Emancipation and the ungovernable Self: Psychoanalytic therapy and Agamben's inoperativity
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> The ungovernable, which is the beginning and, at the same time, the vanishing point of every politics. (Agamben, in Prozorov 2014, p.24)

> Beyond the apparatuses and the forms of subjectivity that they produce there is an excess of living being that can never be subsumed under them. While the excess does not in itself constitute a political subject, it testifies to the fact that the apparatuses are never all there is. (Prozorov 2014, p.24)

Thomas Hobbes feared humanity's state of nature, arguing that if there was to be security and peace in society, people would need to be governed by a leviathan (Ryan, 2012, pp. 432-435). Fast forward a few centuries and the leviathan has morphed into biopolitics, which is the management not just of the political, but of life itself. Worse, the leviathan is not readily identifiable, because the state is imbricated with other nodes of power, resulting in inverted totalitarianism—a leviathan hidden under the façade of democracy (Wolin, 2008). Add to this bleak picture the prevalence of neoliberal capitalism in organizing society and producing subjects (*homo economicus*) for the market society— "being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his earnings" (Foucault in Chari, 2015, p.64). The market society produces entrepreneurial subjects who follow the flow of capital (Eagleton, 2011, p.118), while being forced "to become…responsible" self-investors and self-providers (Brown, 2015, p.84). As Herbert Marcuse (1964) notes, "the individual by himself reproduces and perpetuates the external controls exercised by his society" (p.10). What we observe is that the most effective forms of oppression are those where people possess the illusion of freedom, while being held in bondage by a mystifying leviathan.

It seems to me that since its inception, psychoanalysis has been, in part, concerned with emancipation, breaking the chains that restrict individuals' knowledge and freedom. One could argue that Freud (1923) believed there is an unruly or ungovernable core of being human, which could be harnessed by the ego or facilitated by psychoanalysis, freeing, for instance, people from the sexually repressive forces of the Victorian Age, as well as facilitating persons' emancipation from the bondage of their illusions—religious or otherwise. Consider the very origins of psychoanalysis' "chimney sweeping" or "talking cure"— initiated by Anna O (Bertha Pappenheim)—that helped emancipate Bertha from society's patriarchal chains that bound women (Breger 2000, pp.103-110). Later, Erich Fromm's (1955, 1969) sustained critiques of capitalism and Western societies' preoccupation with individualism were aimed at freeing people from the illusions and chains of an economic system that enervated populations, while filling the coffers of the wealthy. R.D. Laing (1969) observed the insanity of the social-political realities of the U.S. Empire with the hope we might become free people from the

madness of the Cold War. Living amidst the violence and brutal oppression of French-colonized Algeria, Frantz Fanon (2008/1952) argued that the aims of psychoanalytic therapy are (a) "to *'consciousnessize'* [the patient's] unconscious, to no longer be tempted by a hallucinatory lactification," and (b) "to enable [the patient] to choose an action with respect to the *real source of the conflict*, i.e., the social structure" (p. 80; emphasis mine). Interestingly, around the same time and on another continent, Ralph Ellison (1995/1953), commenting about the psychiatric clinic in Harlem, recognized that "Dr. Wertham and his interracial staff seek a modest achievement: to give each bewildered patient an insight into the relation between his problems and his environment, and out of this understanding to reforge the will" (p.302). This partial list highlights a key thread in psychoanalysis, namely emancipation.

In this article, I consider the emancipatory element of psychoanalysis in light of Giorgi Agamben's philosophical notions of inoperativity and the ungovernable self, as well as the works of philosophers Hannah Arendt, Axel Honneth, and Avishai Margalit. In brief, I argue that for some patients good-enough psychoanalytic psychotherapy is a process that invites inoperativity with respect to social, political, and economic beliefs/practices that undermine public-political self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect, which are integral for civic agency and civic trust necessary for speaking and acting together in the polis. This perspective is connected to, but distinct from, Fanon's view of psychoanalysis as raising awareness as to the real social sources of suffering so the patient can choose an action vis-à-vis these sources. The notion of inoperativity adds to this by raising the possibility of facilitating a self that is not captive to or operating out of the grammar of the disciplinary regimes that undermine political agency. The process of psychoanalytic therapy, then, can give rise to an ungovernable self, relatively free from society's disciplinary regimes.

I begin by depicting the parent-child interactions as a pre-political space, relying on Hannah Arendt's notion "space of appearances," Axel Honneth's neo-Hegelian idea of recognition, and Avishai Margalit's view of a decent society. From this space of speaking and acting together, children transition to the larger public-political space, ideally discovering a positive-political self/agency. Included in this section is a discussion regarding the social-political apparatuses[1] that operate with respect to one or more segments of the populace such that they are excluded or marginalized from the space of appearances—included-excluded Others. These apparatuses function to undermine and restrict persons' public-political sense of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence, which operates to limit or eliminate their speaking and acting together in public-political spaces—undermining political trust and agency. From here I turn to Agamben's notions of inoperativity and ungovernable self as a way to think about how marginalized persons resist the apparatuses without using the tools of these regimes. I

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[1] For Agamben (2009) the term "apparatus" refers "a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures and institutions that aim to manage, govern, control, and orient—in a way that purports to be useful—the behaviors, gestures, and thoughts of human beings" (p.13). Referencing Foucault, Agamben writes that "in a disciplinary society, apparatuses aim to create—through a series of practices, discourses, and bodies of knowledge—docile, yet free, bodies that assume their identity and their 'freedom' as subjects" (p.19).

then shift to depict and illustrate the process of psychoanalysis as threshold political space that ideally does not operate out of the grammars of the apparatuses and is, therefore, ungovernable. Positively stated, psychoanalysis, for some patients, provides a space of speaking and acting together that a) identifies the real political, social, and economic sources of suffering, b) supports experiences of suchness (self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect), and c) gives rise to an ungovernable self that is not captive to the grammars of the disciplinary regimes of an indecent society.

