

The Infant

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Abstract

An experimental text in the form of a free associative collaboration between different fields of expertise that explore what practices are needed for a wiser future. The text forms a patchwork that is tied together by the commentator who addresses the infant. The infant is present in each contribution and is our wiser future only if we allow the infant to be that.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis; Architecture; Science fiction; Poetry; The unconscious and the infant; Psychic development

“It is a highly remarkable fact that the unconscious of one person can act on that of another while bypassing the conscious completely”

“If human beings do inherit psychic formations, something analogous to animal instincts, then these are what form the core of the unconscious. Everything that is discarded over the course of infantile development – material not necessarily different in nature from that which is inherited – is then subsequently added to this core. As a rule, a sharp and definite distinction between the contents of the two systems does not come about until puberty.”
Freud, *The Unconscious* (1915), London: Penguin, 2005, p. 76-77

Introduction_

Maaïke Engelen

Question: Which practices will contribute to a wiser future? Picture the year 2068.

Answer: Let us have a talk together to address this question. I asked a few people, so maybe it is going to be more of a combined effort, if that is alright?

Question: Sure, who did you ask and why did you ask them?

Answer: The first person I asked to reflect on how her practice might contribute to a wiser future is an architect. I came across her by coincidence because she had an exhibition next to my work place. I was intrigued by her work because she argues that architecture needs to be a magical and critical act. That seemed to me very much something we might need in the future. She is an architect based in London and born in Greece.

The second person I asked is a friend of mine, an artist, but she was too busy and passed me on to her friends and that led to three other people now contributing.

One of them is a Sci-Fi writer, the other one is an artist who works with disability and the third one a painter also doing research as a theorist. All three of them are from Berlin. Science Fiction is obviously connected with the future, but also with a wiser future. Many ideas in Sci-Fi explore how humans and others could build a future beyond the present boundaries. Disability and its meaning seem to me crucial in thinking about what sort of practices we might need for a wiser future. They present us with boundaries in our understanding of ourselves and others that we often as a people prefer to repress or not look at. The third contributor thinks about society as whole and how we function as groups. Our understanding of ourselves as specific groups within our species has defined our futures so far.

I also asked a psychoanalyst from New York to address how he thinks psychoanalysis might contribute to a wiser future. Or rather: does the practice of psychoanalysis contribute to a wiser future? And close to my own work (I am a psychoanalytic child and adolescent psychotherapist) I asked a young person with a diagnosis of autism what they thought might be needed as a practice for a wiser future. Diagnoses of autism are on the rise. We might wonder what the meaning of that development is for the futures of our young people affected by it.

I myself as a contributor have a clear idea of what practice I think might be needed for a wiser future, or maybe better, I have a clear idea of what is in the way of a possible wiser future.

I asked several people from different walks of life, in the same spirit as the story *More than human* by Theodore Sturgeon, in which the combined consciousness of a group of extraordinary young people is complemented by the consciousness of a disabled baby. Their new expanded consciousness is wiser than each of them and can act as one organism, whilst the individuals keep their separateness.

I hope this text might function along those lines and will invite the reader to merge with its content for an expansion of their consciousness. The reader can think about the text as a patchwork or a quilt. All voices together form an understanding of a wiser future that could not have been thought by one of them alone, and all voices share the unconscious of the infant because this is the human condition.

The baby

I start by looking out for the forgotten baby, because we are most of the time completely cut off from our previous baby selves. We cannot remember how we felt when we were babies. Closest to that, it seems, comes the experience of being in love. People tend to call each other

'baby' when in love, and they are utterly vulnerable in that state as well as possibly mad; people can kill what or whom they love most, and many crimes are committed out of thwarted love and passion.

My assumption in this patchwork is that in the needlework that I do to stitch the patches together to form a quilt, the unconscious of the writings is explored and to a certain degree the text's baby-self is explored as well.

I assume that our repressed baby experiences amongst other things also entail that: 'there is not enough for me' and 'I am drawn to evil'. These are the two basic storylines based on the earliest of experiences which are repressed because they are unbearable and, in the actual experience, instances of unnameable dread. Their verbalisation only occurs later and through parental responses.

In daily life they start to sound like this: 'there is not enough for everyone and thus I need to fight for my survival', and 'humans as a species are drawn to evil and thus I have to try to be a good person to get what I need and want or I will be punished with deprivation'.

When projected even further out these storylines become a doom scenario that invites people to identify with it. For every generation there is one or sometimes more than one doom story available to project unbearable experience onto. At the moment one of the stories is climate change, here the doom element being: it is already too late to change the destruction of our earth.

Other scenarios have been: over-population, the atom bomb, and generally every war that has ever been fought has been the result of a doom scenario with an unconscious story attached to it, telling us that there is not enough for everyone, that humans are drawn to evil and that we have to fight each other for our survival.

When the unrepressed baby expresses their needs, their feeling of utter vulnerability and need are connected with feelings that often are named by their parents as feelings of jealousy, anger, greed and envy. These feelings, however, for the baby are only nameless experiences of their needs, which hurt beyond their capacity to process them if they are not met.

Many a baby faces an environment in which there is little room for the violence of these experiences and their unbearable quality. Having to start repressing them quite early on compromises their love potential from the start. The loving feelings, as unnamed as the hatred, might be experienced as bliss and enlightenment based on the expression babies display when fulfilled. Their utter despair, when not understood by their already repressed parents, are in babies' development evaluated as feelings of jealousy, envy, anger, hatred and greed, which are judged to be seeds of at best destructiveness and at worst, evil.

As a consequence, vital and vivid feelings of personal needs and vulnerability are objectified into ideology and moralistic or purist understandings of oneself and others. The fate of the vital baby's capacity to express bliss and despair is to be repressed because of the unbearable suffering the baby experiences when not in bliss, and many people's most vital parts are thus unavailable to them after the age of one. Only in the state of being in love are these repressions loosened up.

