

Psychoanalysis in the Time of the Last Breath

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It is not because the Indo-Chinese discovered a culture of their own that they revolted. Quite simply this was because it became impossible to breathe, in more than one sense of the word.

(Fanon 2008, p.201)

SIGNS OF THE TIME OF THE LAST BREATHS

“What has got into us?” asks friend and psychoanalyst Stephen Gee (2018). We are sleepwalking within the exhilaration of overlapping structures of violence that increasingly disconnect from the Earth and the wretched of the Earth. This “ecological disequilibrium threatens the continuation of life on the planet’s surface” (Guattari 2008, p. 6). We are resistant to imagining an existence beyond our “species narcissism”, we struggle to think about a posthuman embodiment that “challenges the idea of a discrete and autonomous body”, that embraces, for example, our bodies of water as part of communities and worlds of water (Neimanis 2019, p. 16).

Again, to repeat the question, what has got into us? Daily we witness bombing and the sale of new weapons of mass destruction, inducing, once again, threats of nuclear war. We live in a time when fear rules via the news theatre and its opera of distress. Ruling through fear, in the name of ‘biosecurity’ (Agamben 2021, p. 9), is normalised.

When you think of explosions, what images come to mind for you? What we think about is the Earth under attack and the subjugation of life. In our minds’ eyes, in our dreams, in our imaginary, the nuclear mushroom cloud is in an associative link to plastic particles covering the Earth and penetrating the depths of the oceans, the bellies of fish and the placentas of pregnant women (Ragusa 2021). The planetary destruction, or rather the *worldly* destruction, of the nuclear fallout apocalypse, with its catastrophic

weather, is associated with the rise in carbon dioxide as the residue of an out-breath of the human. The horror that we breathe in and out each day is breathtaking. We live in the time-image of the last breaths of the Earth. Primo Levi (2004, p.29) said, "Auschwitz is outside of us, but it is all around us, in the air. The plague has died away, but the infection still lingers, and it would be foolish to deny it."

"I can't breathe!" – the cry of life losing its last breath. "I can't breathe!" – a sign of the times, broadcast to the world in the final words of Eric Garner in 2015, words repeated 5 years later in the killing of George Floyd. The pictures spread across the planet, viral forces of imagery and sound and objection. The archive of the event remains, for now. It is simple, brutal, and entirely explicable. Cornered and unable to escape, Garner offers little resistance, asking to be left alone, a request that is inescapably impossible for both the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth. Eleven times the words "I can't breathe" repeat. Yet these are not words that are heard, or we hear them without any hearing, much as we too often see what we see without seeing what we see.

"Please, don't touch me, don't touch me!" Garner says, as an officer tries to pull his arms behind his back to arrest him. What is – what should be – terrifying, at this moment when the officer twists Garner's hand and he tries to turn out of the grip, is that this action doesn't appear explosive or out of the ordinary. The cops behave as if the body of this human belongs to them and they act, almost nonchalantly, as if they own it. As soon as Garner tries to turn away, the next step is the chokehold.

The chokehold is a highly articulated movement, deploying a martial technique that utilises leverage and positioning to employ and multiply force. It is a tool, a 'technics', and it brings with it a whole framework of economic conditions and cultural superstructures. It is a tool used by one human against another, to impose force and death. It is a tool to ensure compliance. It is an invisible iron collar fixed around our necks that the black-shirted would-be masters of human meat can yank.

It doesn't matter how much redundancy Garner employs, the numerous times he repeats the message to ensure they can hear it. It doesn't matter because some lives

don't matter, because for too many people Black lives don't matter. This is the event, the provocation, a rallying cry for revulsion in the USA, which found its way to the streets in revolt.

This event, the killing of Eric Garner, the event that provoked us – that forced us – to think, is taken up in Christina Sharpe's (2016) work *In the Wake: On blackness and Being*ⁱ. Or rather, she takes up the 'context' – what Sharpe (2016) calls 'the weather' – in which this event occurs, the weather of the existence of blackness. She presents the hold of the slave ship as the event of the new existence that will become blackness. "*The belly of the ship births blackness; the birth canal remains in, and as, the hold*" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 74). The chokehold that Eric Garner dies from does not exist in isolation but arises from slavery's brutal arithmetics, the arithmetics of size and weight that were used to fill that large space in the ship, the slave ships hold. Reading Hortense Spillers, Sharpe notes how these arithmetics of size and weight obliterated gender differences, rendering bodies under newly imposed values expressed in new arithmetic. "Slavery's brutal arithmetics are precursive to those of the Holocaust" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 69) and, we believe, precursive to the wider chokehold that capital now places upon the Earth.