It is important to identify a few caveats and clarifications before beginning. First, I wish to stress that I am referring only to some patients, especially those whose suffering is most clearly the result of political, economic, and cultural-societal forces. Second, I am neither arguing that psychoanalysis is, in and of itself, emancipatory vis-à-vis the political nor that the psychoanalytic therapist is *the* source of patients' experiences of freedom. Instead, I contend that the psychoanalytic *process* can function as a mutual-personal engagement and exploration that result in the development of an ungovernable self. Third, a reason for undertaking this project is my conviction, along with Samuels (1993, 2001, 2004, 2015), Layton, Hollander, and Gutwell (2006), and others (e.g., Altman, 2000, 2004; Kovel, 1970), that patients and analysts possess political selves, shaped by the economic, cultural, and political apparatuses of their society. The corollary, following Fanon and those at the Harlem clinic, is that psychoanalysis *should not* be seen, understood, or practiced as if it is separated from political and economic realities that are sources of tremendous suffering, especially for people of color (racism) and people who are poor (classism). More strongly stated, practicing psychoanalytic therapy without considering the political, economic, and social forces implicated in patients' suffering colludes with these forces and unethically mystifies them, undermining the patient's ungovernable self.

The emergence of a political self in an (in)decent society: Arendt, Honneth, and Margalit

Hobbes feared a return to the state of nature, which was nasty, brutal, and short, while Rousseau seemed to long for the imaginary freedom evident in the state of nature. In both instances, these philosophers viewed the state of nature as either something to overcome or to recover. A different perspective is that the state of nature is manifested in the parent-infant relationship and the child's psychosocial development, which avoids the idea of nature as nasty, brutish, and short or as some past utopia of freedom. In what follows, I depict the parent-child interactions as a pre-political space, and this serves as a foundation for describing the move from the pre-political space to the public-political space of the larger society. While these spaces are distinct, they have parallels with regard to agency and, what Hannah Arendt (1958) terms, the space of appearances. I end this section with a discussion of the ways apparatuses of indecent societies undermine, for some people, the transition to political spaces of appearance by ways of political misrecognition (public-political forms of humiliation) and the concomitant maldistribution of resources, which undercuts the public-political sense of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence that are necessary for engaging in the polis.

Infant-parent research has long pointed out the complex, mutual interactions between infants and parents. Good-enough parents, in caring for their infants, ideally recognize and treat their children as persons (unique, valued, inviolable, responsive subjects) as they engage their children in proto-conversations, acting as if babies' assertions involve understanding (Bonovitz & Harlem, 2018; Trevarthen,1993; Levin & Trevarthen, 2000). An infant's assertions in this space represent a nascent, pre-symbolic agency and sense of self. Children and parents, then, can be said to be engaged in acts of speaking and acting together, co-creating a pre-political space of appearances.[2]

Philosopher Hannah Arendt (1958) coined the term "space of appearances," which refers to the context of public-political space, wherein citizens speak and act together. In this public-political space, residents are engaged in mutual-personal recognition that makes possible sufficient trust for them to "appear" and act. In a similar way parents, who have significantly greater agency and capacity for communication than children, attune to infants' assertions such that children "appear." This begs the question: what or who ideally appears in these interactions? For Winnicott (1971), it is the "true self." From a philosophical perspective, the "true self" can be understood as a child's experiences of a sense of singularity or suchness (Agamben, 2013). That is, children, in being recognized and treated as persons vis-à-vis parents' attunements (*and repairs*: see Stern, 1985; Tronick & Gianino, 1986) to their children's assertions, obtain experiences of their singularity, uniqueness, or suchness. The idea of suchness can be further understood in light of Axel Honneth's neo-Hegelian view of recognition in the political realm. Honneth (1995) indicates that positive recognitions—what I am calling personal recognitions—facilitate individuals obtaining a sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect. A "true self" and the experience of singularity or suchness, then, would be understood as children's burgeoning pre-symbolic self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence vis-à-vis mutual engagement in this space of appearances—a space of speaking and acting together.

It is important to stress that the infant is not a mere passive recipient of the parent's attunements. In this space of appearances, if all goes well enough, children obtain a sufficient sense of trust (Erikson, 1963) to assert their needs and desires—to risk appearing in their suchness. Relational trust, then, accompanies the child's budding agency, as well as pre-symbolic experiences of singularity or suchness. In brief, parents' consistent recognitions and treatment of their children as persons facilitate the growth of children's agency in this space and concomitantly leads to pre-symbolic organizations of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence. By contrast, consistent misrecognitions and failures to repair represent relational disruptions that undermine children's trust,

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[2] By "pre-political," I mean a space of speaking and acting together that precedes a child's entry into the public-political realm. This pre-political space, however, is not free of political, economic realities. This is evident most clearly in situations of virulent racism and classism. Evidence of this can be found in the narratives of people like James Baldwin, Malcolm X, and Ta-Nehisi Coates. They portray how poverty and racism negatively shape, but not determine, parent-child relations. These testaments, like the autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr., reveal how parents (and others) try to mitigate the effects of racism on their children.

self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect, which reflects and further undermines speaking and acting together vis-à-vis this pre-political space of appearances.

