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## Useful Working Fluids for Feasible Super Efficient Trilateral Cycles

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#### Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author RFG designed the study, wrote the protocol, the first draft of the manuscript and managed literature searches. Author BFS managed the analyses of the study and literature searches. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

#### Article Information

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#### ABSTRACT

This work studies feasible trilateral thermal cycles which undergo controlled isothermal expansion path functions. The interest of the study focuses on choosing some working fluids that exhibit operating characteristics such that, first, fulfil the necessary conditions to yield high thermal efficiency in the supercritical region slightly above the critical point, and second, the critical point of each selected working fluid is located within the range of medium and low temperatures. The relevance of the studied working fluids resides in that the trilateral cycle performance can be increased by using the ability of the selected working fluids to exhibiting very high thermal efficiency when operating within the vicinity of its critical point. Thus, on the basis of thermo physical characteristics such the critical temperature, pressure and maximum allowable operating temperature, working fluids have been selected.

The analysis of the trilateral cycle undergoing the transformation of heat into mechanical work on the basis of an isothermal expansion for every selected working fluid has been carried out. The achieved results reveal that almost all candidate working fluids analysed provides high thermal efficiency when operating in the vicinity of the critical point, considering the two best fluids, water for medium top temperatures, and carbon dioxide for low temperatures.

Keywords: Carnot factor; low isobaric slope; isothermal expansion; thermal efficiency; trilateral cycle.

#### NOMENCLATURES

- $\eta$  thermal efficiency
- R perfect gases constant (kJ/kg-K)
- p pressure (bar)
- *p<sub>c</sub> critical pressure (bar)*
- q<sub>i</sub> total specific input heat (kJ/kg)
- q<sub>o</sub> specific rejected heat (kJ/kg)
- $q_v$  isochoric input heat (kJ/kg)
- $\dot{q}_{\tau}$  isothermal input heat (kJ/kg)
- $q_p$  isobaric rejected heat (kJ/kg)
- s specific entropy (kJ/kg-K)
- T temperature (K)
- $T_c$  critical temperature (K)
- $T_{max}$  max. allowable temp. (K)
- u internal energy (kJ/kg)
- $X_1$  Initial cylinder volume (m)
- X fraction of the piston stroke (m)
- W specific work (isothermal TC) (kJ/kg)

#### ACRONYMS

- CF Carnot factor
- TC Trilateral thermal cycle

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

During the last decade, growing interest has been observed in utilizing low and medium temperature heat sources, mainly due to its availability from oceans, solar, geothermal and industrial residual heat sources. In this way recently TCs (trilateral cycles) [1-3] are being implemented. Thus, for example, the TC performance has been researched for ammoniawater as working fluid in [2] and ORCs and TCs have been thermodynamically compared in [3]. The author presents a comparison of optimized systems with trilateral cycles with water as working fluid and optimized organic Rankine cycles, where the optimization criterion is the exergy efficiency for power production being the ratio of the net power output to the incoming exergy flow of the heat carrier. The author claims that the exergy efficiency for power production is larger by 14% - 29% for the trilateral cycle than for the ORC.

Whilst ORC and Kalina cycles are used already in existing power plants, the TC, although theoretically mature, it is still under technical development [1]. The components to implement a conventional TC are similar to those in the ORC system except that the working fluid at the entrance of the TC expander (turbine) is a saturated liquid. AS consequence, the state of the working fluid at the expander exit is a twophase mixture. As the thermodynamic mean temperature at which heat is received is comparatively lower for the TC, the thermal efficiency for this cycle is lower than that for the ORC, for the same temperature limits. The performance of a trilateral cycle has been recently analysed in [4]. Also investigates and compares it with those for the ORC (organic Rankine cycle) and the Kalina cycle, focused on thermodynamics and thermo economics aspects. The results for the TC indicate that an increase in the expander inlet temperature leads to an increase in net output power and a decrease in product cost for this power plant, whereas this is not the case for the ORC system.

Quasi-isothermal compression based reciprocating engines as well as Quasiisothermal expansion based power cycle engines have been recently developed. In this way, M.W. Coney et al. [5] presented the analysis of a novel concept for a high efficiency reciprocating internal combustion engine called as the isoengine and its cycle, where the maximum net electrical plant efficiency has been predicted to approach about 60% on diesel fuel and 58% on natural gas. They concluded that the key to the high electrical efficiency is the guasi-isothermal compression of the combustion air in cylinders, saving compression work and allowing the recovery of waste heat back into the cycle, mainly from the exhaust gas by means of a recuperator. On the other hand, Opubo N et al. [5], investigated some vapour power cycles for quasi-isothermal expansion instead of adiabatic expansion, taking advantage of the fact that quasi-isothermal expansion has the advantage of bringing the cycle efficiency closer to the ideal Carnot efficiency, with the drawback of requiring heat to be transferred to the working fluid as it expands. The authors claimed that the comparison the specific work output to more standard Stirling engines using gas is higher.

