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# *The healing-growth future of humanity: regenerative politics and crealectic care*

The 2020 coronavirus pandemic served to remind us that despite our Cartesian fantasies of control, naturing nature (*natura naturans*) is still active in the form of an untamed Other. The dominant reaction on most political sides was anthropocentric: if we *do something* – a doing generally framed within the scope of technique and management – nature shall go back to the kind and submissive non-viral neutrality that we appreciate in 'her' as a supposedly passive resource for productivism. How could humanity – a pandemic species itself and not only metaphorically – be better attuned with the powers of naturing nature, in a posture of co-creation rather than of a reactive technocratic war against the non-periodic or 'monstrous' aspects of life? This question is a matter of philosophical health: the future of humanity does not depend on statistics and logistics, but on the possibility of a philosophical (re)generative politics, a trustful care for creative singularity rather than an anxious control and production of regularity. Humanity's collective health presupposes this reconciliation with naturing nature and the deployment of a global shared cosmology based on the creative healing-growth flux of originative creativity. This regenerative and life-affirming creative Real is here termed 'Creal', and we call 'crealectics' the generative philosophical health that favours healing growth.

## Introduction: recalcitrant nature

The coronavirus pandemic colonised the human realm in 2020, globally inducing a heavy physical, economic and psychological cost. This pan-mediatic pandemic also served to remind us that the natural world could at any time become a contingent agent rather than merely functioning as passive matter for our technical domination. Despite our Cartesian fantasies of control, naturing nature (*natura naturans*) may still be active in the form of a singular and untamed "inappropriate/d Other" (Haraway 1991).

Humanity was stupefied by the pandemic global event, encouraged by the media and the politicians for whom the virus became a dramatic obsession, another normative tale of order and chaos. In the years prior to the explosion of the coronavirus phenomenon, the eye of the mediatic tornado was most fascinated by the ordering tale of artificial intelligence (AI) – an artefactual fetish seen by many as the technological panacea for our human, natural and societal limitations. Techno-mediated intelligence was seen – once again, since this is a trope congenital to the history of computers – simultaneously as extremely promising and tremendously risky, a historical pharmakon, both cure and disease at the same time. Technical artificiality would supposedly help us with the actualisation of paradise on earth, yet it could also, in the spirit of science-fiction dystopias, degenerate into a catastrophic scenario of autonomous artificial agents ignoring humane concerns. Our concern for digital viruses and technological singularities was replaced in the panmediatic sphere by an obnubilation vis-à-vis real or grain-of-function biological viruses. In the meantime, the creative and generous singularity of *physis* is not only forgotten, as Heidegger would have it, but interpreted as an omnipresent threatening deadly monster.

The coronavirus was perceived as a gigantic swarm of AI nanobots only by the imaginative few who believed it was engineered artificially; most people treated instead the pandemic as a natural phenomenon, inherently reconducting the Cartesian paradigm of artefactualism and technoscience as human war of control against nature. The dominant mediatic reaction and the majority of political viewpoints were anthropocentric: If we *do something* – a doing generally framed within the scope of technique – nature shall go back to the kind and submissive non-viral neutrality that we appreciate in 'her', a "passive resource" for "productionism/reproductionism" (Haraway 1991: 335). Exceptions in views regarding the virus and singularity of attitudes were hard to sustain: a nation

like Sweden (where the author of the present article lives), was tempted, in the early months of its interaction with the coronavirus, to be faithful to its cultural tradition of a slightly more trustful, less paranoid attitude towards natural flows: no lockdowns or curfews, no protective masks, collective gatherings allowed, no police-controlled state of exception, etc. Yet eventually, the social-democrat government resolved, under political and international pressure and because of a 'second wave' in the numbers of cases attributed to the COVID-19 disease, to a more technocratic, dramatising and controlling approach.

The 2020 pandemic was a reminder that naturing nature, and not only machines, can be and often is stronger than us. The human psyche is still subjected to biological anxiety despite our technological advances, with real consequences. Beyond the resultant deaths, millions of workers lost their jobs as direct consequence of the coronavirus politics – many small business owners, employees, teachers and cultural service providers, for example, experienced the depletion of their lifeworld without any democratic consultation as regards the measures pursued by the politicians. Yet a paranoid bellicose confrontation – culture and technology versus nature – is not the healthy reaction in the long term. Moreover, life cannot and should not be controlled by digital statistics, cyberlogistics or data analytics.

How could humanity be better attuned with the powers of naturing nature, in a posture of co-creation rather than of a reactive technocratic war? Importantly, this is a matter of philosophical health and the answer cannot be primarily logistical – the healing-growth future of humanity does not rely on distributive numbers of vaccine doses. What follows is an exercise of critical speculation concerning the meta-pandemic future of humanity – rather than *post-pandemic* since pandemics are not likely to disappear and are metaphorically proteiform. We advocate here the possibility of an ontological "regenerative politics" (Haraway 1991), a generative philosophy or "thought in the act" (Manning and Massumi 2014), via the renewal of a shared cosmology based on natural creativity (Whitehead 1929), a life-affirming creative Real that is termed "Creal" (de Miranda 2017b).