As a child develops, gaining capacities for symbolization, narration, and self-reflection, the space of appearances extends to other people in the family. In this process, a child begins to make use of the narratives, rituals, and cultural objects found and used within one's family. To understand this transition, we could reconceptualize Winnicott's (1971) notion of "transitional objects"[3] as the child's use of a cultural object not simply to soothe and repair, but to engage in imagined actions (speaking and acting together), wherein the space of appearances is under the child's omnipotent control—securing the child's sense of shared agency, as well as self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence. The transitional object, then, serves as a bridge to the child gaining the confidence to include Others in this space of speaking and acting together. The cartoon Calvin and Hobbes is a playful illustration of this. Hobbes is a stuffed tiger who is Calvin's best friend. They have all kinds of conversations and adventures—speaking and acting together outside the control or domain of his parents and others, while under Calvin's omnipotent control.

If all goes well-enough, many children move from speaking and acting together within the confines of the family to participating in public spaces with others. Ideally, children, in their transition to participating in public-political spaces, discover and have affirmed their sense of esteem, confidence, and respect, which are necessary for social-political (civic) trust and the exercise of (civic) agency. In part, the reason why this transition is without much fanfare for many children is because the larger society possesses public-political narratives, institutions, rituals, and practices that support their public-political agency, civic trust, and experiences of esteem, confidence, and respect. For many people, then, this transition from a pre-political space to public-political spaces occurs without notice. Yet, there are also instances when this transition is painfully disruptive, if not traumatic, clearly revealing the connection (or disconnection) between the pre-political space of parent-child interactions and the public-political space of the larger society. Tragically, there are innumerable examples of this in societies that Avishai Margalit (1996) calls indecent societies—societies that humiliate a group(s) of citizens. Indecent societies comprise narratives and apparatuses that undermine the agency, esteem, confidence, and respect of marginalized, humiliated Others. Put differently, the apparatuses of political humiliation attenuate, if not collapse, the space of appearances. In these societies, humiliated Others are included-excluded Others—a part of society, but relegated to the fringe of the public-political space of appearances—

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[3] Winnicott did not clearly differentiate between the transitional objects of childhood and those of adulthood, which raises all kinds of questions. The developmental achievements and complex psychological and relational realities that take place between infancy and adulthood are huge. This in itself would demand differentiation between types of objects. The transitional object I am referring to is when a child makes use of cultural objects and not simply something like a blanket. The imaginary play between the child and cultural object has more psychosocial functions that the first transitional object that is associated with pre-symbolic modes of organizing experience. For critiques of Winnicott's theory of development, see Applegate, 1989; Brody, 1980; Flew, 1978; Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983; LaMothe, 1998; Litt, 1986.

politically irrelevant. For instance, Martin Luther King Jr. (1998) and Malcolm X (Haley, 1964) describe painful realizations of public-political humiliation perpetrated by the larger white society's apparatuses that tried to force them to accept an inferior status. Other writers, like James Baldwin (1984, 1990/1963) and Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015), depict the anguish of discovering the public realm held mostly humiliation, depersonalization, and marginalization. In my view, what they portray is the disjunction between the space of appearances experienced in their families and/or religious communities, wherein they obtained sufficient measure of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence (singularity/suchness), and their later encounters of systemic racism where they are publicly-politically humiliated, making it difficult, if not impossible, to discover and make use of a positive political self in the larger society.

An even more egregious illustration of this is depicted in Orlando Patterson's (1982) term "social death," which refers to slavery when African Americans could not only literally be killed with no consequences to the murderer,[4] but also that by law they had no political recognition or agency. To be socially alive, there must be social-political recognition whereby participants discover and have affirmed a social-political sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect, which founds speaking and acting together (civic trust and political agency). For African Americans, during the Jim Crow Era and often today, they are included-excluded Others, lacking or being denied political self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect, and concomitantly denied (or marginalized) political agency. They are part of society, but through social-political misrecognition and accompanying apparatuses of humiliation, they are forced to the fringe of the space of appearances.

People who experience the disjunction between the pre-political space of their family/community and the larger political spaces of speaking and acting together often seek refuge in spaces where they are recognized and treated as persons. In indecent societies, these spaces are relegated to the fringe of society. Martin Luther King Jr. (1998) relied on his religious community, which provided a public-political space to speak and act together, securing a sense of esteem, respect, confidence, and agency. Malcolm X, after a painful encounter with a white racist teacher, initially found solace and a positive self in the underground economy of Boston and New York and later in the Nation of Islam.

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[4] Agamben (1998), referring to a different political reality, provides another way to view social death and the ultimate in political humiliation. He coins the "bare life," which concerns persons "caught up in the sovereign ban…stripped of all protections and abandoned to the force of law" (p.102). Stated more starkly, "The sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide…What is captured in the sovereign ban is a human victim who may be killed but not sacrificed" (p.83). Those in positions of political power decide on the state of exception, having "the power to decide which life may be killed without the commission of homicide" (p.142), which in the case of slavery is the white owner.