The research effort in this work is focused on trilateral thermal cycles operating under quasiisothermal expansion instead of adiabatic expansion. Throughout this contribution it will be shown that for low relative operating temperatures the thermal efficiency exceeds the Carnot factor, which makes this thermal cycle very suitable for exploiting the heat to power conversion cycles with low grade residual heat.

However, in the present work the closed isothermal path functions carried out in the TCs, are appropriated to operate at relative low temperatures, being based on a completely different thermal cycle concept in comparison with the conventional Carnot based thermal cycles, not only structurally but also in terms of CF (Carnot factor) constraints, which can be surpassed in some particular operating conditions [6-7].

Thus, the objective of the study is to efficiently convert low temperature heat mainly from ocean thermal, solar thermal and low grade heat from industrial residual power sources by means of the proposed TCs into electric energy. As it has been indicated, the proposed conversion method is based on a different thermodynamic cycle: a non condensing mode closed processes based TC without regeneration. With this contribution, most of the low grade rejected heat may be converted into mechanical work with acceptable thermal efficiency by applying a TC whose thermal efficiency is not restricted by the CF such as mentioned in [7-9].

#### 2. ANALYSIS OF THE TC UNDERGOING AN ISOTHERMAL EXPANSION

In order to analyse the Isothermal ideal cases, let's consider the displacement of the piston under different path functions as shown in Fig. 1, for the following processes denoted as-Isothermal process (constant temperature) Fig. 1, depicts the mechanical work performed under isothermal thermodynamic transformations when evolving from the state point i to the state point i+1, denoted as the state point 1 and state point 2 respectively.



Fig. 1. Mechanical work performed undergoing an isothermal path function

#### 2.1 The Background of the Work Performed under an Isothermal Path Function

According to the scheme depicted in Fig. 1, follows that the mechanical work performed by a piston along its full stroke can be described by means of a general expression as

$$W_{1-2} = \int_{V_1}^{V_2} p \cdot dV$$
 (1)

Furthermore, considering a closed process undergoing an isothermal transformation, it follows that

$$p \cdot V = p_1 \cdot V_1 = p_2 \cdot V_2 \rightarrow \frac{V_1}{V_2} = \frac{p_2}{p_1} \rightarrow p = \frac{p_1 \cdot V_1}{V} = \frac{R \cdot T_1}{V}$$
 (2)

therefore, the mechanical work delivered under an isothermal transformation is

$$W_{1-2} = p_1 \cdot V_1 \int_{V_1}^{V_2} \frac{dV}{V} = p_1 \cdot V_1 \cdot Ln \frac{V_2}{V_1} = p_1 \cdot V_1 \cdot \ln \frac{p_1}{p_2} = R \cdot T_1 \cdot Ln \frac{p_1}{p_2}$$
(3)

The mechanical work described by Eq. (3) is realisable under the condition that the load (motion resistance) obeys the profile defined by Eq. (2).

#### 2.2 The Proposed TC Undergoing Isochoric Heat Absorption, Isotherm Expansion and Isobaric Heat Rejection Based Path Functions

The proposed TC obeys the processes included between the state points depicted in Figs. 2(a) and 2(b). In this way, Fig. 2(a) shows the T-s diagram, Fig. 2(b) shows the p-V diagram and Fig. 2 (c)

shows the path functions carried out undergoing a closed process based transformation for converting heat into mechanical work.



Fig. 2. The T-s and p-V diagrams of the TC undergoing a TC isothermal expansion for converting heat into mechanical work

According to the information provided by the Table 1 and Fig. 2, the transformations associated to each path function of the TC are summarised as follows:

#### Leg (1)-(2):

Correspond to a closed isochoric heating process. The amount of heat added from an external heat source at constant volume  $q_v$  is

$$W_{12} = 0, \quad q_{12} = u_2 - u_1 = Cv \cdot (T_2 - T_1) = q_v$$
 (4)  
Leg (2)-(3): °

