

# Simile on sense of self, virocell and the COVID19 pandemic

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## Abstract

The virocell concept of a viral lifecycle maintains that there are two main stages in a virus's existence. The one is a passive state of a virion, which is not a living entity, and the second one is the virocell. In the state of virocell, a virus infects a host's cell and hijacks its cellular machinery to achieve its own replication. Depending on the way that a cell reacts to a viral infection, it can have its activities or character as an individual living organism, suppressed completely, to some extent or not at all. In the article, the authors propose that there is analogy between the virocell theory as applied to the SARS-CoV-2 virus lifecycle and the sense of self for humans in the coronavirus pandemic world, and the post-COVID19 space-time. Methodology adopted is a combination of simile of Wittgenstein's parallel cases, autoethnography, the virocell concept of the SARV-CoV-2 lifecycle and a multi-individual nature of one's self based on the principles of the assemblage theory. The nature of human existence and the sense of self is defined as a relational notion which is tied to the societal educational standards, phases of developments of a human being and their fluid sense of self. The COVID19 pandemic space-time provides, in fact it demands that humanity undergoes an ongoing education of itself to maintain a productive and resilient movement forward for self and society, as an equivalent of the ribovirocell of a human cell infected with the coronavirus. The notion of speed will have to be unpacked and investigated further, which is done in part in a follow up article and is anchored as the defining characteristics of the post-COVID19 world.

**Keywords:** virocell; sense of self; resilience.

## Introduction

Self and individuality of a human being are at the core of the democratic world and the perception through which humans define themselves in relation to one another, to their surroundings and to the world at large. In the psychological and maybe

philosophical dimension, one's self can be defined in various ways, such as the following paraphrased statement...the self is 'capacity for growth and development, sum of all physiological and physical characteristics of a human being, introspection and evaluation of one's conduct and the source of one's ability to act...self is related to the source of one's agency' (APA, 2020). In addition, self is related to the process of gaining one's own identity or choosing identities in the context of or in relation to one's position in a society. In all the contexts of self, it is important to document and evaluate the process of one's uniqueness against the background of other humans and the environment. It is necessary for a human being to reflect continuously on the context of culture and society in which one's existence unfolds. Therefore it is of utmost importance to describe the landscape of reality in which one's individuality and distinct autonomy transpire or manifest themselves. Such description can be internal and private or can be done in communication with other members of the species with the Latin name of *Homo sapiens*. In this way, self is defined through auto, ethno and graphy of one's life...self can be philosophically and principally described using the principles of autoethnography (Adams and Herrmann, 2020).

This autoethnography approach is well captured in a recent article by Carless (2021), who discussed their personal anxiety, challenges, personal tragedies and assistance from friends and family outside of one's self, and how these assist one in getting through the tragedies brought on by the COVID19 pandemic. The title of the article is "Community of I" and it implies that even though a human being is an individual, their identity and their self is defined through interpersonal interactions with close or distant family and friends (Carless, 2021). COVID19 hit humanity in late 2019 and early 2020, but it was not the first pandemic-like threat in the 21st century (Nature Cancer, 2020). However, it was the first pandemic in about 100 years which led to the disruption of the normal functioning of human society on a global scale through impositions of cordone sanitaires and other non-pharmaceutical measures to contain the spread of the virus (Bagrath et al., 2020). Certain human rights and routines must still be maintained in spite of cordone sanitaires, but it is fair to say that the reality in which each human exists has been shifted. It could be argued that COVID19 brought on, or rather exacerbated, a sense of duality in the world and in the human existence, a duality of self. This duality has had several manifestations.

First manifestation of the COVID19 duality is related to the freedom of movement of one's self in space-time between prior to the onset of the current pandemic, and after from moment the widespread impact of the COVID19 pandemic on global society became entrenched. Human existence before COVID19 was limitless and not bound too much by time and space, by borders and boundaries. One's self could get on a plane and be in any place on Earth within 48 hours or less. A human and their self, with certain available resources at their disposal, could travel and move relatively freely

anywhere on Earth/anywhere with an oxygen-containing atmosphere so to speak. Thus before the COVID19 pandemic, the space-time as experienced by humanity was not a limiting factor of human existence (Santos and Azevedo, 2019), and one's self. After the pandemic started, human mobility around the globe have been compressed in space-time and boundless nature of movement is no more, at least not in the spatial sense of one's self (Bagrath et al., 2020).

Second manifestation of the duality of one's self before and after COVID19 is also related to space-time, but in a different way. This is the way of interaction with other people through physical closeness and visiting each other, through interaction on social media, through our cyber-existence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the past decade or so, social media has provided an avenue for every human to document their life, to upload their memories, pictures, and thoughts into the cyberspace. The way humans experience the reality has become boundless in a way, as social media allow us to share our lives and our own reality with the other humans or followers. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms have provided each human with the ability to link up with any human who had access to the internet and a smartphone or an internet-connected device, and they have a desire to relate to other humans in cyberspace. Thus before the COVID19 pandemic, one's self already existed as a 'Community of I' in the virtual sense (Carless, 2021). Space and time of humans' physical locations have become partially irrelevant, i.e. humanity was living in the space-time compression (Santos and Azevedo, 2019). That is that online presence and the sharing of pictures, memories in cyberspace provide for the human to be present wherever these are viewed and at any time. There was and still is also the physical 'Community of I', as it facilitated the creation of some of the thoughts and memories, it was the source material for the creation of our online self. Therefore one's self, one's 'Community of I' has been experiencing a duality of existence in physical and virtual world, the latter expanding.

The onset of the COVID 19 pandemic shifted the balance of self towards the virtual part of one's existence. People's online presence has increased in significance, as it has provided an avenue for maintaining family ties and it gave us a chance to travel through virtual nomadism (based on the authors' interpretation of the work by Santos and Azevedo, 2019), a way to travel through space-time at least in a virtual sense by browsing the internet and social media. Describing one's self in the context of the COVID19 pandemic has been redefined and the authors believe it is best described using the principles of autoethnography (Adams and Herrmann, 2020). However, a human being as an individual cannot write this autoethnographic story alone. Posts on social media by one's self, the reaction to those posts by the members of our 'Community of I' has provided an ongoing feedback loop. It has created a sense of constant reflexivity on one's self, one's position in a society and it has defined boundaries of one's identity. As

such, one's 'Community of I' represents an assemblage (Buchanan, 2015), i.e. actions we take are driven by ourselves in conjunction with other members of our immediate family, circle of friends and ultimately of society at large shape our lives and our social characteristics. Thus this assemblage has a purpose for its creation, i.e. to allow one's self to grow, to develop, to realise one's identity inside a society or in relation to other people, to describe our characteristics to the world of humans (Buchanan, 2015). The auto is one's self, the ethno is the culture of 'Community of I' and the graphy is the landscape which each human being shapes along with the world and their 'Community of I'... thus autoethnography description and approach apply.

Actions we take in our lives are often done after consultation with other members of our 'Community of I', i.e. these decisions are often shaped by distributive agency of 'Community of I' and all its members (Buchanan, 2015). The boundary or border which defines the outer periphery of the 'Community of I' is permeable in space-time, as it allows members to enter and leave at different points of the member's lives' journey. Besides people, said boundary is also permeable for ideas and knowledge. The permeability of the boundary of 'Community of I' allows one to learn and to develop fundamental epistemic authority of one's life, one's existence (Spaić, 2018). This assemblage allows a human to understand who they are in non-derivative sense, thus following the priority principle (Bailey, 2015), i.e. the 'Community of I' allows each one of us to know for certain who we are as an individual. New ideas and members of our 'Community of I' are the sources and foundation on which we can build individual knowledge and using which we can construct reflect on the world around us, it allows us to construct our sense of self. The 'Community of I' can also include pupils and students, as well as teachers and facilitators, who accompany us on the journey through our school careers and through achieving the societal rites of passage that shape societal identities. The 'Community of I' expands beyond education, or education is part of life in the everyday lived experiences of each members of *Homo sapiens*. One's self assemblage allows us to become persons in a society, i.e. it guides on the way to assume societal roles and identities (Callan et al., 2013). COVID19 has only accentuated these aspects of the 'Community of I' and this has been unfolding in the space-time compression and fluidity of everyday reality of one's existence, of the existence of *Homo sapiens*.