Agamben, inoperativity, and the ungovernable self

Despite the realities of political oppression, or what Patterson (1982) calls social death, individuals and communities find ways to resist. Put differently, despite apparatuses of humiliation (misrecognition) and deprivation (maldistribution of resources), some people appear to possess selves and political agency that are ungovernable. Frederick Douglass (Blight, 2018) immediately leaps to mind. Born a slave, never knowing his father, losing his mother, and being beaten, Douglass escaped to freedom in the north, though this newfound freedom accompanied frequent racist threats and attacks. Despite the apparatuses of slavery and northern racism, Douglass (and many others) proved to be ungovernable, possessing self-esteem, confidence, and respect sufficient enough to exercise his political agency despite attempts to deny his speaking and acting with others. To understand this, I turn to Agamben's notions of inoperativity and the ungovernable self, which will aid in depicting aspects of the emancipatory feature of psychoanalytic therapy.

Agamben contends that social-political apparatuses produce forms of subjectivity or governable selves (Prozorov, 2014, p.24). For instance, in terms of the political-economic realm, the apparatuses of neoliberal capitalism produce *homo oeconomicus*— subjects fitted to and for the market society (Brown, 2015). *Homo oeconomicus* is a governed subject. By contrast, for Agamben, the ungovernable self *"could never assume the form of an oikonomia* [economy]" (in Whyte, 2013, p.166). This suggests that human beings are not condemned to be determined by disciplinary regimes of society for two intersecting reasons. First, the apparatuses of society cannot fully capture or produce subjectivity. There is always an excess that escapes or is beyond the control of the apparatuses. Second, Agamben, using the term "inoperativity," indicates that it is possible to deactivate the functioning of the apparatuses, which does not mean these apparatuses do not continue to operate or have effects (Prozorov, 2104, pp.31-34). Put another way, inoperativity vis-à-vis subjects mean that they are not captive to the grammar of the apparatuses, even if they continue to have their effects. Frederick Douglass is an excellent example of inoperativity and excess. Slavery and northern racism aimed to produce humiliated subjects for the sake of serving the needs of white supremacists. Douglass, for numerous reasons, demonstrated an excess of subjectivity that could not be captured by the political apparatuses of racism and he did not, for the most part, operate out of the grammar of these apparatuses. This said, it is important to ask what is a source of the excess of subjectivity.

What I want to suggest is that *a* root of the ungovernable self is found in the pre-political space of good-enough parent-children interactions. The parents' personal recognitions and attunements to their children, while shaped by larger systemic forces or disciplinary regimes, are not determined by them. To turn to Prozorov's (2014) depiction of Agamben, "Beyond the apparatuses and forms of subjectivity they produce there is the excess of living being that can never be subsumed under them. While the excess does not itself constitute a political subject, it testifies to the fact that apparatuses are never all there is" (p.24). What I am arguing here is that parents' care for their children is not

captive to the apparatuses of an indecent society and this gives rise to an excess or suchness that is understood as ungovernable. There is, in other words, something ungovernable about good-enough parents' care of their children. By ungovernable, I mean that good-enough parents, in situations of societal humiliation, seek to protect their children from these forces, while also, in time, try to help them face the realities of an indecent society. That is, by recognizing and treating their children as persons, they make inoperative the grammars of humiliation and depersonalization. Inoperative, as noted above, means deactivating or neutralizing the apparatuses of power that subjugate, that form and determine subjectivities and identities, making possible the realization of other possibilities or potentialities (Prozorov, 2014, pp.32-37). Inoperative is, for Agamben, not passive (p.134): inoperativity does not "affirm inertia, inactivity or apraxia…but a form of praxis that is devoid of any telos or task, does not realize any essence and does not correspond to any nature" (p.33)—in this case, the caring action of parental attunement. It is important to stress again that Agamben is not saying that inoperativity means that the apparatuses of an indecent society have no effect or impact. Any cursory reading of King's and Malcolm X's autobiographies indicates the negative impacts of racism on their families and the impact of racism on parental care. Agamben is saying that it is possible to act in such a way that one is not completely determined by the political-economic apparatuses, in this case, of racism.

In brief, good-enough parents' ministrations are largely ungovernable, making inoperative the apparatuses of an indecent society. The result is the child's nascent ungovernable self,[5] wherein the experience of suchness or singularity and corresponding pre-symbolic experiences of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence are not tied or captive to the grammar of humiliation and depersonalization of the larger society's disciplinary regimes or apparatuses. I contend that evidence of this is seen in the pain and confusion children experience when they encounter the public-political world that does not confirm their experiences of singularity they obtained from good-enough parental care. The self that emerged in speaking and acting together with the parent is at odds with the governed-humiliated self of an indecent society. An indecent society and its disciplinary regimes aim to control, govern, and determine the selves of the oppressed and marginalized group(s). A couple of illustrations will help here. In eighth grade, Malcolm X recalled a painful interaction. After class one afternoon, Mr. Ostrowski,[6] Malcolm's teacher, under the guise of caring about Malcolm, asked if he had considered a career. "The truth is I hadn't," Malcolm tells the reader. "I never have figured out why I told him, 'Well, yes sir, I've been thinking I'd like to be a lawyer'" (Haley, 1964, p.38). Whether he wanted to be a lawyer is not the point. Malcolm chose a profession

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[5] Agamben is not suggesting that the ungovernable self is necessarily a revolutionary subject (Whyte, 2013, p.160). Of course, an ungovernable self may be a revolutionary subject and there are examples of this already mentioned. If not a revolutionary subject, ungovernable selves may simply live and work such that they resist the machinations of the dominant apparatuses of society.

