The Phoenix Complex and the Nihility of Time

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The proposed paper recaptures the concept of Phoenix Complex introduced by Spanish philosopher Michael Marder during his eight-session seminar held in The New Centre for Research & Practice. In a nutshell, the concept denotes a set of cosmological and natural philosophical implications rooted in human psyche, precisely beliefs, persuasions and attitudes regarding the infinite rebirth, fecundity and renewability of nature, its resources, entities, space in general. To overcome this attitude, Marder iterates, this set must be worked through as if it was any other thinkable complex in psychoanalytical / psychotherapist practice. In the paper, I argue that: Marder's concept is aligned with a tendency in history and contemporary philosophy known today as 'correlationism'; the grounding thesis of the attitudes of Phoenix Complex is a strong metaphysical claim about the nature of time, namely, one's postulating of time's infinity; finally, opposing to this metaphysical claim an opposite metaphysical principle that is defined as 'finitude principle', I would propose my own solution, a practice and approach of overcoming the Phoenix Complex, within the realm of nihility of time and particular consequences which are legitimate to be inferred from facticity of the latter.

Keywords: phoenix complex, correlationism, philosophy of nature, philosophy of time, finitude principle, deep time, entropy, contingency.

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Introduction

Conceived as an *organon*, philosophy may be interpreted as an organon of (1) extinction, (2) resignation, and (3) unlearning. Their threefold synthesis may serve as a grounding for getting through, working with, and getting over what Michael Marder, in his series of seminars (Marder, 2022), defined as Phoenix Complex – an implication of indestructability of nature, a belief and proclamation of its instant rebirth, against all the postulates of contemporary science. The aforementioned synthesis is achievable through the reflection on metaphysics of time, time-perception, time-consciousness and unfathomable cosmic time, precisely because the overcoming of Phoenix Complex may be conceived as unlearning with a disposition of

its machinery/apparatus, a set of attitudes of human species towards time: its perception, interpretation and representation (in philosophy, religion, mythology, arts, literature and common sense).

In the philosophical realm, Phoenix Complex intersects with so-called 'correlationism': both share an attitude towards temporality definable as 'unresolvability principle' – explicit, tacit or implicit attempts of *domestication* of time as a long-term tradition, perhaps, preeminent, if compared to all the other modalities and attitudes towards time, since the beginning of human expression in observable and accessible scope. Domestication of time is an attempt, metaphysical disposition directly and univocally opposed to the idea of 'Unbound diachrony', time-as-untamed-and-unmastered, as well as possessing unidirectional impact on what and how happens in space. The idea of time-domestication is unfold by postulating, proclaiming, 'deduction' or another alleged 'proof' of time's infinity, manipulability, circularity, property of non-depletion, possibility of its being regained, enhanced, augmented, relaunched, controlled in any other way from the position of space or an agent in particular, stretched further, conceived as having no beginning – to put it in short, bluntly speaking, these all are attempts of sewing 'the end to end ad infinitum', without the factual end as an ultimate event in time, after which nothing at all follows, attempts of stripping time from its most ghoulish, macabre and appalling property: its finitude.

If time is finite, then it is the destroyer of the Universe. If it is finite, then there is no rebirth: so, there is the day when no Phoenix would arise from the ashes. If the postulates of thermodynamics, and namely Clausius – Boltzmann – Prigogine implications concerning the disgregation, energetic dissipation, and time-arrow irreversibility, are legitimate, then the ashes of the Phoenix are doomed, being subjected to the heat death of the Universe – as anything else. If the ultimate and ineluctable End of All Things (as Kant calls it) is the case, and the end of each particular thing is asymmetrical with respect to the timescale, then everything is exposed to what Quentin Meillassoux describes, adding to the thermodynamical principle of entropy, as supercontingency: an alethic modality of abrupt potential finitude of any phenomenon, object, thing, law, process, at any given moment of time without exceptions (as well as to the possibility of its existence, but only until the ultimate end of time which is necessitated – as a strong metaphysical claim countering those where the infiniteness of time is a closuring case). It must be admitted that almost all the history of philosophy [taken as a succession of the histories of systematised thought, as Foucault puts it], from its very beginning and up to the contemporary, has inherited the attitudes, intended to master, tame, dominate time at least in the realm of metaphysical domain of postulating what is time and how is it related to space, and to thought itself.