Even before the COVID19 pandemic, there have been many examples of the multitude of selves inside a single human being and the fluidity of self, or rather its variable nature. Example can be the representation of the geography of self, i.e. the poem 'We are many' by Pablo Neruda, which was analysed by Vogel (1987). COVID19 is a disaster, or a public health emergency for which we had originally no test, no vaccines, and no other measures besides severe limitations on the flexibility of human movement through

cordone sanitaires (Bagrath et al., 2020). From the poem of Neruda's the following lines apply to disasters and also demonstrates the fluidity of one's self (as summarised by Vogel, 1987):

*"When a decent house catches fire,  
instead of the fireman I summon,  
an arsonist bursts on the scene,  
and that's me. What can I do?  
What can I do to distinguish myself?  
How can I pull myself together?"*

These verses indicate the possibility of destructive action taken by a human being during an unfolding disaster. It indicates that humans might do the wrong thing when faced with a disaster situation, or an unfolding fluid situation, where their wellbeing or even life are threatened. Part of the reason could be that the verses could be seen a metaphor for the set ways of a human's existence to be brought done by the impact of COVID19 measures. A state of paralysis could be the trigger for the *arsonist* actions in the face of the cordone sanitaires and similar measures. Further part of the poem by Neruda, summarises that when faced with an unknown situation or even with something we have prepared for or studied/read about, a single member of the species with the Latin name *Homo sapiens* can react in the wrong way (as summarised by Vogel, 1987 and interpreted by authors here):

*"All the books I read,  
are full of dazzling heroes,  
always sure of themselves.  
I die with envy of them:  
and in films full of wind and bullets,  
I goggle at the cowboys,  
I even admire the horses."*

These verses could be interpreted, as though a single human being is aware and has seen ideals of heroes that rise up to fictional challenges. In real life, the single human fails to live up to such ideal representation of humanity, or super-human heroes...thus humans tend to do the wrong thing in real life situations, which are challenging such as the COVID19 pandemic or disaster. In relation to the previous paragraph about fires and by implication disasters, the conjecture can be made that such a human being can be overwhelmed by the disaster impacts and living through a disaster themselves. In relation to the COVID19 pandemic, what would be the mechanism of being overwhelmed? Could a single member of *Homo sapiens* survive a crisis of action, could they be paralysed by the compression in space-time of their existence? Is it possible that a multitude of selves of a single human being can manifest in the coronavirus space-time, in isolation or with a one's 'Community of I' in tow?

Vogel (1987) describes some of the interpretations of Neruda's poem in the class discussion and several iterations of that interpretation, e.g. when encouraged to talk about one's many selves one of the students reports the following:

*"I am many. Sometimes I feel as though I will burst because there are so many me's inside struggling to be free, to rise to the top, to glimpse the sunlight and feel the breeze. At times I too wonder if I am showing the best me-the me that others wish to see. When I feel nervous or have the feeling I have allowed the wrong me to surface I dig down into myself to retrieve another me. If people smile or give the desired reaction I know I have shown the me they came to see...."*

These verses indicate that there might be many of us, many selves inside a single body, inside a single human being. It could also be said that the manifestations of the individual selves at different times could be interpreted, as a manifestation of the fluidity of self. The duality of self, of a human being is further captured in the poem *Digital dust* by Roduit (2017), where the author says:

*"A creature of steel. I remain,  
Fragile undoubtedly.  
Digital death,  
Hoping for the Potter's breath."*

The overall aim of the *Digital dust poem* is to improve one's self and to become a better human being, just a trigger is needed. How can this be done in the context of COVID19 and the post-pandemic space-time of human existence? Answering this question is possible from the angle of the interpretation of the Neruda's poem as the geography of one.

Aspects of the world view from a personal perspective and the world view based on anthropocentrism was analysed by various authors in terms of the study of the Earth's surface, e.g. Lowenthal (1961). The aim has been the understanding and development of deductive theories/models to test, the gradual move away inductive assessment and just interpretation of the data collected about the properties and changes of the Earth's surface (Moss, 1970). The COVID19 pandemic transformed the anthropocentric view of the world and pointed out the interconnected nature of the space-time in which humanity exists. Interconnected applies to all humans, i.e. one's action can affect a large number of people on Earth, and the environment and humans interact through a bidirectional mechanism, i.e. COVID19 is a zoonotic disease (see below for details). The pandemic has led to the substantial shift in the nature of the human reality and how the space-time is perceived by individual members of *Homo sapiens* and

humanity as a species. A new way to study the geography of self, of one's 'Community of I' in the COVID19 space-time is needed. The authors attempt to present a way to interpret and the new COVID19 space-time of one's self by presenting a simile of the virus lifecycle and the existence of a single member of the species of *Homo sapiens* during the pandemic. Duality of the self and the virus lifecycle form the basis of the argument and practical implications are discussed, along with the need for learning as a source of resilience by an individual and humanity during the corona pandemic and beyond it.

## Methodology

The COVID19 pandemic showed that reality of a human life can change suddenly. The limitation and space-time compression has led to the constant proximity of humans to a very small entity, a 100 nanometer particle of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (Bar-on et al., 2020). Humans and the virus are two types of biological entities, which are normally independent of each other from the perspective of the human's everyday existence before the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, before any infection from a virus transpire. In other words, the coronavirus is zoonotic origin of natural origin and did not start as having a human host (Frutos et al., 2021). There were various theories of the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, but the most up to date information seems to point to the fact that the virus was originally an animal one and it jumped the barrier to infect humans after some circulation in the environment. Let's unpack this, in more detail. Frutos et al. (2021) summarised various terms which are needed to comprehend the origin of the coronavirus. The first term is metapopulation, which Frutos et al. (2021) define as follows:

*"A metapopulation is a population of populations. A metapopulation is made of spatially distributed populations sharing most of their genomic background, allowing thus crossfertility, but displaying also significant genomic differences. The metapopulation is biological concept closest to the intellectual concept of species but unlike species it is a dynamic concept."*

The metapopulation indicated that viruses can be present in multiple locations in nature and their genetic information, their nucleic acids and several genetic sequences can co-exist side-by-side and the exchange of genetic information is possible. Further to how this exchange of genetic material takes place is defined in the notion of the quasispecies, which Frutos et al. (2021) summarise as follows:

*"The quasispecies model of evolution is based on the concept of the "flattest" in which numerous variants generated at each cycle, and covering all together the whole spectrum of possible mutations (sequence space), cooperate to allow the survival of the virus in a host. There is no fixation of mutations. This is opposed to the concept of "fittest" in which one or a limited number of fixated mutations preadapt a virus to a host. In the quasispecies model of*

*evolution, mutations occur after infection as a consequence of the host pressure, mostly to avoid host immune defenses. These mutations are host dependent.”*

Therefore once inside a host, the virus undergoes mutations or changes to its nucleic acid, i.e. changes to the fundamental nature of the virus as an organism. This definition also indicates that the fate of the virus and the host are intertwined, i.e. mutations of the nucleic acid of the virus...the changes in its fundamental nature occur inside the host only. The intertwined nature will be, from the angle of the virus, as best expressed by the following statement about the viral quasispecies from Domingo and Perales (2019):