Correspond, to a closed isothermal heating process. Consequently the internal energy remains constant so that the total heat added  $q_T$  is converted into mechanical works since ideally there are not internal energy changes, and consequently,

$$u_{23} = 0, \text{ and } q_{T} = W_{23}$$
Since  $\frac{p_{2}}{p_{1}} = \frac{V_{3}}{V_{1}} = \frac{X_{1} + X_{3}}{X_{1}} = 1 + \frac{X_{3}}{X_{1}}$ 
(5)

follows that

$$q_{23} = W_{23} = p_2 \cdot v_2 \cdot Ln(\frac{p_2}{p_1}) = R \cdot T_2 \cdot Ln(\frac{p_2}{p_1})$$
(6)

which can be also expressed as function of the piston location (X) along the cylinder stroke according to the expression (7)

$$q_{23} = W_{23} = p_2 \cdot v_2 \cdot Ln(\frac{V_3}{V_1}) = R \cdot T_2 \cdot Ln\left[1 + \frac{X_3}{X_1}\right]$$
(7)

Leg (3)-(1):

Correspond to a closed isobaric process in which the working fluid is cooled. There is not mechanical work so that the rejected heat is coming from the internal energy according to the function

$$W_{31} = 0, \quad q_{31} = u_3 - u_1 = Cv \cdot (T_2 - T_1) = Cv \cdot (T_3 - T_1) = q_p = q_o$$
(8)

According to the expressions (7) - (9), the thermal efficiency of the TC undergoing a closed isothermal expansion is given as

$$\eta = 1 - \frac{q_o}{q_i} = 1 - \frac{q_{31}}{q_{12} + q_{23}} = 1 - \frac{q_{31}}{q_{13}} = \frac{W_{23}}{q_{13}}$$
(9)

Therefore the thermal efficiency of an isothermal expansion based TC can be expressed analytically, as

$$\eta = \frac{W_{23}}{q_{13}} = \frac{W_{23}}{(u_2 - u_1) + W_{23}} = \frac{R \cdot T_2 \cdot Ln \left[1 + \frac{X_3}{X_1}\right]}{(u_2 - u_1) + R \cdot T_2 \cdot Ln \left[1 + \frac{X_3}{X_1}\right]}$$
(10)

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Since ideally the heat added to the transformation (2)-(3) is converted into mechanical work, the thermal efficiency defined in (10) exhibits a strong dependence on the difference of temperatures ( $T_{2}$ - $T_{1}$ ). Apparently, the thermal efficiency tends to the unity when such temperature difference tends to zero. However, real gases behaviour differs from this model.

Furthermore, even that

$$q_{v} = q_{12} = u_{2} - u_{1} = Cv \cdot (T_{2} - T_{1}),$$
  
$$q_{o} = q_{p} = q_{31} = u_{3} - u_{1} = Cv \cdot (T_{3} - T_{1})$$

and

$$T_{3} = T_{2}$$

,

follows that

$$q_{v} = q_{o} \tag{11}$$

and

$$q_i = q_v + q_T = q_v + W$$

Consequently, since

$$\eta = \frac{q_i - q_o}{q_i} = \frac{q_v + W - q_o}{q_i} = \frac{q_v + W - q_v}{q_i} = \frac{W}{q_v + W}$$

follows that

$$\lim_{q_{v} \to 0} (\eta) = \lim_{q_{v} \to 0} \frac{W}{q_{v} + W} = 1$$
(12)

Eq. (12), as well as Eq. (10) suggests us that considering a reversible TC, when  $T_2$  approaches  $T_1$ , or  $q_v$  approaches zero, the thermal efficiency tends to the unity. However,

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since  $q_v > 0$ , then,  $\eta < 1$ , as stated by the second law.

#### 3. A CASE STUDY

This section deals with the exploration and analysis of a case study in which a TC composed by closed systems based transformations is applied on the conversion of heat to mechanical work undergoing an isothermal expansion based path function to change from state point 2 to state point 3.

#### 3.1 The Structure of the TC Undergoing Isothermal Expansion to Convert Heat into Mechanical Work

The Fig. 3 represents a closed processes based TC implemented by means of a single effect cylinder in which Fig. 3(a) shows the single effect cylinder, Fig. 3(b), shows the sequence of processes carried out to complete the cycle, and Fig. 3(c) shows the corresponding p-V and T-s diagrams assuming isothermal expansion.

The TC shown In Fig. 3 consists of a single effect cylinder-actuator which could operate optionally with several working fluids including but not limited to carbon dioxide or water, as well as other gases that remain at gaseous state at ambient temperature. The cylinder is equipped with heating and cooling facilities. The piston road could drive a reciprocating hydraulic pump for instance or any other load type. Although not analysed in this work and consequently not represented in Fig 3, the possibility of regenerating some residual heat exits due to the fact that the residual heat corresponding to the working fluid temperature at the end of the expansion could be reused. Consequently, the possibility of increasing the thermal efficiency by regeneration is a real fact. The thermal cycle depicted in Fig 3 can be easily understood by observing the associated table as well as the p-V and T-s diagrams shown in Fig. 3 (c).

