions are spatial, but, as seen below, they also determine these processes operationally.

The categories of *interior*, *surroundings* and *contour* provide the opportunity to focus on spatial analysis at different levels and to correlate with each other. This makes it possible to delve into particular aspects of waiting that should be addressed by existing research. The spatial and operational layering, present at different levels and varying degrees in each waiting process, needs to be addressed precisely because no categorial framework is available to address them. Both this set of categorial triads and those analysed above can be integrated under the label “Topography of waiting”. I have conceived this label to encompass everything related to the comprehensive analysis of waiting spaces.

5. Second Partial Conclusion

Throughout this section, we have discussed and reviewed the main categories for the analysis of waiting spaces presented in the studies: “The topography of waiting: Categorical notes for analysing waiting spaces”, “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories from Philosophical Materialism, valuable for their study” and “The ideas of space and place in the waiting studies. Some critical notes on their use in social research”.

❖ As was pointed out, the information collected in these can be grouped under the heading *topography of waiting*, from which we can conclude:

- ✓ Although waiting is a topic addressed by the social sciences, it has not yet been developed to its full potential.
- ✓ The idea is that waiting is not exhausted in its temporal dimension and that special consideration must be given to the space where it occurs.
- ✓ The spatiality of the waits is recognised by some authors (Gasparini, 1995; Díaz, 2017; Schewartz, 1975; Musset, 2015; Lindón, 2019), has not been properly systematised and does not have categorial tools that allow us to delve deeper into the subject has not been properly systematised and does not have categorial tools that allow us to delve into the subject precisely.

The philosophical materialist perspective offers some conceptual and analytical tools for analysing structural and functional aspects of waiting spaces.

❖ *Structural* aspects constitute complexes of very diverse and dynamically interwoven phenomena, which arise or are established concerning other (sometimes functional) phenomena with which they are interrelated and co-determined in a *symploké*.

- ✓ They group *static* and *dynamic* material phenomena of the spaces where they occur. *Static* phenomena would include phenomena such as the area of a building, the number of chairs in a room, the size of square metres of a room and the access doors to a common area, among

others. *Dynamic* phenomena refer, for example, to the multiple operations –movements, territorialisation, spatial uses– that waiters must perform with these structural elements.

✓ Their classification is possible through the categories a) *anchorage*, b) *accessibility* and c) *proxemic adequacy*. These categories respond to the circumscription of a specific space to a specific place (a), the facilities or difficulties in accessing these places (b) and the physical distances between the bodies of those waiting that the space allows (c).

❖ The functional elements of the waiting spaces refer to the dynamism, flexibility and adaptability they allow for the waiters' operations, as well as the internal relations between these operations. Three elements were considered for their classification: 1) numerical distribution concerning demand, 2) durability and 3) degree of presence.

✓ The first of these elements (1) points to the correlations between the amount, and distribution, of existing spaces and the waiters' demand for them. This category was subclassified as a) *sufficient* or b) *insufficient*.

✓ The second (2) refers to the appearance and permanence of waiting spaces over time and can be subdivided into a) *instituted spaces* and b) *temporary spaces*.

✓ The third (3) refers to the type of presence that waiting requires in the waiters and the spaces where it takes place, which can be subclassified as a) *on-site*, b) *off-site* and c) *semi-presential*.

Finally, we have proposed the label *degree of institutional structuring of the space*, which we believe offers a sharper analysis and the possibility of observing the interaction between structural aspects and functional elements in specific waiting spaces.

❖ The degree of institutionalisation can be classified as: 1) *primary structuring spaces*, 2) *secondary structuring spaces* or 3) *tertiary structuring spaces*.

- ✓ Placement in any of these classifications will depend on the accumulation of logistical, communicational and organisational factors, among others, pre-established by the researcher in each particular case.

Within the Topographies of waiting, we also include the two categorial triads collected in the text “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories from Philosophical Materialism, valuable for their study”, consisting in:

❖ The *localisation, ubication and situation* (and) *interior, surrounding and contour*. These categories seek:

- ✓ To conceive waiting and its spaces from an institutional point of view that integrates other aspects of the space of these processes.

- ✓ To cover the multiple levels existing in the waiting spaces, in which the phenomena and materials that interact in these processes are articulated.

- ✓ To focus the spatial analysis at different levels and correlate between them.

- ✓ To allow spatial stratification at different levels and degrees, delving into hitherto little-treated waiting spaces dimension.

6. Waiting for the blackout and lighting up: notes on waiting operations.

*In this section, I will discuss and conclude the articles in **Chapter 4** Beyond Time: Operational Aspects of Waiting Processes and their Institutional Frameworks. The categories developed in this chapter articles will be applied to the institutionalised waiting process for the blackout and lighting up in Cuba.*

6.1. Introduction

Operations are a determining factor of waiting processes as social institutions. This thesis has been one of the fundamentals I have sustained and one of the contributions this research intends to make. Hence, I attach importance to these phenomena' material and objective analysis. My hypothesis in regard to the role of operations is that they occupy a similar level to that of space and time as a constitutive dimension of these processes.

I even consider that, of these three fundamental dimensions, the one that could serve as an enveloping dimension of the other two or as a starting point for the dialectical breakdown of each of them is precisely the operations since these are carried out in a given space and time. Therefore, they could be the guiding thread for understanding their internal structure. Even if these operations were passive, this "inaction" already qualifies them concerning other possible operations, both temporally and spatially.

Based on the previous premises, I wrote "Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes" and "The Institutional and operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study". In both, I have aimed to initiate the debate about the central importance of operations in waiting processes. In order to do so, I also critically analysed how they were handled in existing studies and the importance given to them.

Secondly, I proposed some DM terms and concepts that could be useful in studying waiting operations. Through this arsenal of terms, categories and concepts, I have defined many of the component parts of this dimension, while at the same time delineating my operational theory of these phenomena.

Following the methodology that I have been employing so far, I will briefly discuss the theses and postulates on the operations of waiting through a Cuban institutional waiting. I refer to the waiting related to blackouts or power cuts and their dialectical reverse, the waiting for the re-establishment of this same electricity service. As I have done with the spaces of waiting, I will briefly present an empirical case study from the proposed perspective to conclude this section.

6.2. The Blackouts and lightning in Cuba. Its institutionality as a waiting process

The “apagones” (Blackouts) are significant in Cuba, not just because they happen everywhere, but due to their historical recurrence and their character, sometimes understood even as a social trauma (ALEXANDER et al., 2004). This has led to their establishment as recognisable phenomena, influencing various cultural institutions.

Furthermore, blackouts aren’t only observed in Cuba, but also across the Hispanic-American sphere, influencing Latin American artistic and literary productions. There are songs entitled “El apagón” (The blackout) in countries such as Mexico, Argentina, Panama, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Cuba and many more.

In these productions, blackouts are portrayed in various ways, reflecting each country’s cultural fabric. For example, *Afrocombo* describes interrupted parties and couple dynamics during power cuts¹⁴², while Mexican Yuri addresses violence against women¹⁴³. In 1992, Panamanian singer Rubén Blades¹⁴⁴ associated this phenomenon with Latin America’s social and even political life. Here, the composer denounces the social and political contradictions of the Latin American region at the time, using the blackouts common to most of the subcontinent countries as a backdrop.

The electricity was interrupted and, due to the blackout, the
Torture of a subversive by an employee of the government
And that blackout also put an end to the sound of a dastardly balladeer
Whose record disguised the cries of both the victim and perpetrator

¹⁴² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrF2cWlmgdg>

¹⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vg2Hj7cAJj0>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXB8AyEDaRc>

No more torture. Don't open the hole. The light is gone.

Long live underdevelopment!

The End of Imperialism: The Grave of Communism.

Between a Fidel and a Somoza. And it doesn't work out.

Of kissing and torture. Of joy and bitterness.

Hallucinated and furious: Enlightened and glorious, of hope I am a partner... (See Appendix 23)

In 2022, the Puerto Rican urban musician Bad Bunny talked about the cultural and socio-political dynamics of Puerto Rico by making song and dance operations inherent to the blackouts on the island. His hit song "El apagón", which has more than 21 million views on YouTube, denounces the social situation of the island, using blackouts as an institutional example of the decadence of the territory¹⁴⁵.

In Cuba, the subject has been addressed in no small measure. Its popularity among composers and artists is generally reborn with the successive waves of blackouts the island historically suffers every few years.

In the 1990s, during the acute economic crisis resulting from the fall of the socialist camp, known as the special period, the constant *blackouts* that overwhelmed the Cuban population inspired very popular songs. This case is the Cuban singer-songwriter Frank Delgado's who, in his 1995 song, "Cuando se vaya la luz, mi negra"¹⁴⁶ (When the light goes out, my love black), which features verses such as these:

When the lights go out, my black love,
we are going to undress
early, it has its charm,
like people in the countryside.
The bad thing is that without water and a fan

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdQEIJUMCEM>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9m-S672brU>

we will end up sticky and sweaty
like in a marathon.

Although blackouts decreased after the most severe years of the special period, they did not disappear completely (Vazquez *et al.*, 2015). An example of this is the song by Cuban popular music singer Cándido Fabré, who in 2005 released “El apagón” (The blackout)¹⁴⁷, in which he addresses the problem through neighbourhood scenes of the phenomenon.

The blackout has arrived
Long live savings
The thief slipped in
Help, help
(***)
It is knocked down at one o'clock
It is knocked down at three o'clock
They put it for a while
And they cut it off again
Hey blackout
It has no God's pardon
Hopefully, it will be taken of
To the one who gave it to me (See Appendix 24)

However, it is not only in popular art that we can see the recognition of these realities. Other parts or dimensions of society in Cuba have also echoed this phenomenon. This case is very common in Cuban political discourse, where this theme has remained constant. On 26 July 1994, Raúl Castro pointed out the most important date in the revolutionary calendar in his traditional speech. Thanks to “the heroic resistance of the country” and Fidel’s leadership, Cuba had withstood a fall in “domestic GDP” of up to “34.8 %”, a significant deterioration in the food supply of Cubans, who also suffered “blackouts of 16 and up to 20 hours a day” (D. T. Martínez, 2022, para. 9) .

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rt6vlyFNdW8>

In 2020, during the situation I have previously discussed, Cuban President Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel pointed out that priorities had to be established and all sources of savings had to be sought because much electricity was still being wasted. He said it was necessary to be efficient “to get out of peak hours with large consumers, to protect the population and also essential production such as food production. The important thing is to think and manage, to maintain priorities, amid constraints” (Martinez, 2020, p. 14).

In 2022, amidst a surge in Cuban blackouts, the Minister of Energy and Mines stated, “We must work to achieve a reliable, stable, and safe electricity system to support our country’s development” (Villaurrutia, 2022, para. 4). According to the leader, some large-scale events occurred in 2022, which added more problems to the existing ones. Among these was a fire in unit 7 of CTE Máximo Gómez in Mariel, which caused the loss of 170 MW of power. Moreover, another breakout occurred in the boiler of unit 2 of CTE Lidio Ramón Pérez, in Felton, Holguín, after 120 days of maintenance, which caused the output of 250 MW from the system. It was explained that the minimum reserves necessary to cover the country’s electricity demand were lost with these two events. Another major fire compounded this at the Super Tanker Base in Matanzas city, which limited the fuel storage capacity, further complicating the ships’ logistics (*idem*). To conclude this panorama, the passage of Hurricane Ian in September caused severe damage to the electricity system in that part of the national territory, leaving 1,364,664 customers affected (*idem*) and causing a total power outage throughout the national territory.

Explanations like these illustrate the rationality and *normativity* of blackouts as formally identifiable phenomena, observable across the social structure and demonstrating systemic ordering. For instance, Cuban social networks feature numerous allusions to blackouts. One viral Facebook post describes a mother’s distress over not understanding thermoelectric or circuits, spending sleepless nights trying to keep her son cool with a cardboard box and feeling worn down by the persistent sadness that accompanies these experiences (See Appendix 25).

This post is evidence of the *hylomorphic structure*, the *normativity* and the *systemic organisation* of this institution in Cuba. Concerning *coexistence* and interaction with other institutions, the Cuban energy minister’s speech mentioned above points out that “the responsibility for the blackouts lay with the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the US government” (*idem*) against Cuba.

In this context, and responding to government statements of this nature, a Cuban priest critical of the government, denounced on his Twitter account that blackouts had increased following the vote on the Family Code, a document promoted by the government, held on 25 September 2022 (See Appendix 26). According to the parish priest, in the area of Madruga municipality (Mayabeque province) where he lives, there were eight hours of electricity and another eight hours of blackouts before the referendum. “On the day of the vote, not a single minute went out; that is to say, the thermoelectric plants were fixed that day” (CiberCuba, 2022a, para. 3).

Both statements show how the phenomenon and its associated waiting coexist with multiple other institutions with which they establish constant dialectical relations.

I don't know what I'm going to do with my life,
I spend the whole day in the queue to buy food.
And when I get home in the sunshine from the street and turn on the TV,
I turn on the fan and after five minutes, you get a blackout!

Cuba is an eternal blackout!¹⁴⁸

Finally, regarding the axiology of this institution, it's clear that people aren't indifferent to these phenomena. Examples discussed below highlight the generally harmful perception associated with these institutions. This axiology is evident in the wave of protests during the summer of 2022 blackout/lightning in Cuba, caused by the effects of these phenomena.

One such example is a series of spontaneous protests that took place in various Havana neighbourhoods and other municipalities, including Holguín, Matanzas, Boyeros, Marianao, and Cerro. These protests occurred on the third consecutive day of general blackout and were sparked by growing social discontent over widespread electricity shortages after Hurricane Ian. Participants engaged in pot-banging and road blockades, with the events gaining attention on social media and news outlets such as DeutscheWelle (2022).

¹⁴⁸ Song “Eterno Apagón”, by the singer La Crema (2022): <https://youtu.be/cal2iFT6h0g>.

These protests, taking place while awaiting electricity restoration, highlight the negative perception of blackouts. They are significant enough to impose their normative values as moral references.

In conclusion, the waiting before, during, and after blackouts in Cuba are undeniably embedded within the fabric of social institutions, reflecting their influence and impact on society. In the coming sections, we will examine these waiting processes from the operational perspective developed throughout this research, delving deeper into the complex interplay of factors contributing to blackout institutionalisation and their associated waiting processes in Cuba.

6.3. Notes on the use of certain categories for the study of the operations of waiting

In my thesis, I argue that waiting requires “operative” actions, making the waiting subject an “operative subject”¹⁴⁹. The empirical analysis of any waiting process must consider this premise since these operations are not random or haphazard but respond to determined objectives. These objectives form strategies targeting short, medium, or *long-term goals*, culminating at the waiting process’s end. I have referred to this as the *consumptive end*, where the waiting concludes.

For the waiting subject, this moment is of utmost importance in the process. It defines the process, distinguishing it from other phenomena. For the subject, it is their waiting’s *reference point*, where all operations ultimately *referred*. This *referent* is not always reached at once and directly. Institutionalised waits often have distinct spatial/temporal and operational segments. Although the *consumptive end* influences all segments, each has its unique morphology.

From the entire waiting process perspective, certain operations determine, conclude or close operational chains. Achieving these closing points often signifies reaching a predicted temporospatial place, in the process’s operational strategy. These boundaries or ends are not merely abstract or logical; they manifest as tangible and observable objects, processes, moments, signs or symbols.

¹⁴⁹ This hypothesis is directly opposed to those that see waiting as passive states and that conceive of the actors in these processes as agents who are detained, trapped, slowed down, immobilised.

Among others, we could find here: doors, fences, documents, borders, ceremonies or calendar dates. To classify them, I utilise the term “referential”.

In this case, I have applied it to waiting processes because the points that close the operational, spatial and temporal segments in waiting processes are also often materialised in objects that can be operated on, as in empirical reality. Cuban composer Frank Delegado in one of his songs reflects an example of this.

When the lights go out, my black love,
as a social therapy
and so that you don't get hot under the collar
for the current
sitting around the bonfire we are going to talk about
the same things that
Neanderthal Man
must have talked about long ago (See Appendix 27).

The verse highlights both referential operations and the referent of a waiting process. The operation “sitting by the fire let’s talk” has the referential “so that you don’t get a headache from the electricity”. These operations form plans and programmes that are devised before the blackout occurs and during the waiting. They commence when the light reaches its referent, and the waiting for the “light to go out” ends.

In this song and verses, we can also observe another characteristic of waiting operations. Specifically, the unique operations performed by subjects in these processes, related to the waits themselves. These operations, aimed at specific ends, are classified as “proleptic operations”, which means they are articulated as prolepsis targeting a proxemic end. Thus, we refer to proleptic operations when discussing waits.

These operations involve recomposing action chains aimed at distant apothetical ends, based on past knowledge and experience rather than future predictions. When planning operations in waiting processes, they reference the past, not the future. The poet devises a “social therapy” to maintain peace at home during a blackout based on his experience in similar situations:

When the lights go out, my
grandmother will start
to unleash her bad temper
and speak ill of the government.
And my grandfather, who is a ñángara, is going to retort to her
that it's the fault of imperialism, OPEC
and the world market (See Appendix 27).

Operations in waiting processes reference past experiences instead of the future. Existing operations enable the development of plans and programmes for various purposes. This representation is called anamnesis, which refers to realised forms or models that inform the constitution of prolepsis (plans or programmes). The projected future is an effect of anamnesis, based on known experiences rather than creating or anticipating fantasies. It represents the unknown future based on the known past. “When the lights go out, my grandmother is going to start unleashing her bad temper (...) And my grandfather, a ñángara¹⁵⁰, is going to riposte”.

Another category for operational analysis of waits is anchor points and their demarcation operations. Refrains are physical phenomena marking the end of process segments, called anchor points. These points are both the beginning and the end of specific operative courses.

Anchor points can be internal or external to the waiting process. Internal anchor points are connected by a) realised operational vectors and b) projected operational vectors. These represent chains of executed operations between anchor points (a) or chains of projected operations to be executed between them (b).

In a chronicle addressing efforts to solve blackouts in Cuba, *operational segments* are undertaken to end the waiting for the start-up of power plants that could alleviate constant blackouts. The director of the Unión Eléctrica (National Load Dispatch) reports on incorporating two large generation plants, which had broken down. The first plant, from the “10 de Octubre”¹⁵¹ Central

¹⁵⁰ In Cuban slam, *ñángara* is a person who collaborates as a compromise with the government.

¹⁵¹ Municipality located in the province of Havana.

Thermoelectric Power Plant (CTE), would provide about 100 MW. The second, from the “Santa Cruz” CTE, would contribute 85 MW. With both units, the country’s availability would reach 2,740 MW, compared to a peak demand of 2,750 MW. Considering the system’s 70 MW operating reserve, the deficit would reach 80 MW for a short time (Suárez, 2022, para. 7).

Here, Operations are *segmented* at moments that end some operations and start others. The incorporation of both plants constitutes two *anchor points* within a *convex* operational process related to waiting due to blackouts in Cuba. Both “realised operational vectors” and “projected operational vectors” are presented in this example, showcasing the usefulness of these categories in classifying operational phenomena within waiting processes.

In waiting processes, the objectives actors set are crucial as they direct operations. These “intentional objectives” take three forms: *aims*, *plans* and *programmes*. *Aims* concern the subject proposing them; *plans* affect other personal subjects; and *programmes*, impersonal in principle, don’t allude to operative subjects.

An example can be seen in the case of a Cuban poet trying to cash a cheque during the 2022 blackout period.

I have been trying to cash a cheque for days and because of the blackouts or the massive queues, I have been unable to do so. Today (...) there was electricity, but alas, the system (...), was down. (...). Any operation is a nuisance because one day there is no electricity, another day the system is down, and when both are normalised, the crowd of people reduces your possibilities, with the usual loss of time (CiberCuba, 2022b, para. 4). (See Appendix 28).

The *plans* involve trying for days to cash the cheque, hindered by blackouts or long queues. The poet tried again when there was electricity, structuring operations around an impersonal programme. However, success was hindered by computer system issues, blackouts, or crowds. To access banking services (*aims*) in this context, operations must consider both “blackouts” (*programmes*) and “queues” and “crowds” (*plans*).

The categories discussed are crucial for Analysing waiting processes within the theoretical framework I have developed. It can be asserted that if a waiting process doesn’t have operations structured around aims, plans and programmes, it cannot be considered an Institutionalised

expectation, at least in the categorial sense discussed here. In such cases, it might be regarded as a different phenomenon, such as a pause, limbo, or something similar, but not a waiting. This highlights the importance of these categories in understanding and defining waiting processes.

6.4. The Institutional and operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study

The article addressed vital questions about operations within waits, focusing on the relationship between operations and their institutional framework. I applied the DM's "closed historical cycle" concept to the field of waits. My thesis is that waiting constitutes closed phenomena in cycles, allowing subjects to operate within them by referring to similar processes learned through personal experience or cultural transmission. Researchers find similarities in operations and modes of action in different waiting situations. In short, responses to situations occur because waiting materialises as *social institutions*, homologating them at a certain level. Thus, individual action possibilities are mediated by this condition, determining specific (institutionalised) modes of action.

This characteristic is apparent in a chronicle that discusses measures that might have been implemented during a power outage to mitigate the population's hardship. The text emphasises the importance of clarity whilst maintaining core ideas and addressing the categories under investigation.

The sporadic lights, (...) powered by batteries (...) were dying out. (...). We lacked electricity and all that it entails. However, it was not the only issue. There was a lack of (...), support, tangible alternatives, timely information via all available means, the new, the sophisticated, and the conventional ones (...). Why wasn't a concrete response organised to address the needs and urgencies of the population, those left without electricity to cook food or the possibility of preserving it properly (...)? There were, and always are, people who demonstrated solidarity. Those who took to the street's plants, batteries, [electric] bicycles that made it possible to charge something else (Alfonso, 2022, paras 1–2).

Two types of operations are evident here: those that should have been implemented and those that were actually executed. In both cases, knowledge of previous, similar processes allows for comparative criticism and the implementation of collective operations to deal with the waiting. The

characteristics of these operations are based on the memory of similar situations –*anamnesis*– and their potential consequences (See Appendix 29).

The example above highlights waiting as a closed, cyclical phenomenon while revealing its institutional nature. Operations like social protests occur in response to other subjects or actors who can operate proactively based on their plans and programs. This dynamic demonstrates the dialectical nature of Institutionalised waiting, as it occurs in response to other operations.

According to DM, some operations have a propositional purpose, involving operative subjects acting dialectically, individually and in groups in response to propositional actions. The result of these multiple dialectical interactions produces an objective purpose, which differs from the original intent in a specific way.

This process can be seen in the dialectical relations during the 2022 blackouts between the proactive operations of multiple actors. In the Flora neighbourhood in Antilla, Holguín province, residents staged a peaceful protest against the Cuban authorities' failure to solve the blackouts. The protest occurred because the neighbourhood had been without electricity for nine and a half hours (CiberCuba, 2022a).

This example highlights the usefulness of the operational approach to waiting for empirical case investigations, focusing on two possible perspectives: *concave* and *convex*. Each perspective concentrates on operations that can be approached based on predetermined criteria. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the various dynamics in waiting processes, especially those not directly linked to the individual's will, which cannot be definitively separated.

The classic sociological dichotomy between the individual and society is the foundation for this approach, but a radical separation between these two aspects is rejected. From a materialist standpoint, the assumption is that dialectical relations are diverse rather than dichotomous. Although they may sometimes clash, these phenomena cannot be entirely separated. At most, they can be dissociable, meaning they can be differentiated but not radically separated.

In other words, there are no individuals without societies (in a broad sense) and no societies without individuals. Consequently, the dichotomous approach is not viable, even in terms of possibility. Instead, the operational approach to waiting, focusing on

the *concave* and *convex* perspectives, offers a more nuanced and dialectical understanding of the complex interplay between the poles interacting in a waiting process¹⁵².

Instead of viewing waiting as opposing poles or realities, I proposed two complementary approaches, the *concave* and *convex* perspectives, which examine the same reality from different angles. This approach allows a more objective analysis of waiting operations without resorting to psychologism or classificatory mentalism. Focusing on objective operative vectors and the relationships between different operational segments helps broaden classification and avoids unilateral reductionism.

The *convex* approach, often organizational, *aims* to maintain system order and internal structures, while the *concave* approach typically represents a subjective or personal perspective, focusing on dissipative or opposing elements. Analysing waiting processes through these lenses emphasises the dynamics within these processes.

Using the *blackout* as example, the *convex* operational perspective can be seen in the business organisations (state-owned in the Cuban case) managing electricity generation. In contrast, the *concave* perspective is associated with social actors and organisations, such as electricity service customers, who wait for the service to be withdrawn or restored based on their particular circumstances. These approaches provide a more comprehensive understanding of waiting processes, considering multiple viewpoints and operational aspects.

A chronicle appeared in Cuban governmental *media*, illustrates the *convex* operations implemented in response to social discontent and protests triggered by massive blackouts. According to the article, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba addressed concerns and dissatisfaction during a neighborhood meeting, discussing cultural proposals and activities that helped support vulnerable families during these energy crises (TV Camagüey, 2022) (See Appendix 30).

On the other hand, *concave* operations are exemplified by two women who went to a provincial Communist Party headquarters to plug in a rice cooker due to a lack of electricity at home. Their

¹⁵² There are many researchers who study waiting, and in their analyses, they often refer to this duality as a frame of reference. They may focus on the subjective experience of waiting or the socio-objective phenomena associated with waiting. Consequently, existing work in this field can be classified based on whether it falls within one of these two poles.

actions highlight the frustration and disrespect they felt during the blackout (CiberCuba, 2022d, paras. 1–3) (See Appendix 31).

In both cases, operations could be classified as *convex* or *concave* based on their intentional objectives. The research's analytical goals will determine the focus on one or the other side, its subject matter, or its disciplinary field. These examples also demonstrate the dialectic between different *intentional objectives* within the waiting process, highlighting the interplay between *aims*, *plans* and *programs* on either side of the spectrum.

7. Third Partial Conclusion

In this section, the importance of operations in waiting processes was analysed, and we have called this theme an operational perspective for the analysis of waiting processes. The elements presented were mainly collected in the articles “Beyond Time: Some analytical categories for an operational analysis in social waiting processes” and “The Institutional and operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study”.

In both texts, a critical analysis of the treatments given to the operational question in existing research has been carried out, from which it can be concluded:

- ✓ The waiting operations have been addressed in existing research, but they need to develop their full potential.
- ✓ The analyses carried out have been biased by the temporal hypostasis and subjectivities typical of the scrutiny of waiting.

For the analysis of the internal operational morphology of the waits, a set of categories and terms were established:

- ✓ The operations of the waits were typified as proleptic operations.
- ✓ The referential category was proposed to denote the consumptive end of waits.
- ✓ The referential category of operational demarcation was proposed to denote the boundaries of operational courses in their constituent parts or segments.
- ✓ It was pointed out that proleptic chains of operations in a waiting are dialectically related to each other and to institutional structures that transcend them.
- ✓ It was argued that these operations are channelled by intentional objectives, materialised in aims, plans and programmes.
- ✓ It was affirmed that for identifying and setting these intentional objectives, the operative subjects draw on past experiences on which they structure their operational planning.
- ✓ The categories anamnesis and prolepsis were proposed to analyse these experiences and planning.

The second article further analysed the relationship between the operations of the waits and their institutional framework, concluding that:

- ✓ The relationships between proleptic operations and institutionalisation in waiting are essential to explain them, including the psycho-subjective behaviours observed in waiters.
- ✓ The Operations are characterised by a *propositional purpose* structure in the waiting.
- ✓ The dialectical relationships between *propositional operations* and the objective institutional framework that contains them shape individual or group actions in the waiting.
- ✓ The objective analysis of the meaning of the course of operations in waiting processes is possible using two dialectical perspectives: *concave* and *convex*.
- ✓ These perspectives could broadly group the meanings of the operational courses of the social subjects who wait and the actors who make people wait, respectively.
- ✓ The operational perspective allows the distinction of terms that make up the semantic constellation of waiting, which are often confused with it, such as patience, *delay*, *limbo*, *boredom*, *tedium* or *hope*.

8. Waiting for dollars in Cuba. Notes on the temporality of waiting

*In this section, I will discuss and conclude the articles in **Chapter 5** of my thesis, *Temporal Perspectives on Waiting Processes: A New Theoretical Framework and Analytical Categories*. The categories developed in this chapter articles will be applied to the institutionalised waiting process to buy foreign currencies in Cuba.*

8.1 Introduction

The last waiting aspect I have analysed in the body of the study is its temporality. This issue was the last to be addressed, as it was, if not the most problematic, the one that required the most work. The fact that most of the studies on waiting periods have based their entire theoretical framework on the temporal perspective or approach raises at least three fundamental questions to be addressed.

The first question entailed a critical approach to the analyses on time in waiting periods. In essence, the waiting itself would be analysed, as it is fundamentally conceived as a temporal process. In this regard, my proposal centred on critically analysing and categorising the various ideas or concepts of time employed by researchers who have studied the time in the waiting. I consider this question to be essential because if I start from the understanding that waiting is in itself a type of temporality, the conception one has of time will determine, to a large extent, the conception one has of waiting, and hence the particular aspects that we will seek to cover in the existing research. I have addressed this question in the article “The idea of time in philosophical materialism: a general critique of the idea of time used in waiting research”.

The second question to address was the position of time in the waiting process, based on my approach. In order to do this analysis, at least minimally, it would be necessary to talk about time itself. This necessitated a brief reconstruction of the concept of time. Given that time is one of the most worked ideas in philosophy and that this was not the subject of my research, rather than the idea of time, in a doxographical or philological sense, I was interested in delving into a much more interesting and useful aspect of it for my research. I am referring to the material processes of temporalisation. In other words, the mechanisms of assigning time to specific phenomena.

Since my research seeks the development of categorial tools that could allow approaching the processes of material waiting from a different perspective to the one generally employed, this particular issue would be of greater interest. From philosophical-materialist coordinates, I have proposed that ideas and concepts of time respond to, and are closely linked to, dialectical processes given in reality. Hence, rather than assigning an established temporality to the waiting processes, I have found it much more useful to understand the material mechanisms through which certain phenomena or dynamics acquire one temporality, not another. That is to say, how the transformations given in these dynamics, both in their component parts and in their totality concerning other phenomena, end up acquiring certain temporal characteristics I have expanded on these ideas in the text “Processes and mechanisms of temporalisation: some categories for analysis”.

The theoretical tools outlined in “Some useful concepts, notions, and categories for studying the temporality of waiting” can aid in analysing waiting processes from a temporal perspective. These tools are based on the institutional approach used in my proposal, which considers the three-dimensional concept of waiting, where space, time and operations have similar importance levels. Moreover, the tools recognise the inseparability of these dimensions while acknowledging their dissociability.

As this paper is the one that most directly addresses the main objectives of my work, I will analyse it using the methodology I have employed thus far. I will analyse an institutional waiting in Cuba, summarising the paper through this case study. To do this, I will use the temporal analysis categories offered in the text and conclude with a description of an empirical case.

The specific institutional waiting I will analyse will be the *waiting to buy foreign currency*, which occurs in the context of the money order in Cuba. These waiting periods commenced in August 2022, following the Cuban government’s authorisation of foreign currency sales to Cubans at a rate equating to 100 US dollars per transaction (DDC, 2022a, para. 4). By early 2021, Cuba had eliminated its notorious dual currency system, abolishing a special convertible peso rate, technically aimed largely at tourism and foreigners, by switching all transactions to Cuban pesos¹⁵³ (A. Rodríguez, 2022).

¹⁵³ At the start of 2021, Cuba eliminated a long-standing dual currency system, dropping a special type of convertible peso supposedly aimed largely at tourism and foreigners and changing all operations into local currency.

As per several press reports, during the first week of August 2022, the government declared the initiation of US currency purchases at a rate of 120 pesos to the dollar.

The Central Bank President (...) appearing on state-run television on a Wednesday evening, stated that the state-run banking system had established a new rate of 120 pesos to the dollar, in contrast to the official fixed rate of 24 pesos and 115 pesos on the informal market, as reported by independent online news outlet El Toque, the most viewed in the communist-run nation (Frank, 2022).

Concerning the measure, the government declared its complete success but refrained from mentioning specific figures for the cash collected. On the 22nd of August 2022, the sales of dollars and other physical foreign currencies were authorised at an initial rate of 123 pesos per dollar or the equivalent in other currencies (DDC, 2022a).

Following Finance Minister Alejandro Gil's announcement on state television, people flocked to the 37 official exchange houses (known as CADECA) established for this operation (Espinosa, 2022). In Havana, a city with over two million residents, six exchange houses were established for foreign currency sales (Padrón et al., 2022). To obtain the currencies, Cubans typically queue for multiple days, encountering numerous challenges, organisational forms and even social conflicts (J. D. Rodríguez & Izquierdo, 2022) due to the extremely high demand relative to the limited supply.

8.2. Temporality in Waiting: An Analytical Proposal for Time in Waiting Processes from a Materialist Philosophical Perspective

Adopting a materialist philosophical approach, we should discuss the temporality presented by specific waiting processes, rather than viewing waiting as a type of temporality. In other words, it is not that waiting is an aspect of time, but instead, waiting processes are characterised by possessing a specific temporality, among other features. These processes possess a distinct temporal framework, as well as a specific spatial context, in which particular operations occur, constituting them as unique processes. Although empirical research has examined numerous cases, the fundamental limitation associated with the partial perspective resulting from the temporal approximation of waiting processes persists. This limited understanding prevents the inclusion in the analysis of multiple

materials and phenomena from the gnoseological field of these processes that cannot be reduced to time.

Considering this limitation, in the aforementioned article, I have proposed certain aspects that could serve as an introduction to a perspective of temporal analysis, which allows for categorial interchange between dimensions in the study of waiting processes. Here, time is not understood as the fundamental ontological dimension of waiting, but is placed horizontally in a position that would interact dialectically with the rest of the constitutive dimensions of these processes. This conceptualisation enables a more comprehensive analysis than what current approaches can offer. In summary, my perspective aims to dissociate the temporal aspect from itself while maintaining an awareness of its inseparability from the space in which it occurs and the operations within it.

8.2.a Waiting as a finalistic time

One of the defining features of waiting is its inevitability of coming to an *end*. As discussed in the referenced article, various authors (Crapanzano, 1986; Dwyer, 2009; Rotter, 2016; Turnbull, 2016) have examined this issue from different perspectives. Many of these scholars argue that waiting processes have a discernible internal temporal structure with a definite beginning and must ultimately come to an *end*, and this final is typically anticipated and linked to the demands of the process's operations. In the philosophical framework of this discussion, waiting must not only have a chronological final, but the actors who are waiting must also, to some extent, presuppose this *end* or *goal-oriented purpose* for it to be waiting truly. I have referred to this specific *end* using the category *referent* of the waiting process, towards which all the intentional objectives (*aims, plans* and *programs*) followed by the waiters are directed.

From this perspective, in any empirical waiting process, it becomes immediately evident that the time analysed is always directed towards a specific *end*, called, in my perspective, *proleptic goal*, as the tempo/spatial point where the operations point. This finalism is also observed in the institutionalised waits for purchasing foreign currency in Cuba, as demonstrated in the following account. "Various individuals are present in the queue, but the majority claim they purchase foreign currency 'to travel'. Others, like Lázaro, mention they will use the dollars to deposit in their Moneda

Librement convertible (MLC) accounts, a virtual Cuban currency exclusively used for shopping in well-stocked state-run stores” (CEST, 2020).

In this example, the goals of those involved in the waiting (“to travel” [...] to deposit in MLC accounts) are considered. The temporal structure of the waiting is dialectically balanced with these goals, also contributing to the formation of plans and programmes adapted to it. “Nobody wants to be here”, one customer concedes, “but everybody needs the money quickly to purchase tickets. I came with my family: 100 dollars a head, and we're still short” (J. D. Rodríguez & Izquierdo, 2022, para. 17).

Migratory purposes significantly influenced those waiting, prompting them to carry out all the operations required during the waiting, as shown in Cuba’s foreign currency purchasing process. “Customers lose their patience, immersing themselves in their headphones or mentally reciting the day’s list of problems to be solved. The heat is blistering, and some search for a corner in the shade to endure the stodgy rhythm of the waiting” (*idem*). These examples reveal not only the purposes associated with the time in the waiting but also the institutional framework in which they are embedded, making this time institutional and distinguished by specific particularities according to each process.

Since waiting time is situated within the *anthropological space*, it can be classified as an *anthropological time*. That is a time discernible from physical, astronomical, biological time, etc., although it is not impossible to coordinate with these in certain moments and processes. That is to say, waiting and their times materialise in reality in the form of operations governed by norms, that is to say, derived from routines given in a specific geographical and socio/anthropic space. These operations are precisely those that manifest both a certain *chronology* and a particular *chronometry*. In other words, they are operations that have a duration concerning the operations of other phenomena and the duration of the internal parts of the waiting process.

This aspect is crucial because if we can discuss waiting as a form of temporality, it is precisely this characteristic that allows us to denote parts or moments, also temporal, within a process or sequence of operations with identifiable rhythms, either retrospectively or even predetermined. Because of this sequentiality, we can speak of the temporality of waiting. In other words, the internal temporality of waiting is dissociable but not separable from the processual whole that constitutes it as a totality. Similarly, in each process, it is necessary to identify the coordination between the

process times and the institutions (with their specific times) that the waiting process interacts with. These relations vary to the same extent that the *ubication* occupied by the particular waiting process varies within some of the specific axes of this anthropological space or is crossed by several of these axes. This feature of the time in the waiting processes can be observed in the example below.

[I] was there almost an hour before they handed out the day's shifts and thought I would probably have to buy tomorrow, Friday (...). Then, (...) the Cadeca colleague who gives out the slots tells the queue that, as of today, [the queue] is no longer in effect (...), as of 8 December, (...) the day I thought I was close to my 100 dollars, they will only attend to the slots assigned by TICKET¹⁵⁴ (...). Indignation, anger, deceit? Altogether, I feel (Calzadilla, 2022, para. 5).

The example shows some institutional characteristics, not only of the waiting process but also of its temporality. In this way, we can observe its *hylomorphic structure* ("I arrive almost an hour before the day's shifts are distributed"), its systemic morphology ("I'm sure it will be my turn to buy tomorrow, Friday (...)", coexistentiality and its norms ("as of 8 December, (...) the [queue] is no longer in effect"), as well as its axiology.

8.3.b Chronology, chronographies, chronometry and time demarcation referentials within the waits

Elaborated from a materialist perspective, in the body of the study, I have proposed some categorial tools that could be useful when studying time in waiting in its temporality. With this proposal, I did not seek to close the field of analysis of these phenomena. I aimed to address some aspects of the time in the waiting from certain methodological coordinates, providing a starting point for categorising elements not yet studied categorially in existing research.

It is also important to point out that the premises offered for an integrated study of waiting give continuity to an analytical current already in development within the research on these phenomena. This current is based on constructing categorial classifications for the multiple phenomena that populate the gnoseological field of waiting. Researchers such as Catherine Bailey (2019), for example, offer a group of very relevant categories for the study of organisational waiting based, in turn, on the

¹⁵⁴ A mobile phone application for queue management that some organisations in Cuba have started to use.

approaches previously made by other authors: Auyero (2012), Gasparini (1995), Schwartz (1975) and Sellerberg (2008), among others. They have provided us with materials and ideas without which it would have been impossible to take even one step in my proposed direction.

In the specific case of waiting temporality, the material collected in this research field is extensive. Even so, a classification that would order these and other time-related materials within a coherent system was possible. To achieve this, a tertiary division was proposed to distinguish the *chronology*, *chronometry* and *chronography* of the waits. Each of these dimensions corresponded to a set of notions, ideas, and concepts of the gnoseological field of waiting, which together form what we could call the “semantic constellation” (Pearson & Johnson, 1978) of the time of waiting.

Similarly, it was possible to gather objectual materials related to waiting that are often omitted from existing analyses, primarily due to the hypostatic approach to temporality. In this regard, using the DMs category “referential”¹⁵⁵ was proposed to denote the corporeal materials that intervene in the division of sequences, moments, logics, etc., within the temporality of the waits. In this regard, referentials of temporal demarcation were established, classified according to various characteristics, and analysed in relation to the aforementioned dimensions.

8.4. Chronology of the time in the waiting and their demarcation references

The first category proposed in this study aims to analyse the constituent parts or stages of waiting time and their connections. This category, referred to as “Chronology of the waits”, seeks to comprehend the significance and logic of these connections. While previous authors such as Bendixsen and Eriksen (2020), Hall (1959) and Schwartz (1978) have addressed similar aspects, my approach differs as I do not separate the psycho-phenomenological dimension of waiting from the material or objective dimensions, be it social, physical, or biological. Instead, I recognise that waiting time takes on various forms depending on the perspective of analysis and its objectives. Moreover, I

¹⁵⁵ The theory of categorial closure proposes that *referentials* are semantic figures within the gnoseological space. These figures are physical, three-dimensional contents that belong to scientific bodies and gnoseological figures in the field of science. While my use of the term differs from this system, the function of *referentials* in scientific space and the *waiting field* can be coordinated. For more information, refer to the Philosophical Dictionary Handbook of Philosophical Materialism and the analytical introduction at <https://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df196.htm>.

emphasise the plurality of waiting time based on the behaviour of phenomena, which, when related, enable the identification of patterns and transformations.

To analyse how temporal sequences are articulated within processes, observing the different degrees of determination that waiting may present according to multiple factors is necessary. However, waiting always certainly presents some objectively apprehensible structure. For instance, waits can be classified into three degrees of temporal determination: a) high, b) medium and c) low, depending on the institutional organisation of the waiting's internal functioning. To establish a temporal classification of waiting, it was proposed to consider the dialectics between established forms and the materiality of processes.

Another of the proposed classifications will allow us to delimit the areas of analysis or the parts that organise certain sets of temporal phenomena. To do this, I use a classification proposed by Edward Hall (1959) to analyse the "temporal patterns" that social phenomena present, and Hall states these may be *formal* and *informal* and manifest themselves *explicitly* and *implicitly*.

With some adjustments, this classification seemed useful for analysing the internal temporal logic of waiting processes. Accordingly, the *temporal programming* of an institutional waiting may be structured *formally* and *informally* and manifested *implicitly* and *explicitly*. Similarly, waiting time can be placed in any of the three gradations mentioned. These classifications could explain a temporal structure often unknown to certain actors in the waiting process, allowing the waiting subjects greater temporal control. Let us analyse how this is possible, using these categories in some examples.

In 2022, the company in charge of developing an application in Cuba to control waiting processes in foreign exchange offices (Xetid) ¹⁵⁶ stated that its system would avoid physical queues in the exchange offices. In this research terminology, it would be said that it would reduce the *degree of presence in the vicinity of the* institutions. Moreover, it would transform the initially *monotopic* waiting (*located in the contours and interior of the bureaux de change*) into a much better structured *polytopic* waiting. Temporally, operations would be carried out mainly outside the bureaux of

¹⁵⁶ According to the company, by the end of January 2023, the application will be available "in all 37 CADECAs branches in the country" (DDC, 2022b).

exchange *interior* (the longest periods), significantly reducing the operational time on the *outskirts* while maintaining the same duration in the CADECAS *interior*¹⁵⁷.

From a global perspective, this process exhibits a temporal chronology with a medium degree of institutional organisation for waiting. Although the existence of instruments and technologies for planning and organising the time and operations of the process is verifiable, materially, these function by articulating an explicitly presented (*formal*) organisational programming, which advances in parallel to an *informal one*, implicitly certain in the operations that the waiting actors have to undertake. This kind of analysis could be pointed out if this were correlational research of the organisational mechanisms established to manage a particular waiting process.

Even so, it should be said that a chronological organisation of the management of the process, such as the one analysed, is much more efficient than the one implemented at the beginning of the sales, when, according to various sources: "hundreds of Cubans queued up from the early hours of Tuesday morning to get the first slots in banks and Casas de Cambio (CADECA) throughout the country in order to buy dollars from the Government" (...) (CEST, 2020). Here, the operations related to the possible waiting that the organisation managed and *formally* recognised from the *convexity* were only those circumscribed within the limits of the *surroundings*, and sometimes the *outskirts*, of the offices.

Although the organisationally structured chronological plan was made explicit from the outset and responded to a type of *convex* planning, the tension generated by this organisation, along with interactions with other institutions and their temporalities, ultimately shaped the material morphology of both waiting and its associated times.

8.5. Chronologically monochronic and polychronic waits

Within the chronology of waiting, I have incorporated its temporal morphology, which involves the analysis of the temporal sequences into which a process can be divided. To this end, my proposal has

¹⁵⁷ The *plans* and *programs* were intended to structure the process from a certain perspective. However, in practice, they created different dynamics than planned, altering the *projected goals* and resulting in a completely different scenario. This fact was confirmed by several service users who commented on a press article about the subject.

suggested two very simple classifications. Specifically, morphologically simple waits present a single global temporal sequence, referred to as 1) *monochronic waits*¹⁵⁸. Secondly, temporally compound processes, which I call 2) *polychronic waits*¹⁵⁹, where the waiting presents a temporal structure divided into different parts or sequences, which have different pattern operations and sometimes even require a different spatial positioning for each of these parts or moments.

I have divided the *complex* temporal structure or *polychronic* waits into two types, according to the functioning of their parts: a) *synchronic* or b) *diachronic*. The first a) would be characterised by articulating several processes in the same temporal sequence. In other words, two or more processes that form part of the same global waiting occur simultaneously¹⁶⁰.

Diachronic waits, b) are characterised by consecutive, non-parallel temporal sequences that are co-dependent and consecutive within all or specific parts of the same process.

Let us see how these categories would work in concrete cases.

According to the director of CADECA in Cuba, referring to the mobile application mentioned above, each CADECA branch would have its (virtual) waiting room where “clients (...) only need to present their ID card when attending the offices (...) if they do not keep the appointment, the online reservation is automatically lost” (DDC, 2022b, para. 2).

In this particular case, the temporal structure is not strictly monochronic, as it involves two distinct temporal, spatial, and operational segments, but it tends towards diachrony. To simplify the process, the application’s “virtual” waiting room was designed to reduce it to only two consecutive temporal sequences. The first sequence ended when the application alerted the user that they could come to the office to make their purchase on a specific date. The second sequence was when the

¹⁵⁸ These are one-time waits that occur in a structured sequence from beginning to end without interruptions or segmentation. Examples include waiting in line for a procedure, purchasing a product, entering a cinema, being served in a restaurant, and waiting for a relative’s surgery to be completed.

¹⁵⁹ The categories of monochronic and polychronic time, which we use in my analysis, were originally introduced by Edward Hall in his book *The Silent Language* (1959) to describe temporal characteristics of cultures. We are not introducing new categories, but rather, reinterpreting Hall’s categories in the context of waiting processes.

¹⁶⁰ In this case, we find multiple circular waits, where actors initiate several chains of operations leading to different parts of the process and simultaneously wait for the results of one or more of these segments.

user arrived at the office and had to wait on-site for the staff to carry out the necessary operations, which could not be timed in the same way as the first sequence.

Even though the waiting time could be extended chronometrically, this organisation attempted to simplify it operationally and spatially. However, user testimonies indicated that the actual *chronological structure* was evidently *polychronic*, *polytopic* and *diachronic*. The testimony of a service user illustrates this through her experience with it. *Bel* said:

[I] registered on 30 November (...) at the CADECA at 21 and 42. It is 28 December, and I have only gone to 31 places. Every time I pass (...) by (...) CADECA is empty, and the workers are chatting inside with no customers. I hope to buy it before the end of 2024. I recommend better studying the functioning and the response time of CADECA to a user's failure and how the queue is processed (CubaDebate, 2022).

Here, there is a conflict between the organisationally prescribed temporal structure, the objective material operations that this process demands of those who wait, and a variation in the *convexly* projected chronology. Through the temporal morphology that users objectively observe, this has become polychronic, manifesting other parts than those conceived. "Every time I pass by CADECA, it is empty, and the workers are chatting (...) no customers". Both these operations and these spaces (passing through CADECA) are alien to the organisation's planning, so logically, this time is not considered either. These actions accumulate, adding synchronous times within the general process, increasing its complexity beyond the organisation's anticipated limits.