*“There is a connection between four parameters that characterize viruses during infection processes: replication rate (the rate at which viral RNA or DNA is synthesized intracellularly for viral progeny production), viral load (the total amount of virus quantified in an infected host or host compartment), genetic heterogeneity, and replicative fitness (the yield of infectious particles that can contribute to the next generation). They can influence disease progression, and any of them can be targeted for disease control.”*

These variable control the progression of the infection and the nature of the interactions between the SARS-CoV-2 and the human host. Today, the fates of the coronavirus and humans are now intertwined, the very survival is ‘at stake’ for humanity due to the COVID19 pandemic. The virus has been evolving inside the human hosts, as demonstrated by the various strains such as the beta variant (Tegally et al., 2021) and the delta variant (Torjesen, 2021). The circulation model has been proposed and it explains that the origin of the coronavirus is natural and the virus just circulates in nature, until encountering the correct receptor and then it jumps the barrier from animal to human (Frutos et al., 2021):

*“According to the circulation model, a metapopulation of SARS-related viruses circulate in various susceptible hosts depending upon contact. Different virus populations are found in each host due to the quasispecies evolutionary process.”*

An individual member of *Homo sapiens* is among the hosts that the SARS-CoV-2 metapopulation circulates in, i.e. the process is random in nature and the only thing the virus is ‘looking for’ is the right receptor. From a philosophical point of view, the SARS-CoV-2 virus jumps the barrier from animals to humans when the correct interaction of the viral spike protein with the ACE2 receptor occurs inside the human body (based on the authors’ interpretation of the work by Frutos et al., 2021). Once this interaction takes place and sufficient number of mutations take place, the SARS-CoV-2 became the COVID19 pandemic trigger (based on the authors’ interpretation of the work by Frutos et al., 2021). This is the best working model of the origin of the COVID19 pandemic, at the time of the writing of this article. It is important to mention here, as it again indicates



the intertwined nature of the virus and the humanity existence inside the COVID19 pandemic space-time.

Even prior to the COVID19 pandemic, there has been ongoing anthropisation of the space on Earth, i.e. the invasion and reshaping of the Earth's surface by humanity. The drive for anthropisation has been the inquiry and the improvement of the human condition, continuous drive by humanity to explore, to meet cultural, economic, and dietary requirements of *Homo sapiens*. This likely contributed to the increased chances for the circulation-model based development of the SARS-CoV-2, i.e. contact of the coronavirions with the human ACE2 receptor. From a philosophical point of view, the proximity of a virus and humanity is thus constant and at the same time they exist far apart until the species barrier is crossed from animal hosts of the coronavirus to humans. From a biological point of view, the virus is at the border between life and abiotic parts of the biosphere, i.e. inside and outside of the host's cells (Forterre, 2013). At the same time, humans are highly evolved and intelligent and multi-cellular organisms. It can thus be concurred based on this line of reasoning that humans and the SARS-CoV-2 virus co-exist as two different entities, the two types of living organisms which are in close physical proximity and yet, as far apart as imaginable biologically. Their fates are, however, intertwined during the COVID19 pandemic. The virus and humanity continuously influence each other. Can this parallel existence in the space-time of COVID19 be exploited to describe the self of a human being during the pandemic?

Yarden (2012) provided an analysis of Wittgenstein's representation of the simile, as a method of philosophical analysis. Simile and a metaphor were stated to be possibly interchangeable terms in Wittgenstein's approach to philosophy. Yarden combined this interpretation with suggestions from other authors' that metaphors could be seen as on the border between established elements of a language and just outside of it, metaphors could be on the border between nonsense and a good argument. Further to this, Yardley talks about Wittgenstein's parallel cases, i.e. side by side presentation and interpretation of two apparently unrelated topics or notions under philosophical analysis. This is the basis of a simile and analysis of parallel cases of coronavirus and humanity, which are presented in the current study. The authors use the virocell cell theory of the virus lifecycle, i.e. the assertion that the coronavirus has two stages in its life cycle, i.e. a virion and the virocell (Forterre, 2013), to look at the nature of the human self during the COVID19 pandemic. This virocell concept will be applied as a basis of comparing the possible state of a human's self to the lifestyle of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the physical space-time compression of the ongoing pandemic. The virocell concept is seen and used in the analysis below, as a unifying look at the lifecycle of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and how the life of a single human being can be influenced by the impacts of the COVID19 viral pandemic. The virocell theory and the

notion of circulating metapopulations of the virus are not mutually exclusive from the authors' point of view and both can be accommodated in this article's argument. Thus the methodology adopted in the rest of this article includes the combination of autoethnography, the virocell concept of the SARV-CoV-2 lifecycle, and the principles of the assemblage theory. The constant fluidity of the quasispecies, the metapopulation and other aspects of the coronavirus such as virocell are linked to the fluidity of one's self, of one's 'Community of I'. The lifecycle of the virus is chosen as the basis to explain potential impacts on the human's self after the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. This is complemented by application, in the appropriate places, of the major tenets of the theory of constructivism of Piaget (1966) and Vygotsky's theory (1962; Cameron, 2001).

## Results and Discussion

### *One's self and the virus*

Duality of human self from the text above indicates that the world of one in the COVID19 space-time resembles the life cycle of a virus in the authors' opinion. This analogy will be unpacked further in the text below. A virus is basically an entity at the border between life and abiotic parts of nature. It can exist as a virion, i.e. a protein-coated particle that contains the genetic information for virus replication in either RNA or DNA form (Forterre, 2013). However, a virion is a survival stage of the virus in that it floats passively across various environmental compartments such as water and soil, without showing signs of life, e.g. replication. A virion does not consume energy, it adsorbs onto soil particles as if it were a chemical molecule, i.e. for all sense of purpose, a virion is not alive (Forterre, 2013). To achieve integration of the concepts from the Methodology section, there must be inclusivity of all the concepts of the viral lifecycles, i.e. metapopulation of SARS-CoV-2, the quasispecies model and the virocell. The authors posit that it can be done in the following way. Virions of similar or identical structure and genetic information circulate in the environment and the mutations which take place outside of the host are only spontaneous in nature and their rate is driven by factors such as UV radiation, heat, etc. Without the host, no mutations are significant enough to achieve changes in the genetic nature of the virion, as a non-living entity. The non-living stage of the virus's life ends when the virus encounters its host, and here the notions of quasispecies and the metapopulation take over in driving the process of the virus evolution. Interaction between the virus and the host dictate the nature of this interaction. The host organism that a particular virus infects undergoes a transformation after the viral infection (Forterre, 2013). The virion stage of the viral lifecycle ends, and the next stage begins.

Once a virion enters the host organism, a transformation takes place in the virus, as well as in the host. The virus hijacks the cellular and sub-cellular machinery of the host's cell, and it proceeds to initiate its own replication, i.e. a production of new

virions generation. The host's cell identity as an individual living organism, as (part of) an independent organism is altered...it is transformed from a ribocell, i.e. production of novel cells and proteins of the host, into a virocell...an entity on a cellular basis that produces virions of the infecting virus (Forterre, 2013). There are instances where the virocell can adapt and maintain the ability to divide and continue to function in a semi-normal fashion in spite of the virus presence inside the cell and the ongoing cell's infection with the virus, i.e. the cell becomes a ribovirocell. However, it is also possible for the virion production to continue during the ribovirocell stage (Forterre, 2013). Fight/existence as the ribovirocell or as the virocell will depend on the 'fight' between the metapopulation of the virus and the defence mechanism of the host cell. From a space-time perspective, the host's cell can experience duality of existence similar to that of the COVID19 duality of one's self. Before the COVID19 pandemic, most of the humans on this planet were masters of our space-time, our selves could travel freely in physical sense and in cyberspace...we could spread the presence of our self across the world practically at will, at least to some extent our 'Community of I' was not limited with space-time constraints. Our selves were in a state similar to the ribocell. After the onset of the pandemic, each human under manifestations of COVID19 duality has either entered a state similar to that of a virocell or that of a ribovirocell.