In the associated table of Fig. 3 (b) the ports X and Y means the heater and cooler heat flows. Thus X = 1 means that heat is entering to the cylinder, while Y = 1 means that heat is being rejected from the cylinder to the environment. X=Y=0 indicates no heat transfer activity.

Considering the active chamber of the cylinder depicted in Fig. 3 (a), and the T-s diagram shown also in the Fig. 3 (c), the TC starts in the state point 1, with a working fluid under a pressure,

temperature, specific volume and entropy corresponding to the state point 1. After some heat has been added (q<sub>12</sub>) at constant volume (isochoric process), the pressure, temperature and entropy corresponds to the state point 2. The transformation 2-3 undergoes constant temperature, so that the heat added (q<sub>22</sub>) is converted theoretically into mechanical work at constant temperature (isothermal process), since the internal energy will remain constant along the transformation 2-3. The last transformation corresponds to the heat rejection q<sub>31</sub> towards the heat sink which might be the environment.

As pressure decreases as consequence of the isothermal expansion, the mechanical load reacting against the piston rod is balanced to satisfy the condition of constant internal energy along the piston stroke until the bottom dead centre.

After expansion has finished in the state point (3), the piston initiates the way back towards the point (1) (the top dead centre) at constant pressure, while is being cooled, so that the cycle is completed.

#### 3.2 The Selected Working Fluids

The working fluids shown in Table 1 under study were selected after a search process from a vast amount of available fluids according to reference [10] such as to satisfy certain conditions in the supercritical region above the critical point. Furthermore, the required conditions are defined for a region located at the vicinity of the critical point as:

The isobaric slope shown in Fig. 4 defined according to the T-s diagram,

$$\frac{dT}{ds} \to 0, \tag{13},$$

the Isobaric slope shown in Fig. 5 defined according to the T-h diagram,

$$\frac{dT}{dh} \to 0, \tag{14}$$

and the isothermal slope shown in the Fig. 6 defined according to the p-h diagram

$$-\frac{dp}{dh} \to 0 \tag{15}$$

Such characteristic, shown in Figs. 4, 5 and 6 for the case of water is used to define the region of maximum thermal efficiency. The consequence of this characteristic is summarised as follows: That is, the selected working fluids exhibit the highest thermal efficiency when operating within a region above its critical point.

| Table 1. The selected working fluids, showing |
|---|
| the critical conditions and the maximum       |
| allowable operating temperature from [10]     |

| WF              | T <sub>c</sub> (K) | p <sub>c</sub> (bar) | Tmax (K) |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Ethylene        | 282.35             | 50.42                | 450      |
| Xenon           | 289.73             | 58.42                | 750      |
| CO <sub>2</sub> | 304.01             | 73.77                | 2000     |
| Ethane          | 305.32             | 48.72                | 675      |
| R41             | 317.28             | 58.97                | 425      |
| R218            | 345.02             | 26.40                | 440      |
| R143a           | 345.86             | 37.61                | 650      |
| R32             | 351.26             | 57.82                | 435      |
| Propylene       | 364.21             | 45.55                | 575      |
| Propane         | 369.89             | 42.51                | 625      |
| R134a           | 374.21             | 40.59                | 455      |
| RC318           | 388.38             | 27.77                | 623      |
| Ammonia         | 405.40             | 113.33               | 700      |
| Methanol        | 512.60             | 81.03                | 620      |
| Ethanol         | 513.90             | 61.48                | 650      |
| Water           | 647.10             | 220.64               | 2000     |

# Table 2. Potential working fluids, showing the<br/>critical conditions and the maximum<br/>allowable operating temperature from [10]

| WF           | T <sub>c</sub> (K) | p <sub>c</sub> (bar) | Tmax (K) |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Toluene      | 591,75             | 41,26                | 700      |
| Hexane       | 507,82             | 30,34                | 600      |
| Heptane      | 540,13             | 27,36                | 600      |
| Decane       | 617,70             | 21,03                | 675      |
| Cyclo hexane | 553,64             | 40,75                | 700      |
| Acetone      | 508,10             | 47,00                | 550      |

#### 3.3 Modelling the TC

The TC modelling task has been carried out with data extracted from [10] (REFPROP) and the tool Engineering Equation Solver (EES). The REFPROP consists of an up-to date data base used for property calculations and is available in commercial software packages whose library makes use of Helmholtz fundamental equation correlations to determine fluid properties from the highest-accuracy published data available in literature. Furthermore, the database can be linked with software based tools such Visual Basic, Fortran, C, and even spread sheets to help the automation of data processing. In the proposed case study the data necessary to carry out the performance analysis is presented in Table A1 of the appendix A.