Unlike the physical spaces of the slave ships' hold, or the cattle car, the hold of capital is closer to the development of a psychic structure. A new set of habits, a new language, a new organisation of the reproduction of life, these new habits and languages form the walls of the new hold – a 'New World', but they must still attach this new world to the planet, to the Earth. In the beginning, alongside chattel slavery, the slavehold and the colony, we find the enclosure, the machine and the factory. As they forced the slaves into holds, people were forced into factories, into the position of reproduction through wage labour and into the towns and streets and weather that accompanied these places. All the time, that chokehold, in some form, was present, as part of the mode of attaching the new language of capitalism to the Earth. Nobody chose to work in a factory, or rather, the choice was forced on them so that they have no choice, and this involved shifting elements of the Earth from a mode of companionship to one of brutal alienation. Just as, for Sharpe, the slavehold birthed blackness, so the factory and the enclosure

birthed 'the worker'. Capital's brutal arithmetic is measured in new forms of timeⁱⁱ and reorganised borders that take over from seasons and boundaries.

Six months after Garner's death, on 15 January 2015, the *Washington Post* reports another kind of suffocation. Researchers make known their understanding of the effects of placing the Earth in a chokehold by not adequately responding to increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and the flow of nitrogen and phosphorus into the ocean. With the messages of these and other scientists and ecological activists, humanity must respond to the breaking points of the Earth, whether that is because of ozone depletion, freshwater use, ocean acidification, atmospheric aerosol pollution or the introduction of exotic chemicals and modified organisms.

It is not any singular vignette that enables us to formulate the connection between signs such as the Black Lives Matter movement, Extinction Rebellion and the COVID crisis; rather, we can formulate it by paying attention and responding to the acceleration of moments of suffocation which parallel other moments and converge or intersect, forming new assemblages with unforeseen consequences – the chokehold on the Earth as a breathing machine. Chemical bombs suffocating adults and children in Syria; asylum-seeking bodies washing onto the shores of Europe and elsewhere; people burning to death and suffocating in the smoke of Grenfell Tower; Vietnamese children suffocating in a lorry trying to get into the UK; the increase from 50 to 500 dead zones in the ocean with zero oxygen; the bushfires in Australia, Canada, Brazil, and Congo-Kinshasha in which an estimated 1 billion living creatures died, many suffocating.

The convergence of capitalist, colonial and patriarchal oppression of the wretched of the Earth, paralleling the brutalization of the wretched Earth, has produced a plague, a plague of language and value. We tie the root of colonial racism to the turning of people into property, into the meat and labour of the global market. The logic of this violence has not left because it has produced the surrounding weather as well as the grammar of our world. This is a world in which contemporary slavery is seen in the imprisonment of black men in the USA, in factory farms, and the indebted human, in the compulsory

schooling and environmental externalities, and in so many other places but only if one becomes in some sense agrammatical or - following Sharpe - anagrammatical (Sharpe, 2016, p. 75). We have no access to a language of companionship within a grammar of alienation. 'Respect existence or expect resistance' the slogan goes, and the connotations for the analyst are broad and difficult to voice.

The colonisation and brutalization of the wretched Earth is a plague dressed up as development. COVID spoke to "a fear of a breakdown that has already happened" (Winnicott 1963) and which will happen again. We take life, put it into concentration camp conditions and break its resistance. The immune system collapses, 'a life' becomes a molecular form and is turned into an object of capital and then labelled as pig, bird or bat flu. As COVID grows, the Earth breathes at the very moment when humans struggle to breathe, when the workings of capital pause. Can we speak of the Earth's revolution?

The redundancy of the message, 'I can't breathe' is the fact that we cannot hear it. The chokehold is the last breath of the Earth and the human and the world, making it not only a random event, but an impact event – one that will bring about planetary consequences even if the crater it leaves may be difficult to perceive. A death drive? But the death drive, as Deleuze outlines in *Difference and Repetition* (2004), is not revealed through destruction but within the repetitive phenomenon. George Floyd's message can only be heard through the repetition of Garner's cry for life – a cry which links to the global effects of suffocation.