However, this most of the time 'dead baby' inside oneself leads to personal excesses of paranoia and persecution anxieties (remember the evaluation of 'destructiveness' or 'evil') which as a consequence then form the bottom line of society. When both stories, that there is not enough for everyone and that humans are drawn to evil, go hand in hand, humans become chained to creating and recreating disaster, generation after generation without substantial change. These internal basic stories that form external concrete social structures (and are often seen as 'that is just reality'), interfere with people's genuine wishes and concrete capacity for a wiser future and a life of joy and fulfilment.

Why? Why do we believe in these stories of lack and evil? This, dear reader, this brings me back to the infant. The utter vulnerable baby that is completely dependent on others.

"Infantile" means there is no language, being unable to speak. Before a human can consciously be aware of their own vulnerability, they have been dependent to such a degree that if anything would go wrong or against their needs to survive, there is absolutely nothing they could do about it. Baby's needs are complete and total. It is my understanding that this complete dependency, which is impossible to verbalise completely, is what is repressed as soon as possible because the feelings stirred up in the baby when their needs are not met are experienced as total too. They are fear, and pain and desire to the most extreme extent possible and without any naming or formulated thought as to what these feelings are. They just burn beyond the infant's capacity to process and thus the infant cries, when left alone screams and when left alone still then falls asleep, and if then still left alone, this cycle will repeat until death follows.

Here, with a bit of a jump, we arrive at the two basic stories that grow out of these intense but forgotten experiences: humans are inclined to evil (they leave you to die) and there is not enough for everyone (they leave you to starve).

The intense feelings of despair stirred up are too much to come to terms with even in the best of circumstances. People find this impossible to acknowledge; there is not a baby who has not experienced these feelings to some extent and they all found them unbearable. That is why humans find separateness, to be alone, so threatening. The lucky babies have had just so little experience of it that their baby-selves have been more integrated within their whole personality and they can allow for some feelings of existential loneliness.

But in many cases, in the beginning the infant is in pain and fear to a degree they cannot process nor control and these feelings are repressed before language is formed. The degree of the repression is mostly complete as well. As adults we are under the illusion that we can prevent the infant to feel this intense vulnerability, we rationalise it instead of staying with the fact that the fear of pain starts at birth, a fear we cannot prevent, something we are mostly out of touch with.

People unfortunately thus lose touch with the complete vulnerability of life and their own fragility, their lives, in growing up, take form and shape in defending themselves against the obvious: that they are often in pain and will die one day.

I understand the actual killing of humans by humans as their need to be in control of their fear of the unknown of life and death. If we kill, at least we know that it is coming. Humans cannot remember their beginnings and they cannot predict their departure and they cannot prevent their pain. Killing is one way to erase that fact. Killing is a baby out of control in an

adult body; killing is a baby with a grudge; killing is a paradox. We kill what we love and need most, each other.

The baby, after being separated from the womb, has no idea when their needs will be met and that is terrifying. The human in growing up has no idea when they will die and how they will die, this fear connects us most with how we must have felt as infants. The dead have no language, like the babies. Horror movies that give the dead a voice are rarely pretty. In the intriguing TV series 'The Umbrella Academy', in the end the baby of the group – number seven – and the dead boy who lives with the dead and is afraid of them, are the ones that both save the day as well as destroy life. A baby's hate and a baby's love; words for feelings that both burn intensely.

What I propose for a wiser future is that if we at least try to connect more with infants' feelings of total dependency and their fear of their own experiences when their needs are not met, we as a people might have a chance to become more compassionate towards our own needs and the needs of others. We may do this if we allow ourselves to understand why the basic stories, that there is not enough for everyone and that humans are inclined to evil, are our own psychic projections of once deeply experienced feelings of fear, feelings that we have repressed to such a degree that we take our stories for external reality. If we could explore this, we might come to terms with the fact that most of our lack is created by ourselves. Nature in fact provides enough for everyone and everyone has the same needs to feel safe and fed; to feel not safe and not fed is an experience we all share, it is part of being born. So is the experience of bliss, and if we allowed ourselves the full extent of our fears we could also reconnect with the full extent of our love. It is not hate that undermines love, it is fear of death.

The often heard counter-argument to what I try to explore, that in reality people do horrible things (which they do) and that there is hunger (which there is), is nothing but a concrete externalisation of the repressed part of our baby-selves that we once felt, that it was at times unbearable to be and that was forgotten about, as we also forgot about the intense beauty of bliss that life contains.

For a wiser future to take shape, we need to start looking back into babyhood and acknowledge the vulnerability of complete dependency, we need to acknowledge the illusion that we can prevent the pain it causes and the fear it constitutes. It is this illusion, the illusion that we can prevent baby's fear, that keeps us bound to creating and recreating external lacks and evils because we do not wish to remember the total dependency and vulnerability life presents us with.

For this publication about a wiser future in 2068, I look for the babyhood, the infant, in the contributions that I received and explore what they might sound like if the conscious assumptions become that there is enough for everyone and that humans are driven to joy, and peace.

A Magical Realist Architectural Fairytale_ Ifigeneia Liangi

Fictional storytelling, oral or written, asks for suspension of disbelief and role play. The reader enters the public space of a story and associates with unknown characters and situations through their private imagination. According to the skill and artistic performance of

the storyteller, the reader is then enabled to combine these two worlds, find a balance, and project discussions on human relationships and the world in their mind. In the same way that a reader enacts a pretend play to engage with a verbal story, I am suggesting that an inhabitant's mind may enact a pretend play to engage with a spatial story.

