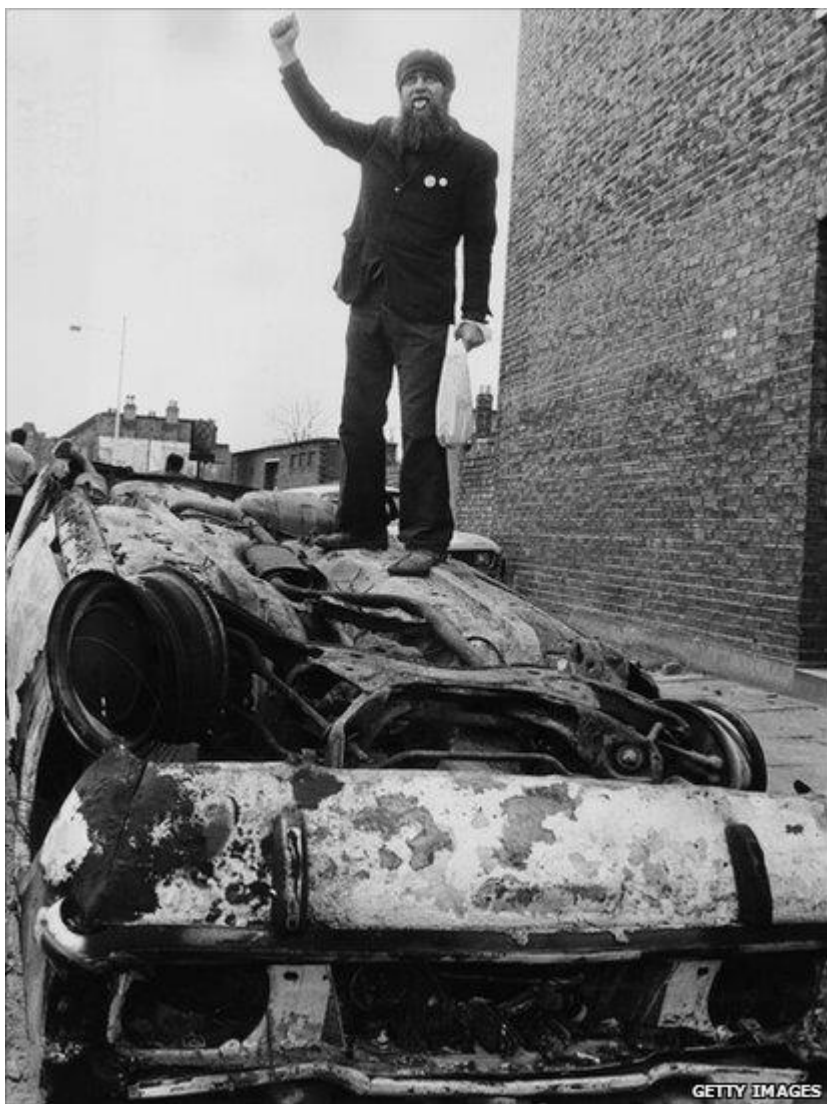


## **The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath**

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath



## One - July 14, 2014, Staten Island.



**I** CAN'T BREATHE! THE CRY OF LIFE LOSING ITS LIFE WITH ITS LAST BREATHS. "I can't breathe!" a sign of the times broadcast to the world in the final words of Eric Garner. The images spread across the planet, viral forces of imagery and sound and objection.

The archive of the event remains, for now. A simple, brutal, and entirely explicable event. A black-shirted man, with tattoos on his elbow, a cap on his head and a radio in his pocket, sanctioned by the state to intervene in life. Cornered and unable to escape Garner offers little resistance, simply asking to be left alone, a request that is inescapably impossible in our world. They will never leave us alone. Force is continually imposed, every day, in our homes, on our streets and onto the earth. For the most part, there is little choice but to simply obey but such obedience costs lives. For some, it costs life. For all of us, it can cost life

Eleven times the words "I can't breathe" are repeated. Yet these are not words that can be heard by the cops. No words can be heard by the cops, compliance is the only option and anything else is simply random noise in their

ears. “I’m tired of this” Garner says as black-shirted men stand around him, caging him, forcing him. When the cops are bored waiting for abject slave like compliance that they believe is ‘reasonable behaviour’, when the required deference to the masters is not given, they move in. The prey has been stalked, cornered and must now be captured and killed.

Let us be generous and assume that these are not the thoughts that go through the cop’s head, that they do not perceive themselves to be killers or hunters going after prey, or black shirts enforcing order. No doubt, like most humans, they think of themselves as doing what is right, what is necessary, what is needed. No doubt, like most humans, they think of themselves as doing what must be done without ever considering quite why this must be done. Like most humans, they think of themselves as making choices and it is only when those choices prove, after the fact of the actions, to be so obviously wrong, do they then retreat to the claim that ‘they had no choice’.

“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 where the officer takes Garners’ hand behind his back and Garner tries to turn out of the grip, is that this action doesn’t appear explosive or out of the ordinary. The body of this human is treated as if it belongs to the cops and they act, almost nonchalantly, as though they own it. As soon as Garner tries to turn away from someone taking his arm the next step is the chokehold.

The choke hold 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, with the purpose of imposing force and death. It is a tool to ensure compliance. It is an invisible iron collar fixed around our necks that can, at any moment, be yanked by the black-shirted would-be masters of the human meat.

Brought to the ground by the chokehold, Garner is then surrounded and forced down by the bodies that circle him, bodies that are now employed as tools of subjugation, control and compliance. “I can’t breathe” Garner immediately cries out, repeating it eleven times, trying to ensure that enough redundancy is injected into the situation such that the message cannot be mistaken. “I can’t

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breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I can't breathe."

It doesn't matter how much redundancy Garner employs; how many times he repeats the message to ensure it can be heard. 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.

The choke-hold that Eric Garner dies from does not exist in isolation but arises from the wider choke hold that capital now places upon the Earth. The choke hold is the last breath of the earth and the human and the world, making it is not just a random event, but an impact event, one that will bring about planetary consequences even if the crater it leaves will be difficult to perceive. Cracks arise within the surface of the earth as the last cry of life repeatedly calls out - this is the defining feature of our moment, this moment after which there will be no more moments, this moment after which time will return to the prolonged event of that which persists outside of this life.

In the anxiety signal of climate science there is an echo of this suffocation, a grasping for space to breathe in the face of the technics embodied in the choke hold, the leveraging of force that brings forward the demand for compliance, a demand that insinuates itself as friend of the human before swallowing everything in its demanding. Technics offers us the dream that it can lever the world into place for us, but the world resists, the dynamics shift, and that great Faustian moment arrives, the moment where we realise that the thing we thought to be our servant has become our master.

A logic that is like that contained in the 'return of the repressed', to use the Freudian jargon, constitutes this moment of the choke hold, this moment of straining breath. What is it, or was it, that has been repressed? It is not clear. Sometimes we are told that the repressive force is technology or technics itself, sometimes that it is capital, 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 human lies at the root of the repression that is so pre-eminently Western, Occidental, modern, 'twentieth century' and civilised.

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The logical determination of this repetition is the force of habit. Not just any habit, but the bad habits of thinking which fail to allow the thought within thought, the difference within thought that is the opening of thinking. Habit precedes language acquisition and grounds the activities of reason. In the place of thoughtfulness, we have the contracting of market forces in physical and psychological habits, market forces that reduce everything to a flat surface, constantly expelling difference, resulting in a pandemic of thoughtlessness. Thinking has become a fixed, automatic and constant repetition of the same thoughts and ideas reproducing the existing relations and conditions that produce that thought. Thinking operates as a 'technics of the body' (Mauss) which reinforces what has already been thought - my identifications and the representation of what I take to be me.

Yet such a return is only part of the story. The moment of suffocation is crucial but even more important is the echoing of this moment. It is necessary to unpick this echoing, vibrating affect, this suffocation of bodies both human and planetary. In the last breath of black lives, the Earth itself gasps for air. What drives this is beyond the human, but it nevertheless flows through the human - that is the clue to the return of the repressed. It is this drive that the colonizer believes must be tracked down, that will be tracked down, relentlessly, to the last breath of the earth itself, an earth erected as the property of man!

For the body of the earth, just as for the body of the human, the same axiom holds true - you may do what you wish, be what you wish, desire what you wish, providing you comply. If you fail to comply, you die. Earth, human, animal, machine, each is strictly limited by compliance to capital. Minor, irrelevant, momentary escapades occur where someone might feel as though they have slipped the chains, but if the great eye of Moloch reaches your little garden then the first rule will still apply - comply or die. Moloch, in the form of the abstract machine that is capital, cares not for its meat, cares not that it is a parasite on this body. It behaves in one single, overarching way - it behaves as though it owns us, just as the black-shirted cops behave as though they own the body of Eric Garner. If we comply, it does so own us, but more importantly, it owns the Earth. Thus, we face a simple option - in the face of the logic of capital, the logic of 'comply or die', the task is very simple.

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How is it possible to not comply and at the same time not die? Is it enough to simply avoid the confrontation, pretend that we're not really resisting, in order not to bring the forces of capital down on our heads? Should we be thankful that the master is beating that slave over there, Ebola, mudslides, Syria always 'over there', rather than me, here? What is so shocking about the ongoing police killings of innocent black men in the US is not only the killings but the fact that they are no longer hidden but now common knowledge part of the daily Facebook post.

Any possibility of responding to the demand for compliance or the struggle for truth and freedom faces a direct, immediate and inevitable fact, that the human has now marked the Earth to such an extent that any sense of 'exterior nature' is impractical, as well as intellectually incoherent. There is no 'human/nature' or 'culture/nature' divide, not because conceptually there is no real or useful distinction - although this is undoubtedly true - but rather because such a distinction is now pathologically delusional. To even think of the Earth as distinct from the Human is to act within a self-produced framework so self-destructive that it is akin to allowing a deliberate but disavowed holocaust. We live, barely, in our own time, like a junky overdose about to happen. We live in the time of the last breath.

The last breath unfolds in the indigenous chants when a people find that the timelines leading back to the native lands are forever erased. It is the moment of transformation when the earth becomes a spaceship sustained by capitalist technologies. The meat begins to realise that the day of slaughter is imminent when the human becomes a tool in the service of an inhuman agency that demands nothing other than compliance. This moment of violence is the shutting down of the intervals and spaces between the breaths. The violent force of the state apparatus constricts the movement of the diaphragm thereby stopping the bringing of sounds into words. No longer is there a word-filled mouth. No longer are the sounds of the mouth addressed to an interlocutor.

No dialogue, no discussion, no democracy matters if compliance is not first offered up as the great, grand sacrifice to Moloch. This is the first rule of the World - the first rule that must be removed, revised, rewritten.

**Two - September 3, 2015, Ali Hoca Point Beach.**



**B**REATH IS LIFE, THE FIRST CRY OF LIFE. The Earth finds its life as a breathing matrix comprised of organic and inorganic interactions, which join and dis-join and re-join in the form of new assemblages. Breath is the first drive. Moreover, drive does not begin with the oral drive but with the breath, which lacks nothing as it is the first synthesis of production even though it is without a 'drive object' and is outside any 'representation', which is possibly why Freud missed it as he sat sucking on his cigars, addicted to the eroticisation of the breath.



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The human breath is made up of nitrogen and oxygen and a small amount of other gases, including carbon dioxide. The human breath is made possible by the operation of the sun and the earth's 'green' breathing ecology.<sup>1</sup> The breathing earth is a matrix comprised of molecules that exist alongside the history of the earth, with the occasional encounter with extra-terrestrial meteor sources. We breathe in the past as the transformative now that makes possible the new. We dance within the contraction and expansion of breath, the rhythmic repetition of molecular forces. These molecular forces are biochemical and geochemical processes that continually rearrange themselves, the most well-known procedure being photosynthesis, the ecological digestion and transfer – *metaphora* - of the atom of carbon, during which process the carbon is released back to the earth's atmosphere as carbon dioxide. Through interaction with plant life, this carbon dioxide is then used to generate oxygen through the process of photosynthesis in which leaves inhale water molecules and breathe in carbon dioxide. The touch of the sun's forces then convert the organic molecules into chemical compounds, into sugars that feed the tree, as well as producing a life-giving oxygen. The importance of this basic process of interaction between oxygen, carbon and plant is somewhat acknowledged by the United Nations on the 21st March each year when there is the 'International Day of Forests'. For life to have evolved on Earth an assemblage of chemicals was needed – carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorous, calcium. However, it is not enough to have the simple elements of life. They must also be self-organised, both diachronically and synchronically, in an ongoing metamorphosis. Life is

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1 Sunlight helps to transform carbon into a molecule of cellulose, "the powerhouse of the cell...Cellulose is the most abundant organic polymer on Earth" - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cellulose>. This is ingrained into the tree's biomass for years to come.

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an organism that begins by ‘swimming’ in water and engaging in metamorphosis, taking in energy, excreting waste, breathing in some way, growing, reproducing and developing ways to react to external stimuli like sugar or heat gradients. This metamorphosis is life’s movement. All life moves, all life is metaphora and metamorph, transference and shapeshifting.

Breath drives life but is also driven by life, it is life’s loving touch and one assemblage of the universe, the breathing earth breathing life. The touch of the earth as a breathing organism that invites and embraces multiple breaths is not a metaphor. Breath is the touch of life, giving birth to a plurality of life forms, yet now more than ever the earth struggles to breathe. Whilst on the 21st March the United Nations formally celebrates life, each day capital uproots the ecology of the earth and a different story gets played out. Capital covers over forgotten stories which co-exist alongside the destruction of the ecology, animal and human life, for example, the story of September 3, 2015.