For a virocell equivalent...the space element of our existence became constrained, and our physical self suppressed by the SARS-CoV-2 impacts, whether direct or indirect they might be. Part of our identity and freedom have been suppressed and we have in a sense become passive observers, or flâneurs, of our own lives (Santos and Azevedo, 2019). If one's self remains in the flâneur stage or continues to function as a virocell, then the 'Community of I' is not strong and the social bonds even through cyberspace have broken down completely during the manifestations of the COVID19 duality in relation to one's self. The autoethnography of one's self in such a situation will be monotonous and independent of space-time. Limited to no social interactions, even via cyberspace, will result in zero (self-)reflexivity and a human being under these circumstances might enter into a state of catharsis or inner emigration. Catharsis will be linked to the hopelessness and the feeling the "no way out", it might be a side-effect of the notion of "emancipatory catastrophism" (Beck, 2015). One could unpack this as the surrendering of a human and their self to the fact that COVID19 is upon us and we can't do anything about it, that we are suffering from the side-effects of globalisation. Globalisation before the onset the coronavirus pandemic led to, among other things, a virtually unlimited access to common goods and produce from across the globe regardless of the human's GPS location. Before coronavirus, an increased availability and mobility... space-time compression was a blessing, but it is now negatively constraining our existence (Rodwell, 2019, page 37). We, as *Homo sapiens*, have reached previously unavailable spaces on Earth made them our own, we have subjected the Earth's surface to anthropisation (Larousse, undated) and indirectly emancipation. Anthropisation

could have increased the chances of circulation model contact between the virus and our 'ACE2 receptors'...we might have created the conditions for the SARS-CoV-2-induced virocell stage of our current selves in the COVID19 space-time.

Another possible outcome of the COVID19 pandemic and manifestation of the duality of one's self, as well as the state of virocell of one's self, is internal emigration. Internal emigration basically means that a human disconnects from the reality of the world around them, and they continue to live their life, as if though the COVID19 pandemic did not happen (based on the interpretation of internal emigration by Hamilton, 2016). Essentially, one's self internally emigrates from reality of COVID19, and it enters a state of denial, and/or this can have detrimental consequences on the 'Community of I'. This can be mass-delusion, hoarding of essential resources and shopping beyond the financial resources available, lack of adherence to the cordone sanitaires or the vaccine hesitancy. As a result of catharsis or inner immigration one's self in a state of virocell might lose sense of purpose, become adrift and suffer negative psychological outcomes. The knowledge space of one's self shrinks, and no new knowledge is needed or seen as desirable by the flâneur of one's life and self.

However, if the social bonds throughout the COVID19 duality of one's self remain strong in the 'Community of I', then the human being in question and their self will enter a stage equivalent that of a ribovirocell. They will become resilient, able to adapt to and continue thriving in the ongoing landscape of the pandemic. They are able to actively fight, in their personal space-time, the effects and impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. They actively struggle against the impacts of the metapopulations of the virus and the adapt to fight it. As a result, reflexivity on one's position in the COVID19 space-time will be changed, compared to pre-pandemic space-time, but it will be ongoing and increase one's internal and external resilience against the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. One's self is the 'Community of I' which is not individualistic but rather multi-dimensional in nature during the COVID19 pandemic and related restrictions. There is internal cross-fertility of ideas between the members of the 'Community of I' and the individual can fight the impacts of the coronavirus, as if though they have aspects of the metapopulation of the virus itself. However, the end result of this endeavour would be positive improvement in the human conditions of one's self. Going back to the methodology section, the virus quasispecies might enable a human to be driven to personal improvement. In a sense, the COVID19 pandemic if it drove one's self to the stage of ribovirocell, it breathed in a new life, a sense of purpose to survive and to improve. This fluid improvement is collaborative in nature.

In the state of ribovirocell, the 'Community of I' provides feedback to an individual human being, thus allowing for reflexivity on an ongoing basis, and this in turn can provide a certain degree of psychological protection/adaptability/resilience. This can be likened to the notion of communalism in some African philosophies,

such as *uBuntu* on the African continent where “I am because we are” (Venter, 2004). Communalism forms a strong foundation of African societies in that a community of local space-time shows exercises social cohesion, and all its members are assisted when needed (Etta et al., 2016). A small and tight group of individual humans, such as the ‘Community of I’, looks after the well-being of one of their own, i.e. a member of their community who is a member by choice or by birth...they are an accepted member of the community. This could apply to the ‘Community of I’ as the member of a community a tight-knit, they have vested interest in the prosperity of the member at the centre of the assemblage, and they exhibit a distributive and collective agency to drive the development of the individual at the centre of the ‘Community of I’ of the member of *Homo sapiens* at the centre of the assemblage. Personal improvement of the centre of the ‘Community of I’ is the purpose of the assemblage in the ribovirocell state of self, it uses the attacks by metapopulations of the virus and the quasispecies fluidity to develop one’s self and chart a path forward through the COVID19 space-time. It eliminates constraints and limitations of the cordone sanitaires, etc.

Besides *uBuntu*, there are co-existing notions of liberalism which focus on the mobility of individuals who seek their own pathway through activities such as education (Thompson, 2017), as well as in life in general. The time component of our existence is almost irrelevant, as the limitation on our pre-COVID19 existence remain in place. Humans can travel to a limited fashion, but it is not possible to return to the 48-hour-to-anywhere trips from prior to the pandemic just yet. However, exposure and maintenance of communities a human is part of is critically important to the psychological survival and functioning of humans. The ribovirocell stage of the ‘Community of I’ must be maintained, and society should facilitate this as much as possible for the largest part of its population. Communalism and liberalism must be balanced in this context. In the ribovirocell stage and under the conditions of the COVID19 duality, one’s self will have a ‘Community of I’ as a micro-assemblage with distributive agency in shaping one’s existence and knowledge, it will contribute to the adaption of one’s life to the conditions of the COVID19 world. The micro-assemblage of ‘Community of I’ of all citizens of a country will together form society as a macro-assemblage. The macro-assemblage in turn will be the source policy biopower that the citizens must be subjected to in order for the society to survive the COVID19 pandemic (based on the authors’ interpretation of Oxford Reference, 2021). The micro-assemblage will have a more direct effect and impact on an individual and their self. On the other hand, the macro-assemblage will have an indirect impact on the self and the individual human being through setting cultural, social, and legal standards of the activities such as education. This is unpacked more in the next section of this paper and the authors try to make the case that the entire society must be in a state ribovirocell to achieve positive fluidity of self for individual members of *Homo sapiens* and for the entire humanity. This is due to the existence of the species in the aftermath of COVID19 and

due to the ongoing circulation by the metapopulations of coronaviruses in the human space-time.

### *Community of I and education during COVID19*

Sense of self and its development in space-time is part of the acquiring of knowledge and learning during the life of a human being. This starts early in the childhood and takes place through the processes, which the authors understand to mean be a mixture of the radical constructivism of Piaget's and the social and cultural process of learning of Vygotsky's (Cameron, 2001). During the growth and development of a child, this starts to interact with its surroundings (Cameron, 2001). Through and during such interactions, the child soon realises their needs and how to satisfy them, they perform learning through various processes of cognitive development. The child is not alone on this journey but is being helped especially in the early stages of learning basic tasks of everyday life, e.g. eating with a spoon (Cameron, 2001). Theory of Vygotsky describes this best, as "... development and leaning take place in a social context, i.e. in a world full of other people, who interact with the child from birth onwards" (as summarised by Cameron, 2001, pp. 5-6). The first social context is the nuclear family a child is born into.

