

Time for Transformation and Creativity

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ABSTRACT

The author researches, explores, and proposes a new way of looking at, and living with, the adversities of human life in its environment and within earthly systems. From the beginning of life, and far before human life appeared, nature has demonstrated how, throughout evolution, life forms maintained themselves by relating, adapting, including the necessary, and excluding the unnecessary. We humans can learn from life's millions of years of experience, and from how ecology works to preserve life wherever it exists. The author shows that what are considered *impurities* may well be the very systems we depend on to survive, and makes connections between the human psyche, relationships with the environment, and relationships with others.

Keywords: environment, nature, ecological communication, body psychotherapy, nature and communication, virus, fungus, bacteria, impurities and purities between us, psychoanalysis, Reich

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Usually, when talking or thinking about the origin of human beings, there is a fixation on thinking about monkeys and, eventually, underwater animals.

But the origin of human beings is elsewhere, in a place that is both human and non-human. The encounter that produced life on Earth took place between elements that existed at least four billion years ago, amidst the debris of a supernova explosion during the period called the Hadean Eon¹, which is apparently when everything began on Earth.

So, I begin this article by championing an issue that is present in all of us, in our flesh and bones, and in our subjectivity. It is what I call *the impurities that need to be defended*.

What are these impurities?

The dichotomy between nature and society has been overturned by recent scientific discoveries that prove that bacteria, viruses, and fungi live in our body, and more accurately, *have become our body*. It is a miracle that, among billions of people, we are each unique.

Approximately 43% of the human body is made up of human cells; the other 57% are bacteria, viruses, and fungi, or non-human organisms. Ten percent of the body's dry weight consists of bacteria, and even though some are not congenital, we cannot survive without them.

The natural defense system works like this – it will fight against selfish cells, those that are not supportive and do not want to collaborate.

1. The Hadean Eon is defined by geologists as an extremely long age at the beginning of Earth's formation 4.6 billion years ago until the appearance of the first rocks four billion years ago. More information at: Lynn Margulis and Dorian Sagan, *Microcosmos: Four Billion Years of Microbial Evolution* (Berkeley, University of California, 1997).

Historically, we have believed that the microorganisms present in our bodies were of no importance, in spite of the fact that the microbes expelled in our feces can be identified, and that despite being dead, their DNA remains intact. Today, scientific evidence shows that disturbances to the microorganisms in our body are responsible for gastrointestinal disorders, allergies, autoimmune disease, and even obesity. You see, microorganisms not only affect our physical health, but our mental health as well, ranging from anxiety – the illness of our times – and depression to obsessive-compulsive disorders and autism.² This demonstrates that the microbes in our bodies must be carefully considered and cared for by body psychotherapists.

This coexistence between human and non-human is called “evolution.”

Millions of years ago, bacteria appeared and spread to create compound organisms. When nature shifted from Earth without oxygen to Earth with oxygen, the conditions for living beings dramatically changed. Oxygen was the dangerous result of photosynthesis by bacteria. With the appearance of oxygen, many bacteria, viruses, fungi, and microorganisms had to find places where they could survive, as oxygen threatened to eliminate them. Many of these microorganisms found refuge in living bodies; many years later, the human body was one of their chosen places.

During this quest for refuge, symbiotic processes developed. To this day, our human organism continues to interact with and depend on this microcosm, just as this microcosm depends on us. In the course of a few million years, microorganisms began producing vitamin B12 in our intestines, and became part of our cells. Aggregates of cells became organs. It is not absurd to say that the study of the evolution of the microcosm leads us to the idea that our consciousness probably arose from the combined capacity of thousands of microbes coming together symbiotically to form the human brain.³

Our bodies, like those of all life forms, preserve the environment of a previous Earth. We coexist with today's microbes, and harbor the remains of others that are symbiotically incorporated in our cells. In this way, the microcosm lives in us, and we live in it. This coexistence, which has lasted thousands of years, is responsible for our evolution. Our organism was supportive enough to accept these strange, different, “invasive” presences, and learn to live with them, enter in dialogue with them.