“His life, his breath, his beating heart”<sup>2</sup>. The Earth is called to and even listened to, but too often it is given a name by an idiot who pretends they are its owner. Fanon, in the opening pages of ‘Black Skin, White Masks’, speaks of these ‘idiots’, “...there are too many idiots in this world”<sup>3</sup>. Here it is important, perhaps, to think of the earlier meaning of ‘idiot’. For the Greeks and Romans, the ‘idiot’ is the private citizen, the one who thinks from their own position, the one who declines to participate in public life, political life. Today this idiot is the one who thinks political life is a private affair, a ‘matter for the individual’. One of the core tensions that can be found playing out in many political scenes, whether they are centred on climate change, on ‘black lives matter’ or in gender struggle, is that between ‘political’ analysis and ‘individual’ responsibility.

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<sup>2</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of The Earth*, Grove Press, New York, 1963 p.52.

<sup>3</sup> Frantz Fanon, 1972, p.7

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Analysis of collective political conditions frequently encounters difficulties in locating sites of responsibility because such sites are commonly understood in personal, individual terms. The position of the idiot, as a major character in contemporary capitalism, is exemplified by this tension between political analysis that must deal with a collective object and political responsibility that seems impossible to locate other than at the feet of individuals, whether they be individual citizens or the personalities of specific politicians.

Resistance to being held ‘personally responsible’ produces a series of figures of speech (tropes) that act to render political analysis impotent. We can articulate these tropes in something like the following way – ‘anthropogenic climate change might exist but I’m not responsible’; ‘institutional racism is terrible but I’m not a racist’; ‘gendered violence is deplorable but I’m not a misogynist’. This is the trope of individual innocence, a kind of absurd category mistake that is only bettered in its absurdity by the trope of individual responsibility, where the ‘agent’ takes on the burdens of the collective by focussing solely on their own behaviour – from here we get the absurdities of thinking climate change can be altered solely by personal recycling or dietary practices, or racism destroyed simply by raising individual awareness or gender violence eliminated easily by proper etiquette.

It is not that the behaviour of individuals is unimportant but rather that when politics has come to mean little more than a way of ‘coordinating individuals’ then that politics is a game of Idiots. Here we draw on Deleuze and Guattari’s idea of ‘conceptual personae’, which is the idea that thought is filled with characters who speak rather than individual authors, and the Idiot is to be understood as such a character. The conceptual personae seem to have “a hazy existence halfway between concept and preconceptual

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plane”<sup>4</sup>. The conceptual persona of the Idiot is the one “who says ‘I’ and sets up the cogito but who also has the subjective presuppositions or lays out the plane”<sup>5</sup>. The Idiot is here being transposed into the specific domain of a ‘political’ thought.

Who is the human? The starting point, our primary axiom, is that *the human is never singular*. Capitalist culture – which is a white, Western formation even whilst it claims and imposes its universality – operates not at the level of the individual as singular but collectively, transforming collectives into consumer demographics, generic flows of consumption that must be plugged into productivities to constitute reproductive cycles of exchange. Like all cultures, there is no agency evoked here, only landscape, weather, flows. Capitalist culture swamps and subsumes all around it because of its capacity to universalise its own modes of exchange, its capacity, put simply, to spread the commodity form inside the body of the human, is devastating. Yet in this capacity, we see the clue both to its dynamic and to a possible route to resistance. The clue lies in this ‘need for the body’.

The Fanon body is never singular - it is only ever an assemblage - life, breath, love = territory. Assemblages operate, they have a life of their own, and because of this, they have a zone of operation, their territory. This territory is most often encountered in the idea of home. There is somewhere that the thing, the animal, the person, the plant, is at home - or not. Whilst human beings claim a love of the home and destroy the others home in the name of this claim, it is the animal who embodies a love of the home, of territory, a love that is expansive with cunning possibility.

It is at the level of the assemblage and territory that we find the possibility of the love of life. Does this loving act form a doing, behaving,

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<sup>4</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 1994 p.61

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, pp 61-62

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gesturing and holding, such as in the holding of the earth, or does it implode on itself like domestic violence and the meat farm? The animal's love is the ground of the home, territory, body, a love grounded not in terms of self but in terms of the earth, space, place. In contrast, the capitalist operates like the landscape gardener in their estate grounds. Inside these grounds, we might feel as though movement is free, but only in the same way the meat from the organic farm once thought itself free. More fundamentally, the love that forms the landscape constitutes the grounds within which the body is formed. The animal's love is cunning; it appears in the negotiation of forces and as oriented to an alternative future.

Fanon can perhaps be said to love just as an animal loves, something Guattari also seems to embrace in his poetic manifesto found in the text entitled 'In order to end the massacre of the body':

"This antiquated world, which stinks everywhere of dead flesh, horrifies us and convinces us of the necessity of carrying the revolutionary struggle against capitalist oppression into that territory where the oppression is most deeply rooted: the living body. It is the body and all the desires it produces that we wish to liberate from 'foreign' domination. It is 'on that ground' that we wish to 'work' for the liberation of society. There is no boundary between the two elements. I oppress myself inasmuch as that I is the product of a system of oppression that extends to all aspects of living. The 'revolutionary consciousness' is a mystification if it is

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not situated with a 'revolutionary body', that is to say,  
within a body that produces its own liberation"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Felix Guattari, 'In order to end the massacre of the body', in Chaosophy – texts and interviews 1972-1977, Semiotext 2009, pp207-214

### Three - November 18, 2016, Aleppo.



**T**HE NEED TO BREATH, NOW CONFINED, THE URGENCY OF THIS MOMENT OF CRISIS AS THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE TIME OF THE BREATH. The earth colonised and commodified as the abstractions of capitalist high-frequency trading. The commodity form cannot restrict its domain to the 'external world' – it cannot be a neutral mode of organising human life – because it derives from the transformation of the human into a source of labour power, a transformation that can only arise from the severing of labour from its result. In the process, the human is broken in two. The connection of action to thought is attenuated. What I do is no longer reflected in the result of my actions but rather through a mediated, momentary distortion. Without this feedback, without response, the possibility of responsibility becomes abstracted and difficult to learn. I become the Idiot, the one who believes they can own the Earth.

Who is the Earth? The Earth is the effect of a process that began billions of years ago, when the densest regions of the universe had become truly massive, forming the first galaxies amidst the play of 'dark matter' and 'dark

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energy' that affects the way galaxies interact on the largest of scales. Some 9 billion years after the Big Bang the Sun, the Earth and the other bodies in our solar system form from a huge accretion disc of gas and dust. For the Earth, this is the start of the Hadean period, the first geologic period of the Earth which lasts for some six hundred million years, a period from which there are no rocks, no fossils, perhaps only some crystals containing perhaps the earliest traces of life<sup>7</sup>.

Who is the Earth? The Earth is that great body of which the human is a part. Yet for the Idiot, this plain truth must be either impossible to grasp or irrelevant to thought. The Earth is often conceived of as little more than a passive platform, some real estate on which more important things occur. In this scenario, the Earth is simply a place, a location for their (individual) life. Yet this 'simply a place', this is the great foolishness, the result of the idiocy of bad separation, false distinction and failed homemaking.

Who is the Earth? The great mother. Who is the Earth? The great teacher. Who is the Earth? My body. My body, the Earth. The evolution and revolution of life, the Wretching of the Earth?

If there is to be an encounter with the assemblage that constitutes the Earth, to talk in what might loosely be called 'schizoanalytic' terms, then my body is a touchstone. At this point we invoke Fanons' 'final prayer' - "O my body, make of me always a man (sic) who questions!"<sup>8</sup>. It is worth noting that this is the last line, the last move, of Fanon's text. It is a cry, this 'make of me' that Fanon produces – O, my body, make of me always a body that questions'. Heidegger famously distinguished the human from the non-

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<sup>7</sup> Potentially biogenic 4.1 billion-year-old carbon, Elizabeth A. Bell, Patrick Boehnke, T. Mark Harrison, Wendy L. Mao. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Nov 2015, 112 (47) 14518-14521; DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1517557112

<sup>8</sup> Frantz Fanon, 1972, p.165



human in terms of questioning. More accurately, he determined a type of assemblage, *Dasein*, which ‘questions its own being’, which is characterised by its capacity to question - not, note, by the mere asking of questions but by the activity of questioning. What is ‘decisive’ for Heidegger is “the movement of questioning that alone lets what is true come out into the open”<sup>9</sup>. Now Heidegger is not enormously interested in the genesis of such a being, but Deleuze and Guattari are.

If the body that questions is an assemblage with a territory, either this is a unique and special characteristic of a special type of body - in which case we enter a space in which we privilege a specific kind of being - or questioning results from the basic processes of flux and organisation that bodies are capable of. It is this latter route that is important. If a body, an assemblage, always has a territory then what might produce a shift from an unquestioning to a questioning behaviour? We talk quite deliberately not about a meaning, but about a behaviour in relation to a structure. It is the encounter with the edge or the limit that produces the behaviour of questioning.

“O my body, make of me always a man (sic) who questions!”<sup>10</sup>. In this cry, in this call to our body, we begin to take seriously the Earth. What can be produced in the encounter between Deleuze, Guattari and Fanon - in the zones of indiscernibility constituted by the infinite and imperceptible Earth - is an *uncanny assemblage* comprised of the ‘wretched of the earth’ and the ‘wretched earth (of the Anthropocene)’. To encounter the assemblage that constitutes the Earth, to ‘overcome’ the anthropic perspective, or at least to have any hope of such an encounter, we must turn to our body and call on it to move, to act. To do this, to call on our body, it is necessary to bring together

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<sup>9</sup> Martin Heidegger, *ITM*, p106

<sup>10</sup> Frantz Fanon, 1972, p.165

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or make communicate those parts of the body of the Earth that have been made wretched in a strategy we call ‘wretching’.

Wretching is a mode of schizoanalytic practice that we will call ‘Fanonian schizoanalysis’. Specifically, it is a mode of schizoanalysis where the transversal method is not some abstract non-specific application but rather where the ‘planet’ and the ‘person’ are thought together as suffering life, exploited in an asymmetric relationship of power that is imposed by a very particular coalition of capital, property rights and drives.

Fanon might be thought to bring a ‘psychological dimension’ to the problematic of capitalist colonialism. His insights and focus on the way colonialism seeps into the pores and occupies the dreams of the colonised can however be rendered trivial if his thesis is reduced to a truism of the form ‘oppressed people feel oppressed’. Of course, oppression feels oppressive. No-one needed Fanon to articulate that. Rather, what Fanon makes vibrant is the colonisation of the drives, the mutability, ambivalence, power and catastrophe that colonisation renders on the drives, immobilising and paralysing them, constricting the breath. The awareness and importance of the ambivalence of the colonised drive is one of the most obvious connections between schizoanalysis and Fanon. Motionless, for “the first thing the native learns is to stay in his place, and not to go beyond certain limits”<sup>11</sup>.

For the wretching earth and its various life forms, they can be said to nourish themselves “but not to breath: it is in a state of suffocation”<sup>12</sup>. “Primitive organisms lived in some sense in a state of suffocation. Life had

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<sup>11</sup> Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of The Earth*, Penguin Books, 2001 p40 / p52 in Grove Press New York 1963 version

<sup>12</sup> Deleuze and Guattari AP 57

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been born but not yet begun to breathe”<sup>13</sup>. Whilst the wretched earth and wretched of the earth have different connotations, they have the same denotation, wrenching when face to face with the sign of a time in which there is no rising morning star but a black hole sucking life breath away.

Fanon is a man who believes in the breath of life and those milieus that can get attached to this breathing life force through love. Fanon’s revolution begins not with violence but the movement of love. “Today I believe in the possibility of love; that is why I endeavour to trace its imperfections, its perversions”<sup>14</sup>. Before speaking of the movement of aggression, there is for Fanon the movement of love. This love - an intensity - produces different milieus of resistance and possibility when confronted by the geology and morality of colonial capitalism.

Keguro writes “David Macey claims that if there’s a ‘truly Fanonian emotion’ it’s ‘anger’ and Alice Cherki insists that Fanon was ‘a thinker about violence’”<sup>15</sup> and goes on to suggest “that love is a crucial, understudied element of Fanon’s thinking and an essential component of his vision for an anti-racist, anti-colonial world” and, we would add, any anti-capitalist world. They go on to say “Fanon’s love gestures toward a future that is unmarked by racism. More than that, he suggests that political resistance and social revolution have, as one of their goals, the cultivation of love”. In developing this thought from Fanon, they claim that “authentic love becomes impossible to experience or sustain under conditions of oppression”. Fanon’s love, as Keguro describes it, “takes root and flourishes within the material

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<sup>13</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, AP 573

<sup>14</sup> Beginning of chapter three BSWM - Franz Fanon (1970/1972 ) Black Skin White Masks London: Paladin p31

<sup>15</sup> From the blog post ‘Love in Fanon’, [gukira.wordpress.com/2012/02/09/love-in-fanon](http://gukira.wordpress.com/2012/02/09/love-in-fanon), accessed 10/03/2018

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circumstances of politics and history.” Fanon’s love speaks of a time and space yet to come<sup>16</sup>, starting with something like ‘human desire’, but moving to a new terrain-species of life. Love becomes a possibility when taking root with rhizomatic effects. If the cure is love, as Freud and Jung claim, then it is a love in the Fanonian sense that produces and opens possible terrains of expression. As such it is far better to think in geological and ecological terms when attempting to think of Fanon’s love than to think only in human terms, it is better to think of the sociological as a geo- or ecological analogue, of the organism as a geo- or ecological feature. It is better quite simply because it opens us up, it re-opens the body to the world, beyond the horizon of the too human. In this re-opening of the body beyond the human it is possible to encounter the controls of capital that flow through the earth – stone, plant and animal - as much as through the human. Lift your eyes to the sky and you will see the earth.