For the analysis of the cycle with the considered working fluids exhibiting the characteristics shown in Table 1, the necessary tests has been carried out to study the cycles performance and behaviour.

# 4. MAIN RESULTS OF THE ANALYSED CASE STUDY

The results of the study achieved using the EES yield the values of Table 3 using the data shown in Table A1 of the appendix A. The data used in the case study for the study of the potential working fluids is taken from reference [10]. Cycle computation is referred to the T-s diagram of Fig. 7 for a non-regenerative TC. The values of the state variables corresponding to each state point for all considered working fluids are shown in the Table A1 of the appendix A, where for every working fluid a set of top and bottom temperatures has been considered, as shown in Table 3. Table 3 shows for every selected working fluid

Critical temperature  $T_c$  (K), Bottoming TC temperature  $T_1$  (K), Topping TC temperature  $T_2$  (K), Critical TC pressure  $p_c$  (bar), Bottoming TC pressure  $p_1$  (bar), Topping TC pressure  $p_2$  (bar), Thermal efficiency  $\eta$  (%) Carnot factor CF (%), and Specific work W (kJ/kg)

In Table 3, the WFs are represented by its critical temperature in ascendant order. The bottoming temperature  $T_1(K)$  is chosen bellow ten degrees from the critical temperature. The topping temperature is chosen between 20-30 degrees above the bottoming temperature. The bottoming pressure is chosen between 2-4 bar above the critical pressure, and the topping pressure p2 (bar), is associated with the topping temperature. The topping TC temperature has been chosen to fulfil the requirement of high thermal efficiency in the region above the critical point. Since the ratio of the bottoming to the topping temperatures is low, the corresponding CF is also low. However since the thermal efficiency of the TC is independent of the CF, the thermal efficiency is significantly high.

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Fig. 3. A closed processes based TC implemented with a single effect cylinder. (a), single effect cylinder. (b), processes sequence. (c), the p-V and T-s diagrams



Fig. 4. T-s diagram for H<sub>2</sub>O as working fluid, operating in the vicinity of the critical conditions, for which the slope of the isobars (dT/ds) approaches zero



Fig. 5. T-h diagram for H<sub>2</sub>O as working fluid, operating in the vicinity of the critical conditions, for which the slope of the isobars (dT/dh) approaches zero

In order to facilitate the analysis of the results to extract useful conclusions, Table 4, shows the studied working fluids ordered in descendent order by thermal efficiency, specific work, topping temperature and topping pressure. This table is useful to highlight the working fluid that satisfies the desired conditions. Thus, focusing on the thermal efficiency follows that the best WF is water, whose thermal efficiency approaches 87%, and if focusing on the specific work, follows that the specific work approaches 2180 kJ/kg. The available topping temperatures associated with the residual heat source is also important to select the appropriated WF. Thus, water requires a power source capable to heat the working fluid till 675 K, which undergoes a topping pressure of 273 bar. Consequently, the same considerations must be taken into account for the rest of the studied fluids.

| Table 3. The performance of a TC o | operating with the stud   | ied working fluids | presented in |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| ascendant of                       | order by its critical tem | perature           |              |

| WF              | T <sub>c</sub> (K) | T₁(K) | T <sub>2</sub> (K) | p <sub>c</sub> (bar) | p₁ bar) | p₂ (bar) | η(%) | CF(%) | W(kJ/kg)c |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------------|---------|----------|------|-------|-----------|
| Ethylene        | 282.35             | 286   | 310                | 50.42                | 53      | 72       | 56   | 7.74  | 350       |
| Xenon           | 289.73             | 300   | 325                | 58.42                | 60      | 73       | 75   | 7.69  | 25        |
| CO <sub>2</sub> | 304.01             | 300   | 325                | 73.77                | 75      | 174      | 76   | 7.69  | 474       |
| Ethane          | 305.32             | 310   | 340                | 48.72                | 52      | 74       | 77   | 8.82  | 356       |
| R41             | 317.28             | 321   | 345                | 58.97                | 62      | 89       | 84   | 6.96  | 482       |
| R218            | 345.02             | 350   | 375                | 26.4                 | 30      | 49       | 41   | 6.67  | 146       |
| R143a           | 345.86             | 350   | 375                | 37.61                | 41      | 62       | 82   | 6.67  | 327       |
| R32             | 351.26             | 355   | 380                | 57.82                | 62      | 90       | 85   | 6.58  | 495       |
| Propylene       | 364.21             | 368   | 415                | 45.55                | 49      | 95       | 77   | 11.33 | 630       |
| Propane         | 369.89             | 375   | 400                | 42.51                | 45      | 83       | 75   | 6.25  | 300       |
| R134a           | 374.21             | 378   | 405                | 40.59                | 44      | 69       | 82   | 6.67  | 326       |
| R318            | 388.38             | 393   | 420                | 27.77                | 32      | 55       | 74   | 6.43  | 154       |
| Ammonia         | 405.4              | 410   | 440                | 113.33               | 115     | 160      | 76   | 8.89  | 740       |
| Methanol        | 512.6              | 520   | 540                | 81.035               | 85      | 101      | 79   | 3.70  | 602       |
| Ethanol         | 513.9              | 520   | 540                | 61.48                | 64      | 75       | 77   | 3.70  | 359       |
| Water           | 647.1              | 650   | 675                | 220.64               | 225     | 273      | 87   | 3.70  | 2180      |