More precisely, correlationism designates [at least] three levels of strong metaphysical claims about the correlation between the I, the thinking agent, the mind, and the world, physical reality, Universe, you name it. It postulates that 'I World' correlation is inevitable and indestructible, that the world without thought cannot exist and, therefore, not merely 'unthinkable', but impossible. Contrasted to, for instance, metaphysics of subjective idealism, its distinctive feature is that its kernel in metaphysical foundations is not ontology, but epistemology. With respect to such a representation of correlationism, what was previously defined as three levels, was briefly and effectively put by Brassier: '[…] we can know the for-us but we can only think the in-itself. […] we can know that what is for-us is also in-itself. […] the speculative identification of the for-us with the in-itself is only for-us' (Brassier, 2017: 68-69).

These three variations of correlationism may be, correspondingly, designated as: weak correlationism, speculative idealism and strong correlationism. The first is connected to the

thought of Kant, the second – to that of Hegel and the third – to the ideas of Heidegger, Habermas, Derrida and many others. In weak correlationism we have the reality of things (objects, properties, processes, relations) relativized to the transcendental correlation – objectivity subsumed to the correlation of it with transcendental subjectivity, the mind of a subject – posited to be the transcendental condition of time and space. In speculative idealism we have this correlation of 'I' and 'World' absolutised as necessary (rather than merely being factual). Hegel, in certain sense, temporalizes (historically) the correlation, nesting it in rational structure: the absolute is grounded in reason as a necessity underlying the unfolding of the world as such both to and for consciousness [in this sense, as Nick Land puts it, 'Hegel thinks history, but not time']. Strong correlationism, in its turn: (1) relativises dogmatised absolute (any possible in-itself) through the linking it to the correlation (as in-itself which is always for us); (2) absolutises the facticity of the correlation in order to block the facticity of finitude which, in its turn, enables to unfold and absolutise the impact of time on the correlation, de-absolutising it.

Such are the postulates of what we know today as correlationism, in one of many instances which are to be summarised as a philosophical intention to absolutise the 'Mind – World' correlation, to postulate the impossibility of the death of mind from two sides: transcendental status of the subject as epistemic subject (the notions about the world are constitutive to the world's existence in absolute sense), and the world as something infinite or necessarily possessing a capability of circular 'relaunch' where such a relaunching ensures the infinite existence of the mind. On the other hand, what I understand as Phoenix Complex, actually retains the ontology as its kernel for strong metaphysical claims of a certain kind, postulating the perpetual rebirth as what may be regarded as one of the grounding claims of a kind. And that is what makes it different from the metaphysical grounding of the philosophy, which is referred today as 'correlationist'. What common is this idea, which I denote as 'unresolvability principle' that becomes visible only if we try to demount, deconstruct, and decompose the Phoenix Complex. Perhaps, the former may be thought as one of the subcomplexes comprising the latter.

1. Phoenix Complex and Finitude Principle

Similarly to the given subdivision of the forms of correlationism, I would also like to present a set of principles, according to which the instances (the particulars) of the Phoenix Complex (conceived as a universal to such particulars) may be classified and, then, associated with correlation and unresolvability principle.

(1) Principle of Inevitability (strong anthropic principle) which is set out against contingency: whatever way the Universe is rerun in time 'from zero', it would never be short of life, at least in *some* form. The organic matter would *inevitably* be born and reborn from inorganic 'ashes'.

(2) Totalisation-Rebirth Principle: everything discontinuous and particular which is destroyed is with necessity reborn as a part of One in the form of totality of eternal 'true' being; such One is unborn-undying, has no beginning and is unending. Wherever and whenever something discrete and particular is born and dies, it is never annihilated in a full sense, but, instead, in its quasi-dissolution conjoins with One, becoming a part of it.

(3) Non-Closure Principle. A notion of lifespan, in a sense contradicts the assertion of infinity. The problem of the beginning lies in the problem of birth itself: how the first birth has taken place? And was there such an Ur-Birth/Ur-Gründ at all? The implication of non-beginning would assume either having the end or not, but, at the same time, the absence

of the arche is more plausible to deduce the absence of the end then having an arche. This principle deals with the postulation of the absence of Closure for things in particular and/or the Universe as such on the basis of the absence of the Opening. Any particular Closure always serves here as a new Opening, so the continuity always takes place as a general principle, precisely because at the very beginning, there was no Beginning, Ur-Birth, or Un-Universe (similarly to their aesthetic representations by Robert Fludd or Kazimir Malevich).

(4) Plenitude Principle: all the potentialities are eventually realised, thus, nothing can truly perish because, if it is, there would be an empty space, rupture in the nature as a space of realisations of possibles. This principle presupposes the totality of Aristotelian teleology: in the space of realisations, everything must be realised, because, if something remains unrealised, everything else either mustn't be realised.