## Risking the future

Many political decisions during the pandemic were based on the analysis of numeric thresholds and statistics. Such behaviour is an example of Sartrian bad faith in which the past and future are reified to justify a lack of action and vision in favour of reactive measures. It is also a contradiction or logical fallacy since a decision can never be deterministic (otherwise it is not a decision) nor the result

of a causal mechanism. To understand this more clearly, we need to examine the problem of the probabilistic knowledge applied in dominant modes of analytic governmentality.

Predictive, data-based, digital, statistic: these terms are today synonym of subjugation. Predictive analytics is defined as "forecasting the statistical likelihood of future trends or patterns […] on the basis of inferred relationships between variables in recorded data" (Chandler and Munday 2020). Data analytics is "the identification of meaningful patterns within large bodies of data through the use of computers, and the prediction of future patterns, in order to gain insights that improve organisational decision-making" (Ibid). These digital forms of analysis are only possible within a framework of discretisable and decomposable material as primary component; it literally counts dead matter and in pandemic times dead people. Statistical analytics is the dominant approach to organisation and intelligence in our engineer-driven corporations or institutions because it is more easily mathematised as a set of operations compatible with so-called objective decision-making. Decisions justified by what is presented as numeric evidence appear inherently more reasonable to those subjugated, technically-minded individuals who confuse the neutrality of numbers with objectivity in demonstrations and fairness or coherence in interpretation. However, we should not be predicting, but *thinking* the future of humanity.

If humanity were a verb, how would one conjugate it in the future tense? A first answer springs from the Latin etymology of *conjugate*: to join together. *To conjugate*, to unite meaningfully might precisely be what humanity is about. There is a fundamental ambivalence in this root, for the instrument that joins can also be a yoke, a domination device, perhaps even a form of enslavement. On the other hand, a link that joins can also be harmonious, operating as the actualisation of a healthy assembling, figured as a composition, a compatible mesh of possibilities or, in the terminology proposed by Leibniz, a *compossibility* (Brown and Chiek 2016).

When we conjugate an English verb in the future tense, an auxiliary verb needs to be added, often *will* and sometimes *shall*. These two modal signifiers may seem to point towards a middle ground between desire and necessity. I shall because I must: it is my duty. I will because I long for: it is my intention. What do we long for in the longer term? The future of humanity cannot merely rely on a list of objective goals, goals that are quantitively measurable; indeed, such goals leave us not with a future but with a deterministic projection of the past. The human future, as illustrated by the 2020 pandemic, is never certain or standardisable into an algorithmic routine. Each human perspective and generative horizon is singular,

partly subjective, possible with various degrees of likelihood, anticipated through processes of imagination, faith, hope, fear, risk or other forms of performativity.

Do we think about the future as a creative horizon, a possibilisation, or do we merely consider it by means of the negation of the past or present? This is a question that engages us, and conjugates our being in the present tense: *we care* (Heidegger 1962). To think about the meta-pandemic future of humanity is not a measurable abstraction since we are subjectively concerned with the thought: it is a matter of philosophical consideration. In this care for the future of humanity, there might be a touch of worry, a zest of love, elements of desire, perhaps an epic energy, the struggle of duty, a joyful hunger, or a dormant nihilism. Nihilistic and life-affirming energies are not fully incompatible: the most enthusiastic utopian narrative might articulate its vision by contrasting it with a negative path, a tragic alternative in which we could speak, as is often the case in climate change discourse, of a *future-off* humanity, a humanity *without* a future, or a humanity living as if the future did not exist, as if we were taking a *day-off* from the future.

In the words of the Roman poet Horace:

Ask not ('tis forbidden knowledge), what our destined term of years,
Mine and yours; nor scan the tables of your Babylonish seers.
Better far to bear the future, my Leuconoe, like the past [...].
Strain your wine and prove your wisdom; life is short; should hope be more? [...]
Seize the present; trust tomorrow e'en as little as you may (Horace 1882: 1, 11).

Hope is what one reverts to when all else seems hopeless and our fantasy of control is depleted. We should substitute hope for confidence and healing trust as regards present experience, actively and carefully projected into the future. We should not indulge in seeking future guarantees in prediction sheets, in the new Babylonian tables of predictive artificial intelligence. Probabilistic knowledge based on vast collections of data is virtually morbid, because it objectifies the future, limits our horizon of possibility and co-creativity, and prevents us from thinking the unthinkable. To forecast the future out of statistics is ultimately 'forbidden knowledge' because it negates the future and contradicts the intention that it wanted to achieve. When predictive analytics are used to shape the decision-making process, the subject of deterministic calculations becomes a subjected, 'unhappy consciousness', that renounces its own responsibility by casting "upon the mediator or minister its own freedom of decision" (Hegel 1977: § 228).