Fig. 6. p-h diagram for H₂O as working fluid, operating in the vicinity of the critical conditions, for which the slope of the isothermals (-dp/dh) approaches zero

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Fig. 7. The layout of the TC for water as working fluid, operating in a region above the critical point

| Table 4. The studied working fluids ordered in descendent order by thermal efficiency | , specific |
|---|------------|
| work, top temperature and top pressure  |            |

| WF              | η(%) | WF              | W (kJ/kg) | WF              | T <sub>2</sub> (K) | WF              | p₂ (bar) |
|-----------------|------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Water           | 87   | Water           | 2180      | Water           | 675                | Water           | 273      |
| R32             | 85   | Ammonia         | 740       | Methanol        | 540                | CO <sub>2</sub> | 174      |
| R41             | 84   | Propylene       | 630       | Ethanol         | 540                | Ammonia         | 160      |
| R143a           | 82   | Methanol        | 602       | Ammonia         | 440                | Methanol        | 101      |
| R134a           | 82   | R32             | 495       | R318            | 420                | Propylene       | 95       |
| Methanol        | 79   | R41             | 482       | Propylene       | 415                | R32             | 90       |
| Ethane          | 77   | CO <sub>2</sub> | 474       | R134a           | 405                | R41             | 89       |
| Propylene       | 77   | Ethanol         | 359       | Propane         | 400                | Propane         | 83       |
| Ethanol         | 77   | Ethane          | 356       | R32             | 380                | Ethanol         | 75       |
| CO <sub>2</sub> | 76   | Ethylene        | 350       | R218            | 375                | Ethane          | 74       |
| Ammonia         | 76   | R143a           | 327       | R143a           | 375                | Xenon           | 73       |
| Xenon           | 75   | R134a           | 326       | R41             | 345                | Ethylene        | 72       |
| Propane         | 75   | Propane         | 300       | Ethane          | 340                | R134a           | 69       |
| R318            | 74   | R318            | 154       | Xenon           | 325                | R143a           | 62       |
| Ethylene        | 56   | R218            | 146       | CO <sub>2</sub> | 325                | R318            | 55       |
| R218            | 41   | Xenon           | 25        | Ethylene        | 310                | R218            | 49       |

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

Trilateral thermal cycles operating with some working fluids characterised by the process of conversion heat into mechanical work undergoing controlled isothermal expansion path functions in a region above the critical point, have been studied. By means of the study, It has been shown that trilateral cycles performance can be improved by using the ability of the selected working fluids to yield high thermal efficiency when operating within a supercritical region above the critical point.

The objective of the study consisted of highlighting the operating characteristics of potential working fluids operating on a trilateral thermal cycle undergoing isothermal expansion path functions.

As result of the study carried out, some data concerning useful criteria to select the appropriate working fluid as function of the feasible operating conditions, is highlighted. Therefore, taking as performance criteria the thermal efficiency, follows that the top ten working fluids are: Water, R32, R41, R143a, R134a, Methanol, Ethane, Propylene, Ethanol and  $CO_2$ , while the thermal efficiency is within the range of 76% for  $CO_2$  to 87% for water.

However, taking as performance criteria the specific work, follows that the top ten working fluids are: Water, Ammonia, Propylene, Methanol, R32, R41,  $CO_2$ , Ethanol, Ethane and Ethylene, while the specific work is within the range of 350 kJ/kg for Ethylene to 2180 kJ/kg for water.

According to the obtained results it follows that water meets most of the criteria of selection, since it provides high efficiency and specific work, despite need a heat source whose upper temperature is above 675 K.

From the analysis of the case study it can be highlighted also the independence of the thermal efficiency with respect to the CF, as well as the high thermal efficiency at low top temperatures with respect to CF.