(5) 'Protagoras' Principle': if a *human* is moral, then *everything* is moral, and the cosmos itself is built on the same basis as human's Lebenswelt does. Since it does so, then, since the purposelessness and absolute finitude is simply evil and immoral, there must be not only purpose, but some perpetuity or infinity which justifies the cosmos and, particularly, the human. This principle is an extrapolation of our moral principles onto the cosmic scales: to be annihilated is immoral, to discontinue the existence is unjust; therefore, there should be some sort of rebirth, reincarnation, or infinity.

(6) Cosmic Nonchalance Principle: an assertion based on the attitude towards the cosmos, according to which the extinction of the particulars does not negate the 'forever' status of life [particularly, life of the mind]; such an extinction (of species, biocenoses, planets, planetary systems) would not eventually matter since the intelligent life is not just *common* within the scope of the Universe (at least within Metagalaxy scales), but is also recurrent.

(7) Principle of Renewability: even if all the sources and elements of power (from food to energetic sources) would be fully depleted, there is always a possibility of somehow relaunching them, reworking, recycling, or, overall speaking, of recreation of what has been lost, to serve it to us in another additional way which would cover our needs.

(8) Genealogical Smooth-Continuation Principle: nothing can fully and eventually die precisely because everything that dies is reborn in another organism, better or worse than its predecessor, but anyway including the latter in itself. So even the species which is extinct 'as such' is preserved in species that follow. Although being partially based on evolutionism, this principle was formulated some time before Darwinian ideas and, therefore, doesn't imply evolutionary succession of species, rather considering the perpetuity of the interplay of what was and what it is with regards to what follows.

To all these attitudes, a viable counter-thesis, dismantling, demounting and, eventually, unlearning strategy, opening a possibility of eventual resignation, a discourse, narrative and methodology, is a metaphysical principle which may be defined as Finitude principle. This principle is itself what has been previously outlined as one of the forms of a synthesis of three organons: extinction, unlearning and resignation – a synthesis which is performed from the perspective of temporality. This synthesis is to be made on the basis of certain metaphysical assertions, distinctions, decomposition and criticisms towards the outlined principles of Phoenix Complex instances, correlationist philosophical attitudes and unresolvability principle's premises and consequences.

To outline this synthesis, we should go back to the problem of distinction between two such ideas as extinction and eschatology, for one being the part of the problem, and the other – its alleged solution. The three things discussed above (the Phoenix Complex, metaphysical 'I – World' correlation, and unresolvability principle), seem to be fairly grounded in a long-term

tradition within the history of human expression towards time as infinite or domesticated, but not only limited to this aspect as a unifying principle for them. All three, in addition, deny the extinction. As Thomas Moynihan writes about the meaning of the latter, which I think is important to be considered here, '[…] human extinction is a comparatively novel idea, one that remained entirely unavailable for the greater part of our existence as species' (Moynihan, 2020: 8). In its generality, 'Extinction means that the wider universe continues without our species' (Ibid.: 32).

The concept of extinction is different from what may be defined as apocalyptic narratives and eschatological traditions; for the latter represent 'the termination of humanity and that of nature as a whole are usually coterminous and coeval' (Ibid.: 32). Contrarily to the extinction, which would mean the end of observation (both actuality and possibility of the latter), eschatology is an observation of the end with an implication of a 'life after the aftermath': life after the end. Yet, in different modalities of such an afterlife, for instance, after-Ragnarok existence of the world is aligned precisely with Phoenix the new world is gradually being reborn from the ashes, becoming-as-old by its constitution (new gods, substantially old ones, are born again); while in Christian eschatology we deal with 'City of God Dystopia' which pretends to be endless, not as much reborn as part of the old world that is saved, transited into the new one, where some augmented elements are built and that is to be the new world 'after the End of Days' as a state to be preserved in infinity, as eternal order.

The matter is important because eschatological traditions, as well as apocalyptic narratives, are explicitly inherent for correlationism and, tacitly, for Phoenix Complex. In other words, aside from the mentioned instances: if the nature is undying, so does the mind, if the mind is eternal, so does the nature, and nature and the mind are co-constitutive in their eternal recurrence, being or re-birth. This is where we, again, have the nature (as-space) to be separated from time (as a nature-being transcendental condition). The nature, thus, is taken as atemporal and, at the same time, as a part of this correlation between the 'I' and what is allegedly conceived as 'nature' [deprived of its temporality – 'deep time' or, in other words, of cosmic time which constitutes the nature's dynamics]. It is what may be described in the most proper sense as a subjective and epistemically-grounded account of nature – the nature-as-atemporal or nature-as-synchronicity. Extinction refers to finitude (although, within the temporal dimension, only tacitly), while eschatology refers to infinity or eternity. Generally speaking, such a movement, as an instance of a violation of Hume's guillotine principle (a transition from logical possibility 'the nature is thinkable as atemporal' to physical necessity 'the nature is atemporal'), designates the tacit transition from metaphysical grounding to the ungrounded.