The spirit of my work reflects on the argument that architecture should be a critical and magical act. Critical as a parallel to a textual fictional narrative, which always has a message; and magical, as an argument that in a Wiser Future architects would be designing for the play and nourishment of the imagination. Perhaps then a lingering architecture, one that allows the user to look and look again and look again, for the eye to jump from one thing to another, or slide, and create possible but improbable combinations and relationships between things, atmospheres and ideas, would be a way to think about architectural design. In my work as an architect storyteller, I am drawing buildings and spaces that tell stories. So, in a parallel to literature, where a fictional narrative cannot tell a story without a character, I am suggesting that a speaking architecture cannot tell a story without a figure. A figure can be anthropomorphic, or a personified object or an animal. It can be sculpted, engraved, projected, or painted. And it can also be experiential, addressing the wider question of how a space can tell a story, making the user more aware of their own body in space through shift of scale, direction of the eye, and consideration of light and the seasons. A speaking architecture of the everyday can convey meaningful and critical sociopolitical messages, which can be antidotes to crises. In that sense, in a Wiser Future I believe that the inhabitant's imagination should be tickled and provoked and for this to happen I am suggesting that storytelling could be a starting point.

In my work (my PhD by design at The Bartlett School of Architecture) I start with the writing of a magical realist fairy tale in my native language, Greek, and I then translate it into English. I then transpose the text into drawings and models/sculptures. These transpositions share the act of hypotyposis; From *hypo* (under) and *typoun* (to stamp, form, give an impression, or a cast), hypotyposis is the act of describing space. Through this work I noticed that when translating textually a culturally specific experience, it is sometimes necessary to expand and describe space or human relationships further in order for the text to make sense in the target language. So, the act of translating interlingually gives hypotyposis more space. In that sense, translations, just like transpositions, are spatial acts and fruitful tools for the nourishment of the imagination of the designer.

Since every story has a message, an architectural design driven by a story inevitably has a message as well, whether social, political, or poetic. The two storytelling genres that were born as methods of allegorical sociopolitical criticism through the use of fiction are magical realism and the fairy tale. Both genres use the everyday normative world as a setting, and magic as a method of criticism. Their difference is that the first is set in two material worlds, a real and a magical one, and requires a skill of boundary skipping between the two, while the second is set in one world, the fairyland. A defining quality of magical realism is that it doesn't accept a hierarchy between the ordinary and the extraordinary; the magic happens naturally. Another one of its qualities is that it is always critical with respect to a specific time and place. In contrast to other fictional genres, it uses allegory with a softness, not with a shock. Both the fairy tale and magical realism use figurative verbal and visual language in order to convey their messages. So, through my work I am suggesting that their relationship creates an inventive narrative mode which empowers both their fictional and their factual sides. Figurative language allows them to coexist in harmony, while magic (in the sense that

we understand it today from the magical literary fairy tale), is a classic tool for the nourishment of the imagination. Figurative language can be a very rich and nuanced thing for translating into figurative designs, so the magical realist fairy tale narrative mode could then be one of the Future architects' storytelling tools for the design of buildings and spaces that speak and spark the imagination, while being open storytelling creatures, with a message.

Response

Ifigeneia speaks about the body of architecture, the baby-self that is non-verbal, which is still magical, for which, if we understood the need for a safe and fulfilled place, we would create spaces and places that counteract the baby's undeniable fears. We would be thoughtful about our creations, to contain our fears and vulnerabilities, we would treat our living spaces like our bodies, as places where we can imagine to be safe and live in the acknowledgement that we need to create for each other, magically and realistically. There is not a body or a soul that does not need a beautiful space to live, the basis for love being able to grow. Cramped, deprived, ugly living spaces enact the baby's fears and contribute to projections of 'there is not enough for everyone and humans are drawn to evil'. Ifigeneia shares with us as a speaking architect the need to balance those fears with a body of work that stems from a place of addressing those fears concretely in space. The buildings of the future in her world would be free from deprivation.

Johanna is inside a building and inside a culture that captures the fears we explored but she brings us a baby for the future, who might survive her nightmare stories and live in one of Ifigeneia's buildings.

Meeting Points_

Thought by Johanna Klingler

Sometimes I strangely feel an illusion of the future's presence. Lying in bed and waiting for sleep, future visits me in one of its ugly appearances, grabs me firmly by the throat and starts spinning my thoughts, pulling them into a spiral of its possible faces – all of them leading to devastating realities of world, of life. I have taught myself how to deal with it, when it comes to me like this. I try to fall – to fall through all the clouds of thoughts, of concerns, of structures I have learned, developed, believed. I close my eyes and concentrate on falling, on watching the clouds of knowledge, duties, systems remaining there, left and right in the sky, I recognize them just for a second and enjoy the free fall, which seems to never end, leading me into my sleep. But sometimes, one of the future's rays meets me like a bright, warm muse of unlimited possibilities and ideas, as if everything that is/was, suddenly makes sense and obtains some kind of form or sense, making me want to work, to think, to live.

Today I talked to my best friend – she just experienced the first indications of the imminent birth of her first child. It is four days before Christmas and I asked her, if she would tell her daughter, that there is something like Santa Claus (in Germany there is a Christkind coming on the 24th and bringing presents). It is not my worst memory, actually quite a nice one. We also remembered Freud's essay *Das Unheimliche* and thought about what it could mean to cultivate magical beliefs, in order to destroy them again. In Bavaria, where we grew up, there are also other myths that occur around this time of the year. From time to time there are times between the times (*Zeiten zwischen den Zeiten*), during which rules and laws are being reversed (e. g. like carnival in February). Around Christmas and New Year there is something called *Rauhnächte* (rough nights), when the wild demons and spirits from the other world are present. Sometimes people dress up as demons and monsters as well and

follow traditional rituals to dispel them. Of course, this has a simple reason - getting rid of the old year's accumulated burdens and frustrations and gaining new strength in order to function again within the old structures. My friend and I always loved those times, even though not a lot of people are (still) aware of them, we wanted to believe them, so they became true and the craziest things happened to us during them. These memories also led me to remember Kathy Acker's words on fiction I read during the last summer - something like when two people are fucking, the whole world is fucking. She talks about how fiction transforms reality. Back then, her writings magically worked as a transformation for me and I was incredibly grateful for that. My friend and I agreed that we were both excited about the unexpected responsibilities of accompanying a young person from the very beginning and to find out which role to play within all the possible evolvments. She said that surprisingly she wasn't nervous about what was going to happen within her body and I thought, if it was true, that an unborn feels its mother's feelings, this one must feel welcome, which I thought sounded nice. We went on talking about catastrophes and how since centuries people expected the end of the world and how unbelievable it seems right now, that it might not be the end of the world.