8.6. Chronography of the time in the waiting and their demarcation references

One aspect I have analysed involves the specific mechanisms actors employ to gather information, enabling them to structure temporal logic and plan their actions. These mechanisms allow actors to develop *plans* and *programmes* based on distinct temporal sequences. To account for these communication mechanisms that reflect the logical structure of time in waiting processes, I propose the category of "chronography of waiting".

The chronography of waiting focuses on the objective material configuration of the waiting process and the subjective "experience of time". It aims to describe the mechanisms of transmission

and communication of the temporal logic existing in a waiting process, which are traced in terms of the operative subjects interacting with them. The key question involves determining the means or mechanisms that make these *normativities* known and communicated within each institutionalised waiting process. In other words, how the temporal logic of the waiting process is transmitted and made visible to the actors involved in the process.

Chronographic aspects play a crucial role in the internal dialectic of waiting processes within institutions, as well as in the relationships between actors and the waiting process itself. In other words, dialectical relations within the chronographic dimension of waiting are vital for both the subjective conception of time and the objective material configuration of Institutionalised waiting time.

The term “referential” is used again in the context of the waiting chronography, but this refers to the physical objects or phenomena that signify the connections between different temporal moments or spaces within a waiting process. These reference points, arranged in a specific order, can take different forms. I provided some basic classifications, but actual practice may reveal others. The chronographic referentials can be categorised as: a) visual, b) auditory, c) audiovisual and d) rhetorical.

Examples of chronographic referentials include information boards, written documents, film materials, computer software, images, maps, signs, symbols, the information provided by organisational agents, customer service windows or bureaus and more. Other referentials, such as narratives, testimonies, verbal communication, stories, anecdotes and songs, can also be employed simultaneously.

Let us look at this issue in detail, applied to cases related to the waits I have been analysing. “When people lose track of time, CADECA opens its doors and an official appears. He is holding an inspector’s tablet in his hands and pauses before pronouncing the first name (...), the customers rush towards him and shout to the stragglers: ‘Come on, they’re calling, get up!’” (J. D. Rodríguez & Izquierdo, 2022, para. 10).

Here, the chronography reflects both formal temporal patterns “CADECA opens its doors” and informal ones “Come on, they’re calling, get up!”. These partially reflect the *convex* and *concave* logic established for this process. A similar dynamic occurs in waiting, as previously discussed,

Cadeca de 23 y J. Thursday 8 December 2022. 8: 30 am. I have been queuing for almost 20 days (...). I dialled unsuccessfully at 4:30 in the morning several times until the day arrived (...) when they gave me my turn (...). Then, (...) the CADECA colleague (...) tells the queue that, as of today, it is no longer in effect (...). I turn around and ask a lucky woman waiting for her digital turn, and she tells me that just yesterday, several Cadecas had already collapsed within a short time of starting the new system (Calzadilla, 2022, pp. 1–3).

In both cases, chronographic references exhibit chronology, which can be either formal or informal: (a) Visual: [formal] “CADECA opens its doors”, “an official appears”, “a tablet”. (d) Rhetorical: [formal] (the official) “pronounces the first name”, “the CADECA colleague (...) tells the queue” [informal] “shouting” “Come on, they’re already calling, get up!” (“a fortunate person”) “she tells me that just yesterday, several Cadecas had already collapsed within a short time”.

In another testimony, (c) audiovisual chronographic reference points are evident in the mobile application used to manage the process, according to some users. “When you enter the application (...), you have to go to the waiting room and wait for a ticket that arrives the day before with an SMS” (CubaDebate, 2022).

Here, the signal in the application, visual and audible as the phone emits an alert sound, is the *chronometric referential* that accounts for a time structure, indicating the operations to be carried out at each moment.

8.7. Chronometry and demarcation referentials of the time in the waiting

The final dimension analysed, chronometry, concerns measuring objective time segments in waiting processes. It answers the question, how many years, days, hours, minutes, seconds, etc., does a waiting process require? To operationalise this dimension, I have used the category of chronometric referentials. These elements mark the objective rhythms in each time segment and measure the durations of the sequences present in the waits.

Chronometric references include mechanical, biological, atmospheric and celestial body cycles, among others. Logical-behavioural references pertain to operations, actions, ceremonies, etc., executed by specific operative subjects that indicate specific durations.

Chronometric referential points include sounds, images, clocks, apps, mobiles, electronic devices with light, sound or both, sirens, bells, human operations, voices, animal behaviour and operations, and phenomena linked to physical/natural, biological and astronomical transformation cycles, among many others.

Chronometric referential sequences can be classified as either a) ordinal or b) cardinal. *Ordinal sequences* (a) are established in a fixed *linear order*, while (b) *cardinal* sequences manifest from specific events or moments and do not follow a fixed *linear* order. Waiting processes typically involve both sequence types, as demonstrated in the Cuban currency exchange example.

Lázaro, a 57-year-old man, kisses and crosses himself with a 100-dollar note inside a bureau de change in Havana as a sign of victory and before the astonished gaze of the workers: “I’ve been waiting since 3 a.m.” he tells Efe. (...) Despite arriving very early in the morning, Lázaro received “shift 37” out of six available shifts. (...) The CADECA opened at 8:00 local time (Espinosa, 2022, pp. 1–5).

This highlights the presence of ordinal and cardinal time sequences in waiting processes. Lázaro’s waiting for currency exchange had an ordinal structure, from his arrival at 3:00 a.m. until the moment he was able to make the transaction. The temporal sequences of this waiting process followed one another in an almost *monochronic* pattern. Conversely, cardinal times in the waiting have internal rhythms that aren’t stable or mathematically regular. However, they are instead governed by various factors such as specific events, random chains of operations, organizational measures, spatial translations, and other factors. “‘It’s taking a long time’, one customer remarked reluctantly. The Cadeca is supposed to provide information on how much currency it has available since the number of dollars to be sold depends on that number. However, it hides the figure so that the ‘awake’ refrain from making calculations and drawing conclusion” (J. D. Rodríguez & Izquierdo, 2022, para. 8).

According to the testimony, at least in the *informal –concave– chronology*, one of the *referentials* used by the waiters is the number of dollars the office has for sale that day. Since the maximum amount to buy is 100 dollars, and sales operations have a certain regular duration, people use this amount as a reference to calculate the time it will take to buy. That is, whether they are due on that particular day or another.

Temporal length is considered within the *chronometrical* aspects of waits. This aspect is addressed in the literature on waits using the label “duration”. Based on the logic presented thus far, I propose considering whether the waiting is monochronic or polychronic to establish its temporal length, as timing affects both typologies. The difference lies in the number of segments to be taken into account, where the former (monochronic) will be mono-segmental ($TS=1$)¹⁶¹, and the latter (polychronic) will be plurisegmental ($TS>1$).

Various authors (Auyero, 2012; Gasparini, 1995; Gell, 2021; Hall, 1959) have addressed this issue in their analyses of waiting time, finding different ways to establish when a waiting is long or short or medium. The most common approach is the experiential psycho-phenomenological one, which refers to the experience or opinion of the waiting subject. In other words, the waiting will be long or short if those waiting say so.

My proposal prioritises the institutional perspective over individual opinions, while addressing the latter’s importance. I have defended the hypothesis that the objective reference elements that could be used to establish the length of waits are given at two different levels. The first is internal to the waiting itself, and the second is external.

Internally, the “with respect to what” the waiting is long or short is fundamental. This aspect will often be determined by specific plans and programs and their associated prolepses that actors and institutions objectively carry out from their respective positions. In other words, rational planning is adjusted to the institutional possibilities offered by the waiting in order to establish projects to overcome the process. In essence, the purposes of operations and their respective adjustments to specific plans and programmes largely constitute the time reference of waits.

I also propose considering relationships waits establish with intersecting institutions, both within and outside the process. This approach allows us to understand the temporality of waits as an institutional structure involving a set of proleptic operations related to other institutions, regardless of their similarity. It’s a system of relationships between aspects of a phenomenon, viewed in their *surrounding* context. Context is crucial, as waits can’t be analysed in isolation without considering their institutional context. Concrete examples can better illustrate these ideas.

¹⁶¹ TS stands for “temporal segment”.

In 2022, Cuban CADECAS experienced complicated institutional waiting processes at the onset of foreign currency sales. This measure produced discontent and a climate of social tension that, together with the rest of the difficulties of the historical moment, threatened to escalate into more acute conflicts. As a result, the authorities launched the electronic application mentioned above, and those interested in buying dollars would make a reservation in advance through it (DDC, 2022a). As the following testimony attests, this app was followed to eliminate the physical queues with all this implied in terms of wear and tear on the waiters. “The line stretches all the way to the corner of the street and turns halfway down the other side under the intense Havana summer sun. Icela, 57, holds shift number 51 and has been sitting on the pavement since the shop's curtain was raised” (Espinosa, 2022, para. 4).

This application would establish the relevant benchmarks for the chronometric timing of the process. However, formal mechanisms of this type were not implemented in all provinces. The formal time structure established in Camagüey, where the fieldwork was carried out, was very simple. An *ordinal* timetable was established, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with no further nuances, which, given the existing demand and under the blackout/lighting regimes faced by the population, was inefficient to manage both the sales process and even minimally reduce the waits for these associates. This led to 30-day waits under stressful conditions and high operability, analysed further below.

Alternative: In the capital, applying these mechanisms yielded different results. “This app was very useful for me at CADECA yesterday. I made a purchase at the C of 23 and J, and everything was very easy and fast. Yes, I had to wait 20 days to buy, but in the end, I could make the purchase since the waiting room guarantees your turn. It’s slow, but at least it’s secure” (CubaDebate, 2022).

The testimony points to a *polychronic* waiting in two segments. The first, of clearly long duration (20 days), is to be carried out outside the office *content*. The second, “very easy and quick”, started *around* the offices once the corresponding shift was reached and ended *around* the offices when finally reaching the sales counter.

9. Fourth Partial Conclusion

In this section, I analysed the temporal aspects of waiting processes from a materialist perspective. My analysis was based on the results of three articles: “Processes and mechanisms of temporalisation, some categories for its analysis”, “The idea of Time in Philosophical Materialism. A general critique of the idea of time used in the waiting research”, and “Some useful concepts, notions, and categories for the study of the temporality of waiting”.

The first of these articles aimed to elaborate explanatory categorial tools for the temporality of certain social phenomena, including waiting.

- ✓ The fundamental characteristic of this analysis was that it was structured based on the dynamic materials processes that make up the sequential orderings of the constituent parts or moments of the phenomena and not on the ideas of time associated with them.
- ✓ I have called the phenomena involved in this order *temporalisation* processes or *mechanisms*.
- ✓ These temporalisation processes or mechanisms were classified in three ways. From their *localisation* in the *anthropological space*, the indicators used for temporalisation and the material phenomena that objectively and sequentially patterned the temporality of the social institutions analysed.

The second of these papers critically analyses the approaches taken to time in waiting processes while simultaneously proposing the need for a new paradigm for its analysis.

- ✓ In function of this reconfiguration of the analytical paradigm of time in waiting, the philosophical-materialist theory of time from which the general critique of the idea of time in research on waiting was to be carried out was presented.
- ✓ The critique of the time-centric conceptions of waits, as well as of waits as temporality, resulted in waits being considered as a) *singular times*, b) *ontologically indeterminate*, diffuse or negative (non-times), c) *fundamentally experiential* or phenomenological and d) *axiologically determined*, generally negatively.

My study proposed a dialectical alternative as a critical response to this conception. As a result, it was established that:

- ✓ The temporality of waiting, like waiting itself, is plural. There is not one, but many times in the waiting.
- ✓ The waits and their associated temporalities are objective material phenomena, positively identified as such, and in no case ontologically negative, liminal, diffuse or any other classification of this nature.
- ✓ The waiting analysed by the social and human sciences presents institutionalised times because the waiting processes themselves are institutional. It is around these institutional temporalities that social actors create their temporal experiences concerning waiting.
- ✓ The waiting periods and their particular times are certainly associated with some axiological classification, but this is not, in principle, necessarily negative; rather, it varies from one process to another concerning multiple variables that will have to be explained in each particular case.

Finally, the last paper proposed a set of categories useful for the temporal analysis of waiting processes.

- ✓ In this regard, the idea was put forward to classify the time of the waits as *finalistic* and institutional/anthropological. The theory of anthropological space of philosophical materialism was used for their classification as temporally *radial*, *circular* or *angular* waits.
- ✓ Some categories were outlined for classifying the parts or components of waiting time. Specifically, a classification of waiting time was proposed based on its 1) *chronology*, 2) *chronography* or 3) *chronometry*.
- ✓ The *chronological* aspects point to the segments or moments that the waiting time presents and the logic in which these parts are concatenated with each other or other temporal phenomena external to the process.
- ✓ Concerning the chronological analysis, the categories 1) *monochronic* or 2) *polychronic* waits were constructed in terms of their chronological morphology. The former would be related to waits that present a single temporal segment, and the latter would present a temporal

structure divided into parts. The *polychronic* waits, in turn, were classified according to the temporal organisation of their constituent segments as a) *synchronic* or b) *diachronic*.

✓ The *chronography* of waiting will analyse the mechanisms that in a waiting process mark, show, expose, communicate, etc., the temporal logic (*chrono-logic*) that internally governs the material waiting as such.

✓ The chronometry of waits will measure the objective time segments, manifested in the waiting, as specific *time* units. That is, in the form of days, hours, minutes, years, etc. As part of this dimension, the temporal length of the waits, their duration, is included, for which the classification as waits with a) long, b) medium and c) short duration was proposed.

✓ The idea of *referential* was proposed to classify the phenomena grouped within each of these dimensions mentioned above, used as chronological, chronographic and chronometric *demarcation referentials*.

Final Conclusions

This thesis has advocated for a dialectical revision of traditional waiting study methods, presenting an innovative theoretical framework rooted in a systematic and categorial perception of this phenomenon. This framework reinterprets the main theoretical foundations traditionally employed for explaining these processes.

My approach contends that waiting is not a singular phenomenon but rather a plural one. Instead of considering it homogeneous or purely temporal, I propose viewing waiting as a process involving multiple dimensions filled with dialectical components and dynamics. These dimensions include temporal, spatial, and operational aspects. This theoretical perspective aims to expand our understanding of waiting beyond a purely phenomenological experience. Besides, it recognises it as a multifaceted process incorporating individual psychology while acknowledging its social dimension. By doing so, it positions waiting as a social institution. Consequently, this approach highlights the diverse nature of waiting, encompassing various forms of institutionalised waiting rather than treating it as a uniform phenomenon.

From a values-based perspective, this thesis suggests that waiting is fundamentally neutral and highly dependent on each case context for its axiological classification. Contrasting with the notion of waiting as an ontologically negative event, my perspective interprets these processes as a positive, objective and materially discernible phenomenon. This fresh perspective enables a more precise empirical exploration of social waiting, broadening the scope of waiting studies to include a wider range of phenomena that current theories may overlook.

The philosophical materialism approach used in this thesis helps structure the historical evolution of the concept of waiting. It includes connecting with other technical and categorial concepts and ideas such as secular and non-secular hope, expectation, time, and others. In this regard, I concluded that the theological inversion of Eschatological Hope significantly influences contemporary waiting concepts, absorbed into the temporal notion of post-feudal industrial modernity linked to Protestantism. This absorption often downplays waiting's spatial and operational aspects, leading to overemphasise its temporal element. The contemporary understanding of waiting requires revision, particularly within social and human sciences, based on the hypostasis of the temporal dimension of waiting. This study aims to challenge this perspective by critiquing the notions shaping the modern

concept of waiting and proposing a materialist approach to examine waiting beyond time and subjective experience.

Examining waiting from an institutional perspective has led to a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. This thesis champions the importance of this perspective and argues that broadening the analytical spectrum to include other dimensions of these phenomena is essential for advancing the field of waiting studies.

The research has focused on three crucial aspects of waiting – its spatial, operational, and temporal dimensions – and their interplay.

Regarding its spatial dimension, although some authors have acknowledged the importance of space in waiting, there is a need for a more systematic analysis and categorial tools in this area. Drawing on philosophical materialism, I have proposed a set of categories that serve as a foundation for analysing the spatial aspects of waiting and their institutional nature. I have suggested new categories for studying these waiting spaces' structural and functional aspects, considering their dialectical relationship with the temporal and operational dimensions of the processes. In plain language, this means that the physical or virtual location where waiting occurs, such as a waiting room, a queue, or an online platform, has a significant influence on the objective shape of the waiting and, consequently, how social actors experience the processes, an aspect often overlooked in traditional waiting studies.

The operational analysis demonstrated they had yet to be thoroughly explored despite considering waiting's operations in extant research. Previous studies demonstrated a certain degree of preference for the temporal and subjective aspects of waiting. However, the operational morphology of waiting, found to be intertwined with institutional structures, was analysed using established categories and terms. Simply put, the 'operations' during waiting – the activities people engage in while waiting – are inherently tied to the structures that govern the waiting process and are tidily connected with the process's time and space. In my conclusion, the operational dimension of the waiting, and not the temporal one, is the encompassing dimension from which the rest (space and time) could be explained.

The analysis of waiting processes from a temporal perspective has revealed the pluralistic nature of temporality in waiting, providing valuable insights into the objective and institutional nature of time. It has become evident that waiting encompasses multiple objective temporalities within its process.

Furthermore, waits and their associated temporalities are objective material phenomena that can be identified. This notion implies that waiting is not confined to a single timeframe but encompasses multiple "temporalities". Instead of talking about waiting time, or waiting as a particular kind of time, I propose to talk about the times in the waiting processes.

Generally speaking, research has successfully linked the spatial, operational, and temporal elements of waiting. It concludes that a comprehensive understanding of these processes' hinges on the relationship between anticipatory actions and the institutional nature of these operations. This includes considering the psychological and subjective behaviours exhibited during waiting periods. This assertion has been validated through the empirical application of the categories developed using my methodology, specifically in the modern Cuban context. In this setting, each critical aspect of waiting has been successfully scrutinised and confirmed.

Grounded in Gustavo Bueno's Philosophical Materialist perspective, I have sought to introduce a new perspective in understanding the waiting process, offering a novel institutional viewpoint for its analysis within social sciences. Furthermore, based on the material and institutional perspective advocated here, I have constructed a set of categories that could be used for empirical research. However, it is important to acknowledge that the subject of waiting and its objective and institutional nature remains a vast field that requires further exploration. The research conducted thus far has laid the initial groundwork for a new understanding of this fascinating subject from a materialist perspective. It could enhance its gnoseological status and contribute to our overall knowledge. Nevertheless, the dialectical dialogue surrounding waiting continues, inviting further discourse and exploration to deepen our understanding and expand upon the findings presented in this research.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1

Translated for Spanish original:

Un amor para decir te espero
Una piel donde aprender fragancia
(...)

Un danzón para esperar el alba
Un fulgor donde empezar de cero
(...)

Se va el danzón (*Para decir: "te espero"*)
Se va el danzón (*Para aprender fragancia*)
Se va el danzón cuando del monte baja un son
(*Para empezar de cero en la distancia*)

Se va el danzón (*Para los solitarios*)
Se va el danzón (*Y para la esperanza*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kulZrTifXWY>

Appendix 2

Translated for Spanish original:

Yo fui feliz
Descalzo entre los ciclones
Cuando no teníamos nada
Bastaba con las canciones
Y ayer salí y solo vi en los balcones
El bostezo de la espera, el miedo
Y coronas de flores. (...)
El bostezo, la maldita espera,
Y coronas de flores.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNN0y-c2EOM>

Appendix 3

Translated for Spanish original:

Tripeando con la vida va por esa Habana,
quiere tener un día práctico.
Pero se amaneca en el veneno de los carros viejos clásicos.
Presiento a esa gente que vive con menos
Sólo alucinado una quimera,
En medio del hechizo ha nacido el oficio, de la espera.
Y la Habana quiere alegrón, almendrón

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsHxgv8gzYU>

Appendix 4



Translation:
Heaven or Hell?...
"Where there are no queues, please!"



Translated for Spanish original:

Sale a las cinco en punto de la madrugada
hacia el mercado donde suele ir a comprar
Mi vecinita y a esa hora tan temprana
Ya no puede ningún turno ella alcanzar
Yo no me explico cómo llega tanta gente
Si hasta las cinco no se puede circular
Vienen volando todos juntos de repente
Y te dejan con las ganas de marcar
es un misterio este tumulto sorprendente
Que no lo puede resolver ni Scotland Yard.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB26dD2zzkc>

Appendix 5

“Do you know what the animal with the longest tail¹ in Cuba is: (...) the chicken?” (Redacción de CiberCuba, 2019, para. 1).

With this joke, the security guard of a supermarket in Havana referred to a queueing process, which around thirty people were undertaking at the entrance of a Havana supermarket, according to a press article from 2019.

¹ The essence of this joke lies in the dual meaning of the Spanish word 'cola', which can refer to both 'tail' and 'queue'. In this context, the joke cleverly plays on the double entendre, using the word 'cola' to create a humorous connection between the animal's tail and the long waiting lines in Cuba.

Appendix 6



In another report, a user remarked, *“Cuba has always been the paradise of queues, but now we’ve surpassed ourselves: we’ve invented the online queue”* (Vicent, 2020). In this reference it is pointed out the existence of waiting processes even in the “virtual” world.

Appendix 7

This can be seen even more clearly in the following excerpt, taken from the report of agreements adopted by socio-political organizations in the city of Havana to structure both the processes of selling to the IPN population.

In view of the irregularities in the functioning of the CCL groups, the state of opinion of the population, the distribution and sales systems, as well as the results of the analyses carried out at the different levels of management in the province and the country, all point to the need to reformulate the system established to date. The decisions taken are:

1. Eliminate the LCC groups.
2. Reorganize marketing and progressively establish its implementation.
3. Guarantee by the administration of the establishment and its superiors, that the assurance of the selected products available covers the totality of the nuclei linked in the defined cycle, which allows to control the deliveries according to the established per-capita and to avoid unbalance within the municipality.
4. Consecutively number the nuclei, taking into account the warehouses linked to the establishment, thus facilitating controlled and planned access. For the consecutive numbering,

the winery and the district shall be taken into account and a ticket shall be drawn up showing the number that corresponds to each nucleus for purchase.

5. Extended sales hours will be established (Tuesdays and Thursdays) from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, in order to facilitate shopping for working consumers. Organization outside the shop will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The shopping days will be by nuclei according to the established enumeration and one day a week (Sunday) will be set for the nuclei that cannot shop on the corresponding day, (...) The shopping day for each nucleus will be established in order of consecutive number, in correspondence with the daily sales capacity of the establishment, (...). (Citizen's Portal, 2022; ACN Newsroom, 2021).

Appendix 8

In this government report π structures are constantly present, but rarely as clearly defined as in the following:

The municipality will designate a person with prestige and authority in the community to control the quantity of products that the establishment receives daily, with the objective of defining the number of nuclei that can make the purchase during the day. For this purpose, the person selected before opening the establishment will check the stock of products by means of an official document and will define and inform the nuclei that will buy during the day, and at the end of the sale will control the fulfillment of the plan. (...). The vulnerable, defined by the municipal governments, will be able to buy on the day that corresponds to them according to the numbering established according to the approved planning, being able to be assisted by another person or messenger, presenting the supply booklet and identity card. (...) (ACN Editorial Office, 2021).

Appendix 9



Appendix 10



One of the most known spaces for the characterization of the IWOEGs was *#LaColaChallenge*, which became a trend on Cuban Twitter accounts (Albornoz, 2019).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtAgwdgPB> and

https://twitter.com/hashtag/LaColaChallenge?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Cwtm%5E1125497503351287815%7Ctwgr%5E8b55e27a2e7437a02297b95ce659fc415d813252%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fcubanospoelmundo.com%2F2019%2F05%2F10%2Flacolachallenge-reto-cubanos-reportar-colas%2F&src=hashtag_click

Appendix 11

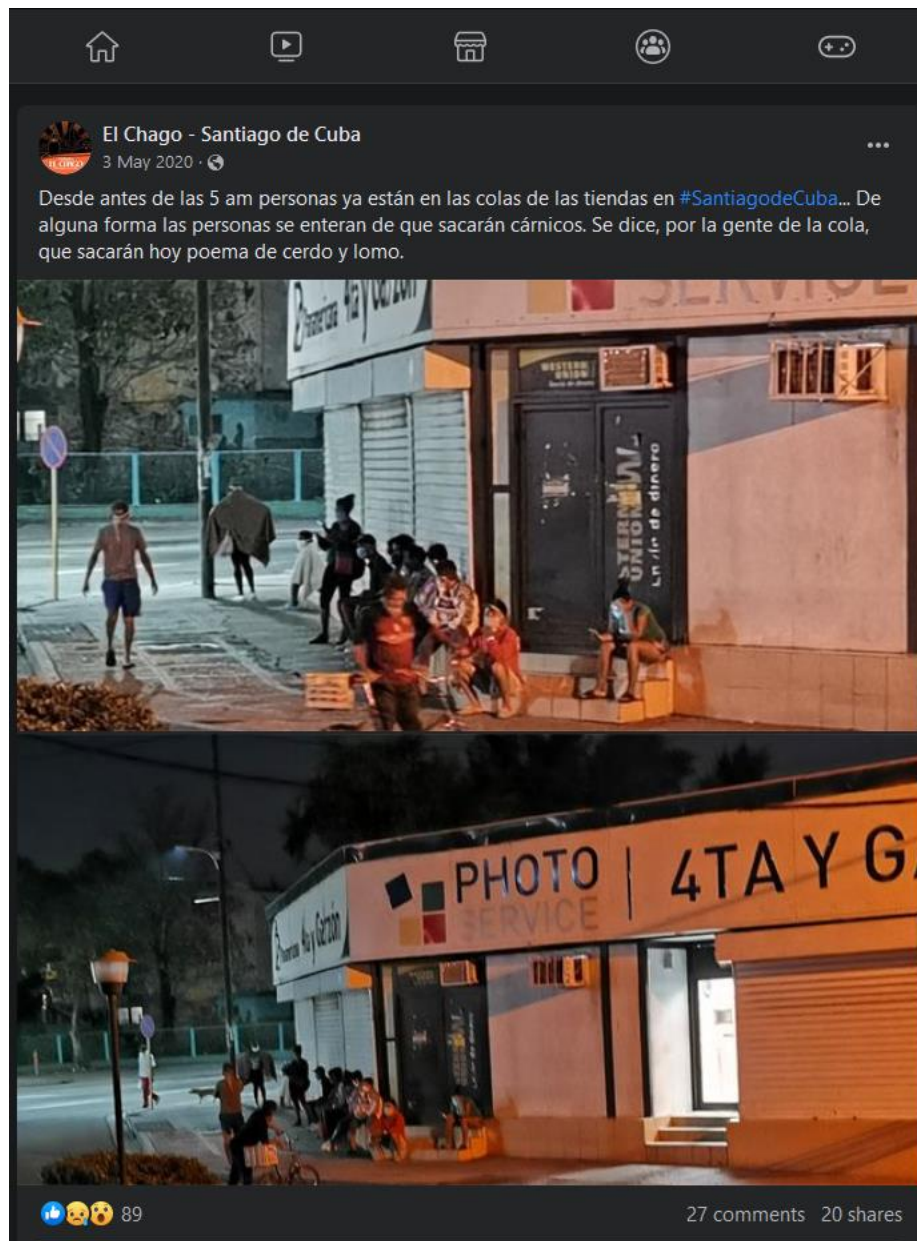


Mobile applications, software's and "ration books" are other nonceremonial institutions for manage waiting processes in Cuba

Appendix 12

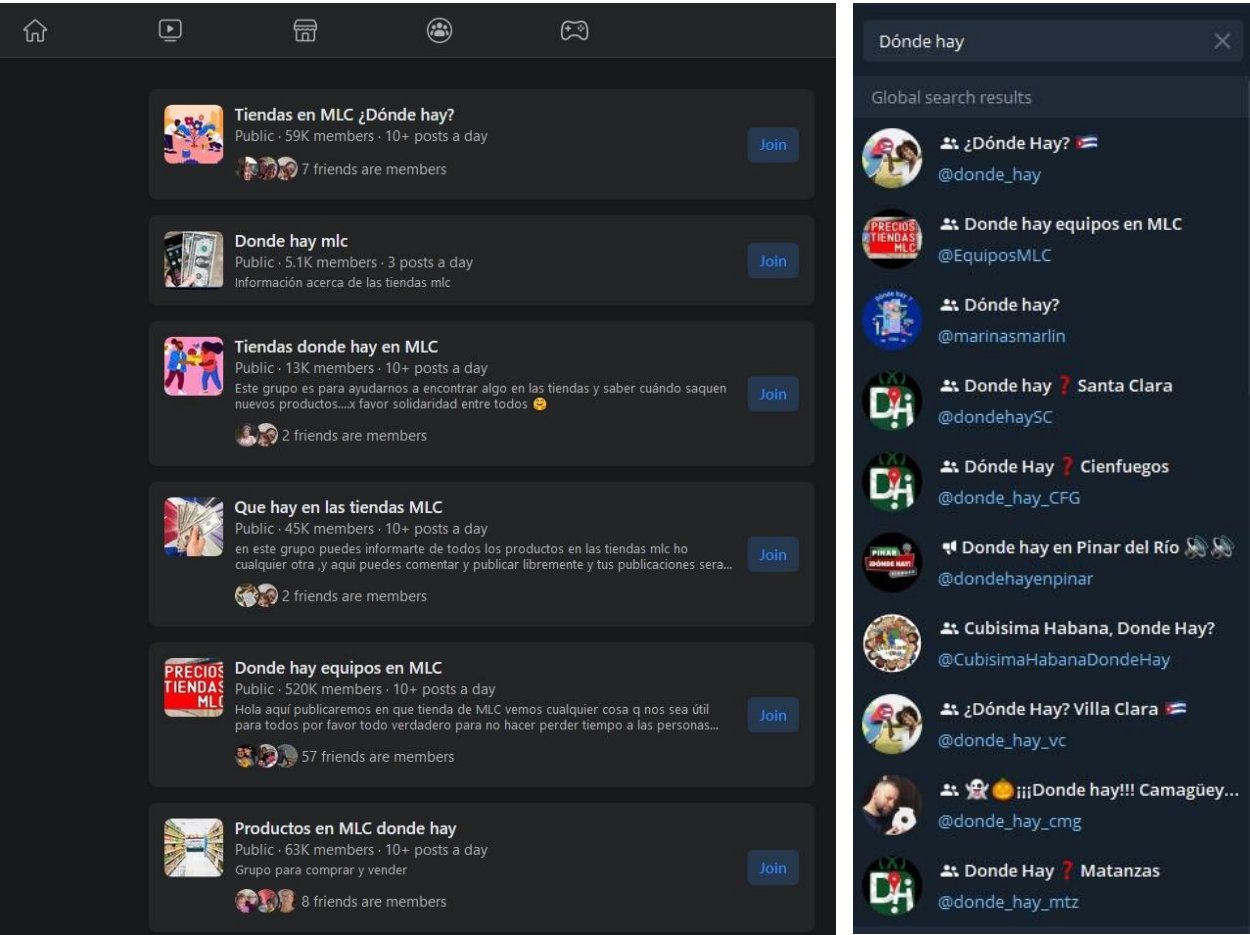


Appendix 13



People waiting to buy meat in Santiago de Cuba

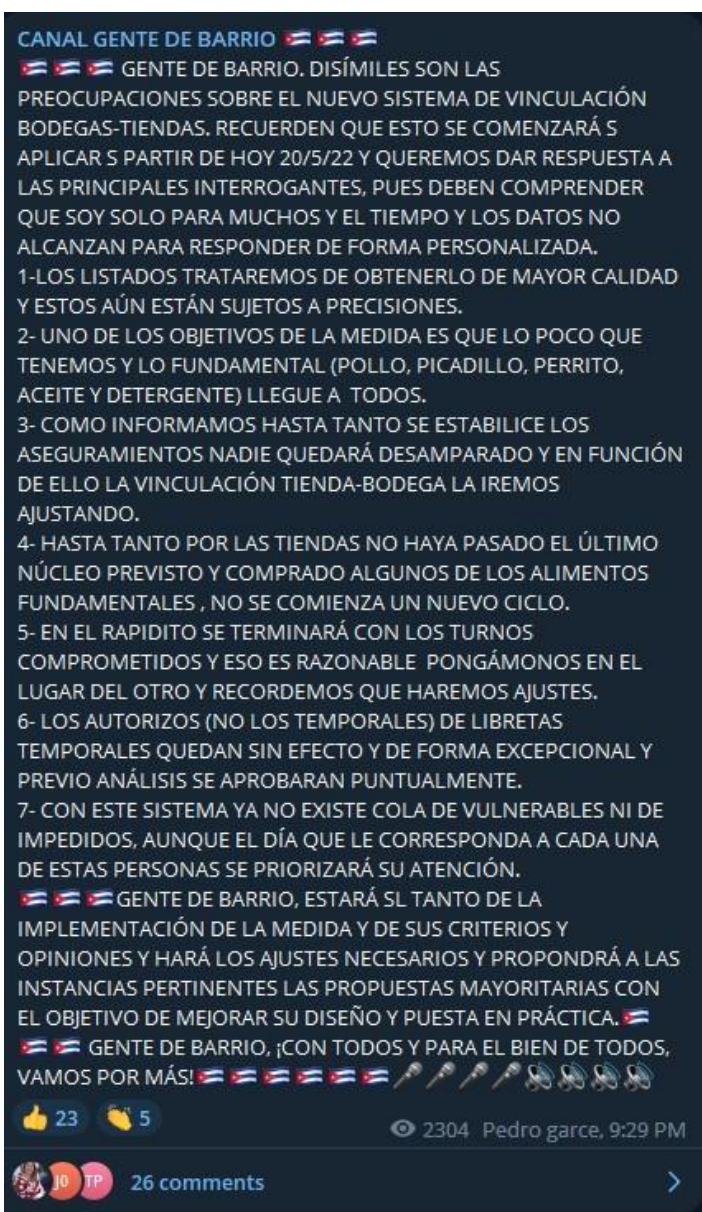
Appendix 14



Facebook and Telegram group “@donde_hay, (Where there are)

Appendix 15

Likewise, some groups epitomise the rules set for waiting and obtaining crucial goods. This applies to the Telegram group "@gente de barrio" from Plaza de la Revolución, Havana. The group shares product availability across local shops, issues guidelines on selling and restocking products, and manages the waiting process. This was illustrated in a May 2022 post:



"There are different concerns about the new system of linking wineries and shops (...). 1. We will try to obtain better quality listings, and these are still subject to clarification. 2. One of the objectives of the measure is that the little we have (...) reaches everyone. 3. (...) Until the assurance is stabilised, nobody will be left stranded (...). 4. Until the last of the planned nucleus has passed through the shops and some of the basic foodstuffs have been bought, a new cycle will not begin. 5. In the quickie, we will finish with the committed shifts (...) Let's put ourselves in the place of the other and remember that we will make adjustments. 6. The authorisations (...) of temporary passbooks are no longer in effect and only exceptionally and (...). 7. With this system, there is no longer a queue of vulnerable or disabled people, although on the day that corresponds to each of these people, their attention will be prioritised."

Appendix 16



Photograms of “Cuba: High prices, lines and shortages”. DW Documentary 2022

Appendix 17



Its implementation created a challenging situation for many Cubans. Numerous shortages (Bravo, 2021), new dissatisfaction, long queues (Febles, 2020), a dramatic price increase, the end of subsidies, and many other social changes that made the life of the average Cuban even more difficult. Consequently, Cubans started to demand social media from the government "beyond mere sloganeering" (Mendoza & Henson, 2021), despite the consequences that such actions were exact (Alonso et al., 2020; Cubadebate, 2020). According to the Cuban writer

Norge Espinosa Mendoza (2021), "[i]n 2021, the island's resistance and hope [was] put to the test once again".

From January 1, 2021, the Cuban government embarked on the "Tarea Ordenamiento" (economic restructuring), addressing four key areas: a) currency unification and Cuban peso exchange rate adjustment, b) gradual elimination of excessive state subsidies, c) income and salary reform, and d) Cuban economy reform (Karell, 2021; Marín, 2021). These reforms, legally established in the "Gacetas Oficiales" (Official Gazettes) by late 2020, had been announced and widely discussed since 2019's end (Canal Caribe, 2021; Febles, 2020).

Their implementation resulted in numerous challenges for Cubans, including product shortages (Bravo, 2021), dissatisfaction, long queues (Febles, 2020), dramatic price hikes, subsidy termination, and other social changes, exacerbating the average Cuban's difficulties. Hence, despite potential repercussions, Cubans began demanding more than mere sloganeering from their government on social media (Mendoza & Henson, 2021; Alonso et al., 2020; Cubadebate, 2020). As Cuban writer Norge Espinosa Mendoza (2021) observed, "In 2021, the island's resistance and hope [were] once again tested."

Appendix 18

Nothing is less pleasant than a queue in a park in La Víbora, especially (...), if it's cold, and (...) you're pissing yourself (...). Someone asks the last (...). And I, prosaically, I'm pissing myself (...). Too bad, because I woke up at five in the morning to mark in the queue, it's already ten o'clock and since then I haven't gone to the toilet. But the effort will be worth it. I'm among the first five in the queue, and I even had the foresight to ask my predecessor who I was after, so I'll just wait for the office to open and do my paperwork (Salazar, 2022, p. 121).

Original Spanish

Nada resulta menos placentero que una cola en un parque de la Víbora, sobre todo (...), si hace frío, y (...) te estás meando. (...). Alguien pregunta el último (...). Y yo, prosaicamente, me estoy meando. (...). Mala mía, porque me desperté a las cinco de la mañana para marcar en la cola, ya son las diez y desde ese entonces no voy al baño. Pero el esfuerzo valdrá la pena. Estoy entre los cinco primeros de la cola, e incluso tuve la previsión de preguntar a mi antecesor detrás de quién iba; así que tranquilo, a esperar a que abra la oficina para efectuar mi trámite.

Appendix 19

In 2019, Cuba's Official Gazette, the legislative body, published decree-law no. 390 to pioneer "services and procedures units" (Decreto-Ley No. 390, 2019).. As reported in the Cuban press, this decree intends to overcome widespread bureaucratic delays by streamlining and accelerating processes across numerous public institutions (ACN, 2019). The Decree-Law, consolidating over 105 procedures, details in articles 7 and 8 the principles for "promoting responsibility, collaboration, information exchange and experiences amongst state entities for solving services and procedures" (Decree-Law No. 390, 2019).

The Decree-Law states that it was essential to "experimentally regulate the creation, organisation, and guiding principles of service units and procedures, in alignment with updating the economic model" (Decree-Law No. 390, 2019). A press report described the persistent delays and waiting times for procedures in Cuba as a "chronic illness" and "an unsolvable evil", highlighting the nation's commitment to easing these processes through the Decree-Law (Castro, 2019a, 2019b). This sentiment is echoed in another article:

Formalities in Cuba will no longer be a problem. At least, that is what the government's new 'experimental' measure implies. They also claim that there will be no more hassle, no more waiting, and no more queues from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon to complete simple procedures such as putting a tilde on a surname incorrectly entered on the identity card..." (García, 2019).

Appendix 20



Signs mentioning the fictitious bureaucratic organization (DEPATRAM). Movie: *"The Death of a Bureaucrat"* (1966)

Appendix 21

Before the dismantling of Cuba's sugar industry, when it was the economic mainstay, sugar cane growers received priority. During the COVID-19 pandemic, medical staff were prioritised. In the context of the "ordenamiento", besides women with young children, pregnant women, physically disabled individuals, and the elderly, blood donors were also prioritised in certain waiting situations (DDC, 2019; León, 2019).

The film *"Lista de espera"* (Waiting list) (Tabío, 2000) features a character "the blind man" (López, 2005), who feigns blindness to jump the queue. When denied priority, he seeks solidarity from others in the queue, sparking a conflict among those with 'handicaps' who also demand consideration.

Seller: (...), if I sell to him [the blind man], you'll start protesting. Let him talk to the queue, the highest authority in these cases.

Mrs. 1: Wait a minute! Although it may not seem like it, I am over 60 years old, and I have had five injuries (...) and he will be blind, but you can see that he is in good health.

Jacqueline: Grandma, do you want us to put this blind fellow here with you?

Grandmother: Well, put him here.

Mother: *Sch...eh, eh, eh, eh!!! I've been here since yesterday, and with a child! And everybody knows that a child is worse than a blind man!* (Tabío, 2000, n. Min. 6:33-7:14).



Frames from the Cuban film *"Lista de espera"* (waiting list) directed by Juan Carlos Tabío in 2000.

Appendix 22

A similarly overcrowded process takes place according to another testimony posted on *Twitter*, in an office with a similar function. *"Look at how the molotera" is, because it's not a queue, for [the offices of] Immigration*". (<https://twitter.com/MGlezesp/status/1564975064583389185>)



"Molotera" is a colloquial term used in some Latin American countries to refer to a tumultuous fight or brawl between several people. In English, it could be translated as "brawl" or "scuffle".

Appendix 23

El Apagón by Rubén Blades (original Spanish)

La electricidad, se interrumpió y, por el apagón, se suspendió la
Tortura de un subversivo que hacía un empleado del desgobierno
Y aquel apagón también puso fin al sonido de un baladista ruín
Cuyo disco disfrazaba los gritos de víctima y de victimario
No más torturas. No abran el hoyo. Se fue la luz
!Que viva el sub-desarrollo! Aquí en el Sub-D
La tierra de Sonia Braga. : El que no la hace, la paga
De abuelas y dictadores. : De santos y pecadores

A diez cuerdas del interrogatorio protesta la gente, pues se canceló
La versión local de un concurso de belleza de la "Miss Internacional"
Y unas madres y el director del show han vuelto a insultar al organizador
Pues se retiró el patrocinador por el apagón, "This cannot go on"
Semi-desnuda y emberracada, grita una Miss:
"Coño: Este país no sirve pa' nada"
Aquí en el Sub-D:
Olor a miao y a perfume. : Todo lo que baja sube
Somos la envidia de Europa. : Nuestra magia la provoca

Por el apagón, en otro lugar, alguien se alegró pues la oscuridad
Lo va a ayudar a desempeñar la muy popular función de robar
Diez mil pares de piernas arrancan sin pagar la cuenta
Y en la iglesia nadie se entera de lo que pasa allá afuera
Mientras, en casa unos culpan al Consumismo y otros acusan al
Imperialismo por este apagón y la confusión de nuestra propia "civilización".
Quinientos años de cotorreo. Se fue la luz. Y sigue el saqueo
Aquí en el Sub-D
El fin del Imperialismo. : La tumba del Comunismo
Entre un Fidel y un Somoza. : Y no se arregla la cosa
Del beso y de la tortura. : Del goce y de la amargura
Alucinado y furioso. : Iluminado y glorioso

<https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/33101043/Rub%C3%A9n+Blades/El+Apag%C3%B3n>

Appendix 24

El Apagón By, Cándido Fabré (original Spanish)

(coro 1)

Llegó el apagón

Que viva el ahorro

Se coló el ladrón

Auxilio, socorro (x2)

(***)

Se me quemó

Ey ventiladoy (x2)

Y a Tita se le fundió

Ey televisoy (x2)

Ey radiecito de Tito

También se quedó sin voz (x2)

Y ya no come ley frío

Por culpa del apagón (x2)

(coro 2)

La tumban a la una

La tumban a las tres

La ponen un ratico

Y te la cortan otra vez (x2)

(***)

Ey apagón

No tiene peydón de Dió (x2)

Ojalá que se la coyten

A ése que me la coytó (x2)

(Coro 1) (x2)

Ayey se me echó a peydey

Una chuleta de macho (x2)

Y se le coytó a Raquel

La leche de los muchachos (x2)

Si estoy trabajando

O viendo televisión (x2)

Cuando no lo espero

Me sorprende el apagón (x2)

(coro 1) (x2)

Un poquito por aquí, otro poquito por allá

Que no la tumben tantas horas en el centro'e la ciudad

(coro 1) (x2)

Aquel que tiene prendido el radio, el televisor

La grabadora, el video... ¿Hasta cuándo, abusador?

(coro 2) (x2)

Si me tumban la corriente, si me dan un apagón
Aquí seguimo'en ambiente todo el mundo con el show

(coro 1) (x2)

(coro 2) (x2)

Y si me tumban la corriente (¡Auxilio, socorro!)

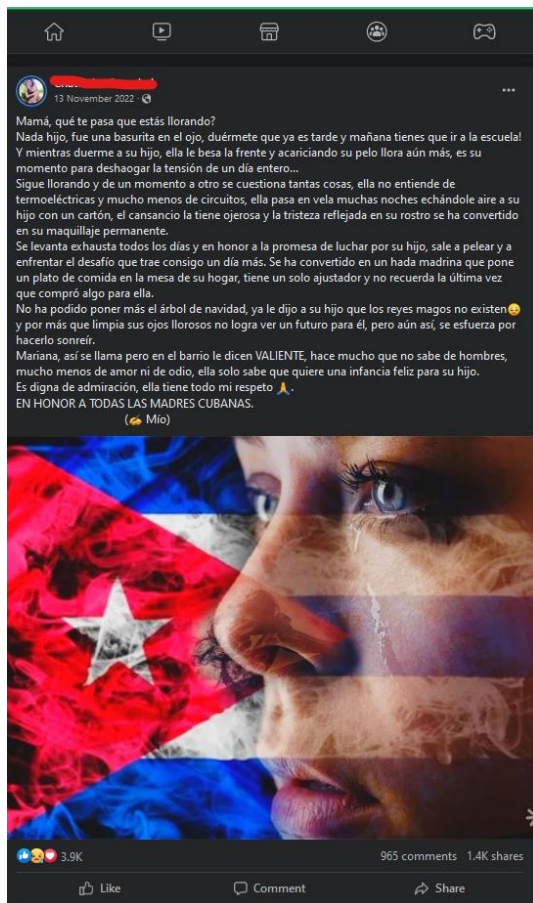
Por eso no me incomodo (¡Auxilio, socorro!)

No se preocupe, mi gente (¡Auxilio, socorro!)

Que más tarde, habrá de tó' (¡Auxilio, socorro!)

(coro 1) (x2)

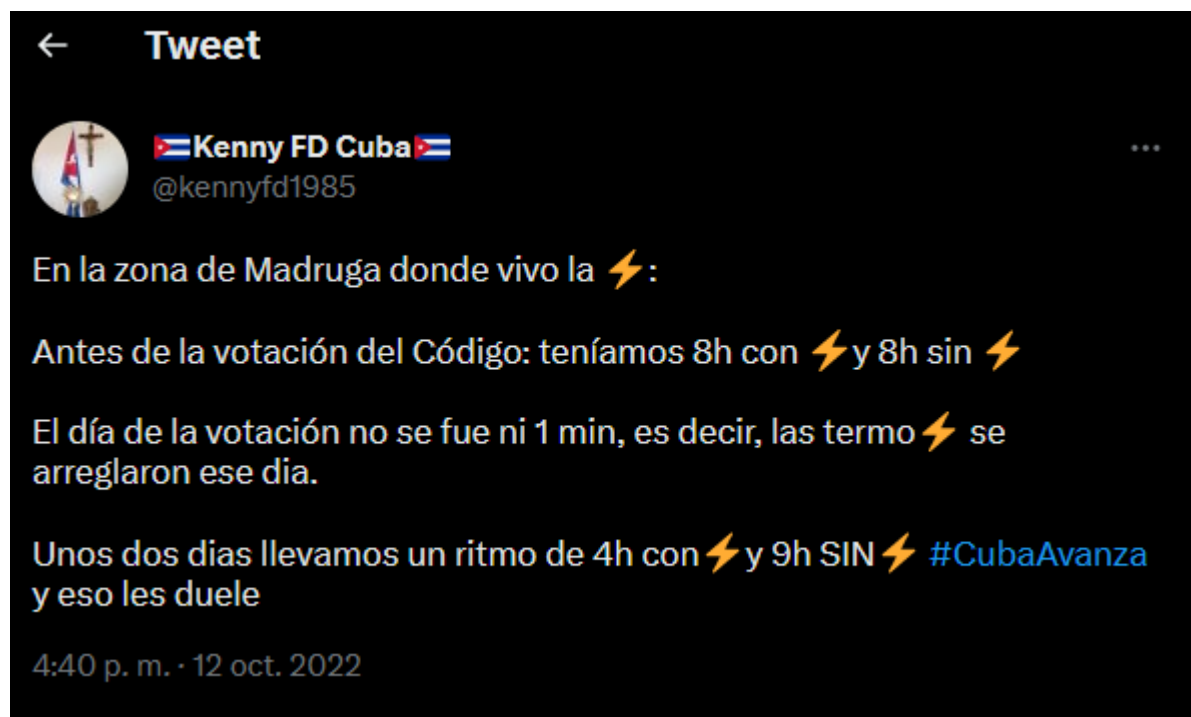
Appendix 25



Mum, what's wrong with you that you're crying? Nothing son, it was a little dirt in my eye; go to sleep, it's late and tomorrow you have to go to school! And while she puts her son to sleep, she kisses his forehead and strokes his hair; she cries even more, it's her moment to let off steam the tension of a whole day...She is still crying, and from one moment to the next she questions so many things; she does not understand thermoelectrics and even less about circuits, she spends many sleepless nights blowing air into her son with a cardboard box; the tiredness has made her haggard, and the sadness reflected on her face has become her permanent make-up.