To continue, let us now take a closer look at 'time-domestication' attitudes in science and philosophy, for their subversion is a second target of the Finitude principle. First, elaborated and well-posited attempts of the liberation of the mind from the prodigal 'dogmatic slumber' of time-domestication on a serious level with relevant takes and stakes, perhaps, have their beginning in the 19th century. For instance, sr. William Herschel in 1814 asserts that, gazing into our galaxy, the Milky Way, one stares at a gargantuan chronometer; but what follows is, as he puts it, the fact that not only its past duration 'cannot be infinite' – in the same vein, 'it cannot last forever' (Herschel, 2013: 541). Another notable contribution was from the geology and palaeontology at their first stages of becoming, when they haven't been aligned with the evolutionary theory. In its 'less scientific' (than contemporary) form it has postulated the idea of irreversible and discrete, mass extinctions of species, populations and the whole ecosystems posited as having no descendants, successors or continuity: an abrupt ultimate elimination without any traces in futurity except for the fossils and 'archefossils'.

Although being refuted by contemporary science, back in the days, in this rudimentary form, this idea played a crucial role for the intellectuals, philosophers, scientists and writers to reflect upon our own past and future conditions and our perspectives, perils, risks – as well as all this at cosmic scales. It may be one of the first times when the fate of the Universe derived not from the extrapolation of our morals, wishes, fears, hopes, desires, imperatives, conditions, events and expectation, but, instead, then the fate of the Other was, instead, extrapolated onto our own fate, our past, present and future condition. The future-oriented implications of nature have been reversed: instead of future-oriented idea of nature drawn from our view of the human history in vital time, the vision of future, our history was plotted from the analogies derived from the observed 'curves' of deep time, non-living / inhuman temporalities, exposing the modality of the future of nature as future-without-us, but not only.

Other notably discovery which was indirectly implied by the concept of 'deep time', posited by such founders of geology as James Hutton and Charles Lyell, is that, deep time is not an infinite time [as they have put it, laying out the idea of perpetual, infinite 'revolutions' of planetary and interstellar scales], because infinity has no depths at all. Hutton's 'abyss of time' actually represents the perpetual comeback to the starting point, that is, the point of the observer (we should keep in mind that the concept of 'observer' hadn't been introduced into natural sciences of that time). As Moynihan puts it, 'It's more difficult to consider the approximately 14 billion year lifespan of the Universe than to simply affirm that it has always been here. […] Eternity is shallow and uninformative. Moreover, eternity deprives our actions of any existential stakes because, in infinite time, everything valuable that disappears eventually returns' (Moynihan, 2020: 206).

Although I do not completely accept the last consideration because it remains close to ethics and applies the concept of 'value' to cosmic scales, I agree with the first part and would extend it to the following conclusion (which would be explicated in what follows): it is infinitely harder to consider, accept and derive any inference from the fact of enormous but finite time that is left for the world than it is from the infinite time. While the latter is a thinkable synchronicity, a time domesticated, the former is 'the rage of jealous time', lethal, unbound diachrony, – a finitude imposing an ineluctable end on all things and, because of this imposing, even more, unfathomable to thought. That is to say, the length of cosmic time (both past and present) is so disproportionate to the vital time, be it species or its' representative (or succeeding species), that, to put it into the graspable disposition is to conceptualise it as infinite instead of 'unimaginably large, yet finite, cosmological [literally meaning, giving a logos/nomos to cosmos, ordering it] arrow'.

2. From Infinite to 'Infinitely Long' but Finite

What comes next, is an attempt to conceive a 'paradox' of an infinitely-long-yet-finite duration contrarily to infinite duration of time, in sound and consistent form. Just as the geology of the first half of the 19th century asserted that there is no origination, and, therefore, no extinction on cosmic scale would ever take place, that for an eternity the downfall of a singular is nothing, that time is an orbit, a cyclic return of the same in the guise of Plenitude, the opposite inference was derived later from the same facts and observations at the second half of the 19th century from the side of thermodynamics and fundamental natural sciences in general. In 1868, Rudolf Clausius lays out the basic principles of what he denotes as entropy (Clausius, 1868: 417-419). Entropy was the assertion and resignation that the changes in physical reality are actually derived through the disbalance and the movement towards balance eventualises into the end of any activity. That the equilibrium is actually

not a perpetual movement and change of the forces (active and retroactive), but a universal inactivity. Instead of going into 'unending cycles' with the same parameters and conditions constantly taking place, the Universe actually moves towards 'a state of unchanging death' where, eventually, no any further change would ever more be able to take place (Ibid.).