Writing those words and thinking about the future, it is hard not to mention the privileged status of living a life in West Europe. Reading news about people who are for example facing actual physical threats or violence on a structural level, my experience of a more or less stable reality sometimes feels like a lie. Writing it down feels somehow even stranger. At the moment, I would call myself a negative person trying to become more positive again. Also, I feel a bit embarrassed for being that negative. Anyways, how do I write about something, if the letters stick on paper while reality moves constantly? What could a claim for actuality even look like? This is just a past thought, one personal moment, a narration.

Here is a small list of tools, some naive ones, which might or might not be helpful for moments of meeting the future. Remembering them sometimes (for me) functions as an emergency panic pill I carry with me, hoping, that the fact I'm carrying it makes me not need it:

Wormholes

Trusting your web of experience, knowledge, sense, people, intuition, spaces, places – you might find your wormholes, when you need them. This includes finding places to stay for a while, places to work, someone to talk to, if you need to, but also finding the exactly right weird little institutions to apply for funding, getting away or finding companions etc.

Community

Caring for each other

Phases

Observing nature's phases, logics, interrelations (this can be a beautiful thought)

Poetry

Believing in more than just one reality

Responsibility

Caring for each other

This means not only people

Reality

Tricky! Not losing connection or getting lost in the spirals of your mind (maybe something between balance and transgression)

Forgetting

Understanding phases - sleeping, waking up, summer, winter etc.

When I manage to understand myself as part of a mother-nature, of phases and a different kind of wisdom etc. the question of existence or sense sometimes seems not so frightening for a moment (anyways, trying to fool around and not think too much can do something unexpected too)

- this one sounds esoteric

Stupidity

Is of course the opposite, don't forget what it felt like to be a child - don't stop being

Experiencing

Producing knowledge by experiencing reality/realities (this one is for one or more people)

Concentration

Sometimes things/bodies/thoughts feel so unreal within neoliberal pace. Carry your things like secrets in your mind, maybe in some other reality, so you can steal some time for them

Ground

I have a list of positive examples (art, things, moments etc.) I am collecting them by writing them down, so I can always look back on them, when I lose perspectives

I also use long voice messages to keep in touch with my friends, who live in different countries, to share thoughts, feelings, developments. There may be strategies, which take you further in your career etc. but I couldn't move on without sharing my ground or rather without feeling it beneath

Collective Work

Doesn't only need to be artistic work - create your own/common ground, wormholes, tools etc. as a means against the dependence on individualistic survival/success (Sometimes also good for/against the ego)

Response

And from there on we move further into the nightmare of the future, from the projections that there is not enough for everyone and that humans are drawn to evil. But we are offered hope in a garden, innocence in the unnamed uncontrolled baby state of being.

(...)writing meditation through time: _

By Clay A..D.

∞ ☼ ⇌ visualize yourself in 50 years ⇌ ☼ ∞

what context do you live in? what is your relationship to others? where do you live? what are your priorities? what surrounds you and what do you surround yourself with? how does your future self send information through time?

write a message from your future self to your present self. be as detailed or vague as desired. notice what the future self addresses as focal points to guide your present self.

take the message and send it in the way that is most appropriate — by burning, through wind, email, burying, postage etc.

dear clay,

amongst the strongest efforts of earth-exit corporations to colonise mars, there are many, by necessity, belief and love that have not given up on earth.

you don't need to know the specifics of who the players are on either side, you can guess the lineages as they stand in your time; history is a spiral after all.

i'm making this contact not to tell you how to act in my past to effect your future, but because i remember how i (you, we) felt in 2018 — your present. the swaths of bleakness that would overwhelm and veil possibility; ultimately, as the activist and writer adrienne maree brown said of the time, “this is an imagination battle”, and she was completely correct in retrospect.

i remember vividly. i (we) are 26 years old, learning the power of your (our) body for the first time after a life of reconciling with illness, gender and depression. within the capital driven tech wasteland of that time you (i) were finding joy in the technology of breathing practices to facilitate feeling, the first inklings that this might be a way to connect through time and space, to make space—physically in the bodymind — in all that can mean. i'm breathing this message to you now, and you're feeling it forwards.

in the place i (we) now live is called the Edge. here we grow and live on a track of land deemed by the state “toxic and unusable”, too broken for either border to claim ownership, the land outweighs their limits of responsibility. our community is deemed a death sentence so it is not seen as a threat, though our approaches to being human attack the still popular belief that humans can exist outside the environment. a belief we find to be deeply false. they let us live because they think this land will poison us, however we live here because the dichotomy of life within the bordering states— of sealed pristine buildings for the rich and then absolute poverty for everyone else, the siphoning of resources towards leaving and giving up on the planet all together — is poisoning us all.

in 2025 this track of land housed an experimental atom modifier, which during its explosion caused a chemical spill in a nearby plant. these two haphazard, hazardous events have chemically altered my body forever. cancer and autoimmune conditions are frequent in our community, though we have treatment and doctors. often those from the outside villainize us for raising children here, but when we look at the death rates the cities are comparable. our death sentences are not so different, just differently framed. potent toxicity of the Edge is just another offspring of human's century long imbuing practices.

we celebrate death as we do new life, the two deeply connected. we do this as well through honoring the changing seasons, even though they themselves have changed dramatically, the meaning of spring or winter felt completely differently from the previous meanings the words held. mourning is a consistent practice and new rites and rituals next to the old have surfaced to hold the inherited grief we bear.