Fanon’s schizoanalysis speaks the names of love made possible, life in motion. This is love as the possibility of movement, the rhizomatic roots sparking and igniting within the earth’s breathing matrix, comprised of personal and collective libidinal economy. If love is rhizomatic it is because it functions as a skin, a force of pre-individual singularities. It is within this matrix that we find the expression of sensual and affectionate currents, so why fix the skin, for what is the centre of the skin? It only has a starting point when the black man and woman is forced to wear a mask and must look for an ‘interior’ to the skin to distinguish themselves from the racist gaze and collective white image of skin.

When love is only love of one’s kind, without kindness towards the alien, then in truth we are little more than narcissists who love in the other only

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<sup>16</sup> Perhaps like Nietzsche’s ‘friends to come’?

ourselves. As Shirley Gunn, an MK/ANC activist stated, “when you can no longer see the humanity in your enemy then you are no different”<sup>17</sup>. Love as Fanon challenges us to think it is the drive towards a new species, an alien plurality.

Fanon’s *first milieu* is one in movement from mask to skin, one to one relationships, both formal and informal relationship encounters, the woman who loves Fanon and transcribes his anger, the meeting of Guattari who gives Deleuze a political edge. With these moments of recognition in which it is no longer a question of mirror, mirror on the wall who is the whitest of them all! White, phallus, Oedipus, signifier, no more, enough is enough.

Voice, my voice, our voice, a breath-voice, with sound, intensity, passion, love, tenderness, rhythm, texture, pain, rage. The voice that is heard and echoed in the love of the woman who notes down his words and create a possible deterritorialisation within the overwhelming stratifications of capitals colonisations. To resist rests upon the capacity to mobilize the individual molecular (peasant, queer) life forces within the masses that we are. This is the grazing field of the grass roots, feasting, like heroin, the taste of something beyond the pain of colonisation. Voice matters, one does not have to be a docile body. The chosen white woman, wife, transcribing the angry black doctor’s text giving his faceless face voice, a materiality from which to graze and feed the thoughts of pain with possibility. It is the “movement of love”.

The *second milieu* is the movement from skin to mask, no longer one to one but group relationships, everyone, each ‘individual’ expressing an aspect of the group, comradeship mobilising a work group, the wretched of the earth in search of a new humanity. This is the moment of the hunt, the swarming

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<sup>17</sup> Personal Communication, 1999

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pack, no longer feasting on the killing of pain but revelling in a stimulation which mimics the pleasures of the hunt. It is the fight and battles against colonization, the aggressive stratification of life. The soldier and comrade who moved from one war into another, fighting against those who laid a medal of honour for his bravery. It is the movement of a “strategic identity”, the “movement of aggression”.

Fanon’s *third milieu* is the synthesis of group and one to one relationships into a community relationships, a therapeutic community with its transversal of the grid of relationships producing a new humanism, comprised of BOTH skin (individual) and mask (the group) AND something else, the matrix of “man in motion towards the world”, towards an outside, not confined by borders - Marx alongside Bakunin alongside Freud alongside Fanon alongside the post-human moment. This is the movement beyond the confinement and brackets of difference whilst bearing, not erasing, the differences.

This is the Hospital Charles-Nicolle moment in which Fanon wondered what and how care might look like, especially in communities of care. This is moment of interconnection between Fanon the psychiatrist and Fanon the revolutionary, coming up against the system of alienation. Overcoming alienation produces richly connected but extremely heterogeneous and random patterns. Fanon is operating on the borders where nonlinear institutions are capable of endless variety. The edge, the threshold, invites a transformation of the previous institutions allowing creative institutional possibilities to evolve at the edges. This is the intersection of different relationship possibilities - one to one, group and community relationships - in a non-industrialised, poor and newly independent African country. This is a moment in which individual-group institutions become communities that no longer need isolation, sacrifice and the excommunication of the scapegoat to maintain some imaginary and symbolic ideal. This is a moment of the opening

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of a world of possibilities, a going beyond both the one and the many, the milieu of a work group and of institutional therapy.

At the same time, as shown with the pitfalls of nationalism, the intersectionality of personal and collective suffering and politics produces a doubling up, becoming a multiple force field of push and pull factors. The hope is a work group, but anti group work dynamics invite an instituted hierarchy or killing mob. The collective organising matrix and rhizomatic network, comprised of simple and complex life systems in active relation to other systems, can become joyful or sad. Again, the aim is not to remain fixed, as organizations do not exist as such, it is the process of organizing that exists. Whilst the work group reacts dynamically and in complex ways, if difference can be tolerated, or even co-exist, as with Guattari's grid, then the possibility arises of an affirmation of life formations that are irreducible to any one sort of language game - substantive multiplicities.

Fanon was able to lodge himself onto the white mirror masking his face and with his voice he experimented with the bodily possibilities, the body that questions, that speaks with intensity, thereby cracking the surface. The pack claim their piece of land through a meticulous conjugation of revolutionary acts. The deeper assemblage that is sought is a new species of life, one not stratified by the colonisation of the other's life breath.

The hospitals in Syria are gone, long forgotten like the experiments at Hospital Charles-Nicolle, a forgotten moment in history. Chemical weapons and hospitals in ruins, lives entrapped in Aleppo. Syrian children's bodies washed up on the tourist's beaches. This body, without the possibility of breath, the uncanny edges of what was once a child now traced into the sand and washed away. The faceless writing upon the sand fading between borders of the visible forms of expression and non-discursive formations.

The bombing of the children's hospital, not once, but twice, this forms the content of Aleppo's rubble, made from the articulated elements of a

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killing machine. These archaeological monuments of suffering must consider the pairing of 'content' and 'expression' and the fact that each of these terms is doubled.

The "eye envies, not the ear!" (Afrikan proverb).



## Four - October 23, 2017, Syria



IN LISTENING TO THE REASON WHY A RUSSIAN PLANE, BY 'MISTAKE', BOMBS A CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, ONE DOES NOT TAKE EVERYTHING AT FACE VALUE AS THESE LIVES WERE A SURPLUS VALUE. "The announcements have little plausibility, or truthfulness...the indifference to any kind of credibility exhibited by these announcements often verges on provocation"<sup>18</sup>. We are subject to the processes of overcoding and territorialization through the deception of the content and disavowals of the form of killing, through the machinic apparatus of capture, decoding and recoding, through the signs and tools of state sovereignty and its market forces. The suffering of Syria, Rwanda, Congo or local council estate is

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<sup>18</sup> Deleuze & Guattari, ATP 84

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

captured in "bonds, knots and nets" and "treaties, pacts and contracts" between police, military, real estate and oil industries<sup>19</sup>.

The turning away and dissociation from the event, presented as non-event. The blind eye deaf to historical processes and screams caught up in the game of doubles. The double articulation of codes and territories as the means of social production, the process of stratification of profit margins.

If 'transversals' invite some new ways of seeing and hearing, an apprenticeship in signs, in the colonial context this involves listening to those forms of expression which are without signs and *seeing what is 'seen without been seen'*. The challenge is to turn on, tune in, and drop in, not out - the challenge is to listen and actively take a position of bearing witness to a life-death game, the maddening double binds, the doubling up of process and content. The process of bombing and the content of the bombing. The content of the bombing refers to substance, the profit margins chosen over certain life formations, whilst the process and expression of the bombing refers to the functionality of capital: the organisation of self-interest, but the self-interest of a class, a function, a role in a stratification of reality that arises from the abstract rules of the capitalist game.

This stratification, at its most crude level, is a life formation reduced to a geological matter, producing an archaeological monument of suffering. This coupling of individuals and groups with milieus of destruction links geology and morals. The moral of the tale consists in the destroying or imprisoning of intensities, subsumed into systems of redundancy and "organising them into

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<sup>19</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, ATP, p424 (Apparatus of Capture). All this is done with certainty, for in the kingdom of the blind and armless the one eyed and signed armed man rules by "emitting from their single eye signs of capture, the knots at a distance. The jurist-kings, are One-Armed, are One-Armed men who raise their single arm as an element of right and technology, the law and the tool" (ibid).

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

molar aggregates”<sup>20</sup>. This is the process of the capitalist colonisation of the molecular breath.

To tune in and actively bear witness involves the activity of mapping resistance. The first moment is to engage in an apprenticeship in signs, as does Deleuze in his embrace of Proust’s attention to the signs of love. The second moment, as seen with Fanon, is the love of comradeship, the love of young men and women engaged in battle when faced with the edges of territory bordering onto life and death. The third moment is decolonisation. The love of life yet to come, becoming<sup>21</sup>.

Mapping invites the friends of the future, the convergence of man, machine-matrix and ecology. The youth to come, the revolutionary, works by seeing and creating diagonal scales of motion, like jazz artists playing up and across and between. Diagonal relationships of intensity traverse the taken for granted map where Afrika is below Europe. This allows a relationship of unforeseen connections among invariant selected facts that brings about a transformation of the real. Mapping is to listen with a human ear, with a machinic-matrix sensor and with an ecological third eye, it’s to be touched by what Nietzsche calls the “whisper”<sup>22</sup>. These whispers occur “between sentences and without sentences”<sup>23</sup> so that one knows things without knowing that one knows them, what Reik calls ‘pianissimo’<sup>24</sup>. This affective unthought thought from the outside is like a passage of music played, sung, or spoken, but very softly, so that its message (sign) “might take him much

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<sup>20</sup> ATP 40

<sup>21</sup> These three moments are each distinct whilst interdependent and are mirrored in the structure of this book.

<sup>22</sup> Beyond Good and Evil, Part VIII

<sup>23</sup> Reik 1949 page 145

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

like a physical sensation by which he is unprepared, and which presents itself suddenly from within the organism”<sup>25</sup>.

“The essence of the world is a flower”, the words of a gardener amidst the bombing of Aleppo. A chink of light from the world ‘over there’, caught in the maelstrom of 24-hour news cycles and YouTube<sup>26</sup>. Ahmad Joudeh, dancing on the rubble of his old refugee camp, or in the blistering heap of Palmyra and who would dance on the sites of killing in which the dead have no burial rites. “Dancing in the Palmyra theatre was my way to fight Isis. It was my way to tell them: you can kill people, but you can’t keep me from dancing”<sup>27</sup>.

The failure to bear witness, to be present to the faceless violence, is a symptom of failed transformation. The moment when life, a potential joyful passion, is decomposed as sick, sad, mad, bad and invisible. The symptomatic imitation of life, passionless sorrow, in which life slips away and something else takes its place, as there is no channel from Aleppo or Darfur to the bourgeois in Europe or America or China. They do not even notice the screams and cries of those who live a few miles away, in the projects, in the council estates that are burning, let alone acknowledging that Bosnia is in the same world or even the same continent as London and Paris. No sense of a shared time, which means no shared body-memory, this is a reality of zoning out. Oppression and violence are always ‘over there’, not here.

When there is no witness, suffering becomes an abstracted abstraction, collateral damage, remote, of another world, always a world ‘over there’,

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<sup>25</sup> Reik 1949 page 147

<sup>26</sup> ‘Inside Aleppo: the tale of the flower seller’, Channel 4 News, Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJGp3g93h6M>

<sup>27</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/mar/13/its-dance-or-die-the-ballet-dancer-forbidden-to-perform-by-islamic-state>

faceless, a mouth that screams, cries, shits, but always with silence, the scream that produces no sound for the witness is indifferent or killed off, a kind of political autism. The first investment of capital is in the killing of the witness (we know where your family live! Where your daughters go to school!). The second investment is competition. The faceless affects of Dafur cannot compete with Big Brother or Euro 2004 and the Aleppo death camps cannot compete with the political theatre between Trump and Clinton. The third investment is to replace the witness with a political autism. We can sit and watch precise drone killing, “we know Srebrenica happened when we were out in the Shopping malls”<sup>28</sup> and we sit and watch CNN or the BBC and think we are witnessing the gulf war, but in truth, we, the supposedly adult and parental ‘guardians of the world’ are autistic and forgetful.

“Syria: shocking images of starving baby reveal impact of food crisis. After death of one-month-old Sahar Dofdaa, aid officials warn of catastrophe and say many more children are at risk”<sup>29</sup>. We have known this would happen for about 3 to 5 years, endless reports, endless stories of tragic and horrific deaths, so all that seems left is to find more demanding image to get the world to pause and once again place Syria on the world debate, as it seems there is no intention of stopping this, only ensuring that the walls of the EU get higher and higher.

The contemporary age is not one of anxiety so much as it is one of forgetting and autism. The new technologies of capital which have become habitual, which have constructed an 'extended mind' that is mindless to the bodies, flesh and minds and souls of those thought to be over there. Syria is long forgotten but one day the youth will find new ways of mapping with gestures and movements that push up against the autistic ‘parental’ re-

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<sup>28</sup> Lola Vollen personal 2004 communication

<sup>29</sup> Guardian 23 October 2017

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

framing of the horrific effects of bomb blasts into something more palatable, sound bites, the use of nosology, statistics of deaths. These parental classifications not only aim to hide political corruption and personal suffering but reinforce autism and forgetting. This is why the acts of witnessing undertaken by the *Black Lives Matter* struggle and work of activists like Lola Vollen, are so important.

Dr Vollen went to Bosnia at the end of the war and listened to her patients without assuming she knew what they needed. She discovered that the treatment they required was to bury the dead, so she initiated a mass grave genetic testing. The corpses without a sign of personal recognition had been excommunicated from the rites of passages. Vollen saw beyond the lack of signs of life, for the corpse was not without a code which she decoded. The decoding of faceless faces was countered by a re-coding as part of family and community. This process of witnessing and of allowing the living to perform burial rites created a sense of community re-embodiment. Vollen was engaged in a convergence of detective work, science fiction and cartography, or *map-making*, which involved the active 'making' of maps, living maps. What is important here is active 'making' element, which is why it is not about replacing one map with another - the principle of representation - but of 'cartography', or more colloquially, of 'mapping'.