What is contained in the 'return of the repressed', is the refusal to "recogniz[e] anti-Blackness as total climate" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 21). It needs to be made clear that the effects of the slave ships mapped the Earth in such a way as to become a spaceship. Sometimes we are told that the repressive force is technology or technics itself; sometimes that it is capital' and sometimes that it is the human or part of some inner workings of the psyche, such as the superego. Without a doubt, some combination of technics and capital and the patriarchal human lies at the root of the repression that is

so pre-eminently Western, Occidental, modern, 'twentieth-century' and civilised. Yet there is something else as well, something often named 'drive'.

WHERE IS THE BREATH IN PSYCHOANALYSIS?

Drive does not begin with the oral drive but with the breath. Breath is without a 'drive object' and is outside any 'representation', which is possibly why Freud missed it as he sucked on his cigars, addicted to the eroticisation of the breath. Breath is the first synthesis of time and space, a production made possible by the linking of elements. The breathdrive, a reconceived libido that is not limited to a human location, is extensive, planetary and, to a certain extent, even inorganic. Breath is a link to the Earth. The Earth finds its life as a breathing matrix composed of organic and inorganic interactions and linkages. The elements join, separate, and then re-join in the form of new assemblages.

If breath is the first drive, it makes possible the first object relationship because of its molecular linking function. Pichon Riviere (2018) argues that there is no psyche outside the links that constitute it. We are born from links and live these links throughout our lifetime. Within the Pichon Riviere revision of Kleinian theory, there are good links and bad links. Links have a durational dimension and are connected to vertical transgenerational links and horizontal contemporary links – but, we can ask, what about the link to the Earth and the wretched of the Earth? Perhaps Riviere's answer is contained in his concept of ecological internalisation. If this internal link to the ecological is broken – as he observed amongst many rural people – it results in anomie and the breakdown of mental health.

Can the psychoanalytic engage with a linking experience that includes the ecological internalisation of the breathing Earth and the wretched of the Earth? If yes, what would this look like? We suggest a model that includes the human in multiple relationships with the Earth – what we have called Fanonian schizoanalysis.

FANONIAN SCHIZOANALYSIS

Psychoanalysis is aligned with the bourgeois and elitism. You need to be able to pay to have a pure analysis, or so the story goes. But this is not the only story. There is an often-forgotten history of Freud's free clinics (Danto 2005). Fanonian schizoanalysis suggests that the overthrow of capitalist colonisation and territorialization of the Earth will come about through the convergence of the revolutions of the wretched Earth and the wretched of the Earth. What gets produced in the encounter between marginal voices - psychoanalytic minoritarian literature like Deleuze, Guattari, Fanon and Langer - is an assemblage consisting of the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth - a schizoanalytic machine and manifesto of the revolutionary that speaks to the signs of the time. The revolution is underway, but the wretched Earth does not need the alignment of the wretched of the Earth to achieve a metamorphosis. It is life on Earth that needs hope, the possibility of creating free breathing spaces for all. This is where contemporary Freudian free clinics need to align themselves.

What do we mean by Fanonian schizoanalysis? Fanonian schizoanalysis is the birth, the sociogenesis, of a new species of life that includes the human but which is not human-centric. Fanonian schizoanalysis is a congress of concepts, one where Fanon's sociogeny is put to work alongside Deleuze's difference and Guattari's asignifications. The aim is to produce a rupture – what Fanon calls a new species of life, a new ordering of relationships – focusing on the intersection and institutionalisation or 'naturalisation' of social relationships that produce compliance because they become habits - the contingency and causality within the social habitus.

Fanonian schizoanalysis is, at the very least, a moment of critical reflection, a body that pushes up against the taken-for-granted knowledge system that serves as the disciplinary structure of representation in the capitalist moment of racialized community production. It is a challenge to the 'Western present' of the anthropocene. Fanonian schizoanalysis puts into question "our present culture's purely biological definition of what it is to be, and therefore of what it is like to be, human" (Wynter

2001). It is a pushing out of our present Western bioeconomic conception of being human, in which we build the self on the negation of an Other, whether that be an 'other life' or an 'other subject' or some vaguely mystified ontological 'other'. Fanonian schizoanalysis is a yes to life, affirmation, and even freedom, not in the sense of absolute freedom but in the possibility of responding with a degree of freedom.

Sociogenesis is a concept drawn out of Fanon by Sylvia Winter. Sociogeny, which Fanon places beside Freud's phylogeny and ontogeny, emphasizes the determinative role of social phenomena: the subject is of social origin, a genie, genesis, social genesis. The social is more than the human. It is not exclusively a human phenomenon but refers to any organism bound in a complex set of relationships that operate at various scales – a matrix and field composed of scales that we call one-to-one, group and community relationships. Fanonian schizoanalysis is a practice of paying close attention to one-to-one, group, and community relationships as intersecting scales of the psyche.