while we accept the land is killing us faster, we feed it medicine by planting species with an ability to up-take the contamination in the soil — sunflowers, eucalyptus, moss, lichens, plantain. we grow our food above ground and wear gloves when dealing with the ground soil hoping one day we won't have to protect ourselves, but accepting that day might never come.

when we made home here it was a commitment to try a new way, not by reinventing the wheel but through combining our knowledges, talents, skills and by calling on the wisdom of all our ancestors — asking and listening to how they persevered through hardship and horror yet found a way. some of us who had privilege and power before were asked to listen more and those who had been silenced by power spoke. toxic cultures can be changed. it's slow, but possible, and we are still learning.

illness here is centred, and respected. we deal in needs, and try to make space for all needs to be met.

when you (i, we) were 15 we dreamed of a spiraling garden. when we were 15 we strongly believed the end of the world would happen during our lifetime, so much so our parents thought us mad. when we were 15 we learned the limitations, and to distrust our body.

the first we manifested.

the second was partially right but learned along the way the complexity of that feeling. as writer, spoken-word artist, and indigenous academic leanne betasamosake simpson says, "it's been the end of the world for somebody all along."

and the third a powerful lesson in integration and love you're still having as i send this, and will continue to have all your life i reckon, or at least i'm still having it now.

it's hard to know how to address. i am you and you are me, but through time we've changed. i am not you and you are not me in some way. fifty years has aged our body, in some capacities i can do less and in other ways infinitely more.

it doesn't get better, it gets much much harder. one day the internet will go out, will you be ready for that? one day gps will all but stop except for the military, a terrifying moment of strategic oppression.

shortly some advice: keep a map of your area. learn to grow food. gather your people, have conversations of what you will do when crisis happens. forge relationship with the land even if you don't know how (ultimately you do, its a part of you, that knowledge is in all of us). stockpile drugs, hormones, keep a first aid kit, know how to use it, and get in relationship to your local doctors and healers. eat together. block to protect. cultivate your inner-world. find what feeds you and gives you pleasure. all too often through these last years we have sacrificed joy for survival, only to remember again and again that joy drives survival.

don't trust the police, the strongholds of power, false gods or celebrity culture. don't haphazardly give your information away. this is not in dogma, enjoy the strangeness of your time, just flex your muscles in other ways of being because the ways of your time will not last long.

an incredible deepening will be needed and i want you to be ready for this to survive the coming times (for us, i wasn't ready in many ways, but this is our history together. time's in movement even if we're not prepared for the way it moves, it's more about being adaptable and trusting intuition in the moment). what's waiting on the other side is unthinkable, pleasurable, and full of struggle. it's worth fighting for but it will be a fight, but beyond the fog is a spiraling garden if you find the will to learn to how to plant it.

backwards and forwardly yours,

Clay

Response

In the spiral garden of a poetic part of the future a baby cries helplessly, who will come.

A Wiser Future Revised

Adam Shechter

How to explain psychoanalytic influence, while not explaining away the emotional-hypnotic essences of its therapeutic effects? Poetic imagination can obsequiously speak for the healing movements of psyche that cross back and forth over emotional and intellectual lines, and so elucidate psychoanalysis' almost dream-like impact within an experiential frame. What is this warning? Articulation is called for so long as telling in linear exposition does NOT overly diminish the possibilities of the unconsciously influencing word. I am suggesting that to intervene at a register too conscious and intellectual, is to risk neutralizing the interventive force that actually makes contact and can possibly alter the primitive formations of the psychesoma. Here, poetry assists the realm of explaining to accommodate the feeling-trance of dream symbols that enlighten beyond their stated exposition. An image or other described sense impression becomes a clarifying vehicle of and for psychological evolution. A language tool that aesthetically redesigns by reducing defensiveness; or in other words, craftily massages rigid thought patterns in order to loosen their threads, and open up the sealed weave of their repetitive cycles; and give opportunity for a playful reshaping of psyche, heart, gut, gait, feet, nerves, the human weave—by word and feeling.

Response

Freeing the baby, feeding the baby, holding the baby, coming to shape the baby's first words through touch and smell and sound. The baby is a poet by nature.

Poetry's capacity to cross these lines is lauded yet devalued by the societal measure. The position of its entrancing discourse of metaphor is greatly diminished in its potency to intervene. Consequently, the long-range interventions of psychoanalytic influence fall from the sky in a similar way—so seemingly weakened in comparison to aerodynamic technology, drugs, brute force, and the general cynicism and impulsivity of novel gratification. Freud left us a map of the psyche—one that is incomplete by the nature of a single mind during a single life tracing the territory of psyche at a given moment of time. He created a topography of a conscious and unconscious; ego, superego and id, totems and taboos, life and death instincts—theories of psyche that influenced insofar as the surveyor could effectively speak to other humans about these new locations of being-doing human. Poetic imagination spoken with an empathic tone transmutes the boundaries of self-awareness to a place that is so much itself, that it goes beyond itself. Such interpersonal poetic imaging entrances as it rouses with what we might call the timelessness of all that we were and all we can be—all within the present moment of our limitation. The transcendent potential in a word.

In a one-on-one session, or a treatment group, psychoanalytic influence is palatable. Unbearable feelings are spoken, and in place of an explosion of acting out, the analyst or the group listens to the desire of the feelings without lifting a physical finger, and yet the whole of the clinician's or group's empathically resonant body is communicated as meaningfully there. This is a new kind of being as doing in which acted out destruction is given the option to be expressed in the shelter of transformative words. An intellectual interpretation is all the more ineffective here. In essence, interpretation is an acting out of a similar brute force that the state utilizes, but in this context, couched in psychoanalytic words—a coercive logic that refuses to just sit with the pain of helplessness. To just sit and feel. To just be helpless to the overflow of psyche. **Response: The baby has arrived.** This is not resignation. And if it is, it is temporary—for this open-ended listening reassigns psychic strength to not having to act under the duress of intense impulse and feeling. Inner muscles of mind innovate, emotional tendons grow a receptive systemic balancing—a modest gauge of efficacy based in psychic flexibility.