The nuclear family becomes a 'proto-Community of I'/proto-micro-assemblage of the child's existence, as their sense of self is not fully developed yet. Inside this proto-micro-assemblage, the child goes through developmental stages, acquires new skills (based on the authors' interpretation of work by Cameron, 2001) and ultimately reaches self-awareness. They gain the sense of who I am, namely

*I am unique, I feel pain, happiness, and other feelings. I live inside a family and my surroundings is good for me.*

In an ideal case, the child develops, and gains limited negative liberties/freedoms during early childhood. The negative liberty is the freedom from limitations imposed on a child, e.g. from freedom from hunger and freedom from abandonment. Negative freedoms of a child contribute to their ability to develop along a natural and healthy developmental path. They will gain the ability to bond with their parents, the freedom from isolation and/or freedom from lack of care. Here the existence of the child is singular in relation to space-time, as it is not exposed to the online world yet. Rather, the child is born into a family, which can be looked at as a proto-micro-assemblage, and later a micro-assemblage of self...a 'Community of I' of the child. The purpose of the micro-assemblage of nuclear family is multi-fold. Firstly, it is the desire of the parents to have a child, to procreate to achieve happiness. Procreation is also a basic biological essence or property of living organisms, with humans being no exception. The second reason for the formation of the nuclear family as an assemblage is the cultural and societal expectation to have children. Elements of this are also related to the biopower of society over its citizens. This is seen by the authors' as the

expression of the interaction between the immediate micro-assemblage of the child/ their 'Community of I' and the macro-assemblage of the society, which the parents and child live in. It therefore symbolises the overlap between the micro- and macro-assemblage which will shape the child's future and self.

Social and cultural norms of the geographical location, where the micro-assemblage of nuclear family is anchored, determine the parameters of the environment in which the micro-assemblage functions and interacts with. Thus cultural and social norms of society dictate the parameters under which the child's 'Community of I' develops and functions. The macro-assemblage adopts laws for child welfare, social grants for childhood development at family level. Through these actions, society determines in part the boundary of the 'Community of I', especially in the context of knowledge and interactions between the micro-assemblage and the duality of self in the COVID19 world. Inside the nuclear family and during the initial years of a child's life, the negative freedoms being met allows for a healthy development of the child as an individual (based on the authors' interpretation of work by Piaget, 1966). The negative freedoms form the space in which a child acquires the skills, such as eating with a spoon, the ability to speak and understand its parents, the skills to communicate inside the micro-assemblage. The communication with its immediate environments leads to the development of cognitive and mental constructs inside the child's mind, inside themselves (Phillips, 1993). It is through these interactions a child undergoes a developmental process that has cognitive, social, and reflective dimensions.

The child's self becomes a result of the ultimate unconscious and conscious development of positive liberties/freedoms of the child. Through acquiring skills, through interacting with the micro-assemblage of their nuclear family, the child slowly develops the conscious ability to act of their own accord. The child creates their own mental constructs about the world around them (Cameron, 2001, pages 5-8). The child starts to think for themselves, they create their own mental space within which they will progressively make their decisions and take their actions as an individual. Through acquiring the positive freedoms or removal of limitations onto themselves and act based on their free will, the volition part of their agency (based on the recent results of Gavora, 2021), through assistance from their micro-assemblage and interacting with their environment, and through the combination of the negative freedoms of the child, through the interactions between the micro- and macro-assemblage, and by applying the mental constructs the child already possesses, they progressively define themselves internally and externally in relation to their nuclear family and the society at large. One's sense of self is then developing as a fluid entity, but through the combination of processes described above, the child develops their own sense of self and their 'Community of I'.

Once a child gains a sense of self, they become a limited fundamental authority in the field of their own existence, i.e. they realise that they are a unique human being in line with the priority principle (Bailey, 2015). This limited fundamental epistemic authority is complemented by the fundamental epistemic authority of the nuclear family, i.e. the members of the child's 'Community of I'. Progressively, there is a non-derivative perception about the mental construct of self in the child's mind, i.e. they have started to actively internalise their own oneness. At the same time, the nuclear family continues to be part of the child's self. It is its source of skills, knowledge and resources needed for the ongoing development of the child's self. Therefore the micro-assemblage of the child's existence is the source of distributive agency in the development of the child's sense of self (based on the authors' interpretation of work by Vygotsky, 1962 and Buchanan, 2015). Distributive agency here means that the development of a child is collective outcome of the 'Community of I's actions and endeavours. Thus the purpose for the formation of the nuclear family as a micro-assemblage is ongoing and does not lose significance throughout (early) childhood, as well as after it (see below).

During the COVID19 pandemic, it will be critical to maintain the reasonable functioning of the child's 'Community of I'. This will be tied to whether the parents and other members of the nuclear family as a micro-assemblage, will be in a state of virocell or ribovirocell. If the virocell stage dominates, when the parent becomes flâneurs, then the child might suffer, as their 'Community of I' might become compromised and potentially ineffective in the child's development. To be more specific, parents might suffer from lack of reflexivity about their own self, they might enter into the state of internal emigration or be impacted by emancipatory catastrophism. They might even enter the state of parental alienation towards the child (Bennet and Tinka, 2018). This can introduce imbalance into the child's 'Community of I' and their development might be compromised. To prevent this, many societies as macro-assemblages tried to assist the parents with payroll subsidies and similar measures during COVID19. At the same time, the child's self and selves of the parents might enter the state ribovirocell, if they utilise the duality of self in the COVID19 space-time efficiently, e.g. through the novel ways of using social media to seek work opportunities and maintain income, or if they seek new work opportunities to maintain balance in the child's 'Community of I'...with constructive and creative engagements during cordone sanitaires. The threat of the SARS-CoV-2 metapopulations don't overwhelm the child, nor any members of their 'Community of I', which maintains forward and resilient operations.

When the child starts attending kindergarten or pre-school phase of their formal and legislated/mandatory education, the micro-assemblage environment of the nuclear family no longer provides the sole context in which the sense of child's self is developing. The distributive agency in its context is expanded and now starts to take place at the interface of the micro-assemblage of the nuclear and macro-assemblage



of society...it moves onto the boundary between the nuclear family, society, and the child themselves. The child's 'Community of I' is expanded to include friends/classmates and the teachers. During the early stages of the pre-school and then school education, the child is transformed, or rather the child enters a space in which they undergo the stages of integrating into the macro-assemblages, i.e. the wider society. The child starts to challenge or experience challenges to their mental constructs in terms of facing new reality and new context in which the child's 'Community of I' continues to develop and be fluid in nature. The boundaries of skills and knowledge are expanded. The child goes through several transformations.

Firstly, they start accessing resources from the macro-assemblage which are provided as public goods. Compulsory and partly or completely state funded pre-school and primary education are an example of such public good. Secondly, the child enters a social structure of a school, it goes through an entry into the teaching and learning environment, where they will be introduced to the values, culture, and knowledge as seen by the macro-assemblage...the society of a country. Entry into the teaching and learning space is a rite of passage of sorts. It is one of the first integrative events of a child's life. It is the first step on the road of the child becoming a person (Callan et al., 2013). The sense of self is further developed as the child starts to identify with other people outside of their nuclear family, they develop bonds with peers...friendships provide a new expansion of their sense of self, the sense of self is becoming more and more individualistic. The child starts to experience self-awareness in relation to values of a macro-assemblage...in relation to the society at large. They start developing an identity and personhood. In the authors' opinion, a pupil is an identity, one of many that a child develops throughout their life school career. The 'Community of I' expands through the permeable boundary and new members enter and leave again, i.e. peers and teachers. The child expands its limited epistemic authority, which is in a fluid state, as the stakeholders in the 'Community of I' become divided into core, i.e. members of the nuclear family, and peripheral who are peers and teachers.