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We all learned to include each other in an ecological space that serves the preservation of life.

And the human organism has become the most complex and intelligent there is.

The Earth's eco-social situation, at this moment, is one of intense transformation. Ecosystems are being attacked as never before in millions of years. Much has been destroyed, much is being transformed. It is not yet known which path will prevail. Certainly, humans are adapting – some are resisting, others not.

Solidarity is not only due to the fact that we are nice and good people. Solidarity lies in our ability to create supportive living conditions, share work, food, space, home, and emotional and rational support. Solidarity is not charity.

Solidarity is creative work.

The Mozambican writer Mia Couto says that a group of healers in Mozambique sought out government authorities during the pandemic and offered their services. They told the authorities that when they found out who the virus is, they would communicate with it – they would start a dialogue with these microorganisms to try to understand them and develop communication.

We have a lot to learn from ancestral knowledge about microorganisms. The history of pandemics teaches us a great deal. For example, in Europe, it took many years to discover that the Black Death came from rats and rat fleas, and the creation of an efficient cure took 350 years. During this period, many scapegoats were created. One of them, it is important to mention, was the Jewish religious population.⁴

At the time, it seemed like Jews were not as affected by the plague, so the conclusion by the then-dominant Church was that Jews were in control of, and spreading, the plague. As a result, Jews were intensely persecuted and cruelly slaughtered – at times burned alive. This was the elementary, crude solution adopted to end the plague. Evidently, instead of immediately turning them into culprits, no one thought about why Jews had a certain immunity against the plague. Jews had a religious habit of constantly washing their hands, bathing, and eating in a healthy manner, which was a form of good

2. *10% Human*, Alanna Collen, Harper Paperbacks, 2016.

3. Margulis and Sagan, *Microcosmos*.

4. Stefan Cunha Ujvari, *História das Epidemias* (São Paulo: Editora Contexto, 2020).

A lie should not become a truth, unless it were to imprison, as it did Mussolini, Hitler, Bolsonaro, and many others.

hygiene. This spiritual habit saved many of their lives, but popular ignorance marked them as targets during the plague.

Today, these hygiene habits are the basic recommended lifestyle for our entire population.

Our organism has managed, and still manages, to be supportive of billions of foreign bodies and billions of cells. As it becomes a single body, it evolves and cannot live without its impurities. An enormous complexity co-exists “lovingly and unconditionally” in our body without the slightest sign of selfishness, taking care of what is different, taking care of others at the micro levels. If selfishness arises in the system, it is because something within the trillions of cells is not working properly – that is, it is not supportive or collaborative. And the name of that cell will be cancer, a tumor that selfishly produces others.

The immune defense system has zero tolerance for selfishness. The natural defense system works like this – it will fight against selfish cells, those that are not supportive and do not want to collaborate.

Organic selfishness is entropy itself.

We can see that the organism is a system absolutely contrary to our society, which is selfish in the extreme and, therefore, absolutely tumoral and entropic. As scientist Antonio Nobre ⁵ claims, collaboration and solidarity prevail in nature. Without collaboration, there is no complexity, which is basic to the existence of our self-regulating system and is also the basis of love.

Human beings exist only in coexistence with non-human beings. One depends on the other. Opposites go together. We are all made by “not-us.” Interdependence, as Dr. Genovino Ferri ⁶ says, is naturally present in our lives and on our planet.

Our organism has developed an ecological capacity to preserve life among all its differences. Diversity begins in our own organism. Is that which is not human, or in-human, not its equal? Good question, isn't it?

Even though our organism has achieved the freedom to reinvent itself, this does not mean that it will also happen among us humans. We have a great and disturbing paradox here: humans demonstrate an enormous difficulty in evolving and building systemic alliances that include humans, ecosystems, nature, animals, and

microorganisms in the interest of ensuring a better future.