Freud's map of the psyche was incomplete even for him, being worked out and reworked to his dying thought, in fact, the death process itself became a part of his charting a frontier understanding of the psyche. The topographical model that he left us with continues to be drawn, current analysts nuancing his lines—pages added to this map that further and further define the formless dark of the unconscious. **The sociopathic actions of the state seem to go on forever around the edges of this drawing, as their power over our bodies leaves our psyches just as helpless as the first floppy-burgeoning state of our births.** Poetry sits down at this dim perimeter and scopes out where the impossibility of the state's brute force can be picked up by the metaphor of the pen. A writing implement that too easily grows oily with nostalgic similes of peace—the petals of a flower that can softly envelope a bullet and metabolize its gunpowder into pollen—why not?

The speech of state administration typically relegates human emotion to a negligible status. In contradistinction, the language of psychoanalysis treats feelings like royalty, and appreciates what happens to them through all the different ways that humans use language to express feelings. Examining how language is used to hide from the associated unbearable pain and anxiety of feelings is continuously studied against the backdrop of how words expose hidden wishes and impulses—and then factors in how what is wanted or needed, paradoxically, is not wanted or needed—at least for a time. So, how does therapy's struggle

with feelings and language tell us anything real about how to influence social group formation at the level of the state and its coercive apparatus? Just raising the question invokes a wounding cynicism, side by side—one infinitely larger than the other.

Language taken as an unlimited metaphor, that is more than just a word or group of words representing a thing other than itself, sketches a cartographer's path into the seemingly immutable cold object of 'the state as a psychic landscape' that is as manmade as it is natural. Language as an empathic technology of the heart and soul standing up against or looking for a way to tap into an unknown potential that could actually influence and evolve how the state feels about and represents its psychic experience in the moment before going into action. Just as it is fully charged up to dominate—to sit back and instead consider the drive to do so. **The poeticizing component of psychoanalysis allows for metaphor to be the vehicle of knowledge that is also the emotional study of the very slow making of an effective meaning—a slow but deeply practical experience of change. This may seem very overwhelming, just to sit in front of a mirror that parallels, as if sitting inside the excitations of the original helplessness.**

How to cultivate this unborn metaphor? The language of scientific research or statistics might ask for similarly aggrandizing measurable outcomes. Poetic research into psychoanalysis influencing the future of society asks for a muddying of the psychoanalytic procedure. At unusual intersections with society, the language of psychoanalytic knowledge will be subjected to a relation of intimacy that goes beyond the cozy borders of the consultation room and somehow remains within its womb. Poetic imagination preserves psychoanalytic influence as it ventures out into the making of an unknown metaphor that can suspend the state's will to action from an understanding place; one that can soften the dread of a callously misunderstanding one. A creative line of appreciation is drawn around the hardened language of society as a metaphor that situates a bridge at the empathic gap between the unreachable individual of the state via the psychoanalytic process. The social substance of the formless dark as though a wall that is not really there—an identified fabric of development that stopped growing years and years ago. How can this stopped moment be traversed into evolution?

Children and how they are related with: this begins charting the uncharted territory of a wiser future. Their hyper-vulnerability to impressions are an indication of the limitless raw lands of future psyche—little minds being made up 'in the right now' as pedagogical pens draw lines with varying degrees of emotional sensitivity on the psyche-map of schools.

Parental influence on their children through their childrearing practices is ultimately controlled by schools, and in this same way, schools are controlled by how parents parent their students. In a wiser future, schools will not explain away feelings as being in opposition to a moral imperative. Nor will teachers teach along the narrative lines that primarily account for the formulas of their preceding boxes. Categories and their orders will become metaphors that are fluid, with porous boundaries that expand and contract, harden and soften according to the emergent meaning of the class's emotional flow. The

pressure of catastrophic urgency as a real action will be left with the parent-caregiver at the front door of the school building. The coercive capability of the state as transferred to the teaching authority will be circumscribed by the creation of an environment that securely receives the child's expression of everything. A safety designated by the

metaphoric domain of psyche as an equal priority to and also exceeding the physical in proportion to what can be creatively tolerated.

School will be a sanctuary for the living metaphor of feelings, **a psychic and physical house** that permits the supple material of a child to cultivate the sensory impressions and expressions upon the canvas of the class. A group-family-canvas of little selves growing towards larger and more detailed spheres of analogy. This individuation includes the original family as a steadily returning base that evolves in tandem to what was. A past regarded as real as the present—a two-way time-process making the future.

The subject of safely expressing aggression and fear of the new will be emotionally studied as the first subject of metaphor. Metabolizing frustration will be the second. The emphasis will be on a lot of fun most of the time, and just the right amount of too-much-struggle at others. Unconscious emotional evolution of the ego will be the third subject taught to parents as their children emotionally, mentally and physically grow. Talking will encompass a subject preceding the first, the means that is this milieu including representation by all the arts (and silence) as needed. The premise of school will be that what is unholdable by the family unity in terms of a child's development can be held by the teacher, class and school—a complex, multi-layered dialogue of separation from the original family that translates developmental resistance within a shared language of a tolerably enlarging social sphere. What is impossibly difficult will become the scene of a hidden metaphor, and if empathically stayed with and searched out long enough, will open up a passage of progressively flowing meaning.