Fanonian schizoanalysis is the working model we have in mind - and the challenge is to create models that speak to the intersecting relations of the World, Earth and Planet. Model making is akin to myth in the work of Bion: it is an imaginative or poetic tool with which to learn from experience. One-to-one, group, and community relationships are working models that expand upon the practical application of sociogeny. Imagine the Borromean knot as the intersectionality of one-to-one, group, and community relationships and think of one-to-one, group, and community relationships as a metamorphosis of Lacan's Borromean knot of the symbolic, imaginary, and real, 'exiting language' into the world of relations.ⁱⁱⁱ

At its most simple conventional psychoanalytic level, one-to-one is analysis, supervision, self-reflection, and tutorials; the group is the analytic couple as a group, group work, training, seminars, cartels; community is the frame that organises psychoanalytic space – it might also be the matrix Foulkes discusses. Now imagine a psychoanalytic organisation, for example the Site for Contemporary Psychoanalysis, as an intersectionality of one-to-one, group, and community relationships. Imagine the

production of an unconscious at the sites of intersections. Imagine flows, a fluidity open to other systems of complexity (such as ecological systems or the Black Lives Matter / Black Liberation Movement) that interfaces with other unconscious minds, planetary objects, and life forms, and thereby creates new assemblages.^{iv} Psychoanalysis in this scenario is a *becoming*, the folding and unfolding of a poetics of mapping flows, but the process is artificially and arbitrarily blocked when the mapmaking refuses or resists interrelationships beyond the individual or nuclear (Oedipal) family. At worst, the different schools of psychoanalysis function like a family and set a ceiling on what we can think, and who can think it, to reproduce the Oedipal dramas and the taken-for-granted economic exchange value at play.

PERMEABLE MEMBRANES OF DREAMS

The intersectionality of one-to-one, group, and community relationships within psychoanalysis provides us with new rhizomatic maps. What interests us is less the question of producing yet another model of the unconscious, but the edges of the terrain, the imaginative cartography of the map's edges and interfaces. The image we provide is that of an intersection of relationship possibilities producing permeable membranes which are always layered, with new life just beneath the layers of dead surface skin, as Fanon points out in the introduction to *Black Skin, White Masks*, using the term epidermalization. Fanon argues that "the analysis we are undertaking is psychological. It remains, nevertheless, evident that for us the true disalienation of the black man implies a brutal awareness of the social and economic realities. The inferiority complex can be ascribed to a double process. First, economics. Then, internalisation or rather epidermalization of this inferiority" (Fanon 2008, p.xv). In this moment of self-correction ('or rather'), Fanon pushes beyond the individual psyche and into the problem of interface, intersection and information. Epidermalization opens the door to a transformed concept of the mind and psyche.

The layering of the epidermis, dermis, and hypodermis can enable a topological model of the mind or transformation of the ego body surface into dream-like permeable

membranes. These are membranes of imagination, dreams, and the hope for a new vision of life. Can we imagine a body like an ecological field, one in which the permeable membrane is the sensory organ alive to life? Permeable membranes and contact barriers are the interfaces that link lives.

What is key is the interface, which is encountered in the AND function of schizoanalysis - mother AND child, child AND teddy, dream AND awake, sleep AND image AND smell AND sounds AND the herd of animals – a fluidity and transformation in which things take shape and slip into each other.^v The AND function is the rhizomatic road to the multiple layers of the skins of existences.

THE THIRD IS ALWAYS MULTIPLE, A COMMUNITY (WORLD, EARTH, PLANET)

Winnicott's transitional space is where things come to pass in a new form – a little of the old and a little of the new – evident in the creation of the third in relational psychoanalysis, for example the work of Benjamin or Ogden. But the third is always multiple, in the schizoanalytic sense, or becomes a new species (Fanon 2008). The third is the multiplication of the self, a complex interplay between different forces, selves, rooted in the body as part of the World, Earth, and Planet. Jessica Benjamin is right to speak of surrendering to the third, but this third should imply multiplicity rather than progression or summation, because only then is it a reciprocal interconnection of humans and the World, Earth, Planet.

