

# TIME'S UP!

2020 - the time for limits

*by Genovino Ferri*



## 1) Time's up for the current relational style

Time is up for humanity's relational style, currently dominant on our planet, with its reactively phallic, defectively insufficient oral trait prevalence, which is ever more borderline and narcissistic. It has produced the entropic collapse in which we find today's Social Living Body.

*We now need other trait patterns and other relational styles, with a different how in our relationship with the Other-than-Self World!*

The patterns of the aggressively-possessive "**mine!**", of the **lack of respect towards the Other** and of **empathic negligence** are in crisis and which, on a larger scale (complex, living social systems), produce obtuse, "neoplastic" riches. These patterns' blindness means they are unable to envision the entire relationship with the *Object*, only observing its parts and devouring them.

This blindness does not permit the Other *Subject* to be felt, being too polarized by their own, beyond-threshold, insatiable hunger.

The Planet is alive and the biosphere, the locus of negative entropy (the 10 kilometers above us is where entropy diminishes) and of photosynthesis (the process through which Life on the Earth originated), can be compared to a closed thermodynamic system.

In the biosphere, the continuous negentropic flux permits the creation and maintenance of the complex, open, dissipative structures which are living organisms.

A “little man”, who has only been in existence for two million years, which is “just now” in the terms of time itself, has been expecting to be able to play with ancient equilibriums. Fortunately, however, nature also has wisdom and its own intelligent limits.

The "Divine Limit" has been reached by some of this little man's trait patterns and they are worn out! Other patterns are appearing, facilitated by the catastrophic mark incised by Covid 19, which means they shall be seen more and more.



## 2) Time's up for independence

**We are dependent on the biosphere** and we are no other than it. Building intelligently together with our biosphere may, or may not, seem an attractive idea, but it absolutely must be done!

“Dependence-interdependence” is one of those binomials with which we must make peace, keeping it within the “normal” thresholds of its spectrum. Only through these limitations can negative entropy be produced, because moving above, or below, these thresholds would only produce entropy. In reality, living beings and the biosphere are interdependent.

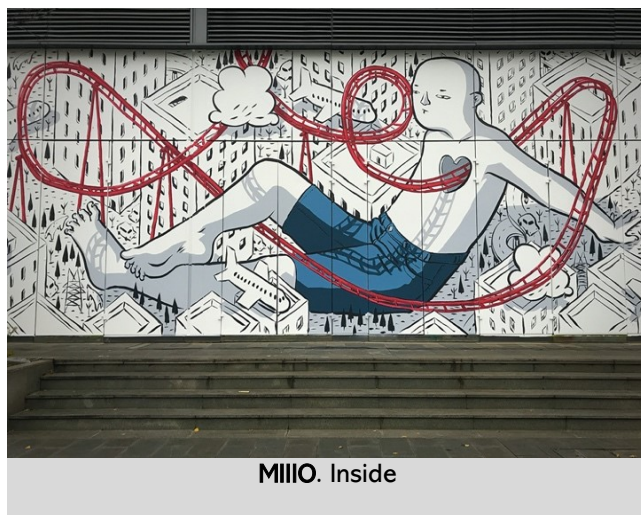
All living beings live in the same space, they are in the same field and they breathe this same atmosphere of planet Earth. Right now, we need the intelligence of a homo *sapiens sapiens* and the capacity to *Inter-legere*, meaning to read interpretatively, through the lenses of Complexity about our responsibility to respect the environment and all the other living systems. In particular, we must really "take on board" our responsibility to respect the Earth itself, from which Life emerges. This is indispensable and will be decisive, first and foremost for ourselves!

We cannot go on producing the climate changes that are making our atmosphere more and more *toxic* and destroying the habitats of so many living species, which, like us, are inhabitants of this marvellous planet.

Chaotic changes generally favour unpredictable outcomes, but in this case there is certainly a high probability of "homo", supposedly, "sapiens sapiens" losing out on any further role in evolution.

Interdependence is a circular process and making the biosphere increasingly toxic produces negative feedback for all living things, including man, who I have no trouble today diagnosing as having a "depressed immune system".

The term "toxic" is also sadly appropriate, because the word "virus" itself etymologically means "toxin" or "poison".



### 3) Time's up for Dopamine (DA) and the Reptilian Complex

Now the clinical psychiatrist in me is asking to speak, having heard the word "depressed".

In other pieces of work, I have described the Living Social Body as being affected by an alarmed **depression masked by acceleration**.

