

Body Psychotherapy and its Social Connections:

“Intelligent Networks in Social Context and Setting”

I believe it is important to share a few reflections on Intelligence, Time, History and “Negentropy”, before going on to present my views on such an important and complex theme as that proposed by this 7th Congress.

Life is intelligent.

Living systems are intelligent.

The simplest living system is formed by one cell, a mycoplasma

Taken as a whole it can be said to be characterised by an external limit or “cell membrane”, which separates the living system, the “self” we could say, from the surrounding environment. Within this membrane there are a whole network of chemical reactions through which the system is preserved, continues to flourish and its existence is maintained.

So, the membrane could be considered intelligent in the sense that it “reads the outside” and regulates its metabolism functionally by opening and closing itself, continually choosing what types of substance to permit to enter or to keep out.

“Intelligence” from Latin “Intellegens” from “inter-legere” meaning to read between.

Can intelligence be compared to a fractal figure?

I believe it can.

Fractal figures are characterised by patterns that are continually repeated on varying scales – not only patterns, but also functions which can be replicated on any scale.

Intelligence persists over time stratified in the structure of forms of life.

At each bifurcation, or fork in the path, which are points of instability for forms of life, intelligence mutates and transforms expressing itself through other types of ‘reading’, which, if the negentropy is greater, must be more intelligent.

Time. Within each living form, time is the indicator, like an arrow, of the path taken in the movement through life. It moves in one direction and, as such, past and future are not equivalent.

I am suggesting an alteration to the Gestalt of time “from being to becoming”.

I am suggesting a “negative-entropy” indicator to be placed side by side against the “entropic” indicator of time, but pointing in the opposite direction.

Time defines history, leaving “notches” characterising the progression of life-forms in its strata, in its bifurcations, in its states and in its intelligences.

Here today I will underline planetary geological time, phylo-genetic time and finally experienced time, because the points of reference to be considered are the Living Planet Earth, our species and we here present at the 7th Congress.

“The history of the cosmos includes the history of matter, the history of life and the history of human beings all the way through until our own individual life-stories connected to our own consciousnesses” (I. Prigogine).

The history of our planet is the story of a special planet that learned to capture solar energy through photosynthesis, to in time create ordered and dissipative structures, which are the living organisms, the biosphere and the geometric space where entropy is diminishing.

D. Brower condensed the Earth’s existence into the 6 biblical days of creation.

If the Earth were created at the striking of midnight on Sunday, life would appear on Tuesday morning around 8 O'clock. The microcosm would evolve over the course of the next two and a half days. Sexual reproduction would be invented by micro-organisms at about 4 p.m. on Friday. Big reptiles would appear at 5.10 on Saturday afternoon and mammals about twenty minutes later.

Homo Sapiens would only appear about 30 minutes before midnight.

With the introduction of the Neopallium giving three-dimensional stereoscopic vision, the ego with its own area of consciousness is capable of thought, of orienting itself in space and time, of recognising and knowing.

To reiterate: the Planet can read, it is intelligent. A cell-membrane can read, it is intelligent. In the same way my capacity for three-dimensional vision can read, it is Intelligent.

My form of intelligence is clearly superior in negentropy in that my species has evolved through a thousand more bifurcations than has a mycoplasma cell or the Planet Earth. However, all three are truly "similar" as members of the same fractal continuum.

What is Negentropy?

In 1944 Erwin Schrodinger, who won the Nobel prize for physics and was the founding father of quantum mechanics, introduced the concept of "negentropy" in his Dublin lectures, which were published in "What is life?". In this work he underlined that he was referring to a negative variation of entropy starting from an original value - the birth of an individual, the origin of life, the start of biological evolution.

The variation in entropy represents the acquisition of greater order which is manifested more the higher you climb the evolutionary tree.

Photosynthesis countering entropic degradation constitutes the first step, the first level, the first layer of a column of negentropy which has slowly, over time, transformed biological evolution, with its tendency to towards order and stratification, produced ever more complex forms of living systems until our own species.

They develop and live because of the increase in entropy in the surrounding environment.

Although the direction of living systems is towards negentropy or in completely the opposite direction to that indicated by the second law of thermo-dynamics, it does not violate this law as the balance of entropy must be global – including not only the organism, but also the environment.

The negentropy Project in its entirety and the Project of life in its every form are extraordinarily intelligent.

With these considerations in mind, I have spent a few months reflecting on the themes proposed by this Round Table and the 7th Congress: What are the connections between Reich, body psychotherapy and social interaction and how can we contribute to the quality of life of our own species, to that of the co-evolved mycoplasma cells and to the Planet Earth?

There are, potentially, hundreds of answers, but there is one that I would like to share with you here.

It comes from the structural reality that you and I encounter every day – the “setting” in body psychotherapy.

In 1999 I defined it as a complex living form, an intelligent and self-poietic system (my concern that I might be taken for a raving lunatic was, however, eased by the publication of my article in the July annals of the New York Academy of Sciences) in which the analyst and the analysed, the psychotherapist and the patient with a “third” living form – their specific relationship and the energy field in their operating space – constitute the fundamental structure, you could say the DNA.