One could say that child's micro-assemblage of self is becoming multi-layered. The mental constructs are created at the boundary between nuclear family, the society as a macro-assemblage and the micro-assemblage of the school environment/of teaching and learning. Both of these micro-assemblages are located inside the society as a macro-assemblage. At the three-pronged boundary, the child uses their limited fundamental epistemic authority of their self, the basic life skills from the childhood in the nuclear family and other perception of two remaining assemblages...to accept or interact with the epistemic authority of the teacher, and the knowledge of their peers. Two fundamental epistemic authorities interact here...the one of the child's self and the second one is the fundamental epistemic authority of the society as the macro-assemblage (based on the authors' interpretation of Spaić, 2018).

The fundamental epistemic authority of the society is set by the standardised curricula in pre-primary, primary and secondary education settings. These curricula reflect the values and cultural norms of the society, the latest knowledge from the subjects taught and common knowledge of the teaching and learning professions. The fundamental epistemic authority of society is delegated to teachers after they have met stringent qualifications criteria. Mastering this knowledge and completing education in terms of the standardised curricula is important for the comprehension and adoption of the personhood by the child in a society as a macro-assemblage. The limited fundamental epistemic authority of the child's self then interacts with the teacher/peers as a derivative epistemic authority inside the micro-assemblage of teaching and learning (based on the authors' interpretation of Spaić, 2018). This micro-assemblage between a child as a learner and the teacher overlaps with the micro-assemblage of the nuclear family and the society as a macro-assemblage. This in turn allows for the development of self, for the acquiring of mental constructs in the child's mind, cognitive development and skills are also accompanied by the development of emotional and affective aspects of the child's self. Thus the 'Community of I' through its layered character is a reflexivity exercise that a child goes through in prescribed space-time, as mandated by society, and where certain rites of passage must be completed on the child's road to develop full self and to become person by the societal standards.

Through the assemblage interactions stated above, knowledge is assimilated and internalised by the child, their cognitive and mental constructs of what knowledge means and which academic field they prefer are formed. The child ideally proceeds through their school career with an accommodating attitude of the macro-assemblage and the members of their layered 'Community of I'. Ideally, child's journey through the school career is nurturing, their sense of self is enriched and blossoms. Under these circumstances, a reflective equilibrium is struck between the oneness of the child, the professional aptitude of the teacher and the educational standards, i.e. all the fundamental and derivative epistemic authorities involved in the child's education and the 'Community of I' of the child, and the macro-assemblage of the society. The COVID19 duality of self should be negligible in the early years of the child's schooling, it should not manifest too much and should be relevant mostly in the physical sense of space-time. The nurturing development of the child and child's self should be ideally done through a steady state of the micro-assemblages and the 'Community of I'. The child, the teacher, the parents, and the peers to some extent should have an open system of communication and exchange of information through the permeable boundaries of the assemblages. This system is open to interaction and input from the micro-assemblage of the nuclear family, e.g. the parents' concerns for the well-being of the child might have to be considered by the teacher. Constant reflexivity and autoethnography of conduct should take place on an ongoing basis and ideally by all members of the child's 'Community of I'. This is required to maintain up to date

knowledge about the welfare of the child and also to maintain the teacher and the parents adaptive to the landscape of the COVID19 pandemic, to maintain the status of the ribovirocell.

Being present at the three-prong boundary between the micro- and macro-assemblages, the child is able to realise their nuclear family identity as part of their self, and as they grow up and develop further the child can start identifying as the member of a cultural background, indirectly linked to a macro-assemblage of the society, they can identify with the subject at school they like and as members of a hobbies club. Such multitude of identities allows for a diversified development of knowledge and the child's self. The child can be productive member of the assemblages they are part of. The child's 'Community of I' is in a state of productive and forward fluidity, it is in a state of ribovirocell. Neither the metapopulations of the SARS-CoV-2, nor the circulation of the coronavirions in the environment around the human ACE2 receptors can then shift the existence into the virocell of a flâneur at the centre of the child's 'Community of I'. The proximity of the virus and the human child leads to an interaction of the two, and the forward fluidity of the child is catalysed by the virus's presence in child's space-time of existence.

If the micro-assemblage of nuclear family fails the child in the early years of their life, e.g. if the parents become stuck in the state of virocell, then the sense of self and essential life skills cannot be developed by the child. If the macro-assemblage of society fails in education, then the personhood of the child is in danger and could not develop. The rites of passage for a child are denied and the negative liberty of knowledge is denied to the child. Thus if the micro- and macro-assemblage fail a child in the early years of their life, then the child as an individual is denied the ability to reflect on one's self cannot be developed. Foundations of the 'Community of I' cannot develop, the sense of self cannot be developed fully...self enters a state of virocell, the child becomes a flâneur of their own existence. The threat of the parallel cases of the existence of the SARS-CoV-2 and the 'Community of I' for all members of *Homo sapiens* is that established mechanisms of the macro-assemblage of society educational break down. This in turn can lead to the breakdown of the environment that stimulate the ribovirocell state of one's self, resulting in the entry into the virocell stage of one's existence...for example becoming a flâneur of the child's own life.

The family micro-assemblage failing will result in the child having trouble interacting with the new micro-assemblage at pre-school and during primary education, i.e. the child might struggle in the teaching and learning micro-assemblage. Underdeveloped sense of self will likely result in the complicated integration of the child into society as well. The rites of passage of starting schooling will not be fully enriching experiences for the child. As a result, they will struggle to become a person or experience socially productive personhood, as their counterparts from stable family micro-assemblages

would. The interaction with macro-assemblage of society through the personhood will be compromised and the child would likely struggle within interacting with teachers and peers at school, inside an overlapping micro-assemblage. This struggle would likely result in the lack of identity formation by the child in later years. The child would have a limited 'Community of I', limited ability to reflect constructively on the nature of their self, they become adrift and would likely to accept or not interact constructively with the derivative epistemic authority of the teacher and the fundamental epistemic of the macro-assemblage of society. Even if the teacher and the peers of the child are in the state of ribovirocell, their efforts to constructively engage with the child, whose 'Community of I' in the nuclear family has not developed optimally, the micro-assemblage of teaching and learning will be of limited or no efficiency. This will happen without the physical proximity of humanity and coronavirions, but it could be exacerbated by it and so could be the impacts.

If the child is in a state of productive and forward fluidity, they have beneficial social interactions with their peers, their teachers, and the wider society. The resilience and knowledge of the child develop in the state of ribovirocell (Barnová and Tamášová, 2018). The child under such conditions is an integrated member of the society, the macro-assemblage and also moves between various micro-assemblages which are part of such society. This productive and fluid state allows the child to reflect on the surrounding and stable environment. The child has a chance to reflect on themselves. They can probe the world without pre-conceptions and gather/construct and internalise knowledge through a combination of learning mechanisms of Piaget (1966) and Vygotsky (1962). The discovery of self in the world and not against it is a creative process in which the child can choose, explore, shift, and develop an identity or a set of identities they work with. Thus, in the authors' interpretation of the child development, positive reflection is part of productive and forward fluidity of self, of child's identity and personhood. It is reflexivity and forms part of the forward and constructive development of the child's 'Community of I' (Carless, 2021). In the COVID19 space-time, the ever-changing geography of one's existence can exert pressure on the 'Community of I', similar to the pressure that the human immune system exerts on the SARS-CoV-2 virus that leads to mutations in the RNA of the coronavirus. To maintain the ribovirocell status of self, the 'Community of I' must continuously act through their distributive agency to maintain the positive and constructive forward fluidity in relation to the human being at the centre of the 'Community of I' micro-assemblage. The society should facilitate it as much as possible so that the metapopulation attacks by SARS-CoV-2 onto the 'Community of I' are converted into a *Potter's breath* into the development of the human being at the centre of their 'Community of I' moving forward and becoming more adapted to the COVID19 space-time existence.