#### **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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### APPENDIX A

## The Data for the Case study

| Point    | T(K)            | U(kJ/kg)         | S(kJ/kg-K) | P(bar)         | V(m³/kg)   | Cv(kJ/kg-K) | Cp(kJ/kg-K) |  |  |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| Ethylene |                 |                  |            |                |            |             |             |  |  |
| 1        | 286             | 242.50           | 1.8661     | 53.00          | 0.0065016  | 1.7941      | 17.5020     |  |  |
| 2        | 310             | 463.80           | 1.9982     | 71.55          | 0.0065016  | 1.5680      | 5.3269      |  |  |
| 3        | 310             | 514.35           | 2.2634     | 53.00          | 0.0116540  | 1.4546      | 2.8955      |  |  |
|          |                 |                  |            | Xenon          |            |             |             |  |  |
| 1        | 286             | 79.46            | 0.34864    | 60.00          | 0.0017389  | 0.15116     | 0.80284     |  |  |
| 2        | 310             | 82.93            | 0.35977    | 73.32          | 0.0017389  | 0.13007     | 0.51235     |  |  |
| 3        | 310             | 87.82            | 0.38872    | 60.00          | 0.0024211  | 0.12078     | 0.36145     |  |  |
|          |                 |                  | Ca         | rbon diox      | ide        |             |             |  |  |
| 1        | 300             | 263.16           | 1.2389     | 75.0           | 0.0013626  | 1.01150     | 4.5507      |  |  |
| 2        | 325             | 287.15           | 1.3157     | 173.6          | 0.0013626  | 0.92975     | 2.6663      |  |  |
| 3        | 325             | 409.93           | 1.8115     | 75.0           | 0.0052833  | 0.87759     | 2.0648      |  |  |
|          |                 |                  |            | Ethane         |            |             |             |  |  |
| 1        | 310             | 465.17           | 1.8807     | 52             | 0.0065865  | 2.1002      | 17.5510     |  |  |
| 2        | 340             | 523.82           | 2.0613     | 73.64          | 0.0065865  | 1.9091      | 5.1564      |  |  |
| 3        | 340             | 579.95           | 2.3332     | 52             | 0.0124730  | 1.8038      | 3.0446      |  |  |
|          |                 |                  |            | R41            |            |             |             |  |  |
| 1        | 321             | 422.37           | 1,7943     | 62             | 0.0045553  | 1.5872      | 17.0970     |  |  |
| 2        | 345             | 457.76           | 1.9007     | 88.97          | 0.0045553  | 1.3931      | 5.2600      |  |  |
| 3        | 345             | 513 10           | 2 1452     | 62             | 0.0085816  | 1 2491      | 2 7047      |  |  |
|          | 010             | 010110           | 2.1102     | R218           | 0.0000010  |             | 2.1011      |  |  |
| 1        | 350             | 299.61           | 1 3229     | 30.00          | 0.0013716  | 0 94369     | 4 7850      |  |  |
| 2        | 375             | 323.00           | 1.3874     | 48 64          | 0.0013716  | 0.93219     | 1 7401      |  |  |
| 3        | 375             | 507.00           | 1 4682     | 30.00          | 0.0035110  | 0.91030     | 1 2430      |  |  |
|          | 010             | 001100           | 111002     | R143a          | 0.0000110  | 0.01000     |             |  |  |
| 1        | 350             | 355 17           | 1 5047     | 41 000         | 0.0023015  | 1 2904      | 18 1590     |  |  |
| 2        | 375             | 385.41           | 1 5882     | 61 897         | 0.0023015  | 1 1631      | 3 2825      |  |  |
| 3        | 375             | 427 15           | 1 7446     | 41 000         | 0.0056976  | 1.0969      | 1 7566      |  |  |
|          | 010             | 127.10           | 1.7 110    | R32            | 0.0000010  | 1.0000      | 1.7000      |  |  |
| 1        | 355             | 416 66           | 1 6996     | 62.00          | 0.0026641  | 1 3698      | 30 4840     |  |  |
| 2        | 380             | 447 23           | 1 7829     | 89.63          | 0.0026641  | 1 1357      | 4 6686      |  |  |
| 2        | 380             | 507.00           | 2 0073     | 62.00          | 0.0020041  | 1.0230      | 2 1137      |  |  |
|          | 000             | 007.00           | 2.0010     | Pronvlene      | 3          | 1.0200      | 2.1107      |  |  |
| 1        | 368             | 509 31           | 1 9755     | 49.00          | 0 0039899  | 2 2669      | 36.071      |  |  |
| 2        | 415             | 602.66           | 2 2144     | 95 31          | 0.00000000 | 1 9668      | 4 2474      |  |  |
| 2        | 415             | 602.00           | 2.2144     | 49.00          | 0.00000000 | 1.8000      | 2 6590      |  |  |
| 5        | 415             | 033.75           | 2.0704     | Pronano        | 0.0120070  | 1.0000      | 2.0000      |  |  |
| 1        | 375             | 584 80           | 2 2043     | 45.00          | 0.0063476  | 2 2841      | 12 7760     |  |  |
| 2        | 400             | 640.00           | 2.2045     | 40.00<br>58 15 | 0.0003470  | 2.2041      | 5 1000      |  |  |
| 2        | 400             | 681 07           | 2.5400     | 45.00          | 0.0000470  | 2.1055      | 3 2220      |  |  |
|          | 400             | 001.97           | 2.3031     | P13/a          | 0.0100300  | 2.0950      | 5.2220      |  |  |
| 1        | 378             | 382.88           | 1 5630     | 14 0           | 0.0018325  | 1 1070      | 15 0300     |  |  |
| 2        | 405             | 113 58           | 1.5053     | 69.2           | 0.0010325  | 1.1970      | 2 8831      |  |  |
| 2        | 405             | 456 30           | 1 7881     | 11 D           | 0.0010323  | 1.1000      | 1 6087      |  |  |
| 5        | <del>1</del> 00 | 400.00           | 1.7001     | RC319          | 0.0040221  | 1.0402      | 1.0007      |  |  |
| 1        | 303             | 350 14           | 1 1553     | 32.0           | 0.0012416  | 0.08/13     | 3 2720      |  |  |
| י<br>2   | 120<br>120      | 376 65           | 1.4000     | 52.0<br>55.2   | 0.0012410  | 0.90413     | 1 6558      |  |  |
| 2        | 420             | 101 00<br>101 07 | 1.0104     | 32 A           | 0.0012410  | 0.90210     | 1 3070      |  |  |
| 0        | 740             | TUT.21           | 1.00-0     | 52.0           | 0.0004220  | 0.00-10     | 1.0073      |  |  |