[6] Biographer Manning Marable (2011) indicates that the teacher's name was Richard Kaminska. Malcolm may have misremembered or altered the name, possibly for legal reasons. Since the autobiography uses a different name, I have decided to retain Malcolm's version.

that was esteemed in the larger public-political world. Malcolm aspired to find a positive public-political self. His teacher replied, "Malcolm, one of life's first needs is for us to be realistic. Don't misunderstand me, now. We all here like you, you know that. But you've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer—that's no realistic goal for a nigger. You need to think about something you can be. You're good with your hands— making things. Everyone admires your carpentry shop work. Why don't you plan on carpentry?" (p.38). Mr. Ostrowski's "care" for Malcolm illustrates the dominance of the racist apparatuses of an indecent society bent on humiliating African Americans, forcing them to the fringes of public-political spaces of speaking and acting together. Malcolm's understandable response was to draw "away from white people" (p.38). This painful memory represents the collision between Malcolm's ungovernable self and the dominant governed self of the larger indecent society. Let me add further, that Malcolm's ungovernable self, which he obtained in the caring interactions of his family,[7] became the seed and source of his resistance toward the racist apparatuses of white society and, later, to his resistance and resilience against the apparatuses of the Nation of Islam.

Luther King Jr. had a similar painful experience. When he was about 6, the white friend, with whom he often played, told King that he was no longer allowed to play with Martin (King, 1998, p.7). Confused and hurt, King asked his parents if they could explain this. King listened as his mother struggled to explain discrimination and segregation. King wrote,

> She taught me that I should feel a sense of "somebodiness" but that on the other hand I had to go out and face a system that stared me in the face every day saying you are "less than," you are "not equal to." She told me about slavery and how it ended with the Civil War. She tried to explain the divided system of the South—the segregated schools, restaurants, theaters, housing; the white and colored signs on drinking fountains, waiting rooms, lavatories—as a social condition rather than a natural order. She made it clear that she opposed this system and that I must never allow it to make me feel inferior. (pp. 3–4)

King's mother and father, in caring for him, had given Martin a sense of somebodiness (suchness/singularity), which can be understood in two ways. First, his parents endeavored to provide Martin with a sense of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence, all of which were not tied to the apparatuses of racism that sought to govern or determine African American psyches and social-political relations through disciplinary regimes of humiliation. Their care, their speaking and acting together, were ungovernable in that these larger forces and disciplinary regimes were not operative. Apparently, they were successful, because if their care were not ungovernable, Martin would not have had such a painful realization or awakening. Second, his sense of somebodiness in the face of a racist public-political realm was ungovernable, because, for King, it was not dependent on or determined (inoperativity) by the machinations of an indecent society. Let me add that, for King, his religious community and its space of

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[7] I also recognize that Malcolm X's autobiography also details the disruptions within his parents' marriage and his family (Marable, 2011). But what I am contending is that he obtained sufficient care or good-enough care to develop an ungovernable self.

appearances reinforced his somebodiness or ungovernable self, both of which became sources of resistance against racism in childhood and in adulthood.

In summary, the pre-political space of speaking and acting together between parents and children ideally fosters the emergence of pre-symbolic experiences of both trust and singularity or suchness, which are further depicted as organizations of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence that are necessary for agency. If all goes well enough, the child discovers and experiences confirmation of these experiences in the public-political realm, wherein s/he engages in speaking and acting together with others—civic agency/trust. Disjunctions between the pre-political space and the larger public-political spaces are precipitated in indecent societies, wherein there are apparatuses that produce humiliated Others by undermining their public-political experiences of suchness/singularity, esteem, confidence, and respect. Stated differently, these apparatuses reduce or obliterate public-political spaces of appearances, which involves denying or reducing their political agency. In this section, I argued that good-enough pre-political spaces of speaking and acting together means the parents' care, which is ideally connected to other caring relations, exceeds or is not captive to the apparatuses of an indecent society, which results in "the excess of living being that can never be subsumed under them [apparatuses]" (Prozorov, 2014 p.24). This excess is the key of the ungovernable part of the self, making inoperative the grammar of humiliation of the disciplinary regimes. Parental care gives rise to an ungovernable self that can later lead to political agency of resistance toward these larger forces and systems.

The process of psychoanalytic therapy: Inoperativity and the emergence of an ungovernable self

Arguing that the parent-child interactions of speaking and acting together is a pre-political space does not mean that this is the only "pre-political" space. The notion "pre-political" is meant to convey interactions of speaking and acting together that precede the child's entry into the pubic-political realm. There are other interactions of adults speaking and acting together that paradoxically lie outside the larger public-political space, yet are within it. These spaces, while shaped by larger political structures and forces, can serve as oases in the sense of providing relations that invite flourishing and emancipation—ungovernable selves. While there are parallels between pre-political spaces and what I am going to call threshold spaces, there are also important differences. For instance, the "consulting room" is not a space for a "corrective emotional experience" that provides the attunement a patient did not obtain when growing up and that precedes the patient's engagement in public-political spaces. That said, therapists' care for their patients involve personal recognition vis-à-vis emotional attunements (e.g., empathy) that accompany the relational trust needed to speak and act together with the aim of facilitating patients' self-exploration and self-understanding. In this section, I endeavor to depict psychoanalytic therapy as a threshold space that involves, *for some patients*, a process that entails inoperativity with regard to the larger political, economic, and social disciplinary regimes that undermine the patient's political self-esteem, self-confidence, self-respect, and agency. Analytic inoperativity can give rise to an

ungovernable self, relatively free of the political forces that seek to restrict or deny persons' engagement in the political realm.