<https://www.facebook.com/Chatelaine.Larzabal/posts/pfbid0Tvet1tKj78Dj4rFNm9t3xYQbPyKYojCnspZxbqNdWjJuMNbdXV9yKnXfw3rQwFkCl>

Appendix 26



On the day of the vote, the light (electricity) not a single minute went out; that is to say, the thermoelectric plants were fixed that day.

https://twitter.com/kennyfd1985/status/1580040582730481664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwc%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E1580040582730481664%7Ctwgr%5Ee4cc7ab318962a473396428643245e0f9307bfd7%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fd-1600542167318712546.ampproject.net%2F2304212144000%2Fframe.html

Appendix 27

Cuando se vaya la luz, mi negra,
nos vamos a desnudar
temprano tiene su encanto,
como la gente en el campo.
Lo malo es que sin agua y sin ventilador
acabaremos pegajosos y sudados
como en un maratón.

Cuando se vaya la luz, mi negra,
mi abuela va a comenzar
a desatar su mal genio,
y a hablarme mal del gobierno.
Y mi abuelo que es ñángara le va a ripostar
que es culpa del imperialismo, de la OPEP
y del mercado mundial.

Ay, Alina Blanco, alcánzame la vela
que otra vez me pierdo la telenovela.
Cierra el Westinghouse que se descongela.
Yo no sé qué haré con mi guitarra eléctrica.
Quiero, quiero, quiero,
bailar con un mechero
háblame de amores,
de amores con faroles.
Quiero que me cantes un blues
antes que vuelva la luz.

Cuando se vaya la luz, mi negra,
mi mente se va a afectar.
Mi psiquis mal educada,
está muy electrificada
y no puede pasar ninguna noche de Dios
sin luminarias, sin vídeo, sin la radio
y sin la televisión.

Cuando se vaya la luz, mi negra,
como terapia social
y pa' que no te calientes

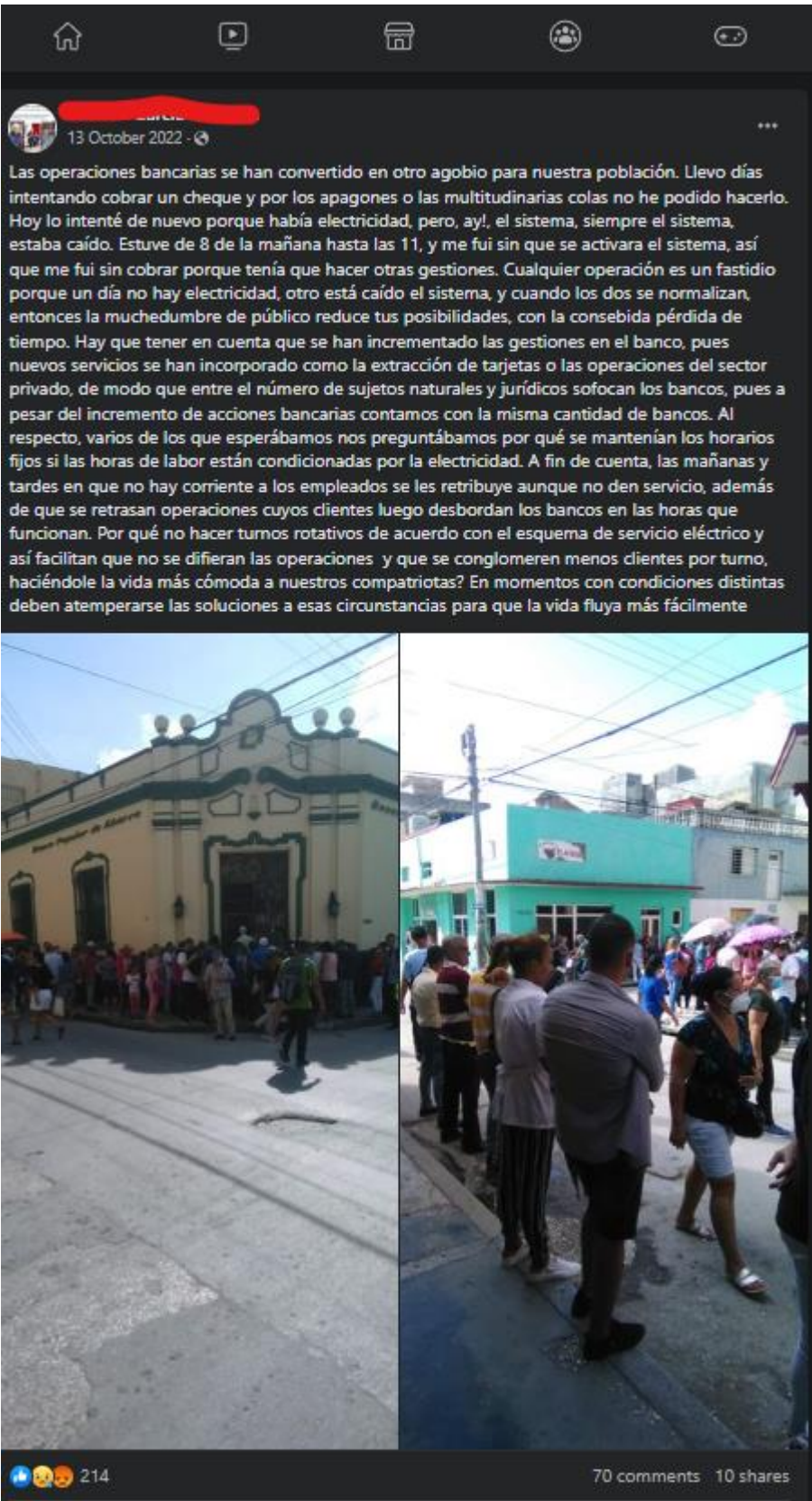
el coco por la corriente
sentados en la hoguera vamos a conversar
las mismas cosas que hace tiempo debió hablar
el Hombre de Neandertal.

Ay, Alina Blanco, alcánzame la vela
que otra vez me pierdo la telenovela.
Cierra el Westinghouse que se descongela.
Yo no sé qué haré con mi guitarra eléctrica.

Quiero, quiero, quiero,
bailar con un mechero
háblame de amores,
de amores con faroles.
Quiero que me cantes un blues
antes que vuelva la luz. (bis)
Quiero que me cantes un blues
antes que vuelva la luz.

<https://www.musica.com/letras.asp?letra=1935504>

Appendix 28



Appendix 29

The particular characteristics of all these operations are based on the *anamnesis* of similar situations and the consequences they could have.

"People are getting tired", said (...) Martha Beatriz Roque. "If they don't provide electricity throughout the country", they will continue to demand (...) "In El Cerro, there has been no water or electricity for 72 hours. The people have taken to the streets because the food that one buys with twenty sacrifices is going to waste", explained the septuagenarian Mercedes Roque. (DeutscheWelle, 2022).

These experiences do not respond to *ad hoc* reactions but constitute culturally crystallised wisdom that takes on materiality in the form of concrete operations, as reflected in the verses of the song "El apagón" by the Cuban composer Cándido Fabre:

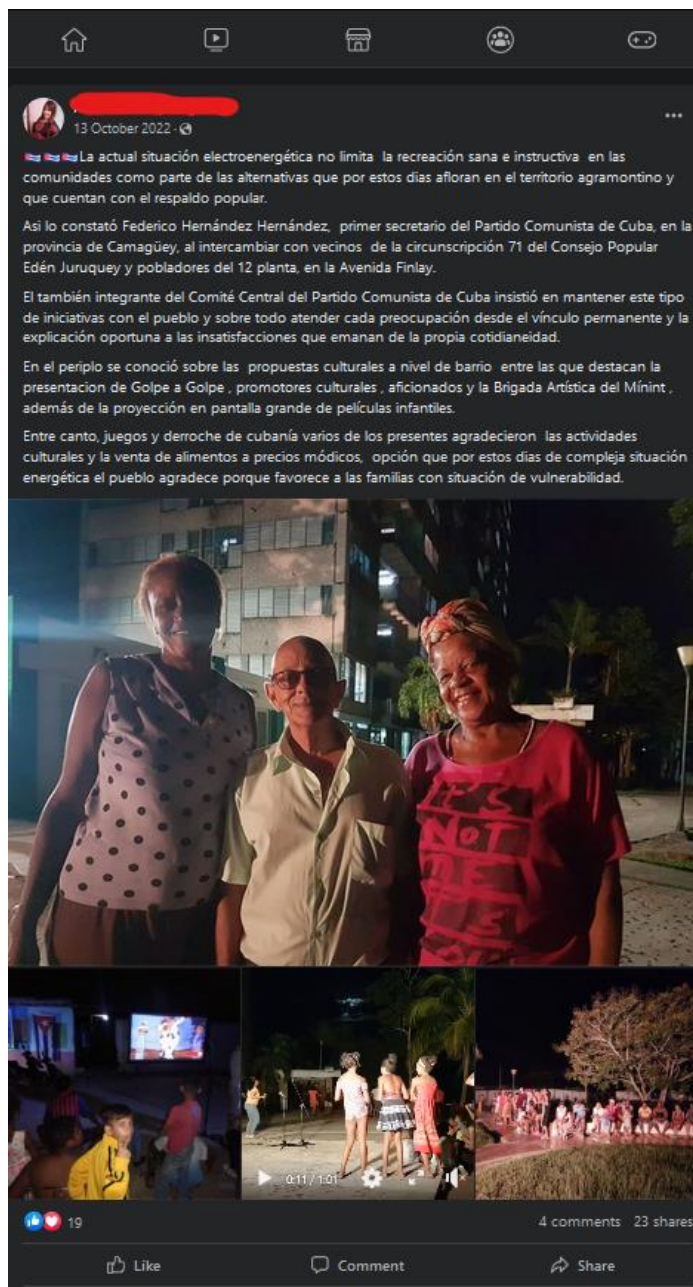
Yesterday I'm spoiled
A macho^{III} chop
And Rachel's gone sour
The milk of the boys^{IV}

(*Ayey se me echó a peydey
Una chuleta de macho
Y se le coyó a Raquel
La leche de los muchachos*)

^{III} Macho is the word used in eastern Cuba to call Pork.

^{IV} <https://lyricstranslate.com/en/candido-fabre-el-apagon-lyrics.html>

Appendix 30



<https://www.facebook.com/maria.castanedavarona/posts/pfbid0dumVBak8WwMS9vWRdDqjoe4Gd12sKP57ajFgQ48QRRcReQnC5VmM9Nftdsonuowhl>

Appendix 31

← Tweet

 **Alma Chete**
@AlMachete11

Esta madre cubana cargo con su olla arrocera para el edificio donde esta el "partido comunista" de so provincia y alli se puso a cocinar, ahi no se va la luz, siempre hay corriente. #CubaPaLaCalle



18 mil reproducciones 0:31 / 1:08 🔊 ⚙️ ↗️

1:47 a. m. · 14 oct. 2022

25 Retweets 2 Citas 37 Me gusta

🗨️ ↺️ ❤️ 📌 ↗️

https://twitter.com/AlMachete11/status/1580540647836356610?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetemb%7Ctwterm%5E1580540647836356610%7Ctwgr%5E26964609c2bb9661184f4b317f9eb7ed8dbe397d%7Ctwcon%5Es1&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2F27280237254158016434.ampproject.net%2F2211302304002%2Fframe.html

Appendix 32

Días del Mes	Rotación Septiembre						
	2 horas	2 horas	2 horas	6 horas	5 horas	4 horas	3 horas
	00:00-02:00	02:00-04:00	04:00-06:00	06:00 - 12:00	12:00 - 17:00	17:00 - 21:00	21:00 - 00:00
1	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
2	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
3	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
4	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
5	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
6	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
7	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
8	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
9	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
10	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
11	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
12	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
13	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
14	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
15	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
16	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
17	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
18	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
19	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
20	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
21	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
22	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
23	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
24	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
25	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
26	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
27	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1
28	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2
29	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3
30	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4
31	B2-B4	B1-B3	B4-B2	B3-B1	B2-B4		

Bloques 1	
Circuito	Zona
Y-114	Reperto Arenera, La Guernica calle 2, La Vigía desde Julio Sanguly hasta Andrés Sánchez, 12 Plantas de la Doble Vía, Calle Tomás Betancourt, edificio de los Ferrocarriles, Fábrica de Vinagre, Hogar de Ancianos, Hotel Puerto Príncipe, Avenida de los Mártires frente al Hotel Puerto Príncipe, La Boria, calle Ignacio Sánchez, Policlínico Pirre, calle San Ramón hasta Santa Rita y San José, Museo Ferroviario, Calle República hasta la Tienda La Quincallera, Calle Avellaneda hasta el Hotel América, calle San José desde Pobre hasta Santa Rosa y Reparto Beneficencia.
D-1069	La Jagua.
Y-316	ECOI 15 y zonas aledañas, callejón de Las Flores, Nuevo Salomé, Torre Blanca, Politécnico Ferroviario, camino de Camujiro, Las Delicias, carretera Santa Cruz hasta la Prisión de Menores, Reparto Las Flores, Torre Blanca, calle María del Rosario hasta Dolores Betancourt, El Diamante hasta los Almacenes de ACINOX.
3162	Nuevitas pueblo, Hospital de Nuevitas, Bombeo Saramaguacán, Fábrica de Alambre y Electrodo.
Y-282	Reparto Simoni, Nuevo Simoni, Fábrica El Mambi, La Recapadora y Reparto Agramonte.
2055	Macuto
Y-285	Reparto El Modelo, Avenida del Micro Planta Mecánica, Reparto Planta Mecánica, La Nueva Mascota y El Imán desde Calle 14 hasta la 4ta
2110	Batey Argentina, CAI Argentina, Florida del Este, La Luisa, Algarrobo y La Valita
Y-440	Circunvalación Norte hasta el Policlínico Centro, Villa Mariana y edificio de Villa Mariana, camino La Matanza, Buenos Aires, La Vigía. Reparto Bella Vista, Reparto Villa Rufa, Reparto Cándido González, Reparto Caridad de Méndez, Reparto Van Troi, parte de la Vigía, calle Jaime Noguera, Benavides, Perucho Figueredo, Artoia.
2340	La Cubana, San Felipe, Bombeo El Anoncillo, Las 500.
Y-460	Esperanza de Tinima, UIM 1390, Encubadora de Pollos.
2620	Playa Sant Lucía y Las 80.
Y-287	carretera Central Reparto La Mascota, calle Cupey hasta calle A de Simoni, calle General Gómez, Plaza de la Habana hasta Bombeta, Padre Valencia desde la Tienda La Gran Señora hasta Dama, Horca, San Ramón esquina Carmen, Desengaño, Sedano, Martí desde la carretera Central hasta Bombeta, San Juan Bosco, 20 de Mayo, Plaza del Carmen, Hermanos Agüero hasta San Ramón.

Bloques 2	
Circuito	Zona
Y-317	Carretera Santa Cruz desde entrada ECOI 15 hasta Pediátrico, Parque de Diversiones, Torre Blanca, José Mateo, Vista Hermosa, Hospital Pediátrico (DOBLE CIRCUITO), Rpto. PiÑA, Mercado Estrella Roja, Calle Palmira, Domingo Puentes, Dolores Betancourt.
3255	Circunvalación hasta la Carretera Central Este vía Oriente, Jimaguayú, Nájasa, Pasteurizadora, Presa Cubano-Búlgara
Y-314	Isabel Hortensia, Circunvalación Sur desde Camino Camujiro hasta Inmediaciones de Materia Prima, Nadales, Ramírez, con de San Miquelito, Sánchez Soto, Previsora, Sánchez Soto
3100	Planta de filtro Nuevitas, Lugareño, La Prudenciana, Las Piedras, Redención, Unidad de Tanques, Minas II, Altavracia, San Serapio y La Victoria
Y-410	Circunvalación Norte desde desde Vocacional hasta Carretera Central Oeste, (Vocacional, Sabanita, Carretera Central Oeste desde Circunvalación Norte hasta San Cruceño), Santa Teresa y Tagarro.
2024	Guilmaro Norte, Palo Seco, La Cantera de Palo Seco, Las Posas, Gabibí, El Caimito, Pueblo Nuevo, Yamagual y Jobabito.
Y-319	Reparto Las Delicias, El Jardín, Calle Matadero, Desengaño, Bombeta, Santa Catalina, Honda, Lugareño desde Matadero hasta Hermanos Agüero, Edificios de Lugareño.
2050	Ciudad de Santa Cruz del Sur completa.
Y-315	La Yaba, La Georgina, La Gloria, Esperanza, Nueva Esperanza, Los Ranchos, Jardín Botánico parte de atrás, Chacuba, Finca Malecón, Restauran LAS RUINAS, Camino Jagüey, Marquésado, La Mosca, El Paraiso
C-31	Casco Histórico de la Ciudad, Cisneros, Parque Martí, Macao, Ave Ignacio Agramonte hasta la Plaza del Gallo, Calle República hasta el Policlínico Centro, General Gómez hasta Cisneros, Rosario hasta Tío Perico, San Fernando, Triana.
Y128	Calle San Esteban desde Pintor hasta López Recio, Avellaneda hasta San Esteban, República, Independencia, Plaza de los Trabajadores, Plaza del Gallo, Santa Cecilia, BANDEC, parte de Padre Valencia hasta Lugareño, Reparto Bove (San José desde Industria hasta Amalia Simón).
2630	Playa Santa Lucía parte turística

Bloques 2	
Circuito	Zona
Y-317	Carretera Santa Cruz desde entrada ECOI 15 hasta Pediátrico, Parque de Diversiones, Torre Blanca, José Mateo, Vista Hermosa, Hospital Pediátrico (DOBLE CIRCUITO), Rpto. PiÑA, Mercado Estrella Roja, Calle Palmira, Domingo Puentes, Dolores Betancourt.
3255	Circunvalación hasta la Carretera Central Este vía Oriente, Jimaguayú, Nájasa, Pasteurizadora, Presa Cubano-Búlgara
Y-314	Isabel Hortensia, Circunvalación Sur desde Camino Camujiro hasta Inmediaciones de Materia Prima, Nadales, Ramírez, con de San Miquelito, Sánchez Soto, Previsora, Sánchez Soto
3100	Planta de filtro Nuevitas, Lugareño, La Prudenciana, Las Piedras, Redención, Unidad de Tanques, Minas II, Altavracia, San Serapio y La Victoria
Y-410	Circunvalación Norte desde desde Vocacional hasta Carretera Central Oeste, (Vocacional, Sabanita, Carretera Central Oeste desde Circunvalación Norte hasta San Cruceño), Santa Teresa y Tagarro.
2024	Guilmaro Norte, Palo Seco, La Cantera de Palo Seco, Las Posas, Gabibí, El Caimito, Pueblo Nuevo, Yamagual y Jobabito.
Y-319	Reparto Las Delicias, El Jardín, Calle Matadero, Desengaño, Bombeta, Santa Catalina, Honda, Lugareño desde Matadero hasta Hermanos Agüero, Edificios de Lugareño.
2050	Ciudad de Santa Cruz del Sur completa.
Y-315	La Yaba, La Georgina, La Gloria, Esperanza, Nueva Esperanza, Los Ranchos, Jardín Botánico parte de atrás, Chacuba, Finca Malecón, Restauran LAS RUINAS, Camino Jagüey, Marquésado, La Mosca, El Paraiso
C-31	Casco Histórico de la Ciudad, Cisneros, Parque Martí, Macao, Ave Ignacio Agramonte hasta la Plaza del Gallo, Calle República hasta el Policlínico Centro, General Gómez hasta Cisneros, Rosario hasta Tío Perico, San Fernando, Triana.
Y128	Calle San Esteban desde Pintor hasta López Recio, Avellaneda hasta San Esteban, República, Independencia, Plaza de los Trabajadores, Plaza del Gallo, Santa Cecilia, BANDEC, parte de Padre Valencia hasta Lugareño, Reparto Bove (San José desde Industria hasta Amalia Simón).
2630	Playa Santa Lucía parte turística

Bloques 4	
Circuito	Zona
2410	Santa Teresa, La Sacra, Batalla y CAI Batalla
Y-107	Reparto Arenera, Saratoga, José Martí, Las Mercedes, La Norma, Los Ángeles, Avenida Pineda y Reparto La Guernica completo.
2350	Panamá, CAI Panama, Vertientes pueblo.
Y-105	Reparto Puerto Príncipe, Barrio Nitrógeno, Los Pinos, Monte Carlos (los edificios altos) y carretera Central Este desde La Rafaelita hasta Circunvalación Norte y carretera Central Este hasta el Punto de los Amarillos.
2250	Jaronú, CAI Brasil, Los dos Circuitos de Esmeralda y Manga Larga.
2610 (Y-042)	Camalote, San Fernando, San Miguel, Cafetal hasta el entronque de Lugareño.
3545	Céspedes, Arrocera Libertad, Piedrecitas, Magarabomba y Mamanantubao, La Poliera, Loma de Urabo y CAI Céspedes
3550	Florida, CAI Agramonte, Santa Inés, La Porfuerza, Conquista, Sandino, Sorbitol
Y-103	Hospital Amalia (DOBLE CIRCUITO), San Francisco, Victoria de Girón, UIM El Peñón, Aeropuerto (DOBLE CIRCUITO), Charles Morel, Arroyón y Clavellinas.

Appendix I (Case study 1).

From the secular hope to the institutional waiting in Cuba. Some notes for its analysis.

*In this section, I will discuss and conclude the articles in **Chapter 2**, *Waiting in Context: A Critical Exploration of its Theoretical Underpinnings and Historical Evolution*. Specifically, I will apply the categories developed in this chapter's article related to the diversity of the conceptualisation of the waiting and their interrelations. I will discuss this perspective by analysing some of the waiting conceptualisations made by scholars referring to Cuba's historical/political waiting.*

Addressing Cuba's waiting issue is complex. Although it is not difficult to find allusions to the phenomenon, on the contrary, the amount of material that apparently deals with this issue is so abundant that it is very difficult to select those that are relevant to the analysis. Waiting and related concepts have been constant in the history of thought and analysis linked to Cuban issues.

Upon closer examination of the approaches used to discuss waiting in Cuba, a common characteristic becomes apparent. Even when the same term is used, there tend to be two different ideas at play when discussing waiting in Cuba or the waiting of Cubans. The first is waiting as a secularised form of hope, while the second is waiting conceived proleptically in terms of a specific purpose.

While the second meaning is the focus of my investigation, it is important to note the existence of a type of hopeful waiting that differs from the one I am studying. By distinguishing between these two meanings of waiting, we can better understand the nuances of the Cuban experience of waiting and how it shapes their daily lives.

This secularised hope idea has been applied to Cubans' political and socio-cultural life. For many authors in Cuba, there is hope for abstract phenomena, such as freedom, justice, democracy and communism, among others.

This meaning of waiting is present in Cuban popular thought and culture inside and outside the island. When Cuba is taken as the focus of analysis, it is common to find this hopeful waiting as an explanatory category for multiple dynamics. This idea is embodied in well-known symbols of Cuban history and idiosyncrasy. An example of this is the Giraldilla, the statue that crowns the castle of the Real Fuerza de la Habana, which welcomes the traveller just at the entrance to the Bay of Havana. According to some authors (Leal, 2022; Parra, 1970; Valentini, 2022), popular tradition has detached the original meaning of the sculpture to associate it (in a completely mythical way) with another, earlier event. I refer to the figure of Isabel de Bobadilla, wife of the adelantado Hernando de Soto who left for Florida in 1539 to conquer the riches of North America[∇]. According to popular tradition, this Cuban Penelope-like figure

[∇] Hernando passed away in 1542, somewhere between Louisiana and Arkansas. La Giraldilla, his wife, is a popular figure who represents waiting, melancholy, fidelity, and love. The sculpture symbolises the city, its people, and

bade farewell to her husband in Havana. She waited for him stoically, “in vain and with courage” (Leal, 2022), without ever hearing from him again.

In his book *El arte de la espera: Notas al margen de la política cubana* (The Art of Waiting: Notes on the Margins of Cuban Politics), Rafael Rojas argues that hopeful waiting is fundamental to Cuban national identity formation. He cites the fact that the first Cuban book is entitled *Espejo de paciencia*^{VI}, which has been highlighted by poets such as José Lezama Lima, Gastón Baquero and Cintio Vitier, who share a stoic morality.

Rojas examines how waiting manifests in Cuban culture, including graphic art and vernacular storytelling. For example, he mentions an old Cuban joke that emerged during Mikhail Gorbachev’s visit to Cuba in 1989. It is said that during the Soviet leader’s farewell, Fidel Castro whispered in his ear: “As you can see, Comrade Mikhail Sergueievich, here we are not and will not be in perestroika, here we are and will be in stoic waiting” (Rojas, 2014, loc. 2155). He also emphasises the intricate situation in Cuba, where various factions await distinct outcomes for the nation’s future. Fidel Castro hopes for a restoration of the Soviet Union, while government reformists desire power delegation. Moderate exiles and the Communist Party’s right-wing seek a diplomatic understanding with the United States. The exile right anticipates a military coup or dictator assassination. Washington expects a popular uprising, while the European Union and Latin America envision a gradual transition to democracy and a market economy, led by Castro, allowing continued investment without intense U.S. competition.

In the excerpt, both Cuba and international actors are in a state of anticipation. Slavoj Žižek, in *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (2002), explores the “basic paradox of the Revolution” in the global capitalism era, highlighting “social immobilism” and using Cuba as an example. Žižek likens Cuba’s situation to Walter Benjamin’s “messianic moment”, a suspended state awaiting a transformative event. He describes a negative messianic time in Cuba, where life is on hold as everyone anticipates the consequences of Castro’s death and socialism’s collapse (Žižek, 2002).

Similarly, the Cuban-American sociologist Alejandro Portes, winner of the 2019 Princess of Asturias award and perhaps the most renowned Cuban social scientist at the international level, expressed the following opinion when a Spanish media outlet asked about Cuba: the island “is completely stuck in a kind of waiting period for years (...) [With Donald Trump at the helm of the White House] we have returned to the intransigent position: they have closed Cuba, and the country is left in a waiting period because it does not know what to do” (Martin, 2019).

In all these cases, the waiting is a form of hope lacking religious connotation, albeit not entirely. Although there is no waiting for the beatitude of the messiah, this waiting does not present a higher degree of probability nor an associated rationality that surpasses the meaning handled by Christian dogma. The difference here is that in this waiting, the “divine” event (*kairos*) has been transformed into a historical or “revolutionary” event while maintaining its aura and perhaps salvific envelope. This “History”, with a

their perseverance, standing by the sea with their eyes fixed on distant lands where their loved ones must return. Leal (2022) states that El Morro represents hope and guidance, whereas La Giralrilla embodies nostalgia and loss.

^{VI} Silvestre de Balboa wrote *Espejo de paciencia* (Mirror of Patience) in 1608, an epic poem commemorating the kidnapping and release of the Bishop of Cuba, Juan de las Cabezas Altamirano, near Bayamo town in Cuba. This is the earliest known work of Cuban literature (Marrero-Fente, 2019).

capital “H”, resembles Hegel’s absolute spirit more than the concatenation of spatially and temporally localised concrete dynamics realised by concrete social and historical subjects.

Žižek (2002) further notes:

In Cuba, renunciations are experienced/imposed as proof of the authenticity of the revolutionary event (...) [T]he counterpart of the event is (...) a country frozen in time (...). The ruined houses are proof of fidelity to the event. It is not surprising that the revolutionary iconography of present-day Cuba is full of Christian references: the apostles of the revolution, the elevation of Che to a Christ-like figure, (...) when eternity intervenes in time, time is in suspension (p. 9).

Rojas (2014), for his part, also attributes certain mystical qualities to waiting as a secularised hope, which, according to him, is manifested throughout Cuban history. From this perspective, he points out how the “attitude of waiting” constitutes a moral principle for any mysticism. According to Rojas, in past theocratic Christian societies, individuals hoped for communion with the King and God. Communion occurred through heroic acts, spiritual offerings or prescribed self-sacrifice. As one of its fundamental characteristics, the Judeo-Christian providential outcome is always positive and overcomes earthly tribulations. The hopeful waiting never ends in a worse situation than the one we are going through while waiting.

Waiting as secularised hope, frequently linked to Cuba, is analysed in my study using “theologically inverted” hope. Gustavo Bueno’s notion of *theological inversion* (1972a) is applied to hope that becomes secular hope in the first of the research articles, “From eschatological hope to working time: sociological notes on the Christian origins of the contemporary idea of waiting”.

In this paper, I analysed the historical-conceptual relations between hope and waiting, considering their current meanings without discussing Cuba’s specific case. My aim was to distinguish a hope concept that, while sharing antecedents with dogmatic Hope, differs from secular hope and hopeful waiting, merely a “theologically inverted” hope.

The interconnection between these terms and their differences is no invention or original discovery on my part. Other authors have also perceived and addressed the issue. Rojas himself, for example, points out the following in this regard:

This fusion between the states of waiting and hope is rearticulated in communism. Ernst Bloch’s Christian reading of Marx is a good example of how the happy eschatology of the Church Fathers is perfectly translatable into the optimistic scheme of history conceived by Marxism. However, in modernity, a highly pagan order, a clear distinction is made between hope and waiting (2014, loc. 2163).

After making these statements, Rojas alludes precisely to the play *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, which he believes is “perhaps the text that best illustrates this demarcation between hope and waiting imposed by modernity”, and where “Beckett presents the act of waiting as the opposite of hope, that is to say, as a theological sin” (Rojas, 2014, loc. 2176). Given that waiting is an attitude devoid of future representations and an experience lacking certainty, unlike the one who is hopeful, the one who waits does not wait for something edifying or redemptive, but rather survives in that hollowness of meanings that time offers, in that deserted abandonment that founds history.

Here, Rojas echoes the opinion of Eligio Resta (1996), who argues that waiting is an experience devoid of certainty. The one who waits, according to Resta, does not do so for something edifying or redemptive, unlike the hopeful individual. The waiter merely exists in a void of meanings, with time, often lost, as the central protagonist.

My introductory article's stance opposes Rojas and Resta's views, which is precisely why I included them. From my perspective, *theologically inverted* hope, rather than waiting, enables the subject to hope, devoid of certainty. I will explain this aspect further when I will revisit the importance of operations in the waiting process, as previously discussed in my article.

Nevertheless, I consider that for waiting to be genuine, it must have an end or a reference point towards which all actions carried out by those involved in the process are directed. This *end* or referent point should be known and be proleptically equal to the *plans* and *programs* drawn up by the actors to achieve it. In other words, it should align, if not equate, with similar processes and goals (past experiences or other waiting), already experienced by the actors or known through third-party experiences.

According to my theory, Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* (Beckett, 1998) aren't truly waiting, as they don't know what, how long, or where they should wait. This lack of knowledge prevents them from knowing what they need to do while waiting in order to complete the process. From my theoretical perspective, their waiting is closer to hope than actual waiting because they cannot make concrete plans or structure operational chains based on known or lived experiences to reach the referent or end of their waiting.

However, even if I do not agree with the criteria used by many authors, I must acknowledge that at least in the cases of Rojas (2014) and Resta (1996), they perceive two distinct phenomena in hope (*theologically inverted*) and waiting (proleptically operationalised), as assumed in this study. Other approaches don't differentiate between the two types of waits (and hope), treating them as the same phenomenon.

In these cases, operational waiting is equated with waiting/hopeful waiting, without differentiation. A paradigmatic case concerning the Cuban context and its waiting can be found in an intellectual dispute that had some repercussions in the Latin American sphere, which took place at the beginning of the 21st century. In this, a group of Cuban and Latin American writers, researchers and intellectuals debated precisely the question of waiting in Cuba, following the appearance of the text *La inercia de la espera sin horizontes* (The inertia of waiting without horizons)^{vii}, published in a blog closely linked to the Cuban novelist, critic and journalist Leonardo Padura. In his text, Padura, who is perhaps the most internationally acclaimed and best-known living Cuban writer, expresses opinions such as the following:

Some Cuban writers and thinkers have reflected on the overwhelming presence of waiting in the country's history (...). [S]ince the crystallisation of nationality in the 19th century, Cubans have always had to wait for the future to bring something that would complete or relieve us (political independence, a better government, economic development, etcetera). [T]his vigil (...) [is] part of the national character (...). Perhaps the best way to see how (...) waiting has been integrated into the Cuban subconscious is in the infinite patience we have developed to resist the queues (...) for every act of daily life. However, the true crowning of waiting as a vital attitude can be seen in the widespread practice of annihilating the

^{vii} <https://archivo.kaosenlared.net/la-inercia-de-la-espera-sin-horizontes/index.html>.

time (...), waiting for something (perhaps fallen from the sky) that will move their lives (Autor de Kaos 2014, 2008, para. 3)^{VIII}.

Statements like this generated various comments and reflections, both supportive and critical, published in multiple digital and print media. Among them, the series of articles published on the rebellion.org portal under the title “Cubans and the Wait” which criticised Padura’s positions with arguments such as the following, stood out:

[T]he reader must understand that outside Cuba the world is not full of poor people who hope to be rich, of non-whites who dream of being white, of fat people who do the unspeakable to be skinny, and so on. (...) An example is given of the Cubans’ patience in queuing (...). Perhaps there are fewer queues in other places (...), because prices are responsible for building pyramids of consumers (...). It could also be that the Cuban queues result from a combination of Third World poverty and political will for equitable distribution (Avalus, 2009, para. 4).

Additionally, the author notes that many experts on the United States argue that no country has more (and better organised) queues than this great nation. A similar situation exists with bureaucracy; it is often said that the United Kingdom’s bureaucracy is unmatched, making Cuban bureaucracy seem almost trivial in comparison (*Idem*).

Beyond the controversial content, both texts, despite opposing ideologies, share a similar conceptual architecture of waiting ideas. In both, no distinction is made between secular hope and proleptically operationalised hope, assuming both phenomena as the same and interchanging them without distinguishing between one situation and the other. In short, it is possible to point out that what distinguishes the two positions is the consequences and origins, ontological, of the waiting of the Cuban people, and not the morphological characteristics of the phenomenon to which they both refer.

Both ideas are based on the same concept or notion of waiting, understood as a phenomenon that is temporary, passive or slowed down at most. In the first of these positions, Padura’s, Cubans would wait passively for reasons associated with the state and politics in general. That is to say, here, the state occupies the *convex* position of the process, while the people (thus, without nuances) would occupy the *concavity* of the process. In the other position, the Cuban state itself is part of the general waiting in Cuba; that is, it participates in the *concavity* with the social subjects, leaving the *convex* place to telluric forces of a historical/political and transnational (global) character.

In both positions, it’s essential to note that concave and *convex* institutions aren’t passive phenomena but the opposite. Both types exhibit constant activity and permanent operation, linked at multiple levels and inserted not in one but in many kinds of different waiting processes. According to the thesis I defend, this is not unique to the social environment of the island, as every society has a set of waiting processes that form part of the institutional fabric and involve a multiplicity of social actors, both group, individual and organisational.

In summary, when discussing waiting in Cuba, the external perspective often tends towards metaphysical generalisations, such as “Cuba” or “Cubans” waiting, without properly distinguishing the reasons or the actors involved, or perhaps what or who they are waiting for. Analysing social phenomena of this nature

^{VIII} ‘Autor de Kaos 2014’ is the pseudonym used by Leonardo Padura on this page to identify his texts.

requires clear specifications, as not all waits are the same, nor do all actors expect the same thing or in the same way.

When authors such as those mentioned speak of waiting in Cuba, they do so from an idea of waiting closer to *hope* than to the proleptical waiting channelled towards specific *ends*, as analysed throughout my study. Conceptually, it is very complex to consider waiting as proposed in the cited texts. This helpful waiting, associated with none other than the “People of Cuba”, in the form of a country that waits, overflows any particular gnoseological field of any of the existing social sciences since it crosses them all at the same time. Only from literature and some rather metaphysical philosophies is it possible to speak of waiting with such a degree of abstraction.

This statement suggests that while this idea of waiting may be useful in poetics, arts and certain philosophies, it is almost impossible to apply in the social and human sciences. This is because it does not allow for clear categorisations of material and identifiable phenomena. Without clear categorisations, we cannot clearly break down or concrete group phenomena of reality linked to waiting. Instead, we would be dealing with personal opinions, which may have their value in certain areas but not all.

In summary, in this section, I have discussed the concept of waiting in the Cuban context, distinguishing between hopeful and proleptically operationalised waiting and arguing against generalising about waiting in Cuba. Instead, specific categorisations that point to identifiable phenomena should be used. A new approach is needed to avoid the limitations of previous approaches, a question that will be discussed in the following sections.

Appendix II (Case study 2).

Topographical notes on a process of waiting for a passport update in the city of Camaguey, Cuba.

Thus far, I have delineated the categories proposed for examining waiting spaces grounded in the IWPDBA within the Cuban context. Furthermore, I have shown how this categorical framework can be utilised to identify aspects and phenomena in waiting spaces. This section will briefly discuss the results obtained during an empirical case study. I aim to characterise some of the waiting spaces empirically given in obtaining identity documents (ID) in Cuba using my proposed categories. I am not attempting to draw analytical conclusions about the phenomenon; instead, my goal is to provide a broad characterisation of the waiting spaces.

The case study centred on offices issuing IDs, passports and other documents. Data collection employed “participant observation” and “unstructured open-ended interviews” (Álvarez Álvarez & Barreto Argilagos, 2010; Padua et al., 2018).

I conducted participant observation, which involved the researcher himself carrying out paperwork related to extending his passport. This allowed for a distinct observation of waiting dynamics and the organisation of these spaces. Within the context of the Ordenamiento in Cuba, this process constitutes the most urgent waiting period for paperwork, owing to the exceptionally high demand for migratory processes, particularly in the past two years.

Cuba has witnessed an unparalleled migratory phenomenon following the reopening of national borders after the 2021 Pandemic. From 2021 to 2022, an estimated 263,910 Cubans entered the U.S. alone (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2022). Contrary to prior migratory waves, this one encompasses legal avenues until a specific stage of the journey.

During data collection, the route involved leaving Cuba legally by air. Tickets were purchased, and the journey transited through airports and emigration offices before crossing several Central American countries to reach the southern border of the U.S. These routes necessitated legal procedures to be undertaken within Cuba.

Of all the paperwork required, those related to passports were among the most important, although not the only ones. The bureaucratic and documentary paperwork essential for migratory processes

encompasses documentation pertaining to ownership of homes, vehicles, and other valuable assets, educational certifications, and diverse powers of attorney, among others. To emigrate, Cubans typically dispose of their properties to acquire the required funds or entrust these assets and properties to third parties. This process entails traversing copious amounts of bureaucracy (G. S. Martínez, 2022).

As an emigrant and a researcher, I participated in a waiting process in an ID card office in the city of Camagüey, located in the east of the country, during the second week of September 2022. The offices where this paperwork is carried out are known as “carnets de identidad”. Although not strictly tied to migration, most individuals in these offices aim to emigrate via available channels. They join fellow Cubans needing to update identity documents, waiting together, even if they’re not potential emigrants themselves. My experience in these waiting spaces confirms this hypothesis.

Camagüey, my Cuban residence, has three ID card and passport offices catering to approximately 300,000 residents (MacroTrends, 2023). Nonetheless, given that on a typical day, an average of merely 55 or 60 people are accommodated, the number of these offices is considerably insufficient considering the existing demand.

During the 2022 summer power outages, these offices became IWPDBA factories, with blackouts decreasing daily applicants served. Similar situations occurred in other parts of Cuba (J. A. Rodríguez, 2022). Power cuts affected biometric and legal data collection for passports and ID cards, as computerised operations required electricity. Even with power, offices sometimes struggled, as data needed to be uploaded to a remote server also susceptible to power cuts. Thus, electricity in both local and central offices was essential for processing information but remained improbable in the analysed context.

Operationally, the office I analysed was structured as follows: service typically began at 8:00 a.m. At 7:45 a.m., a report provided an estimate of daily clients and processable paperwork. The office functioned Monday to Saturday, but on Thursdays and Saturdays, only “impedidos” (priority individuals) were attended to.

Service classifications included:

- accompanied minors,
- adults over 75,
- pregnant women or those with small children,

- individuals with physical disabilities affiliated with support organisations^{ix}.

As explained in “the report” service stratification during my observation morning was as follows. As it was Monday, the entire population would be attended to that day, including the “handicapped”. The order of entry would be a physically disabled or older adult, a pregnant woman or a woman with a child. Only after the “handicapped” was seen would a “member of the queue” be seen. All persons who did not fall into the abovementioned categories were included in this last group. If a blood donor appeared, they would be prioritised before queue members. If all went well, the queue would remain open until 11:00 or 11:30 a.m., as electricity was expected to be cut off then, based on the office’s circuit location.

Despite formal mechanisms, high demand created a more complex waiting process architecture^x. In addition to the formal structure, informal strategies were used to manage the waits.

One such informal strategy was the institution known in Cuba as “the list”. This mechanism consists of a list of individuals who require access to a certain product or service, and it can be drawn up and controlled by one person, a group, or on a rotating basis. These informal (*concave*) regulations played a crucial role in managing the waiting process.

The queuer, a significant social actor during waiting processes, often controls these lists, as analysed in the Cuban Pandemic case. Alternatively, someone in the queue may be assigned the task of guarding and administering the list. When this person is close to accessing the product or service, they hand it over to someone else who takes over the custody of the document. If the person desists or manages to bring their turn forward, they are expected to do their duty and hand over the list to someone responsible for managing it for some time. This mechanism was used in the case of the waiting I observed.

List annotation and rectification are critical operations. The waiter enters the list and ensures their name remains on it, communicating their continued interest in the product or service to the group. The list is rectified once, twice and sometimes even three times a day, depending on multiple factors. Rectification is done five, six or even seven days a week, as we will see later.

^{ix} Socio-historical factors can influence the categorisation of these or other social groups. For example, health workers received priority in COVID-19 queues, and sugar cane cutters were prioritised during harvests in the 1970s to 1990s. Accredited blood donors are also inexplicably given priority at the start of queues.

^x The studies conducted by Barry Schwartz and Richard Larson are invaluable investigations into the dynamics between supply and demand, from the perspective of analysing waiting times.

In this office, the list was updated twice daily at 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. No entries were made during these times; they were added throughout the rest of the day. The list was always held by someone near to receiving the service, as they needed to be present in case a new applicant wished to join the list.

In such waiting processes, two or three lists may be kept, prioritising seniority with the oldest going first. In the case analysed, this spatial/operational system was entirely *ad hoc*, without *convex* organisational intervention. Its operations occurred in the office *interior*, outside the office contour, but close to it. Strikingly, some testimonies affirm that similar systems were implemented in other areas of the country, also in a completely spontaneous manner, which says a lot about the socio-historical and institutional rootedness of waiting processes in Cuba.

The dynamics described here account not only for the operations and, to some extent, their spatial organization but also for the normative and ceremonial guidelines underpinning the fragile social order these institutions contain. Considering the required operations, this space can be classified as polytopic, fragmented into three or four operational segments involving informal (mostly *concave*) and formal (closer to *convex*) operations. In terms of *localisation*, the office analysed was far from the centre.

Its accessibility was convenient due to several transport arteries, as I lacked personal transport in Cuba. This lack of transport was also a condition for multiple waiters because, socially, *accessibility* to the space where these processes were located was *public*. That is to say, it was not limited in any sense, even when its internal *regulations* presented some regulations that stratified the operations of physical access to the process, granting preferences to certain social groups over others, as we saw in the case of the “handicapped”.

The waiting spaces were near Plaza de la Revolución Ignacio Agramonte y Loynaz, a location for events, commemorations and large celebrations. The *surrounding* space totalled approximately 184,667 m², meaning there were relatively few buildings in the office’s *interior*. This was important as waiting spaces were less harsh compared to city centre offices with narrow streets, crowded houses, and less air circulation.

In the context of the Cuban summer, this is a significant factor as it affects the value of the waiting processes. Without draughts, waiting is difficult due to the lack of infrastructure protecting waiters from the elements, especially where waiting begins. These are mostly temporary spaces set up *ad hoc* at some point. Extreme heat can directly impact the mood, the biometric capacities of the waiters, and, therefore, the operations themselves. In this case, the spacious *interior* provided a *proxemic adequacy*

with enough room without invading others' personal space, which could be a significant stressor, as mentioned by Hall (1990).

The offices had a 156.73m perimeter fence, which served as the office contour for some waiting operations. The space was operationally divided into segments about 51m long at the front. This area housed the lists and was where vendors, traders of *logistics-related* products, and sometimes even the queuer managing the waits or profiting from them, were located.

These *informal operations*, which are closer to the *concavity* than the *convexity* of the process, are generally located in places of *circumstantial durability*. They are often on the margins of legality, so it could be less practical to carry them out in the same place where the police or other law enforcement agencies can detect them. It should be noted that this type of office is managed by the Ministry of the Interior (MININT), making them militarised spaces. This is why the outline is very well delimited spatially and operationally.

The *interior* waiting area covered approximately 1,380m². The waiting offices were small, but the garden and inner courtyard, where the waiters were *localised* in the second operational segment of the space, were quite large at approximately 330m². The specific concentration point, or waiting space within the *interior*, possessed a *secondary degree of institutional structuring*. It displayed medium complexity with well-established social organisation forms.

Although this space did not have infrastructural elements such as toilets or water dispensers, it did have other simple and efficient elements such as ceilings, delimited areas and seating. Aspects such as aesthetics or comfort were not considered, but the basic needs strictly related to waiting were functionally covered.

The open waiting area had a 55-seat capacity. Only those seated could enter the interior and the ten-seat area for paperwork. Of the interior seats, eight were for waiting and two for carrying out the necessary operations for each procedure, such as taking photos, handing over documents, registering data and stamping.

Overall, the architectural structure of the internal waiting area had been designed with the process in mind, and therefore, it was instituted in terms of its durability over time. Regulatory mechanisms were structured, rationally, efficiently and clearly. There were disclosure mechanisms of the waiting regulations, such as timetables, schedules and rules of behaviour, among others. On the *contour* fence and access gate to the enclosure itself, there were guidelines on the operations that may not be carried

out within the waiting area. These included taking photographs, using certain changing rooms, talking loudly, or accessing the service and processing offices without proper authorization.

Spatially, operations were divided into three segments around the office perimeter and vicinity. The operations related to the perimeter were associated with the informal ceremonial patterns of the process, such as managing the list and vendors selling logistics-related items. The operations related to the vicinity of the offices were also linked to informal ceremonial patterns, including queuing to access the office vicinity and correcting the list. After navigating these spaces, two additional waiting areas were *ubicated* inside the offices. The first was the seating area in the “Ranchon” (open hut), and the second was inside the actual office where the paperwork was carried out.

Despite constituting the second waiting segment, occupying a seat didn’t guarantee same-day completion. Only when one entered the inner enclosure, the one with the ten seats, did one know with certainty that one would be served that day. If a blackout happened while the waiter was inside, that person would have priority the next day because their process had been interrupted. This benefit would be allocated to them, as they are being given priority over those in the queue and the “handicapped”.

Depending on the procedure requested, these waits could include a part of the process occurring outside the office interior. Waiters had to wait at home during a formal period until part of the process was finished.