In simple, direct terms dopamine (DA), which is the neuromediator responsible for Action, has become hyper-activated as a response to the depletion in serotonin (5HT), which is the neuromediator responsible for Affectivity.

*Clinically*, fear is associated with a depressive state which increases noradrenaline (NA) levels, the neuromediator responsible for Alarm, which, in turn, completes the circularity by hyper-activating DA.

The three neuromediators are interdependent in a triangular fashion, which must be respected. Dopaminergic acceleration is beyond threshold. **Red alert!**

The three brains are also interdependent. Pre-frontal, cognitive acceleration (Neopallial Brain) informs the alarm status of the locus coeruleus (Reptilian-Complex Brain) and of the amygdala, the brain-area which registers extreme fear. It does this, in fact, by bypassing the anterior cingulate gyrus (Limbic Brain), which normally registers and modulates affective relationships.

This triadic interaction of the brains is no longer well-balanced, producing a **cognitive dissociation of sentiments**, which favours the dominance of ever more aggressive, reptilian relational patterns. These patterns, themselves, inform and dominate subjectivity, and are unattenuated by empathy and orbitofrontal intelligence.

The three brains are interdependent. and they represent another triangle to be respected. The Reptilian-Complex Brain, with its primitive patterns, does not entertain relationships - it has gone beyond-threshold in its "everything that is different from me is a dangerous enemy and should be attacked." **Red alert!**



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(Primary Dong Sheng school 东晟小学 in  
Luzhy,  
Sukhou -CHINA.2016)

#### 4) Time's up for the rarefied-liquid society

Limbic time, for feeling, has been violated - **the time for relationships has been violated**. Relationships belong as "with", as "contact", as "being together" and they have been overwhelmed by an infinite amount of communication, which, not being relational, has no substance over time. These endless communications occur and begin to fade instantaneously, like emotions. They are not like sentiments, which last.

There is no longer the luxury of "memory", or of "the past", there being only a cursory projection of the future, which is, however, dissociative, agitated and beyond-threshold. It blinds and prevents any aware presence in the here and now. In its haste, it overwhelms the Social Living Body, disrupting and inhibiting the organisation of the thoracic area. The chest would otherwise be the principle bodily location of feeling and of empathy, but it is liquefied by the beyond-threshold demands of external time, which robs the person of their own internal time.

The network of contacts has moved (in bodily analysis) from the 4<sup>th</sup> relational bodily level (Chest) to the 1<sup>st</sup> relational bodily level (Eyes). Yes, there has been an increase in information, but, under acceleration, the network has become dissociated, unable to bring with it time for "Inclusion", for "Listening", for "Telling stories" and for "Breathing", all of which have more "human" rhythms.

Internal Time, which in being a continuous flow of energy permits stability of identity, has been interrupted. Loneliness and feeling lost have emerged and become much more widespread as the defectively insufficient, oral state of the Living Social Body shouts its pain. The new pathologies, from addiction to autoimmune diseases and from cardiovascular to psychiatric illnesses, are spreading.

In the entropic collapse caused by self-consumption, the rarefied-liquid society desperately re-proposes itself, inducing unsatisfied, defectively-insufficient oral states in individuals who have countless needs and ceaseless desires and who are in a compulsive, headlong rush towards mega-profit and towards any objects associated with even a "sheen of status-symbol". It is an ephemeral, narcissistic, covering loop.

### **You cannot do without the Chest!**

Rarefied-liquid society has gone beyond its limits. **Red alert!**

#### **5) Time's up for the absence of the Chest**



*The where, the how and the when* of a pathology guide researchers and analyst-therapists in their *supervision* and in their actions; this information permits them to perceive the intelligent sense underlying each condition.

The Chest may be considered a repository of limits, of boundaries and of control. In both psychological and bodily terms, the chest's time of prevalence as a relational level, in the normal progression of each individual's successively dominant evolutive stages, is the muscular stage. The chest appears, obviously, to be indispensable both for better breathing and to organize the passage from smooth to striated muscle. The chest is the necessary negentropic basis from which to deal with the process of individuation-separation from the mother, who represents a powerful attractor. The process of leaving her breast and her gaze and turning upwards, towards greater and more complex horizons, requires organisational autonomy.

The chest, or 4<sup>th</sup> bodily level, has been weakened in the Social Living Body by rarefied-liquid modernity and is currently a very vulnerable relational bodily level!