If the setting is a complex living form it possesses the capacity for a negentropy gradient and is able to develop progressively over time and, if the recurring interactions between the parts are Intelligent, then there can be a variation in the

negentropy from the original value in a historical process belonging to the relationship itself.

What now brings Complexity within our reach is truly the introduction of the body into the setting. It has always been present, but it has also always been absent and it is with Reich and body psychotherapy that it bursts into the setting, revolutionising it.

It is this presence that makes the setting a complex living form!

The concept of becoming coherent towards the paradigm of complexity had already been plainly expressed in W.Reich's writing on masochism and I believe that the "systemic, complex gene" is already present at the point of bifurcation which W.Reich describes as Character Analysis.

Corporeity in the setting: a real quantum leap in energy, corporeity with its own history and its own negentropy and today I maintain there is an extraordinary network of stages, levels, layers, of intelligences, language, communications and relationships "from the big-bang of fertilisation going slowly up through various evolutionary stages until the dorso-lateral nucleus of the prefrontal cortex, seat of the working memory".

Such a silent setting is an attractive, complex, intelligent and rich scenario which offers the possibility of vital, whole, new, effective therapeutics.

In this setting the Therapist has the Intelligent Responsibility, or rather the Responsibility for an "external" intervention on the person, which can restore a higher degree of negentropy and which also, among other effects, moves to reconnect cognitive intelligence to "other intelligences" of the organism in a functional co-evolution, bringing him or her away from the risk of isolation and separation.

On this basis I propose fractal acceleration!

Is our Society part of a great planetary setting?

And, if it is, can the model of setting in body psychotherapy help us to read the other setting on a greater order of magnitude?

"The entrance of the body into the setting mirrors the entrance of the Body – Living Planet in the greater setting". I am again proposing the same quantum leap in energy

levels in the greater, external setting as is used by Reich and body psychotherapy in the lesser setting: to reconnect “Society to its own Planetary Body”, to its own humus, thus repairing the separation / isolation which would otherwise be risked.

We must use our Intelligent Responsibility to make this external intervention. We must create Intelligent Networks, not only to spread information about the planet on a purely cognitive level, although this is important, but on the higher level of a relationship “with the planet” to teach how to have a Relationship with the Living Planetary Body.

The paradigm must be modified so that it is not only meant in the way that Kuhn underlines as a “change in the visual Gestalt”, which is already both clear and far-reaching, but also intended as a change in the emotional-affective Gestalt.

Feeling and thinking are the two fundamental pillars of the consciousness, the last two major intelligences which have been etched into our make-up phylo-genetically by history.

They form most of our transferences and counter-transferences - feeling belongs to the “Limbic Brain” negentropy station and thinking to the “Neopallial Brain” negentropy station, both belong to the organism, to our corporeity.

Feeling “the Living Planetary body” leads to a “listening” relationship to its Intelligence stratified in time and to the reading of its Negentropy.

“This tiny planet has a limited surface-area, a limited capacity and confining limits, which have determined and favoured biological evolution, in space, temperature, atmospheric composition, production velocity and in time.

They set immovable limits for life on earth, exceeding which means choosing an evolutionary dead branch – the Ecological God would be unforgiving”.

Feeling the “Living” planetary body as such leads the individual concerned who feels “it” to have a relationship based on care, great affective respect, giving, gratitude and belonging, because the fractal similarity of the structures of Intelligent Negentropy between the two bodies is indeed great.

The project which we can realise externally is to reconnect “Society” to our own “living body”, because we have it inside ourselves, because our contact with corporeity is specifically ours.

Our ability to feel and the body are inextricably linked as are feeling and knowledge. To have a relationship is to make feel and to make aware! “There is no knowledge without feeling” (G. Ferraro).

In today’s lives there is no time left to us for feeling, today we experience more emotions (immediate feelings) but less sentiment (which is a matter of time), there is more information but less knowledge.

To have a relationship is to give time back to sentiments.

Reconnecting to feelings and sentiments to make life make more “sense” again.

Reconnecting Society to the history of the Intelligent, Living Planet to make more sense of the path of evolution, of the way to move forward, Intelligent and Living Planet – it cannot be over-emphasised, before us and before the mycoplasma cells.

What we can do is to bring feeling into society and to move closer to the “Body” of Nature to learn its wisdom, its complexity and its beauty.

In this geological “planetary” fraction of a second we find ourselves at yet another evolutionary bifurcation on the direction of which the fate of “life” rides, from our own species to the mycoplasma and to the Planet Earth.

“Today a tiny technological man, who has only been in existence for two million years, which is only yesterday on a biological timescale, expects to play with the most ancient equilibriums (“E, Tiezzi”).

“Becoming aware of a global Community is the key event necessary to permit us to leave the age of barbarism (“E.Morin”).

There is absolute necessity for Intelligence with greater negentropy, a new “re-combination” (like the many evolutionary re-combinations, which have already taken place throughout the history of life on this planet) – a third neopallial-limbic intelligence which is “more than the sum of the two parts”, through which we can

aspire to base and realise a possible new future, with a new way of being on the Planet and with the Planet to continue to be Intelligent with Life's Intelligence.

Genovino Ferri