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| Ammonia     |                   |                            |                            |                         |                                     |                            |                             |  |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1           | 410               | 1384.8                     | 4.5376                     | 115.00                  | 0.0075433                           | 2.3343                     | 19.2710                     |  |
| 2           | 450               | 1504.7                     | 4.8171                     | 159.56                  | 0.0075433                           | 2.7662                     | 7.7850                      |  |
| 3           | 450               | 1622.3                     | 5.2520                     | 115.00                  | 0.0133260                           | 2.4789                     | 4.7618                      |  |
|             |                   |                            |                            | Methanol                |                                     |                            |                             |  |
| 1           | 520               | 997.5                      | 2.2890                     | 85.00                   | 0.0068431                           | 3.8581                     | 16.8000                     |  |
| 2           | 540               | 1071.7                     | 2.4292                     | 101.33                  | 0.0068431                           | 3.5848                     | 9.9258                      |  |
| 3           | 540               | 1150.7                     | 2.6308                     | 85.00                   | 0.010068                            | 3.6308                     | 6.1979                      |  |
|             |                   |                            |                            | Ethanol                 |                                     |                            |                             |  |
| 1           | 520               | 1310.5                     | 3.7282                     | 64.00                   | 0.0070698                           | 2.8564                     | 11.4110                     |  |
| 2           | 540               | 1367.4                     | 3.8356                     | 75.2                    | 0.0070698                           | 2.8338                     | 6.9549                      |  |
| 3           | 540               | 1416.8                     | 3.9655                     | 64.00                   | 0.010047                            | 2.6683                     | 4.5573                      |  |
| Water       |                   |                            |                            |                         |                                     |                            |                             |  |
| 1           | 650               | 2221.6                     | 4.7753                     | 225.0                   | 0.0045813                           | 4.2412                     | 65.2720                     |  |
| 2           | 675               | 2314.3                     | 4.9154                     | 273.3                   | 0.0045813                           | 3.3843                     | 19.992                      |  |
| 3           | 675               | 2548.4                     | 5.3885                     | 225.0                   | 0.0080085                           | 2.9018                     | 8.1990                      |  |
| 1<br>2<br>3 | 650<br>675<br>675 | 2221.6<br>2314.3<br>2548.4 | 4.7753<br>4.9154<br>5.3885 | 225.0<br>273.3<br>225.0 | 0.0045813<br>0.0045813<br>0.0080085 | 4.2412<br>3.3843<br>2.9018 | 65.2720<br>19.992<br>8.1990 |  |

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