For a long time, psychoanalysis could at best only count to three, reconfiguring what preceded in the name of some pre-thought ordering signifier, usually the Oedipal, or words from above, or some master's voice or phallus. The transitional third is a different form of notation in the Bergsonian and Deleuzian context, always *on the border between* images, words, sounds, smells, colours and thoughts, a border that is animal, imperceptible as Deleuze and Guattari (1988) put it, never simply this or that. This is akin to what the Jungian analyst Paul Ashton (2007) calls the movement away from the dualistic consciousness that leads to the either/or form of knowing, which divides, excludes, and splits up. Ashton's third is "a both/and or 'true' knowing. It is the way we

know things and respect their differences, but all within the truth of the panentheistic interrelatedness..."(p. 189).

Following in the footsteps of Ferenczi^{vi} and other marginalized psychoanalytic voices like Sabina Spielrein and Maria Langer, we call for a psychoanalysis that engages in one-to-one, group, and community relationships as this invites a multiple third (World, Earth, Planet). What remains unsaturated are different relationship possibilities, permeable membranes, and links, and these possibilities create new relationships that breathe life and fresh air into the practice, theory, politics, and economics of psychoanalysis.

FANONIAN SCHIZOANALYSIS WITH PSYCHOANALYSIS: A QUESTION OF SCALE

There is the complex of Freud/Lacan, in which conflict is between the desire for the mother and Law in the Name of the Father. In contrast, in Fanonian schizoanalysis, the conflict is between colonisation and the combined assemblage constituted by the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth. In Freud/Lacan, symptoms are repression and foreclosure, a question of diagnosis. In Fanonian schizoanalysis symptoms are the expressive particle "I can't breathe", alienation, and asylum-seeking. It demands a process of allowing oneself to be affected by the signs of the time. In Freud/Lacan, the cure is working through, the use of transference and sublimation or the creation of *sintome*. In Fanonian schizoanalysis, the cure is transversality, intersectionality, dream spaces, and revolution. No to diagnostic categories – a negation of life which is hemmed in. Yes to the question of life. But at what scale do these life possibilities operate? Is it by only taking one day at a time, a week, or even a month?

Bodies are stopped, searched, dissected, and classified, bodies that live hemmed in both physically and/or mentally. The conclusion Fanon reaches is that "the first thing which the native learns is to stay in his place, and not to go beyond certain limits. This is why the dreams of the native are always of muscular prowess" (Fanon 2004).

To be hemmed in is a form of movement subject to the hierarchies of diagnosis and different forms of technologies. These include imprisonment, specifically chemical imprisonment – the production of an ever-expanding list of new diagnostic categories, psychological policing, as evidenced by the increasing number of symptoms in the DSM and the linkage to the pharmaceutical as the ‘final solution’ to so-called ‘mental illness’. Can we transverse this simply by asking if someone can get through the day? What in their daily and weekly existence can be taken for granted? Can they plan for a future? Is it a question of taking one day or week at a time? Is there any sense of space and time beyond the current crisis?

Symptoms within Fanonian schizoanalysis need to be reframed in terms of questions of scale. Different scales enable us to pay attention to the different object and subject relationships involved in the processes of subjectification. Some objects can only be seen at certain scales, in the same way that microscopes and telescopes organise our capacity to see objects that can’t be seen at other scales. This is analogous to the ‘binocular vision’, that Bion suggests can enable “a new capacity for exploring the environment” (Lopez-Corvo 2018, p.46).

Within Fanonian schizoanalysis, the scale is not one of measurement – statistical relationships that reveal certain scalar objects such as speed, temperature, gender and race. Instead it is an intersection of three folds (three scales): one-to-one, group, and community/Earth relationships. Why these three?^{vii} Because this enables us to think about the intersections of processes and functions, not oppositional relationships. Thinking about the scale of the problem (‘I can’t breathe’) only from a World perspective is a bad abstraction. ‘I can’t breathe’ needs also to be thought about within the Earth and Planets’ perspective, as these systems open up different questions, relationship possibilities, and experiences in response to the question of breath. The interest lies in the tensions between the different scales, where one scale operates against another, and where there are counteracting or countervailing tendencies. Where are the tensions and how are they lived?

What psychoanalysis brings to intersecting one-to-one, group, and community relationships is a reflexivity that comes about through the analytic position or attitude. Reflexivity is a pause between the sensory and the motor. To pause and make oneself emotionally available to the other/life. Reflexivity includes the befriending of dreams, as Hillman puts it: dreams without interpretation, reverie, a field theory, as opposed to subject/object process in which the master interprets the intra-psychic processes from some imaginary vantage point. Reflexivity is the capacity for dreaming, the reverie of images, the result an alpha function that links affect and events - row C in Bion's grid (Bion, 2021). This dreamtime makes us – makes psychoanalysis – open to other worlds, to life.