The youthful mapping of a future life involves an evolution of the interface between human, machine-matrix and ecology. With this evolution of human, machine-matrix and ecology we create an abstract machine-matrix and machinic assemblages of revolution. The evolution of a deterritorialized eye and mouth as a third ear, comprised of the double rhythm of the touching of what is seen and a hearing without being seen and heard, without a sign. The intensive mapping of the signs of life lost. It is to imagine playing music on the walls of the killing machine. The comrades who once toyed now use viral messages, sounds thereby re-coding the sonic warfare of capital. The

whistle blowing of those exiled for exposing the attempted killing of the witness.

Reik's *Listening with the Third Ear* (1948) shows, sees, a sequence, pattern of what one sees without seeing but hears - the statements of suffering. If Fanon can be said to have read Biko it is because he heard the cry of those youthful ones tortured under colonial rule. This is the youthful deterritorialized eye and mouth, freed from hierarchical imitations thereby allowing the roots of "attention to turn in other directions"<sup>30</sup>. Youthful attention involves speeds, acceleration and slowness, which offer the possibility of the deterritorialization of the failures of revolutionary desire, its "collapse into organizational microfascism" arising from "semiotic subjugation" which is a "a more powerful investment that comes to replace revolutionary desire". Guattari describes this in terms of the process of learning:

*"Children begin learning about capitalism in the cradle, before they have access to speech. They learn to perceive capitalist objects and relations on television, through the family, in the nursery. If they somehow manage to escape semiotic subjugation, then specialized institutions are there to take care of them: psychology, psychoanalysis, to name but two."*

Fanon's thinking was comprised of rhizomatic roots, the plasticity of the youthful brain which rewires itself and thereby enables the transformation of what is rooted within the present, within our presence, to bring about a witnessing and translation of something of what is seen, heard, into another

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<sup>30</sup> Reik 1949 page 169

form of problem and question. This is what Reik will call the “shock of thought” - it could equally be called the shock of youth, the generation gap - something affective and alive that “bursts in upon us”<sup>31</sup> or takes us by surprise, an unexpected encounter with rhizomatic thought “that has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight”<sup>32</sup>. It is a life-space where relationships are generated by the transforming affect into a thought.

The question of the young - how could you have let Rwanda happen? The digested affect-thought into a thoughtfulness and youthful exuberance to challenge the lie. Fanon was thoughtful, truthful, youthful and bold when confronted with lies, lies motivated by narcissistic self-interest and enacted as a paranoid splitting, apartheid and the mindless destroying of the mindfulness - witnessing.

The productivity of cartography is its capacity to put into relationship the practice of mindfully ‘tracing’ and ‘witnessing’ life and its attacks, a practice producing openings for the new species of humanity, life, yet to come. In place of white-washing history, a new tale gets told, lines that foster connections between fields. No longer is the burial place a mass grave confined to a prehistory, seen as without history, but rather the site of hospitality and the removal of blockages on the dead, to offer these faceless ancestors a home amongst the living as the thoughts of living root formations. The opening of the dead onto a new plane, a story *for* the dead enabling the ghosts of the past to no longer haunt the living as they now have a burial rite of passage.

*“In my history lessons. I look at a map of the world, run my fingers along the surface, and stop at: Sudan, Palestine... Uganda... Zimbabwe... and wonder how there aren't any open bleeding holes in the paper, wonder how*

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<sup>31</sup> Reik 1949 page 495

<sup>32</sup> ATP 23



## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

*the gaping wounds in the soil of these lands, lands that have been fed misery and pain, do not show up, and do not transfer onto my fingers”<sup>33</sup>.*

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<sup>33</sup> Hana Aylid, Scarf Magazine – Freedom to Wander, 2010

## Five - January 15, 2015, Washington USA.



**S**IX MONTHS AFTER ERIC GARNERS DEATH ON JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2015 THE WASHINGTON POST WILL REPORT ANOTHER KIND OF SUFFOCATION. The loss of oxygen to breathe which affects all life! 18 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 phosphorous into the ocean. “What the science has shown is that human activities — economic growth, technology, consumption — are destabilizing the global environment,” said Will Steffen. With the messages of these and other scientists and ecological activist’s humanity is left to gauge and respond to the breaking points of the earth due to ozone depletion, freshwater use, ocean acidification, atmospheric aerosol pollution and the introduction of exotic chemicals and modified organisms.

The human response to moving into a “zone of uncertainty” because of violation of the planetary boundaries has been perplexing to say the least. No global human revolution against those economic and political acts that place the earth in a chokehold, but what has followed was two populist political acts, both propelled by racist ideology, which accelerate global warming. First, the vote by most of the white British working class to exit from the EU and its commitment to environmental policies and second, the election of Donald Trump. Both these acts speak of the interconnected forces of class, race, gender and how this overlaps with environmental considerations.

For feminists like Christina Hoff Sommers "Trump is a reminder of what masculinity can be like outside of conventions"<sup>34</sup>. The rally cry of ‘MAGA’, to make the US and UK great again, the call to its colonial past, is bound to some Promethean myth that humanity and the earth can only be realized through the domination and objectification of nature. This ideology is linked a form of instrumental reason in which the process of so-called emancipation from the earth, via reason, ends up becoming out of control and alienation by man and the earth.

Eco feminists, who link this desire to control nature, in the name of scientific advancement, to patriarchy, point to a male arrogance in this process that shows an indifference to the destruction of nature. One example of this is the domestication of foreign lands, seen as empty, through the insertion of highways and the introduction of cars to advance the initial colonial exploits and extend the reach of capital. Moreover, this domination of nature, framed within capitalist scientific discourse, can be seen to mirror or at least parallel the way people from the so-called Third World are subject to domination, which in turn parallels the way women and children and the

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<sup>34</sup> SOURCE

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elderly are oppressed in families and the way people oppress animals and destroy the environment.

The convergence of capitalism, nationalism, patriarchal and Western rationality and the colonization of space has produced an earth of homelessness. It is a production process that grants certain subjects value, meaning and worth, while the lives of the underclass and marginalised, animals and other life forms on earth are deemed to be without worth and significance. Of course white male racism is not the primary cause of the destruction of the environment or the solely determining cause of capitalism, but these interdependent systems converge simultaneously against the 'wretched of the earth' and wretched earth. This is understood by Noam Chomsky who responds to the election of Trump in the following way:

“a date that might turn out to be one of the most important in human history, depending on how we react. No exaggeration. The most important news of November 8 was barely noted a fact of some significance. On November 8, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) delivered a report at the international conference on climate change in Morocco (COP22) which was called to carry forward the Paris agreement of COP21. The WMO reported that the past five years were the hottest on record. It reported rising sea levels, soon to increase because of the unexpectedly rapid melting of polar ice, most ominously the huge Antarctic glaciers. Already, Arctic sea ice over the past five years is 28 percent below the average of the previous 29 years, not only raising sea levels, but also reducing the cooling effect of polar ice reflection of solar rays, thereby accelerating the grim effects of

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global warming. The WMO reported further that temperatures are approaching dangerously close to the goal established by COP21, along with other dire reports and forecasts.” This statement occurs alongside “the president-elect, calls for rapid increase in use of fossil fuels, including coal; dismantling of regulations; rejection of help to developing countries that are seeking to move to sustainable energy; and in general, racing to the cliff as fast as possible....Trump has already taken steps to dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by placing in charge of the EPA transition a notorious (and proud) climate change denier, Myron Ebell”<sup>35</sup>.

With the convergence of racism and capitalism we see the on-going colonization of the planet and entrenchment of the market system. This produces centralized urbanized western empires prospering through the appropriation of the natural resources of the earth and human labour, from the periphery. It is a system of appropriation which had little or no regard for the resources - slaves, animals, land and earth – needed and used to generate profit. It is a practice build upon a violent seizure and conversion and territorialisation of space. The seizure of earth, soil, animals and slaves and conversion of this ‘raw material’ into energy which in turn has enabled the development of the modern (Western) urban centres.

The management of the vast demands for natural resources, like food, timber and fibres parallels the demand for human (slavery) and animal resources to feed and fuel the growing industrialized states and consumer

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<sup>35</sup> SOURCE

patterns in urban centres. The human cost and ecological effects of these global modes of production are immense. One effect and symptom of this 'negative space' is the bare existence of the wretched of the earth, homeless within their own lands, another is an indifference to the ecological effects, as evidenced by the futile attempts to replace replenished natural wealth imported to the urban Western centres.

Henri Lefebvre speaks about the power of the negative as a "violence, terror and permanent aggression directed against life" (Lefebvre 1991: 109). Negative space for Marx, Fanon and Lefebvre is the lifeblood of capitalism, but also the chokehold placed onto the earth. Following King (1990), we believe that capitalism capitalises upon "political and economic conditions of imperial dominance" (King 1990: 8) and promotes racism alongside the binary division of earth-human, subject-object classifications. The idea, idealism, that reason had all the answers was thought to be revolutionary, but in practice it resulted in new and subtle forms of exploitation through the convergence of racism with the territorialisation of the forces of capital.

This development saw the expansion of industry, free market economies and investment in technological advancements that supported this extension of reach and belief in the need for never ending progress. This spreading out and growth of modernization was perceived to be synonymous with progress but in truth, as Ziauddin Sardar (2003: 300) remarks, it was a violence, what he calls "development led imperialism", that systematically and consciously suppressed traditional cultures and tried, with some success, to replace them with their own cultural traits and patterns. Sardar rightly remarks that "civilization as we know it has always meant Western civilization." Technological advancements alongside institutional racism enabled this process of conquest and the insertion of Western (capitalist) values. Development becomes the de-development of Afrika and the earth.

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It is not any singular vignette that enables us to formulate the connection between the Black Lives Matter movement and Global Warming, but rather by paying attention and responding to the acceleration of those moments of suffocation which parallel other moments, by paying attention to moments of convergence and intersection, where new assemblages form, assemblages with unforeseen consequences. These symptoms reveal the chokehold on the Earth, at the same time constituting the Earth as a breathing machine.

The apprenticeship to the signs of the choke-hold is to be witnessed in the intersection of events such chemical warfare in Syria and Iraq, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, nuclear holocaust, refugee bodies drowning, the globalised use of suffocation as a method of torture, the endless use of explosions in film to create special effects. All these events and more speak in imaginative ways of the contraction of the breathing cells of life, connecting in a transversal line that reveals assemblages that are invisible if we either maintain an anthropocentric perspective or attempt anti-human corrections.

"I can't breathe!" the cry of life losing its life with its last breaths. Yet as we see the rise of bio politics it is evident that these are not words that can be heard. This cry of life has not resulted in any mass revolt or revolutionary overthrow of the suffocating forces choking the earth of its last breaths. Instead the globalization of market forces has become the new rising sun that replaces the process called photosynthesis, in which plants take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen using the energy of the sun to revolutionize carbon back into an earth-life producing product. Greed and self-satisfied indifference are destroying the different organic and inorganic materials that depend on oxygen - proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, fats - these all comprise of oxygen, even bone matter. Now imagine an ocean or world without O<sub>2</sub>, one of the post-apocalyptic scenes that are clichés only because they are symptoms and so appear regularly, like the sneezes that prefigure

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

the cold virus. This is the point at which science fiction glances into the night sky and sees a time reflected before the existence of forefathers and conquerors of the earth, an untimely light from our beginnings, another time which we struggle to comprehend.

The anthropocentric position sees the blank sea, the desert of life, as the real problem. The critic of the anthropocentric position makes the accusation that 'life' has been equated to 'human life' a false conclusion drawn. Yet in that blank desert it is not only the human face that no longer appears, nor simply the absence of the cellular organism in any form that calls for mourning, it is the machine itself that slips away from its potentials, not dead but now insipid in comparison with its contemporary capacity. Even if the 'human' per se did not matter, what it is that the human makes happen does.

Yet all this pales in the cry of the last breath. The mass revolt of the earth against capital has not yet occurred but the fact of its occurrence rises ever higher as the last breath slips away from the future. It is not the past that causes revolt, although it may - as it does at present - cause a kind of mimicry of resistance. Instead it is the loss of the future in the last breath that forces the revolt of the earth. The overthrow of capital will come, but not it seems from the human but from the *earth's protests* which may or may not leave a life called human.

In this revolution we see the convergence of the struggle of the wretched of the earth and wretched earth against the choke hold. The choke hold is the last breath of the earth an impact event, one that will bring about planetary consequences even if the crater it leaves will be difficult to perceive. Cracks arise within the surface of the earth as the last cry of life repeatedly calls out, this is the defining feature of our moment, this moment after which there will be no more moments, this moment after which time will return to the prolonged event of that which persists outside of this life.



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The moment of suffocation is crucial but even more important is the echoing of this moment. It is necessary to unpick this echoing vibrating affect, this suffocation of bodies both human and planetary. In the last breath of black lives, the Earth itself gasps for air.

## Six - May 25, 1979, Hollywood Boulevard



*“Black people throughout the world are realizing that our freedom will only be won through a protracted struggle against two forces - racism and imperialism. The world imperialist system festers in Africa and Asia and engulfs the Western hemisphere as well. In the United States we know it as monopoly capitalism.”<sup>36</sup>*

**T**HE BRICKS OF THE IMPERIAL WALL ARE DOUBLED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MOVE IN TWO PLANES AT THE SAME TIME. What people living outside of the US often don't appear to realise about America is that this great machine, perhaps the most powerful machine in history, a machine which has conquered the planet, has also crushed ordinary US citizens. It is

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<sup>36</sup> SOURCE

## The Freudian Spaceship – Part One: Breath

the land of the machine, in the broadest sense of the term, a country dependent on the continued functioning of the machine. What is the American machine? It is the abstract machine of capital, the Great Industry, Moloch, the cry of the mind-forg'd manacles.