This part of the process included handing over stamps, photographing, fingerprinting and entering biometric data into the registers. These operations required physical presence in the offices after waiting in areas around or near the offices, as mentioned earlier. In addition, there was the waiting for the physical production of a passport or an ID card as such (or both simultaneously). The latter was the waiting that would take place somewhere outside the main office space *interior*. These documents took weeks or months to collect, and calling before going to the offices to see if they had already been produced was sufficient.

I only needed a passport stamp, which I anticipated to be a straightforward in-office process. However, the polytopic nature of the waiting process made it far more complex than expected. I arrived at the office around 6:30 a.m. and joined the queue outside, where other people were also waiting to rectify their status and check their position on the list. I was informed of the formal and informal procedures that needed to be followed.

Since it was time for list rectification, I was yet to sign up and had to wait until those eligible to enter the office that day had gone through. The expected daily capacity was 25-30, but the list exceeded 400 names. On a normal day, the overcrowding in the surrounding area would have made it impossible for me to even enter the garden area of the compound. Some people had been trying to get in for up to ten days. The waiting process was even more complex and formally polytopic for those who needed to obtain a new passport or ID card.

I entered due to the queue's structure from the list. Those who had been waiting for days only had to physically be in the space once at least 25 to 30 people were in front of them, which was the average number that could be served. As a result, most of the people waiting for the process were in the waiting spaces in the contour and the surrounding offices, except at 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. during rectification times. These times and office hours were temporarily the most significant in the process. Blackout time was crucial as it extended waiting when processing operations ended.

There was no electrical equipment in the garden waiting station, so it was never known whether or not there was electricity. People used a light bulb on inside the offices, which could be seen from the ranchón (shelter), as a visual reference that the moment of the blackout had not yet arrived and that there were still opportunities.

On the *interior*, waiters were assigned seats in the waiting area. This space constituted the *second spatial segment* of the process. The seating area had around 50 seats, divided into groups of 25, separated by a small aisle about one and a half meters wide and about ten meters long, allowing for mobility. Each group was then organised into five parallel rows, each with five seats.

Upon my arrival, I took one of the available seats in the left group, quickly noticing that people in the right group knew each other. Sitting closer to the right group, some waiters in my group also knew those members. As newcomers entered the queue, they would correspond with the right group, and a waiter from the left group would automatically move to join them. I soon realised that the right group consisted of those waiting the longest and next in line to be attended to. They knew each other and the specific procedure for which each was waiting, and even unrelated biographical details. Their camaraderie enabled them to handle logistics without fear of losing their position. Observing these dynamics, it became clear that the grouping was even larger than what was evident from the members present in the waiting area, as right group waiters were aware of absent members considered present due to prior participation.

While waiting at the office, I witnessed a lady approaching and greeting everyone in the queue, explaining she was “rotating”^{xI}. She addressed this explanation to the left group, where newcomers like the handicapped and me were waiting. The “handicapped” typically have priority and are not part of the right group, “the queue”, and they do not stay in the process for long. The mentioned lady was rotating on behalf of her elderly mother, over 75 years old, waiting for her to access the *interior* station of the process. She began to rotate, *situated* at the very front of the handicapped queue. She had to “talk to the queue”, publicly reporting her intentions and explaining her reasons while staying at a certain point close to the *referent*.

It is worth noting that the “rotating” system is not always accepted by the queue, particularly in tense and potentially violent processes, where waiters are agitated or angry for various reasons. Such strategies may not be feasible in such processes, where conflict is high and dialectics between individuals are prominent. It all depends on the level of urgency in the waiting.

The example above demonstrates that there is not only a logically structured and normative regulation of behaviour during the process but also a morality or group axiology that functions institutionally. Although the situation described was successful, this is only sometimes the case, and this is where the group comes in to administer justice and make decisions in the small dynamics that may arise. Ultimately, all those waiting have the same goal, to finish the process by accessing the provided service, which happens when their number on the list is reached and the person in front of them in the queue leaves.

The front of the offices is the culminating location spatially. If one enters this space, one knows that the waiting is over because the delay is a matter of time, not of *concave* but of *convex* operations. This remaining time (almost always minutes) will comprise mostly *convex* operations carried out by the agents working in the offices. However, it will no longer depend on the waiter, his skills, his stamina and his alliances.

During the process, a 75-year-old was accompanied by his daughter, also carrying out a procedure. This action was automatically considered a violation of the concave internal rules of the process. At that moment, “the queue”, the compact group of the right, let him know that “he could pass, but his

^{xI} The “rotating queue” system, a notable Cuban institution, involves individuals nearing their turn to purchase goods or services, temporarily allowing others to pass while maintaining their position. Once the desired item becomes available, they reclaim their spot and proceed to complete their transaction.

daughter could not, as she was not handicapped". She would have to queue like everyone else if she wanted to pass. These groupings in blocks of waiters, their communal behaviours and corresponding spatial positioning, "territorialisation" (Correa *et al.*, 2013; Musset, 2015), quasi-tribal denotes a fact already observed in other waiting processes: participants tend to group and create micro-communities based on their interests (Brady, 2002).

Brady (2002) observed similar dynamics in queues for "The Phantom Menace" tickets. According to Brady, waiters formed groups to protect conquered spaces, which placed them closer to the referent (the end of the queue and its spaces) or at least placed them in a strategic *localisation* concerning some point of interest in space. These groupings enabled sharing experiences, knowledge and resources, managing conflicts and safeguarding belongings.

From my perspective, these alliances correspond to the *waiting operations* and are in function of achieving the *plans* and subject's *programmes*. Intra –and inter– group dialectical relations in solidarity are exclusive to third parties. That is to say that, in the waiting processes, where these solidarity micro-groupings occur, it will almost always be in the face of threats from individuals and other groups outside the collective in question. These threats can occur in both the *concave* and *convex* aspects of the process, as we will have the opportunity to discuss later.

In the case of the right group, the non-disabled "queue" members were allied against the rest for several reasons. They shared a similar condition with no physiognomic, biological or social handicap preventing them from waiting, making their process more extensive than most left group members. Those in the left group, primarily with physical impairments, were exempt from the queue. Without physical limitations or prior waiting experience, newcomers like me were initially tolerated and allowed to *ubicate* in the left group as we had yet to sign up on the list. The right group members knew they would face another day of waiting if some did not receive the referent that day.

I signed up after 30 minutes; my number, 447, meant waiting 10-12 days given the processing rate of 20-30 people daily. This *situation* raised the question of why I was still waiting in the area. The people in the right-wing block, who had formed a close-knit community with one another, were suspicious of my presence, and they had a sixth sense for people trying to cut in line or bypass the system.

However, in some cases, when a person outside the community needed help gaining a better place in the queue, someone in the community would vouch for the outsider and the community would decide whether or not to allow them to join.

In my case, I did not have any prior acquaintance with anyone in the queue, so after signing up on the first day, it would have been reasonable for me to leave and return at 5:00 p.m. when the list was rectified. I stayed to observe dynamics and take notes in a notebook. To avoid further complications, I informed the other waiters, without making a big deal, about my investigation and my desire to hear any stories they might have about their waiting. By doing so, my presence was justified during that initial stage of my process, and the irregularity of my specific operations were mitigated.

Everyone was very receptive, and they immediately accepted me among them. They invited me to the right side, enabling close observation. From that moment on, I was tolerated and accepted as a *de facto* member of the group, with all the benefits that came with it, as I would later realise. As part of this micro-community, I talked to Maykel, a 36-year-old electric motorbike taxi driver waiting in line to get passports for himself, his wife and his children. He could've moved his children as "handicapped" but didn't, respecting those waiting for days and avoiding cutting in. Maykel was in a better position than I was but could not get through that day either. He waited in the shade of the roof while his motorbike's punctured tire was fixed in a tire workshop near the office. Once the tire was fixed, he planned to go to "hacer el día" (earn his day's pay).

Maykel planned to bring his children to the front of the queue if the waiting became too long. He discussed this strategy with the group, feeling out their opinions on the matter. His emigration goal was to travel to Suriname with his family. First, they needed passports and documentation. His sister-in-law would sell her house to fund their trip to Suriname, but they'd need to figure things out from there.

Beyoncé, who had earlier asked if I was a journalist due to my note-taking, was 29 years old and sold goods that people brought from abroad. She shared that she had sold everything from clothes to medicines and toiletries. She wanted to go with her husband to "see the volcanoes", a sign in Cuba for emigrating to the United States through the Central American route. This process involved a journey from Cuba to Nicaragua, followed by guidance from a *coyote*^{xii} to reach one of the southern borders of the U.S. This process involved multiple waits, one of which was obtaining the necessary documents. It was just one of the many waits Beyoncé and Maykel would go through to reach their goal of crossing the border between Mexico and the United States.

^{xii} A coyote or *pollero* is someone who specializes in human smuggling, bringing people across the United States border from Mexico (McMahon, 2023).

Beyoncé told me she already had a coyote who was “good, cheap and reliable”. She knew this from the experiences of several friends who had crossed successfully with the same coyote. Her friends also informed her about the required documents and the state of the queues at notary offices, law firms and identity cards. However, at the time of the interview, she had yet to finalise any concrete plans or dates for the trip as she was still raising the necessary funds.

In contrast, Josefina and Juan Carlos had already bought tickets for their trip and showed them to me. They only needed their passports and were ready to head to the airport. They had bought the tickets using passports about to expire but decided to apply for new ones, just in case. I expressed my concern that this strategy could be risky given the lengthy waiting for the passports, but Juan Carlos hoped that “the Lord would intervene and that by some miracle, everything would work out in time for them to leave without any problems”.

From my perspective, the waiting operations are vectorised towards objectives external to the waiting process itself. They form *plans* and *programmes* structured based on *anamnesis* (past experiences already known), which intentionally articulate individual strategies. These strategies are shaped by *prolepsis*, which anticipates future events based on past experiences. Waits for *procedures* are institutionalised processes that resemble other waits.

Queues, in general, are also institutions that in Cuba present certain basic characteristics that vary according to multiple factors, among them the space where the process takes place, but also the time, or historical moment, in which the particular waiting occurs. The morphology of a historically established institution may be confronted with another of a similar nature at another time. As discussed in the body of this paper, waits, in their institutional character, are not harmonious entities that coexist peacefully with other institutions, similar or not. Like all institutions, these manifests itself in reality as a dialectical symploké in tense, conflictual harmony, like the swords that fight in combat, intertwined with each other. A good example of this was the following dynamic, which manifested itself while the process I have been describing was taking place.

Around 10 a.m., an older man asked for the last one in the queue. There were about 30 people present at the time, divided more or less equally between the queuing staff and the *handicapped*. Faced with this number of people, in a normal situation, someone alien to the logic, norms, values, etc., of the queue would have thought that he had a good chance of accessing the service, as it was impossible that an office could not serve so few people in one day. This gentleman was unaware of the universe behind this seemingly small concentration of staff in the space, which otherwise remained seated and calm.

Someone explained to the man that the last one was not physically present, as the queue had around 300 people, not in the facility. If he wanted to access the service, he had to sign up on the list that had been informally drawn up, pointing out who in the queue had it, and come to check in every day in the morning and afternoon. This gentleman, probably accustomed to the institutional functioning of such waits in the past, could not accept this dynamic, as in his opinion, he was already “present there” and saw that he had “possibilities”.

According to him, “he knew nothing about lists” and “this system was not (formally) established anywhere”, and it was not laid down in the service regulations of the offices. Theoretically, the man was right since the formally and convexly established regulations said nothing about lists or similar processes. However, as I have pointed out, waiting processes do not only have *convex* regulations (formal, let us say), but their institutionalisation also has concave logics and regulations, without knowledge of which it is impossible to operate proleptically in these processes. That is, establishing action plans and programmes subject to known formal-logical regulations.

The conflict highlights the importance of understanding the *concave* logic and regulations in waiting to establish subjective *plans* and *programmes*, according to a particular process. The man, accustomed to institutional functioning in previous waits, needed to be aware of specific concave regulations governing this waiting process. The situation led to a confrontation between two institutionalised approaches to handling waiting processes: one vertically downwards from the *convex* to the *concave* –from the organisation to the waiters– and the other horizontally within the *concave* –among the waiters–.

Functionally, the material conditions in Cuba when these events took place made it impossible to sustain regulations of the first type (1), known biographically for the gentleman. These were the ones he demanded to be implemented following the “logic” of the socio-political and ideological system of organisation, which, theoretically at least, Cuba still upholds. These acts are similar to a scene from the Cuban film “Lista de Espera” where, during a discussion among some queue members about who would be placed in front of a blind man his incapacity as “handicapped”, Regla, a queue member, said:

Regla: *Are you the first in the queue in Havana, ma’am?*

Madam: *Yes!*

Regla: *Well, he [the blind man] is going to put himself here in the first place, and I want to see who’s going to take him away from me! It seems like a lie! Is this a socialist or a capitalist country?* (Tabío, 2000, pt. Min. 7:42-7:54)

After affirming the nation's socialist character, the conflict ended. However, Cuba's current material reality and social context differ significantly from the film scene. Presently, the regulations desired by the older man do not align with reality. High demand for paperwork, resource scarcity, blackouts, technical deficiencies and other shortcomings have changed the circumstances for which the organisational regulations were designed.

The office director addressed the issue, as the older man was technically correct from an organizational standpoint. Although aware of informal mechanisms for managing the process, the director couldn't validate them without establishing management guidelines that required *convex* resources.

Consequently, he disregarded the *informal concave* mechanisms when they conflicted with the formally conceived waiting process. Holding the paper in his hand, he informed me that "in that unit," the waiting (queue) was not managed through any list. Instead, those who wanted to access the service had to be physically present. If the person was present, they would stay in the process, and someone physically present would take their place in the queue.

At that point, he put the list away and announced that, for him, those present were the only clients who would be recognised as such; hence no one who was not there would receive the service. However, the current situation in Cuba, with the high demand for paperwork and the scarcity of resources, made it difficult to offer services as quickly as before, leading to waiting processes being longer. This announcement caused tension among the crowd, as they knew that only a limited number of people would be served before the scheduled power outage.

To make matters worse, the director announced that, as a punishment for violating official regulations, he would personally allow all the disabled people to go ahead of those in the queue. Only after that would he allow those in the queue to proceed. This measure meant that no one in the queue could enter that day and they would have to return the next day to start a completely new process since the list had been confiscated.

The director's disregard for the waiters' claims created a tense atmosphere, bypassing informally established logic and norms, including rules set during the morning report. The group's reaction to this situation was intriguing. Camaraderie temporarily halted as members considered group or individual action. As a power outage was imminent, tension in the room intensified.

Initially, the group began complaining and berating the man who had gone to the higher-ups. He was seen as a traitor, and the remaining queue members were unwilling to help him join the line. The

informal rules of the group dictated that anyone who violated the group's agreements or showed solidarity with potential adversaries would be considered an outcast and lose the protection of the group as a whole.

The announced punishment not only posed difficulties for external members of the group, such as the man who complained, but also caused internal unrest. The confiscation of the list disrupted the group's consecutiveness, and new situational positions had to be established immediately. Amidst insults and threats, the queue continued until after 11 a.m., when something unexpected happened: the power did not go out. The situation, which had been described as "muy caliente" (very hot) in Cuban slang, suddenly changed as the process could continue without any further interruptions.

This fact allowed for rearranging the waiting structure in the concave plane. The new reality of the electricity service meant that perhaps everyone present could access the service, but it was necessary, as I pointed out, to establish a new order. It was also necessary to decide who and in what situation to insert the queue members who, for some reason, were there at that moment, like myself and others who had only been there for a few days. Due to the alliances established hours before, it was decided that I would be the first of the newcomers to be served, and this was announced to the rest of the group present.

Beyoncé and Amalia, two of the waiters, immediately acted as my godmothers and confirmed my presence over the past few days, which gave me the right to enter the queue if possible. This act of solidarity demanded a similar response from me, so I went out for a moment and returned with water and some food for everyone present, including non-members of the group. This act was not the first of its kind, nor was I the only one to undertake it. Faced with the impossibility of looking for supplies in areas far from the office, people began to share the logistical items they possessed. These ranged from water, sandwiches, energy drinks like coffee, and sugary sweets like candy.

The new dynamics demanded a reordering of logistical operations, as almost everyone had planned these for a process that would end at noon. However, the new electro-energetic reality indicated that the offices might offer services according to the established schedules, extending the waiting beyond what was planned for that day. Along with food, the women also exchanged strategic information on how to access the only toilet in the offices, which was, of course, off-limits, in perpetuity, to the waiting men. As in the story "El trámite" (The Procedure), men could go to any discreet point in the *interior* and were excused from the waiting spaces to answer the call of nature. If, for some other reason, someone

had to be absent briefly, he would give his phone number to a colleague to call him if the agreed turn in the queue was approaching at a faster rate than expected.

Unexpectedly, there was no blackout, allowing me to complete my procedure in one waiting session. The institutionalised waiting process in Cuba reflects a complex social and cultural reality, where formal regulations coexist with informal norms and practices. This dynamic creates tensions and conflicts, necessitating individual and collective negotiation to access services. The waiting space fosters social interaction and solidarity, with shared resources, information and internal order to manage uncertainties.

Appendix III (Case study 3).

Waiting for the blackout and the lighting in the city. The operations of waiting in three micro-stories

Having discussed the categories linked to the operations of waiting processes, I will conclude by looking at their application in concrete empirical cases. Using the method of the micro life history or the micro-narrative (de Pinto, 2006; Lara & Antúnez, 2014; Man, 2013), the following will analyse three waiting processes in the city of Camagüey during August and September 2022. These narratives account for the social relations in which the participants are immersed and how their particular biographies are affected by the sociocultural, historical and political context that contains them (L. González, 2003).

The information provided was collected using participant observation and semi-structured interviews. In all cases, the information provided has been coordinated through the categories used in this research, mainly those related to the operations within the waiting processes. In all the cases analysed, I have been given full permission of the participants to tell their stories. However, names have been changed, and their exact locations in the exhibition have been omitted, as their identities are irrelevant to the aims of this research.

5.5.a. Case 1. Pavel. 34 years old. *Web developer.*

During a blackout, I found Pavel installing a grille on his room door, their future family home. His wife Magalis, 33, was 38 weeks pregnant. While waiting for the baby to be born, they were building their house on the empty rooftop of Pavel's mother-in-law's house, who agreed to give it to them so they could be independent. Pavel hammered a chisel in the opening for the door and fence as we spoke. He wanted to open a hole where he could fix the grille that would provide protection and comfort to the new house. Magalis told me that one of the problems with this house is that it is very hot because it is made of a slab and has a very low ceiling. In Magalis' state, this is dire, causing severe discomfort during blackouts. Pavel said the grille would enable them to sleep with the front door open, allowing air circulation without the risk of theft.

While I was helping Pavel with the chiselling, we talked about other alternatives to this quasi-crafting operation. I told him that we could get an electric drill and that he had a friend who could lend it to us, to which he replied that it was not necessary, that he had one, but that with the blackouts, it would be a waste of the few hours of electricity opening this hole, which can be done “by hand”. According to Pavel, he had to use the limited electricity to complete orders for his foreign employers, whom he works for as a freelancer, as well as his “official” work at a biotechnology company. “I can install the grille without electricity using a torch, but for web page programming, I need electricity”.

Pavel’s original idea was to build the room on the house’s ground floor. He had the resources to do it quickly and efficiently. However, “these blackouts”, he tells me, “have changed everything”. With the intervals between lights and blackouts, I cannot build during the lightning because it would put the whole family in trouble when doing things. “If I had built down there, everyone would have had to suffer because when there was light [electricity], we would have to clean up the dirt that every construction site produces”. “Magalis’ mother works on a computer at home. If there is electricity, she also has to cook meals and catch up on backlogs at the university where she is a professor”. “Here, I can get ahead without bothering anyone, I can do it myself, and the women can be quiet downstairs doing other things without me getting in their way with the noise, the dirties and construction work’s disturbing”.

Magalis, his wife, told me that these months of waiting for the pregnancy to end “have been terrible”. Enduring the heat of the Cuban summer and the plagues without electricity “is torture”. To this must be added the fact that life in the city becomes more complicated with the blackouts.

Imagine I’m pregnant, but I can’t stop doing the normal things in life. I have to queue like everyone else, and I also have to look after the house and go to the doctor. All that, without electricity, is more complicated. More so, without light, it is slower and more complicated. Only now that my belly is showing, I can have priority in the queues because I’m pregnant, but at this point in my pregnancy, I can’t stand for so long, so Pavel or mummy have to go and queue, but they’re not pregnant so they don’t have priority,

she told me while laughing at the absurdity of the situation. Magalis is a lawyer in the same biotechnology company where her husband works. However, due to the advanced stage of her pregnancy, she is currently on leave, as she could give birth at any moment.

Both cases involve waiting for blackouts or electricity, a *circular waiting*. Magalis' wait is also *circular and radial*, as it involves her pregnancy's final stages. The operations described in both cases have time and space at their centre. For Pavel, waiting occurs in segments dictated by electricity's presence or absence. First, the operations of the waiting process have as their *intentional objective* the completion of the construction works. To this end, Pavel has established *goals, plans* and *programmes* to achieve this *goal*. As it is possible to see, Pavel sets intermediate *goals* at different points in the standby process. During the blackout of the night, he opens the holes for the grille; during the blackout of the day, in a better light, he puts the grille in place.

These plans take into account other family members' needs, accommodating their activities ("With intervals between electricity and blackouts, I can't build during blackouts without inconveniencing the family"). In addition, Pavel considers that the blackout takes place at night and that his house is mainly near another house, that of his mother-in-law.

Furthermore, since their living space is *surrounded* by other houses, they must take into account the activities of their neighbours. These activities include shared meals, sleep times, celebrations or socialising during outages, like playing games or conversing. Construction noise could disrupt these activities, as they occur during similar waiting periods (blackouts or electricity) like Pavel and Magalis. Hence, they should be taken into account.

Finally, the case reveals *programmes* governing participants' operations. A construction, its parts and other alternative operations to these. "I *can do this* (put up the fences) without electricity, by lighting myself with a torch, but to programme web pages, I need to have light (electricity)". It could be seen that the operational chains led to specific points within the process, limited by specific *references*. For example, the three holes, six inches square and three inches deep, at a distance of 35cm each, that Pavel made in the door frame wall during the blackout I interviewed him. These *references* delimited the operational anchor point, where

operations would begin the next day when the grille would be put in place during the morning blackout.

5.5.b. Case 2. Ernesto and Doris

Ernesto, 79, worked for over 40 years in a forestry research centre, while Doris, 73, was an accountant and clerk at the city's provincial hospital. Both are retired and earn the minimum wage that a Cuban pensioner can earn. They live in a house located in a less developed area of the city, further away from the centre, with two houses on either side and a third one in the backyard.

The house has only one open space at the back and another at the front, where the air circulates. At the front, Ernesto and Doris' house faces a small but busy street in the old part of the city centre. Their house and waiting space are constructively very dilapidated. The roof of the upper rooms is in danger of collapsing, so Ernesto and Doris have had to move all their vital operations to the lower part of the house, which houses the kitchen, a small living room and the former dining room that now serves as their living quarters.

Like many Cubans, Doris and Ernesto rely on electricity for cooking. They discarded alternatives during the Energy Revolution when Fidel Castro replaced older cooking methods with modern, efficient electric appliances. The problem with this measure was that, although very beneficial at the time, it was impossible to maintain over the years. As noted above, blackouts come periodically but have never completely disappeared. By the 2022 summer crisis, much of this "new" electrical equipment was already discontinued or obsolete and had to be repaired or replaced by others.

Because of their socio-economic status, Ernesto and Doris cannot access or afford new equipment, so they have to make do with the old ones that survive, thanks to the inventiveness of the Cubans. As Doris told me, their *operations* are temporally structured as follows. From 3:00 to 4:44 a.m., they cook the next day's food while waiting for the blackout, as electricity is available, and they need to "get ahead" before it goes out. From 4:45 a.m. until 4:59 a.m., it is breakfast time. Here, they make coffee, and if "by some miracle" there is milk or something to put on the bread, it is also heated.

At 5:00 a.m., the power goes out. With the blackout already underway, they have breakfast without light and begin the waiting operations for the next light to come on. Here, the benchmark is *chronologically* set at noon; when the afternoon light comes on, they warm the food prepared in the early morning and have lunch. With the remainder of the electricity time, they take advantage of it to do other domestic operations such as ironing or washing clothes, simultaneously, they turn on the TV to watch the news, especially the news about the planning of the blackouts, the repairs of the thermoelectric plants and the generation capacity.

“We Cubans are experts in many things”, Ernesto tells me. “We know about hurricanes, COVID-19 cases, vaccine development, and now, blackouts. We’re knowledgeable about thermoelectric plants, missing parts, generation capacity, and even fuel shipments”. This information allows Doris and Ernesto to set their prolepsis more efficiently. Doris watches the news daily, hoping to hear that the blackouts have been definitively resolved.

Around 4:00 p.m., after pre-cooking the food for dinner, they turn on the only fan in the house and waiting for a visit from some friend. They “always come by” to make them their last coffee beforehand. In this window, the *turning point* before the *referent* of the waiting for the blackout, which will take place at 5.00 p.m., they also open the refrigerator for the last time to have a drink or at least some fresh water before closing it in perpetuity until the next light. Doris told me that her fridge is “no longer good”, that it is losing its coolness and that she cannot allow “the little food she has to spoil because of the heat”.

At 5:00 p.m., they eat their still warm dinner and begin waiting for the next morning’s lighting. Doris and Ernesto’s house is hot with limited air circulation from the entrance door. Cool air brings in noise from the neighbourhood, where others' waiting *plans* often *dialectically* clash. To waiting for the light to come on and get through the blackout, activities such as chatting on the pavements, playing dominoes in the street or playing traditional children’s games, in which many children participate, are implemented. In Cuba, it is common for children not to go to bed until the lights come on, as the heat is unbearable.

For Ernesto and Doris, many operations are impossible due to precarious *logistics* for the waiting, forcing them to change their sleeping and waking routines. Doris and Ernesto do not have any battery-powered electrical equipment that flourishes in the Cuban informal market

and allows some to maintain routines similar to those sustained when there is power. For them, the day would end around 6:00 p.m., at which time they would go to bed to try to sleep with doors and windows closed so that the “noise” *of the street would* not wake them up, for they had to get some rest before dawn when this whole routine begins once again.

In tempo/operational terms, Ernesto and Doris’ wait for the blackout/lighting are distributed in two large time segments, like everyone else’s –the blackout and the lighting hours–. When the data for this research was being collected, the cycles within each segment changed at least three times. Initially, the time segments were distributed in cycles of 12 hours back-to-back, *i. e.*, 12 blackout hours and 12 daylight hours, varying only in the start and end times of these cycles.

The electricity company later established 6-hour alternating cycles for better organisation of operations. In this cycle, the distribution was as follows, from 5 a.m. to 11 a.m. blackout, from 11:01 a.m. to 4:59 p.m. lighting, from 5:00 p.m. to 10:59 p.m. blackout, and from 11:00 p.m. to 4:59 a.m. lighting. The first days of September 2022, when part of the research data was collected, was the cycle followed by the lighting and blackouts. Hence this was the cycle of Ernesto and Doris’ waits, which we have analysed.

In September, the electricity company announced changes to the blackout/lighting cycles. Although they were supposed to maintain the same length, the duration of the blackouts and lighting periods were reduced to different intervals, varying by zone and day of the week. The company provided a schedule for these periods through social media and other channels, but this measure only lasted a few days due to protests. Instead, a random system was established where the electricity could be turned off or on at any time (See Appendix 32).

Just at the end of that same month, September 2022, a few weeks after my interview, the increase in the number of hours of blackouts led to a wave of popular revolts across the country demanding the restoration of electricity. Thus began the hardest days of the crisis. Given the impossibility of adjusting operations with a known temporal order, tasks such as preparing meals and charging phones became unviable due to service unpredictability. This whole situation meant that the waiters needed help to articulate their plans and programmes as they had been doing. From the categories we have been proposing, the *prolepsis* became very

complex due to the lack of *anamnesis*, as it was unknown when the electricity would come, which prevented planning.

This doesn't mean the institutional character of waiting for blackouts or lighting changed. On the contrary, it only adopted one of its possible morphologies. Specifically, it went from being in socio-familial and socio-community relations to intensifying its *socio-political* dimension. Although, although the operations described above were maintained in the two orders mentioned above, family and community, this does not mean that the blackouts as an institution did not have a socio-political and sociocultural dimension.

As the articulation of operations in these spheres was prevented by an unstructured normativity at the *convex* level, in the *concave* spaces of the waiting process, bottom-up operations were activated, aimed at mobilising and demanding the normative restructuring of the blackouts, in order to be able to "normalise" the operations of the waits involved. In short, standby operations shifted from pursuing domestic and micro-social goals to pressuring *meso*^{xiii} and *macro-social* levels to adjust temporal planning irregularities, enabling organic proleptic operations.

5.5.c. Case 3. Waiting for the blackout at Aurora's talk show

Aurora, a qualified doctor, is 62 years old and lives alone with a severe knee problem. Her daughter Ana Carla lives in the United States and provides support to manage the associated difficulties. Aurora resides in a single-room house on a street corner that intersects with one of the busiest roads in the city centre. The street originates from the "Plaza de los Trabajadores", the city's geographical centre. The house is *ubicated* on the lower floor of a two-storey building. The central *localisation* of the house and waiting area means that Aurora's blackout and lighting issues were particular.

Aurora's situation differs significantly from that of Ernesto and Doris. She has a more stable financial situation, which allows her to manage her time better. Her home is also better equipped to deal with power outages. While she has electric cooking equipment, she also has a

^{xiii} middle

liquefied gas cooker that she can use when there is no electricity. However, Aurora still faces challenges due to the blackouts and must plan her activities around restoring power.

She wakes up at 8:30 a.m. when a social worker arrives to assist her with mobility difficulties, prepares the lunch around 10:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m., using gas and electric stoves. When the electricity returns around 11:00 a.m., all the appliances are turned on, and lunch is ready by noon. After lunch, she charges her mobile phone and rechargeable lamps while watching the news to learn about the latest blackout updates.

While charging her mobile phone, Aurora downloads photos and messages from her daughter and friends abroad at 5:00 p.m. During blackouts, she has only a two-hour window for internet access before the network goes down. Aurora explains that this is due to the old batteries in the transmission towers that last for a few hours before the antenna is turned off, cutting off both the internet and mobile phone signal. However, she also has another theory that the government intentionally cuts the internet in areas without electricity to prevent potential revolts or protests. By doing so, images do not circulate in real-time on social networks, preventing simultaneous mass uprisings. In 2021, during a wave of massive blackouts, including the one in 2022, thousands of Cubans took to the streets to demand an end to blackouts, better access to food and medicine, and political reforms.

Empirical evidence supports Aurora's theory, as cutting off roads in "uprising" areas was observed during protests after this research. A news report described how police officers arrived to surround demonstrators in Havana's Playa district. At the same time, there was an almost total blockade of internet traffic from Cuba for the second night.

Aurora plans her activities using information from various sources, including Cuban TV, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook groups, and the electricity company's channels. With this information, she can estimate when the power will go out and come back on and the expected duration of blackouts. The information she collects includes details about plant maintenance work, the availability of spare parts, the price of oil in the international market, and "even the course of the war in Ukraine".

Blackouts impact Aurora's life significantly in two aspects: sleep and communication with her family in the U.S. Her house lacks windows, making it difficult to cool her room during hot

nights. She cannot use her air conditioning unit even when the power comes on because she never knows when it will go off again, which might damage the air conditioner. Additionally, Aurora's daughter is pregnant with her second grandchild. She waits anxiously for news of the baby's birth, as she cannot go online to check for symptoms or hospital updates during power outages.

To wait for the early morning light (from 11:00 p.m. to 4:59 a.m.), Aurora performs her activities in the living room or on the pavement outside her door, where neighbours and friends who also have no electricity visit and chat. They discuss various topics, including the ongoing electro-energy crisis and its socioeconomic and political impact on the country.

In blackouts, Aurora and her neighbours gather to pass time and share information. They share news, memes and comments from Facebook and other social networks, as well as press articles. They also discuss domestic issues and enjoy refreshments such as coffee, sweets and soft drinks provided by Aurora or brought by other participants. It is important to note that the waiting logistics for the blackout and the operations carried out during this time involve alliances between different individuals.

Aurora's gathering during the blackout usually includes three to six people with varying social and biographical positions. As part of my research, I participated in several of these gatherings and collected testimonies from other social talkers whose strategies for managing the waiting were similar to Aurora's.

Gladis, a Doctor of Science and professor at Ignacio Agramonte University in Camagüey shares with me that she now focuses solely on subsistence due to the ongoing situation. The blackout and light cycles, with their associated waiting and operations, have made it impossible for her to concentrate on work as household chores are very precise due to electricity rhythms. As a result, she has lost all interest in science and research. However, she has accepted the situation and does not experience any conflict or anxiety about it.

Gladis prioritises her family during this time of survival, acknowledging that the times when the revolution and work came first are over. She used to believe in the project, but years of tribulations, vicissitudes and disappointments have convinced her that there is no way out. According to Gladis, the daily operations of waiting have even prompted her to consider moving

to a different position at the university. “I can no longer review doctorates and master’s degrees, imagine, in what light?”.

Gladis’s home routine involves waking up at 5:00 a.m. to make breakfast before starting non-computer work, continuing until 10:30 a.m. During this time, she pre-prepares part of the lunch she will cook when the electricity returns. Gladis cooks an ample meal on alternate days, and her youngest daughter visits her on the cooking day “so at least that day, my daughter doesn’t have to cook, and I give her a break”. On the non-cooking day, Gladis eats leftovers from the previous day. After 11 p.m., when there is electricity and water, Gladis takes the opportunity to do laundry and clean the house every other day “without struggling or rushing”.

Sonia is a young social researcher who works as a teacher and researcher and sells whatever she can find. She lives with her nine and 7-year-old daughters and her 67-year-old mother. Sonia is divorced with no permanent partner. Sonia’s strategy focuses on *goals* and *plans* aligned with her daughters’ schedules. Like the other tertulias, Sonia implements a morning operations program that revolves around the morning blackout but is centred on taking her daughters to school at 7:00 a.m. After dropping off her daughters, Sonia spends the rest of the morning running errands, looking for goods for her business, or going to her formal job to “clock in” since there is little she can do without electricity.

At midday, she usually returns home for lunch as Lucía, her mother, has prepared lunch for her and the girls, who need picking up at 1:45 p.m. On arrival, she washes uniforms, irons clothes and ensures the girls do homework before the 5:00 p.m. blackout. When the girls arrive, they take the opportunity to do these chores and see the girls do their homework. At 5:00 p.m. precisely, and with no time for regrets, Sonia instructs the girls to leave their homework for later and to get dressed for their dance classes. The youngest girl is taught classical ballet and the eldest, flamenco dance.

At 5:15 p.m., Sonia leaves with the girls on her electric bicycle, taking them to their academies 4 km away, a 25-minute journey. There, she waits for them to finish their classes and returns with them to the house to carry out the night's operations. Like Aurora, Sonia has some rechargeable lighting equipment and uses liquefied gas for cooking when she cannot use the electric stoves.

In this case, blackouts/lighting particularly affect her daughters. “One is an adult and more or less adapts, but it’s hard for the girls, especially because of the heat, because they can’t sleep well until the light comes on and we can turn on the fans”. “It’s not easy to get them to do their homework when they don’t have good light to study”, Sonia told me as she finished cleaning up the kitchen after dinner. “I can’t constantly monitor them, so I had to find an alternative. What I did was, I bought a mobile phone for each of them and I gave it to them so that they could entertain themselves while I finished the housework”. “I know it’s not educationally ideal, but what can I do? I don’t let them go online without supervision due to poor networks and inappropriate content. I also don’t allow phones in school, as it’s not the place for them”.

On blackout nights, a retired accountant, Irma Martha shared her story about a good Samaritan neighbour who provided electricity during blackouts. She said: “That extension cable doesn’t do much, but at least I can charge my mobile phone if I need to, or at least eat with light”.

Rubén, the good neighbour, installed a lightbulb at his door during blackouts, saying: “The kids come like little bugs to the light when I put the bulb on”: The lit area became a social hub for children and adults. Rubén recounted: “Sometimes I’ve counted up to 30 kids in front of the house. It’s a hell of a row, a racket, but at least they have a place near their homes where they can meet”. He also mentioned: “The other day Isabel, a neighbour from the block who was a top sportswoman, brought them all together and entertained them by teaching them to play old games. You know, hide and seek, ‘topao’, ‘1,2,3 curro ha he’ and stuff like that. She made an improvised street plan in the middle of the blackout. It was crazy”^{xiv}.

These micro-stories show the incredible alternatives Cubans have implemented to make the waiting process more bearable. During blackouts, streets are filled with faces half-lit by mobile phone lights and rechargeable lamps. Cubans have learned to store electricity during blackouts, and rechargeable items like lanterns, power banks, and battery-powered fans have become essential.

^{xiv} The *topao* and *1,2,3 curro ha he*, are two traditional child games.

My observations revealed numerous dynamics like this, indicating that such stories are not isolated within the context of blackout/lighting waits. Walking through the streets of Cuba during a blackout allows one to see the tremendous amount of operations that waiters carry out during these processes, which could be thought of as passive and where “nothing can be done”.

In Cuba, streets are filled with faces half-lit by mobile phone lights, rechargeable lamps, and various lighting devices not requiring direct connection to electricity. In this particular period, Cubans have learned that just as *anamnesis* of previous crises have taught them, where they have had to learn to store food, water, clothes and everything necessary to subsist, electricity can also be stored used when there is none.

In this new context, any equipment with batteries symbolises luxury and perhaps social status. All these devices and technologies are logistically essential to cope with the blackout/lighting double-faced waiting process. Cubans use technical innovations to make their waiting more viable, demonstrating their resilience and adaptability in adversity.

One night, an interesting phenomenon occurred in Irma Martha and Ruben’s block, which evidences the ceremonial/institutional structure of the processes they expect and the operational architecture they possess.

Rubén invited me to observe a Saturday night blackout in his and Irma’s block, located in a more “popular” part of the city. The area is bustling with informal commerce and loud music. On weekends, the intensity of activities increases, and residents “entertain the neighbourhood” with shared music.

That Saturday, I planned to see how the area would adapt without electricity. However, to everyone’s surprise, the power didn’t go out. We expected normal weekend activities to resume, but the opposite happened: nobody played music or partied. The block remained quiet until a neighbour shouted in frustration about the uncertainty of the power situation said: “Caballero! Have you seen this? Look at the time, and the light hasn’t gone out! I can’t stand it any more; I’m so nervous that I almost go downstairs and turn off the catao (electrical switch) because I can’t stand this uncertainty!” Rubén and I laughed at the absurdity, but the day remained quiet until the power went out at 5:00 a.m.

Various explanations for this behaviour exist, with at least one related to waiting processes from an institutional/operational perspective. Waiting, since they are perpetually positive material institutions and identifiable as such, sometimes articulate an institutional structure of norms, regulations, logics, values, etc., which, even when it does not materialise morphologically, *i. e.*, an observable material institution as such, it imposes itself and sometimes even ends up creating the very situation of waiting for which the operational structure that this institution^{xv} has been conceived.

This is precisely what happened that Saturday. The fact that the phenomenon that generates the waiting process as such (the blackout) did not manifest itself did not mean that the operations structured institutionally to deal with it did not manifest themselves. Likewise, these could not develop organically because their manifestations lacked meaning functionally. Hence, although there was no children's fuss around the light bulb, there was also no music, drinks and normal dynamics in these cases. Similar to walking through a web of empty tapes, or having to register on a computer, or take a ticket from one of these shift-organising rolls, with no one else in line, or even no line at all, we do it quickly, performatively, boringly, and almost ridiculously.

^{xv} This scenario may be familiar: navigating airport security belts or following markings on the ground at banks and post offices due to COVID-19 restrictions. These procedures are required even without delays, as they are integral to established operations.

Appendix IV (Case study 4).

Waiting for dollars at the CADECA in “República street”. Case study

The Cuban government’s recent authorisation of foreign currency sales to the public has created complex waiting processes due to the high demand and scarcity of supply, which are intimately linked to socio-historical events such as “Coyuntura”, “Pandemic” and “Ordenamiento”. These dynamics, including waiting processes, have intersected and influenced the context in which they exist in Cuba. To gain a deeper understanding of the waiting process for purchasing foreign currency, I participated in an empirical waiting in the queue until the end.

The speed and efficiency with which the processes and mechanisms for managing the waiting were structured were remarkable. These organisational dynamics became highly elaborate and structured systems. Participating in the waiting allowed me to observe and analyse the dimensions outlined in my proposal. To achieve my research outcomes, I conducted participant observation between September 5th and September 21st, 2022, and conducted open-ended, in-depth interviews with key informants. The waiting observation occurred in one of the two authorised CADECAs in Camagüey; namely, the CADECA known as “La CADECA de República”, located at Calle República #353 between San Esteban and Santa Rita^{xvi}.

The foreign currency purchasing waiting process had a “polytopic” distribution, with locations varying depending on operational and temporal factors. The process was divided into several segments, beginning with the individual waiting in a queue at a different location from where the sale occurred. They had to identify where the most demanding waiting operations were taking place to join the queue. The operational segments of this process took place in three to four locations depending on various factors such as time of year and other circumstances, as discussed further in this proposal.

During the observation period, the first segment took place in an urban park, approximately 808 m away from the analysed CADECA, locally known as “El Parque de los Gatos” (The Park of the Cats). This park was used to record the lists and rectify registered numbers, and these operations could be moved to other locations if necessary. When the operations of this temporary segment needed to move, another urban park, “Parquecito de Bobes”, located in the vicinity of Parque del Gato, was used. This park was

^{xvi} <https://www.google.com/maps/dir//21.3854011,-77.9165035/@21.3847022,-77.9186304,17z>.

573 m from El Parque de los Gatos and 696 m from the CADECA, both equidistant from the waiting proces's reference point.

Two other *ubications* followed these places, with different operations occurring. The first was *localised* in the *surroundings* of the space where the referent was located, *i. e.*, the offices. This place was known as the “Parque del amor” (The Park of Love), was about 1200m², and was *located* in the same street, about 50m, from the CADECA. Following this penultimate waiting area, the space where the operations were concluded was located right on the *contour* of the CADECA, on its front perimeter side.

From here, the person reached the process's reference point near the bureaux de change in the final waiting space for foreign currency purchases. This small area contained 20 to 25 people making purchases that day.

Operationally, this process was structured as follows. First, individuals seeking foreign currency had to register on a waiting list managed by informal –*concave*– administrators. Unlike the list described for access to bureaucratic procedures, which was administered informally on a rotating basis, this process had permanent administrators who had self-titled themselves during the first hours when the foreign exchange began to be sold, as was revealed to me by key informants.

Each person could sign up once per day, but they could include up to 9 other names along with their own, for a total of ten names each day. This specific quantity was because, as noted above, CADECA only sold the equivalent of 100 USD per day. If someone required a larger amount than that, they would have to come back another day.

To avoid this delay, people tried to gather friends or relatives to go with them on the day of purchase to acquire as many dollars as possible. Informally, the regulation allowed up to 10 people to sign up at a time. I observed people registering up to 7 times, noting their ten permitted turns each time. That person's list had 70 turns, equivalent to 7000 USD once the dollars were purchased^{xvii}.

Unlike the list described for access to bureaucratic procedures, which was administered informally on a rotating basis, this process was permanent. The waiting list for foreign currency purchases could reach up to a thousand or even two thousand people, prompting multiple lists' creation to avoid confusion.

^{xvii} These amounts were often those necessary to carry out the irregular migration process, which Cubans carried out in those days, for which they required not only money, but also the processing of documents, as explained in the section on waiting for bureaucratic procedures.

During my observation, I noted the existence of up to four different lists. When a person entered the waiting area, they had to personally write down their name, surname and the names of the individuals accompanying them, in clear and legible handwriting. Careful attention was necessary when writing down names, as any errors could result in the person losing their place on the list if their name was mispronounced or misunderstood. Once a person lost their place, they could not be readmitted to that list and had to start over on a different day or list.

Daily, the waiting list status was updated, and individuals were informed of their queue position. To track their progress, individuals were encouraged to record the numbers of each list they were on in a notebook or diary. With many people in the waiting area and constant discussions, keeping track of one's place required significant concentration. Attempts to bypass the informally established rules were commonplace, but they were often met with resistance from those guarding the queue.

The dynamics in the waiting area segment near “El Parque del Amor” differed; only 40 to 50 people gathered here, including the waiting list's first 100. The main task in this section was to “guard the queue” and monitor individuals or groups in front of and behind one's position. This task was crucial, as individuals with questionable intentions could appear at this stage, trying to break the process's informal rules.

In the “Parque del amor” segment, ten waiters ensured outsiders stayed on track in the queue. This number was a strategic measure to counter attempts to transgress the process's informal rules. However, there were instances where “violent characters” appeared just before the purchase and threatened to jump ahead in the queue, claiming they could not see more than 50 people ahead of them. These situations resembled the passport process I explained earlier. However, without *convex* mediators, the law of the jungle generally prevailed.

The last segment involved a traditional queue, with no more than 50 people, typically between 25 and 30. This order was adopted because, on average, the CADECA only served between 35 and 40 people per day, depending on various factors such as the availability of dollars, electricity schedules, and service mishaps.

Temporally, the process had at least three chronological segments or macro-cycles, each with specific spaces and operations. It's evident that we're dealing with *polychronic waiting*, mainly structured

informally, culminating in a final, formally –organisational– established segment^{xviii}. Despite being entirely informally organised within the process's concavity, the degree of temporal determination was highly complex, as I will elaborate.

The first stage of the waiting process involved annotating and rectifying the lists, which took place at specific times throughout the week. Annotation was carried out on the first day and could take between 30 and 120 minutes, depending on various factors. Regulations and temporal logic were clarified before starting annotation and rectification. Registration was possible from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday to Saturday, and from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Sundays. Rectification occurred Monday to Saturday at 7:45 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and Sunday morning, with all lists rectified.

I observed up to six hours of rectification on some days, due to many annotated numbers. This indicates the process's temporal segments were organised synchronically (multiple simultaneous activities) and diachronically (sequential segments).

In the first segment, individuals could note up to 10 numbers daily. Waiters typically allowed 24 to 48 hours between entries for various reasons. Firstly, the number of annotation days would be extended until the number of shifts needed to complete the exchange was reached. Additionally, the number of days scored would correspond to the number of people the waiter could gather to accompany them on each shopping day once the benchmark was reached. For instance, a person needing 5000 USD would annotate the lists for ten alternate days in an ideal annotation context, with ten annotations each day. They would need to rectify their situation on annotation days and intervening days.

The duration of the operation varied, with more annotations leading to longer time in the waiting. After completing the annotation process, individuals usually dedicated 4-6 hours on Sundays for general rectification. If, ideally, this person could commit ten acquaintances to accompany them for the days necessary to acquire the desired amount, then five consecutive shopping days, or at most one or two days in between, could be established to acquire the required amount of 5000 USD.

As will be discussed, these waiting processes could have potentially been managed more effectively. In this framework of regulations and norms, it is important to note that the chronographic references used were generally rhetorical. It was the participants themselves and the managers or administrators of the

^{xviii} To clarify, unlike the previous examples discussed in this study, no formal tools, such as the Ticket app, were available to manage the wait at this location. Consequently, the responsibility for organising the wait fell solely on the agents involved.

process who, through verbal explanations, would mark out the different existing time segments chronologically and chronometrically.

The initial note-taking and rectification stage lasted 15-20 days, depending on various factors, with informal temporal programming primarily within the *concavity* of the process, when viewed *chronometrically*. There were other chronologically and chronometrically identifiable segments within each of these days. The reference points used were mostly mechanical, but those related to the cycles of celestial bodies (such as sunset) and logical-behavioural factors were also present.

After this first period, if things have gone according to the structured system, the person should arrive at the penultimate stage of the process or the second macro waiting cycle. This arrival usually occurred when the person was among the next 100 waiters to buy. As mentioned, at this moment, the waiting moves to the “Parque del amor”. Chronometrically, this stage lasted between 48 and 72 hours. It could last 24 hours in very favourable circumstances, but this was highly unlikely. However, it could extend over four days, depending on multiple factors.