When Franz Fanon (2008/1952) argued that the aims of psychoanalytic therapy involve facilitating patients to become aware of the real social, political, and economic sources of their suffering so as to be able to choose an action vis-à-vis these sources, he certainly implied that the analyst needs to be aware of these sources. In my view, Fanon, given his location in Algeria, where French forces brutally oppressed Algerians causing immense physical and psychological harm, was facilitating, through psychoanalytic therapy, patients' psychological and political agency/emancipation. Here I want to press further and suggest that the analyst's awareness is necessary, but not sufficient to facilitate the patient's awareness and the possibility of emancipation. The analyst must also create a space and process wherein the grammar of society's disciplinary regimes is inoperative. This process, then, is not simply an intellectual or cognitive awareness of emancipation, but one that must also be experiential.

The idea of the importance of fostering experiences in psychoanalysis is not new. Decades ago, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann (1960) made a similar claim. In her view, an analyst is to meet a patient "on the basis of mutual human equality" (p.17), and this principle is rooted in her understanding that "the psychotherapeutic process is of a strictly interpersonal nature as to procedure and as to contents" (p.xv). Indeed, the very "success or failure of psychoanalytic psychotherapy is, in addition, greatly dependent upon the question of whether or not there is an empathic quality between the psychiatrist and patient" (p.62). Equality, interpersonal nature, and empathy accompany and support the very experiences necessary for relational trust that supports the shared venture of analytic exploration. In part, a question, in each instance of a psychoanalytic relationship, is what experience(s) is the patient needing. What I am arguing here is that some patients need an experience of suchness and emancipation that accompanies the emergence of an ungovernable self.

So, with Fanon, this process must first entail the therapist being aware of the social, political, and economic sources of the patient's suffering. Second, this awareness must accompany providing a space that does not operate out of the grammar of the apparatuses of an indecent society that has given rise to the patient's suffering. This inoperativity, to use Agamben's (1998) term, means deactivating or neutralizing the apparatuses of power in an indecent society that subjugate persons, which form and determine subjectivities and identities through political humiliation, thereby reducing the space of speaking and acting together. More positively, the therapist's consistent empathic attunements, which are founded on recognition and treatment of the patient as a person (the singularity or suchness of the individual), facilitates self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect that foster agency related to the analytic space of speaking and acting together—aimed, in part, at self-exploration and insight into the real sources of suffering. In this process, the patient experiences a kind of emancipation from the machinations of an indecent society and its apparatuses of misrecognition. When self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence, which found political agency, are no longer dependent on or determined by the grammars of the apparatuses of an indecent society, then we see the emergence of an ungovernable self.

It is important to recall that, for Agamben, inoperativity does not mean the apparatuses of a society are not operating or not continuing to have effects. The patient, who speaks and acts together with the therapist, constructs an ungovernable self that will continue to live within an indecent society, facing political and economic humiliation or other associated harms. Consider, for instance, Bertha Pappenheim mentioned in the introduction. As Freud's (1910, pp.12-13) patient, known as Anna O., she later became a well-known activist in Europe fighting for women's rights. We might consider her courage to tell Freud to listen as the presence of an ungovernable self, which may have been deepened by having experiences of someone in the position of authority respecting her corrections and wishes—personal recognition and experiences of singularity. Bertha was not going to be captive to the patriarchal disciplinary regimes that sought to keep women in their places. Yet, possessing an ungovernable self did not stop these powerful apparatuses or keep them from trying to control her or humiliate her. Bertha Pappenheim's ungovernable self simply was not dependent on these apparatuses for defining or legitimizing her political agency or public-political self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect.

Of course, it is very unlikely Freud would have been aware of the real social-political sources of Bertha's suffering, which begs the question regarding the emancipatory element of the analytic process. In other words, does the therapist need to be aware of the relation between a patient's suffering and the social-political apparatuses that give rise to it? If we take the case of Bertha Pappenheim, the answer is no. The analytic relation and process, wherein there is genuine respect, personal recognition, and interest in listening to and understanding the patient's experiences, may itself function inoperatively, unwittingly contributing to furthering the consolidation of an ungovernable self. However, in siding with Franz Fanon, I would argue that it is best when therapists are aware of these social-political apparatuses, because this will reduce the likelihood of being unsuspecting accomplices to these forces (see, Cushman, 1995) or worse when psychoanalysis itself becomes entwined with disciplinary regimes of the state (see Thomä & Kächele, 1994).

Another important qualification is needed here. Clearly, other threshold places exist in indecent societies. These may be religious communities that make inoperative the apparatuses of oppression (e.g., King, 1998; Desmond Tutu, 1999; Nelson Mandela, 1994) or social-political organizations that foster ungovernable selves by way of mutual-personal recognition in speaking and acting together with shared aims (e.g., Freeberg, 2008; Moritz & Moritz, 2001). That said, psychoanalysis, I wish to argue, is, for some patients, a threshold space by its very nature in the sense of taking seriously the patient's experiences, treating patients with respect, recognizing and treating them as persons, and fostering experiences of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence. It operates on the fringe of society, creating a space of self-exploration that is largely and ideally inoperative with respect to the reigning apparatuses of society. It affirms the patient's agency in "governing" his/her life and in the process fosters an ungovernable self, while also, for some patients, facilitating insight into the real social, political, and economic sources of their suffering.