And this was the idea of nature without a future. The idea was that, contrarily to Lyell and Hutton, there is no perpetual equilibrium between the forces of destruction and creation put in effect on the universal scales – instead, since the time begun there is a constant and irreversible tendency, a movement/transition, to the decay, and all the cosmogenesis is this tendency to decomposition, putrefaction and perishing of cosmos. That the final state of what is in fact 'equilibrium', for us is a total disequilibrium, that is, a disintegration, heat death of the Universe, 'the impossibility of cosmology', as contemporary physics and philosophy put it. With respect to the described shift to 'no future' principle, it may be subsumed as: although the nature definitely has some futures, at the very end, it has no future as such, since everything would ultimately end, including what we understand as nature in any possible sense. When we speak about Boltzmann, as a continuer of Clausius, we may think of the postulates of thermodynamics as a transcendental law hinting to an inevitability of the dissolution of matter in time: the degradation of energy, the flux of tendential energy, the thermospasmic shock. At the end, this moves even beyond the thesis 'extinction is forever'; what the notions of 'entropy' and 'heat death of the universe' entail on metaphysical level is: 'there is even no forever'. Therefore, the question of a kind 'is it possible that life which has died at one location in the Universe would reborn elsewhere?' or any similar would be irrelevant because, eventually, there is no time available for any sort of rebirth, at a certain point. The lack may very well be not in 'where', but of 'when'. In the most profound, metaphysical sense, such an inference was derived through the cancellation of the opposition between absolute finitude and infinity in favour of the former, by eliminating the latter as an assumption and grounding for any possible claim about the nature of reality. This is Kant's antinomy resolved in favour of one of the possible solutions presented by Kant as unresolvable. To my mind, this antinomy, from the very beginning, is precisely a form of defence against the cosmos, described by Nick Land as 'the most elaborated form of panic in the history of the Earth'. As Michel Foucault tries to explain the problem of antinomies (as well as their genealogy), '[…] since Kant, the role of philosophy has been to prevent reason from going beyond the limits of what is given in experience' (Foucault, 2020: 298).

Indeed, the future, finitude – infinity antinomy, anything what follows is not something that is given in the experience, and it, as well, can be a fancy addition to Land's assertion. Yet, this is not a fruitful explanation or explication of the problem, because the problem of time, temporality etc. precedes Kant and his antinomies. What Kant does is an attempt to pinpoint the problem to certain grounding on which the domestication of time should be considered to be sufficiently reasoned. That is, what Land sees (in more metaphorical then philosophical sense) as 'panic' and Foucault tries to explicate in more precise manner: as putting the limits to philosophy, reason, mind etc. Kant's antinomies, implications of correlationism, unresolvability principle, as well as Phoenix Complex (those parts of it which I have outlined as relevant in part (II.) with respect to the essay's subject) may be viewed in general perspective as manifold instances of what Frederico Nieto describes as 'the explicit muting of cosmic trauma that is precisely brought to the fore by the overwhelming of transcendental temporality over our own whimsical and fairly lackluster empirical givenness within the indifferent contingent flow of the universe' (Nieto, 2023).

3. Lyotard's Wager

In the book *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, Jean-Francois Lyotard puts the problem of finitude and temporality in the following way:

> 'You philosophers ask questions without answers, questions that have to remain unanswered to deserve being called philosophical. According to you answered questions are only technical matters. […] You turn to other questions that seem completely impossible to answer: which by definition resist every attempt at conquest by the understanding. [Y]ou grant yourselves the privilege of continuing to regard as unresolved, that is as well formulated, questions that technical science believes it answered but in truth only inadequately dealt with. […] While we talk, the sun is getting older. It will explode in 4.5 billion years. It's just a little beyond the halfway point of its expected lifetime. It's like a man in his early forties with a life expectancy of eighty. With the sun's death your insoluble questions will be done with too. It's possible they'll stay unanswered right up to the end, flawlessly formulated, though now both grounds for raising such questions as well as the place to do this will no longer exist. You explain: it's impossible to think an end, pure and simple, of anything at all, since the end's a limit and to think it you have to be on both sides of that limit. [T]his is true of limits belonging to thought. But after the sun's death there won't be a thought to know that its death took place.
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> […] In 4.5 billion years there will arrive the demise of your phenomenology and your utopian politics, and there'll be no one there to toll the death knell or hear it. [Y]our passionate, endless questioning always depended on a 'life of the mind' that will have been nothing else than a covert form of earthly life. A form of life that was spiritual because human, human because earthly coming from the Earth of the most living of living things. […] With the disappearance of Earth, thought will have stopped – leaving that disappearance absolutely unthought of' (Lyotard, 1993: 8-9).