The US is not a country but an economy that has 'perfected capitalism'. Let us be clear, however - in perfecting capitalism the US has embraced, with a heart-warming naivete, the alien abstract forces of capital. This alien force now runs riot through the minds, bodies and bellies of the American. The reality of perfected capitalism is one where capitalism has mastered the American. Capital knows, with an alien animal cunning, how to consume from within. It is parasitic force that morphs the consciousness, culture and criteria of life, visible only through its' effects. Most notable of all is the effect on technology. The technological machine which was to find itself colonised as the major mode of capitalist growth following the Industrial Revolution, becomes the face of the parasite, its very presence seen by many as coextensive with capitalism. Yet we can see the real force of the parasitic drive not in the machine itself but in the peculiar Hollywood fascination with *the runaway* machine perhaps expressed most forcefully in the *Alien* films.

The Alien hunts man down, yet it is only after the third film of the series that Ripley begins to realise that she carries the alien runaway parasite inside her and it is at this moment that she can begin to look the Alien in the eye and think about ways to detach the spaceship from the ships of modernity and the cargo they carry for the building of capital. It is in this 'runaway' nature of the machine that we see capitalism at its most insidious, simultaneously driving and concealing its own effects. The 'runaway machine' produces a fear response, a theatre and scene that arise not only from the capitalist machine itself but from the inability to halt the runaway process.

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Something lives, it is alien, yet it has an uncanny human resemblance. The relationship between alien and alienation is much like the relationship between the *Heimlich* (homely) and the *unheimlich* (unhomely or *uncanny*). The problem of the alien is the problem of alien knowledge. It is not a question of productivity per se but access to this force of productivity. Margaret Thatcher sensed this, she invited the worker to buy the council flat, that is, to become indebted to the *habit* of home ownership. Alien knowledge has inadvertent effects on the knower. The alienated worker exists by way of becoming an alien knowledge, reduced to an object of surplus production, never the subject of production. This alien knowledge produces the side-effect of alienating the worker from their own most intimate truths, a movement from bare existence to that of a subject with free time to contemplate and 'invest'.

The claim is that in the framework of alien knowledge there is an indisputable unleashing of power but simultaneously that the knower inevitably loses something. The question of knowledge thus raises ethical questions specifically what is it we lose and is the loss one of subjectivity, of self or sense of self? The problem of 'how we know' begins to override 'what we know' because of the side-effects that result from the alienating framework - modes and means of production - of alien knowledge

Has the machine not alienated all real forms of life? What if the machine itself was the real form and force of life? Dr Ishiguro's life-like robotic clone of himself and his daughter produces uncanny effects, opens us onto the uncanny valley. The closer the resemblance between the robot and human, the greater the rejection by adults - but not children (excluding of, course Dr Ishiguro's daughter, who was not amused when the encounter with her robotic double took place). Sony capitalise on Harry Harlow's brutal experiments on monkey deprivation and the furry toy as a substitute for the

mother<sup>37</sup>, experiments which will be emulated in the production of furry robotic animals.

For Deleuze and Guattari life is itself comprised of desiring machines. These are the underground factory workers, formed in the workshop of free syntheses, with endless possibilities and free associations that evidence a life beyond the control of the parasitic machines. Yes, something remains, something is alive and real. This real life, life that escapes the cages of docility, is “not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible” (AO 40). It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari caution against talk of a death drive, for this death is the lifeblood and drive of Capital. The spread of HIV in some ways parallels the workings of capital, it infected cells, and replicated the receptor thereby multiplying the cell, analogous to the process by which capital decodes and re-codes the human, the biological, the earth, with the viral cell of the commodity.

The dirty little secret of capitalism is the channelling of all flows of life and of what is left of life into private capital, the insertion of desire into the economic base and insertion of the drive into social productions. The free worker with her desire, becoming animal, off her face dancing on Saturday night is “shamed, stupefied” and “placed in a situation without exit, it is easily persuaded to deny ‘itself’ in the more important interests of civilisation” (AO 143). In opposition to this deadness, schizoanalysis sees the function of libido as a call to life to invest in social production in such a way as to hallucinate history and produce in “delirium entire civilizations, races and continents ... intensely ‘feeling’ the becoming of the world” (AO 120). Hence the

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<sup>37</sup> SOURCE

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questions from children, l'enfant, "what does it mean to be able to breath? - why be poor? why are there rich people? And the child says: Why?" (121)

The difficulty lies in the fact that the living force, revolutionary desire, has become an *abstract* entity - it is not the machines that run away with themselves, but the alien force of capital that runs away with ourselves, carrying every part of the Earth off as prisoners of the machine. The key to this domestic violence is that the human has the key to the cell but is unable to use it, this is what truly imprisons her, keeps her in a state of abuse. That which is most intimate to her, the site of greatest intensity, the pain and abuse endured, is also what is external to her, not as the territory of the Earth but as desire, demand and need of the other, the force of domestic capital and patriarchal violence.

This living force, the 'drive for death' in the technological machines, is the conversion of a desiring machinic life drive into anti-life, inaccurately called a death-drive and produced by the runaway effect. Yet the technological machines are no more than haunted bodies, temporary clothing for the forces of the abstract shadow of capital which appropriates the body as its own. These are the zombie formations seen in the zones of non-being. The zones of non-being speak of an uncanny merging of founding process of industrial labour production with contemporary and future relations of production. The perpetual reproduction of these relations of production is to be seen in the hybrid formations which blur the interface of human and machine. The assembly lines founded at the advent of industrialisation, which spoke of 'servitude', forced labour production, now come up against the literal embodiment of what the word robot originally meant to the Czech brothers Karl and Josef Capek, a fictional humanoid. Robots are forced labour, in servitude, with human features - or is it the other way around, humans are robots with the mask of human features? Animal skin, human masks!

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The real machine, the major machine of the real that defines this time, the abstract machine of capital, slips constantly from mask to mask as it machines the real into its own image. Capital is an abstract entity that makes reality in its own image and remakes the human to fit the new world. Without exit, no breath, no mouth, the silent scream of the body cannot escape, or can only partially transform itself through the hole punctured in the structural forces by the voice of protest. The body is entrapped in the shadows of the capitalist machine.

When attempting to communicate, the eye of capital once again becomes the shadows of the body, ready-to-hand with the mobile phone and laptop, opening onto the windows of screen pop ups, not of a life outside, but market forces that mirror the movement of capital upon the body. No exit, or incomplete escape, the eye of consumption becomes the substitute mouth, hence the cry of protest as seen in Bacon, faces without eyes and mouths. Bacon draws mouths, many mouths through which the body attempts to hysterically escape the monolithic pictures of global capital, for the hysterical conversation has always, from the days of the witch, been a site of protest.

The American is the one that has been, so far, most transformed by such an entity. In contrast Afrikans have been transformed by the magical power of map drawing and naming as the slave recalls with each whip cast into her flesh the call, what is my name.

As with America, we see extreme contrasts in Afrika. In fact, there is not a singular Afrika but many. What is Afrika? Ali Mazrui (1986) ponders if Afrika can represent itself or will always be represented by others. Mazrui notes that Europe is north of Afrika yet the planet is round, so how come Europe is situated above Africa? We can include within this the observation that the size of Africa on the map is usually portrayed as smaller than it is. Mazrui draws our attention to the name Africa, which he tells us can be traced by some to the Berber, while others trace it to Greco-Roman ancestry. The

location that was referred to was present day Tunisia, not the whole of Afrika. It is suggested that the name derives from the Latin, *aprica* (sunny) or Greek *aphrike* (without cold), a local Berber or Phoenician word, or from the Semites in which the word sounding like Afrika meant ‘ears of corn’, referring to the productive and fertile soil of Tunisia. Then there is the Arabic name, *ifriqiya*. Mazrui concludes by underlying that the application of the term Africa only came about in the fifteenth century with slavery and Western European expansion. The discovery of dark-skinned people resulted in Europeans thinking about Afrika as the land of black people, as the Dark Continent, and no longer as a province of Europe. With the introduction of the term Africa to define the whole continent an interesting racial categorisation occurred. The term African was only used for those people living south of the Sahara as Africans. Africa now becomes a race, becomes black. At the same time, he observes that Afrika is multicoloured and multicultural with greater diversity than any other continent but there was no embrace of diversity and instead everybody was seen as simply black. Again, what is Afrika? A large urban mass made up of islands of rural existence? We have ruthless capitalism, capitalism without the safety net and a sea of indifference, impunity and brutal cruelty alongside wonderful community existence which invite acts of compassion, ubuntu and the tolerance of difference. A continent which has both, in its past and present, referenced some of the greatest sites of diversity seen by those open to looking beyond the mythical and timeless Western presentation of Africa as singular and homogeneous. Is Africa the symptom of European and Western contradictions and brutalities? The result of these contradictions is one of the ‘purest’ manifestations of unchecked capitalism alongside self-righteous religious and patriarchal rule. Nation states made up of an influx of refugees and desperately poor people crossing borders and the exodus of skilled labour that are bought and brought into the West as cheap labour. Nation states who are no better than in their hatred of the other than the



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European fortress, for example the xenophobic hatred in South Africa and large-scale attack on the 'homosexual'. Africa has learned from Europe that you create community through a shared crime, hate crime. Europe has the Muslim; Africa has the 'Homosexual' but let's not forget it was the British who brought us laws and religions that pathologised men having sex with men. Let us not forget the Americans who continue to flock to Afrika and offer donor support providing consenting sex is thought about in fundamentalist Christian terms. Afrika needs to move between the donor demands of the Christian right and human rights groups that demand 'our' Western models of sexual identity are the norm. Afrika is the land of female resilience in the face of male and capitalistic violence. Africa a coconut, in a nutshell the emerging middle class - called upon to drive and hold together the African economy - while Afrika is the kernel presence of the absence of these Western and capitalist promises in which some Afrikans learn to speak and engage in the power of a double consciousness - brown and white, Western and non-Western.

Fanon in his dying words breathes in this stale air and proclaims that in the process of the USA catching up to Europe it "became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness and inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions" (WE 252). This is what we mean by the US having 'perfected capitalism'. It is for this reason that the relation between the American and the USA forms a critical conjunction of forces in the contemporary world. On arriving in the US city, one soon realizes that one is entering a huge machine in which almost everything is regulated via a system of coding, from ordering coffee to making a telephone call or following the 16 rules as to what to do with a bike on the Bart train. One cannot but wonder if another Hollywood fascination, cracking the code, reflects people trying to escape a system which is over-determined by regulation. At the same time, one discovers that alongside this regulation there is in fact a 'Wild West' attitude, the nomadic

rogue dimension of the war machine that cannot be assimilated and which shoots from the hip, in the school yards and shopping malls. The strength of this machine is the global homogenization of a politics, that is, the ethics of consumerism as the basis of the social order, the creation of a packaged reality. “War machines have a power of metamorphosis, which of course allows them to be captured by States, but also to resist that capture and rise up again in other forms, with other ‘objects’ besides war (revolution)”<sup>38</sup>.

At its most simple level there is a co-dependency – the car as central to the American way of life, for example. Moreover, these cars are large and while this might perhaps make human sense when it snows, and the car might become a temporary shelter, it is nonetheless an ecological violence, especially when they are driven by one person. At its most insidious level, there is the generalised commodity form producing a generalised packaged reality, perhaps most clearly seen in the packaged reality of meat that transforms food, animal, human into precisely those cogs or moments in a machine that operates above, beyond and against the human, the animal and the Earth.

The US is a land of waste and excess driven by a demand and need to consume more and more in the fear that something may have been left out, the assumption of lack written like neon into the capitalist machine. For example, when ordering a meal and consuming all these different taste sensations the person may feel cheated as she was unable to experience the essence of the meal as each flavour wipes out the other. To have as much as possible comes from the legacy of economic depression and from a fear of famine and once upon a time, fear of the female, that lies at the centre of the logic of capital and the propagation of the great American dream.

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<sup>38</sup> ATP 483

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The great American dream that reached out to the stars has been lost to the stripes. We have forgotten where we came from, we don't know where we are, and we fear where we may be going. Afraid, we turn from the glorious adventure of the pursuit of happiness to a pursuit of an illusionary security in an ordered, stratified, striped society. Our way of life is symbolized to the world by the stripes of military force. At home we have made a mockery of being our brother's keeper by being his jail keeper. When Americans can no longer see the stars, the times are tragic. We must believe that it is the darkness before the dawn of a beautiful new world; we will see it when we believe it.

### **Saul Alinsky - Rules for Radicals**

How do people cope living at the epicentre of the machine? Contrary to the stereotype about Americans being stupid there are deeply distressed people, many of the young people or marginalised groups, who want to talk about what is going on in the United States. At the same time people seem overwhelmed and in response to this they demand a reality that is manageable, packaged. Stated differently, there is a simplification of complexity, so the challenge of thinking outside the box, while appealing, is to think beyond a narrowly demarcated 'safe' space. The result of living within manageable limits is that Americans are often indifferent to what falls outside these known limits. The citizen lives a state of alienation, aliens on the Earth. For humans the violence of the capitalist machine involves alienation, dehumanisation and depersonalisation such that dissociation becomes a necessary strategy. Marx was aware of this. The concept of alienation, which is central to Marx's writing, can be traced throughout his work, or put another

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way, can be traced in every dimension of the capitalist apparatus, be it economic, ideological, political or philosophical. Young Marx, the philosopher and political theorist, believed “man had forfeited to someone or something what was essential to his nature” and this loss was a by-product of the way in which the market economy was structured. The late Marx, the economist, identified the alienated situation of the worker under capitalism as comprising of four aspects.

(1) The worker [Marx wrote] is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object. The object he produces does not belong to him, dominates him, and only serves in the long run to increase his poverty. (2) Alienation appears not only in the result, but also in the process of production and productive activity itself. The worker is not at home (our emphasis) in his work which he views only as a means of satisfying other needs. It is as activity directed against himself, that is independent of him and does not belong to him. (3) Thirdly, alienated labour succeeds in alienating man from his species. Species life, productive life, life creating life, turns into a mere means of sustaining the worker’s individual existence, and man is alienated from his fellow men. (4) Finally, nature itself is alienated from man, who thus loses his own inorganic body<sup>39</sup>.