All the other ways of learning and doing as we know them, as earlier referenced in brief, mainly the hard sciences and methods of brute force will be secondary to the study of meaning. They will slowly be swallowed and dissolved into the actionless art of the metaphor—one by one, they will flake off and leave a vestigial trail of pedagogy. Here is a vision of the far-away futuristic child as concluding metaphor: This student will attend schools in which students teach the teachers, steadily superseding linear thought with a cross current of categories that are indigenous to the natural birth of the psyche. Emotional needs induced, spoken, symbolically conveyed will be the only instructions to the educator of care. These lessons of organic need will be channeled into multi-directional scripts that guard sensitivity as the central nutrient of a school of growing psyches. A topography of reflection will sensitize the classmates to function more as an ever-warming up chorus, harmonizing to the shifting emotional notes being articulated across the wave of their voices.

Response

But what if the small body is in pain, what if the small body is ill, what if the small body cannot keep up? What if a baby is born not healthy and never will be healthy, what then might happen in a wiser future? How to contain the terror of death and evil if one's own body seems a place of distrust?

Body Talks_

Romily Alice Walden

My body learned to speak in 2016. After two and a half decades of shutting up and putting up it finally found its power. I'm living under the weight of 25 years of repressed nos.

They are spoken in heavy eyes, inflamed lymph-nodes, restless sleep, constant aches and a general refusal to follow direction.

There are people who speak fluently with the body: body workers, healers, practitioners of magic and ancient wisdom. I am not one of those people. When I talk to the body I am clumsy and rude.

I say –

Please can we go out today if you feel able?

And the body hears –

Why won't you do what I want?

Why won't you follow direction?

Why can't you be like you used to be?

Nobody wants to play with you if you talk to them that way.

When you can't work because your body is on strike, you have to turn to lovers, friends, community and the government for help.

You have to say –

I can't use my body today, does your body have anything spare for me?

You have to hope that they can also hear your body saying NO and that they don't think that your mind is saying no and your body is willing

(as if the two were not the same).

My body is not willing today.

I remember speaking to my body as a child. I remember saying all of the bad things that I felt and saying them right to my body. My body that kept on doing its job.

I don't blame myself for my sickness. I also want to make it clear that my condition is not manifested by my thoughts.

My body's desire to say no has to do with the fallibility of bodies, the existence of sickness, the expiration of wellness and the acknowledgement that health is often temporary and sometimes not at all.

The future is coming for all of us.

In the future your body will say no. Your body will say –

Not now.

Not anymore.

Not like that.

Not today.

And eventually –

Goodbye.

I would like to make peace with my body before that day.

I would like to learn to speak to my body before I die.

When we work together, my body and I, when we make deals and get things done, I'd like to acknowledge that collaboration:

Artwork by *Romily Alice Walden* and a willing body.

Or –

Text by *Romily Alice Walden* and a body that wanted to be still.

And this body today, this body that wants to be still, it's still my body, it is still a body that belongs to me. It is the same body that you loved, that you desired, that you held and cleaned and tended to.

And these disobedient bodies, they have a lot to say about the shape of futures, about the shape of things to come

about the things that must be tended to...

These bodies speak to the state of the communities that we inhabit, the land that we take from, the quality of our air, the richness of our soil and the health of our water.

These bodies talk to us of power, greed, and never-ending consumption.

These bodies give us a map of how to change.

Response

In a wiser future we would listen to our bodies, our gut, our gut feelings, regardless of illness or health, our bodies are our place in the world to start out from and they are the most vulnerable place there is, that won't change, we can change our understanding of this vulnerability and shelter with magic and critical acts, with spiral gardens, with emotional room for big hostile feelings that come with such vulnerability, with understanding the need to be 'in between', mad and monster, alien and other, without having to fear the death penalty either by being silenced into repression or by actual death.

In the following story written by Rafael Lourenco, a young person with a diagnosis of autism, the mad and monster, alien and other of the infant, the silent baby, the realm of undivided oneness, the place we can connect with but not speak about because words were never there, that place he describes, gives contours, but he cannot start chapter two, because the monster is the infant and the infant has no words. The infant acts, and we can act upon our infant selves, the place inside ourselves we often call our gut, the place that 'knows' what we need, the place that 'knows' about oneness and vulnerability, about fear and rage, the place that knows what helps us live a fulfilled life with joy, the place we have learned to neglect and are alienated from because we have no words for it. When we start to try to put these experiences into words, they might sound 'crazy' to us, we have no means to evidence them and thus they go into the realm of the occult. As Freud said, in his next life he knew he would have to study the occult. In a wiser future I hope we will understand more that 'the occult' is a place where we can reconnect with our baby-selves, were we can trust to not have words, were the place of not having words for it becomes integrated instead of repressed, so that our reasonable selves will shelter our fragility, everyone's. Chapter Two can be an open space to meet our newborn. In the future that newborn will have words to let us know what happened and hopefully their baby -self will have been integrated within the story that they will tell us.

The Future in 2068 - An Alien Short Story_

Rafael Lourenco

Prologue

My father believed in aliens. As a child, I, of course, believed in them also. However, as I got older, I grew more skeptical of my father, whose very grasp on reality appeared to have loosened as the years went on. I loved my father dearly, but as his obsession with extraterrestrials grew, the distance between us grew as well. I always believed this to be the deciding factor of Mother leaving. She sought to take me along, yet it was for nothing. I believed that at least one of us were to remain in Father's side, supporting and caring for him, lest he actually draw the ire of little green or grey men. Then again, that wouldn't be the most peculiar thing I have witnessed in my life.

My father was a man of great intelligence and eccentricity, the two ingredients essential to the formula that would make up a mad scientist (his cybernetic arm and eye only enhanced such an illusion, so I guess he really was one). He was a humble man, despite this, never blabbering about his achievements. He never conducted any inhumane experiments or any wacky inventions (at least that I know of) and always brought his work with him, even papers from the early 21st century. Things about cults, eldritch abominations and the like. It seems that these people were no more than Lovecraft fans, but one report always interested me. It was about a young man named Freddy, who allegedly confronted a creature he dubbed "The Figure". For me, these reports were nothing more than horror fiction, yet there was always this sense of realism and dread found in these accounts. For Father, this was irrefutable evidence that mankind was not simply a small part of a populous universe, but also that we were at the very bottom of the food chain, hopelessly, obliviously adrift in the infinite black sea, completely helpless and ignorant to the terrifying truth of reality and if we were to chance upon the truth, we would go mad from such revelations. As terrifying as this so-called 'truth' seemed, I was perfectly content to be ignorant, so long as I lived my life to the full. Even as my father began to grow more unhinged by the day, I saw that he always cared for

me, even building me an android assistant, with something resembling an A.I., who, I must say, was very efficient at its job.