If the nuclear family micro-assemblage fails the child and the child's 'Community of I' end up in a state of confusion and drift, positive reflection is impossible. The relationship between the child and the micro-assemblages they become part of is/are complicated and development of the personhood in a society can be incomplete. The child's reflection/reflexivity about themselves probe the world without a 'working hypothesis' and getting wrong answers. Then it can lead to outright hostility on part of the child of the macro-assemblage of society towards them. Identity crisis can result in the child and self of the child can remain adrift and in a state of confusion, in a state of virocell. Remedial action of the society, as carried out through education policy of the macro-assemblage, can assist the child in approximating the path to productive and forward fluidity of self, the path to ribovirocell. Examples could be counselling, tailored and targeted foster care, etc. Mapping of self of the child, who might be in a state of virocell and who has become a flâneur of their own life, is essential here. The space-time of the child existence must be expanded and the 'Community of I' must be developed, or its development stimulated by counsellors entering the micro-assemblage and bringing with them some knowledge and novel constructs that the child can internalise. This can provide the baseline for charging a way towards personhood development and freedom of choice of identity/identity set for the child. The positive reflection is an ongoing process where the child creates mental constructs through stimulating interactions inside micro-assemblages, such as nuclear family and the classroom, or school environment, and the macro-assemblage which the society the child is a person in.

Flâneur at the centre of their 'Community of I' can temporarily succumb to the negative impacts of the coronavirus metapopulation attacks. If this happens the micro- and macro-assemblage, such an individual is part of, must facilitate offsetting of the attack and the conversion into the ribovirocell state of self for the centre of the 'Community of I'. Good education policy, cultural inclusiveness, and the effective communication are essential for the development. A sense of self must thus be allowed to develop as close to the state it would be in, if though the micro-assemblage of nuclear family, the micro-assemblage of teaching and learning and their overlap with the macro-assemblage of society was functioning normally...as if though the child might be on track to develop a functioning and reflexive 'Community of I' (Carless, 2021). Fluidity must be seen as a property of the education endeavour and as a mechanism which resembles the fluidity of the quasispecies and the metapopulations of the virus... rather the parallel case of the virus existing next to the child during education must be seen as simile for a positive pressure to develop further skills and help the child adapt to the fluidity of the COVID19 and post-COVID19 space-time.

By the time, a child reaches the rite of passage of puberty, their sense of self, their social personhood and their chosen set of identities are in place. This is the case at least

to some extent and the nature of these attributes will change in puberty. Biological changes and the impacts on the psychological status of the adolescent accelerates the development of the self, one's personhood and opens up the availability of new identities. The macro-assemblage of society dictates some of the parameters of this acceleration on one hand, but also the 'Community of I' play an important role. The macro-assemblage parameters include legal regulations and definition of the sexual rites of passage...such as protection or allowing of child marriages, new identities being opened up through the mandatory or elective study of foreign languages or integration of the minority language speakers into school environment of the state-majority language, the access to internet and thus new information...to name but a few parameters. On the 'Community of I' front, the micro-assemblage of one's self dictates that specifics of the duality of self, i.e. to which extent space-time, are present in the physical and cyber/online/social media dimension. The acceleration was increased by the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. Analogical to the fluid nature of the viral RNA, where the metapopulation parameters of the replication rate, the viral load, the genetic heterogeneity and replicative fitness in the COVID19 space-time determine the duality of self and the threshold of existence between virocell and ribovirocell.

The productive and fluid nature of self during the onset of puberty is transformed into the accelerated and fluid nature of self, personhood, and identities during puberty. One's self undergoes massive changes and the 'Community of I' is transformed and gains a much more pronounced duality in space-time. The physical dimension of one's self loses some of its significance and the online presence increases in importance. The positive reflection is transformed to fluid reflection and it could even be said that there is a constant fluidity of the 'Community of I' between the state of the virocell and ribovirocell. Mental constructs are still there from childhood, but the massively and rapidly transformed into new mental structures and across in duality of self in space-time. Novel mental constructs are added (Kern, 1991). These changes can cause a state of confusion and many perceptions of self, personhood and the individualised identities are the result of the religion of social media, targeted adverts, and peer pressure. Social media groups, peer groups, an individual is part of, are fluid in nature. The speed of formation and breakdown of these micro-assemblages can determine the religion that defines an adolescent's self, personhood, and identities (set) in space and time, there is a constant fluctuation between a virocell and a ribovirocell of the 'Community of I'. Reflexivity of one's self is also ongoing and of much higher intensity as before in childhood.

Society of one's origins is the stable and more homeodynamic environment which defines the values culture and educational policies. Its execution can anchor the adolescent's self the defined boundaries for compulsory and then further formal education. This macro-assemblage and its policies and norms continue to nurture the

adolescent's development of self, personhood, and a set of identities. The fundamental epistemic authority of society is passed onto the adolescent or is available for the adolescent as a source of discovering partial truth about adolescent's reality....and by extension of self, personhood and set of identities. However, this is not the only epistemic authority in the adolescent's life. There are now social media and the fluid nature of the micro-assemblages which also create epistemic spaces, which are far more dynamic than the macro-assemblage of society and micro-assemblages of teaching and learning space, of the nuclear family and which increase the fluidity in space-time of the 'Community of I'. Social media and similar epistemic spaces are fragmented, autonomous and many micro-assemblages are formed and destroyed on a continuous basis. This introduces additional fluidity in the sense of self, personhood and set of identities...as the adolescent navigates and negotiates a common reality of the society and their peers. If the micro-assemblages of nuclear family and the school environment (teaching and learning space) are functioning and the educational policy and resources are in place and functioning appropriately, then the adolescent stands a good chance to master the accelerated and fluid nature of self, personhood and set of identities in a productive way. The adolescent is in this case provided with the tools to transition to a permanent state of ribovirocell of the 'Community of I'.

The coronavirus has suppressed normal functioning of the society, but most people have adapted. Online social media presence or self actually allowed many human beings to find or maintain connection with the outside world, with other humans in a state of virocell. Eventually schooling for many children moved online and/or became a combination of the online classes and offline homework for submission through cyberspace. Duality of the 'Community of I' became far more skewed towards the online dimension of space-time, and the micro-assemblage of teaching and learning had suffered a similar fate. Once the disaster of the COVID19 pandemic struck, it irreversibly altered the way teaching and learning is carried out. Teachers had to adapt to the use of social media in teaching and learning, they had to and continue to have to prepare online activities, e.g. recorded lecture materials, and upload them or share them through closed social media platforms, e.g. the Google meet groups, Whatsapp groups, etc. In a way, this has put the essence of the profession of a teacher/educator in a sense of fluidity, one could almost say that a teacher as a professional is at risk of oscillating between the state of virocell and that of ribovirocell. A teacher can only stay in the state of ribovirocell, if they maintained abreast of the latest developments in teaching and learning technology, i.e. if they become the fundamental epistemic authority on the duality of in space-time of teaching and learning micro-assemblage in which they interact with their pupils/students.

The transformation by COVID19, the epistemic authority in the micro-assemblage between a teacher and a pupil/student has become more fluid, just like the human

space-time during the coronavirus pandemic. Before the onset of the pandemic, the teacher held the fundamental epistemic authority on the subject matter that must be mastered by a pupil or a student, in order to advance their academic career, e.g. by meeting of the criteria to move on to the higher grade or complete a stage in education such as the secondary education. In addition, the teacher held the derivative epistemic authority in terms of the subject matter taught and the methods of subject matter delivery. These fundamental epistemic authority and derivative epistemic authority were in relation to the pupil or the student, under the teacher's care. However, the space of the micro-assemblage entered a state of duality, once the COVID19 pandemic and the related restrictions hit the world. The shifts resulted from the need to pull the resources and selves, the identities of both teacher and the pupil/student in order to navigate the space-time in the context of COVID19. The geographies of self for both teacher and pupil are fluid, they continuously undergo mutation in a fashion similar to the SARS-CoV-2 virus presence in the physical proximity to both member of *Homo sapiens* and the changes to the quasispecies and metapopulations of the virus.