In thinking about the future, there may be some state of affairs that we wish to abolish out of ressentiment – for instance, current transhumanists rely on technological progress to abolish death, revealing how narcissism can be

hypostasised into technopolitics. Utopias, including the historically influential communist one, have had a tendency to nihilise the present for the sake of a better future: "We call communism the *real* movement that abolishes the present state of things." (Marx and Engels 1970: 162). A vision for the future of humanity that claims to be grounded on *realism*, whether in the form of Marxism or the current form of pan(dem)ic capitalism relying on statistics, digital projections and big data, not only abolishes the future as the open horizon of regenerative possibility but also the present as co-creative and agentic source. Thinking only about present dissatisfactions to imagine future forms of life is reactive and insufficient from the perspective of a truly generative politics.

Nietzsche suggested that the earthly realisation of the most harmonious future would mean that humanity as we know it would need to give way to a new humanity with renewed core evaluations and a faithfulness to the earth; he infamously called this hypothesis *Übermensch*, a concept that is often misinterpreted as a quantitative need for *more* and better performance, a supercilious enhancement of competitive capacities. Technocrats tend to think about the future of humanity in terms of such a quantitative and comparative enhancement. This anthropocentric mode of thinking calls for a domination of analytical engines: computers, robots, binary protocols, digital simulations. Transhumanists invoke the exponential rise of artificial productivism in the guise of a so-called singularity, forgetting that the philosophical idea of the *singular* (Nancy 2000) points precisely to the non-analytical, the non-measurable, the non-machinic, the creatively emergent. The exceptional is hardly computable, for it is an aperiodic (Schrödinger 1967) or metastable (Simondon 2020) extension of a domain of possibility.

The future of humanity ought to be an openness to decisive possibilities, what Ludwig Binswanger called a "repossibilisation", the "*wiederermöglichung*" which is a renewal of the possibility of a new agentic constellation "constantly elaborated anew from the reverse side of the future horizon" (Mazzú 2012: 433). Our collective responsibility is to carefully actualise what not only intensifies our potentialities in the present, but also what preserves and heals the future as a terrain for freedom and (re)generation, such that the future is never abolished or standardised in whatever we think might be a hygienic, protected or secure state of affairs.

If the ground of life is an aperiodic, creative and continuously recreative élan (Bergson 1911), sociopolitical time cannot be a deterministic unfolding of necessity. If our ultimate value, our shared cosmology, as advocated not only by Nietzsche but also by Bergson, Whitehead, or Deleuze, should provide a space for open and primordial creativeness, we need to accept some level of imperfection,

aperiodicity and negativity in order to keep the horizon of human and non-human life open for differences, alterity, singularity and (re)generative ways of thinking: "The perfection of the fully defended, 'victorious' self is a chilling fantasy, linking phagocytotic amoeba and space-voyaging man cannibalising the earth in an evolutionary technology of post-apocalyptic extraterrestrialism" (Haraway 1991: 320). The healing-growth paradigm is not one that believes nihilistically that the only possible salvation for life is human space travel in Elon Musk's rockets for good-hearted multimillionaires.

There is much debate about the risks that could lead to human extinction or civilisational collapse, but perhaps the most dangerous risk for humanity lies in the idea that we can eliminate existential risk. If being with the world means world-making possibility, an "opening for making-possible" (Heidegger 1995: 364), then existence embraces risk. The phantasy of the abolition of death is the ghost that floated over the 2020 pandemic politics and our most dangerous idea: if we are prevented from the possibility of risking our life to defend what we believe in, then, as shown by Hegel, we may all become slaves of our own securitarism.

## The people of Pan

Morally speaking, possibility is neutral. History is abundant in events that seem to defy imagination: 'How is this possible?', we may ask in concurrence with Hamlet, when 'time is out of joint', when the least expectable atrocity or deception tears our existences apart. How is it possible that suddenly a planetary virus can induce a shift in the existential, vocational and professional projects of so many? It was possible partly because the dominant reaction to the virus only accelerated our biopolitical will to order: "The governance of the disorders […] is implicated in the will to order and security that animates various projects of global governance" (Howell 2011: 145).

The horror of the past, and the mediocrity of big data, if projected as a shadowy chart over the body of the present into the illusionary screens of the future, may indicate, through the actuarial game of macabre prediction, that there is little hope for radical intentional change. We are familiar now with Fukuyama's often contested formulation, "the end of history" (1992), but we are less aware of the contradiction we live in: the defeatist and *arithmomaniac* reign of statistics, predictive analytics, averages and their influence in decision-making, is itself *possibilicide*, a massive killer of ultimately healing possibilities, by maintaining our worldview in the controllable zone of common, habitual and expected behaviour. Technocrats who intend to impose a politics based on artificial probabilities of life and death cannot create the better or safer future they promise because

their methodology implies an annihilation of the future as possibility for self-determination, self-demonstration and holistic haleness.