This second stage was divided into two synchronously closed temporal segments, guided by two scheduled ordinal times in chronological terms. The first of these internal moments began on the first day with the morning “queue care”, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. If everything went as planned, the queue would be cared for from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. the following day, a day on which, hopefully, the person should start buying.

This dynamic relied on the absence of obstacles or mishaps to hinder or delay the process, with fifty people carrying out these two care shifts. This exact number is because, on average, CADECA attends between 35 and 40 people daily. However, nobody wanted to lose their place in the queue if an unforeseen event occurred and more people were attended to. If, on that particular day, only 35 people were seen, 15 people in the queue would repeat the night shift and 15 would do another morning shift. Therefore, these queue duty cycles could be spread over four consecutive days.

Finally, the final segment of the process took place the day after the night watch. This last segment took place during the normal operating hours of the exchange facility, *i. e.*, from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. However, it never lasted until the afternoon, as the sale usually ended when the organisation's dollar availability for that day was over. Given the availability of foreign currency, between 3500 and 4000 per day, and the time between one sale and the next, it was never more than midday when operations ended until the following day. If there were anyone left in this outline line without buying, they would

occupy the first positions of the next day, so they would have to, if not watch the whole night, at least be alert and come very early to make sure that there were no incidents or misunderstandings with their situation.

In a preliminary analysis, this waiting period is quite long due to the large number of operations that participants must complete and the established organisational time frame, compared to similar processes I have previously analysed. This waiting process is completely institutionalised and, on average, gathers between 70 and 80 people daily during observation. During this time, I accompanied and was accompanied by several individuals, as previously explained, returning daily until reaching the first 100 numbers to complete the process.

Moraima, who had been waiting in line since the first day of my observation, played a crucial role in helping me understand the dynamics of the queue. She told me that she was not waiting to buy dollars for herself but for her daughter, who planned to emigrate through Nicaragua. Moraima worked in a store that sold Cuban pesos and often had plenty of free time due to the shop's irregularity in receiving orders and power outages. Her daughter was attending university, and Moraima did not want her to miss classes, even though she knew her daughter would not complete her degree since she planned to leave before the end of 2022. This timeframe gave Moraima three to four months to implement her *plans* and *programs*.

From her, I learned that the structure of the queue had been shaped by the dynamics of the first few days after the sale was authorised (24/08/2022) and that the current system resulted from days of completely spontaneous experimentation. That list system was controlled by four women who were not technically in the queue. Yet it was public knowledge that they had some business with the lists.

Moraima mentioned that the "quest" involved holding turns or positions, buying foreign currency intermittently to resell later. Limited research indicated that the process's composition encompassed various classes within the Cuban social structure. However, at least on the days I was involved, many of them were young professionals of working age. However, they were not the ones who controlled the process but were "marginal", in Moraima's opinion, as she said she knew two of the organisers who were "professional fighters". "I know them from the centre", she told me, "they sell everything, and in the Pandemic, they queued for money". She also mentioned that the organisers lived in one of the neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the sales and waiting spaces.

Intriguingly, Moraima claimed participants in the waiting process avoided exaggeration in their “inventos”^{xix} (*inventions*) to prevent disrupting their business. Even when they engaged in operations to manage their turns, they never took things to the extreme. The key to maintaining order in this waiting system was to ensure that conflicts did not escalate out of control. The authorities had drawn a red line around the existence of social conflict. The police visited the registration and rectification areas during my observations when they noticed large crowds of people gathering there.

To circumvent potential conflicts and to keep the process manageable, the “organisers” of the queue randomly changed the meeting point for the initial segments of the process, which could occur at “Los Gatos” park or the “Parquecito de Bobes”. These movements also ensured that those unaware of this informally established dynamic or unpunctual would lose their turn and the days invested when they arrived at the wrong place. As a result, the list size decreased, providing “room for manoeuvre” for individuals to sell their turns or insert themselves into empty slots to buy foreign currency for later resale.

The process’s power, leadership and ceremony dynamics were numerous and fascinating but beyond this paper’s descriptive objectives. It is possible to point out that the *symploké* that constitutes a waiting process was observed, as in few others. The alliances and strategies of collaboration or obstruction between agents were many and interesting.

Moraima observed that “good people always appeared in the queues, even when they displayed seemingly selfish attitudes”. She shared an anecdote about one of the days when it was time to buy. Upon seeing ten people ahead of him, someone arrived in the queue and said, “Well, I’m number 11” and got in line. The people in the queue explained that each of them had at least 5 or 10 people with them, and this person took out a knife and said that he didn’t “know anything about that, that he was there and saw ten people, so he was the 11th”.

After that incident, it was decided that each person should bring at least three people with them to stand guard on the day of queue-keeping, Moraima told me. “I always try to be there because I am a woman and a mother, and it’s not the same with my son-in-law, who is young and male. You have to avoid it, and I have calmer and a better plan to deal with these characters”, she added.

^{xix} In Cuban slang, “inventio” means an informal business or job, often operating on the margins or outside the law.

According to Moraima, it's important to note that most people who come here are good people who want to solve their problems. "They are not familiar with beauty and all that", she said. Most people here are cooperative and helpful, giving advice and even sharing water during the waiting days. They take turns, mark each other if someone is late, and look for each other's belongings, transportation, and positions.

Appendix V (Complementary paper 1).

Title: The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories useful for their study

Abstract

This work contributes to the social science research on the processes of social waiting. Specifically, it deals with the study of the spaces or places where waiting takes place. As a theoretical novelty, waiting and the spaces associated with it are conceived here as social institutions. Furthermore, I offer a set of notions and analytical categories that facilitate the empirical approach to waiting spaces from the perspective of Philosophical Materialism (PhM). This allows us to distance ourselves from the traditional conception of the subject that locates waiting processes within the field of social temporalities.

Keywords: *Space, Place, Interior, Surrounding, Contour, Localisation, Ubication, Situation.*

1. Introduction

The vast majority of studies dealing with human social waiting ascribe an essentially temporal notion to them. For this reason, existing analyses are oversaturated with temporal categories while lacking others that address elements of waiting and resist chronological reduction. The phenomena associated with the spaces where waits occur are notable for their omission. By investigating this matter, I express my agreement with those who defend the spatial significance of waiting (Correa et al., 2013a; Musset, 2015) while proposing a global notion from which to approach the problem.

Specifically, I propose the label “topography of waiting” to address aspects related to the spaces where waiting occurs. Under this premise, I propose a set of spatial notions that are useful in studying waiting spaces. I refer to the notions of *surroundings*, *contour* and *interior*, and those of *localisation*, *ubication* and *situation*, as conceived by the Philosophical Materialism, developed by the Spanish philosopher Gustavo Bueno Martínez (1924-2016) and the substantive theory on which my analysis is based. These notions allow researchers to analyse spaces of waiting with a level of precision that is not enabled by the current existential approaches in this field of research.

Using the PhM system, I propose a conception of space close to the first genre of materiality (M1), according to the terminology used by Gustavo Bueno. That is, space inserted in the set of *physical* phenomena of reality, such as a river, rocks, the air, or a territory. However, this does not mean that I deny that the idea of space also includes components of other genres of materiality. Specifically, the presence of the second genre (M2) of a perceptual, socio-cultural or psychological type, or even the third genre (M3), ideational or essential, such as geometric notions of space, is not denied. According to PhM, there is no separation between the three genres of materiality (M1, M2 and M3) (García Sierra, 2021i, 2021j, 2021o). In fact, they cannot even be treated as if they were three different, albeit interacting, worlds. Nor is there any prior distinction between them. Instead, I find an essential *dissociation* (García Sierra, 2021d). In other words, it is possible to analyse them at different times. In the same way, a coin has two *inseparable* sides, but they can be *dissociated* and analysed at different times.

2. Place and Space in Philosophical Materialism

From a PhM perspective, I can observe that the notion of space used in research on waiting has mostly been related to covering doctrinal and ideological positions rather than to the analysis of territorial factors (physical or material) linked to waiting spaces. Considerations of waiting as a “liminal space”, “space of possibilities” or “space of uncertainty” are prevalent in the analyses on the subject (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020; Brun, 2015; Coleman, 2020; Gasparini, 1995).

My proposal aims to redirect the analysis towards a *technological* level that allows us to approach spaces in the objective sense (M1) mentioned above. On the one hand, this makes it possible to begin systematising research by presupposing that space is essential to the processes of waiting, regardless of the approach adopted and the subject matter addressed. On the other hand, this approach can clearly incorporate phenomena hitherto neglected in human and social sciences research. Following the PhM distinction, I highlight the tertiary-generic materials (M3), such as equations, formulas, mathematical distances, etc., commonly used by disciplines such as statistics, computational, cybernetic and computer sciences, among others in their analyses of the waiting processes. In many cases, the results obtained by these disciplines are partially ignored by researchers in human and social sciences, as there are few ways of integrating them into the predominant temporal analyses. A similar issue but in the opposite direction is that the characteristics of psycho/sociological analyses of waiting are difficult to equate with the discoveries made by researchers from the so-called *hard* or *exact* sciences.

Using a materialist perspective, I move from the general to the particular, addressing broad categories such as space and place and then focusing on more specific notions.

The first notion I will focus is the classical category of *place*. For his analysis, Gustavo Bueno starts from the Aristotelian canon from which place (τόπος) is defined as the "first immobile surface that envelops the body" (Aristotle, 2014 Physics: 209b). Its function is defined in relation to the body that occupies it, even if it appears to us to be fixed or static^{xx}. From this perspective, that *something* occupies a *place* implies that something else can substitute it in its occupation of that place. This place, seen in the singular, constitutes a neutral or *cardinal* place.

Aristotle offers another characteristic of places that I find relevant to waiting. This is the capacity of some places to envelop others. According to this, the place that envelops the others is the *primum mobile* ("first moved") on which the *prime mover* acts directly. This would be the

^{xx} Here it is necessary to point out that Aristotle warns that place is not the body, for two bodies could not exist in one place. The localised body, though mobile, is liable to occupy different places. However, this in no way affects its substance. In the same way that a body can, in general, occupy several places successively, different bodies can occupy a place (Bueno, 1998, 24).

sacred place and also the *first place*. Hence, places can be presented as enveloped in relations of order (*ordinal*), which can present (or not) relations of hierarchies. Here, specific sociological or political contexts stand out as an example. For instance, the same person could occupy the place of commander in chief of the army and the republic's president in different contexts, but at the same time and place. In those cases “a body or individual that occupies a place n in a context k can simultaneously occupy a place $n \pm m$ in a context q ” (Bueno, 1998, p. 24).

This characteristic indicates that places, when pluralised, are sometimes related to each other in a hierarchical way, giving different gradations to the entities (agents, processes and things) that occupy them compared to similar ones in different spaces. Here, place refers to a *post* or *position*. It is possible to find this meaning in the idea of occupying the “first place” in a competition or a queue and in the idea of being in an advantageous social position. It is also applied to physical bodies, persons, institutions or classes of bodies in a context, axis or coordinated system of axes that is almost always hierarchical.

This possibility is observed in specific waiting processes called multispatial or polytopic waiting, referred to as such because of their spatial multiplicity. In waits of this nature, the process can be *operationally* fragmented and, at the same time, *topographically* dispersed. In this way, a particular waiting process (*e. g.*, the collection of an inheritance) may include multiple waits –lawyers, banks, notarial procedures, etc.– linked in turn to multiple waiting times and to different *places* –offices, homes, headquarters, etc.–. In each of these moments of the process, which can be simultaneous or consecutive, the same subject can be in different places at the same time in a cardinal, ordinal and/or hierarchical manner.

In human social waiting, specifically, this maxim holds. The occupied place or position in a waiting process has a relationship (cardinal or ordinal) with other places given at different scales in the same context. In an axiological and ordinal sense, the place where one waits occupies a position above others according to certain criteria. This place corresponds to what Gustavo Bueno calls a “point of application of the force of the matter” (Idem). This is a *strategic place*, a *good place*, a *privileged place*, within the sequence of places in which the process of waiting manifests itself.

Oddly, this is an issue that has received very little research attention. Even authors who have addressed the spatial/territorial issue of waiting have not acknowledged the sequentiality of these areas. In my view, however, this is an essential aspect since it determines the character of waiting in an objective way.

Once again, Gustavo Bueno offers a useful distinction. According to his theory, a given place where a given process takes place –a waiting process, in this case– consists of *integral* and *determining parts*.

Constituent parts are concatenated with others of the same level and can be assigned to a place of their own. On the other hand, *determining parts* are generally components that encompass several *integrants parts*, occurring at the boundary of their totality. Therefore, the *integrants parts* are first-order portions, while the *determining parts* are second-order portions with respect to the former. In other words, it is possible to find a “primary order of places (or first-order places) and a second order (second-order places, secondary order places, distinguished places)” (Bueno, 1998, p. 27). These correspond to the *integral* and *determining* places, respectively. This segmentation is observable in waiting processes where the normative regulations of particular places, inside the general waiting space, are labelled according to their degree of importance. The place located one meter away from the customer service desk in an office during the current COVID-19 pandemic has a different significance from the rest of the places in this organisational space. This place is a *determining* place in the process, just as the point half a meter from the door to the premises can be an *integral* place in the process.

The condition of places being *integral* or *determining* also defines the operations - sometimes ceremonials - carried out in each case. The temporal cycles in which the wait is framed also depend on these factors. This diversity of roles or functions makes it possible to differentiate the places in the ensemble (Bueno, 1998) of the general space of the waiting. Using the previous example, although the actor's behaviour may not be one metre away from the entrance door, he must stop and maintain the same distance from the window of attention, in accordance with the established medical-sanitary recommendations. In the same way, at this point, he offers the documentation required in his case, and this is what will or will not allow

him to move on to the next cycle of operations or achieve his objective, finishing the waiting process.

3. Waits as institutions and the spaces of waiting as institutionalised spaces

As mentioned above, here I take a different approach from most existing research on waiting. Unlike the majority, for whom waiting is a type of temporality, my proposal conceives human social waits as *social institutions*. From the theoretical perspective of PhM, in contrast to human *institutional waits*, there are *ethological waits* - both animal and human - and *non-institutional waits*. Understanding the differences between them is fundamental to establish the limits of both the *gnoseological* and *topographical* space of the waiting, which are analysed by the different behavioural sciences^{xxi}. Following PhM, institutions are considered figures of inter- and extra-somatic objective culture; gnoseologically supreme categories of *anthropological material*.

For Gustavo Bueno, institutions are supra-individual structures: “universal and differential concepts of such a material that subsumes another of the fundamental categories of anthropology, ceremonies” (Ongay, 2008, p. 2). As institutions, the waiting could be both *ceremonial* and *non-ceremonial*, according to the criteria for classifying *ceremonies* also proposed by PhM. According to his interpretation, ceremonies are “figures of human activity subject to norms and which involve operative sequences of a transitory nature that are internally closed from their configuration” (Bueno, 1984, p. 9). These categories, ceremony and institution, constitutes fundamental notions for delimiting the frontiers between anthropology/ethology, nature/culture, and human/animal, among other possibilities.

These notions are very useful for studying waiting spaces. Using them, it is possible to integrate different degrees of complexity both in waiting processes in general and in the spaces where they occur. Additionally, the idea of *institution* is fundamental in *dissociating* the parts of a waiting (time and operations or time and space, for instance) without needing to *separate*

^{xxi} It is not possible to go into the distinctions between human social waiting and the ethological waiting in this paper. In another article it will be devoted solely to this aspect of waiting.

them from each other. For this reason, waiting spaces should be analysed as institutionalised spaces. Gustavo Bueno has analysed other materials related to spaces from an institutional perspective. Here I take as a reference his analysis of *maps, journeys* and *travellers* as human institutions linked to spaces as I understand them. On maps, he reflects:

The map is a morphology that, concerning its field, maintains a pragmatic isomorphism whose foundation does not lie in the graph, nor *in its field*, but the involvement between the two. [In this way] the maps used by Columbus or Juan de la Cosa served as guides to their respective navigations, and these managed to transform the hypothesis of the sphericity of the Earth (...) (an adjustment that could only be established after multiple successes and partial rectifications) (Bueno, 2012a, p. 36)^{xxii}.

Here, Bueno points out some fundamental issues. The first is that the operationalisation of spaces and territorialisation are integrated phenomena, *dissociable* but not *separable*. In other words, a physical space only becomes a territory through human operations on the ground. These operations are only possible within the framework of already existing institutions related to converting spaces into territories. Maps are precisely such institutions. Their use makes it possible to integrate non-territorialised spaces into territorialised spatial complexes. In this way, these spaces, now territories, become institutionally operational.

I say that these operations are already institutional because they are human social operations. They transcend the framework of ethological spatial behaviours, such as biochemical demarcation –via urine, for example– or visual or auditory bodily manifestations – gestures, shrieks or rituals in which body parts, such as genitals or teeth, are displayed– typical of other animals. In other words, human territorialisation is only possible through institutional acts. Among these acts, we can find the symbolic demarcation of the terrain through the

^{xxii} English traslation of the original Spanish: “*El mapa es una morfología que, en relación con su campo, mantiene un isomorfismo pragmático cuyo fundamento no reside en el grafo, ni en su campo, sino en la involucración entre ambos. [De esta manera] los mapas que utilizó Colón o Juan de la Cosa sirvieron de guías a sus respectivas navegaciones, y estas consiguieron transformar la hipótesis de la esfericidad de la Tierra (...) (un ajuste que solo pudo ser establecido tras múltiples aciertos y rectificaciones parciales)*”.

placement of objects recognised as institutions, such as a fence, a totem pole, a military construction, the American flag placed on the moon, etc.

According to what I have outlined above; it is possible to affirm that maps operate with known territories rather than unknown spaces. This fact is related to *rationality*, one of the *cumulative*^{xxiii} characteristics that Gustavo Bueno associates with institutions (*i. e.*, with the possibilities of transmission via rational understanding, based on already known and previously rationalised and operationalised materials).

Insofar as maps are linked to territories rather than spaces, their morphology responds to the map-maker's objectives and must operate with given categories in the framework of an already existing culture. This means that maps must be transmitted –sometimes unevenly– to other human social actors. That said, we can assume that journeys can be made in territories, understood as the typical locomotional movements of human beings. In the words of Gustavo Bueno, the journey is a “displacement along a precise, determined or determinable spatial itinerary. (...) The journey must refer to operative corporal subjects, and for this reason, the journey is not only '*latio*', but locomotion; and not animal locomotion, but human locomotion” (Bueno, 2000, para. 33).

The differences between travel and other movements have a certain proportional relationship between *routes* and *routines*. If human beings *travel* along established *routes*, which allow us to return if necessary, animals, on the other hand, move through spaces; and when they do so repeatedly, their behaviour responds more to routines than to routes *per se*.

Beyond the repetitive nature of both types of movement, normativity and rationality govern the routes and distinguish them from the routines, whose components are different – biochemical, genetic, stigmergic (associated with animals)–. Gustavo Bueno (1984) argues that a similar parallel can be found between animal *rites* and human *ceremonies*. In this case, although

^{xxiii} For Gustavo Bueno, institutions possess the following characteristics: 1) they exhibit a “hylomorphic structure”; 2) they serve as morphological cultural units of a systemic order; furthermore, they display 3) recurrence; 4) rationality; 5) normativity; and 6) axiology.

the operations may be similar, the sense –the meaning, according to some authors– between one behaviour and the other are entirely different^{xxiv}.

Applied to waiting, these distinctions help us to differentiate the spaces of human social waiting from other waiting spaces of an *ethological* or *non-institutional* type. This demarcation is of vital importance because waiting is an analogous and not a univocal phenomenon. In other words, it is more accurate to speak of waiting in plural, with the same applying to the spaces where it takes place.

Drawing a parallel with the above, it is possible to point out that *pauses* (typical among animals) are to *human institutional waiting* what *rites* are to *ceremonies* or what *routines* are to *routes*. The institutional nature of waiting spaces is what distinguishes them from other *ritual* or *routine* spaces. As researchers, sometimes we lose sight of the fact that waiting spaces are assigned and are rarely random, even if they seem to be. Frequently, waiting spaces are institutional and this institutionality is the key to understand their features.

To the extent that human social waiting is institutionalised, to varying degrees, the space in which it takes place is also institutionalised. Even when the waiting takes place in a *primary structuring* space^{xxv} of a “natural” type (a jungle, a cave, the banks of a river), the institutional dynamics of the waiting itself operationalises the territory following the aims of the process. In this way, a vigil area, a resting place, a space for waste, another for storage, etc., can be delimited, albeit precariously.

The story of a Cuban emigrant who crossed the Darién Gap in the Panamanian Jungle on his way to the USA and had to overcome the multiple delays required by the characteristics of this migratory route is a good example of this process:

^{xxiv} In this respect, Bueno presents the differences between the sand ablution rites of elephants when they lack water, and similar operations carried out by Muslims in a similar situation. If among the former, the meaning is merely biological, to refresh oneself from the embracing heat of the desert, among the latter, the meaning refers to a religious ceremony that involves the interference of multiple institutions.

^{xxv} For a classification criterion for waiting spaces concerning their degree of structuring consult: Avila (2020). “The topography of waiting. Categorical notes for the analysis of waiting spaces” [In Press].

As night fell, we were in the little place where we had to sleep. Waiting to continue the journey the next morning, the guide repeated several times: 'When the sun rises, we are going to cross the river, climb the hill in front of us, we will come across the river again, and we have to follow the current (...). And he warned of an area infested with assailants (...). The instructions were clear (...).' [In the morning] We woke people up, and if you could see them: they were shaking like they were in a bed! They wanted to sleep another little bit and start making breakfast (Y. F. Rodríguez, 2019, para. 4)^{xxvi}.

In this account, we can see not only the process of mapping and signification of the territory (*we are going to cross the river... the hill in front of us... an area infested by assailants*), but also an institutionalisation of the waiting space in the institutional sense I am proposing (*... as if they were in a bed... sleep another little bit... make breakfast*). This example also reinforces Bueno's hypothesis. Here, the differences between those who move through a territory and enter an unknown or non-territorialised space are clear: "(...) the 'traveller' concept implies the 'road' concept [*i. e.*] an already established itinerary which leads with certainty to some place (...) and which, therefore, eliminates any surprises in terms of routes" (Bueno, 2002, para. 11).

From a spatial point of view, the waiting subject is more of a *traveller* than an *adventurer*. As I conceive them here, the itineraries are almost always more or less defined in the spaces of waiting. Even if itineraries may present more or less sporadic or constant episodes of improvisation (adventure), the places of waiting are given in specific spaces, related to specific identifiable events within the internal logic of the waiting process as a whole. It is a different matter if the social actor is not familiar with the process beforehand or if, during certain parts of the process, he/she experiences feelings of unpredictability and disorientation. In this case, the researcher's task is precisely to make visible the internal junctures of these spaces where they are not sufficiently clear, as well as the borders of the waiting territory itself. On the other hand,

^{xxvi} Traslation from the Spanish original: "*Cayendo la noche estábamos en el lugarcito donde había que dormir. [Esperando para continuar viaje a la mañana siguiente,] el guía repitió varias veces: 'Cuando amanezca, vamos a cruzar el río, subir la loma que nos queda al frente, nos topamos otra vez con el río, y hay que seguir en favor de la corriente. (...)' Y advertía sobre una zona infestada de asaltantes (...). Las instrucciones eran claras (...). [En la mañana] Despertamos a la gente, y si ustedes los vieran: ¡remolones como si estuvieran en una cama! Querían dormir otro poquito y ponerse a hacer desayuno*".

I propose the need to describe (measure) these spaces' characteristics and verify how the spatial dynamics are articulated with the rest of the dimensions present in the process.

In short, I can affirm that waiting spaces are institutionalised spaces distinguished from other possible spaces. Their demarcation as such and the establishment of the characteristics that define them are fundamental for the classification and understanding of waits in the institutional sense. This enables waiting to constitute an object of analysis that can be adjusted to the categorical tools of the social and human sciences.

4. Some spatial categories of PhM and their possibilities for the analysis of waiting spaces

Having raised essential aspects needed for the analysis of waiting places in general, I will now address other more detailed categories for this aim in what follows. I refer to two sets of notions: *interior*, *surroundings*, and *contour*; and *localisation*, *ubication*, and *situation*. Both sets can be related to each other as well as with other much more specific categories, which I do not deal with in this paper^{xxvii}.

4.1. Interior, surroundings and contour

From the perspective of PhM, it is impossible to speak of social processes or humans by only referring to endogenous characteristics. The behaviour of humans, considered as a species or as individuals, must be explained by considering the surrounding space or context in which they are immersed. Also, it is essential to consider the processes within these environments. In this sense, human contexts are populated by entities, processes and materials, which can be anthropic (ceremonies, institutions, etc.) and *nonanthropic* (plants, stones, stars, etc.). As people, we establish relationships with many of these phenomena. These relations are mediated by the proximities and distances between the phenomena and ourselves.

^{xxvii} Here we refer to a group of categories established in the work "*The topography of waiting. Categorical notes for the analysis of the spaces of waiting*".

From this theoretical perspective, Gustavo Bueno offers a terminology that I consider pertinent to denote the position of these relations in a spatial sense. His perspective is also very useful for the analysis of waiting processes and their spaces. Specifically, I refer to the categories of *interior, surroundings, and contour*^{xxviii}. With these gnoseological tools, I aim to characterise phenomena based on their different positions in space, in relation to the elements inside, outside and in the perimeter of the waiting space. The central premise is the positions of elements and actors are always established in relation to other spatially located phenomena.

The first of these distinctions, the *interior*, refers to the set of entities that are included in the node (process, phenomenon or entity) that occupies the space (Bueno, 1993, p. 1411). In the case of waiting, the *interior* denotes the material operations and processes that take place in the space where the waiting takes place. Here are included, for example, the movement of rows in a waiting room, the changes of position that an actor makes to be closed to an exit door, an information window, or a bathroom. It also involves ceremonies that regulate certain waiting times. For example, in hospital waiting rooms, those waiting for relatives who have been admitted receive a report or update at certain times of the day and in a specific order. Object materials such as beds, chairs, food and drink dispensers, information boards, loudspeakers, among many other possibilities, can also be found.

Surroundings, for its part, is constituted by “all the entities which, while not belonging to the nodule [process, entity or phenomenon], nevertheless maintain constitutive interactions with it (perhaps molecular^{xxix} rather than molar) and, in each case, significant”^{xxx} (García Sierra,

^{xxviii} The *surrounding, contour* and *interior* are three notions used by Gustavo Bueno to denote different spatial positionings. Bueno has extended the architectonic and pictorial distinction between contained space (*dintorno*), *contour* (*contorno*) and enveloping space (*entorno*) to bodies, parts, wholes, concepts and fields of concepts, which enables a logical analysis of relationships between configurations, continuities and, perhaps most importantly for Bueno’s materialism, discontinuities. See in this connection: <http://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df090.htm>.

^{xxix} It is essential to clarify that Bueno mentions the molecular in a systemic sense. This is not to be confused with the molecular idea in the rhizomatic sense developed by Deleuze and Guattari.

^{xxx} Translated from the Spanish original: “*el conjunto de todas las entidades que, no perteneciendo al nódulo [proceso, entidad o fenómeno], mantienen sin embargo con él, interacciones constitutivas (acaso moleculares más que molares) y, en cada caso, significativas*”.

2021h, para. 2). For Bueno, these *surroundings* exceed the merely “external envelope” or place (in the Aristotelian sense) of a nodule. It could also pass through or into the nodule. For instance, as the earth’s gravitational field passes into the body of a bird or a fish.

The delimitation of the *surroundings* of waiting poses a certain difficulty, especially if one considers the monism proposed by various authors who claim a connection among all things. From the materialist point of view, I use the idea of *symploke*^{xxxI} to avoid this error. Thus, the *surroundings* of a waiting space embrace the objects and phenomena that interact (harmoniously or in conflict) with many of the elements of its *interior* and *contour*, modifying them in many cases, but without being totally linked to the waiting process.

According to PhM, the *surroundings* (or parts of it) can be of two types: a) *nodular* or b) *indeterminate*. *Nodular* parts are made up of nodules of the same order as the reference nodule^{xxxII}. In relation to waits, the *nodular* parts of the *surroundings* correspond to the collateral processes, which can also be waiting, that take place in the space of the main process. For example, waits for documents adjacent to others, waiting during transport to the processing office, shifts for a service parallel to the wait (such as waiting for buying a stamp or authenticating a document), among others. All these nodular parts could be considered nodules in themselves if we change the perspective. That is, if we take more or less distance (*apothetically*^{xxxIII}) from the object, changing the focus of the analysis, in this case, a specific waiting process. According to the PhM, nodular parts could be organised in a *molar* (one after the other) or *cellular* (non-linear) structures.

^{xxxI} See explanation the explanation in: *The waiting as institution. 3.1. ϕ -components and π -totalities. Their application to the study of waiting times.*

^{xxxII} In this context, the nodule constitutes the object of reference that integrates the three orders: *the surroundings*, *the contour* and *the interior*.

^{xxxIII} Gustavo Bueno's “apotético” or “apothetical” denotes a distance that animals, including humans, perceive between bodies. The term derives from Greek words “apo” - από -(far) and “thésis” - θέσις- or théseos - θέσεως - (allocating), and denotes the phenomenological position of objects in our “surrounding world” as they appear to us from a distance. Stalking behaviours and capturing others' actions, plans, or symbols are *apothetically* constructed. In human and ethological sciences, the apothetical refers to perceived distances through organoleptic filters, incorporating distance as an inherent concept aspect.

On the other hand, *indeterminacy* refers to situations that occur in the *surroundings* of a waiting space or area, which in principle are not related to the process, but could affect or determine it. As an example, a waiting environment *located in* a peripheral area with a high rate of violence. Here, the violence is not linked, in principle, to the specific waiting process, and yet it affects both the *surroundings* and the *interior* of the space.

An example of this is offered by Alain Musset (2015) when he analyses the economic activities *around* the long lines of cars waiting on the Mexican side of a border crossing between Mexico and the US. The author describes in detail the dynamics of dozens of street vendors who run from one car to another offering various goods. Most of these goods come from perimeter shops located in the *vicinity of* the waiting area or territory. In principle, these shops are not related to the waiting itself. For this reason, their commercial activities are in an *indeterminate* space. The surrounding of the *nodular* area was occupied by other types of institutions linked to the process: migration offices, international relations, customs agents, border patrols, etc.

However, the action of the vendors is undoubtedly distinctive to this waiting process. Although technically the relationship of these informal traders with waiting is rather transversal and not central, Musset integrates their dynamics within the process. Specifically, he analyses what I call the *economic dimension of waiting* or the *economy of waiting*. However, the author acknowledges that these actors are not, in principle, the agents of waiting. In this case, the real “waiters”^{xxxiv} (Auyero, 2012) are the drivers of the cars attempting to cross the border.

The objective of investigation then, is not so much to determine what activities these actors carry out and how they take place, but where they take place and what relationship this positioning has with the rest of the spaces of the process. Musset cannot answer these questions, nor can he go beyond a mere ethnographic description of the phenomenon without notions such as those I am proposing here. Although of the great value, the ethnographic

^{xxxiv} According to Auyero, people who wait should be called *patients*. This definition is inspired by definition used by P. Bourdieu in his “Pascalian Meditations” (2000). However, I prefer to use Giovanni Gasparini’s term “waiter” (“On Waiting” [1995]), as a person who waits, without any axiological implication of this state in principle.

materials provided by Musset they do not clearly and distinctly organise the different levels at which processes take place within the spaces of the waiting.

On the other hand, the *contour* is the limit or boundary between the *surroundings* and the *interior*. This notion corroborates that the concept of *surroundings* is not reduced to the “enveloping surface” (Aristotelian place) that embraces the entity. When I speak of the *contour* of the waiting space, I am referring both to the internal spatial (physical) borders of a waiting space and to the temporal borders of this same space. “Temporal borders” here are related to the particular space where the waiting process occurs, not to the waiting process duration. However, I am aware that the *duration*^{xxxv} of the space and the process may coincide in some waits. For instance, in war situations, the *contour* of the waiting space, the battlefield where soldiers are entrenched and waiting for the enemy, disappear with the ending of the process when the enemy appears and the fight starts. At this moment, the totality of the waiting process and the *contour* of the waiting space are ended by the push of these conflicting forces.

Physical *contours* can include, for example, the walls of a waiting room, the border fence separating migrants waiting for asylum, or the geographical destination of their movement. In relation to the temporal boundaries of spaces, we can identify the dividing lines that are established between the different operations that make up the duration of a waiting space. For example, the moment that divides the transformation of any space into a waiting space with specific regulations (*e. g.*, a car park during an earthquake, a fire, a terrorist threat alarm, etc.).

Contours can sometimes be linked to certain operations that not only characterise the space functionally but also structurally. For example, devices such as surveillance cameras, boundary tapes, armoured glass, etc., can be associated with the concept.

The ability to describe the waits provided in the examples above are indicative of the advantages offered by the categories I am proposing. They allow to precisely locate and classify each of the dynamics that we could find in the empirical research space. An accurate

^{xxxv} The concept of *surroundings* can also be used in studies where the temporal or chronographic dimension of waiting is taken into account, but it has to be explained according to other parameters.

delimitation facilitates the understanding and explanation of phenomena linked to others waiting's dimensions such as the economic, political, ceremonial, normative among others. As I have argued, the spatial aspect of waiting can be *dissociated* but not *separated* from the temporal or operational. Hence, a closed door, a security protocol, a type of communication (electronic and not personal) affects not only the space of waiting, but also its time (extending or reducing) and number of operations (increasing or decreasing).

4.2. Localisation, ubication and situation

The topographical sectorialisation of social action spaces is commonly perceived as a significant issue to be addressed in spatial research (Santos 2000). Some authors (Aristóteles, 1995; Harvey, 1992; Santos, 1995) draw distinctions between *site* and *place*, for example, to denote the internal differences between points in space. In the case of waiting spaces, as we shall see, it is also relevant given the characteristics institutional characteristics shown by those. In *human social waiting*, the specific *place* in which it occurs is a vitally important aspect, independent of the characteristics or typologies of the waiting itself. In order to understand it objectively, it is necessary to take into account both its specific demarcation and the relations that this specific place maintains with other points in its *interior*, *surroundings* or *contour*. These demarcations constitute one of the initial tasks of any researcher attempting to analyse a waiting process. In this regard, the spatial (*topographical*) characteristics of the process can be described while at the same time establishing the degrees of influence among the different segments of this space.

Nevertheless, each of these segments of the spatial totality must be integrated into the process. This makes it possible, among other things, to determine the points of contact and the divergences with the dynamics present in the waiting as an institutional totality. Alicia Lindón, who has dealt with this particular aspect of waiting processes, calls it the *anchoring* of waiting. With this category, she describes the problems concerning the position of the waiting space in the vast geography of a given territory (a village, city, country, continent, etc.) (Lindón, 2019).

Categories such as those used by Lindón and other authors (Auyero 2012; Musset 2015; Secor 2007) can be grouped under the idea of *waiting localisation*. However, this classification

does not allow us to address the environments of a specific position in all its complexity. Neither does it allow us to explain the consequences of these positions for other parts of the waiting process and the actors involved in it.

I do not deny the importance of *localisation* offered by these authors. On the contrary, I base my proposal precisely on its dialectical assimilation. I recommend that this notion be systemically integrated with two other notions offered by the PhM. Together with the idea of *localisation*, the notions of *ubication* and *situation* in waiting spaces should also be addressed. On these notions, Gustavo Bueno explains:

The distinction between *ubication* [from Spanish, *ubicación*] and *situation* is a traditional distinction that comes, naturally, from Aristotle (...) the *ubication*, which has to do with the place, Aristotle's *pou*, the *ubi*, and the *situation*, which has to do with the *keisthai*, which has to do with the verb *keimi*, which is to lie [be situated], in a way (Bueno, 2021, min. 02:22)^{xxxvi}.

Quantitatively ordered according to their scope, these notions can be arranged from the most encompassing to the least encompassing. In this regard, *localisation* comes first as it covers more than the *ubication*. The *localisation* alludes to the “local” of waiting (Secor, 2007) space (in the Euclidean sense), where bodies perform a movement. Simply put, it refers to the *geographical localisation* of the place of waiting. This *localisation* is circumscribed to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the objectives of the research. In this way, the waiting can be *located* in a continent, a country, a state, a region, a city, a village, a town, a locality, a neighborhood, etc.

In all these spaces, the idea of *place* (in the Aristotelian sense), which refers mainly to three-dimensional Euclidean bodies, is already presupposed. However, there are other realities, spatially related to this *place*, which are not the place itself. One of these realities corresponds to what envelops the place. In reference to this, Gustavo Bueno notes that “the *place* is not the *ubi*” (Bueno, 2014, min. 2:22-3:06), although, on numerous occasions, it is translated in this

^{xxxvi} Translated from Spanish: “*la distinción entre ubicación y situación es una distinción tradicional que procede, naturalmente, de Aristóteles (...) la ubicación, que tiene que ver con el lugar, el pou de Aristóteles, el ubi, y la situación, que tiene que ver con el keisthai, que tiene que ver con el verbo keimi, que es yacer, de algún modo*”.

way^{xxxvii}. According to this perspective, *ubi* is an accident of the body being in a place rather than the *place* itself. For this reason, at times or in disciplines where a high degree of specificity is required, locating (*locus*) is somewhat different from *ubication* [ubicación-*ubi*]. According to the author, *ubication* [ubicación] is an essentially descriptive term. That is, it is axiologically neutral with respect to other phenomena. Referring to a body, it could be said that it is *localised* in one place or another, without further nuances. “A battalion is localised [ubicado] at such and such a height or another, but nothing more is said” (Bueno, 2014, min. 09:14-13:09)^{xxxviii}.

This matter becomes even more complex when are introduced concepts related to the site (*situs*) and its possibilities of analysis. This complexity of analysis is precisely the reason why I have introduced the notion of topography. The *site* is the origin of what it could be called the *topology of the waiting* process. This notion points to the consequences of the “situational” arrangement of the elements inside the process. Consequently, it is a dynamic notion and can be, when relevant, linked to the perceptions, ideas, or values related to the process. Additionally, the topography of waiting can be conceived as the description of the elements *localised* in the waiting space^{xxxix}. Such elements can also establish relations among them. The notion of *situation*, from the topographical perspective offered here, points to the ordinal relations among elements. When I say that something is “situated” in a specific place, the idea changes completely because introduce relational elements. The notion of *situation*, relating to the act of *situating*, no longer belongs to purely descriptive language but involves a valiative description. Therefore, a *situation* indicates to be at a certain point in space, which determines a better or for worse possibility in certain aspects. Thus, Bueno explains that “the battalion (...) is well situated or poorly *situated*, (...) we are not only saying that it is in a place, but that this

^{xxxvii} In English, it is difficult to explain the point Bueno is making since there is no word commonly used for what Bueno is referring to. I have translated the notion that Bueno proposes, ‘*ubicación*’, as *ubication* to distinguish the subtle but essential differences in one concept from the other.

^{xxxviii} Translated from Spanish: “*Un batallón está ubicado en tal cota o en otra, pero no se dice nada más*”.

^{xxxix} The space in the sense in which it has been described, closer to the first materiality genre (M_1), according to the PhM.

place has a special privilege, it has a privileged situation with respect to third parties, or it does not, or it has a situation that is the opposite of privileged”^{XL} (Bueno, 2014, min 09:14-13:09).

With these distinctions, the aim is to underline that the differences between *ubication* and *situation* have very complex characteristics^{XLI}. Therefore, the *situation* implies organisation and arrangement of points. In other words, “it has to do with identity and congruence” (ibidem, min 23:23-30:28). This conclusion connects us immediately with the distinctions analysed above. If, as we saw, *ubi* [*ubication*] alludes only to inclusion in a place, then there is the implication of being *located* within a larger space. The *situs* (site-situation), on the other hand, also contains considerations of the relative order of elements of the *contour*. In other words, the *contour* is that which determines the borders of the material *place*. The borders of the first immobile surface are the *place* where the given body or phenomenon is contained. At that moment, this place refers to the *ubication*, according to the terminology I have introduced. Therefore, the place is being made *ad hoc* for each body, but can, at another moment, be occupied by other bodies (Bueno, 2014, min 13:09-23:23). The *surrounding* can sometimes be equated to the *localisation*, just as the *interior* can be equated to the *situation*.

In the case of waiting, these distinctions are of utmost importance. Both the *localisation* and the *ubication* of the space where the waiting process takes place must be delimited by analysing the *topographical aspects* of the waiting process. Once these aspects have been established, it is essential to determine whether the waiting subjects can be *situated* within the process, thereby establishing their *situation*. For example, a subject is waiting in a queue is *situated* through the description of being, for example, “three people who are 20 metres away from the entrance”. This *situation* (*i. e.*, being with others and the distance from the objective)

^{XL} Translated from Spanish: “*el batallón (...) está bien situado o mal situado, (...) no solamente decimos que está en un lugar, sino que ese lugar tiene un privilegio especial, tiene una situación de privilegio con respecto a terceros, o no la tiene, o tiene una situación todo lo contrario de privilegiada*” (Bueno, 2014, min 23:23-30:28).

^{XLI} According to Bueno, Leibniz introduced these topics in his confrontation with Cartesianism and its analytic geometry. According to Leibniz, the Cartesian system of analytic geometry describes the position or situation employing a three-axis or two-axis coordinate system. Since he had to resort to external criteria, the coordinates, in order to be able to define the place, or situation, in which a body was in the plane, or space, it was an extrinsic system (Bueno, 2014, min 23:23-30:28).

inevitably improves or worsens his waiting, with respect to the rest of people in the process. A *waiter* waiting for a transplant is *situated* in a particular position among all the candidates on a waiting list. This specific *situation* indicates the probability of receiving the requested organ within a reasonable period of time. In other words, our lives may depend on where we are *situated* in the waiting.

Situation differs from *localisation* or *ubication* insofar as it always establishes a type of relationship that calls, in principle, for a *gradation*. In the study of waiting processes, this category can be very useful, especially in research that analyses the mechanisms of control and uses of power or domination. The *situation* is inherent to human experiences as they are almost always referential (even when they are self-referential). The situation is related to the concept of “keisthai” in Aristotelian philosophy, which is derived from the verb “keimi”, which roughly means “to lie” or “to be at rest” (Bueno, 2021, para. 2). In this context, the *situation* refers to the position or arrangement of something in relation to its surroundings, considering its state or condition. The concept emphasises the relationship of an object or place with its environment and other relevant variables rather than simply focusing on its specific *localisation* or *ubication*. By asking people for a particular opinion or experience during a given waiting process, we largely address their *situation* within it, their position concerning other material factors -organisations, for instance -social actors, group expectations and regulations.

We can better understand this articulation by citing, as an example, Sarah Turnbull’s notes on the waiting conditions of certain migrants in the UK. The author establishes the *localisation* of the informants, the UK, as follows:

A defining feature of immigration detention in the United Kingdom (UK) is its indeterminacy (...). The British government chose not to adopt the European Union Returns Directive, which limits the duration of detention to a total maximum of 18 months (Stefanelli, 2011). (...) Consequently, the lived experience of detention is one of waiting: waiting to know both when and how detention will end (*i. e.* release to the community or expulsion from the UK) (Turnbull, 2016, p. 1).

This example is particularly useful since it shows how pertinent the *localisation* for *localised* waiting spaces at specific scale can be. However, if the focus is narrowed further, other types of categorical tools or combinations will also be appropriate.

These ideas could also be exemplified citing a waiting process studied by Javier Auyero in his very interesting book *Patients of the State: The politics of waiting in Argentina* (2012). Here, the author mentions the case of Lidia, who has been waiting 21 years to “have a roof over her head”. After a fire in *la villa* [the neighbourhood] where she lived razed her house to the ground, she became a waiter [patient]. Using the ethnological description offered by Auyero, I can summarise the case using my categories.

According to Auyero, the waiting was “located” in “one of the fifty-seven tents that the city government put up to house those left homeless by the fire. The provisional camp was located in Parque Roca, at the crossroad of Avenida Coronel Roca and Avenida Escalada in the Villa Riachuelo neighbourhood” (Auyero, 2012, p. 69).

The text mentions both the *ubication* (from my theoretical perspective) and the *localisation* (explicitly mentioned by the author) of the waiting process. This does not yet imply an axiological consideration of space in relation to the waiting process. If, on the other hand, the victims were to be attended to according to a numerical list, and the subject (Lidia) was *situated* at number 155, with only the first 27 on the list to be aided, we would need to incorporate an aspect that affects not only the chronological/spatial, but also the phenomenological (psychic/emotional/axiological) and even the more empirical social practice.

If we intended to carry out a qualitative analysis of the example drawn from Auyero, it would not be possible to move forward without first illustrating these defining characteristics of the case study. Categories such as the ones I am introducing are used precisely to refine the research approach. In this way, the analysis and the exposition acquire all the nuances that the case demands.

On the other hand, some or even all these spatial categories could be combined in other types of processes. In the latter case, a wait may be *located* in a territory and present multiple

ubications, where in turn the actors are involved in different *situations* in various possible scenarios. Alicia Lindón calls this type of waiting process *etápico* [stagic]. She cites the waiting processes associated with the movement of undocumented Central American migrants to the US as an illustrative example. “In these cases, it is not a single movement from a place of origin to a place of destination, but countless movements that gradually reduce the distance that initially separated the origin and the destination” (Lindón, 2019, p. 50)^{XLII}.

Just as it is possible to combine the categories of *localisation*, *ubication* and *situation*, it is also possible to combine them with *interior*, *surroundings*, and *contour*. We can combine, for example, the notions of *ubication* and *surroundings* in two different ways. The *ubication* level of analysis is the notion most often cited in waiting researches and the one that, to some extent, defines waiting directly. Its range is as diverse as the possible waiting processes that take place in society. *Waiting ubications* can range from public service offices, hospitals, airport waiting rooms, association headquarters, urban spaces, private homes, prisons, and borders, among many others.

The second level of analysis, referring to the *surroundings* of these *ubications*, corresponds to surrounding processes, materials and phenomena that influence waiting, but only in a transversal way. A specific *ubication* can be analysed in relation to its *surroundings*, considering the presence or absence of access routes (*e. g.*, metro stations); gastronomic areas (supermarkets, small restaurants); recreational areas (squares, parks, open green areas); government offices (department of motor vehicles for driver’s licenses or courtrooms during trials); or peripheral areas of the city (slums or ghettos).

The possible relations between the first and the second level of analysis undoubtedly have significant consequences for waiting processes. The actors involved are also affected. The many different potential processes and experiences underline the importance of establishing these relations of analysis in each case. Researchers may also use a combination of notions. For

^{XLII} Translated from Spanish: “En esos casos, no se trata de un desplazamiento único desde un lugar de origen a un lugar de destino, sino de innumerables desplazamientos que van reduciendo gradualmente la distancia que separaba inicialmente el origen y el destino”.

analytical purposes, I will quote a writing by art gallery owner Nermin Saybaşı, who analyses one of the pieces of an exhibition series whose central theme is “waiting in society”.

There I am, beside a window in a room, which could be in one of these mammoth blocks of Socialist hotels, which are no longer built, and where you might have resided before; and I see the monotony of the place, which could well be an abandoned workers’ district, or a camp, and so on and so forth; through the desert, which opens itself to the end of the world, I see the end of the world itself, which could be any end of the world, no matter where. And I can’t stop looking at this border, behind which there could be a new world –or nothing^{XLIII}.

The quotation is from a work that reproduces the fictitious letter written by a writer invited to an artists’ congress in East Germany during the Cold War. The fragment mentions all the details related to the *ubication* of his *waiting place*. What is interesting for us is that the author offers a concept of waiting related precisely to the space surrounding the process. Waiting and place are considered inseparable phenomena. In other words, the waiting only makes sense or becomes “visible” if the spectator is immersed in the experience of the space where the narration takes place. The artist describes his spatial/temporal *localisation* (East Germany during the Cold War) and his *ubication* (a hotel). In addition, he offers details of his *surroundings*: a landscape of buildings with multiple possibilities of use, a camp, and a working-class neighbourhood. There is even one element of the *contour* of the space: a *window*.