His brilliantly formulated challenge to the history of philosophy as being another idiosyncratic reaction towards the problem of temporality I call Lyotard's Wager. The Wager which has not merely reaffirmed the implications of metaphysical pessimism (of Schopenhauer, Mainländer or von Hartmann) or its late derivatives (such as Tønnessen, Zapffe, Crawford, Benatare, or Thacker) – Lyotard's Wager's significance lies in its act of transition of pessimism from the realm/domain of being to the realm of time (a thing perceived, but never achieved by such pretentious metaphysicians as Heidegger with his claims about mastering time, just as other correlationists after and before him). As such, this wager is thrown in the face of what has been defined as the unresolvability principle – it actually uncovers it as an implicit, tacit, or explicit dispositions within the history of philosophy. Since the principle itself is asserted as a component of the Phoenix Complex (and correlationism), I consider it is eligible to extrapolate the challenge postured by Lyotard to the extent of all three.

This implication of the philosophies of pessimism, wagered towards the historical philosophical 'time-domestication paradigms', is aligned with findings of the natural sciences of the 19th – first half of 20th centuries, from the ones which have been discussed above to even more 'neutral' and 'mainstream' theories and concepts: Big Bang, two instances of Einstein's Relativity Theory, Weinberg's and Hawking's M-Theory, Michio Kaku's

soteriological speculations on the nature of the Intelligence self-preservation in the face of the end of all things, Prigogine's motifs concerning the unidirectional irreversibility of the cosmological time-arrow aligned with the foundations of Boltzmann's/Clausius's/Kelvin's thermodynamics implications, as well as with Big Rip or Big Crunch hypotheses.

What all these share in common is the factuality of obsession with time and its finitude, and, consequently, the aftermaths of finitude arriving immediately after the Finitude principle is accepted; the basic and foundational assertion of the irreversibility as a ruling principle instead of the implications aligned with 'solarpunk' attitudes, those of the renewability, salvation, resolution, deferring or denial of the imminence of end; the resignation that only blind faith and ungrounded hopes, dreams, desires are nowadays the sources for the beliefs implying at most potential (not speaking of actual) possibility of infinity, perpetuity, repetition, rebirth, eternity. In other words, it may be viewed as a stimulus for a response which, in its ultimate form, is the Finitude principle: when his challenge concerning the Solar System and life of the mind on the Earth in particular, is extrapolated to the Universe in general, no place remains for rebirth in any thinkable.

Subsuming: the most prominent hypotheses of physical cosmology, such as the Heat Death of the Universe, Big Rip, Big Crunch, etc., are grounded on Finitude principle. Each of them, in one form or another, postulates the irreversible and absolutely transcendental, as well as contingent, End of All Things. From Lyotard's Wager, it is eligible to make a transition to more universalised problematisation, developed further by Land and Meillassoux: even if the Death of the Sun wouldn't eventually be the cause of the ultimate perishing of human species or intelligent life in the Universe in its generality (be it our Solar System or any alike), the Heat death of the Universe / Big Rip / Crunch will be such an ultimate. On the other hand, even if, on the timescale, the cause for such a perishing wouldn't be calculated as a factual singular or polyvocal death-event with relatively high degree of probability, there's always a place for a transcendental catastrophe – an imminent disaster with irreversible eliminative consequences which mind is simply incapable to calculate, deduce, assume or anticipate: a disaster which has already taken place in future which will have happened in the sequence of the events unfolding in a time-space continuum from a human-like observer's perspective with regards to the future events related to this observer's ontic strata.

The perspective of the problem of the impossibility of prediction and calculation of the possibility or even the existence of such an imminent annihilating threat here is stressed not with regards to space as such, but to time-consciousness limitations, if we are to speak about the actual and hypothetical host of intelligence, that is, any host of intelligence capable of only one-directional and one-dimensional perception of the time flow. Lyotard's Wager stems in two directionalities of temporal nature, the first is of the finitude of the Universe in time, and the second is of the impossibility of probabilistic calculation of the disaster which may potentially eliminate – at any moment – mind or life as such, without any possibility of its renewal or re-emergence.

In the first instance of such an emanation of what may be defined as *transcendental catastrophism*, we deal with the impossibility of prediction and vision of things to come. In the second – with knowing very well of such things, as well as knowing that there is no way to change them, and the ultimate outcome, despite knowing what the outcome would be and what are its causes.