A brief illustration is helpful here. When I walked into the waiting room one evening, Robin was sitting staring at the wall. There was a depressive air about her. She stood as I introduced myself, revealing a kind of listlessness. After sitting down on the office sofa, I learned that she was 31, married with two children (10, 8). Robin said she was tired, physically and psychologically. Both her and her husband worked 50-60 hours a week at just above minimum wage with no benefits. Her parents helped with childcare, but the stress of trying to make ends meet was wearing her out. Tom, her husband, noticed that she seemed depressed for the last year or so and encouraged her to get help, which was difficult because of their lack of money and insurance.

Over time, Robin revealed that her father was an alcoholic while she was growing up, though he suddenly stopped drinking when she was 17. Her mother worked part-time, but primarily stayed at home to care for the children. Robin said her mother was and remained anxious about money. They were chronically poor and seemed, at times, one month away from being evicted. While in school, she recalled times when she was teased by "friends" and others for the clothes she wore. Her mother would often get shoes and clothing at various "clothes closets," which were religious charity locations for poor persons to obtain free clothing.

Growing up in the poorest section of the city, Robin said she never had any aspirations for college. According to her, she did poorly in school, though she was able to graduate. After high school, she found various low-wage jobs that, in many ways, kept her tied to her parents' apartment. They also began to rely on her to help pay for rent and food. When Robin was 20 years old, she met Tom, whom she later married. He likewise did poorly in school, eventually getting a GED in his mid-twenties. Like Robin, Tom struggled to find work that paid much above minimum wage. Together, they helped Robin's parents, paying them for childcare.

During the first weeks of our meeting, Robin understood her struggles in terms of depression, which for her had two likely sources, namely, biology and family history. From this, she believed that she could get over her depression through medication and therapy. Her openness to both aided in getting her to obtain a psychiatric appointment with a psychiatric nurse-practitioner at a local clinic. She was diagnosed as depressed and provided a low dose of Prozac. Within a few weeks, Robin felt better, but recognized that her weariness, in part, remained. We explored her childhood and the impact of growing up with an alcoholic father (a funny, playful drunk) and an anxious mother, who constantly fretted about paying the bills.

There was a turning point in therapy after about six months, but before addressing this, I want to depict briefly Robin's struggles in light of the apparatuses that governed her subjectivity, giving rise to an enervated and governed self. From here, I consider the initial process of psychoanalytic psychotherapy in terms of inoperativity and facilitating the emergence of an ungovernable self. While I believed Robin's struggle with depression had roots in her developmental history and biology, I also recognized that the disciplinary apparatuses of neoliberal capitalism and classism gave rise to an enervated governed self. The psychosocial impact of capitalism (and its current iteration, neoliberal capitalism) has been discussed by numerous writers from various disciplines, stemming

back to Karl Marx (Cushman, 1995; Dufour, 2008; Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; Desmond, 2016; Fraser, 2015; Hochschild, 2012; Illouz, 2007; Lukács, 1968; Mander, 2012; Marcuse, 1964; Rogers-Vaughn, 2014). With regard to Robin, I suggest that her depression emerged, in part, against the background of the social, political, and economic apparatuses of capitalism, which accompanied subtle and overt forms of classism. Depression, then, is a response to and symptom of 1) political-economic apparatuses that demand compliance if people wish to survive, while also enervating them, 2) a governed self, unwittingly captive to the expectations and demands of political-economic apparatuses, and 3) an indecent society, wherein poor and working-class persons are humiliated (socially constructed as economic losers, failures: see Soss, Fording, & Sanford, 2011; Silva, 2013; Wacquant, 2009). I would add here that this view also reframes Robin's development, in that her father's alcoholism and mother's anxiety are understood as responses to neoliberal apparatuses of society.

It is important to say a bit more about governed self and its relation to the political-economic humiliation associated with classism. Robin grew up in a poor family, often feeling ashamed of struggling financially. She tended to blame herself or her parents. Over her life, Robin was exposed to thousands of subtle and overt messages from the larger neoliberal culture, which communicated that being poor was the fault of the individual—apparently "lacking" the intelligence, creativity, and/or drive to become financially successful. The various apparatuses of society (e.g., media, government programs, the economic system, etc.) promulgated these messages that she and countless others internalized. The governed self is not only defined and determined by these messages (no sense of suchness and diminished freedom), but is also uncritical of them. It is as if these messages are dogma, like Margaret Thatcher's slogan, "There is no alternative." A market society seeks and produces governed selves, docile, uncritically willing to follow the flow of capital, docilely accepting their situations, and politically irrelevant. For those like Robin a market society produces humiliated Others—marginalized from the larger political spaces of speaking and acting together. Shame is a powerful tool of social, economic, and political apparatuses to keep certain populations in check, obedient, and defeated.

Given this perspective, how then are we to understand psychoanalytic therapy, especially in what I call the initial phase? I suggest that good-enough therapy, in general, is inoperative with regard to the larger apparatuses of society that give rise to governed selves. It is inoperative because the therapist recognizes and treats the patient as a person—unique, valued, inviolable, responsive/agentic subject—through empathic interpretations/observations, appropriate interest and curiosity, etc. By inoperative, I mean that this space of speaking and acting together is relatively free of the grammar of the apparatuses that depersonalize, humiliate, and alienate. This is a threshold space wherein the patient is *invited* to experience, express, and have affirmed her suchness (self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence) that is not tied to or dependent on social-political apparatuses. The therapeutic or analytic alliance, then, involves personalizing attunements in the process of the therapist and patient exploring and reflecting on the patient's life, leading to a slight adjustment, which is the emergence of an ungovernable self. This is how I conceptualize the first six months of therapy with Robin.