Indeed, this drive that Lewis Mumford called "the will-to-order" (2010: 3) is at the core of technological progress-regress. The damage that can be generated by monolithic forms of analytic intelligence in attempting to rule life was also recently exemplified in the French management of national forests. In 2019, a report from the *Commission des Affaires Économiques* of the French Parliament mentions a crisis in which nearly 50 forester employees committed suicide between 2005 and 2019 as a result of the rationalisation of their practice, while tree diversity became seriously endangered because of the financial decision to focus on coniferous monoculture (Assemblée Nationale 2019: 48). In the early 2000s, the French government introduced the analytical accounting methods of New Public Management into the administration of the *Office National des Forêts*.

What are the principles of New Public Management? That a national institution is part of a market and needs to make significant profit according to a factual short-term cost-based control system, that there should be a focus on citizens as customers, and, last but not least, that analytical accounting should be utilised in this regard (Osborne and Gaebler 1992). This form of arithmetic management, through exulting in the use of predictive analytics, tends to read the complex realities of a biopsychosocial system in terms of credit and debit. A forest caregiver wandering among the trees, apparently doing 'nothing' while in fact engaging in an intuitive and careful dialogue with the forest, will be seen by the grid as being involved in an unproductive slice of time – a cost – that should be cut. Such decisions lead, directly or indirectly, to suicide, depression, or loss of meaningful joy at work, and an endangered life diversity. The national economy also suffers from its arithmomania in the long term. The coronavirus pandemic itself felt like a long computational list of new cases of illness or death, and many measures were taken based on these numbers only, as per the scheme of reductionist metrics that gangrenes politics and the human economy. Oversimplifying decisional grids with a predictive analytics lens leads to a loss in cognitive diversity and biodiversity.

In the *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Hegel discusses the different ways that people confronted the absolute through nature, symbolised by the god Pan. For Hegel, Pan represents not just an alien totality that has no relation to humans, but something "friendly to the human spirit". Nature or Pan is represented, not as the objective whole, "but that indefinite neutral ground which involves the element of the subjective; he embodies that thrill which pervades us in the silence of the forests." (Hegel 1981: 234). We need a pan-democracy in which we are able to meander and wonder while working:

> All that is gold does not glitter,
> Not all those who wander are lost;
> The old that is strong does not wither,
> Deep roots are not reached by the frost (Tolkien 1954).

In the midst of the pandemic and panmediatic abuse of biopolitics (Foucault 2004) – that quasi-totalitarian administration and regulation of human life at the levels of the population and of the individual body – one could argue that computer technology has enabled the citizens to cope with existential stresses by keeping them 'connected' and 'mediated' by digital tools of communication and entertainment. On the other hand, perhaps these very same tools prevented us once more from rebelling against infantilising ideologies. The 2020 global pandemic, in making digital transactions increasingly important, will be remembered as the historic moment where humanity became *de facto* a network of 'anthrobots' (de Miranda el al. 2016). If our epoch marks the historical beginning of the AI civilisation, we may wonder: what will the future of human flourishing be in an era of anthrobotic intelligence, particularly if such flourishing entails an increased fear, war or ressentiment towards life, biology or nature?

In 1843, Charles Babbage and Ada Lovelace projected to build an "Analytical Engine" by associating analysis with a mechanical function of "operation" (Menabrea 1961: 247). Historians of technology usually consider their plan as precursor to the invention of computers. In her notes, Lovelace herself emphasised: "The Analytical Engine has no pretensions whatever to *originate* anything. It can do *whatever we know how to order it* to perform. It can *follow* analysis; but it has no power of *anticipating* any analytical relations or truths" (284). Such lack of anticipatory creativity and of relation to truth constitutes what Turing called the "Lovelace Objection" to AI (1950: 450). Engineers and consultants tend to brush away such objections as irrelevant or vague ('feminine'?) for pragmatic behavioural purposes and measurable-financial reasons. But attempts at foreclosing, in the fashion of mechanical artifactualism, humanity's relationship with the originating Other, are doomed to fail because the Other is in us in the form of Creal, the source of our desire, of the possible and of the real. "Whatever we know how to order it" remains a problem in computer science, as is now widely recognised by the AI community under the name "the problem of control", which is a human problem: the difficulty to define "the purpose that we really desire" (Russel 2019: 10).