Survival is due to our ability to reinvent and create. It is a spectacle based on our own fragility.

We need to face or reveal truths that have been repressed, forgotten, or set aside for moral reasons – truths that are scary, but are in short, just truths. The current world is permeated with lies. In reality, we have known other times that were also permeated with lies, and seen that these lies led to disastrous plagues and wars, to slavery, to genocides, to the annihilation of blacks, indigenous people, Jews, Gypsies, Chinese, homosexuals, transsexuals, etc. – in brief, to the destruction of everything that was different or diverged from what people in power considered a threat to the pure white race.

Only truth leads us into the future.

Psychotherapy and psychoanalysis have always sought the truth. For example, Freud, when using free association, sought the truth contained in the unconscious. Reich, in evaluating the musculature, looked for the unconscious truth contained in the body. Jung, using the study of archetypes, looked for truth in the images and fantasies contained in the unconscious. Everyone sought to liberate or find sexuality. Perls, through spontaneous gestures in Gestalt therapy, sought awareness. Moreno, through psychodrama, sought the truth of group affective relationships, while Liss, Boyesen, Boadella, and Lowen looked for truth in the use of body-based techniques.

Once truth, or truths, are found, we become free people with growing possibilities for choice. In other words, truth leads to freedom, to independence, and to increasing choices, while lies lead to narrowed options and imprisonment. The path of psychotherapy is that of truth and freedom. Without truth, there is no freedom, and there is no freedom without truth. A lie should not become a truth, unless it were to imprison, as it did Mussolini, Hitler, Bolsonaro, and many others.

This is a truth to be confronted: we are inhabited by non-human beings, as well as human cells. We have non-human truth within us. We live with the non-human. We must acknowledge it to be free, and not try to exterminate it. In fact, the search for extermination takes years, and is often not found.

If external threats are large enough, normal cyclical processes can be destroyed and schismogenesis can occur. Schismogenesis ⁷ is a word coined by Gregory Bate-

5. <https://believe.earth/pt-br/antonio-nobre-o-cientista-da-amazonia>

6. Genovino Ferri, *Il tempo nel corpo. Attivazioni corporee in psicoterapia* (Rome: Alpes Italia, 2020).

7. Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.)

son, a biologist and philosopher. It refers to cycles in living systems that oscillate uncontrollably. Bateson believed that schizophrenia could be related to a certain type of schismogenesis – in this case, an excess of feedback in the brain that leads to disintegration.

The opposite of schismogenesis is **autopoiesis, that is, the necessity to actively stay alive against the antics of the world.** Life responds to disturbance and uses matter and energy to stay intact. An organism constantly negotiates its parts and replaces its chemical components without losing its identity. We must learn to dialogue with the different, the invisible, the unknown beings that will remain with us forever.

Caution must be an important part of our education and everyday hygiene. Historically, it took human beings a long time to discover vaccines and antibiotics – long after the effects of microorganisms were known. Therefore, if new threats appear, hygiene is basic for the non-dissemination of unknown viruses and bacteria. Essentially, we already know the basic habits, such as handwashing and keeping the body clean, which guarantee some security. Masks become essential when we know that there is “something in the air.”

However, the unknown does not only consist of viruses and bacteria. We humans are always creating “strangers,” adding new possibilities for the unknown to emerge – in new smartphones and new technologies coming out each year. “The faster the better.” What before took millions of years now takes only a few seconds.

Who knows? In a little while we may be able to teleport from one place to another.

While it is fascinating, this incoming novelty to which humans are adapting almost always appears at a greater speed than is possible to integrate, even for the young or very young. What are the consequences? Consequences can be positive or negative. Therefore, to reiterate, we must be attentive to our relationship with the new, especially in relation to technology, the wonder of our time. First, we must know our technology better since, just as a new virus is in the air, the “magic” devices of our technology also communicate through the air. We must not forget that, although created by humans, technology is not human!