The micro-assemblage of teacher and pupil/student needs to pull the experiences of both parties inside it, in order to progress through the teaching and learning after the onset of the pandemic. A new fundamental epistemic authority needs to be created about the way that a particular pupil/student can access the subject matter to be covered under the teacher's guidance. The fundamental epistemic authority here would involve understanding the best social media platform for the transmission and sharing of subject matter, for the achievement of learning on behalf of the pupil and its monitoring or evaluation/assessment/measurement by the teacher through the space-time of the COVID19 existence. In other words, the teacher and the pupil/student must together negotiate the space-time of COVID19, i.e. they must together adapt the existing knowledge and develop a new and common form of fundamental epistemic authority about how best to achieve the teaching and learning outcomes, the educational standards set by the macro-assemblage of society. The presence of the coronavirions must be looked at the maintained as the selective pressure on the changes to the nature of the 'Community of I', the micro-assemblages that the teacher and the pupil are part of. This is the only way to maintain their selves in the state of positive forward fluidity, in the state of ribovirocell. To end this section of the article, several questions remain to be asked...what is the relationship of education, the formation of self and its development throughout a person's life to the COVID19 space-time? Is it irrelevant here or does it go beyond the definition of micro-assemblages and macro-assemblages from this section of the article and can be a metaphor for something else? Is education, rites of passage and other related matters similes for something else in the COVID19 pandemic and post-pandemic space-time? The authors posit here that there is a metaphor which has a wider application in the humanity's existence in the COVID19 pandemic and post-pandemic space-time. In



the final section of this article, a different simile or metaphor is described to answer these questions. All we all children of the COVID19 world who need to live in the post-COVID19 and function in a ribovirocell.

### *Society, sense of self during COVID19 and the way forward*

The total economic loss of the COVID19 pandemic has been estimated at 16 trillion USD (Cutler and Summers, 2020). In more detail, premature deaths costs have been estimated at 4.375 trillion USD and the long-term impacts on health, or morbidities 2.572 trillion USD (Cutler and Summers, 2020). Finally, up to 1.581 trillion USD was the estimated costs of the mental health impairment that have resulted from the COVID19 pandemic (Cutler and Summers, 2020). These costs are the results of the total number of the COVID19 cases so far, i.e. 248938575 and the total mortalities standing at 5039536 (as of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021; (Worldometer, 2021a). They demonstrate the almost astronomical costs of the COVID19 pandemic and the size of the impacts on humanity. Loss of human life is highly tragic and must be avoided, but there are survivors of coronavirus up to 90.6 % of all coronavirus sufferers have recovered from the disease (as of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021; Worldometer, 2021a). These are the people, who need to carry on the torch for humanity, along with the rest of the global human population which currently stands at about 7.9 billion (Worldometer, 2021b). This continuum of *Homo sapiens* might and does feel the full weight of transitoriness of human life, the time-limited nature of one's self, they might even feel survivors' guilt (Frankl, 1990). They continuously tether at the boundary between the virocell and the ribovirocell state of one's self and one's existence in the COVID19 space-time. However, the survivors of the coronavirus must see the survival as a signal to carry on. They must consider the actions prior to the pandemic, as a thing of the past...in the sense that it cannot be undone. The micro- and macro-assemblages, at the level of self and the level of society must be taken forward. However, damaged they might be, they must be seen as a foundation on the which the whole of humanity must carry forward in the post-COVID19 space-time.

The COVID19 pandemic, the cordone sanitaires which is brought, the transformation and fluidity of self, of one's 'Community of I' must be seen as an educational need and opportunity. The positive forward fluidity of the society and 7.9 billion 'Communities of I' must be maintained. It be seen as the source of human resilience and as the drive to continuous education, research and improved personal and societal understanding of the COVID19 impacts. The COVID19 pandemic and post-pandemic space-time provide data at dramatic and unrivalled speed. The SARS-CoV-2 virus is the causative agent of the disease. It contains a highly mutating RNA, as its genetic material and its coronavirions are always in the physical proximity of humans. This indicates the potential for mutation and the speed of the changes in the nature of the virus, pointing to the fluidity of the virus and the need to understand the essence of the speed in the context of the pandemic and post-pandemic, to maintain the human society, and

7.9 billion 'Communities of I' in a state of ribovirocell. To maintain the ribovirocell state, it is important that each member of *Homo sapiens* have a functional, inclusive, and carrying 'Community of I'. Members of this micro-assemblage must continuously remain cognisant about the metapopulation of the virus and its impacts in the figurative, as well as the literal sense, as the metapopulation of SARS-CoV-2 is a source of 'attacks on the Community of I', which has existed in parallel to humanity since 2019. The metaphor of the invisible and yet parallel existence of the 100 nanometer coronavirions, the upsized virocells of coronavirus, and the multi-cellular humans next to each other is a fundamental and defining aspect of the COVID19 pandemic space-time and the post-coronavirus continuation of it. In other words, the COVID19 defines a new reality for one's self and for all members of *Homo sapiens*.

Some of the foundations of the pre-COVID19 existence will be still applicable to the post-COVID19 world, but a large part of the reality will be based on new parameters. The 'Community of I' of each member of *Homo sapiens* a core concept that humanity must comprehend to function in the post-COVID19 space-time. The compression of humanity by cordone sanitaires and related non-pharmaceutical measures has put a requirement on humanity's door-step to start learning a new, and to handle the uncertainty and nature of the core concept of its coronavirus existence...the reality in the post-COVID19 space-time. There are, in the authors' opinion two concepts which humanity needs to comprehend here, i.e. reality and speed of change. This is necessary to maintain a state of ribovirocell of one's 'Community of I'. Reality is the very essence of the human existence, which are fluid and require humanity to start from the beginning...to re-educate one's self to exist in the highly uncertain world with physical proximity to an invisible 100 nanometer entity, millions of coronavirions that are parallel to humans and that influence humanity in ever new ways, which we are yet to understand. Here the reality of a new world is being re-written, and we are children and adults at the same time...another duality where education of us continues and yet starts from scratch again. The fluidity occurs at a high rate, speed and understanding of it is of fundamental importance for the maintenance of the positive forward fluidity of the selves of the survivors of coronavirus and the society, where all of us are in a state of being children or adolescents in the post-COVID19 world. The importance of speed is unpacked in the second and follow-up article, which is aimed at linking the concept of the 'Community of I' and the state of ribovirocell to the essence of human reality, as well as its implications for everyday human existence.

## Conclusions

In the article, the authors use the simile method of philosophical analysis to suggest that there is analogy/metaphor between the virocell theory of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the sense of self in the coronavirus pandemic world, and/or the post-COVID19

space-time. The nature of human existence and the sense of self is defined as a relational notion which is tied to the societal educational standards, phases of developments of a human being and their sense of self...through the autoethnographic notion of one's 'Community of I'. The COVID19 pandemic space-time provides and in fact demands that humanity undergo an ongoing education of itself to maintain a productive and resilient movement forward, for self and society...an equivalent of the ribovirocell of a human cell infected with the coronavirus. The human self and humanity in general must undergo a rite of passage, i.e. to educate themselves on the aspects of the COVID19 space-time, as well as its the post-COVID19 counterpart. The core concept of this learning process is the adherence to the ribovirocell state of self and positive forward fluidity. The threshold concept will likely be the redefinition of the speed, and this will be unpacked and investigated further, which is done in the second-part of this study.<sup>1</sup>

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