"We must find another relationship to nature besides reification and possession [...] Nature is for me, and I venture for many of us who are planetary foetuses gestating in the amniotic effluvia of terminal industrialism, one of those impossible things characterised by Gayatri Spivak as that which we cannot not

desire" (Haraway 1991: 296). If we accept that the source of reality is driven by an infra-physical flux of infinite possibility, a creative Real or *Creal* (de Miranda 2017b), if the core of being is reflected in the formula *it is possible*, then once embodied as self-possibility, this feeling could be described as a cosmological dynamic of desire. Spinoza called this cosmic desire the *conatus*, an idea that is identified in Daoism as the source of natural intelligence: "This desire is the source from which all things in the world arise and move toward fulfilment. […] Desire, then, is what incites, animates, and furnishes the content of knowing" (Virág 2017: 77). Our desire or lust for life can indeed feel cosmic or interstellar, yet desire is also subjective, manifesting an inner relation to the outside reality. Deep desire is the arrow pointing to a healing horizon of growth.

## Outsiding the inside

In 2021, in the middle of continuing international lockdowns and curfews supposedly justified by the pandemic, I am looking at a screen during an online philosophical consultation with another human being, via a digital device. Since February 2018, in the context of the Philosophical Parlour (Stockholm, Sweden), I offer ideational and existential support to individuals in the form of philosophical dialogue, a practice that had to move online since the coronavirus phenomenon. I recognise that a computer is a vehicle that is used for efficient data processing, yet one that can be 'hacked' to a certain extent in order to facilitate regenerative dialogue when a physical connection 'in real life' is not possible.

We might be tempted to say that a computer is an experience such that you are either inside or outside a screen. If you consider, alternatively, my interlocutor's perspective and my own reality, the distinction between inside and outside becomes blurry, like a vibration on the hypersurface of our dialogue. We get used to protocols, and we stop paying attention to their strangeness, their arbitrariness, their capacity to be otherwise, but when our habits are disrupted we may start to wonder, and philosophical thinking is reaffirmed as vital.

We know that philosophy starts when we consider objects, ideas, situations or practices in their curiousness: how are these things possible? Philosophical health re-enchants the world, but it also starts with the risk of making it a stranger and more challenging place in the short term. This is why, in times of existential crisis, some might turn to deep thinking and the responsibility of intellectual desire while others turn to the false security of numbers, self-victimisation or autopilot behaviour. Ideals are the bridge between *cogito* and life, between mind and emotion. The sublime feeling of nature as creative desire sensitises us to an "outside and an inside" in thought, a creative "hyper-dialectic" between

imagination, reason, flesh, interpersonal experience, plurality and ambiguity (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 94).

Now, let's imagine a conceptual chimera: the neologism *exinterior*, an experience that would be at the same time an inside and an outside. In a book about her philosophical friend Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous (2007) writes:

> When, in my seminar, I share him with my friends or listeners, it's 'Derrida' that I offer to a reading, that I extend. It's because he is, since forever, this *tu* [second person-singular *you*] in me that speaks, who speaks of who speaks of living, my complication, my accomplice, my interior force stronger than me. [...] Yet this *tu* is indeed him, the one who speaks to me in the tube of the so-very-interior ear that right away I say *tu* to him, I echo internally [...] Naturally, there is no opposition between outside and inside, everything that happens does happen only at the line of non-demarcation, at the edging, at the self's exinterior, in the outside of the inside, that doubly locked heart that he calls the secret (51-2).

What is this singular "line", this "edging", this "outside of the inside" where "everything happens"? It is the Creal as hyper-singularity. The experience of the *exinterior* starts with a certain form of deep listening and the impression that we can have friendly energies out there, bridging inner and outer worlds:

> In a sense, there could be no *exterior* antigenic structure, 'no invader,' that the immune system had not already 'seen' and mirrored internally. Replaced by subtle plays of partially mirrored readings and responses, self and other lose their rationalistic oppositional quality. A radical conception of *connection* emerges unexpectedly at the core of the defended self (Haraway 1991: 322-3).

In a dialogue with the other, with the outside or with the inner self, we are invited to the radical practice of care for the self as analogous to a care for a common truth. Human flourishing is a harmonious dialogue with natural beings, akin to a pragmatic form of poetry; it is not only analytic, not only dialectic, but also hyper-dialectic (Merleau-Ponty: 1968) or *crealectic* (de Miranda 2020b), a co-realisation of slowly emerging symbols, many of which become explicit at a slower rhythm than the pace forced on things by analytic or dialectic necessitarian approaches.

We accept that intelligent behaviour may sometimes consist in distinguishing discrete familiar parts or reproducible functions in the midst of noise via an analytic process of segmentation; intelligence may also manifest itself in the deciphering or synthesis of agonistic forces through a dialectic process of elaboration. Beyond

analytics and dialectics, crealectic intelligence generates realities in the image of an ideal of truth, enacting desiring subjects imbued with a sense of possibility in a relationship not only with the Real, not only with other selves (including inner possible selves), but also with the healing sublime or Creal, which is the ever-emergent singularity that regenerates regularities. Here we are back to the future as creative conjugation, a joining together as common repossibilisation.