Many develop strong emotional connections with their devices, as if they had a soul, a heart. Remember *Blade Runner 2049*⁸ (2017) in which the replicant had a sexual relationship with a virtual woman? Although without a human woman it is not real, nevertheless, he is passionate about his virtual relationship.

... affective problems are understood psychologically, but the neurological ones are reflected in the electrical functions of the organism, which resonate with the electromagnetic waves of our devices...

A human being’s sensitivity, deprivation, and relational difficulties can create confusion around the virtual fulfillment of repressed and unconscious desires. This issue has brought many affective and neurobiological problems. Emotional problems can be understood psychologically, but the neurological ones are reflected in the electrical functions of the organism, which resonate with the electromagnetic waves of our devices, and that goes through the unknown, through the invisible.

If we don’t worry about technology in the same way that we worry about an unknown virus, we will have surprising problems with new impurities. For example, monitors are a new bridge for contact between people. Monitors show us representations, not flesh, bone, and smell humans. Therefore, through non-human elements, we contact the human and the thrilling capacity to create emotional relationships anywhere in the world. This reminds us that again, the “non-human” is part of ourselves, incorporated into our daily lives.

Electronically, distance does not matter, yet when it comes to forming relationships, distance does matter. What I mean is that, when we are physically face to face, there is an important experience of proximity, a distance that is neither invasive nor abandoning. In online internet communication, immense distances are shortened, and we also come face to face with people, penetrate their homes, work, leisure, cars. In the virtual approach, we experience and pay attention to other stimuli, such as the face, the voice, the look, the words, the breath, so that communication is also neither invasive nor abandoning. Both are wonders that allow us to preserve contact, but what will be the outcome?

Our body is always creating antibodies to protect us while adapting to or protecting us from invaders. The vaccine, for example, must work with our organism, using its intrinsic wisdom, infecting the body so that it causes the formation of antibodies, and accepts this new invasive element without danger, without schismogenesis. Today, as always, humans must learn to live and dialogue with impurities and with what is “non-human” in order to find a possible ecological language.

According to the Book of Genesis, God stopped the construction of the Tower of Babel by introducing many languages. The Tower never reached Paradise because its builders, stripped of a common language, became confused. This parable shows the importance of finding a universal language through and with our differences

8. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-LzzkTi6hk>

with nature. Paradise is nothing but nature with all its epics. As Jerome Liss⁹ said, in an ecolibertarian way: where is freedom?

Confinement could have been a prison, and it was for many. Or it could have been freedom, and so it was for many.

We discovered that freedom is not just out there. Freedom is found within each one of us. Psychotherapy is always looking for it, without illusions, with limits, but without taboo.

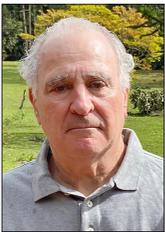
In body psychotherapy, we constantly work to find the body's best capacities to deal with improvisation, with micromovements that affect the macromovements. Micromovements are more precise and bring awareness because we change and learn one thing at a time.

In our microcosm there are changes that affect the macrocosm.

Awareness of the unknown leads to better brain integration and triggers motivation. Integration is the connection of different parts through which we become more intelligent. Different activities, accepting the challenges of the unknown, following the intuition that makes you feel, think, and act are all important.

The search for truth is a challenge towards a better future.

Solidarity is an intelligent process. As Genovino Ferri¹⁰ writes, truth is a relationship of interdependencies. We are all together on this planet, in a unique system that is interdependent with everything that exists, and it is this relationship that will help us develop better, interconnected systemic intelligence.



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9. Jerome Liss and Maurizio Stupiggia, *La comunicazione ecologica. Manuale per la gestione dei gruppi di cambiamento sociale* (publication city: publisher, 2016) and *Dalla sofferenza all'emozione. L'approccio biosistemico al trattamento psico-corporeo della sofferenza emotiva* (publication city: publisher), 2018.

10. Genovino Ferri, *Il tempo nel corpo. Attivazioni corporee in psicoterapia*, I (publication city: publisher 2020).