In the whole “visual picture” of the waiting process, an unmistakably intentional message is intended to be conveyed, perhaps related to loneliness, stress, or oppression. In any case, what is relevant here is the scaffolding through which this experiential intention is structured, the images of the spaces that the author uses and the materials of these hypothetical, but not impossible, spaces. Through these images, the aim is to create some specific encompassing perception (*i. e.*, in a single moment, without gradualness). With this outcome, the author unconsciously uses ideas associated with what I have categorised as aspects relating to the *localisation* and *ubication* of waiting spaces.

^{XLIII} Ilić, S., & Ferčec, G. (2010). A Letter to Heiner M/Version 2: ‘Performative’ work. Cited in Saybaşı, E. (2011). Waiting As Potentiality. Third Text, 25(3), 361.

However, as mentioned above, the notions I have described are axiologically neutral. The mention of Germany as a *localisation* and a hotel as a *ubication* do not imply values of any kind. Hence, if the author's intention is to convey sensations and to offer valuations, the text must establish relations involving different levels between the materials in the field. In other words, the author will have to *situate* the elements in relation to the *surroundings* of the waiting process so that it is understood by the reader. Therefore, to convey the intended axiological (negative) position, complementary references are used, such as "from the East during the Cold War" and "surrounded by massive buildings".

5. Conclusions

For PhM, the analysis of space is consubstantial to the understanding of many human social phenomena, among which are the processes of social waiting. I do not intend to provide a definite or rigid description of the, spatial dimension of waiting in the way that its temporality has been the primary focus of past research. On the contrary, and in agreement with Gustavo Bueno, I consider that "[n]o road (...) can be travelled in an instant, outside of time" (Bueno, 2002, para. 12), an idea that is also applicable to the *territories of waiting* (Musset, 2015). In other words, I have aimed to open the debate to the integration of other dimensions in the analysis of waiting.

The proposal I have put forward, to conceive waiting and its spaces from an *institutional* perspective, precisely follows this path of greater integration. From this perspective, I believe that I have proposed a material and objective basis for connecting multiple aspects linked to waiting, beyond the merely temporal, that cannot be incorporated in the study of waiting using the current analytical perspectives.

These unifying objectives constitute the substratum of the spatial categories presented here (*interior, surroundings, contour and localisation, ubication, situation*). Their use responds to the need to cover the multiple levels existing in the waiting spaces, in which the phenomena and materials that interact in these processes are articulated. The possibility offered by these categories to focus the spatial analysis at different levels, on the one hand, as well as to correlate with each other, on the other, allows us to delve into particular aspects of waiting and

its spaces, which are often ignored by existing research. This is precisely because they do not have a categorical arsenal such as the one I have proposed in this paper.

However, it is important to reiterate that these categories are not the only ones possible for analysing waiting spaces. On the contrary, they are rather preliminary tools of approximation. They offer a solid categorical instrument useful for the breakdown of waiting places. My proposal could help researchers in the field to transform the places of waiting from unknown spaces into institutionally operationalised territories.

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Appendix VI (Complementary Paper 2)

Title: Institutional as an operative framework of social waits. Uses and possibilities of a materialist approach to its study

Abstract

This paper proposes a materialist approach to studying waiting processes, focusing on the operational dimension often overlooked in existing research. The operational dimension of waiting is crucial in shaping and defining these processes. Operations integrate space and time and provide a framework for understanding how different elements and actors interact within these processes. The proposed operational theory offers a framework of objective references to define waiting processes and discriminate them from other phenomena, such as tedium, boredom, pauses, limbos, or hopes. The paper draws on the work of various authors who have explored the materiality of waiting processes and contributes to developing a more comprehensive theoretical framework for studying waiting from a materialist perspective. The paper also proposes categories considered important for addressing constitutive parts within waiting processes concerning their operational dimension, largely overlooked in existing research. The paper argues that the proposed operational theory and categories could effectively resolve the terminological confusion surrounding waiting and offer valuable parameters for classifying similar empirical phenomena in contexts beyond those presented. Overall, it is provided a framework for analysing waiting processes from a materialist perspective, contributing to a better understanding of waiting as a social institution.

1. Introduction

If someone were to ask us what we think waiting is, the answer would most likely be something similar to “a waste of time”. If we were to visualize this phenomenon, we would often see clocks ticking slowly, almanacs that do not turn their pages, and slow-motion films where the world hardly changes for their protagonists. These images respond to a socio-cultural construct that makes waiting a fundamentally temporal issue, specifically linked to lost, dead, and liminal time.

When we think about waiting, we usually focus more on how long it lasts than where it takes place or what those who wait have to do while they watch their time slip away miserably. However, these aspects are essential to understanding waits, particularly when they become social institutions, affecting various human groups (e.g., waiting times at airports, hospitals, or in legal and bureaucratic procedures).

In short, space and the operations of waiting, as constitutive dimensions of these processes, are often overlooked in favour of time. However, both are fundamental in their analysis, as the places or spaces where waiting occurs frequently qualify and determine it. The same is true of the actions and processes that must be carried out by those involved in a wait of this nature. Of the two dimensions, however, the latter, the operations, have the most far-reaching totalizing qualities. The operational dimension, rather than the temporal one, has the ability to integrate both space and time, even when they are not determined by it. Thus, these three dimensions are co-determinants of each other in the waiting process.

Nevertheless, as I pointed out, *operations* can serve as a gateway to analysing any other dimensions of waiting processes. Moreover, the operations also possess another fundamental characteristic. I refer to the capacity to encompass or articulate specific parts of the waiting processes logically and materially. These parts could range from a migration regulation that makes a group of migrants wait at a border to a limited-capacity room for patients in a hospital waiting room or even the opening hours of a government office, among many others. This capacity is essential as it enables us to reveal the dialectical relationships within waiting processes, both in their essential constitutive dimensions and the specific phenomena that characterise them.

Although these dynamics between all and the parts of waiting are addressed in existing studies, they must be systematically analysed comprehensively. Their approach is not based on a powerful enough general theory of expectations to be a reliable guide for analysis. My working hypothesis is that the operational dimension is crucial for articulating an objective analysis of waiting processes, considering them as objectively defined phenomena. This hypothesis contrasts with common sense and even with much of the existing research, which suggests that waits are operationally passive phenomena or at least limited in their possibilities of action.

In contrast, my thesis, following other authors (Appadurai, 2013; Gasparini, 1995; Janeja & Bandak, 2020), posits that operations are not only present in waiting but constitute the key to a systemic analysis of these processes as phenomena with their own objective structure, observable and analysable as such. In other words, it would prevent, when approaching the processes of waiting, from doing so through phenomena transversal to these, such as the experience of the subjects who interact in it.

With these premises in mind, in this paper, I have set the objectives of exposing the importance of operations to analyse the mechanisms by which operations constitute. In other words, I seek to understand how proleptic operational courses, given in institutionalised waiting processes, articulate and conform with other elements within these same processes. Secondly, I will offer some categories that I consider of great importance when addressing constitutive parts within waiting processes concerning their operational dimension, so far more needs to be addressed by existing studies.

To do so, I will employ a critical-dialectical methodology based on Gustavo Bueno's Philosophical Materialist perspective, also known as Discontinuous Materialism (DM)^{XLIV}. This research is theoretical, and through this approach, I aim to move from the theoretical hypothesis to concrete examples to articulate generalisations that allow me to establish useful categories in the classification of similar empirical phenomena given in contexts other than those presented.

2. Some characteristics of the operative framework of social waits

Before analysing the waiting processes, it is important to consider whether such an undertaking is feasible. Suppose waiting is viewed as an individual and subjective process, comprehensible only from the subject's perspective. In that case, it cannot be attributed to the status of an objective social process. As stated earlier, waits are diverse, as varied as the actors who experience them. Even within the same actor's biography, multiple and unique situations may

^{XLIV} Discontinuous Materialism is a non-reductive materialism, which offers a notion of *matter* broader than tangible objects that the so-called "material turn" tend to limit itself. Gustavo Bueno conceives as a matter of tangible materiality and other realities, including non-tangible physical matter. According to Bueno's ideas, non-tangible realities are material due to their plurality and changeability; moreover, their existence depends directly on the physical matter that supports them without exhausting them (Camprubí, 2022; Pérez-Jara, 2022).

arise according to particularities and moments. Thus, the diversity is such that it renders categorical construction and scientific analysis nearly impossible.

However, the existence of current studies on waiting within the social sciences is undeniable, with a significant increase in both qualitative and quantitative studies in the last decade. Based on this fact, it is necessary to assume that there is a specific categorisation of waiting processes. Researchers can establish certain objective patterns, even if they are unaware of this. In other words, while researchers may not always conceptualise this objectification, they necessarily exercise it in their work. Therefore, it is possible to group these phenomena under specific criteria beyond individual situations and admit that some constants manifest themselves.

Until now, these constant elements have been associated with individual experience. In other words, it is known that waiting exists because that is what those who suffer from it testify to it. These subjects generally point out that this experience is axiologically negative. This phenomenon should constitute another limitation for science to take action to, if not solve it, at least understand why and how it manifests itself. In this sense, this paper assumes that this subjectivist perspective has prevailed because the subject is the dimension where certain apprehensible characteristics of waits emerge and take shape. Those who have analysed the waits along these phenomenological aspects refer their study to where they presuppose the materialization process occurs. In other words, the subject mind ($M2^{XLV}$, from the DM). Following their reasonings, these should be the place where the logical articulation of waits takes place. In this case, it would be in the minds of the actors. Sometimes even the heart, the spirit or the soul is proposed. This tendency is related to the temporalisation of waiting. If waiting is essentially time –“lived time” (Schweizer, 2008) or “duration” (*durée*) as proposed by

^{XLV} In Philosophical Materialism, the ontology of matter is represented by the three genres of materiality (M_1, M_2, M_3), denoted as $M_i = \{M_1, M_2, M_3\}$, where $M_i = \text{World}$. Physical-empirical entities represent the First Genre of Materiality (M_1), while the Second Genre of Materiality (M_2) refers to psychological and historical phenomena of inner life. M_3 , the third genre of materiality, denotes abstract objects that are neither external nor internal, such as projective regulated space, parallel lines, the infinite set of prime numbers, Saussure's “Langue,” moral relations, and synthetic identities that are not properly included in their own time or place. Although dissociable from each other, the three genres of materiality are not separable and can also be understood as dimensions.

Bergson (1965) –, they can only be analysed through this subjective experience. As can be seen, this presupposition is related to hegemonic Kantianism in some fields.

According to this, time as an *a priori* form of consciousness, of inner sensibility, originates in the perception of one's psychical life. Hence, the instance in subjective perception is the source of truth of wait since it is assumed, in principle, that this is, above all, time. The problem is that this psychologism or mentalism, taken to its ultimate consequences, leaves out any possibility of identifying and, consequently, studying any material waiting process beyond the perceptual sphere of the waiter. The waits only exist when it is "felt" by a subject and under conditions they can identify in their situation. In this way, a large part of the scientific activity is excluded, reducing the analyst's work to that of a mere chronicler of the multiple possible experiences and stories.

Although this idea of waiting is latent in many existing studies, in practice, researchers have to use objective materials found in the field far more than they can recognise. This utilization occurs because it is partly impossible to operate scientifically in any other way. This statement does not affirm that the position of the subject involved in the waiting process can be disregarded in the analysis. On the contrary, the position sustained in this respect is that waiting will only be in itself if the subjects, in the process, know that they are waiting. The syntagms "waiting without reason" or "waiting without knowing it" are only possible in literature and fiction but not in the social and human sciences. The difference in my conception is that the self-recognition of the waiting process does not have to do with the will to do it or experience but with the actual planning of proleptic operations. That is, with the recognition and identification of specific plans and programmes –successful or not– to deal with the waiting process, to conduct particular actions concerning a more or less established referent.

In order to address these problems, the proposal presented here points out that waiting analysis should begin in the material reality itself. In other words, from the material processes where the waits take place. Those processes will explain the experiences that the social actors have based on the analysis of the operations they carry out. In other words, the operations themselves provide the guidelines for analysing waits, not the subjective criteria that the actors involved may have about them. The aim is to integrate particular subjective criteria and

meanings into more comprehensive configurations. These are none other than institutional configurations, the only spheres where these subjective meanings take on real “meaning”.

It can be concluded with the above by posing and answering two questions. In the first place, how can this paper analyse the operative coordination that exists in the waits when they are intertwined with others that are not, in principle, linked to the process? In other words, how can there be a distinction between the operative courses of the waits from those that are not? The answer to this question is found in the characteristics described above, particularly concerning certain operations’ typologies, logical chaining, and courses. In order to distinguish between some operations and others, there must be a start from the coordination they establish with their purpose. It is because the wait has an *end*^{XLVI} that it is precisely possible to speak of its internal structure, which is given independently of the experiences, opinions and intentions of the waiting subjects. Gustavo Bueno (1992b) calls this property *objective purpose*, which it will be examined in more detail below.

A second question involves investigating how to distinguish the very operations given within the waiting process from one another. In other words, how to establish specificities in internal operations of the same process which share an identical referent or closure? To clarify this further, the operative distinction of waiting is not formal since they are all proleptic operations but in the materiality of these specific operations, in terms of their internal logic. That concerns the objective material spheres in which these operative courses take place. Concretely, if, as this paper shows, these spheres are of an institutional type, in waiting, their finality will be given in the form of a brachistochrone curve^{XLVII}. That is to say, in the form of two paths where, in the movement of bodies, they correlate in that they both take place on the same axis of coordinates. This figure is none other than the institutional morphology of the

^{XLVI} Here, the idea of “*end*” is used in its double meaning of both an end as a final or culminating point, and an end as a purpose, objective or goal.

^{XLVII} The purpose or tendency of P to traverse the positions of the *brachistochrone ending* at B affects each position of P, starting from P(A); each position can be considered as determined by the identity between the process of the previous movement and the result of that process (the brachistochrone curve); and if we treat the curve as a configuration, by the action of gravitational forces (Bueno, 1992b, p. 8).

waiting, the context that frames and channels the operations. Moreover, here, the objective particularity of the waiting could be found, its gnoseological closure and its operative specificity.

2.1. Proleptic operations and institutionalism

Waiting, as phenomena objectively identifiable by their qualities, can be analysed through the label Gustavo Bueno uses to classify particular historical processes which, according to this author, shape the personality of social subjects. The mentioned category is “closed cycles”, which Gustavo Bueno defines as the “enveloping medium” through which each individual moulds their personality. According to Bueno, the “enveloping medium” of the individual:

It must be defined from the perspective of the historical process, closed in such cycles as to make it possible to understand causally, above all, the possibility of *anamnesis*, comprehensive projects or programmes of the totality of an individual life. Due the material of such projects or programmes (*anamnesis*) can only spring from the exact anamnesis of previous lives already fulfilled in the past and transmitted by linguistic account (and this is the reason why the idea of person implies human language) (Bueno, 1982, p. 18).

A similar process occurs with waiting but on a different scale of analysis. In the waiting, this category does not point to any historically closed times of a society or a biography but to particular processes (of waiting) traversed multiple times by different actors. These processes, however circumscribed, are somewhat connected to that *meso* (medium) or macrocycles, given at the socio-political level. Therefore, waiting constitutes specific frameworks for action, reaction and social relations, where particular, sometimes personal responses are generated, which are sometimes transmitted to other social actors through institutionalised channels.

This analysis answers the question of how subjects can correspond with the waiting processes if they (the processes) are all punctual or contingent. The idea of the historical process, closed in cycles, makes it possible to understand this mechanism. Through this, it can be causally understood “the possibility of *anamnesis*, projects or comprehensive programmes” of individual and/or group actions, which is seen manifested in institutionalised waiting processes. In other words, by employing this category, it is possible to understand under what mechanisms similar “individual” responses are produced, in different situations and contexts, in the face of supposedly different waiting processes.

The key here is not in the subjects' psyche or the ontology of waiting as a "state of being" (Schweizer, 2008) or in similar metaphysics. The answer, on the contrary, is entirely institutional. In order to understand this reality, it must be borne in mind that, as pointed out earlier, "the material of such projects or programmes (*anamnesis*) can only spring from anamnesis" (Idem). In other words, it can only come from previous processes already completed in the past and transmitted through different channels. Regarding these channels or means of communication, this paper must point out that they can be personal as well as group/family or macro-social, cultural. However, what is characteristic is that, in all cases, the transmission is institutional since the material transferred is transferred already beforehand. In other words, this paper is dealing with "tried and tested" processes that are communicated to be repeated in similar contexts.

This principle is based on the assumption that waiting does not occur in society abstractly but in a given political society at a specific historical time. In this society, waiting takes shape in a particular institutional environment, which gives it its distinctive stamp, defining it in relation to other institutions as a whole. Apart from these contexts, waiting processes cannot occur, so their analysis is essential when investigating these phenomena.

In the DM, central importance is attached to institutionalism in the anthropological field, even considering it to be the supreme category of the anthropological discipline and vital importance for others, such as sociology, economics, political science, etc. Without going into too much detail on this question, as has been discussed in depth in other studies^{XLVIII} it is said that institutions are characteristic elements of human activity in an anthropic sense and have an enveloping capacity that allows them to coordinate materials, processes and phenomena, both institutional and non-institutional.

In this proposal, institutions are materially recognisable by six cumulative characteristics^{XLIX}, namely: 1) possessing a hylemorphic structure; 2) being morphological cultural units of systemic order; 3) recurrence; 4) rationality; 5) normativity; and 6) axiology. The

^{XLVIII} See Avila (2021). "The waiting as an institution. ...".

^{XLIX} For a detailed analysis of these characteristics in general, see Bueno (2005). "Ensayo de una teoría general de las instituciones", *El Basilisco* 3-53. <https://fgbueno.es/bas/pdf2/bas37a.pdf>.

waits, at least those analysed mainly by the social and human sciences, meet these requirements, and this paper proposes that they be conceived as such. These characteristics define them not only morphologically but also materially condition each process's parts and dimensions. Hence, it can be stated that, operationally, waits are also characterised by their institutional nature.

Although not well recognised by authors who have investigated waiting, this institutionalisation of waiting processes is frequently exercised by them. Barry Schwartz, for example, finds a structure in the order of waiting, such as queuing, as well as in other waiting processes in general. The author notes: "If there were no such internal structure, then one would be indifferent about the temporal sequence of activities. And since an organization of random activities is a contradiction in terms, social order would be impossible" (Schwartz, 1978, p. 9).

For his part, Kevin Gray, referring to queues as waiting processes, states that they are mechanisms that socially regulate "group behaviour" (to which this paper adds individual behaviour) and immediately adds "regulation in which a randomly assembled group of strangers is caused to act, quite counter-intuitively, in a particular way" (Gray, 2009, p. 167). This criterion is shared by Ann-Mari Sellerberg when she argues that, on certain occasions, it is possible for waiting to be used as a mechanism to control dissatisfied or potentially disruptive actors in the social order. Accordingly, the author points out that "one ingredient in waiting may consist of a movement between authorities, experts and 'stations'. (...) The Workers [e. g.] frequently move from one of several 'stations' to the next, in an active process of waiting" (Sellerberg, 2008, p. 356).

Somehow, in all of the above, it is recognised that there is a certain coherence between the waits as really existing, objective phenomena and the behaviours (the operations) of the actors involved. The problem begins when one has to explain the origin of these given objective structures. Here, the path followed is the mentalistic or psychologistic one which, as has been already noted, permeates research on waits. All these authors are inclined to associate the morphology of the waiting process with psychological and mental structures, even given beforehand. Thus, Barry Schwartz calls the process he describes a "psychological queue

literally”, although, according to his analysis, its “universality” is to be sought “in the imperative character of social goals and their priorities” (1978, p. 9). In his words, there is an “organic correspondence” between the two structures, the social and the psychological, which allows the subject to orient himself in the processes of social waiting. As he notes, by linking individual activities to some supra-personal scheme, the queue of the mind limits and disciplines and thus gives meaning and direction to individual life (1978, p. 5).

The conflict here is that this integration is only possible if a system of shared logical structures exists. Schwartz hints at the possibility that this structure is embedded in the subject’s psyche and is reflected in the shared behaviour. This approach seems to be problematic in that it requires a claim of principle, only resolvable with an organicist approach. In other words, only by appealing to biological, cerebral structures, which act concerning these coinciding subjective behaviours, can the co-ordinations be explained. This thesis is difficult to sustain unless one admits a psychic invariability in all human subjects, to which behaviours would have to be homogeneous. However, actual practice shows us something entirely different. It is uneasy to find homogeneity in waiting or any other social sphere.

As for Gray’s (2009) approach, this paper does not fully agree. Queues do not always exhibit the randomness he attributes to them. Queues are institutions that modulate the behaviour not of “some individuals” but of particular individuals, with *aims*, *plans* and *programmes*, among other characteristics, that distinguish them from others. The more that is known about these subjects, the more efficient will be the technological implementation of the queue that will regulate the waiting (also institutional) that these actors will go through. In this regard, it must be said that the very exercise of grouping and categorising the actors that this process requires is by no means random. Their articulation is functional, as it responds to regulations, guidelines and even ceremonies, around which values, rationalities and logics (*meanings*, as commonly called in some anthropologies and sociologies) are interwoven, which the agents share and are organised in specific ways and based on operations. This explanation is why queues adopt a particular morphology and no other, for instance, a straight line, two

parallel lines or any of the multiple forms that a *molar* or *cellular*^L row can present. The author himself acknowledges that queues embody “[a]t its core the queue incorporates a fundamental, and deeply democratic, principle of ‘ordinality’ –a rule of ‘first come, first served’ (FCFS) or, as it is alternatively known, ‘first in, first out’” (FIFO) (Gray, 2009, p. 167). However, these are not the only regulations in the queues. They also include other regulations, such as specific priorities for physical, social, situational or organisational characteristics, which may be ethical, moral or socio-organisational. It is important to point out here priorities that are sometimes established by situations such as physical handicaps, sexual conditions (pregnant women), age (children, elderly), belonging to a group or guild (organisational agents such as employees, military, sailors, law enforcement officers), and so on. To this must be added regulations such as staying within a given perimeter, not smoking, and not using the telephone, among others. Finally, it is worth clarifying that those waiting in a queue need not know each other for coordination. Otherwise, the technological nature of queues is again overlooked, as they are intended to regulate operations independently of the relationships between the agents organised through them. The queue to escape from a burning plane organises both people who know each other and complete strangers. This queue does not constitute a cultural or physical domination mechanism, although obedience to it is no less institutional, strict and obligatory.

In short, the psycho-individual characteristics of the actors, manifested in the waiting processes, do not exhaust or explain all the operative mechanisms present in them. Moreover, these given mechanisms explain the psycho-subjective behaviours that can be observed. The *institutional* possibility is proposed as a category for the waiting process to categorise many of these dynamics. In this way, it is possible to establish what *processes of institutional rotation* are called under which the individual teleologically represents, via anamnesis, the waiting process based on other similar processes. In this exercise, this representation makes possible the logical

^L Molar rows are those that are organised on the basis of subjects arranged one behind the other, like teeth or molars in the mouth. They are very common in tails or phyla organised by the FCFS principle. Cellular phyla are those in which organisation occurs in a clustered manner, from groups that may or may not be disconnected from each other. The latter type of queues is common when the service principle is qualitative and does not respond to FCFS.

approach of operative courses, objectively articulated with the (institutional) context in which they take place.

2.2. Finality (ends) of institutionalised proleptic operations

The institutional nature of the waiting mentioned above allows us to continue to break down the characteristics that operationally distinguish these processes. Having established some ideas related to the institutional characteristics, this paper can move on to other aspects linked to the global destiny of these operations, such as institutionalised *anamnesis*. This refers to their purpose and how this can be categorised. To do so, elements of two of the ideas of *end* that appear in the DM will be used. These ideas apply perfectly to sociocultural situations, “ethological behaviour”, and human, institutional settings. At the same time, by appealing to them, it is possible to leave aside the mentalistic metaphysics that characterises some works on waiting without eliminating the possibility of reconstructing subjective finalist determinations, that is, the voluntaristic action of the actor, which is also characteristic of “proleptic planning” in waiting.

This perspective opposes traditional teleological metaphysics, which seeks to return to a prototype of *proleptic goals*¹¹ that demands the presence of either a “planning demiurge, of a God who is the final cause of the world” or “an *anthropically* organised world” (Bueno, 1992, p. 7). Materialist ontology, on the contrary, starts from a particular abstract idea of the end employing which one seeks “to attain one’s proleptic finality as a characteristic, and not a mentalistic, flexion of the abstract idea” (Idem). As noted above, Gustavo Bueno calls this process *objective purpose*. It is characterised by finding its conclusion, not in a superior, external or mental *end*, but in the operations of the operative subject in its dialectical context.

For the analysis of waits and their operations, this question is of utmost importance, as shall be seen. Nevertheless, it must be clarified that this does not mean that the importance of

¹¹ G. Bueno uses “*proleptic goal*” rather than just “plan” to stress that operating subjects must always draw on past references as part of their ends. A Neanderthal’s assembly of an axe reaches a *proleptic goal*, in that his perception of an earlier stone leads to his modeling of the present axe. Equally, an architect does not work with “future” buildings, but with composing parts of past buildings (shapes, materials, etc.). Note inserted by Brendan Burke, in the English version of “*Qué es la ciencia*” (Bueno, 1995), translated as “*Sciences as Categorical Closures*” in 2013.

human projective capacity is denied, but that it has to be consonant with the objective possibilities where it is exercised. In this sense, the *objective purpose* of waits integrates multiple dialectical relations of processes that also tend to an *end* or *purpose*. Specifically, it is referred to as the operations or operative courses executed by the actors as *intentional objectives* (aims, plans and programmes), which also possess particular finalities (ends). This *finality* or end will be called: *goal-oriented purpose*, which can be defined as the purposes of operative subjects acting dialectically individually and as a group. This action takes place *vis-à-vis* other individuals and groups and their corresponding actions, which are also propositional. The result of the multiple dialectical interactions described above always produces an *objective purpose* different from the one initially represented in a particular way, that is, as a *goal-oriented purpose*.

In other words, in waiting, as in literature or cinema, reality always surpasses imagination. To use an analogy of Gustavo Bueno (2012), the result of the different interactions is a polygon of forces capable of producing figures different from those projected at the beginning of its outline. To understand this easily, it is important to recall what the paper has previously mentioned regarding waits as vectorial phenomena, whose vectors are precisely the operative lines *projected* or *realised* by the actants from one anchor point to another. Therefore, the *projected operative vectors* can correspond to *goal-oriented purpose* and the *realised operative vectors* to *objective purposes*.

To see this clearly, it is possible to use the following example. F. Neil Brady, referring to the behaviours of the actors in a queue he studied ethnographically, testifies how the process itself generated the formation of groups within the queues that altered their discipline *by reinterpreting* the established norms in their favour and “shortening the wait for those protected by group membership” (Brady, 2002, p. 162). This behaviour has as its counterpart another non-grouped individual or other organised groups and their corresponding *goal-oriented purpose*. The dialectical tensions produced by these interactions modulate the morphology of the waiting process, which ends up presenting itself in a “complex” way. This dynamic takes place until a more or less stable system is created that evacuates the totality of

the operations channelled in the projected operative vectors. It gives an outlet for the purposes concerning the objective possibilities of each *anamnesis*. In this regard, Brady observed that:

As for the social nature of queues, it is not queues that threaten friendships; rather it is friendships that threaten queues. When a person holds a spot for a dozen friends who come later, the behavior clearly intends to subvert FCFS^{LI}. When persons already in line happen to become friends and adjust the meaning of FCFS for their convenience, the integrity of the line may still be threatened, but with less original intent (Brady, 2002, p. 162).

In synthesis, within the confluence of the *propositional* operations and their given *objective* possibilities, an actual framework of possibility can be seen for the realisation and articulation of the operations in the waits. It is in this framework that these operations take on meaning and logic, even in their subjective significance. This logical form occurs because it is here that waiting is essentially configured with its material finality. Even if the expectations of the wait may coincide in part with the intentions of the *waiter*, they are not necessarily subjected to them. That is to say, there are subjective, propositional, and operative planning, which do not exhaust the *objective purpose* of the processes. This is so because the waits occur in institutional spheres that go beyond and involve individual subjectivities and their planning possibilities.

An example of this can be found in Bendixsen & Hylland Eriksen's research on the waits of a group of irregular migrants in Stockholm. In terms of their expectations, the authors note the following:

What are irregular migrants waiting for? The answer varies between contexts and persons. The consequences of waiting vary too. (...) Irregular migrants in Norway wait for an answer to their appeal to UNE, for changes in politics or policy, for documentation strengthening their case, for a call from their lawyer or for something unspecified to happen (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 93).

As can be seen, the variability here is objective and not attitudinal or voluntaristic. Even if it can be admitted that attitudes and will are undoubtedly diverse in each case, there is a larger framework of possibilities to which they must conform. Thus, it is possible to affirm that, to a certain extent, the *goal-oriented purposes* of these particular waits take objective form in the material (*i. e.*, institutional) context that surrounds them.

^{LI} First come first service.

2.3. Rearticulation of institutional operations

In order to see how operations play a role in institutionalised waiting processes, some examples of research on the subject can be looked at. Richard Larson (1987) analyses a case at Houston airport in the State of Texas in the 1980s. When a flight landed, passengers with hand luggage were allowed to exit through the main gate, which meant waiting to leave the facility lasted between one and two minutes. On the other hand, those with cargo luggage had to wait five to six minutes in front of the carousel before leaving the terminal. Faced with constant complaints from the latter about the waiting time they were subjected to concerning the former, the authorities created a system to solve disagreements. This system consisted of sending the cargo luggage to the last carousel in the terminal, thus extending the waiting time to eight or nine minutes, *i. e.*, one or two more. However, this time was taken up by the “waiters” walking to this pick-up point. On arrival at the new lounge, after having walked through a good part of the airport, the luggage was usually ready for collection, or they had to wait at most only one minute. With this new system, the complaints disappeared utterly, even though the overall waiting time was increased by about two minutes.

Larson hypothesises that this change was due to moral or socio-psychological reasons. According to his idea, in the previous system, those with carry-on luggage saw those with hand luggage leave first, making them think that the organisation was socially unfair, as they had to wait longer, even if they had arrived on the same flight. With the changes introduced, the latter no longer had to see the former leave first, and with no perceived preference, the complaints dissipated.

Without denying the (dialectical) conflicts between particular *goal-oriented purposes*, nor the competitiveness that can occur (and indeed does occur) within waiting processes, this paper does not fully share the Larson's hypothesis. At least not in this particular case. While these could be factors to be considered, from a materialist perspective, in addition, there may be another response to the positive reaction of those involved. The explanation lies in the objective operational modification of the process and not so much in the psychosocial or socio-cultural elements that Larson points out. However, this change, which implies an increase in the number

of operations, does not explain the change in attitude. The explanations must be reached by another route, as discussed below.

In another example also given by Larson (1987), citing Benakiva & Lerman (1985), in the same decade, some bus stations in the USA, in order to reduce passenger discomfort when having to wait to board vehicles at the start of journeys, they used a strategy of having passengers board before the vehicles were ready to depart. This strategy increased the overall waiting time, as boarding had to be interspersed with vehicle preparation operations. However, the duration of internal operations, waiting in the lounge or the departure hall, was reduced. In addition, certain operations, such as placing luggage in the baggage locker, finding seats, placing hand luggage, etc., were brought forward in time.

However, while all this occurred at the start of the process, other changes were introduced at the end. In this sense, if the stations were not ready to unload luggage and passengers quickly at the end of the journey due to a backlog of arriving buses, the drivers would extend the route by a few kilometres. The journey completion delay gave staff more time to decongest the terminal. Thus, when arrival finally took place, both the waiting time in the vehicle and the delay in the baggage claim area was minimal, even though the overall time had increased. Thus, the negative consequences on waiters' moods were significantly less. In summary, it can be said that in this example, the process's overall duration increased, but the times for certain operations decreased at the beginning, while others increased at the end (near the referent) of the wait/trip.

In the latter case, however, another type of morphological transformation of the process with other objectives can be seen. In an investigation by Russel Ackoff (1987), also cited by Larson (1987), the placement of mirrors next to elevators in a particular hotel and the waiting areas, in the form of tall buildings, "allow those who are waiting to fix their ties, comb their hair, and even perhaps coyly flirt via the mirror with others who are likewise waiting" (Larson, 1987, p. 889). Ackoff says that hotels that had invested in these mirrors received far fewer complaints about lift delays than those that dispensed with them.

There has not been temporal variation, nor have the existing operations been modified, but the number of proleptic operations within the process has increased. In other words, the

operations that made up this process have been adjusted by introducing other intermediate operations in the previous operative courses. A similar exercise to the one implemented in the first example was carried out, re-operationalising some moments –empty ones, so to speak– of the total course, although without the temporal consequences of that one, since the total duration remained the same.

All the above examples have been given in different situations of waits and with different social actors. However, they all have the common peculiarity of having succeeded in modifying the social actors' representations concerning them. In other words, the measures implemented in all cases succeeded in changing the axiological evaluation of the subjects concerning the waiting process. However, in the three cases, the morphological transformations were different. In other words, the measures taken transformed the waiting process temporally, spatially and operationally in different ways, and the results were similar. The question that could be asked then is: what is the common element in all these transformations? Moreover, why have people changed their opinions about the waits favourably, even when they have had to wait longer and/or perform more operations, concerning the previous morphology that these waits presented?

In the first case, the thesis proposed is that the change may be due to the quality of the operations introduced and their relationship with the *goal-oriented purposes* of the actors involved. Even though there was an increase in the number of operations and temporal duration, this augmentation was proleptically accurate with both *propositional finalities* and *referents*. In other words, although passengers had to do more and perhaps stay longer inside the airfield, the *intentional objectives* (aims, plans and programmes) were much better integrated into the logic of these operations (in their *objective purpose*) than in the previously existing one (waiting five minutes in front of a carousel).

Something similar happened in the second example, where the objective adjustment process was tailored to the subjects' perspectives and *goal-oriented purposes*, and this modified their operative courses and operations without losing consonance with the referent and the adjacent courses. This same logic is followed in some restaurants when the bar is located near the waiting room or menus are placed at the entrance where customers have to wait before

occupying their respective tables. Similarly, in some airports or train terminals, informative videos are shown about the recreational options and possibilities of the destination so that waiters can occupy their time while waiting for the flight's departure or train that will take them there.

In all these cases, the waiting process is occupied operationally but with significant operations pointing to the referent. With this, not only are operations inserted into the institutional dynamics of the process, but they also become coherent with the *goal-oriented purposes*, that is, with the possible operative courses of the subjects which, as has been already pointed out, projectively transcend the frameworks of the process in question. Hence these operations can be qualified as "significantly proleptic institutional operations", concerning their *objective purpose*. Gustavo Bueno, in this respect, affirms that

finality says synthetic identification between a process [or configuration] and its result [context] when this result [context] is shown to us as a necessary condition for the constitution of the unity of the process [configuration] itself as such, therefore, thanks to finality, the referent is "self-sustained" (even "reproduced") as such, which means that the (processual or configurational) multiplicity of parts of which it consists is ordering itself and in such a way that the ordering is constitutive of unity according to one of the forms of possible alternatives (in the limit: a single one) by which the parts of that multiplicity could, of course, relate (combine, compose) to each other or to third parts (of other multiplicities of the environment) (Bueno, 1992b, p. 7).

In other words, the readjustments mentioned above rearticulated the multiple operative courses, making them coherent concerning the referent, which means that a unity of purpose is achieved from the executed operations. This readjustment does not diminish or eliminate the existing dialectics but instead rearranges them in a much more functional scenario to the ultimate end of the process. In this way, the totality of the process is *defined in a* much clearer and different way.

The idea of proleptic operations is placed here in the field of logical and not psychological analysis. Proleptic finalities are always logical operations, regardless of whether or not they are more or less adjusted to the material realm of wait. The "experiential and mentalistic" approach so far assumed by existing research is limited to this individual experience as an entity closed in itself, ignoring (at least, in representation) the contextual materialities existing in the waiting

processes. The examples that have been seen are proof that this exercise is sterile. In all the cases presented, a minimal organisational movement modified the totality of the processes. And this, objectively and even in the *systemic* ordering^{LIII} of the waiting as an institution. In other words, in the configurational organisation of the logic attributed to the process by the waiting actors, that is to say, in its *goal-oriented purposes*.

The changes in the internal morphology of the aforementioned institutional waits (their normativity, rationality and axiology configuration) took the form of operational transformations. These transformations led to a change in the actors' involved planning (the *anamnesis*), which the organisation foresaw. In other words, it is possible to say that the subjective experiences were modified, even manipulated, by the transformation implemented in the institutional structures of the waiting, in their parts strong enough for that purpose, resulting not only in the proleptic adjustments of the waiters but also, it seems, in their cheerful acceptance of these changes.

In short, according to Larson, the organisational procedures had a beneficial effect due to the psychological repercussions for the actors involved. They hid the feeling of "empty time" (Larson, 1987, p. 898) that waiting would produce. However, this paper believes that success did not lie in the waiters' psyche. Instead, the genuine improvement lay in the core nature of the operations introduced in all cases. Those operations were more in line with the institutional characteristics of this waiting (urgency of the process, for example) and the plans and programmes of the particular actors. That was the real common factor in all the transformations mentioned above and the key to perceptive success. In short, the objective operational restructuring of institutional scope, and not the temporary suppression or psychological resignification, has had a certain impact on the process.

^{LIII} *Systemic totalisations* are a type of gnoseological construction representing wholes that consist of parts that do not causally or structurally intersect with each other. These totalisations are generally distributive in nature and can be seen as classifications or functional systems. Systemic totalisations differ from *sistatic totalisations*, which involve structural or processual wholes with parts that are interconnected according to an internal law. Systemic totalisations can be formed as a result of reflexive recurrence of sistatic totalisations, and they play a significant role in understanding the interplay between different levels of knowledge and experience. For a deeper explanation see (García Sierra, 2021k). "Systematic totalisation / Systematic totalisation / Corporeal operative subject / Incorporeal metaphysical subject", in: <https://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df050.htm>.

In what follows, an analysis will be done regarding what mechanisms some parties within the process have the operative possibility of intervening in the action of others, to the point of transforming them, according to their objective intentions.

3. Uses of the operational perspective for analysing institutionalised social waits

On more than a few occasions, researchers linked to waiting have noted that, within these processes, social actors involved do not wait similarly. In fact, it can be said that even within waiting, there are agents who are not even waiting, yet their operations are inseparable from the process. This dynamic, which at first sight appears to be a contradiction, is nothing more than the result of the dialectics inherent to these institutionalised phenomena, which sometimes tend to assume dichotomous forms. Among other possibilities, dialectics can be given in the form of a wait that is external and one that is internal, one that is social and one that is individual, one that is active and one that is passive, and so on.

Jarrett Zigon notes concerning waiting understood in a “prereflective waiting” way that it seems to be a passive resignation to what comes to us. Even when waiting has a direction, for example, when waiting in a queue at the airport, one’s capacity to act seems limited by the waiting conditions (Zigon, 2020, p. 65). Like the others, this conception establishes the possible separation between the subject and the social object. These differences, in turn, give it the subjective or objective character that waiting can have. A large part of the existing research on waiting revolves around this type of position.

The perspective proposed from this paper’s perspective does not adhere to this dichotomy. Starting from the assumption that many of these dialectical realities are often even confronted with each other, although they are *dissociable*, they cannot be separated at all. At least not in a radically dichotomous way. Thus, there are neither *subjects* without societies (in a broad sense) nor societies without subjects. Such an analysis is not feasible, not even in terms of possibility. The subject is permanently interwoven in social dynamics, which he reproduces and qualifies through his actions. In the same way, the social whole is impossible without the action of these individual subjects, who are the ones who give material *interior* to this totality.

As far as the possibility of “active waiting” is concerned, here it is considered this metaphysical speculation. At most, one can speak of degrees of this activity, for there is no such thing as an entirely passive waiting in the terms being dealt with. The idea of “activity” or “passivity” in waiting is ultimately based on a metaphysical conception of individual freedom outside the social structures in which the actor develops and which impose a certain degree of restraint on him. Hence the constant recourse to personal experience as the catalyst of objectively analysable waiting, the place where it is postulated that this phenomenon manifests itself without socio-structural “contamination”. In the same way, if waiting is in itself, it has some objectivity. Some studies attribute this action’s objective feature to the social order, sometimes seen as the state. This order forces a person (understood as essentially “free”) to participate in a process almost always imposed and, precisely for this, axiologically negative.

3.1. Concave and convex perspectives: two useful categories for the study of waits

In order to address the question of the dichotomies mentioned above, this essaya proposes a classification different from those mentioned above, based on a type of analysis that takes into account precisely the operations involved in the waiting processes as the guiding axis or methodological guide. Given that, as has already been pointed out, the waits are organised vectorially. In other words, they are operational, putting the actions in function of precise aims located at a perceived distance –*apothetically*^{LIV}– in space and time. Rather than analysing waits around schemes of a subjective or objective type, here it is proposed to analyse the waits based on their operational courses as a classifying criterion of the different perspectives in play. That is to say, Prigogine (2018) is being discussed. Hence, it is possible to say that in their entropic condition, waiting processes present both disorder and order elements. In this regard, the dialectical relations between the two stabilise the system. Both types of elements, which struggle in different directions, generate operative responses whose cures will tend to order or destabilise the system (or waiting process in question) according to the prevalence they achieve within the process. Each of these actions, even though they will have some relation to the order

^{LIV} For a more comprehensive explanation, see note 139 in: “The Spaces of Waiting,” Section 4.1, “Interior, Surroundings and *Contour*”.

of the total system, could follow their courses, creating and reacting to various tensions given at multiple points (topologically speaking) of the waiting. These points of tension or force could be located in positions both internal, liminal, and external to the waiting process. That is to say, they could be located in its *surrounding*, *contour* or *interior*. However, from an analytical point of view, all these places/moments in tension related to the operations can be grouped to facilitate their classificatory ordering. The here-defended proposal is that this grouping could be established around two significant poles or perspectives to approach them logically. These blocks or analytical spaces are called to approach the operative courses, the *concave and convex perspectives*. The positioning in one of these perspectives will depend on the position of force exercised by the specific action in the entropic sustainability of the system.

From this approach, there is a possibility of leaving aside, in principle, any psychologism or classificatory mentalism when defining the different meanings of the actions or operations present in the waits. In other words, the observed operations could be explained by themselves if one paid attention to their objective operative courses and the relations between the different operational segments in which they are grouped. Although this does not disregard the subjective logic of the *waiter*, it does not necessarily link the categorisation to the latter's intervention. These classifications eliminate unilateral reductionism or dependence on a single point of view in analysing waiting processes.

This vectorial ordering can be analysed in two senses. Firstly, in an almost always institutional sense, although not in all cases, this is what is called *convex*. In most cases, the *convexity* in the waits would tend to maintain the order of the system internal to the waiting process, establishing the ordering factors within it. Secondly, it is referred to as *concave* which is almost always in a subjective or personal sense, although there are waits. This perspective generally groups together the elements that are called *dissipative* or oppose the stabilising factors, tending towards ordering, that was mentioned earlier. The processes of waiting, from this perspective, thus constitute the dynamics within these dialectical poles.

This distinction also has to do with the relationship of forces between the operations within the process and the relationships between these and other operations external to the system, which influence it. The *concave* and *convex* also point in the direction in which the

tension of certain operations within the process. Thus, in a *convex* sense, the operations given within the process are characterised by having a closer relationship with variables external to the waiting process. Hence, the operative courses approach is set in such a way that, to a greater or lesser extent, it includes *anamnesis* external to the waiting as a processual totality. These can be materially considered in the practical implementation of the *intentional objectives* set. In this way, the *convex* perspective can elicit operative courses that go beyond the internal vector space of waiting, extending its vectors to, what is called, *anchor points* external to the waiting process. These *anchor points* concern the *concave* (internal) space where waiters establish their vectors. The *convex* perspective corresponds to that of organisations, groups, actors, institutions, etc., which in their operative dialectic fulfill the requirements mentioned above, concerning the relations with anchor points, processes, agents, entities or entities external to the waiting process as such.

On the other hand, the *concave* perspective is characterised by structuring proleptic operations in a closer relationship with the process itself and without too many material connections, at least objectively operable, on which the *waiter* can rely to trace his operative courses or set his intentional objectives. Hence, it is notorious that they are operative courses moved by intentional objectives, anchored primarily in points internal to the waiting process. In other words, the *concave* is most strongly linked to the internal vectors of the vector space of waiting. The *concave* perspective is commonly associated with individual or group actors or waiters and not so much with institutions or organisations. However, this is not true in all cases. This assumption is based on the prevailing panopticism of some sociologies, anthropologies and perhaps psychologies, which structure their gnoseological framework around the dichotomous subject-object relationship. In the view of this paper, this reduction is limiting. While it is recognised that the individual-society dialectic is indeed present, it can be assumed to be one among other possible dialectics. Hence, analysing waiting situations has to be approached on a case-by-case basis to establish classifications. To illustrate what this means, it can be seen in the vaccination campaigns currently being carried out in different countries. Sometimes, there are waiting processes where the *concave* position is occupied by the state or the corresponding ministries, while individual social actors occupy the *convex* position. In these cases, it can be

seen that the state is the one that implements proleptic operations marked by internal referents. Thus, raffles, prizes, payments, public welfare campaigns, speeches by celebrities and other actions are aimed at convincing the majority to go to the vaccination centres (Dodd & Henni, 2021). It is estimated that these referrals can reach 70% of the vaccinated population, which would mean, statistically, achieving the desired herd immunity.

Another way of understanding these perspectives, which leaves out the *panoptic* question, is by analysing them from the ideas of *aims* put forward by Gustavo Bueno's DM (1992a), which has been discussed throughout^{LV}. Correspondingly, the structures of finalistic systems concerning which, as has been seen, waiting can be qualified as composed by the "composition" between the *referents* and the *ends*, be they of a propositional, objective or other nature. That is to say, the perspective of the operations within the wait can be considered concerning the logical approach that the operative causes of the waits themselves as finalistic systems present. Therefore, it is necessary to consider that, in waiting, an operative subject always intervenes in its genesis as a system tending towards an end or *ends*. This finality is already determined since identities presuppose an operative subject that intervenes in the conformation of the *referent*. In other words, there is a *waiting process* just when someone waits for *something* or *someone* specific. As has been pointed out, who does not know what is waiting for, it is not waiting at all. This process can not be a wait, among other reasons, because it does not have a *dined referent*.

In this sense, with Gustavo Bueno, there can be two options as a resulting composition between the end (aim) and the referent for the wait. The first is a composition that does not contain an operative subject in its structure. That is to say, a composition *that is in-mediate* concerning the specific mediation of an operative subject, animal or human. In these cases, it is possible to speak of a "finality according to the material mode, or a *logical purpose*" (Bueno, 1992, pp. 10-11). In the specific case of the waiting that is of interest here, I will not speak of a total absence of the operative subject but of a mediated participation of this subject. This statement does not mean there are no waits for this type of resulting composition since some *waits* relating to the *radial axis* of the anthropological space (the wait for gestation, for

^{LV} See section 3.1.a

example) present this characteristic. They are the least frequent in social and human research, which is why it is not necessary to entirely dispense with the finalistic structuring of an operative subject. This composition could be linked to the *convex* perspective of waiting processes. In this particular, examples can be cited such as, legislative institutions, regulations, and prescribed ceremonies, but also the architectural structures, barriers, gates, gates, fences, traffic cones, and boundary tapes that specific waiting processes (especially organisational ones) envisage as a prediction of the finalistic performance of some of the given operational courses. Thus, the dialectic between aims and programmes is very clear. When a particular behaviour is presupposed, institutions are established (a gate or a cone, for example) that respond to this dynamic while at the same time reaffirming it by preventing it from deviating from its objectively established end (*aim*), in the manner of a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

The second option supposes a type of finalistic process where “the composition between the referent and the end” takes place through the mediation of an operative subject, which is the one that *applies* the end to the referent. A proleptic aim is relative to propositional finalities in these cases. By this, it is not to say that the proleptic subject must be understood as a subject capable of representing the future end, as is commonly thought in many cases concerning waits. This representation is absurd because the future does not exist and cannot be the object of representation. What the subject represents in the waits, as in other situations where *anamnesis* is involved, is a past situation. An analogy of the result, or context, of a past process similar to the one experienced in the present. It is to an already “lived or known past” (Bueno, 1992b, p. 11) with which the waiter associates its waiting circumstance. This inclination is related to a greater extent to the *concave* perspective, where the waiting actors have to appeal, now, to their experiences (in the sense of expertise or accumulated knowledge, and not sentimental experience) if they seek to draw up *plans* and *programmes* that can structure the *anamnesis* necessary to transcend the process following their expectations.