A symbol connects realms that might have been perceived as heterogenous. An object becomes meaningful, subjective, and a subject becomes a reality out there, for example a model of trust or awe. We correspond with the world in which the living pillars of nature respond and echo each other in a movement of deep unity, as in Baudelaire's poem *Correspondences*, in which the poet echoed his philosophical model Swedenborg. Signe Toksvig writes in her biography of Swedenborg, quoting the book *divine love and wisdom*:

> All psychological processes were immaterial events which could have an effect in the material world. And these effects were often 'correspondences'; they expressed either directly or in symbolic form their spiritual cause. [...] Life, for him, was a force emanating from the Divine. [...] Temporary, soul-stuff 'phantasies' could become materialized – appear in solid earth-stuff – if they 'which in themselves are spiritual meet with homogeneous or corresponding things in the earths for then are present both the spiritual that furnishes a soul and the material that furnishes a body.' (Toksvig 2012: 285).

In common parlance, poetry and philosophy are often considered to be inoperative, beautifully vain, or gratuitous as would be our wildest flights of fancy. Poets and philosophers are often seen as marginal or passive observers, masters in escaping the seriousness of realism. In fact, philosophy and poetry are here to remind us that the object and the subject, the regular and the singular, the Real and the Creal, are a present conjugation that generates future fruits with the patience of slow growth, contrary to the artificial and hectic growth of arithmomaniac politics and economics. There is a continuous creation at work in us and around us. At every instant the world is recreated and we are a more or less active part of this process. A generative philosophy can heal the blindness of viral capitalism, provided that we remain aware that we are neither the measure, nor the originators of all things. Healing growth means to work in tandem with the regenerative Creal, with deep life. Our technocratic regimes are obsessed with securing order and regularity, forgetting that a world that is hyper-regular tends to become a crystallized world, a quasi-lifeless world, one in which the regeneration of singularity is smothered and the renewal of healing possibilities restricted.

Creation is not a mere human technological capacity, it is a cosmological flux. Haraway, after Dempster, calls this life-generating co-creation a "sympoiesis" (Haraway 2016; Dempster 1998), a becoming with and through each other: "We experience ourselves as a collectively-producing system with the sum becoming greater than the individuals or parts", in which "nothing makes itself [independently]; nothing is really autopoietic or self-organising" (2016: 58). Real space, outer space, inner space and virtual space are intertwined in the crealectic collective process of allowing Gaia and its inhabitants to regenerate and repossibilise singularly. We must move away from the fanatism of analytic control and the reactive humanism that pretends to 'save lives' but only manages human quantities whatever their existential condition. The politics of realism, under the guise of well-intentioned hygienism and rationalised administration, increase our distance from each other, constantly separating life from itself, objectifying growth: "Productionism and its corollary, humanism, come down to the story line that 'man makes everything, including himself, out of the world that can only be resource and potency to his project and active agency'." (Haraway 1991: 297).

The kind of authoritarian *Realpolitik[1]* that is activated in the face of macroscale dangers must be replaced by a "Crealpolitik" of the creative Other (de Miranda 2017b: 510) in favouring a regenerative politics. This anti-totalitarian strategy can be understood as the positing of an open common ground compatible with epistemic, social and existential pluralism, especially now that the general war on personal integrity and the schizoid-paranoid form of individualism produced by capital-humanism has failed to counter the law of globalisation in which the axiom 'laissez-faire' mostly liberates financial markets, panmediatic viruses and mimetic behaviour.

Social reality is polysemantic and implies a multiplicity of decisions and acts in which the very factualisation of data, the attribution of a syntax to a given reality, is itself already filtered by creative and active imagination and an embodied perspective on fairness, goodness, growth and justice. In other words, "Nature and Justice, contested discursive objects embodied in the material world, will become extinct or survive together." (Haraway 1991: 311). Crealectic connection or sympoiesis is a form of healing growth that relies on the axiom that the real-Real, the hyper-singular Creal, the *pan-daemonic* (filled with inspiring divinities) ground of experience, is an infinite and continuous creation of multiplicity and possibility.

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1    The German term here seems fit since Germany resorted to extreme biopolitics to manage the 2020 coronavirus; the Merkel government re-awakened the national ghost of totalitarianism.

# (Re)generative cosmopolitics

What exactly could a regenerative politics be that would not be reactionary, but instead trustfully ignore the nihilistic stance on the inevitability of human degeneration? Regenerative medicine, regenerative design and development, regenerative economy, regenerative politics: the interdisciplinary concept of regeneration has been gaining traction in the last decade, in some cases to replace ideas of artificialism or sustainability (Stark 2018). The term 'regenerative' qualifies holistic-minded practices that activate a capacity for self-renewal or self-healing (Morgan 1901: 278). There is in the idea of regeneration a reference to (w)holism and to a dynamic state of health. In the discourse of ecological economy, both the word *restoration* and *regeneration* are commonly used terms that possess a Latin root: restoration from *(re)staurare*, meaning to repair, give back, build up again; regeneration from *generare*, which means to give birth, generate, effectuate. "Regenerative is frequently employed in sciences – such as ecology, biology, and medicine – to indicate a functional self-renewal or – more often – a morphogenic replacement of lost or damaged parts or structures in organisms or ecosystems." (Morseletto 2020: 763).