Father was once head of The Ministry of Scientific Research & Development, a government-sanctioned organization. He's still considered to be the most absolutely brilliant head the organization ever had, and despite being deranged, they had such respect for him, that they funded any research he asked for, hopeless or not. With his brilliant mind and the technology and funding at his disposal, my father was sure to end up with something. Then, one day, he came back home, more horrified than I had ever seen him. According to him, he saw a figure, similar to the one described in the Freddy report, though he himself wasn't sure if it was the same one. He described it in full detail, so he must have been close to this thing. He said that it didn't see him, and he was lucky to have made it home at all. I tried to deny it, or say it could have been something else, but the detail he described it with and the sheer horror on his face would make any skeptic, including me, at the very least, intrigued.

I will never forget the day Father finally snapped and drove a bullet through his head. I was only 17 years old. I knew that his mind was fragile, but never to this extent. We held his funeral only 2 days later, funded by the Ministry. Due to Mother's absence, I was left under the care of P-8318, whom, despite being an android, I had a strong bond with and who was more than capable of taking care of me. He had something resembling an A.I., and always seemed more human than robot. So, that's how it was, for the past 7 years. Just me and my android guardian against the world.

Unfortunately for us, my story drew dire consequences for both of us. It was only then I began to believe my father, that, maybe there are things we cannot comprehend.

But, now I'll tell you my story.

Chapter 1

Deciding to honor my father and follow in his footsteps, I managed to secure for myself a job at The Ministry of Scientific Research & Development. So far, my superiors have had nothing but praise for my work, labelling me such things as 'prodigy', the 'next head' and that I possess the potential to even surpass my father. Despite all this flattery, I never thought of myself that highly.

I climbed up the ranks quickly, being first an assistant, then a manager, to the head of my own department (Physics, if you must know). Not bad if I do say so myself. I intend to even become head of the whole Ministry, even if it is only to really honor my father. We got into some high-level physics that I won't go into detail about, should it take up too much of your time.

After a day of research, I took my usual walk home. Although my house is about an hour and a half away by foot, I do not mind, as I live near the countryside, and I always enjoy the sights. It also counts as my exercise. It helps to clear my head of my troubles; the ambience makes me feel I'm in my own little world.

So, there I was, simply trotting along. Until, a large blur, appearing in the corner of my eye, caught my attention. In order to properly see it, I halted dead in my tracks, in hopes of getting

a better view. A bear, perhaps? No, bears aren't too common around here, and the blur was noticeably larger than a grizzly.

"So, what was it?" I wondered to myself.

It kept moving back and forth frantically at high speeds, as if it were in a panic. I started to regret my decision. As the thing I was watching slowed down, I caught a glimpse of that... creature.

It was a horrific thing. It was a slimy, scaly thing, with its body more like rubber than flesh, with some patches of black fur around it. It possessed a long muscular tail, shrouded with large spikes. Its head bore two large horns and 6 eyes. To be honest, there was nothing 'ordinary' about it at all. To call this thing an alien would be an insult to aliens - Spikes covered its whole body. It had several limbs, with arms, legs and what seemed to be dozens of clawed tentacles, flapping about, protruding on its back. Four creepily long arms reached out, clawing through everything in its presence. It even slashed through a boulder as if it were paper.

It had 2 immense mouths. One on its face (where it should be) and the other where its stomach should be. It drooled saliva that seemed to be acidic, melting and burning the things that it came in contact with. And its eyes, dear God. Dear **GOD**, its **EYES**. It was easily the most horrifying feature of this eldritch creature. How I even managed to see and describe it so well I have no clue. There were SO many other revolting features this abomination possessed but to fully describe it would take up the bulk of my tale, so I digress. Instinct possessed me for a moment and, not even aware, I began to tread closer to it (Yes, even I don't know why I was stupid enough to do that). As I inched closer to it, I steadily, steadily, drew out my phone, hoping to get a good picture of this behemoth. It looked smaller from where I had first stood. But as I am now just a few feet away, I saw just how colossal this being was. At the very least, it was 10 feet tall. With my camera ready, I took a very good picture, if I do say so myself.

However, it was at a cost. The worst thing that could've happened, happened: **IT SAW ME**.

However, it didn't really do anything. It only stared at me with a quizzical tilt, as if it had never seen a human before, which only added fuel to the fire. Where exactly did this creature hail from?

Ever so slowly, I raised my phone up to call The Ministry, or the emergency services, or both. As I pressed the first number on my speed dial, suddenly, the creature bellowed. It let out a piercing, deafening, demonic screech. I could only cover my ears, my head full of mind numbing pain. As I helplessly writhed in utter pain, incapable of defending myself, I saw, through the dizziness and the haze, I saw, the creature disappear before me. It didn't fly or walk away. It simply vanished. I could feel my mind tearing itself apart. I could barely think. I couldn't form words, move. I couldn't anything. It only came back to me during my current writing of these events, as if my memories just entered the front door in my brain.

But this was nothing compared to what happened next...

Chapter 2

Highlights

- The text is a patchwork by different authors who in their own voice tell us what practices are needed for a wiser future.
- Each contribution shows a perspective that is unique but they all share the infant as embodying the wiser future.
- The commentator ties the patchwork together interpreting the infant in each text and in the whole.
- The text as a whole gives voice as to how thinking might be freely formulated in the future.
- The text uses free association and poetic prose.