3.1.a. Intentional objectives in dialectical realtions

The *concave* and *convex* perspectives described above can also be analysed concerning what has been called *intentional objectives* in waiting processes. That is, from the configuration of *aims*,

plans, and *programmes* respond to one or the other side of the spectrum. Larson (1987) offers an example that is very useful for us to understand what he is proposing. In the 1980s, Manhattan Savings Bank offered a pattern to follow in managing common waiting processes in specific organisations. According to the author, its success was based on offering entertainment activities to customers waiting at its sixteen branches. These could range from music played by pianists and organists to pedigree dog shows, cat shows or even a “Christmas ice show”. In these conditions, customers were not afraid to go to the bank and wait in the queue for their financial transactions. On the contrary, they viewed the time spent in the lobby as a positive and usually entertaining experience (Larson, 1987, p. 897).

Using the perspective this paper proposes here, the reading that can be given to these facts is the following. From a *convex perspective*, the Bank established *plans* and *programmes* of a total nature to make it more pleasant for customers to wait in the organisation’s lobby. If this strategy had a positive effect, it might be because of the coherence between the *concave purpose of the* customers/waiters and the *convex* operations introduced by the institution. These operations aimed to equalise the particular plans and programmes with the banking organisation and were also established concerning other operative courses external to the process. In other words, with the operations carried out by other competing banks and their respective management of waiting processes, the repercussions of these actions in the media (free promotion), as well as the specific socio-cultural environment of New York, the city where the bank’s offices were located.

Although in this case, the *convex* strategy, *in terms* of the intentional objectives (plans and programmes), was harmonised with those given *concave*, on other occasions, it could be the case that this harmonisation does not take place, leading to episodes of even momentary disconnection. In her outstanding work on the waiting times of some waiters linked to the NHS in the United Kingdom, Sophie Day describes an example of the dynamic mentioned dynamic. According to the testimony collected by Day from one of these waiters:

[Here, in the NHS hospital] it is like a conveyor belt. No one talks to you for six months. You have this medicine and that surgery, this treatment and then that. It is hard to remember it all, and you are just on a conveyor belt. Then, after six months, it is all explained. It is safe. I would never go

anywhere else. I come here for my [continuing] treatment. I know everyone now. (Day, 2019, pp. 176–177).

As shown in this case, the points of disconnection or invisibility of the organisation's internal anchors (*convex* perspective) made it impossible for *waiter* to draw or establish clear goals, plans and programmes (*concave*), as the *convex* institutional logics were not properly known to those who expected the services. Initially, the two logics ran in parallel, although they ended up being aligned after a while.

This example demonstrates two vitally important points. First, there can be disconnection points between the *concave* and *convex* perspectives. The second is that these disconnections cannot extend throughout the process, but only occur in specific parts. From the DM, it can be said that they occur in the form of *symploké*^{LVI}. In these cases, dialectic relationships are expected, where one and the other intertwine in more or less balanced ways without being exempt from openly clashing with each other on various occasions. On this last point, it must be said that, in the case of waiters linked to the NHS, the proleptic-adaptive restructuring of strategies was carried out from the *concave* perspective: "Then, after six months, everything is explained". In other words, they adapted to the *convexities* of waiting and not the other way around. This adaptation does not necessarily imply that the waiters were subjected to the organisation's "rules" or that their "freedoms" were constrained. Adaptation to the prevailing conditions does not always respond to the subjugation of individuals or groups. Sometimes, on the contrary, it is the result of convenient adaptation or simple negotiation. In any case, it is necessary to establish which is the case.

In another sense, Ann-Mari Sellerberg (2008) points out that, in waiting, "the 'consummatory' action goes in the direction of the original goal, but stops somewhere along the line" (2008, p. 352). Put in the terms of this paper, proleptic operations point to the referent. Thus, the author points out that organisational waiting –in the direction of the goal (referent)– can lead to the premature and partial fulfilment of waiters' intentions (aims) and the occasional elimination of tensions. In this way, waiting can play a positive role in the organisational activity in that it can "dilute" the "intensity of the desires of the seekers". In

^{LVI} See explanation the explanation in: *The waiting as institution*. Introduction.

Goffman's (1952)^{LVII} terms, desires can be "cooling out" (Idem). From the operational perspective, it is understood that, in waiting processes, when extended over time, there tends to be an adaptive equalisation of intentional objectives (aims, plans and programmes) between the *concave* and *convex* perspectives due to the number of exchanges, confrontations and dialectics produced. Thus, it is possible that, from a *convex* perspective, a decrease in *concave* interaction operations (for example, the request for information) may be observed, as well as a lengthening of the time intervals between one and the other.

Arjun Appadurai comments on how on many occasions, this adaptability to waiting, even in the context of social struggle and hostility between communities or social groups and governments, can be a very effective tool for resistance to mechanisms of control and exploitation.

When the unhoused or underhoused millions in Mumbai –or Delhi or Calcutta or Capetown or Johannesburg or Durban– mobilize to demand better housing, they know they will endure an unknown period of waiting: waiting for policymakers to agree on a plan, for funders to shake up the complacency of local and national governments, for builders and contractors to construct new housing, for their own turn at the head of the queue (Appadurai, 2013, para. 17).

In these cases, families and communities must restructure their intentional objectives (aims, plans and programmes) by reorienting them to a wait that could take years or even decades, in a scenario of great uncertainty, given the *convex* threats imposed by "predatory real estate development" or "state-sponsored demolition", among multiple other factors. Appadurai conceives this waiting as "heroic" as a coping mechanism that in no way reflects those omnipotent entities of power have triumphed over *waiters*.

In the two examples above, the proleptic restructurings are produced in the *concave* by the *convex* pressure. However, in institutionalised waits, this is not always the case. Based on Hage (2009), Valeria Procupez (2015) points out that, when talking about the politics of waiting –a notion approximating what is called *plans* and *programmes*– it is often overlooked that the modalities of waiting are shaped not only by those who make others wait but also by those who wait. As an example of what Procupez points out, she mentions how beneficiaries

^{LVII} Cited by Sellerberg, 2008, p. 352.

of certain housing subsidies, once grouped in grassroots community organisations, can push for broader demands than those offered by the mere exercise of stoic waiting for housing. Issues such as access to public funding for collective housing projects or the direct administration of the works by the participants themselves, and not by construction companies, have been demands achieved by those who have waited, operating in an active and organised manner. According to the defended proposal, these organisations could readjust the *convex* intentional objectives and their implementation in terms of objectives drawn from the *concave* perspective.

Another way the relations between these poles can be presented is through dialectical interconnections where both interact so that several interacting parts can be transmuted. In these cases, the dividing lines between the *concavities* and *convexities* of waiting have to be established ad hoc, and according to the *apothetical* (distance) position taken by the researcher concerning his object of analysis. A few examples to see how this may play out in particular cases will be discussed.

Palmer, Pocock & Burton (2018) recount their experiences studying the hunting process in some native communities in northern Australia. According to these authors, the natives made them wait at their own pace while hunting animals in the *bush tucker* (Palmer *et al.*, 2018, p. 8) near the community. Thus, they were forced to accept the temporary rules managed by their hosts. They attribute these waits to the differences in temporalities between the research subjects and the natives. Without denying that these temporal contrasts are true, it seems that it is essential here to understand the core of the operations performed by each party and their respective referents. For the aborigines, this was an *angular* wait for game prey. For the researchers, on the other hand, it was a *circular/radial* type of waiting, as their waits rested on observing the actions of the natives during the hunt, which included observing the waiting processes associated with the hunt. For the natives, the *convex* perspective of waiting is on the dynamics of the prey (their operative courses), the weather and other possible trajectories of the environment where the hunt takes place (*e. g.*, from other competing predators). The researchers' *convex* perspective, on the other hand, focuses on the operations of the subjects studied, their dynamics, even their direct orders, and the dialectics they established both in

their position as *concave* subjects (versus their angular waiting) and their position as objects (*convex*) versus the ethnologists' *concave* perspective in their *circular/radial* waiting.

A different example of this *concave-convex* dialectic can be found in the waits at the Kabul airfield that has been cited in this paper. Considering the approximately fifteen days that this process lasted (from 15 to 31 August 2021), the *concave* perspective can be found in the thousands of Afghans, soldiers, collaborators, journalists and other support personnel of the occupation troops who were waiting to be evacuated. The *convex* perspective can be found, on the other hand, in the operators of the Pentagon, NATO or the various governments involved, who were in charge of the strategic direction of the evacuation efforts.

According to a witness at the scene, from a *concave* perspective, she and her family were in the vicinity of the airport (a specific anchor point) because the "The US has told them they can be evacuated, but only if they can get through an airport gate" (Ellis-Petersen, 2021). In other words, the "go through the gate" operation had been set up *convexly*. Here, those seeking entry were subjected to the necessary scrutiny to determine that the access applicants were *reliable*. This operation is not so much linked to the wait but to other, unrelated courses of operation (US national security, counter-espionage work, etc.). From the *concave* perspective, however, all operations at that time were directed towards a precise, purposeful aim: to transcend the indicated gate. This was the aim of the *concave* intentional objectives, *i. e.*, specific proleptic programmes to "circumvent Taliban checkpoints", the establishment of vectors to certain referential aims—"a particular gate", for example— or specific plans in terms of overtaking other waiters, such as "carrying a certain visa". These *intentional objectives* are *concave* and may be preceded by preceding turning points where hopes for a "peaceful transition" or going to the airport because "I feared for my safety and that of my family" were not fulfilled (The Agenda, 2021).

However, this is not to say that the intended objectives were always achieved in the prescribed manner. According to the same witness, "every day they have gone to the airport, it's been so crowded and violent, it's not been possible to get the family through without a huge risk to their lives. The gates have not been opening" (Ellis-Petersen, 2021). This idea is evidence that *convex* and *concave* perspectives need not coincide. They may be at odds with each other

in their objective operative approaches (*finis operis*), even though their *goal-oriented purpose* (*finis operantis*) may coincide in the same referent. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily due to a panoptical negative voluntarism or an intention to control from the *convex* perspective. This situation responds to the institutional nature of this wait and the external and internal connections of the different *convex*-operative courses.

The intentional objectives that drove the operations from a *convex* point of view is considered. It can undoubtedly find the urgency to flee the country of the thousands of (*concave*) collaborators threatened “after an extreme religious and political group called the Taliban took control(Newsround, 2018). However, alongside this motive, there are others, such as the need to protect sensitive information, safeguard spy networks and war materials, attend to the US domestic electoral landscape, relations with the European Union and the wide-ranging geopolitical movements projected for the future. This example does not deny that there may be episodes of selfishness, irresponsibility or even sadism. However, it is quite different from saying that there is, in principle, a panoptical intention and that this could be seen in the *convex* performance. What is important to point out here is that the conditions of the actual total interactions (*finis operis*) in any given institutional waiting process are objective and independent of the intentions (*finis operantis*), good or bad, of the individual actors (*concave* or *convex*) involved in it.

4. Conclusions

Drawing on Gustavo Bueno’s Discontinuous Materialism (DM) perspective, this paper has aimed to explore some of the essential aspects of addressing the role of operations within waiting processes. I have hypothesised that the operational dimension is crucial for articulating an objective analysis of waiting processes, considering them as objectively defined phenomena.

Operations are not random or accidental actions but are conceived within a precise, logical framework of relationships, specifically within an institutional context. This context is the primary factor to consider when analysing waiting processes, as the variety of these phenomena arises from their association with different institutional contexts. Consequently, I have consistently referred to “waiting processes” in the plural.

In relation to this, I have examined the processual logic in waiting processes, considering them as a dynamic multiplicity of operational dialectics. These complex, intertwined relationships have been categorised into *concave* and *convex* perspectives, and these perspectives provide a general framework for the distribution of operations within waiting processes.

In conclusion, this paper contributes to the debate on operations within waiting processes and their significance in understanding these phenomena from a social and human sciences perspective. My thesis posits that a comprehensive analysis of operations, time, and space is essential for institutionalised waiting processes to attain true gnoseological status, allowing them to establish themselves as distinct object of study within the social and human sciences.

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Appendix VII. (Complementary paper 3)

Title: Beyond temporal and experiential aspects: critical notes on the idea of waiting handled by the social sciences

Abstract

Waiting is a common human experience studied in various disciplines, such as political sciences, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and film and literary studies. However, existing approaches to waiting in the social and human sciences limit their focus on temporal and experiential aspects and their assumption of waiting as a univocal and axiologically negative phenomenon. In order to address these limitations, this paper proposes a redefinition of the five gnoseological starting points used to date, which include considering waiting as a phenomenon of an essentially temporal nature, a fundamentally experiential or phenomenological one, a morphologically univocal, an axiologically pernicious, and an ontologically negative. By incorporating the unknown or partially ignored edges of waiting into the field of study, this paper offers a more comprehensive understanding of waiting as a social phenomenon shaped by social, historical, and structural factors and individual experiences. The proposed approach provides a theoretical framework for a more solid and comprehensive analysis of waiting, ultimately offering new perspectives on this important and ubiquitous social phenomenon.

Keywords: *Waiting, Philosophical Materialism, Temporalities, Subjective Experiences.*

1. Introduction

It is a reasonably widespread view among those who have studied waiting that it has become a “common human experience” in which everyone’s life is involved in one way or another (Ferrie & Wiseman, 2019). Reflections on waiting, in a denotative sense, are generally related both to everyday events (Bissell, 2007) –waiting for a kettle to boil, for public transport, for medical appointments (Rotter, 2016) and so on– as well as social processes that transcend the

microscale and are inserted into the meso and macro dynamics of societies. In this way, it is possible to find some waits linked to personal or family processes and others related to politics –municipal and national– and geopolitical relations, such as those linked to migration, diplomacy, and war. However, although various specialists analyse waiting with lively interest, there is no proper theory of waiting as a social phenomenon, at least not a consensual and widely used one. Therefore, I share Bandak & Janeja's view that “waiting should be conceptualised, both as a figure in itself and as a trigger for various forms of social energies” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 1). Approaches of this kind point to the need for an approach to this phenomenon from a doctrinal body of ideas, terms, and relationships, among others, that address existing gaps whilst allowing for an objective approach and analysis of waiting for what it is in itself.

That said, there are no sociological, psychological, anthropological, or other waiting theories from the so-called social and human sciences. At most, we find sets of ideas, notions, and approaches, sometimes shared and sometimes not, from which the different analyses begin. The closest thing to a notion of waits, properly speaking, are some philosophical proposals, mainly of a spiritualist and idealist hue, which offer guidelines for analysis that have been assumed as theoretical references on the subject. For example, authors such as Henri Bergson (1965, 2011, 2017) are widely cited when discussing a particular theoretical-philosophical conception of waits. However, those familiar with the French philosopher's work will know that he never developed a theory of waiting, nor was it a central interest of his work. If Bergson ever mentions waiting, he does so obliquely, without dwelling too much on it, while analysing questions related to his central theme: time. This conception is one of the reasons why Bergson arouses interest among contemporary analysts of waiting. Given that this author constitutes a reference in temporal analysis, and as waiting is considered a phenomenon structured by time, the slightest allusion to waiting in Bergson's work has become a cornerstone for analytical approaches to the subject.

Even with these theoretical limitations in the study of the waits, the social or human sciences stand out as the ones that have produced the most results (Dwyer, 2009; Auyero, 2012; Bailey, 2019; Janeja & Bandak, 2020). The political sciences, sociologies, anthropologies,

philosophies, film and/or literary studies have authors who identify the phenomenon, address its nuances, and produce most of the theoretical and practical material we have to approach the subject today. Accordingly, and referring to the particular case of ethnography, Bandak & Janeja point out the following:

[E]thnography shares an integral relationship with waiting as a method. Owing to this engagement with waiting, anthropologists have a repository to draw upon when focusing on waiting as an “object” of enquiry. Through ethnography, it becomes clear how waiting can be used as a prism to understand how temporalities and social relationships emerge and are being reconfigured in diverse social and cultural contexts (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 25).

Approaches of this nature, even though they often aim to highlight the gnoseological possibilities of waiting as an object of study, face a latent contradiction in the very approach to waiting structured from a perspective designed for other social phenomena. In this case, I am referring to temporal phenomena. Hence the constant challenge of explaining multiple phenomena other than time, which are also part of waiting, from strictly temporal categories. All these attempts associated systems and theories, and results constitute the *gnoseological space*^{LVIII} of research on waits.

For purely heuristic purposes, it is possible to group the accumulation of approaches addressed by the various disciplines^{LIX} into two strands that I consider dominant, namely sociological and psychological^{LX}. I have established this classification based on the conception

^{LVIII} The *gnoseological space* comprises various components and elements that constitute the positive sciences or are associated with them. This space is organised into three axes: the syntactic axis, which includes terms, operations, and relations; the semantic axis, encompassing referentials, phenomena, and essences; and the pragmatic axis, covering ontologisms, dialogisms, and norms. (García Sierra, 2021b).

^{LIX} It is crucial to recognise that waiting processes are investigated not only in social and human disciplines but also in fields like statistics, mathematics, cybernetics, biology, ethology, medicine, and biopharmaceutical sciences. Nonetheless, these disciplines often depend on conceptualisations originating from social and human sciences for their analytical approaches. This paper mainly concentrates on critiquing the conceptual and categorical assumptions employed in social and human sciences, rather than the empirical outcomes of all these disciplines.

^{LX} Another approach to waiting is the ontological approach, which primarily seeks to define waiting itself and its relationship with time. This approach is mostly adopted by philosophers, mathematicians, artists, and other related disciplines.

that the particular analysis explicitly or implicitly expresses the nature of the origin of the wait concerning the subjects (group or individual) who interact with it. In this sense, the different perspectives would have the particularity of assuming waiting as a phenomenon whose core is in the social a) or the psycho-individual respectively b). Whether the analysis focuses on one or the other aspect will determine the priorities of the approach. On the one hand, the focus will be on the institutional and/or organisational aspects that interact with the waiting processes. On the other hand, the significant references will be on the psychic, emotional, and experiential processes present in the particular waiting subjects.

At this point, it is necessary to clarify a fact that, in my opinion, also defines the research on waits. The organisational and socio-structural bias of the sociological approach does not indicate that the role of individuals is ignored. On the contrary, if anything gnoseologically characterises the waits analyses, it is precisely the centrality of the subject as a catalyst of the different materials that populate the study's field of the issue. On many occasions, the actors' experience of waiting is investigated rather than analysing the waiting itself. To such an extent that waiting is repeatedly assumed to be a type of experience of a temporary nature. In this regard, Craig Jeffrey notes the following: "A challenge for scholars is to explore how this sense of waiting is experienced while also attending to the wider structures that shape people's apprehension of waiting, and, at the same time, remaining sensitive to surprising differences and unexpected similarities across contexts" (Jeffrey, 2010, para. xiv).

Bandak & Janeja (2020) call this relationship between sensations and contextual frameworks the "poetics of waiting". The authors refer to "the existential affordances of being placed in temporal relations, gaps and intervals where the outcome is uncertain" (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 3). Thus, they follow Herzfeld's conceptions of social poetics. Here, poetics does not refer to an aestheticisation of social life but to the semiotic analysis of the use and active reading of the signs that guide actors in their social actions, ambiguity and indecision amidst human endeavour, crossing individual and collective forms of action (Herzfeld, 1985). Harold Schweizer, referring to the time of modernity as accelerated social time, notes the following:

If the acceleration of social change leads to a contraction of the present, in waiting the present is painfully prolonged. If the acceleration of the pace of life intensifies experiences, waiting seems only to diffuse them. In short, the temporality of modernity is sudden, instantaneous, like the movement of the camera's shutter, while in the experience of waiting, space and time expand to flat, tedious dimensions. The acceleration of time in modernity, in other words, has greatly accentuated the tediousness of waiting (Schweizer, 2008, p. 8).

Regarding the centrality of subjectivities in the waits, the differences between those approaches are here formal rather than material. In the social approach, the analysis focuses on establishing the relationships that the researcher finds in their empirical field of work between social phenomena (institutional, organisational and historical) and the subjective experiences present among those who wait.

On the other hand, the psycho-individual approach directly seeks to collect and describe these experiences in as much depth as possible, sometimes even literally. In such a way, they can be made visible or imaged to generate social processes –demands, complaints, denunciations– that affect the social contexts that generate these waits. The biographical construction may even involve places, events, institutions or people outside the experience. However, their allusion is merely anecdotal, part of a narrative that gives weight to the story told by the person or persons who suffer the wait (the “patient”^{LXI}) (Auyero, 2012).

Even within the wide disciplinary diversity present in the multiple existing approaches, it is possible to establish in a more or less *ad hoc* manner some theoretical coincidences in the research. If we summarise the approaches taken independently of particular global inclinations, it is possible to affirm that a group of characteristics distinguishes the analytical space of waiting. Specifically, it is possible to establish five gnoseological starting points used to date that define the different approaches. In a deictic way, waiting has been chiefly treated as:

^{LXI} Javier Auyero (2012, p. 9) and Pierre Bourdieu (2000) use “patient” to describe social actors who wait, emphasising their limited ability to influence waiting conditions and the patience required. However, as this term often implies a negative conceptualisation of waiting, I adopt Giovanni Gasparini's (1995) more neutral term “waiter” from his work in *Time & Society*, which allows for clearer, objective analysis.

1. A phenomenon of an essentially temporal nature. Waiting is considered something that belongs to time or temporal phenomena. Simply put, waits are temporalities.
2. A fundamentally experiential or phenomenological phenomenon. Here the emic conception, according to the classification of Pike (2015), locates the experience of individual subjects as the only possible place to find a certain objective materiality of waits.
3. A morphologically univocal phenomenon. Waiting is postulated as essentially the same phenomenon, which only varies in terms of the contextual envelopes (always accidental) in which it manifests itself. Most of the time, it is spoken of waiting as a singular phenomenon.
4. An axiologically pernicious phenomenon. Waiting is seen as a harmful phenomenon that negatively affects those who “suffer” and should be avoided as far as possible.
5. An ontologically negative phenomenon. As such, waiting is defined as that which is not (a non-time). That is a phenomenon that highlights “that which is not done” or that which “does not happen”. A time in which something does not happen or someone does not appear, and as such, it is indeterminable in itself.

All these characteristics, considered essential to waits, have underpinned the particular approaches to this object of study. To a greater or lesser extent, and in the face of different problems, different researchers have agreed that when I speak of social and human waits, I refer to a phenomenon that brings together all or most of these characteristics.

However, even when a specific tacit recognition is given to this set of phenomenal distinctions, it is also widespread to find that, in existing approaches, there is no deepening of what waiting is as such. That is, in itself and concerning other phenomena of reality. It is understood that, in principle, waiting is a phenomenon linked to time; the most frequent theoretical enquiries are of an enumerative type without a sufficiently critical approach. The most in-depth analyses revolve around temporalities and, from there, their connections with waiting and the analytical possibilities of existing socio-temporal theories.

The fundamental problem with these approaches is that they leave out a set of phenomena and processes that are also part of the waits and that cannot be reduced to any of these gnoseological presuppositions. In other words, there is much more to waiting than time

or individual experience, and its morphology presents a greater plurality than what is assumed. Along these lines, it is increasingly evident that waits are not negative phenomena, neither axiologically nor ontologically.

For all of the above reasons, this paper proposes an entirely new perspective of analysis that allows us to approach the question of social and human waits from more solid and comprehensive gnoseological, epistemological and, consequently, methodological presuppositions. Specifically, I propose a redefinition of these five presuppositions based on the coordinates offered by Philosophical Materialism (hereafter, PhM) in such a way as to reverse (“turn upside down”) the criteria presented while incorporating into the field of study other unknown or partially ignored edges. This reversal is not intended to deny the link between waits and the assumptions attributed to them by existing research. Nor do I seek to deny the relevance of their analysis; quite the contrary. Through critique, as I conceive it, I seek to reinterpret these postulates only in a precise sense. I aim to incorporate them into my understanding of the problem of waiting, which I will examine in more detail in what follows.

2. A critical analysis of the main theoretical assumptions of the waiting studies from the perspective of PhM

As it cannot be otherwise, since nothing comes from nothing, my starting point is the existing materials on the topic. Once the general characteristics shared by most of the analyses carried out so far have been established, the basic premise of my proposal is their reinterpretation or redefinition from other analytical coordinates. With this, I intend to conduct a dialectical critique of the metaphysical elements alien to the different fields of social research. At the same time, it seeks to incorporate the positive and objectively verifiable components that these notions present in practice and *representation*^{LXII}.

2.1. Waiting as a temporal phenomenon

^{LXII} *Philosophical materialism* rescues the scholastic distinction between *exercise* (linked concepts: *actu exercito*, *logica utens*) and *representation* (*actu signato*, *logica docens*) of that *exercise*. In the famous maxim of Thomas of Kempis we see an example of this distinction: “it is better to feel compunction than to know how to define it”. In other words, compunction is *exercised*, but not *represented*, since it is not defined (López Rodríguez, 2018).

The temporality of waiting –or rather, its temporal hypostasis– is directly related to the Anglo-Saxon cultural sphere. As I have been able to ascertain, this is the origin not only of most of the research on waiting nowadays, but also of the bulk of that which locates these phenomena in the sphere of temporalities. This is one of the reasons why I can affirm that, in the temporal conception of waiting, the Anglo/Germanic/Scandinavian sphere of influence has played an essential role. Here, I consider that the “hypostatic union” is produced, so to speak, not only between waiting and time but also between a specific type of waiting and a particular way of understanding time.

In the case of waiting, its particularity lies in the fact that it becomes a *subjective* or *phenomenal experiential* waiting with a univocal character; it finds in time, precisely that of the Protestant tradition, its negative ontological foundation. That is to say that waiting ceases to be a phenomenon conceived by itself to be defined negatively concerning time insofar as it hinders, slows down or stops it. Time is understood according to the conception that is fundamentally handled by Calvinist Puritan Protestantism, to which Weber (2001) partly attributes the *ethos* that gave rise to capitalism. The temporal is characterised by pointing to a *vital* or *existential* time, which goes beyond the chronometric. This time it is taken as a *time of life*. Where humans mostly work towards salvation, according to the Calvinist point of view, the consumer should accumulate and consume in the eyes of modern capitalism.

It must be said that these associations between waiting, time and experience in the field of anthropological and sociological analysis have been established more on a philosophical (ideational) than on a scientific or disciplinary (categorical) level. This dynamic applies to most social science research, where waiting in *representation* (in its conception) has been used more as an idea, sometimes admittedly obscure and confused, than as a clear and distinct (operational) category. When it comes to the empirical/disciplinary analysis of waiting, temporal categories derived primarily from the traditions that embrace the study of social temporalities take precedence. This inclination towards temporal analysis understood in this way tends to overshadow other aspects of waits that go beyond the strictly temporal/existential, as we shall see below.

In this sense, Jarrett Zigon, for example, notes that waiting is a “temporary mode of being in the world” (Zigon, 2020, p. 65). As such, it is of interest to ethnographies and the social sciences. For the same reason, subjects’ interpretations of these ways of being socially are a recurring theme for mainstream anthropologies, where experience has become a sort of supreme category of analysis. Hence, the most common criterion for understanding waiting is to consider, first and foremost, “the experience of time” (Lungu, 2019, p. 13) sometimes even reduced to the mere opinion expressed by those who wait.

To address this inertia, I propose approaching the time of waiting from a dimension that I have called *chronometric*. This is not opposed to the commonly assumed approach, which I will classify as *chronological* and tends to focus on the temporal meanings of the actors in a broader sense. On the contrary, with my *chronometric* approach, I seek to *dissociate*—that is, to identify—moments or parts within the same dimension, assuming that these are impossible to separate^{LXIII}.

From these premises, as mentioned in the previous section, I propose to distinguish between a psychological and sociological current, respectively. The fundamental differences among them do not lie in how waiting is conceived in each, since in both cases, it is similar: waiting is time. On the other hand, they differ in understanding time as a dimension of human reality in which waiting is inserted.

It is essential to consider this particular point, as it constitutes the gnoseological starting point in analysing these processes. Therefore, from the first analytical position of a psychological type, I will start from the understanding that time is a *phenomenon*, in the Kantian meaning of the term. That is to say, a subjective re-presentation of a particular reality, a sort of perception produced by something like a subject transcendental to these destined tasks. In this line, Paul

^{LXIII} For the PhM, *dissociation* and *separation* are not synonymous. That two terms are inseparable does not mean they cannot be dissociated, and it is sufficient that “the rhythms of their respective developments are different. The axes of three-dimensional physical space are inseparable; however, their contents can be considered dissociable if, in each of them, it is possible to determine values linked to others independently of the values of the other axes, or each two, concerning the third” (García Sierra, 2021a). The distinction between *dissociability* and separability can be observed, for example, in the faces of a coin. Both can be dissociated at different times when tossed, heads or tails, but it is impossible to separate the parts from each other, as they are conjoined in the coin as a whole. Similarly, it is impossible to speak, at least anthropologically, of time without space, space without time, or waiting without space, time, or operations.

O’Kane points out that “waiting is not a gap in time, but another time, a special time that is, perhaps more than other times, our own time” (O’Kane, 2020, p. 1). Alternatively, as Gasparini states, waiting is the time that fills the voids of our time (Gasparini, 1995, p. 31).

The second analytical perspective, sociological, is based on recognising certain social qualities in time. For this reason, it is explained socio-anthropologically. Thus, waiting is not only a *waiting out of time* but a skilful way of doing it “actively and intentionally” (Bissell, 2007). This activity occurs in contexts where time exerts its influence, *i. e.*, the social and human domains. Bandak & Janeja (2020) point out that ethnography and what I call *ethnographic waiting* occur both in time and concerning time(s). Hence, an ethnography that studies waiting is also an *ethnography of waiting*, which arises in and through waiting as temporality.

In other words, it arises in and through time. In any case, both perspectives start from the unquestionable assumption that waits are temporalities and that the only –or perhaps the best– way to analyse them materially is through the catalysing exercise carried out by the subject of this particular time. Either through the reflection given in the mind (or spirit) of the individual subject on the part of himself or through the representation of social reality (social time in this case) converted into a psychic phenomenon, that is, into a subjective or group experience.

As it is possible to observe in these cases, rather than a way of approaching waiting through time, what is sought through these categorisations is to understand time, or social times, through waiting. For many authors (Schweizer, 2008; Auyero, 2012; Janeja & Bandak, 2020), even with very significant particularities, waiting is nothing more than a temporality. More precisely, a type of representation (construction), in a temporal way, of a given reality. In their words, it is a “particular engagement with time” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 1) that subjects acquire and actively weave their biographies around.

The problem in this conception is that it does not allow us to explain another undeniable reality that also exists within waiting. I refer to the chronometric dimension I mentioned earlier as that time that elapses objectively beyond my meanings. That is, a duration relative to its material passing, according to specific scales measured in years, weeks, days, hours, minutes, etcetera. In other words, an analysis of the temporal dimension that claims to be genuinely comprehensive must also consider the mathematical aspects present in the waiting time. Even

when this time is associated with merely experiential or symbolic, this aspect will be crucial since, in different contexts, a wait of three days is not the same as a wait of three months or three years, nor does it have the same meaning.

By this, I am not suggesting that from a materialist analytical perspective, it should be assumed that the time claimed here, cosmological, physical or solely chronometric, can explain all the multiple meanings –Bergson's (1965) *durée*– attributed by men or societies. Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen point out that waiting appears to be an “open time oriented towards the future” (2020, p. 89) and that it seems to be opposed to a supposedly closed time, in which action is subordinated to past expectations and frozen dispositions. This latter time, in its closure, would correspond to the time analysed by cosmology or physics. From my perspective, I will say that waiting times indeed “appear” to be “open”, liminal or ambiguous times, but this is only an appearance. Time in its physical (chronometric) sense disappears entirely, in its material existence, within the waiting process. In this sense, I will say that waiting constitutes not only a temporality or a temporal representation but one of “a particular kind”, as we shall see below, where physical and mathematical time is very much present and, boy, does it matter!

In the same way, it is possible to point out that the same waits are not those that present in their parts different significant *durations concerning* the context, social or geographical, where the wait as a whole is inscribed. Nor are manifestations in different cycles, periods or temporal segments homologous in their temporal structure. For the same reason, the component of the waits cannot be explained solely by their *duration*, be it psychic, social or cosmological, in an exclusive manner. In other words, the phenomenal (*emic*) manifestations of waiting, present in psychic or social actors, can be explained but still says nothing about their objective (*etic*) structure, not even concerning the temporal. These objective structures (apprehensible only from an etic perspective) must necessarily be present in the phenomena, and they are the ones that must *be experienced* in order for these, and not other, experiences to be produced. From these analytical coordinates, the only possible way is to explain waiting and its parts under the assumption that they *are not* in themselves but regarding other time-related phenomena.

Among the most common phenomena with which waiting is associated, either as an integrated entity or as an integrating substance, it is possible to find hope, tedium, boredom, delay and queuing. Many of these processes often have a dialectical co-determination relationship with waiting involving their axiological characterisation. In this way, they are assumed as axiologically negative phenomena precisely because they integrate waits among their contents. On the other hand, sometimes the waits are axiologically classified insofar as they contain one or more of these states or processes. I will go into this in more detail later on^{LXIV}. I am interested in pointing out that even if this conception is expected in the *representations* of waiting, in its *exercise* –that is, in its implementation– contradictions are not entirely eradicated from the research. In other words, even if theoretical conceptions are permanently on the path of temporal analysis, the empirical reality of waiting imposes challenges that cannot be overcome using these tools alone.

In this regard, many researchers have begun to account, in different ways, for the diversity in waiting, although without fully detaching themselves from the temporal hypostasis. Bandak & Janeja point out that, as “temporal commitments” in waiting, “it is important to explore how and when it is experienced as a passive waiting or when it is an active waiting for something” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 2). In the same vein, but in a reverse sense, Jeffrey (2010) points out that, as a “conscious and materialised” activity, waiting contributes to forging new ideas, strategies and actions in which time and space often become objects of reflection. That is, waiting would constitute a valuable means of understanding the kinds of actions associated with time, both as producers of particular times and as a result of them. In other words, insofar as waits constitute vital periods –“temporal configurations”– where attention to the temporal is particularly intense or “engaged”, it is essential to “explore which ways of thinking, acting and relating” are implemented, as well as which are “avoided, excluded or neglected when situated” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 2).

In these last quotations, an issue of the utmost importance is revealed. Suppose the analysis of waiting has so far emphasised its temporal and phenomenological condition, both from a psychological and sociological point of view, when Bandak & Janeja mention ways of

^{LXIV} Cf. 2.4. *Waiting as axiologically negative phenomena.*

thinking, acting and relating that are avoided or excluded. Are they referring to alternatives of behaviour, thinking and various interactions associated with temporal waiting? On the other hand, if it is possible to adopt some forms and avoid others, does this not mean that these modes of weighing, acting and relating are already given before the acting subject says about them? Is the same true for waits, as phenomena as such, even if we were to assume them as temporalities?

All these questions are linked to a fertile field where social research related to waits still has much to contribute. I am referring to the materialist approach as I defend it in this work. This analysis enters the field of the materiality or objectivity of the time surrounding the waits and the waits themselves. Therefore, it opens up the possibility that there are types of temporalities that go beyond the individual analytical subject and waits that transcend the merely temporal aspect of their reality.

Such a paradigm of analysis must overcome the gnoseological contradictions that I consider present in current studies on waits, where the analytical approach is not sufficiently clear and distinct because the object of study itself is often not. In other words, when waits are analysed according to current coordinates, other phenomena are, in fact, being addressed.

In my analytical proposal, I argue that the only way to understand and establish the true importance of the temporal in waits is to assume that it coexists alongside other dimensions or constitutive parts that are not time, nor can they be reduced or explained by it.

By this, I do not mean that research on waiting should proceed in the opposite direction to that proposed so far, denying all temporality in waiting. In doing so, I would only affirm the current analytical position, but in the opposite sense, *contraria sunt circa eadem*. Instead, I propose to proceed dialectically by incorporating another approach that makes it possible to maintain the existing materials while admitting to others that the current approaches, given their analytical scope, cannot assimilate. Specifically, I encourage modifying the perspective of analysis, moving from one that has its centre in time and experience towards another that distributes the structural balance of waiting in three dimensions articulated with similar degrees of importance: the temporal, the spatial and the operational. Following Gustavo Bueno, although these dimensions are *dissociable* from each other –because they respond to different

moments– are not *separable* for that reason. Accordingly, there is no *temporal* waiting that is not framed in a *space* (more or less defined), and that is not determined by a specific set of *operations* (more or less standardised).

In short, the temporal hypostasis of waits is a fundamental current gnoseological characteristic in the study of waits. Its implementation originated from a particular historical, conceptual path and from the application of concepts used by studies of temporalities to the analysis of social and human waits, which, given its short historical trajectory, has not developed its categorical tools.

2.2. Waiting as an experiential phenomenon

The second aspect that must be addressed is the phenomenological dimension of waiting. That is, its conception as a subjective experience, temporally contemplated most of the time. Following some theoretical traditions, we could call this aspect the *epistemological conception of waiting*. With this, I seek to denote the different ways of understanding subject/object relations in analysing these phenomena. Thus, as I have announced, my starting hypothesis is that waiting has been conceived as a *fundamentally subjective* phenomenon.

Based on considering the waits as temporary phenomena, several authors theorise about waiting as such. These approaches include the psychological implications of waiting processes for waiters and the influence that a particular subjective commitment to waiting can have on the objective morphologies that these processes “appear”.

As for the psychological implications, Richard Larson, who has done some of the most interesting work on waiting, points out the following theorem, referring to queuing as a waiting process that he has studied, “[i]f B skips over A in queue but A leaves service before B, then because of B, A has experienced a slip in queue, a skip in service, and neither a slip nor a skip for the entire system” (Larson, 1987, p. 896).

Based on the principle of individual agents (interacting from their psychic individualities or freedoms), Larson establishes an equation of methodological analysis that occurs in queuing situations. The problem here is to prove that the same is true for all waiting or even that it is true for all waiting in the same way. To standardise waiting based on the individual actions of

the waiting subjects would imply demonstrating that waiting –or the systems derived from it, such as queues– always present a similar objective behaviour and would require explaining in what sense they are similar. That is to say, it is assumed that waiting is, regardless of where and how it occurs, somehow homologous and, therefore, measurable.

From my perspective, I consider that, based on these assumptions, it is impossible to distinguish between waits as such, since the very condition of (subjective) *experience* of the temporal, given its plurality, makes the task impossible. Even if the experiences of waiting that each *waiter* subject constructs were to coincide, this would only be due to a mere statistical accident. Otherwise, we would have to assume the hypothesis that mental structures are the ones that articulate these experiences and that they are one and the same because there is a bio-organic similarity in the agents that process them. This way of demonstration is impossible, as it far exceeds the social and human sciences field. Hence, it is gnoseologically impossible even to consider it. That said, all that remains for to examine is whether, since there is no need (neither social nor morpho-biological) for these similarities to occur, it could be the case that they are all different from each other. Nevertheless, in that case, categorisation or systematisation would be impossible, and with it, the scientific activity itself.

However, another solution here is frequently *exercised* in the approaches, even if it needs to be *represented* in this way. I refer to the positions that presuppose that there is an objective expectation that is one and the same, although not apprehensible by science as such. In the face of this, the different agents who expect to reflect and even *react* to these manifestations constitute what is given to scientific understanding.

In simpler terms, the proposal starts from the assumption that waiting is always formally the same and that what changes are its contents. In the case of Larson and others, these contents are the waiters who undergo the waiting process. The researcher uses the waiting agents, through their unique psychological individualities and phenomenological distinctions, as the material for analysis. However, the problem with this approach is that this given material, in principle, transcends the field of mere appearances, where the contrast is limited to statistical evidence of similarities.

In order to resolve this mess and to offer some “objective” support for the analyses carried out, some authors have linked the morphology, and even the very essence of the waits, to specific *innate* capacities, *in the* Kantian manner, of men. This position would correspond to the admission mentioned above of a particular morphological objectivity in waits, even if it does not define it –either because it considers such a definition impossible or because of a lack of interest–. Here is where the postulation of individual natural capacities for the temporal processing of reality that I have detailed above comes in. Through this natural ability, waiting would take shape and experiential, rational or mental form, depending on the interpretation.

At other times, waiting experiences are linked to processing certain realities through acquired social skills, sometimes far back in the historical or biological/zoological past, which can be understood from an ethical point of view (Larson, 1987), ecological (Geißler, 2002), sociocultural (Auyero, 2012; Bourdieu, 2000; Chia, 2002), political (Brun, 2015; Lungu, 2019) or economic (Gray, 2009; Miyazaki, 2003).

Kevin Gray (2009) notes that in the queuing/waiting behaviour, “we experience a deeply personal sense of ownership of time” (2009, p. 166). Hence, any attempt or actual realisation of violation of that spatiotemporal ownership, represented by our place in the queue/waiting line, is taken as an attempt or actual abrogation of ownership and represents a direct blow to individual self-esteem. With this, the author wonders whether queues, as waits, might not have “a distant echo of some primordial ‘big bang’ of property, so that the beginnings of property are still perceptible” (Idem) in the behaviours of humans beings in the various waits of our daily lives. Therefore, he notes that: “Modern astronomers are able to gaze across space and observe in real time the birth of a star many eons ago. In much the same way, by analysing the conventions of queuing behaviour, today’s property theorists can catch a fleeting glimpse of the creation of proprietary order” (Gray, 2009, p. 188).

For Gray, as a process of waiting, queues are evidence of the existence of a status given to each person who participates in the queue and embedded in sets of rights amalgamated in time and place. These rights are always individual and, as such, are opposable to those of the rest of the people, who are further back in the queue and those who have not yet joined it. According to the author himself, it is “this deeply proprietary perception of entitlement” that makes the

queue and is “what explains and colours the patterns of behaviour that comprise the empirically observable emanations of the behaviours” (2009, p. 177) associated with it.

The problems I find in these assertions could be associated with what Gustavo Bueno calls the *anthropological dialellum*^{LXV} (Bueno, 1996, p. 348), but this time related to waits. That is, to a certain presumed attribution of original or essential, natural, anthropic characteristics. We never know whether they refer to supposed biological conditions or are reminiscent of cultural or spiritual (sometimes racial) characteristics of human beings. In other words, linking waits to an essential sense of ownership presents the difficulty of demonstrating the “essence” of a given behaviour, whatever it may be, in human beings. The conflict here is to determine the origins of this supposedly essential behaviour, establishing when it arises, why, what it is associated with, and why it has survived and not other essentialities (anthropophagy, for example). If this exercise is already complicated in itself, as it refers to a request of the principle of the very complex resolution, its link, also essential -according to this proposal-will be equally problematic and even impossible. As such, one is guilty of anthropological reductionism in an attempt to explain complex phenomena and ideas –such as property and waits– based on categories belonging exclusively to one field of human knowledge when these phenomena are transversal to many of these same scientific/disciplinary fields.

For Gray’s economic skills approach, as for other authors, it is the waiters who filter a given situation, classifying it as a wait as such or in some other way. It suffices to understand the “filters” through which this mechanism takes place or understand the “modes or forms” (Brady, 2002; Fujita, 1985) in which these waits manifest themselves. That is, how and why they take shape and analytical possibility.

While it is not denied, in principle, the possible establishment of some supreme category that gathers all possible waits to be analysed by scientific activity. There needs to be more

^{LXV} Philosophical materialism posits that dialectics aren't inherently vicious circles, countering Greek sceptics like Agrippa. Crucial for modern scientific theories, dialectics are relevant in fields like the kinetic theory of gases, differential calculus, and cellular theory. Similarly, anthropological analysis also employs dialectics. Bueno's (1978) "anthropological space" doesn't rely on principles or axioms. Instead, materials or parts must be presupposed for their genesis. Reconstructing humanity's history necessitates assuming humans' relative end. Consequently, the "anthropological dialectic" prevents attributing human development solely to pre-human evolution or environmental factors (García Sierra, 2021c).

argument to sustain that this core is the temporality or subjective experience. This temporal/experience encapsulation is not even possible when, as it turns out in numerous cases, the descriptions of the waits given by the agents involved coincide in pointing out that these are considered social time or lifetime.

2.2.a. Active and passive waits. Possibilities for action within the waits

Another way of classifying waits with the subject at their centre has been done by analysing the degree of activity that waiters possess and/or manifest in the process. This categorisation group waits according to their *activity* or *passivity concerning the* behaviour of the actors. In this section, the central gnoseological problem is establishing this action's origin. Two ways of approaching the issue are proposed. The first one starts from the subject to the object and has the voluntary activity of the actor at its centre. The second goes from the objective process to the *waiter* and fixes the degrees of activity on the needs posed by the waiting itself, assumed as an objective phenomenon.

From what I have explained above, it is not difficult to suppose that the first of these possibilities has been the one that has prevailed in the studies carried out on waiting. In this line of analysis, Craig Jeffrey points out that waiting is not always imposed on subjects but that they also invent "active and creative ways of spending time and waiting" (Jeffrey, 2010, p. xvi). Other authors (Appadurai, 2013; Gasparini, 1995; Janeja & Bandak, 2020) further qualify the issue and point out that waiting is not entirely close to the action of *waiter* subjects. Bandak & Janeja propose, for their part, to recognise "the existence of a range from inert waiting to active waiting" (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 2). The differences lie in the degrees of trust or indifference to the outcome that the actors involved express. For this reason, a large part of the distinctions in the waits is motivated by the actor's more or less anxious or impatient attitude towards the outcome of the wait (Janeja & Bandak, 2020).

In another way, but along the same lines, Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen argue that "the liminal/passive versus goal-oriented/active axis should be understood within a broader typology of different forms of waiting" (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 107). According to these authors, when waiting time is saturated with "social time", waiting seems productive and momentarily

meaningful. However, this perception very often shifts to the opposite pole. This shifting makes the process seen as pointless or wasteful if the wait's purpose still needs to be accomplished. For example, when "the dentist never shows up (...), the loved one does not return your calls, the ministry (...) never sends you the official letter you need (...)" (Idem). The proposed classifying criterion is the opinion of the subjects and their logical perceptions concerning the wait they are going through.

In other cases, the distinctions between some forms of waiting and others are located in areas even more profound or more ambiguous than the rationalisations themselves, even going as far as feelings (Lungu, 2019) or the aforementioned psychic states, such as trust or animosity (Janeja & Bandak, 2020). Along these lines, Vlad Lungu (2019) considers that by closely observing a waiting process, *i. e.*, the way people live inside, we can "get a closer glimpse of the true feelings of a situation that is beyond our control" (Lungu, 2019, p. 10). For this author, only by understanding these feelings can it be better understood "the ways and reasons for the wide possibilities of action and inaction" (Idem) that subjects have in the waits.

Concerning the above, I should point out that from my perspective, the question is not about the dispositions for individual action, the significance of the actions carried out or their links with the emotional or psychic. In my opinion, it is essential to analyse the characteristics of the actions or operations concerning the objective possibilities and needs of the actors at each moment of the process.

It is moving away from the narrow frameworks of the individual conception of the subject. In other words, stepping forward from their opinions about the waiting they are going through when it is possible to understand that several objective factors traverse these processes. Those material elements are which articulate and structure the waiting in itself. On these, the actor possesses a specific agency given beforehand and outside his will or ability to operate in it. If waiting is a type of "social time" (Auyero, 2012; Bailey, 2019; Schwartz, 1978), as it is often conceived, it is not an abstract, individual or subjective time but is grounded in a concrete physical space that determines certain operations. In short, if waiting is a time, it is an institutionalised one: it is the time of the dentist, of couple relationships, of a particular

ministry, etcetera. All these times correspond to spaces and operational courses, already given when the subject arrives at them.