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to be regenerated is "to be re-born; brought again into existence; formed anew". The intellectual roots of the concept are to be found in the Greek concept of palingenesis, which for the Stoics designated the continuous recreation of the cosmos (Lapidge 1978). In the political theory of his doctrine of right (1797), Kant uses the term palingenesis differently, in contrast with metamorphosis. For him the concept of palingenesis conveys the trauma of a political death and the romance of a sudden political rebirth, one that, in his view, is far too abrupt to bring about lasting and desirable political change. In contrast to metamorphosis, palingenesis is defined as revival, implying for Kant a degenerative return to the past (Williams 2001). There is no actual original condition of a perfect society to which humankind can return. The direction which human improvement takes, however, points for Kant forward to the new, by metamorphosis, rather than back to the old by palingenesis.

But the idea of regenerative politics conveyed by the crealectic hypothesis is rather a 'back to the new' or 'back to the future' scheme. If (re)generation is to be understood as progressive politics, such politics can only be typified by indicating a return not to states of affairs or realities but to the creative core of becoming, which is not a thing nor a fixed essence, but a potential, a singularity. What needs to be regenerated is the processual sense of possibility in mattering and healing meaning: crealectic regeneration is repossibilisation in constant emotional and intellectual renewal, a politics for the ever-threatened "poetariat" (Pinson 2013; de Miranda 2017a). This is crucial for the poet in each of us, in need of decency,

justice, joy, but above all of vigour in the feeling of one's eudynamic being-with-the-world (from the Greek meaning 'good', *eu*, and 'potential' or 'possibility', *dunamis*).

Regeneration signifies the revitalisation of the holistic capacity for intersubjective sympoiesis of life-affirming trust. Such is the difference between a closed and an open system: the closed system has "rigid, impenetrable boundaries", whereas the aperiodic open system has permeable boundaries, demarcation lines or regions for the definition of appropriate activity and for admission of new members or entities into the system (Kast and Rosenzweig 1972: 20). In this regard we make use of the perhaps still too analytical term *system* when we wish to express the fact that the thing is "perceived/conceived as consisting of a set of elements, of parts, that are connected to each other by at least one discriminable, distinguishing principle" (Jordan 1969: 24). "A system is an assemblage of objects, principles, or facts, united by some form of regular interaction or interdependence into an organized whole" (Roe et al. 1992: 27-8), but also ideally open to evolving singularity.

Autopoietic, self-producing systems (Maturana and Varela 1980) are autonomous units with self-defined boundaries that tend to be centrally controlled, homeostatic, and predictable. Sympoietic, collectively-producing systems, in contrast, do not have self-defined spatial or temporal boundaries (Dempster 1998). Information and control are distributed among components; such systems are aperiodic, evolutive, and have the potential for surprising change. They are thus open systems defined by their connections and relations, to the point that a better name for it, rather than the slightly technical *system*, may be *structure* or, as suggested by Lacan and Foucault, *discourse*, or perhaps, one could suggest, *ectoplasm* (from the Greek *ektos*, 'outside', and *plasma*, 'formed' or 'moulded') or conceptual constellation. In any case, crealectics (from *Creal* and *ektos* and/or *logos*) is the regenerative politics of formations emerging from the Creal, in which every *thing* becomes an ecstatic self-demonstration of being and becoming.

The global coronavirus pandemic has revealed to humanity, despite the attempts by governments to close all borders, that earthlings are without rigid boundaries. In linguistic social cultures, boundaries are not only physical, they are also symbolic. Symbols are part of a world which is a "system of truths" (Merleau-Ponty 2012: xxv) and as such, they can always degenerate into a dogma, a rigid web of beliefs. In 2020 and 2021, the global world learned (or was forced) to be *virally correct*. The coronavirus itself became a dogma, thus producing, as every dogma does, control, fear and self-abandonment. Long after Kant's proposition that human liberation relies on quasi-universal axioms, and that "I ought never

act except in such a way that I could also will that my maxim should become a universal law" (Kant 1997: 15/4, 402), political theories of the last 50 years have learned to be suspicious of absolutes and universals. But can we get rid of nature as a multiversal Other, the invisible possibilising core of insiding and outsiding, the ultimate Creal that is immanent and experienced – as opposed to Kant's noumenon or to the absent Real of Lacanian psychophilosophy (Hook 2008)?