When the Lacanian Borromean knot becomes a doughnut, it is reflective, a double, binocular vision that offers multiple perspectives. Likewise, we can re-frame Freud's conception of psychoanalysis, as a theory of personality, a method of psychotherapy, and an instrument of scientific investigation, as three overlapping sets.

This interfacing of different relationship possibilities is, in Bion's terms, a permeable membrane instead of beta screens, those deeply conservative borders of psychoanalysis that have reproduced class and other normalised relationships, like heteronormativity and white privilege. The interface is what Thomas Ogden (2004) calls "dreaming undreamt dreams and interrupted cries" but a dreaming not limited to humans, one which intersects with the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth.

The nightmare we need to dream about is one in which we are faced with the destruction of permeable membranes such as ozone blankets interfacing with the sun. Instead of the ozone layer functioning as a permeable membrane and contact barrier, there is, both as analogy and also literally, a transformation into beta screens, into heat domes that attack the linking of elements. These attacks consist of the burning of fossil fuels, oil and gas as well as thoughtless greed that devours the feeding breast/mother of the Earth that life depends upon. Instead of ecological life fields of complexity interfacing and enabling life, each system ends up becoming living furnaces in which

bacteria and other molecular processes are cooking up new viruses. There is a loss of fluidity and respect for our - and life's - watery embodiment.

The Earth is a spaceship overheating and cooking up a storm and in parallel to this the human and other creatures' bodies are furnaces overheating. The experience of not-me - life over there - cannot be imagined. It is the individualistic ideology of nation-state versus the environment. Freud colluded with a bourgeois individualist approach, the one-to-one bourgeois domain, but alongside his dog/wolf, he did also invite a non-anthropomorphic approach. Creating new relationship possibilities is intimate to the question of what a therapeutic revolutionary war machine might look like, how it would operate, and where it is to be found. If these relationship possibilities are to have any direction or goal, it is the unfolding of a link and bond to the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth.

SCHIZOANALYSIS AGAINST PSYCHOANALYSIS: A LETTER TO A FUTURE

What letters can we write to our children of the future, to "a psychoanalysis yet to come" (Nigianni 2022)?

Fanonian schizoanalysis speaks the names of love made possible, life in motion, and permeable membranes. This is love as the possibility of movement, the rhizomatic roots sparking and igniting within the Earth's breathing matrix, comprising a personal and collective libidinal economy. Life is primarily breath, the drive to breathe, the drive to breathe easily. Fundamentally breath is a metabolic dynamic: without breath, death and without a host, no breath. Breath entwines the corporeal and incorporeal, consciousness and unconsciousness. Life breathes but cannot breathe without a host, like thoughts that cannot occur without a thinking apparatus (Bion, 2003).

But much like Nietzsche's critique of the church, we would like to suggest that psychoanalysis is saturated with the stale air of a psychoanalytic church, a godless religion, in need of open doors, and windows, for this stale air, this bad breath, saturates thinking and life in the consulting room.

“But enough! Enough! I can’t bear it any longer. Bad air! Bad air! This workshop where *ideals are fabricated* – it seems to me just to stink of lies.” (Nietzsche, 2003, p.31).

Psychoanalysis is engaged in several bad abstractions. A bad abstraction, in our terms, is one that is not addressed to concrete things, to beta elements. The most concrete problem facing the Earth is the time of the last breath. Within the times of the last breath, psychoanalysis coming to the support of life is a vital necessity, The alternative is to turn the analytic framework into a bomb shelter beneath the ground, a spaceship only for the select few. Nothing can burn without oxygen, including psychoanalysis. Spaceship Earth, as it rockets into the future, feeds off oxygen, which is mixed with other substances, fuel, and motor forces, to give off energy. The cost is a melting of the Earth. Moreover, the heated scattered remains become bad air, bad breath, and bad breathing habits.

To encounter the unconscious breath of life is something that goes beyond questions of those who can afford to pay for five-times-a-week analysis. Put another way, why did it take the COVID crisis to get psychoanalysis to reframe its social contract, a structure that alienated those who struggled to knock on the analyst’s door? Covid flattened the hierarchy and invited new kinds of accessibility and relationship possibilities, such as online work or even analysis whilst walking in a forest.