As for the last attempts of preservation of the Phoenix Complex / Unresolvability principle attitudes in science, there is a set of hypotheses known as Big Bounce hypotheses/theories. Their general idea is grounded on oscillatory model of the Universe, postulating a cyclic

repetition of the Big Bangs/Crunches, sequences where the first cosmological event, that is, a primordial Big Bang, is a result of the collapse (Big Crunch) of some 'previous' Universe. Despite the recent successful creations of theoretical models (such as nonsingular Big Bounce theory in the Einstein-Cartan-Sciama-Kibble theory of gravity), the question with such models remains open, especially with regards to the nature, flow, and secondary, but still problematic, the directionality of temporality: why had the Ur-Universe started expanding at all? was there such a beginning? why, if there was, must one assume the infiniteness of [postulated] bouncing? Instead of the latter, one may assume not an infinite bouncing, but rather finality and finitude, the possibility of collapsing into None instead of the infinite repetition.

Implicit or tacit assertion here, again, must be one and the same thing: the infinity of time! If the Universe is a physical-cosmological Phoenix, which dies and reborns from the ashes each time throughout the enormous cosmic time scales, then, to be actually *undying*, it must be *unborn*. What Big Bounce hypotheses are unable to respond is this problem of unbirth / undying, precisely because of lacking coherent explanation of why has anything born at all and why has it not disappeared immediately after taking place or prior to it.

Previously, we have discussed a weak correlationism. Now, with regards to the problem of in-/finitude and Phoenix Complex, the penultimate attempt should be discussed. In-between the two dispositions lies also a set of numerous hypotheses of time reversal, commonly known as T-symmetry. It postulates a preservation of qualitative symmetry of the physical laws under the hypothetical condition/event/sequence of time reversal. In a sense, this attitude represents 'weak' Phoenix Complex instances, some of the best coherent attempts, more or less, to save its foundations and groundings in a realm of physical cosmology.

Yet, it may be said that any asserted implication of the T-symmetry as such that would speak in favour of the Phoenix Complex attitudes is, in a sense, ill-founded when it actually comes to time-reversibility as a potential or virtual eventuality. Even if this would be the case that time becomes reversible and that such a process (uni-directional flow/sequence of events in time in reverse order, given hypothetically) is to be actualised; even if the whole set of the basic physical laws is to be preserved, there is a minimal actual set of classical variables which is proven to be negated by the fact of the time reversal (where potential and virtual set may exceed this minimal postulated set). To them there are included at least such physical variables as magnetisation and magnetic field; power; electromagnetic vector potential; particle velocity; particle linear momentum, angular momentums (orbital and spin); event occurrence time; electric current density; Poynting vector (electromagnetic field powerflow).

All that actually speaks in favour of the fact that, even if there would have been at least basic form or aspect of time-domestication, its material consequences would have fallen to some of these possibilities: (1) either the sequences would be fully uncontrolled and unpredicted; (2) or they would be irreversibly destructive with regards to microscopic parameters which are to change with regards to quantum objects; (3) or, if those consequences would not be totally destructive [in a full sense of meaning], then, at least, they would be contingent enough to turn a reversibility from an alleged virtue into a potential – virtual – actual disaster.

4. '3Rs' Ungrounded

The last case I would like to discuss is a set of ideas, attitudes and principles aligned with Phoenix Complex, correlationism, and unresolvability principle. These are the ideas of recombination, re-potentiation, reactualisation, lineage, rebirth, relaunch, circularity,

succession, plentitude, preservation, totalisation, recycling, reincarnation, revival, regrowth, and reassembling. All these are reducible to '3Rs': Repeatability, Replaceability and Renewability. Each of these attributes, in a sense, represents the modalities, conditions and properties of the states of affairs implied by the instances of Phoenix Complex in thought, expression, practices and normative commitments. Renewability, for example, is aligned with the implication of immortality – an idea of not-coming-to-an-end through the constant regeneration and reparation. The same is true for Replaceability – like Theseus' ship, it postulates the possibility of the replacement of a part or the rebirth of a whole in a far different time and place. Or, as principle (8) from representation of the Phoenix Complex instances goes, everything that is extinct is reborn into something new which includes what has gone extinct as its part in itself, bearing its part as a Continuity. That is, the Continuity precisely aligns, in this sense, with both Replaceability and Immortality.

It is worth mentioning that Immortality itself is not identical to Infinity, and Infinity is precisely what derived from the attribute of Repeatability. If Immortality would mean one or another form of undying, with Infinity we deal with a sort of perpetuity, as a path of constant return without the final return (non-return step is withdrawn); or eternal recurrence as Nietzsche puts it; or as Levinas' death → rebirth continuity of I in the Other. Repeatability, therefore, implies one or another form of Infinity: the infinity of repletion of the resources (in contrast to Renewability as a revival or rebirth, it implies the infinite amount of them allocated in the infinite spacetime continuum); the infinity of repetition of being in the form of birth and rebirth of what dies, either as the same or as the Other as carrying the continuity with what has died – infinity as non-perishing.