The loss, or reduced importance, of boundaries, of rules, of the father and of organisation, which have all been dismantled by the increased velocity of time, only serve to demonstrate the multifaceted influences of this entropic process. The Social Living Body has, first of all, been dragged down into incontinent oral liquidity, then further down into borderline rarefaction and, today, it is breathless, lacking air and oxygen. This symptom testifies to the cyclical process mankind has initiated in our biosphere, as the toxicity "comes home to roost".

**Interstitial pneumonia**, the potential severe clinical development of COVID-19 is a very worrying indicator. I cannot but associate it with a Chest pathology of the Social Living Body. This is unexpected symptomatology, caused by a virus which has selected precisely this habitat in the human body to replicate. The virus is neither good, nor bad, but would certainly guarantee its own survival better in a host with greater resistance – when the host-terrain dies, the parasite generally dies too.

Where - the chest; how – invisibly; when – now. **Red alert!**



## 6) Time's up for the Superego.

The Superego no longer dwells in the family, having moved out to live in the media. This has brought to an end many precious differences which are vital to guarantee the riches of diversity and caused a significant increase in indifference. The Superego has been contaminated by the reactively phallic, defectively insufficient oral trait patterns and by borderline narcissism.

Today, dwelling in the media the Superego is inconsiderate, emotionally uneducated, narcissistic and demanding; it excludes, it is mono-directional, does not reciprocate and is persecutory.

Today's Superego dictates the rhythms and the velocity of external time, and (as I stated in an interview in 2005) is stealing time from relationships, from the limbic system and from Affectivity. We have a generation of displaced, impotent parents and one of lost, alone, frightened and impulsive children.

Indeed, by emptying the family and breaking up the circular network that both connected and permitted the "Family Field" with its own atmosphere and its own *delimited* values. The new Superego redirects the motivational vectors outside family, towards other objects to be desired and other packages of values contaminated by the currently dominant trait patterns for which it is Having which defines Being.

The Id, one pulsive pole of the personality, has, for millions of years, been having an intense debate with the Superego, the other pole, which vouches for and censors the personality. When not beyond threshold, this counter-balanced interaction permits, to quote the father of psychoanalysis, a "normally neurotic" Ego, representing a *third*, relatively autonomous position that is informed by the two powerful polar attractors it can move between. The Id today, no longer has an interlocutor which is capable of containing it and the ego is lost, almost exclusively experiencing powerful, primary-narcissistic attraction.

Permit me to express a **paradox – the Id has passed its limit** – it is beyond the threshold. **Red alert!**



## 7) Time's up for Omnipotence

And now, a curious, albeit dramatic, scene. The meeting, on this planet, of *the virus* and *homo sapiens sapiens* . . .

It is not even certain that the virus can be included among true living things, since it is unable to survive autonomously, unable to convert food and is obliged to parasitism, being unable to reproduce alone. It is the smallest and, structurally, a very simple being. Man is the greatest, structurally highly complex and a thousand negentropic evolutionary steps beyond...

However, the greater being succumbs and leaps protectively to *shut itself away* at home!

Other binomials spring to mind – inside and outside, the invisible and the visible, simplicity and complexity, micro and macro, distance and contact, individual and sharing. However, one comparison stands out as being exceedingly dramatic - **omnipotence** and **impotence**.

*The limit makes us potent; its absence makes us omnipotent; its excess makes us impotent.*

How do we make peace with the functional intelligence of Divine Limits? How do we bring evolution, the connection with other living systems, the biosphere and the living planet back within normal confines, so that they are not beyond threshold? How do we stay Alive and in contact with Life's Intelligent Limits?

By re-entering our Home and re-inhabiting our own Chest... We have an opportunity to settle back into a protected environment and to re-discover the *reflection* of a field that tells our own story, has our own atmosphere to be breathed back in and our own identities to animate again... It is an opportunity to have a new relationship with the outside, which can be co-constructive, human and, as such, intelligent.

Re-entering our Homes and re-inhabiting our own Chests is an opportunity to re-connect heart and mind and to re-discover an extraordinary, re-vitalising password – **Humility!**

**Humility permits us to become more intelligent and more potent**; it permits a new relationship, in between heights and depths greater than the Self, and it allows us to cross, upwards and downwards, that rigid arrogant neck caused by injured omnipotence, that castrated neck set down by marked impotence.

Time's up! Red alert!



*Genovino Ferri*

*Sincere thanks to Millo, the street artist, for permission to feature a selection of his extraordinarily beautiful artwork from around the world and to the psychotherapist Andrea Aielli for selecting the appropriate mural for each section of this article.*

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