Lacan has shown how any discourse, any web of belief, revolves around a strange attractor, a retractive absolute signifier (1997), the effect of which is produced in the structure of discourse itself, as a ghost in the machine, which Lacan calls Real (de Miranda 2009). The universal or set of universals around which such-and-such social reality is constructed maintains the cohesion of the ensemble by playing the role of a slippery *axis mundi*, a master signifier (Lacan 1991: 56). This infrasymbolic totem can also become an "essentially contested concept" (Gallie 1956) in a process of sense-making and world-making. Human discourses tend to crystallise around an explicit or implicit set of persistent beliefs or disbeliefs, inverted beliefs, that allows for their web of belief to catch a maximum of flies in the name of Life (death), God (atheism), Capital (communism), Competition (emulation), Beauty (decadence), Science (faith), or more recently the "Master Algorithm" (Domingos 2015) and its pseudo-opposite, the mysterious human-centred factor that is propagandised by so-called humane forms of digitalisation.

Only a hypersingularity can neutralise these pseudo-absolutes. If the revolutionary and *poietic* "people to come" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 218) do not nurture such a crealing access to singularity, then conservative ensembles might extend the dominion of their own absolute by overcoding blocks of victimised and confused citizens. Absolutised values are "combat concepts" (Hunter 2015). A potential global social contract for healing growth – based on the *Creal Axiom of Liberated Living* – suggests that what *matters* politically and ethically, what makes (a) difference (Deleuze 1994), is to ethically consider continuous creation *as if* it were our global ultimate absolute, and to keep such a virtuality in view, since the virtual is itself the ultimate possibility designated as Creal. Creation is the only absolute that constantly self-destroys and self-regenerates, and thus it cannot be reified. The crealectic axiom generates a liberating performative discourse that respects rather than nihilises the creative Otherness and singularity of nature.

## Conclusion: natural intelligence

The healing-growth future of humanity is a goal that remains to be sympoietically co-created. It entails studying and imagining how socio-technical bodies or living "ensemblances" may grow harmoniously, within a practice of care for "philosophical health" and "well-belonging" (de Miranda 2020a).

Anthrobotic intelligence and industrialism have a tendency towards the dogmatic and to present problems in terms of control over nature, a hazardous framework: "If we put the wrong objective into a machine [...], it will achieve the objective, and we lose" (Russel 2019: 11). Humans are still learning to define goals that remain meaningful and healthy in the long term. The desire of a paradise on earth can slowly produce hell on earth, for example a discretised prison in which the quest for security produces the death of our will to live joyfully and singularly. To counterbalance the rise of deterministic intelligence, based on probabilistic necessity and arithmomaniac paranoia, we need a culture of faith in natural intelligence and natural growth, that is a faith in deep listening, philosophical dialogue and a constantly renewed opening to the concept of creation as possibility for healing growth. Natural intelligence means being philosophically and (re)generatively attuned to the continuous (re)creations that may renew our shared experience of life on earth.

Beyond physical and psychological health, crealectic health needs indeed to be philosophical. We can define philosophical health as a state of meaningful, generative and honest coherence between one's ways of thinking and speaking and one's ways of acting, such that the possibilities for healing growth and for eudynamic forms of life are ever-renewed, allowing for self-possibility, self-demonstration and well-belonging. There is no fixed recipe to achieve this; it is a thinking and collective process of meaning as healing and theory as creative therapy: "Overwhelmingly, theory is bodily, and theory is literal. Theory is not about matters distant from the lived body; quite the opposite. Theory is *anything* but disembodied." (Haraway 1991: 299).

Closely tied to the invention of philosophy is the ideal of political flourishing, which seems to be related to this speculative moment where humanity starts aspiring to free itself from uncontrolled beliefs, fears, wars, dogmas and lack of mastery over its distributed destiny. With the historical advent of philosophical thinking, humanity may overcome its preoccupation with reactive survival or ever-deferred bliss in some extra-terrestrial promised land: "Perhaps the most significant heritage Plato left to utopian thought was the conviction that an ideal society was in some measure feasible" (Manuel and Manuel 1979: 112).

This essay was written as the coronavirus pandemic and therefore nature was compared to a monster among us, justifying all sorts of closures, discouragements, and a paranoid freezing of life-affirming singularities. In this article, I have argued against the morbid politics that seem to dominate our anthrobotic realms, constantly forcing us to exit the world rather than entering life:

> When the system of connections closes in on itself, when
> symbolic action becomes perfect, the world is frozen in a dance

> of death. The cosmos is finished, and it is One. Paranoia is the only possible posture; generous suspicion is foreclosed. To 'press enter' is, in that world, a terrible mistake. The whole argument of 'The Promises of Monsters' has been that to 'press enter' is not a fatal error, but an inescapable possibility for changing maps of the world, for building new collectives (Harraway 1991: 327).

The apparent monstrosity of nature is a gift. The promise of monsters is that they can be *de-monstrated*, assimilated without being exterminated or explained away. Otherness and singularity are healthily articulated into our meaningful world. We must learn to live creatively and bravely with our viruses. A meta-pandemic regenerative politics means the awareness that we can constantly, from the point of view of the Creal, co-create the Real within a horizon of healing growth.

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