In economic alienation we witness other forms of alienation; disconnection from the earth, detachment from one’s immediate

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<sup>39</sup> SOURCE

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relationships, from other people, animals, from the place we are moving through, from what we eat, how we love and fuck and sleep and dream and from the very time of the Earth. Humans, all too human, become so alienated that their very body is placed into a situation where it becomes little more than a symbolic body written up by and written into the codes of capital and the state and its disciplinary structures. For example, the history of homeless people tends to be recorded through surveillance and documentation by those institutions responsible for discipline, punishment, shelter and cure to 'save' and 'rescue' their victims. Theory replicates this disembodiment when it situates the body as structural, symbolic, made up of signifiers without flesh, always coded and abstracted but never decoding and embodied. If academia is a theoretical engagement in which theory argues with theory, with narcissistic twists and turns abounding, what is practice? Practice rooted in 'grass root challenges' often overwhelms the capacity for reflective thinking and can result in reactive and anti-intellectual responses, becoming another form of the attack on thinking, often clothed in a macho ethic that wants to shoot down thought, reflection, difficult questions. What is needed is movement between theory, practice, policy maker, university, organisation and individual, a movement of bodies in which there is always going to be a break down in translation but where, if a community of engagement and learning are created across these thresholds, a transversal reality that breaks open these spaces can emerge, preventing them from continuing to exist as closed sets. The desire to become part of the 'real world', to 'grow up', to 'be realistic', drives social production, rips apart psychic life, forces trauma on the body, the mind and whatever else there is that makes up that aesthetic ideal, the 'whole being' that the human takes itself to be. We need to counter this desire with the dreams of the utopic.

One example of this alienation and dissociation is living in a twilight drug or alcohol induced state, such that the person does not have to connect with

themselves or anything else. Another example is the organisation of a perplexing and depersonalised environment, which is devoid of meaning and purpose, through various delusional systems, imagining things that are not there or else refusing to see what is present. Slave to the machine. Kelly Oliver, following Marx, suggests that the slave is reduced to animality<sup>40</sup>, yet at the same time denied the pleasures that Marx associates with animal functions. Instead the slave's life becomes a "means for the life of others", it is "not a means to one's own life". "All relations, not just the relations of production, are forced, including the so-called animal functions"<sup>41</sup>.

Alien knowledge is the shadow of the object that falls upon the knower, the ego's identification with home ownership. This is analogous to the problematic which we can find in Heidegger's articulation of the problem of technology as an 'enframing' of being as well as in Marx's analysis of the commodity form, a problem of the effects of the *form* of a type of productivity. When the worker does not buy into and refuses to become part of Thatcher's dream, then the shadows of commodification start to have daimonic effects.

The daimonic alien source of thoughts that lives inside the object as a drive that affects one to think - enough is enough, time to unite! The working-class revolutionary consciousness is a moment where there is a loving of the alien, loving the alien for what alien bodies can do when acting in unity, in ways that are alien to the prescriptions of the market economy. This intimate knowledge of how one expresses oneself as one is oppressed - self alienation - is seen and heard and embraced as a life force of resistance, my/our defences against the breaches of our subjectivity. The work force which shuts shop is impregnated by some collective alien force and under a spell activates

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<sup>40</sup> SOURCE

<sup>41</sup> SOURCE

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new possibilities as a product of this externalised and alienated drive force. In Marx's sense of the terms as he uses them in the 1844 manuscripts, the workers revolt derives from the thought of the alien, an alien that has been with us at least since Socrates daimon.

## Seven - September 11, 2001, World Trade Centre



**T**HE PROTESTS OF THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH, THE REVOLT OF THE EARTH HAS COME UP AGAINST THE GATES HOUSING THE WALLS OF WEALTH, THE PRIVILEGED ELITES WHO ENTER THE SPACESHIPS. Walls built at a cost to life as we know it. Walls maintained by a refusal to know. This refusal to see what one 'sees without seeing' occurs through thinking the thoughts of the other as though they were 'independent' thoughts, to not think, to be thoughtless and remain scripted.

"Prof Chris Rapley, a climate scientist at University College London and former director of the Science Museum in London said: 'The Anthropocene marks a new period in which our collective activities dominate



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the planetary machinery. Since the planet is our life support system – we are essentially the crew of a largish spaceship – interference with its functioning at this level and on this scale is highly significant. If you or I were crew on a smaller spacecraft, it would be unthinkable to interfere with the systems that provide us with air, water, food and climate control. But the shift into the Anthropocene tells us that we are playing with fire, a potentially reckless mode of behaviour which we are likely to come to regret unless we get a grip on the situation”

**(Carrington, 2016).**

In 1974 US ecologist Garret Hardin created the metaphor of ‘lifeboat earth’ (Gardin, 1974). Future survival for him needed to be governed by the ‘ethics of a lifeboat’ in which there is no place for the wretched of the earth. This is the ethics of the camp, which is to speak of the earth becoming a spaceship. Recycled air, a bio-cyber machine struggling with a depleted ecosphere and knowing it is only a matter of time before the air conditioning technology breaks and then the wait begins, the time limited existence. This is to be trapped as a docile body within the intervals of the wait and the promise of new technologies of self, alongside the melancholic and uncanny reminder of fresh air as “the sign of their approaching death” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, p.173).

The dead bodies washed onto the shores of Europe without breath are a repetition of the unwanted cargo and the life thrown into the sea by the slave ships of modernity to generate the insurance of profit. The spaceship has *real* limits, negation of earth, the binary divisions of human and nature. This is the real that is impossible as opposed to a productive *real* in which

there is the affirmation of the multiple interrelationships within the earth as once found in Afrikan philosophies, grounded through an ontological embrace of a body-memory which is always in relation to the community, including human and animal ancestors. Following Ali Mazrui, we agree with the conclusion that the capitalist materialistic attitude has had a profound effect on many Afrikans who now simply see animals as something of economic value and laugh at the West and its attitude towards 'pets'. Something has been forgotten in this laughter, it is the same laughter (of abstraction) that the Europeans used in turning the Afrikan body into an object in a zoo, simply something exotic to be gazed upon or else seen as flesh, raw meat put to work. Europe brought about the notion of reserves - game reserves and tribal reserves (protected species) - what Mazrui calls ecological apartheid, in which certain areas are designated as explicitly human and others for animals, the native<sup>42</sup>.

As the human species develops the capacity to rip open the world, as it transforms from the simply social animal, from the collective swarm of flesh that is each organism's contextual body, the pack or horde, it encounters the counter-effects of its increasing capacity for the transformation of the world. This counter-effect is the reconstitution of the human flesh swarm as a new surface, no longer a physical swarm of bodies but now a network of knots and nodes, with unpredictable entanglements, a variability and changeability that produces disparity, inequality and differentials of power across the global networks. Unpredictable possibilities are quickly framed by the consumption patterns of capital thereby producing erratic effects on the earth. The human swarm transforms into capricious and erratic networks of power and it is as if it is in this unpredictability that the politics of the contemporary age is

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<sup>42</sup> SOURCE, Mazrui

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born. Capitalist politics involves a battle to reproduce the same relations of production and maintain the investment of finance into economic market forces whilst attempting to manage the human and earth factors, the unpredictable life formations that have never read the manuals and which produce numbers, differentiation, quickly changing quantity. There is a fickle intersection of forces that defies the spread sheets attempts to predict derivatives – a so called average velocity – or the refusal of certain sectors of the workforce to play dead and blind themselves to structures of exclusion and exploitation that have become invisible to so many others affected by them. It is not Cantor's engagement with mathematical questions of infinity – points on a line and sub sets and empty sets – that tear downs mathematical rational foundations but the greed of those aligned to the profits of machines of production and a humanity-shaped mass consumption, transnational corporations, the technological spread of capitalist consumption. Abundance premised on the empty set, poverty.

Greedy reproduction of the conditions of exploitation so that new virgin lands can be subjugated; the image of capital par excellence is that of rape. Let us take the moon and turn it to face the other way, take this virgin fertility and turn it into a minefield of penetration. Life 'waits' for the promise of maturation, the curse that once of age you, meat-doll, will be taken and belong as mine - this is the brutal, cruel and crude promise of capitalist chauvinism for each life form named slut, naked existence, poor. Reproduction and making copies, passing on a set of instructions that determine life formations and turning its life face into the fantasy of what capitalist chauvinism desires and wants. Never a life on its own terms, a premature rotting, given over to be drugged and taken - yet somehow, sometimes, and many times too often for the liking of the capitalist chauvinist machine, life remembers life as it moves within the cracks. The rats moving between the cracks of the ships pioneering the possibility of global market

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forces and new and unforeseen assemblages, the black death moving within and between the rat, crack and market force.

The anthropocene is not merely a result of human activity, it is as much a condition of the human, the way in which ‘appropriation’ has transformed ‘adaptation’, producing a predominantly unilateral, asymmetric relation between ‘agency’ and planet that negates the very possibility of what might be termed ‘ecosophical relations of negotiation’ and ‘porous thresholds.’ With each environmental irruption, be it flood, hurricanes, or famines, the revolution of the wretched earth intersects with the resistances of the wretched of the earth. If the anthropocene names a periodisation determined by the way in which the human ‘marks’ the planet, the question of how such marking takes place also involves where the marking takes place.

Gardins’ capitalist lifeboat spaceship of the future ‘reforms’ the ship of modernity, but eternally repeats the colonisation of the wretched of the earth and the wretched earth. How different this tale is to those indigenous people, for example the Khoi and San of Southern Africa, who adapted their needs to an environment, thereby maintaining ecological peace, as opposed to colonising the environment to meet their needs in the name of a ‘war on want’. When it comes to animals, the earth, life, are we able to think ourselves into the being of the earth and animal without a sense of possession and property - can we become animal, become Earth? The hunter gatherers adapted their needs, tools and techniques to an environment, in a shared sense of belonging, without ‘property’ rights on earth, animal and life. The surface of the earth for the Khoi and San is alive with possibilities which invite cohabitation, cracks which speak of timelines, songs, dances that refuse the legacies and mappings undertaken by Berlin conferences and G20 meetings!

// hapo ge // hapo tama // hapo hasib dis tamas kai bo (a dream is not a dream until shared by the whole community) – Khoi Proverb.

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From every wound there is a scar, and every scar tells a story that says I have survived: turn your wounds into wisdom - isiXhosa quote.

It is better to have a wizard as a neighbour than a liar. A liar cannot be trusted; a wizard, though dangerous, can be trusted - Afrikan proverb.

## **Eight - November 15, 1884, Berlin**



**T**HE TIMELINE OF EVENTS OUTLINING THE ADVENT OF THE MODERN CONCENTRATION CAMP SPEAK OF THE 'ETERNAL RETURN' OF COLONISATION, for in Zarathustra's and the Sangoma's laughter there is a mockery of talk of a postcolonial. Otto von Bismarck convened the Berlin Conference in Berlin in 1884–1885, whilst today the joke is to ask, 'what do you see if you turn Afrika upside down – China'. This is the despotic face of this past present history, 1898, when the British PM Salisbury claims to be able to distinguish living nations from dying nations.

Not long before this Berlin Conference, in 1812 in the US construction begins on the first federal highway, the Cumberland Road, which connects

the Potomac and Ohio rivers. The great highways built of gravity weighing down the dancing skies with the marriage of private property, land ownership and the stupidity of the sense of having. One year before, November, Midlands, in the UK winter night, revolt! Workers with blackened faces break into factories and destroy the machines. The Luddite movement was born and spread north, with artisans destroying factory machinery that they held responsible for making their skills and lives obsolete.

In February 1812 the UK Parliament imposes the death penalty for 'frame breaking' effectively declaring war on the Luddite movement – capital will not be stopped! Poets speak out in defence of the Luddites, like Lord Byron's address to parliament. In March the Luddites respond by attacking a wool factory in Yorkshire. Whilst William Blake, a Luddite sympathizer, takes the struggle south against "those dark satanic mills", as in his depiction of London, it is only Marx's cry of rage in 1844, against the alienation produced by private property, that makes the struggle slowly start to go viral, opening the global epidemic of the class war.

Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only ours when we have it – when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., – in short, when it is used by us. Although private property itself again conceives all these direct realisations of possession only as means of life, and the life which they serve as means is the life of private property – labour and conversion into capital. In the place of all physical and mental senses there has therefore come the sheer estrangement of all these senses, the sense of having. The human being had to be reduced to this absolute

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poverty in order that he might yield his inner wealth to the outer world.

### **Karl Marx, 1844 Manuscripts.**

The time of capital always includes the time of resistance. The Berlin Conference was the time period in which there was the foundation of the Fabian society in the UK, in which George Bernard Shaw communicates a need for different forms of connection, new ways of organising communities as a way of putting an end to a system that divides society “into hostile classes with large appetites and no dinners at one extreme and large dinners and no appetites at the other”<sup>43</sup>. Revolution is as simple and complex as this, new ways of organising one to one, group and community relationships and the ways of connecting overlap, producing unforeseen assemblages.

This was the time in which Europe’s newly overcrowded urban centres developed alongside a growth in nationalism. The search for markets and raw materials drove colonial expansion, impinging upon material and psychic spaces. Scientific and technological advances in the second half of the 1800s made overland expansion easier, railways and steamships made long journeys possible whilst the spread of the electric telegraph enabled contact to continue at a distance, shrinking space, opening the future possibility realised in the form of globalisation. Medical advances with quinine to treat malaria enabled explorers to visit for longer times in ‘the tropics’ whilst ‘the explorer’ became the great hero figures of the western imagination. David Livingstone, Henry Stanley and Cecil Rhodes became celebrated pioneers and widely admired within a new cultural formation of ‘bourgeois society’. More missionaries flocked to Afrika and Asia to spread the word of god - and

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<sup>43</sup> SOURCE



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psychoanalysis is born, in part out of an admiration and identification with the conquerors of space.