By this, I do not mean that the waiting subject is a mere puppet of his or her circumstances. On the contrary, logical and rational action –free, we might also say– is essential for these processes to be articulated as institutionalised ones. Gustavo Bueno (2005) calls this rational accommodation the *systatic shaping* of institutions, which allows for the tailor-made adjustment of the social actor's rationalities and bodies to particular institutional frameworks. In institutional waits, it is impossible to speak of happy or unhappy slaves who act without their own will. They would not act or do something else if that were the case.

Hence, it is not the question of will that distinguishes activity or passivity from waiting but the institutional circumstances surrounding these processes concerning the operational dynamics required. These dynamics remain almost always outside subjective control in terms of their morphology but not entirely in terms of their operational content. Thus, in many cases, even if it makes no difference how willingly or creatively the actors act, the process is not immune to such qualified actions. In any case, if the material conditions underpinning these actions (operations) are not ideal, or if they do not correspond to the surrounding institutional materialities, achieving the objectives that the operational actor has set out to achieve will be difficult, more or less actively or creatively.

In short, in the waiting process, to act or not to act is not the most relevant thing. What is essential is to determine which actions –*operations*– are or are not relevant, in which proleptic frameworks these actions can be articulated and under which institutional circumstances. Therefore, it could be affirmed that actions, reactions, interactions and inactions operationally plague waiting. These operations make sense, more or less, to the extent that they are inserted into the material processes with greater or lesser adaptation to the objective characteristics that they present.

2.3. The waits as morphologically unambiguous phenomena

Another characteristic of research on waiting is its consideration as a homogeneous phenomenon. When *waiting* is analysed, it is generally analysed in the singular manner of a

single type of waiting, which, at most, has certain distinct forms. For example, Palmer, Pocock and Burton argue that how the ethnographic researcher waits “are similar to the types of waiting potentially involved in the research” (Palmer et al., 2018, p. 3).

Without clear and distinct objective criteria, the authors resort to various aspects, external or internal, related to waiting, but where this relationship is not always duly clarified. Thus, some use the distinction I have mentioned, “forms of waiting”, without determining whether these correspond to objectively different types of waiting or dissimilar waiting methods according to the actors involved. In the first case, distinctions have been made between *collective* and *individual* waits as ways in which one expectation is materially distinguished from another. In the second case, referring to waiting, the modalities analysed between *active* and *passive* waiting are used.

According to the first distinction, it is argued that there are different kinds of waiting insofar as there are different ways of approaching it on the part of the actors involved. In this way, they are primarily related to what I have analysed above concerning the subjectivities associated with waiting processes. Various authors analyse waiting as a phenomenon that is the same everywhere but is shown to be variable because of the unique experiences that actors associate with it. These experiences may have similarities with each other. Sometimes, for cultural reasons, because the same idea is shared while varying from one context to another – tempo-diversity (Geißler, 2002)–. Sometimes for individual reasons or because of a shared mental/brain morphology.

Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen, investigating irregular migrants’ waiting in Norway between 2011 and 2013, aim to problematise the notion of waiting “as a homogenous condition or state of being”. To this end, they propose as a differentiating element “the ways in which irregular migrants relate to waiting in ‘different ways’” (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 89). In other words, rather than waiting per se, the authors refer to the different forms (or kinds) of waiting.

In this regard, Ghassan Hage notes that when one is waiting for “something to end”, one engages in “a specific form of waiting in which one is not waiting for something, but rather waiting for something undesirable (...), unpleasant, to end or to go away” (2009, p. 4). Hence, it is understood that waiting varies, even in its structural morphology, according to the actor's

subjective interpretation of the situation. Along these lines, the variations of waiting can be coordinated with what Bandak & Janeja (2020) call the *poetics* of waiting or what Pike (2015) calls *emic* interpretation processes.

Richard Larson uses this same perspective even in his methodological approach. He argues that the perceived diversity of waits, which is empirically observable, is related to the plurality in the analytical stances of the instrument catalysing the phenomenon. That is, with the cognising subjects, their minds, psyches or rationalities. To test this thesis and other parameters, the author interviewed groups of subjects where they were questioned about their opinions on the “futilities of queuing delays”. His objectives were:

- (1) To investigate the belief that the disutility of waiting is indeed a nonlinear function of the amount of time spent waiting in the queue.
- (2) To determine which specific member, if any, of a parametric family of disutility functions satisfies the qualitative and quantitative assessments of the individual.
- (3) To investigate the conjecture that the queueing environment and/or waiting time information alters one’s disutility function.
- (4) To begin to understand risk aversion versus risk proneness in queueing situations (Larson, 1987, pp. 902–903).

This example reveals a common confusion about the plurality of waiting times. Here, it is assumed that the mood of the waiters is an important variable. In principle, this is correct. The problem arises when this view is supposed to be universal. This assumption occurs because it is typically assumed, from the outset, that the waiting processes are all the same. According to this, some analyses are built pointing to this unicity.

I cannot say that this unity is materially objective from the analytical coordinates I am moving because waits are varied and different. Hence, the diversity obtained by the analyses does not only respond to the criteria's variability, but also the objective variations in the material waits they face. In simple terms, the opinions and experiences of the waits are different from one another, in principle, because the waits are also different. Hence, the question here is not showing opinions or rationalities that differ among waiters but establishing, if possible, why some are similar and to what extent.

Understanding this is essential to establish the respective gnoseological fields of each science or discipline and the variables that may be relevant in each process. According to my line of analysis, it would have been sufficient to start from the idea that the diversity in the perceptions of waits is not so much given by the particular individual or group ways of dealing with them but that they are different because they have an institutional morphology that distinguishes them.

The second type of differentiation of waiting mentioned above –social, *active or passive* waiting– is linked to the *politics* of waiting and is mainly related to processes of material configuration, *etic*, of institutional scope. Pointing to their *activity*, some authors (Appadurai, 2013; Procupez, 2015) see the waiting processes as open to creativity, struggle and social transformation. When they appear passive, they close down, and the opposite happens.

Gordon (2011), in his research on the USA prison system, speaks of a waiting distinguished by its passivity. Here, Gordon points out how “fate and fatalism” are recurring figures in the waiting in the North American prison context. For this author, prisoners become people with no future, forced to live a kind of “incessant repetition” of the same routines, of an endless uniformity (Gordon, 2011, pp. 13–14). According to this, the penal system evidences an objectively *passive* waiting. This inactivity is because the prison waiting process is designed to “rob” the incarcerated of their space and time, imposing on them logic external to their own that governs how and when to carry out even the most intimate operations of daily life (Janeja & Bandak, 2020).

On the other hand, I do not believe prisons are entirely repetitive places. So, I am not saying that they are pleasant places. This position seems based on a phenomenological conception since much more happens in prisons than waiting and repetitive processes. Accordingly, it becomes necessary to distinguish between the different perspectives the prison system encompasses and that it cannot be reduced to its organisational/repressive or panoptic structure, in Michel Foucault’s (2011) terms.

Inside prisons, many dialectical relations go beyond the oppressed/oppressor-prisoner/prison frameworks and intermingle various relationships, not always harmonious, between the inmates themselves, between them and the guards and staff, between the guards

and each other, and so on. “The mind never stops, one guy trying to settle an account outside, another trying to collect a debt, the other trying to dig a tunnel. And so on, day after day” (Babenco, 2003, (Babenco, 2003 min. 17:34-17:43). This is how Ebony, leader of the prisoners, complains to the prison “Doctor” in the film *Carandiru*, describing his sleep problems. He identifies the cause: “Your problem, Ebony, is stress. That is what big executives have” (Babenco, 2003 min. 22:52-22:56).

To this, I must add that prisons are not entities disconnected from society, but that they weave links, they build bridges with the “outside world”, and these dynamics also affect the operative courses inside the prison. With all this, I want to point out that institutional prison waiting, as I understand it, presents material dynamics, which in no way can be explained with categories other than those belonging to them.

When presumably similar waits are standardised, there is a methodological reduction, which reduces many important objective aspects. However, this univocity of waiting is not always assimilated similarly. The empirical material often provides researchers with sufficient examples to contradict this conception. Sophie Day, for instance, offers invaluable ethnographic material on waiting times in some British NHS hospitals. Day observes that even in such a closed environment, “waits are of many kinds” (Day, 2019, p. 160). The author perceives diversity both between spaces (“even physical waiting rooms differ”) and in their use: “other spaces, such as the chemotherapy units we observed in 2012, are treatment and waiting rooms” (Idem). Similarly, the dynamics, functions and operations present in each of the waiting areas they host also differ from one another: “At the sexual health clinic (...) you can just turn up and wait to be seen (...). In some clinics, patients carry numbered tickets as ordinal sequence markers; in others, they rely on receptionists to use their medical records to mark the order in which they were registered” (Idem).

Finally, Day points out an issue that I believe to be essential. Likewise, that is that waiting while differing in the motives that move them –the *referents*, as I have called them– varies objectively in the dynamics of achieving them: “Many people wait in one place and then another: they may be waiting to have their blood drawn, to see an oncologist, (...) for a prescription at the pharmacy, or for a chair in the chemotherapy room” (Day, 2019, p. 160).

If these differences are palpable in a closed organisational *environment* such as a hospital, what can we expect when attempts are made to standardise waiting times in entirely different environments? Particularly, if we start by equating all waiting times based on their presumed formal characteristics in terms of their time structure. By this, I am not suggesting that it is not possible to establish correlations or analogies between waits. Without such an exercise, we could not analyse them scientifically. I affirm that, when carrying out this task, the starting point must be other than the merely temporal, volitional experiential one, as I have been stating.

In this line of analysis, and in an attempt to integrate one type of differentiation and the other, Bandak and Janeja have proposed using the notions mentioned above of politics and poetics of waiting (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 3). The problem in this classification is that the waits are not only linked to what I call from the PhM “the circular axis of anthropological space”. That is, to the social sphere, of man/man relations, which the *political* and *poetic* perspectives, *as they* are understood here, aim to capture. The field of social and human (institutional) waiting intersects not only social (*circular*, according to my classification) but also physical/biological (*radial*, following my coordinates) and even mystical/religious/numinous (*angular*, from this same perspective) materials. When the hunter waits for prey, he does so not only by adhering to symbolic (semiotic) readings related to the surrounding environment, but his operations are mediated by institutional and organisational elements (hunting permits, dates, seasons, restricted geographical spaces, etc.).

In the same way, in the environment of the gnoseological space of waits, it is possible to find other materials that are difficult to coordinate with the poetic or political perspectives. I refer to ideal or logical contents, mathematical formulae, theorems, analytical systems, etc., used in and applied to the waits, which present a specific type of materiality (M3, from the PhM)^{LXVI} that does not fit into the offered classification either. In other words, even if these categories are interesting, they still leave many phenomena and materials from both the *surroundings* and the *interior*^{LXVII} of waits outside the analytical scope.

^{LXVI} On the different types of materialities proposed by the PhM, see section 2.5. “*Waiting as an ontologically negative phenomenon*”.

^{LXVII} For an analysis of the distinctions between *surroundings* and *interior* in the spatial analysis see: Sierra (2021). “Nódulo: entorno, dintorno, contorno” in: <https://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df090.htm> . For an analysis of these

In short, and regarding the morphology of waiting, I believe it is a phenomenon that is more *analogous* than essentially *univocal*, as it is usually conceived. Hence, waiting must be assumed to be morphologically *plural*, making it impossible to speak of waiting in the singular, and it would be more accurate to refer to waits in the plural as diverse phenomena.

2.4. Waiting as axiologically negative phenomena

In the modern capitalist world, waiting is unequivocally seen as a waste of time to be avoided if possible. “Time is money”, goes the Anglo-Protestant adage, the core of the capitalist ethos according to Max Weber (2001). However, as we have seen, for some authors, waiting can also be “transformed into a kind of active time” as long as “it can be filled with meaningful content” (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 89). That is when the subject can give an experiential account of waiting as a phenomenon that is not harmful to his or her subjectivity. As is possible to observe here, the axiological question rests on the shoulders of subjective, phenomenal significance, which is located in the order of opinions. In this way, the same expectation can go to one valuational pole or another depending on the subjects who experience it, even when they often share the same opinion, which is almost always negative.

According to Barry Schwartz (1974), when one waits, one experiences the feeling that one's personal time is socially less valuable than the time of the one who makes one wait. Kevin Gray, for his part, points out that waiting demands a very high personal cost, given the sense of degradation inherent in it, as well as a particular awareness that “time, a fraction of one's life, is being stolen, irretrievably lost” (Gray, 2009, p. 172).

According to this author, waiting time is “dead time”. For this reason, phenomena associated with waiting, such as queues, constitute a “symbol of unhappiness and social unrest”. The waiting process thus imposes a cost, constituting a demoralising action because it “subsumes the distribution of power that it presupposes” (*ibidem*, p. 171). For all these reasons, waiting is sometimes seen as an entity that generates “feelings (...) of impotence, weariness, anxious vigilance, stress, frustration and sometimes even uncontrolled rage”. To wait “is to

categories specifically applied to waiting processes see: Avila Castellanos (2021). “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories from Philosophical Materialism useful for their study”.

endure an interval of non-being, the black space between events and the outcome of desires” (Gray, 2009, pp. 171–172).

On this last point, I disagree with Kevin Gray that these feelings always manifest in the waits. The processual conception that I assume does not allow to assign a single psychological state to waits since they present different parts, moments, actions and even spaces, and not in all cases do similar states of mind emerge, nor are the same operations demanded –or even imposed– on the actor.

It is possible to affirm that, in many cases, waiting in line represents a real possibility of access to the good or service demanded and, with it, the achievement of the prolepsis, that is, the attainment of the *end* (referent) of the wait. Particular *polytopic waits*, such as in particular queue waits, where the waiter has to move through different points of the space, may be preceded by a chaotic and unordered moment, with the access to a queue as such constituting precisely the psychologically least stressful point.

On other occasions, the character of the object of the waiting that is outside the agent’s control is considered a relevant factor in the axiology of waiting. Simon Coleman notes that “it can play an important role in determining the experience of waitin” (Coleman, 2020, p. 47). Vincent Crapanzano (1986) proposes to differentiate between “instrumental waiting”, which takes place in terms of a specific object (a bus, a boiling kettle, a document, etc.), and “existential waiting”, whose contents and purposes (referents) are more abstract, such as the end of all wars, the arrival of world peace, the eradication of hunger or the brotherhood of all nations.

In other cases, the axiological negativity of the wait is associated with its uncertainty degree in the time extension of the process. In or terms, the *chronometric duration*, as a whole, or concerning some of its *constituent parts*. On other occasions, the rejection is associated with the uncertain results of specific demanded operative courses or the lack of knowledge of someplace segments’ *localisation*, *ubication* and *situation*^{LXVIII}. For example, Kafka’s “The Trial” shows us how waiting can be a punitive instrument. Here, part of the punishment of the

^{LXVIII} For a deep analysis of the category’s *location*, *ubication* and *situation*, see: Avila Castellanos (2022). “The spaces of waiting: Some notions and categories from Philosophical Materialism useful for their study”.

accused consists precisely in waiting for the outcome of the trial in a state of complete uncertainty.

In this regard, Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen relate how, for Basher, a Palestinian refugee irregular resident in Oslo, “the authorities fail to understand the psychologically demeaning effects of indeterminate waiting (...) in asylum centres by focusing exclusively on material conditions” (2020, p. 98). Here, the uncertainty of waiting in terms of duration and outcome instils in “waiters”, like Basher, fears directly related to unwanted futures. In this case, “deportation after a long period of waiting” (2020, p. 99) makes the wait meaningless and only pointlessly transcends the temporary segment.

Katherine Verdery’s ethnographic research on socialist Romania provides another example that illustrates this concept very well. In one of her researches, the author relates the anecdote of a Romanian woman who had heard that broken eggs from the ration coupons would be distributed in a shop near her home. The woman “thought that if she waited in the shop with a jar, she could get a few extra eggs” in addition to those already allocated by the card. “She explained her idea to the clerk, who found a broken egg; after an hour, another broken egg appeared” (1996, pp. 55–56). Once the sale was over and the shop was empty of customers, the woman approached the shop assistant to suggest that she break another pair of eggs and give them to her, thus ending her wait. The very possibility raised protests from the shop assistant, fearful that someone would report her. In the end, another broken egg “appeared”, and she gave it to him. The end results in three broken eggs after two hours of waiting.

Beyond the example itself, the classification used by the analyst in her reading of these events interests us. For Verdery, this constitutes “a further assault on self-conception by state confiscations of time”. In her words:

The experience of humiliation, of a destruction of dignity, was common for those who had waited for hours to accomplish (or fail to accomplish) some basic task. Being immobilized for some meager return, during which time one could not do anything else one might find rewarding, was the ultimate experience of impotence. It created the power sought by the regime, as people were prevented from experiencing themselves as efficacious (Verdery, 1996, p. 56).

This fragment clearly shows how waiting is considered a negative factor not in itself but because of its phenomenological relationship with conceptions attributed to other factors which, in principle, have nothing to do with that which generates the specific and objectively verifiable waiting. The second-degree connection between an event of anthropological interest, such as the obtaining of food, via hunting, gathering or exchange –of eggs in this case– with another event that far exceeds the field of analytical possibilities of this discipline, such as the political organisation of the state and its mechanisms of social control, seems to me to be methodologically and gnoseologically inappropriate. By approaching the analysis in these terms, the hypotheses are based on a foundation of opinions, which are difficult to measure.

Ideas such as “self-experience” or “self-conception” are problematic when establishing their objective scope. This statement does not mean that I find the processes described morally acceptable. What I mean is that, to understand them, it is necessary to offer objective parameters that transcend the actor's mere experience, the researcher's ethical stance and a dubious “common sense” that is often appealed to as a silent judge. Waiting processes can be fertile phenomena for analysing the mechanisms of assigning social meanings as long as the ideological biases that populate the field of anthropological studies are kept under epistemic control.

In other cases, the axiologically negative classification of waits stems from the tensions that some authors have noted between the “forms” of wait. As I have pointed out, these “forms” include, at the same time, sometimes indiscriminately, objectively different waits as ways of expecting that the different actors manifest. From my coordinates, I believe that what is being indicated are the tensions inherent in the different waits, which can occur both at the structural level –the static, according to classical sociology– and in the operational dialectics executed by the different actors involved in the process.

Bandak & Janeja point out that these “tensions between different forms of waiting” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 6) are visible in the migration literature. Consequently, waiting has been seen as a kind of sanction used to slow down the movements of migrants from peripheral nations to the big cities of central countries or former metropolises. According to this, waiting makes it possible to “keep people away”, to keep them out, to delay them by making them wait for

decisions beyond their control. These prolonged waits have a “corrosive effect” on a large number of undocumented migrants while at the same time turning their particular migratory situation into a state of permanent existential transience, where external evaluations of value or one's own experiences are the only way to move socially (Idem).

When reference is made to conflicts, it is not understood that the collisions occur *in* and *over* materialised aspects relating to operations, materials and waiting spaces. Contests over limited resources generate competition between the actors and agencies in the waiting process. In other words, those who wait also confront each other and the agencies and agents in another position. The very institutionality of the waiting process constitutes the regulating body and the container of these conflicts. Hence, it is possible to affirm that waiting creates conflicts and resolves it by organising them so that they respond to and contribute to the institutional logic itself.

The last of the aspects that I wish to address in which waiting can be seen to be negative is that of the phenomena or states to which it is usually linked. Thus, some authors refer to boredom, tedium, weariness, etc., apparently produced in a situation of waiting, to support the thesis of such negativity inherent to waiting processes. Thus, Coleman consigns among these cases “the situational boredom that everyone sometimes experiences, for example, waiting for the bus” and “a more existential state of hopelessness and hopelessness, intimately linked to frustration, and often close to despair” (Coleman, 2020, p. 46).

However, the point here is that this relationship does not seem as clear-cut as it is assumed. Waiting, in principle, does not necessarily have to be linked to boredom. Both categories are different processes. It is not always because one is waiting that one experiences boredom. Boredom, weariness, uneasiness and tedium are often caused by specific actions unrelated to the process or multiple other factors whose link with waiting needs to be demonstrated. This link is not always adequately explained, and more importantly, it is rarely operationalised concerning any of the internal aspects of the process. I agree with Ghassan Hage when he states that “waiting can be the opposite of boredom” (Hage, 2009, p. 12) as, in some cases, it is structured around productive, enjoyable, creative or beneficial activities. As Coleman notes, “travelling before going to university or starting a new job; it can also provide a

temporary respite from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, such as resting on a station platform for a few minutes before a train arrives” (Coleman, 2020, p. 47).

In the same way, waits can be transformed on the fly by changing their valuational meanings in one way or another. Waits such as these can become “a waste” regarding temporal utility. Thus, the university journey mutates into “an aimless or disappointing journey” (Idem), and the wait for the delayed train becomes a restless anxiety “out of sync” with the broader rhythms of society (Schweizer, 2008). Conversely, the transformation occurs from axiologically negative to positive waiting in some cases. According to Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen some migrants implement strategies to “turn empty waiting into open-ended activity” (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 89).

In a general sense, and because of all that has been said about wait’s axiological classification, my position is that they possess a variable nature. While there are no axiologically neutral waits, they also do not have to be constantly negative. This position does not deny that there are many –perhaps the most– waits that are assumed to be harmful, damaging, stressful or morally rejectable. Nevertheless, on many occasions, waiting can open up the possibility of creative, learning or conflict resolution processes, as several authors have pointed out (Appadurai, 2013; Gasparini, 1995; Procupez, 2015). Truces during a war or waiting for an organ donor to appear are not axiologically negative waits *per se*. In both cases, their very existence indicates that much more violent and harmful actions have been stopped –at least momentarily– or that there is sufficient health and vitality to withstand the malfunctioning of the organ to be replaced until a substitute is found.

2.5 Waiting as an ontologically negative phenomenon

The ontologically negative character of waits (*i. e.*, waits are indefinite) has been addressed in various ways. According to Gasparini, the waiters experience is permanently “at the crossroads not only of the present and the future but also of certainty and uncertainty” (Gasparini, 1995, p. 31). Bendixsen and Hylland Eriksen describe it as a congestion “that obstructs the route leading from the present to the future, but it is also a somewhat sharp and unpleasant chasm between certainty and uncertainty” (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 93). Bozic-Vrbancic concludes that

“waiting for ‘something’ always implies a temporal dimension in which the present and the future are strung on the thread of desire that runs through them” (2009, p. 192). For Vlad Lungu, citing Victor Turner (1968), in waiting, we experience “in-between moments in time [where we can] examine the essences of meanings and experiences” (Lungu, 2019, p. 13) of waiting itself. In the same vein, Catherine Brun (2015) points out that this ambiguity is given by the “liminality” of waiting, as processes that take place in the borderline, transitory or undefined zones of time and space, which gives them a certain marginality in terms of the laws and perhaps the rules that should govern the social order, which is why they are constantly used as a mechanism of control and/or exclusion of actors and social groups.

That is to say that, as ontological negativity, waiting has been conceived as a time in transit in the process of being defined. A kind of in-between time or “liminal” time where processes occur that are equally transitory, undefined, and perhaps incomplete. In the same way, it has also been defined as a material transience between two types of social phenomena –sometimes processes or institutions– that are also distinct. In this way of approaching the question, both the categories used and the gnoseological positioning they generate are highly ambiguous. They do not allow to close the analysis around apprehensible realities insofar as they do not refer to the material situations of the actors or objective and verifiable impediments. Instead, they aim to give theoretical and categorical forms to the multiple perceptions of individuals as if to account for their overall material reality. Expressions such as “perception of impossibility”, “truncated future”, “inactive activity” (Crapanzano, 1986), “temporal deviation” (Schweizer, 2008) or “time mismatch” (Brun, 2015) aim to highlight the mental aspect or understanding of the actors, rather than to narrow down the actual impediments to objective life unfolding, translated into concrete obstacles to specific operations.

Treatments of this nature are frequent in existing studies. Regardless of how waiting is conceived, what is certain is that it is most often defined concerning something or by the absence of something. Thus, waiting has also been understood as a void that appears in the interstices between events (Gasparini, 1995). A space that, because of its emptiness, allows

other phenomena that, in turn, account for the existence of waiting: “only when nothing in particular happens can something happen” (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020, p. 91).

It is possible to say, then, that waiting has been categorised as a relational idea, which PhM calls an “oblique” concept^{LXIX}, which can only be explained in relation (even by negation) to other concepts. It is not an apprehensible phenomenon in itself but subject to other phenomena due to its material or formal ambiguity. “Waiting as a phenomenon is an unstable object”, says Bandak and Janeja (2020, p. 16). They add that it is not only that it constitutes an “absence of action” but that it takes place in an “uncertain terrain in which what is expected may or may not happen” (Idem).

At one extreme of the positions that analyse waiting from its ontological negativity, I find those that blur it to such an extent that they make us doubt its very existence. “For a short or prolonged period of time, an individual or a collective finds itself in a situation in which what is expected or anxiously anticipated has not yet been actualised” (*ibidem*, p. 1). If we were to extend this situation to its limit, we could categorise extreme situations and processes such as migrations, wars, excessive poverty, inter-group crises and conflicts, social isolation, etc., as waits. All of these may also be temporarily indefinite while subjecting the actors involved to changes of state, violence, impositions, radicalism and so on. Seen in this way, it could be the case that the waits, in themselves, end up losing all objectivity, becoming a kind of tailor’s box or *Pandora’s amphora* in which all imaginable miseries can fit.

When people feel trapped in a “never-ending present” (Jeffrey 2008) where alternative futures cannot be reached, it may seem meaningless to work to achieve future goals because that future lies too far ahead. However, (...) even during this uncertainty of not knowing and not being able to control the future, people do anticipate the possibility of alternative futures, and waiting becomes a particular way of experiencing this link between time and power (Brun, 2015, p. 24).

^{LXIX} An oblique concept is constructed from an implicit platform, causing a rectification of the original idea (García Sierra, 2021d). Obliquity is useful when phenomena cannot be approached directly, as they are presented through mediation. In social and human sciences, waiting has been treated obliquely, which I argue is unnecessary. Waiting can and should be addressed directly; however, temporal coordinates hinder this approach. Consequently, an alternative analytical scheme, such as the institution proposed by the PhM, is required.

The criticism to be made of this type of approach is the following. In situations such as those described, where the absolute extreme would be reached in the speed of variation of the process and where the number of possibilities of transformation and development is such that the subject's capacity for rational processing is annulled, what happens is not that the waiting changes form, becoming more severe or unbearable. What happens in these circumstances is simply the objective disappearance of waiting as such. In other words, in these cases, I am not talking about waiting but about another type of phenomenon. For a waiting process to be as such, someone must, in fact, wait for something. In other words, someone has to glimpse a particular *end* and *goal-oriented purpose* –a *referent*, according to the materialist perspective– that *de-fine, de-terminates*, the phenomenon. In other words, that puts a limit on it, closing it in itself. “A wait with an unknown endpoint creates uncertainty because it is beyond the control of the one who waits; such waits are the most difficult to endure” (Palmer et al., 2018, p. 6). This *end/goal* or *finality* ultimately allows waiting as a phenomenon to be distinguished in the set of other phenomena of reality, even when it does so through others, as is the case with waits when they are held as oblique ideas or concepts. This “*end*” makes it possible, from my operational theory of waits, to trace operations determined concerning this final goal, independently of the objective pertinence of these same operations concerning the process as a whole. In other words, the existence of an *end* or final *purpose*^{LXX} makes it possible to implement certain operations that I will call “*proleptic*”, this is, destined to reach a particular purpose, a *proleptic goal*. In this regard, the ambiguity in which some *purposes* are presented in certain waiting processes, taken to their maximum extreme (critical point), can blur or directly make analysis impossible. In this way, it is not that the situation becomes more or less unbearable axiologically but that it reaches such a degree of openness and indefiniteness that the actor can no longer establish plausible finalities based on planned operations. That is to say that the precedents from which to start (by *anamnesis*) towards attainable futures through *prolepsis* are blurred or unknown.

^{LXX} For a distinction of these terms see: Bueno (2012). “Sobre la finalidad y la teleología”, available at: <https://fgbueno.es/act/efo031.htm>.

If we take as an example the waiting for the end of a war, for this waiting to be so as such, it must be linked to the development of known proleptic operations: information on the war operations, political changes, news from the front, etc., If it is another type of waiting, such as obtaining a visa in an extreme migration situation, it will be related to objective possibilities, such as a passport, a border crossing, or arrival at an office or embassy. Every one of these operations can be implemented, with a greater or lesser degree of success, based on already given material structures and contexts. These structures are precisely the social institutions, the architecture of which is adopted by the waits. Otherwise, both their resolution and their objective apprehension would be impossible.

Another way of understanding the liminal notion of waiting is to be found in a conception that also assumes waiting to be a midway phenomenon, but this time not only between two moments in time but also between two social phenomena distinct from each other. Likewise, it is not so much that waiting is always considered to be the product of the intersection of two entities, but rather it manifests itself materially in processes originating from both.

Some waits, in their genesis, morphology, and structure, are assumed to be a by-product of modern life. This assumption is a consequence of the collisions and dialectics relations in societies where economic benefits are associated with maximising the utility of time. F. Neil Brady points out that the existence of certain deviations in queuing/waiting, governed by organisational systems such as the well-known “first come first served” (FCFS), are symptoms of the more general pathological pressure of individualistic self-interest overriding “civilisation” (Brady, 2002, p. 165). It follows from this that, in their dynamics, waits are articulated and driven by phenomena such as the profit motive, self-interest or the ethics of the market and business.

The problem with this conception is that it assumes that there is an underlying conflict between morality and economics, like a problem between behavioural norms (culture) and psycho/body desires or drives (nature). From a materialist perspective, I cannot admit this confrontation because I start by integrating nature and culture in a continuum, where culture is assumed to be “humanised nature” and not an irreconcilable antagonist. Seen in this way, waiting, or rather the behaviours surrounding these processes, are the result of the natural

drives present in the *homo economicus* of the neoclassical economists rather than sociological behaviours.

Following this idea of waiting as a by-product of social phenomena, entities and entities, some have seen waiting as a broadly constitutive component. Correspondingly, Colin Hoag (2011) argues that there is a clear relationship between bureaucracy and waiting, although he admits that the social sciences have studied it only to a small extent. Citing Monique Nuijten (2003), Hoag proposes that bureaucracy should be analysed as a process and not as a product when articulating the waits it integrates into its morphology. I could share this position up to this point as it leaves the door open to a processual conception of waits such as the one I propose. However, I disagree when Hoag assumes, together with Nuijten, that waiting is a “hope-generating machine” (Hoag, 2011, pp. 85–86). My reluctance here is not to deny that bureaucracy is this hopeful machine but because, while closely related, waiting and hope are not univocal phenomena but analogous. The fact that those who hope have expectations does not mean that this is a kind of hopeful waiting. The distinction here is very complex because it is subtle and must be made carefully beforehand if the two concepts are to be related.

On the other hand, it is hardly ever made clear what waiting is considered to be or what role it has within the structure of the bureaucratic process. It seems that waiting can result from other processes or an existing institution from which it is used to pursue alternative processes. In other words, waiting appears here as both a *product* and a *reproducer* of the dynamics necessary to the bureaucratic activity of reference. In my opinion, social and human waits—at least, those that can be analysed from the social sciences—are not only processes loaded with expectations (which is interesting but not defining) but also with prolepsis. This feature gives them a distinctive quality compared to other possible similar processes.

For other authors, waiting is not a lack of definition or ambiguity but a state of being, only in different ways at different times. Here, waiting is instead an oscillation between various stances, “a way of becoming emergent in one’s oscillations between doubt and hope, but also of suspending both” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 5). In this connection, Palmer, Pocock and Burton make a critique of what they call the “institutional approach to ethnography”—referring to a different kind of institutional perspective than the one I have been dealing with—according to

which “institutions” are understood as market, business and, above all, political organisations. According to the authors, this approach leaves no room for “open-ended and omnivorous research activities” (Palmer *et al.*, 2018, p. 3). Here, I start from Bissell’s criterion, which considers that, from these organisations, “chronological time” is sometimes over-understood as a container space for waiting. One time has to be filled with “profitable activities” (Bissell, 2007, p. 280) as efficiently as possible. This is also why axiological negativity is attributed to the waits I have been analysing.

Precisely concerning this, I must point out that this type of evaluative negativity has sometimes been linked to the ontological negativity attributed to it. Thus those who see in waiting a certain emptiness of activity, a time emptied of content, but not of meaning, operate in this way. Correspondingly, the very absence of content resignifies waiting as a harmful phenomenon. In this line, Richard Larson points out that waiting “can be a very negative and frustrating experience, even in the absence of social injustice” (Larson, 1987, p. 897) and quotes Morrow, (1984) who, writing in *Time magazine*, synthesises both negativities very well:

Waiting is a form of imprisonment (...). One is being punished not for an offense of one’s own but for the inefficiencies of those who impose the wait. Hence the peculiar rage that waits engender, the sense of injustice. Aside from boredom and physical discomfort, the subtler misery of waiting is the knowledge that one’s most precious resource, time, a fraction of one’s life, is being stolen away, irrecoverably lost. (...) Waiting can seem an interval of non-being, the black space between events and the outcomes of desires (Morrow, 1984)

To this, Larson adds, quoting William James, “that full time seems to pass faster than empty time” (Larson, 1987, p. 987). Hence waiting, as an “empty” time, is so deplorable for those who suffer from it.

I do not share this thesis because the ontological negativity of the waits is not entirely clarified. In this rejection, one of the conceptions of waiting time does not establish what is meant by waiting time when it is spoken of. On the other hand, while it is perfectly possible to deny the character of waiting time as a necessarily helpful or even useless time, I do not share

the denial of chronometric time itself. I believe this is a flagrant error made on numerous occasions in existing research.

Although I do not intend to hypothesise mathematical time to the detriment of the meanings of the actors involved in the processes, neither can I dispense with a chronometric vision of the waiting processes. Hence, I propose to establish dimensions of temporal analysis relating to waiting where a distinction is made between the *chronometric* dimension of the waiting process and the *chronological duration –durée–* in Bergson's sense, as I have analysed. In other words, both the temporal extension in the physical sense and the dimension of the meanings attributed to the different temporal segments given in the waits are considered. And all this in an ontologically positive way. That is to say, starting from considering that waiting exists and, although in constant relation to other phenomena, with sufficient materiality to be analysed and considered as a reality.

To sum this up, instead of the ontological negativity commonly assumed for waits, my opinion is that they are *positive* and *material* phenomena. In other words, they are perfectly discernible in reality as a whole. In this sense, according to my position, waits are phenomena related to the three types of materiality (M1, M2, and M3) proposed by the PhM. This means that waits are related to *physical/biological* phenomena (generic cousins M1), *psychological/mental* phenomena (generic second M2), and *ideal/conceptual* phenomena (generic third M3).

If, as noted above, a certain hypostasis of the temporal is frequently found in research, this is partly due to the conception of waiting as a psychological or perceptual process. In the terminology I have been using, it is possible to reformulate the above by saying that waiting is fundamentally associated with second-generic phenomena (M2). Phenomena that, according to the PhM, tend to abstract precisely the spatial and to hypostatize fundamentally the temporal^{LXXI}. My proposal here is that, without ignoring the second-generic connections (perceptual, experiential, psychological) that the waiting presents, its analysis cannot do

^{LXXI} In the same way that primo-generic phenomena (M1) cannot occur outside space and time, while tertiary-generic phenomena (M3) can, to some extent, occur outside space and time. For more information see: (García Sierra, 2021e). "Primer Género de Materialidad (M1)", available at: <http://www.filosofia.org/filomat/df073.htm>.

without its characteristic primo-generic relations (M1) since it is precisely here where the spatial dimension that I propose as essential, together with the temporal and the operational, is to be found. In the same way, we cannot overlook the tertiary-generic condition (M3) of waits present in both *temporal* and *operational* and *spatial* phenomena, and above all, in the interpretation of these^{LXXII}, in the form of formulas, concepts and definitions that go beyond the field of the physical/biological and the merely psychic/phenomenological and enter the realm of ideational phenomena.

3. Integrative proposal to articulate all of these characteristics

I would not like to end this analysis without outlining some of my theses on waiting. First, I do not share the commonly used conception of waiting, which I have outlined above. The thesis I defend is that, in order for waiting to acquire gnoseological status for science, it must be approached from a categorical perspective and not as an idea, as it is mainly done nowadays.

Based on these assumptions, I consider that the conceptions of waits must be reworked based on hypotheses different from those used so far, the generalities of which I have explored throughout this paper. In the different criticisms raised, I have revealed some aspects of my position, which I have developed in greater depth in other works^{LXXIII}.

My aim here has been to point out some of the multiple objective and material features of the field of the waiting that cannot be reduced to a temporal, perceptual-individualistic or negative perspective. Such variable matters can constitute these data as a chair, the shape of a waiting room, the regulations that regulate the operations in the organisation where the process takes place, the economic activities (formal and informal) around the waiting, etc. To this, I add that even the subjective conception of time itself (in the metaphysical sense that it is

^{LXXII} Here we find, for example, the very fertile field of theoretical materials produced by statistical/mathematical knowledge concerning waiting processes, their fluctuations and variations. Materials of this kind cannot be incorporated into the field of the study of waiting under the current state of existing theoretical notions.

^{LXXIII} I have devoted an extensive analysis to the importance of operations within the processes of social and human waiting and its possibilities as an analytical category in the paper related with this matter in this research.

often given) is only possible when there are instruments, technologies and theories that allow the objective measurement of the time that elapses while we wait.

Something similar happens with the measurement of this time within waiting times, where I find different theoretical proposals to address the problem. A good example is the frequent allusion to the category duration –*durée*– (Auyero, 2012; Rotter, 2016), which is assumed to be a subjective perception of waiting time. The analysis of this is only possible after the material mentioned above developments, in which the psychological experience of the subject is framed. Even so, it has to be said that, even when I recognise an effort to overcome existing contradictions in the analysis of waiting, this category still proves to be deficient for the task. The problem here is that, to the extent that waiting is conceived as a temporality when it comes to establishing ideas that allow to measure the process's time or duration or some of its parts, the exercise becomes hugely complicated. This is because the categories used to measure physical, psychic and social time are the same, making it impossible to distinguish how and why they differ. In this context, the Bergsonian idea that suggests that different emotional attitudes are directly related to time takes precedence. Hence, social time should not be equated with measurable units of time but rather as an “experiential dimension of social life, which can only partially be measured by clock time” (Janeja & Bandak, 2020, p. 18).

The disadvantage I find here is that it is never established to what “partial” extent the clock can measure one time and another. If, as is presupposed, almost everything is time in waiting, when measuring the durations that actually exist, it turns out that one phenomenon cannot be distinguished from another. The idea of *duration*, correspondingly, does not solve the problem. In his dialectic with Einstein, Bergson alludes fundamentally to a perceptual or psychological, representational duration (Bergson, 1965, 2017; Canales, 2015) which does not eliminate outright the possibility of a chronometric conception.

The importance of a proposal such as the one I am making lies in that time is assumed as chronometric rather than chronological and that the logic or meanings that revolve around waiting are analysed from an integrating tempo/spatial/operational perspective. This allows the multiple aspects present in waiting to be covered while simultaneously making it possible to dissociate some of these (time, for example) when the need to do so arises.

With regard to the subjectivisation of waiting, which proposes it as a *subjective experience*, most of the time, I should point out the following. The fact that certain empirical and theoretical studies allude to the existence of conceptions in different research subjects that experientially connect waiting and time does not demonstrate an intrinsic connection between the two, nor does it make such a relationship evident. Not even the multiple empirical materials accumulated in this respect support this thesis categorically. “Waiting has become a central preoccupation for these men, who have a profound sense of being lost in time and space”, says Craig Jeffrey (2010, p. 171) about the young students he researched in India.

This is also the treatment sometimes given to some of Bourdieu’s ideas used as theoretical presuppositions or ontological constructs to conceptualise waits in some research:

From the gap between what is anticipated and the logic of the game in relation to which this anticipation has been formed, between a “subjective” disposition (which does not mean interior, mental) and an objective tendency, relations with time are born, such as waiting or impatience –a situation in which, as Pascal says, “we anticipate the future as something that is too long in coming, to hasten its course” (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 278).

This quote sums up much of what is understood today about waiting connected to the temporal experience, specifically, about waiting connected to time and consciousness. For the author, widely commented on in the different investigations, there is not much more to waiting than temporal representation. Although he is cautious to specify that because it is subjective, this representation need not be “mental”, the problem is that he does not clarify how it is not. It seems that all subjects have the same kind of experience of time in a given situation, but it is unclear whether this situation has anything to do with it or by virtue of what mechanism they are or are not related. I note certain circumstances with which specific non-mental “subjective experiences” are associated.

This type of definition, verification by matching or analogy, is widespread when analysing “experiences of waiting” or waiting as an experience. Specific scenarios (migratory processes, social assistance, hospital, among many others) are proposed; it is hypothesised that it is a wait, the supposed waiters are questioned about their condition, and they narratively confirm that it

is indeed a wait that they are suffering from. This is then described from a subjective point of view (not a mental one, according to Bourdieu), and attempts are made to find “experiential” similarities in other similar circumstances. The problems begin when it comes to explaining these coincidences and, even if in all cases it were possible to find them, the moment that only one of them is different, there would be no way to explain the anomaly since there is really no theory in this respect.

In this regard, I consider that, in the case of research on waiting, this presupposition of common sense constitutes a real obstacle, both *emic* and *etic*, to explaining and understanding the processes of waiting. Here, it is prevalent to observe how the categorical frameworks of (*etic*) research are based on social actors’ reflexive (*emic*) experiences immersed in specific cultural spheres with pre-established rationalities. Together with Gustavo Bueno, I consider that the uses, representations, expressions and opinions of the actors “can only put us in front of emic ‘fragments’ of meanings, which will have to be reconstructed on an objective level, eventually incorporating components that have not even been used in a language of words and, perhaps, can never be used again” (1996, p. 29).

In this vein, researcher Jan-Paul Brekke, to cite one example, uses the demands of a young refugee seeking asylum in Sweden to demonstrate the seemingly natural and unobjectionable relationship between time and waiting. In his words, the young man asks himself:

For how long can a person wait for the residence permit (...)? We have no life apart from thinking about this residence permit. Whomever you ask, you get nowhere. They just tell you to wait. But for one more day? One more month? One more year? How much longer must I wait to know what my destiny is? (Boy 18, unaccompanied Afghan) (Brekke, 2004, p. 22).

The fact that this relationship is alluded to by the researcher demonstrates the double rationalisation I am trying to illustrate. If this young man rationalises (*emic*) his waiting from a temporal point of view, he participates in the historically established conception, illustrated here, which relates time and waiting experientially. This actor only demonstrates that he has perfectly assimilated this idea, which is how he expresses it in his discourse. There is nothing significant in this if the origin of such links is understood in the sense I have outlined in this

paper. What is striking is the use of this same categorisation on the analytical (*etic*) level without any further critical-analytical or explanatory comments from the researcher who reports the results obtained. At this point, I would assume that the analyst has established the relevant historical connections of this idea with the scientific concepts and categories used in his or her discipline. However, this does not happen, and this is not an isolated case in studies on waiting but the general rule in many approaches to the topic.

However, what is truly surprising about this behaviour is that, in most cases, this theorising occurs seemingly unconsciously. Even though critical and systematically approached conceptual analyses are increasingly rare in the sciences today, it is astonishing that with honourable exceptions (Auyero, 2012; Bourdieu, 1999; Gasparini, 1995; Hage, 2009; Schweizer, 2008), the vast majority of research lacks such a route. Critical studies, both terminological and historical-conceptual, of the waiting idea, when they are not non-existent, have been carried out within a concise period. This lack of treatment may partly be the origin of the ignorance of the historical modulations presented by the concept. Furthermore, from this ignorance, the uncritical assimilations of the relations between waiting, time and subjectivity that I have been observing may have derived.

This behaviour is notorious, among other reasons, because science commonly describes itself as a rational activity that stops its progress at the slightest suspicion of dogmatism. In my opinion, this fact has constituted a gnoseological fatality when it comes to developing clear and powerful theories in the analysis of waiting. A burden that has hindered its understanding as a phenomenon of reality until today, making truly comprehensive explanations of it impossible. The assimilation of waiting by time, that is, its location in the field of temporalities, has undoubtedly produced significant results. This is because it has constituted a defined gnoseological field, with materials, theories, categories and systems whose power has benefited those who have approached waiting in an introductory way. However, the development and sophistication that these same studies are reaching, as well as the demand that reality itself is imposing on us in terms of information on the increasingly numerous social waits that have appeared almost everywhere from 2019 to date, are posing challenges that the existing theoretical tools are no longer able to meet. In this context, the

subjective/experiential/temporal analysis of waits, far from resolving these demands, hinders their resolution.

I could cite the question of the singular *operations* that make up these processes, the complexity of which appears to be unfathomable from today's point of view. In my consideration, these constitute positive elements, that is to say, genuinely observable in their analysis, about which there is still much to be said. However, although they are not entirely ignored, operations take a back seat in existing research regarding reaching conclusions. If this happens, it is because, most of the time, what matters to the researcher is to equalise the results obtained within the categories that connect adjectivised time (*time of*) with the individual's subjective experience. In other words, the psychic understanding of it.

Intending to integrate some of the notions raised throughout this work into a coherent and genuinely comprehensive system of analysis, in a series of previous writings, I have proposed to carry out what Gustavo Bueno has called a *reverse turn of the fundamental* postulates on which waits in social research are based. From a new perspective, all of this rethinks the location of waits on the basis of a redefinition of their fundamental characteristics. I have already anticipated some of this theoretical turn of *the screw* when analysing the question of the temporalisation of waits. However, even if I cannot fully develop this point, I have something to say about the negative conception of waits, both on the ontological and axiological levels. Both aspects can be analysed together insofar as, as I have indicated, they are morphologically related.

In order to cover aspects of this particular and to offer an alternative to the perspectives currently used, I propose to conceive of social and human waits –those studied primarily by the human and social sciences– as *social institutions*. This rethinking makes it possible to approach waiting in a positive way, as a phenomenon in itself (institutional, in this case), thus subverting the idea that it constitutes an ontologically negative phenomenon, a temporary non-being (Schweizer, 2008), an undefined, indefinite, other-time (O’Kane, 2020) decaying, ambivalent (Hage, 2009), liminal (Gray, 2010), liquid (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2020), transcended, dead time (Jeffrey, 2010).

On the other hand, it enables to break with the idea that subjugates waiting to other phenomena as a detachment or generation of these phenomena. Specifically, I refer to the previously analysed associations that some authors (Coleman, 2020; Janeja & Bandak, 2020; Schweizer, 2008) establish between time, the human psyche and some states such as boredom, lateness, lethargy, dullness or, in their optimistic version, hope.

From the institutional perspective I propose, waiting can be analysed as an objective and perfectly discernible reality in the broad field of anthropic phenomena. In doing so, I do not deny the relationship between waiting and time, nor am I proposing that the psychic representation of the actors should be disregarded. On the contrary, the order analysed so far must be reversed to understand it better. In other words, I am instead conceiving the waiting in time; on the other hand, I propose that the time integrates the waiting processes, among other critical dimensions.

In the same way, they are not the individuals who construct the *experiences* of waiting based on their will, their activity or their decision, but that, to a large extent, they are already given before they can “act”. In this respect, the temporal (and experiential) dimension ceases to be from which waiting is derived or around which it gravitates; and begins to form part of it as one more of its constitutive dimensions.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the current approaches to waiting in the social and human sciences have limitations in their focus on the temporal and experiential aspects of waiting, and in their assumption of it as a univocal, axiologically negative phenomenon. While useful, these characteristics have left out important processes and phenomena integral to waiting and not provided a proper theoretical framework for understanding it as a social phenomenon.

To address these limitations, this paper proposes a redefinition of the five gnoseological starting points used to date, based on the coordinates offered by Philosophical Materialism. This new approach recognizes waiting as a dynamic and multi-dimensional phenomenon shaped by social, historical, and structural factors, as well as individual experiences, providing a more objective analysis of its effects while acknowledging the significance of subjective experiences

and emotions. By incorporating unknown or partially ignored edges of waiting into the field of study, I offer a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, ultimately advancing our understanding of waiting as a social phenomenon.

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