As indicated above, there was a shift in the therapy after six months. Robin and her husband continued to work 50-60 hours a week to provide for their family and to help their parents. While Robin was feeling better, she understandably continued to feel the stresses and strains of trying to make ends meet. At one point, I decided to invite her to consider that there were other sources of her suffering. Let me pause here and say that introducing interpretations that are outside patients' narrative constructions are certainly part of psychoanalytic therapy. This, it seems to me, is inevitably disruptive and can have an educative aspect.[8] Hopefully, our interpretations are offered for the patient to consider, correct, emend, and reject. This said, Robin, at first, seemed puzzled, but was interested. I remarked that we had explored her depression in terms of her family of origin and physiology, but we had not considered other factors or sources of her and her family's struggles.

I first indicated that Robin (and members of her family) felt a deep sense of inadequacy with regard to her social-economic status. She recalled feeling humiliated as a child for being poor and needing assistance from the government. I suggested that she consider the possibility that her humiliation was sourced in larger systemic forces and institutions. More specifically, I indicated that the larger political-economic system, along with the media, promulgate certain beliefs (even faiths) with regard to individuals within the society, in particular, those on the lower end of the economic ladder. Moreover, these institutions often function to individualize suffering to keep people mystified with regard to the sources of their suffering. Robin seemed a bit confused, at first. I asked her where she had learned that she and her family were "white trash" and where the young children who teased her learned to see her that way. Later, I suggested that she might reframe her father's alcoholism and her mother's anxiety as responses to the larger system in which they struggled to survive. At some point in that session, I said something to the effect, "Don't simply take my word for this. See if it makes sense to you and, more importantly check it out for yourself."

What I was intending to do was invite Robin to consider and explore other possibilities, and I believed she trusted me enough that this was an invitation. Frankly, if Robin had rejected this direction, I would have returned to the more traditional path of self-exploration. But she did agree to consider this, with some reservations. We did not address this every session, but it came up a couple of times a month. Several months after this session, Robin surprised me. She had talked about this with her husband numerous times and she had checked out several library books over the previous month. [Tom and Robin would take their children to the library on Saturday mornings for children's readings.] Robin then said she was getting angrier about her situation. Some of the anger was directed at the "system" and some was directed at me. I first asked about her anger at me and she remarked, "Well now that I know this, what the hell can I do?" My response was something like, "It seems to me that your anger is connected to a

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[8] There is, of course, a long history in psychoanalysis regarding the issue of suggestion. I clearly was making a suggestion; however, I made a judgment, based on my experiences of her, that she would not simply take any suggestion I made. To put into the terms used in this article, she already had an ungovernable self—a self capable of critically deliberating and questioning what was offered.

sense of feeling powerless or helpless in the face of massive systems and institutions." She nodded. "I have two thoughts about that for you to consider. First, in one sense these larger systems thrive on people feeling powerless and remaining powerless, demoralized, and isolated. Second, your anger can be understood as your desire to act in spite of feeling powerless. Perhaps, you can consider how you might act within your own locale." In my view, Robin's anger was a sign of the ungovernable self or agency in relation to powerful social, political, and economic apparatuses that function to determine or govern subjectivity for the sake of preserving a market society.

Weeks went by. Robin came in one day and reported that she and her husband had joined a local group advocating for better pay and benefits for people working in the poorer part of the city. This group lobbied city officials and business owners. Robin added that she did not want her children to grow up feeling ashamed that her parents struggled to make ends meet. She also decided to tell her parents that she respected how hard they had worked to survive.

Robin's ungovernable self, in my view, meant that she was no longer going to be defined and determined by political-economic apparatuses. She was thus able "to choose an action with respect to the *real source of the conflict*, i.e., the social structure" (Fanon, 2008/1952, p.80; emphasis mine). This did not mean Robin would no longer struggle financially, nor did it mean that she did not continue to struggle with depression. It did mean that Robin felt more agency and that she exercised this agency with other people— speaking and acting together. If I had not invited for her to consider other sources of her struggles, I would, in my view, be colluding with an indecent society's apparatuses of humiliation—apparatuses that aimed to isolate and manage (governable selves) people, mystifying the real sources of their suffering.

Conclusion

Freud moved away from hypnosis and symptom reduction to the talking cure with its aim of getting symptoms to speak. In one sense, this was a step toward emancipation, at least with regard to persons' being in bondage to their symptoms. I am convinced that there is an inherent emancipatory element in psychoanalytic psychotherapy that stems from personalizing engagement and exploration, which invites the possibility of the emergence of an ungovernable self—a self not defined and determined by symptoms or struggles associated with being captive to the disciplinary regimes of society. Indeed, for some patients, the psychoanalytic process facilitates the recognition of the real social, political, and economic sources of suffering with the aim of patients choosing an action toward these sources. That is, the emancipatory element is not simply in terms of symptoms, but also toward those apparatuses that seek to create a governed or managed self. This suggests that psychoanalysis itself is ideally ungovernable and, like Socrates, it can be accused of corrupting the "youth" by fostering explorations that demystify sources of control, oppression, and marginalization.

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