Following Rajana Khanna (2003), a case can be made for identification on the part of Freud with Stanley and a situating of psychoanalysis alongside the adventure novel. What Stanley did, the authors of the adventure novel also did on a fictional level. The adventure novel was hugely popular during this period and speaks of the unofficial mapping of Africa. Stanley's job was to broker (steal) land deals and keep European imagination filled with heroic tales from the "dark continent". Moreover, Richard Phillips (1997) points out that the scramble for Africa was also a scramble to map the world to colonise and consolidate imperial power. "Adventure stories constructed a cultural space in which imperial geographies and imperial masculinities were conceived" (Phillips 1997: 12).

The adventure novel, including psychoanalysis as part of this tradition, as Phillips (1997) contends, following Victor Turner, corresponds with liminal space, but at the same time mapped a worldview that placed Europe as the imperial centre and colonies like Crusoe's island at the margins (Phillips 1997: 13, 17). Even Deleuze's Michel Tournier and the 'world without Others' does not escape the assumption that colonised lands are empty of life, people, waiting for the European mind to populate and map the terrain to give it a rational basis.

It was also a period which saw the rise of biological racism. As Foucault puts it, the state was no longer the instrument that one race used against another, but instead became the protector of the superiority and purity of that race within its borders. Racial purity, with all its biological implications, skin colour for instance, replaces the idea of race struggle, for example Saxons against Franks, due to a shift from law to norm, from races in the plural to race in the singular, a move from the emancipation of a people to a concern

with purity and sovereignty. State sovereignty thus becomes the imperative to 'protect the race' and its economic interests (Foucault 2003: 81).

Egypt and Congo became the first territories colonised in the scramble for Africa which results in 10 million square miles getting owned by the colonisers. The Congo endures horrors as unimaginable as that of slavery and the holocaust, but to this day it is of little interest within the global construction of hierarchies of suffering. Europeans believed that they were the most advanced and civilised people on earth and it was their duty to educate non-European natives and tame the hysterics and witches within Europe. Charles Darwin's theories were popularised to support this view, the so-called 'survival of the fittest' being cited as an explanation-exculpation for colonisation. Kant, Hegel and other philosophers 'cooking theories' on how to tame the slave were watered down into everyday popular philosophies and ideologies of hate crime, the contemporary arrogance of the white Dutchman and woman's blind indifference as they proudly invite their children to make fun of slavery<sup>44</sup>.

The colonial war never left us but instead moves inward and outward. Moreover, Alain Badiou (2013) is correct to warn us against the 'ideology' of any singular absolute example of the camp, for in using the Holocaust as the 'one example' against which all evil must be measured we do not witness what is happening before our eyes, the creation of new singularities of evil and new concentration camps.

We must go further and not limit the camp to human existence, for animals and the earth are colonised within the camp of market forces. The intersectionality of the camp does not imply equivalence but a framework in

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<sup>44</sup> On Kant's 'raciology', see *'The color of reason: the idea of "race" in Kant's anthropology*, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, in Postcolonial African Philosophy – a critical reader, Blackwell 1997, pp 103-131

which animals are understood to be subjected to acts of violence very similar to those people experienced in the situations of genocide, a parallel that JM Coetzee's fictional character Elizabeth Costello makes in her engagement with Bacon, Marx and Arendt<sup>45</sup>.

Fanon's work – in particular, his elaboration of the convergence of the political and psychological – enables us to understand the experience of being caged, having no mental and physical space into which one can retreat. The production of places in which the other has no mental and physical space into which to retreat, as depicted by Fanon, is both a description of homelessness at the limit and a definition of violence. What is especially helpful in the human context is understanding that this is the overlap of the political and psychological. Fanon describes the result of this convergence as the breaking down of a sense of belonging - or of being rooted in a material, political and psychological way - through disconnecting the body, thought and soul from community and ancestors, and the reducing the complex person to simple flesh.

Fanon describes a kind of violence which Achille Mbembe elucidates as the encounter with not being recognised as an independent self-consciousness being. Mbembe's (2001: 200) description of the reduction of the person to flesh – meat – is particularly illuminating in this regard. The killing of the native belongs to the same register as the killing of an animal, but, as Mbembe (2001: 167) writes:

(for) "flesh to become meat, it must undergo a series of procedures. First, it must be cut into pieces or quarters. These have to be cleaned .... Like that of the animal whose throat is cut, the death inflicted on a human

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<sup>45</sup> SOURCE

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being is perceived as embracing nothing. It is a death of a purely negative essence without substance.”

Mbembe (2001) notes the multiple forms of violence that this can take, from ceremonial punishment to forced labour to everyday forms of torture, harassment, fatigue, and execution. Negative space is the lifeblood of this colonial entrenchment of the market system and creation of centralized urbanized empires, the birth of Western capitalism as global capitalism. This is the image of thoughtlessness that the market forces invite as it feeds off the abstraction of life, the commodification of meat and flesh into objects subject to packaging within the supermarket - hyper realism and the normalisation of bloodletting within our packaged reality of sound bites.

The butchers house, the city-urban slum over there, this is our future architecture. “Pity the meat! ... Meat is not dead flesh; it retains all the sufferings and assumes all the colours of living flesh”. Deleuze suggest that “meat is the common zone of man and beast, their zone of indiscernibility”<sup>46</sup> and that it is this *zone of indiscernibility*, one of the key moments of Bacon’s work, which intersects with Fanon’s *zone of non-being*. “There is a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born”<sup>47</sup>.

‘God is Dead’, first declared in 1882 and repeated two years later, occurs at the same time and in close geographic proximity to the Berlin Conference, which Joseph Conrad referred to as the ‘The International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs’<sup>48</sup>. Horror, horror as all forms of colonisation

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<sup>46</sup> SOURCE

<sup>47</sup> Franz Fanon *Black Skin White Mask* Forward by Homi K. Bhabha and Ziauddin Sardar Pluto Press London 2008 Copyright Editions de Seuil 1952, English translation copyright © Grove Press Inc 1967 page 41

<sup>48</sup> SOURCE

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becomes permissible, for now 'man' is without the witness of the extended family, the community, the ancestors and the earth, instead the politics of the human proclaims sovereign rights over the earth and its various and dynamic life forms.

The earth as an a living force field of multiple elements is totalised and territorialised by the One from the heights above, the sovereign names of the Western father, nation state and capital that speaks in a forked tongue, in the names of technological progress and development, thereby using the science of interpretation as the instrument to control dreamtime of the earth and the *id*, it's longing for the seasons of change, difference within the repetition.

Deleuze calls for another kind of laughter, laughter at our stupidity which speaks of anthropocentric thoughtlessness; for we are all stupid, that is, we are unable to imagine how our stupidity is in fact the wall which we need to create new concepts so that the earth can once again believe in man. We know that human stupidity will not be enacted as a revenge upon the earth but as a site of thoughtfulness, because stupidity is a 'transcendental condition of thought', a forcing of thought (Deleuze, 1994, p.345)." Stupidity is not animality" Deleuze argues but is instead a "specifically human form of bestiality" (Deleuze, 1994, p.150).

It is from the flows of stupidity that the forcing of the imaginative capacity to conceive another world, another Earth, arises. Politics for Fanon began with this imaginative capacity, which for Deleuze and Guattari becomes the subversive potential of the body-without-organs when creating new assemblages of life, assemblages of nature-earth-man, from whence arise the emancipatory power of playful and unforeseen assemblages of art, science and philosophy.

I exist because of the earth and the Earth exists because of the relation to the extended community, ancestors, totemic animals, rocks, plants, temperature gradients and collective forces, life. The Fanon-Body includes

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not only a corporeal, physical body and its psycho-social-political location, but also a collective body of human, animal, life, in a state of continual evolution, becoming something other through collective struggle. For Deleuze and Guattari

“the Earth is the great unengendered stasis, the element superior to production that conditions the common appropriation and utilization of the ground. It is the surface on which the whole process of production is inscribed, on which the forces and means of labour are recorded, and the agents and products distributed”

**(1983, p.141).**

It is this Earth that must be explored, an Earth that we argue is neither reducible to the (physical, material) Planet nor the (human, social) World, nor is it solely explicable by the process of social production. It is a revolutionary Earth that produces signs of the time that refuse the already thought symbolic system of inscription and representation, events that “cannot be thought and yet must be thought.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 60).

The last cries of life suggest the earth as a breathing machine, making the call for the separation of intolerable rumblings and sounds from the ‘depth’ and the transformation of the drones from the heights into the chains of life that nurture the cracks breaking apart the surface and inviting breath. Yet the last cry of life, at least of this life, arises as that death from the outside appears on the horizon. It is obvious now that the possibility of the simple and direct extinction of planetary life, at least on this planet, is no fiction told by mad scientists or strange novelists. Yet this extinction moment also contains an arrogance and denial that is shocking. This is the same self-shock and impossibility experienced when attempting to engage in ‘rational’

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discussions with those who will no longer gain profit in the call for imaginative alternatives to capitalism or colonisation or slavery.

## Nine - July 16, 1945, Alamogordo New Mexico



**I** CANNOT BREATHE! The 'submission' and 'rage' of the earth because of over 2000 nuclear bomb attacks. The axe forgets but with each nuclear explosion a memory of suffocation is carved into the earth. More and more we witness the architecture of places as an impingement due to a host of violent structural suffocation functions that infringe upon the territories and terrain of living, life, earth.

Consider the intersection of the following 'symptomatic' expressions; firstly, the destruction of sacred and indigenous land, for housing estates and homelands are big businesses alongside the extinction of animals and plants. And with more and more animals and people worldwide living in grave and unsympathetic living spaces we see the production of strange hybrids and new behaviour amongst animals and humans. These inhospitable living spaces, 'concentration camps', are the incubation of disease, as evidenced by



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the intensive farming of animals which is thought by some to be at the heart of the swine and bird flu. What we see, like the colonization in the nineteenth century, is land occupation, be it through war, enforced town planning and forced removals or simply the buying up of the land of the poor and indigenous populations by real estate, market forces.

The sea cannot breathe.

“Our actions today will change the world’s oceans for thousands of years. That is the conclusion of a study simulating a little-discussed consequence of climate change: it could choke entire ecosystems by cutting oxygen levels in the ocean. In the most extreme scenarios, with the planet warming by almost 10°C, the oceans could be starved of oxygen for 8000 years”<sup>49</sup>.

Colonisation of the night sky.

“What is Light Pollution? The inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light – known as light pollution – can have serious environmental consequences for humans, wildlife, and our climate. Components of light pollution include: Glare – excessive brightness that causes visual discomfort. Skyglow – brightening of the night sky over inhabited areas. Light trespass – light falling where it is not intended or needed. Clutter – bright, confusing and excessive groupings of light sources”<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Chris Baraniuk New Scientist 7 November 2017

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.darksky.org/light-pollution/>

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Artificial light has wide ranging affects, for example it affects pollination and the circadian rhythms of plants and humans. Life forms respond differently to the wavelengths of artificial light, for example wallabies give birth about a month later than those living under only the natural light of the moon and stars<sup>51</sup>. Artificial light can prevent corals from spawning<sup>52</sup> and female fireflies (*Photinus pyralis*) didn't flash back at the male as often as those not exposed to light, resulting in fewer of those females mating<sup>53</sup>. Blue-rich white light at night to increased risks for cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

With regards humans, even if we do not accept the holy trinity of sleep, dream and the night, implied in the work of psychoanalysts from Freud and Jung to Hillman, what is clear is that the blue-rich white night lighting is deeply disruptive to the human sleep cycle and is associated with reduced sleep, disease, impaired functioning and an increase in obesity. All this in the name of market forces, efficiency and modernity, abstractions which are imposed on the earth.

Capital is the modern impact event, the 'successful revolution' and great death yet to come but always imminent in its present mortification of life. Impact events are the metamorphosis of life on earth, central moments in the structuring of new assemblages, often with unforeseen and unpredictable connections. Once upon a time, around 4,500 million years ago, the moon was part of the earth, but with an impact event of collision with a large planetary body, there was a tearing away of a hefty quantity of rock. The

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/mother-wallabies-are-delaying-births-due-bright-lights-180956785/>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.uq.edu.au/researchweek/content/light-pollution-threat-annual-coral-spawning>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.darksky.org/3-insects-affected-by-light-pollution/>

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debris cooled, producing an assemblage that was becoming-Moon. This impact event was followed by other impact events which in turn produced the becoming of water on earth and the historical evolutionary becoming of life within which we find ourselves.

It is speculated that about 550 million years ago the first known signs of animal-becoming arose, an organism called Ediacarans. This ancient life ended with yet another impact event when once again an extra-terrestrial body hit the planet producing massive climate change resulting in the largest extinction of life on earth that can be identified, this includes the extinction of dinosaurs and the termination of myriad forms of life. It is approximated that it took about 10 million years for life on earth to recover. Each impact event operates as a kind of seed for a new assemblage and the most current impact event is 'man-made' in the form of the capitalist machine. The strange hybrid diseases seen today find their ancestry in the black plague in which rats travelled alongside the merchant ships seeking new markets. The impact of the capitalist machine constitutes a revolution of the earth and the production, once again, of a new assemblage.

The animal and the earth are incessantly captured. Agamben describes a great 'anthropological machine' that lies at the heart of the animal-human divide (2004, pp.26-27) but even here, in this moment that attempts to go beyond the human, we still find the Earth is lost, forgotten. The animal-human divide is still located around the human, still formed from within the human camp. We want instead to begin to think a capitalist machinery of capture, non-human drives within which the human is plugged into the earth and life to form a new assemblage. Capital attempts to nullify and capture both the animal and the earth. Crucially, the capitalist machine is only capable of being understood by conceiving it in terms of its attempts to capture the drives that flow through both the animal and the earth, as they play out on the backdrop of the planet.