The first protective membrane, skin of life, including human life, is the blanket of gases known as the atmosphere that covers the surface of the Earth. It has a weight, an embodiment, or in Freudian terms, it has a pressure, a source, an aim – and perhaps even an object, depending on how one understands the concept of satisfaction. Air is akin to what Freud called the component elements of the drive. More than this, oxygen is the tender care of the skin, the protective membrane of life and human life, which, when translated into the human domain, becomes a force field theory of drives/instincts. This blanket, the protective membrane of oxygen, has unconscious memory. The unconscious is entwined with these molecular processes and energy

fields; air pressure, suction or air resistance cannot simply be bracketed as science or a social unconscious.

Charles Babbage proposed the possibility of an 'atmospheric memory', of the air as a "vast library",^{viii} much like the oceans are the rhizomatic unconscious memories of the slave ships' Atlantic passages. Our unconscious is populated by foreign bodies, including water, air and bacteria. The repressed memory is the litter of the letters of Western capitalist expansion which included life cast overboard into the oceans. It takes our breath away to see the levels of violence against the wretched of the Earth and the wretched Earth.

In the face of deliberate disaster, what kind of response can we cope with? What bearing does psychoanalysis have on our tears, anger, frustration, desolation, fatigue and hopelessness? All these affects flow through us just as they also flow through our communities. Grief is perhaps the easiest way to describe this convergence of Black Lives Matter, COVID and global warming. In grief we encounter the death of the loved one, whether they were family, community, or a cherished link to life. Yet in grief we encounter death as it is, arriving from the outside to cleave open the present and threaten the internalised good object, placing some into the realm of the ancestors whilst leaving others bereft of a future.

In the face of this, it is to Fanon's "yes" that we turn (Fanon 2008). This 'yes' is the affirmation of life in the face of impersonal systems, the moment of finding ourselves both wanting to respond to the process and situation and being caught inside that situation. This 'yes' is affirming oneself beyond the framework one is trapped in. The production of capacities to affirm existence and the development of new frameworks are all part of an ongoing process of resistance to habits that produce self-reinforcing and domesticating habituations enforcing docility.^{ix}

CONCLUSION

The breath in psychoanalysis is not welcomed as our necessary outsider. It is not treated as the stranger that needs somewhere to rest before moving on. Instead, it is treated like a slave or a possession. What follows from this is an inability to think beyond my World, a World that includes the scales of intersection and multiple overlapping's of World, Earth and Planet. We are not suggesting simply breathing technologies, though it is not a bad idea to remind clients to breathe when distrusting their bodies because of trauma, anxiety, and pain. We do not suggest that we limit the psychoanalytic imagination to a critique of those moments when the breath is not possible, though it is important to think about the possibilities of climate survival (wretched Earth), as well as the breathing practices communities (wretched of the Earth) attempt to find within the chokehold. We do not suggest that "I can't breathe" is the only abstraction psychoanalysis should engage with, though we do think it is important to engage in concrete realities that include an intersectional analysis, including an understanding of class.

What we *are* suggesting is a radical extension of the thinking apparatus of psychoanalysis. We must extend our arms to embrace the great outdoors. Gone are the days when the analytic text can only speak to a bourgeois frame of reference, those who can pay to encounter their unconscious. There is nothing inherently wrong with five-times-a-week analysis, contrary to Lacan or Jung's assertions, and it may produce a more intense encounter with the unconscious in some situations. But other encounters with the unconscious need to occur, and that includes flows which speak to both manifest and latent concerns. Simply put, it is easier to be open to latent concerns when you have cultural capital and don't have to worry about the rent! When you seek refuge, manifest and latent concerns need space to be conceptualised and this can only be done through voicing the constant variables that cross over in one-to-one, group, and community relationships. For example, 'having a voice' has a different meaning and tonality, depending on the scale. Perhaps a conjunction of relational psychoanalysis

with intersectionality and field theory might be another way of conceptualising this question of scales.

‘The Freudian Spaceship’ is the name that we give to the complex assemblage of the World, the Earth, and the Planet. They name the same space, but they name it in different kinds of ways, organizing it differently for us. The Freudian Spaceship is the name that we give to the complex assemblage of this home or space we live in, sometimes called the World, sometimes the Earth, sometimes the Planet. The thread linking these spaces is an uncanny spacetime that psychoanalysis calls the unconscious.