If we consider Phoenix Complex as a failure, refusal or incapability of conceiving and resignation of the absoluteness of finitude or, which is the same, the finitude as principle, we, then, should try to propose a counterpositions to '3Rs' from the viewpoint of Finitude principle. It may go as follows: even if the Repeatability is the case, either with regards to the infinity of resources for repletion, or with the fecundity principle as a guarantee of the infinite/recurrent/eternal replication/reproduction in the domain of space, if time is finite, these infinities, regardless of their exact nature, are exposed to perishing because of the imminence of the End of all things, including those which are potentially capable of infinite reproduction and growth; even if Replaceability is the case and everything that has gone extinct would reappear in any other place, or, even if, in the physical reality, there are always 'spare parts' for the replacement of the 'parts', 'details', even worlds or species which have been lost, eliminated, damaged, – the finitude of time nullifies the potential replacements ad infinitum, that is, even the replacement is physically possible, it is never the case that it is by the same token would be temporally possible; as for the Renewability: even if there is a possibility of instant recycling, rearrangement, renewal of the energy, fuel, food, being, matter, life, etc. from the metaphysical 'ashes' (any material which is eligible to being the substrate / substance to be the basis of such a renewal), even if there is a substance capable of the infinite renewal, because of the finitude of time, this potential of the unending renewal is nullified and becomes finite by its actuality (regardless of potentiality).

Concluding Remarks

The Phoenix Complex is closely connected with philosophical dispositions of correlationism and the unresolvability principle. All three are grounded on an assumption of the infinity of time as a transcendental condition of their proper functioning, soundness, consistency and reciprocity of their discourses. Because of that, in my assertion, one of

the ways of at least partial overcoming of the Phoenix Complex is a development of the narratives, concepts, theories, speculative models opposed to its metaphysical claims about time and temporality, generally defined as Finitude principle. The latter implies, relies on and explicitly adopts finitude and contingency – in arts, philosophy, literature, science, or any of their intersections, as a metaphysical grounding of the narratives, dispositions, theories, etc. which they produce. As the historical review shows, the basis for establishing, proclaiming, adoption and resignation of Finitude principle has already formed within the literature, science and philosophy in manifold instances and from the different angles of problematising.

If overcoming of the Phoenix Complex is taken not only as something of the psyche (unconscious and conscious) which should be worked with and undergone through, but also as an unlearning, then the crucial step to such an unlearning is a resignation. And, as such, a resignation is possible only through the acceptance of 'Lyotard's wager' and its derivations, as well as the other developments of the implications of Finitude principle. This resignation would as well involve the necessity of the acceptance of the fact of the superiority of time over space with regards to the dominating representations of 'space – time' continuum intrinsic relations, especially, those of their ordination and subsumption. On the one hand, one accepts the contingency of events with regards to the transcendental catastrophism brought by the time arrow with regards to the sequencing and ordering of the events; on the other, one resigns the facticity of the end of all things and the ultimate face of the Universe as being in one or another form finite, with the finitude be postulated either not from the domain of space, or regardless of the finitude of space, but because of the finitude of time – in both cases.

The idea of space being supervenient on time (time being superior over space) in such an acceptance must not be taken as merely a logical possibility or necessity, but as the one of ontological nature – as an assertion or the claim about the nature of physical reality with all the derivable consequences from such a state of affairs. In the context of unlearning, the three 'Rs' of the Phoenix Complex, Repeatability, Replaceability and Renewability should also, gradually or simultaneously, should be changed by their opposites as grounding attributes: Singularity (as non-Repeatability), Uniqueness, and Depleting (negation of the idea of perpetual).

Finally, with respect to the implications of the Phoenix Complex, unresolvability principle and 'I – World' correlationism, the crucial distinction should be made from the side of the attitudes and narratives aligned with the Finitude principle: the distinction between the apocalypse/eschatology and extinction. Where the former tells off the path of the eternity and infinite time, the latter postulates the path of finitude and non-return – extinction is forever, and, at the same time, in a physicalcosmological sense, there is no forever. Moynihan writes: 'Above all, the strange evolutionary path of the human has somehow made it the only creature to be conscious that, beyond the individual's precarious condition, its kind as a whole faces existential risk' (Moynihan, 2020: 355). To reiterate his claim: human is the only known creature apt of unlearning of its own metaphysical *implications* towards *temporality* – the only known to date conscious of subjective, intersubjective, species, mesoscales levels, as well as universal finitude and contingency towards time.

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