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We call 'Earth' the realm of all that lives. The machines of capital move to control everything on Earth, to govern and colonize every field of life, to create docile submission in a process of domestication. The 'end of history' is this aimless motion of the capitalist machine, but the machine faces elusive elements, the uncanny, that remain ungovernable. Resistances, frictions, anomalies and chaos all push back against the ongoing dynamic of the capitalist machine. The capitalist machine, whilst an apparatus of capture, is not an optical but an *abstract machine*. Yet the 'drive' of this machine, the source of its dynamic, what pushes it to colonize and control, is the most difficult question.

Guattari, in the opening chapter of *The Machinic Unconscious*, focusses on the concept of the abstract machine. In that chapter, Guattari attempts to counter abstract universals (such as 'the Good', 'the True' and 'the Beautiful' – or 'dog', 'man', 'woman') with abstract machines, to be able to think the peculiar power of 'ideas' or 'refrains' (Guattari, 2011). At the heart of the capitalist machine is the refrain that it is natural, that no other world is possible other than one regulated by buyer and seller, by market exchange, with winners and losers, each of whom is granted their positions as a result of some kind of natural justice. The refrain of capitalism can be found in that deadening phrase 'what else can we do?'

What is it, this 'capitalism' that we speak of, that is spoken of, that is lived? Whilst it is, without a doubt, an economic system, a mode of production, the body of which is formed by the cells of the value form of the commodity, it is also a mode of subjectivisation. The crucial distinction between the labourer and their 'labour power', which sits at the heart of Marx's analysis, indicates the necessity inherent to capitalism and its alienation, that it must produce a subject for whom it is a 'natural fact' that they must exchange their labour power for bread *within the market*. At the heart of this is the dynamic of the enclosure, the need to remove the

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commons so that the only possible way to obtain bread and coffee is through the market.

The apparatus of markets, money, rent, property rights, products, commodities, wages and investments, constitute a great orchestra of machines articulated in a horizon of possibility. The orchestras' refrain coordinates the future as it re-writes the past and in doing so captures the present. Capitalism is not an ideology or merely an economic form, but a momentum of self-reproduction grounded in a specific limitation of the possible. It is as though the orchestra, having found a groove, reaching a moment of continuous improvisation, finds itself now trapped inside a never-ending score, possessed by the haunting refrain to which they continually return. The core refrain of the capitalist machine is that there is no escape, even if you want one.

The violent force of the capitalist apparatus constricts the movement of the diaphragm thereby stopping the bringing of breath into a chant, sounds into words, a mouth addressed to an interlocutor. Isolated, flesh, no longer a face but instead meat; carcasses without breath washed up on the European shores of indifference and invisibility. Places without retreat, the earth as camp. What is central is neither the policing element nor the technologies of power but the way these networks operate at both a linguistic and non-linguistic level, producing the largest camps and most displaced life forms in history.

The assemblage of any revolution invites unforeseen connections, evolutionary potentiality, possibilities that may or may not reframe the surface. Fanon, like Marx, sensed this. The assemblage is an intersectionality that never implies equivalence at the sites of convergence but rather articulation along the transversals. The surface of appearance is the function of molar and molecular elements, double, uncanny, moving in opposite directions. The surface can be pictured topologically as a Mobius strip, in

which one ‘side’ is molar and the ‘other side’ is molecular, the molar forever traversing the molecular and vice-versa, hence repetition of a return to what appears to be the same, history repeating its differentiations. Freud intuited something of this, for as Richard Klein (2016) notes the Freudian project is a topology of surfaces.

On the one side of the Möbius strip we have the assimilated molar consciousness but on the other side there is that which refuses assimilation, the molecular “orphan unconscious” (Anti-Oedipus 1983, 82)<sup>54</sup>. The *afterwardsness* (the ‘apres coup’ or ‘nachträglichkeit’ in Freudian theory) is the twist in the Möbius strip, the bastard nomadic folding within the folds of molar and molecular life formations. Put another way, on the one side of the Möbius strip there are the foreign bodies which cannot be assimilated but at the same time this refusal, when twisted and shown as the ‘other side’ side of Möbius strip, is a resistance to that which is already assimilated. This is a battleground between the breath-words, the drives from the depths, from the earth, as distinct from the heights above where the language of instruction is to be found in the form of the superego and the logic of sense that mortifies the surface. The surface of the earth is alive, that thing, das ding, the it/id that invites passwords to breathe life into the cracks.

If there is to be an encounter with the assemblage that constitutes the Earth, to talk in what might loosely be called ‘schizoanalytic’ terms, then my body might be a touchstone. At this point we invoke Fanon’s ‘final prayer’ - “O my body, make of me always a man (sic) who questions!” (Fanon, 1972, 165). It is worth noting that this is the last line, the last move, of Fanon’s text. It is a cry, this ‘make of me’ that Fanon produces – O, my body, make of me always a body that questions’. In this cry, in this call to our body, we begin

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<sup>54</sup> Within a transversal relationship neither ‘planet’ nor ‘person’ align with non-human / human. Non-human persons and human planets abound.

to take seriously the Earth. What can be produced in the encounter between Deleuze, Guattari and Fanon - in the zones of indiscernibility constituted by the infinite and imperceptible Earth - is an *uncanny assemblage* comprised of the 'wretched of the earth' and the 'wretched earth (of the Anthropocene)'. To encounter the assemblage that constitutes the Earth, to 'overcome' the anthropic perspective, or at least to have any hope of such an encounter, we must turn to our body and call on it to move, to act. To do this, to call on our body, it is necessary to bring together or make communicate those parts of the body of the Earth that have been made wretched in a strategy we call 'wretching'. Wretching is a mode of schizoanalytic practice that might be called 'Fanonian schizoanalysis', specifically it is one where the transversal method is not some abstract non-specific application but rather where the 'planet' and the 'person' are thought together as suffering life, exploited in an asymmetric relationship of power that is imposed by a very particular coalition of capital, property rights and drives.

Fanon, along with Steve Biko and his development of the concept of 'black consciousness', might be thought to bring a 'psychological dimension' to the problematic of capitalist colonialism. Fanons' insights and focus on the way colonialism seeps into the pores and occupies the dreams of the colonised can be rendered trivial if his thesis is reduced to a truism of the form 'oppressed people feel oppressed'. Of course, oppression feels oppressive. No-one needed Fanon or Biko to articulate that. Rather, what Fanon makes vibrant is the way that the colonisation of the drives is inseparable from the colonisation of the land. The mutability, ambivalence and catastrophe<sup>55</sup> that colonisation renders on the drives is no mere side-effect or secondary process. The awareness and importance of the

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<sup>55</sup> It is worth recalling that 'catastrophe' derives from the Greek 'katastrephein', which translates as 'to turn upside down'.

ambivalence of the colonised drive is one of the most obvious connections between schizoanalysis and Fanon.

Despite the fertility of a connection between schizoanalysis and Fanon, a methodological tension arises because Fanon, Deleuze and Guattari are all very aware of the risks of creating new maps, only to re-find the old habits of the master-slave in the new order, the problem Fanon discusses in the chapter 'Pitfalls of National Consciousness' (Fanon, 1963)<sup>56</sup> and which in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms can be called the 'cop within' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, p.346). Whilst we might like to propose a 'Fanonian schizoanalysis' as the most likely method to orientate ourselves, philosophically and politically, towards the problematics of anthropogenic global warming and 'post coloniality', the possibility of such Fanonian schizoanalysis encountering the 'tout-monde'<sup>57</sup> is wrapped in the limits of languages, maps and signs with only the body to play with, my body that reaches into the infinite and imperceptible limits of the Earth.

There is something enigmatic about the Fanon and Biko body in that it is not an atomized individuality but one that bears witness and faces the ancestors, a body-memory that includes a sense of ubuntu. I exist because of the other and the other exists because of me, but it is not the western Big Other (of negation) but another that exists in relation to the extended family, community, ancestors, totemic animals, earth, life. I/we do not exist as a set of individual biographic stories which I account for. The concept of the body that arises from a 'Fanon-Biko-Body' includes not only a corporeal, physical

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<sup>56</sup> This is the third chapter of the text and in the new translation (Fanon, 2004) it is called 'On the trials and tribulations of National Consciousness'

<sup>57</sup> What name might we use for that which we call the Earth? Edouard Glissant offers the 'tout-monde', an 'all-world' that designates a world of the co-presence of things and beings, a world of relation, a world of archipelagos



body and its psycho-social-political location, but also a collective body of human, animal, life, in a state of continually becoming something other through collective struggle. This collective struggle cannot be thought to be human but rather operates within a continuum moving from the human-yet-to-come to the-earth-yet-to-come. It is the shift to this alternate continuum of struggle, neither human nor forgetful of the human, neither Earth nor forgetful of the Earth, this de-centring from the human and re-centring towards the Earth, it is this that constitutes what we have called 'the strategy of wretching'. "...the earth asserts its own powers of deterritorialisation, its lines of flight, its smooth spaces that live and blaze their way for a new earth"<sup>58</sup>. The revolution of the wretched of the earth and the wretching earth.

Fanonian schizoanalysis might be thought as a congress of concepts, one where Fanons' sociogeny<sup>59</sup> can be put to work alongside Deleuze's difference and Guattari's asignification. Sociogeny, which Fanon places beside phylogeny and ontogeny in our understanding of the 'human', produces a rupture within our present knowledge system that offers – at the very least – a moment of critical reflection on the knowledge system that serves as the disciplinary structure of representation in the capitalist moment, the 'Western present' of the anthropocene. This '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, p.31) and pushes us out of our present Western/bioeconomic conception of being human in which the self is built on the negation of an 'other life'.

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<sup>58</sup> ATP, 423

<sup>59</sup> One of the most interesting discussions of 'sociogeny' in Fanon is contained in (Wynters, 2001).

## Ten - April 22, 1915, Ypres Belgium.



*Dreams of meat, dreams of clay* - Scout Alexeev, on an autumn day, 1916.

*His fatalism depends on the belief that he has a chance. If the very air which he breathes is poison, his chance is gone: he is merely a victim destined for the slaughter* - C R Cruttwell

**G**ERMAN FORCES FIRE OVER 150 TONS OF LETHAL CHLORINE GAS INTO THE FRENCH TROOP'S COLONIAL DIVISION ON THE 22ND APRIL 1915. This is the first recorded use of chemical warfare. In the Second World War the gas chamber as a mass killing machine is used. Suffocation and the birth of the gas mask, as the iconic transformation of the face that it becomes, occurs at this moment in the early Twentieth century, as mass warfare and technology form the edge of capital's blade.

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In the 'post-war' era suffocation becomes a favoured method used to torture people in times of colonial conflict, especially during the battles against decolonisation. In South Africa a group of ex-political prisoners share their experience of suffocation at the Trauma Centre meeting (Cape Town, 1997)

"The group shared some of the experiences of how the torture was done. These included having a wet sack over your head. The wet sack was better than the rubber. At least you could still breathe and suck the water into your mouth. The rubber sack was the worst. It stinks, and you are suffocated".

The gassing has been given many names; the Halabja Massacre on Friday, March 16, 1988 or Bashar al-Assad, but for the wretched Earth the burning oil simply suffocates. In the struggle to represent 'horror' the 'truth telling' becomes too mired in the false debates of politics as it's played on us. We need to find a space that enables the 'need to react' to be removed, and instead open a capacity to organise a response. It's that 'need to react,' part of the reactive impulse driven economy, that underpins the replication of the structures one is reacting to, the imposition of 'a necessity to act'. The same can be said for much of the current political discourse, which operates as little more than psychological impingement of the manipulated 'forced choice'.

We speak of terrorist, we speak of madness, but in speaking of these edges we need to hear the echo of terror found in the words territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialization. In 'finding' that clearing of cluttered double talk, double binds, we understand that madness is always to be driven mad, which for Fanon is acute alienation from both the material - land, bread - and psychological.

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*The First Act of 'madness':* suicide. We need oil to enjoy the immediacy of the present no matter what the cost. Act of war declared against the earth, wretched of the earth and ends in suicide and suffocation of a life starved of oxygen due to CO2 emissions.

*The Second Act of madness:* war. Bombs, suffocation, gassing of those who oppose the despot.

*The Third Act of madness:* to die of shame. When suffocated, shamed and stigmatized, when watching brothers and sisters die in shameful conditions, then gassing others occur alongside random grotesque acts of beheading and execution of the brother, sister, mother, father, child of my enemy.

*The Fourth Act of Madness.*

*"Suicide as social protest and resistance is a historical reality among Chinese. Only under the impress of the current phase of globalization is it beginning to be reinterpreted as the result of a mental disorder"*

**João Guilherme Biehl, Byron Good, Arthur Kleinman (2007: 3).**

Once upon a time in South Africa there was a phenomenon called family murders, when the white male would kill the family and then kill himself. This has been forgotten in our thinking, but perhaps we can think about suicide bombers in this way, what 'intimacy' to death are they inviting and how does this intimacy change?

*The Final Act Of Madness:* "to breathe the air" of madness (Nietzsche *Ecce Homo* 1979. 34), destiny without breath.

The final act has nothing to do with a face, representation, but with the breath. Destiny as foretold - life against the crucified herd animal, as "a crisis

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like no other before on earth” (Nietzsche *Ecce Homo* 126). It is not to gaze, but to “sense” the nostrils, to “smell - the lie as lie” (Nietzsche *Ecce Homo* 126) thereby “demonstrating the measurelessly uncanny consequence for a whole history” (Nietzsche *Ecce Homo* 1979 129 - *Why I am Destiny* section 4).

“For when truth steps into battle with the lie of millennia we shall have convulsions, an earthquake spasm, a transposition of valley and mountains as has never been dreamed of. The concept politics has then become completely absorbed into a war of spirits, all the power-structures of the old society have been blown into the air...there will be wars such as they have never yet been on earth”

**(Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo* 1979, 127).**