This Spaceship Earth, moving through space, is alive in the Freudian sense in which it is driven. It is composed of drives and an unconscious formed by something like the moment of primary repression. We have attempted to metaphorize psychoanalytic concepts, expand them beyond where they are meant to apply and create a poetic primary process^x that speaks to concrete problems facing the world.

For Chris Oakley (2015) psychoanalysis is a practice of thoughtfulness and being as alive as you can be to yourself and others. Thoughtfulness implies care, imagination, and a thinking apparatus to think the thoughts in search of embodiment – what Bion called digestion. This must include the capacity to be affected by the signs of the times we live in, thoughts from the outside, and the great outdoors. Digestion of what one is affected by speaks *the double* (Rank, 2012), something uncanny, for the human is, always has been, and must continue to be, the embodiment of alien elements such as bacteria, water, breath and fungus, those alien forces which help to process the shit that humans produce.

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Notes

ⁱ Reading Sharpe's book in 2021 provoked a moment of strange connection and congruence, perhaps

at its most uncanny when we came across her description of Eric Garner's murder and its connection to breath (Sharpe, 2016, pp109-110).

ⁱⁱ One of the most interesting discussions of this is in E.P. Thompson's essay *Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism*, (Thompson, 2017)

ⁱⁱⁱ The concept of exiting language is from Guattari and is part of his development of an *asignifying semiotics*. For a good starting point with regard this concept, Maurizio Lazzarato, '*Exiting Language, semiotic systems and the production of subjectivity in Felix Guattari*' (Hauptmann, 2010). This exit from language is not an attempt to ignore, marginalise or minimise the importance of language but is congruent with a non-anthropocentric perspective in which language is no longer the privileged avatar of a concealed ontological dualism.

^{iv} When we use the concept of an interface, we draw on the work of Gregory Bateson. Whilst perhaps best known amongst psychoanalytic circles for his concept of the 'double bind' in relation to schizophrenogenesis, Bateson's work is more broadly a radical reorganisation of the concept of mind, arguing for an immanent and ecological concept of mind that extends well beyond the human individual. Noel Charlton, for example, describes Bateson's framework, which was taken up by Deleuze and Guattari in their development of schizoanalysis, in the following way: "Bateson understands all the processes that produce, for instance, healing in organs, growth in organisms, development in societies, or balance in large ecosystems, as being 'minds'." Charlton goes on to suggest that "His view may be seen as a modified form of panpsychism because, though objects do not have soul or mind in themselves, material components are necessary for a mental system to exist. The mind is the process of informational interaction between these components." (Charlton, 2008, p31 and Chapter 3 *passim*).

^v What we call here the 'AND function' of schizoanalysis is primarily developed in *Anti-Oedipus* as the first synthesis of production, a reorganised and reconceptualised form of what elsewhere, as in Freud, might be called 'primary process'.

^{vi} Ferenczi was the first to recommend different kinds of relationship possibilities, but he was stigmatised, mythologised, banished, and excommunicated. He dared to challenge psychoanalytic practices and bring in new ways of engaging, informed by his encounter with war trauma and recommendations from a patient and future analyst, Elizabeth Severn, who had endured sexual abuse as a child. Now we find that the abused patient in analysis with us, that wants us to rewrite our textbooks, is the Earth.

^{vii} "The Tao gave birth to One. The One gave birth to Two. The Two gave birth to Three. The Three gave birth to all of creation." (McDonald, 1996, Chapter 42)

^{viii} In Chapter 9 of the Ninth Bridgewater Treatise (Babbage 1838) Babbage suggests that "The air itself is one vast library, on whose pages are for ever written all that man has ever said or woman whispered." This moment in Babbage's text became the inspiration for an exhibition called 'Atmospheric Memory' curated by Jose Luis de Vicente, which premiered at the Manchester International festival 2019.

^{ix} We pose domestication here as a negative value. It should be noted that this is in the context of capitalism and a sociogenic framing. There is a more complex background discussion that cannot be pursued here that would engage with the pro-social implications of what is called the 'self-domestication hypothesis' (SDH). For an overview of SDH see Sanchez-Villagra, 2019.

^x "In primary process the things of persons are usually not identified, and the focus of the discourse is upon the relationships which are asserted to obtain between them. This is really only another way of saying that the discourse of primary process is metaphoric. A metaphor retains unchanged the relationship which it 'illustrates' while substituting other things or persons for the relata. In a simile, the fact that a metaphor is being used is marked by the insertion of the words 'as if' or 'like.' In primary process (as in art) there are no markers to indicate to the conscious mind that the message material is metaphoric" (Bateson, 2000).