Returning Soul to the World: Culture and Community

Simply said, you make soul by living life, not by retreating from the world into "inner work" or beyond the world in spiritual disciplines and meditation removes …. [but rather by leaving behind] the Cartesian split between inner and outer—good soul inside and the world, the flesh, and the devil outside …."

—James Hillman, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy—and the World's Getting Worse,* p. 50-51

"So, I want to clear this up here, because Keats's phrase which has sustained my therapy for so long, contains a major mistake! It actually neglects the world, even while finding a soul use for it. You go through the world for your own sake, making your own soul. But what about the world's soul, Michael? What about the *anima mundi* and making that?"

—James Hillman, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy—and the World's Getting Worse,* p. 54

Mary Watkins is a core faculty member and Coordinator of Community and Ecological Fieldwork and Research in the M.A./Ph.D. Depth Psychology Program at Pacifica Graduate Institute. In 1974, she completed *Waking Dreams* while studying with James Hillman at the Jung Institute in Zürich. As a member of the early archetypal psychology group, she was inspired by Hillman's commitment to the imaginal and to seeing through. This led to the publication of *Invisible Guests: The Development of Imaginal Dialogues* in 1986. Since the 1980s, her work has focused on creating bridges between Euro-American depth and archetypal psychologies and psychologies of liberation from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The latter is explored in her new book, *Toward Psychologies of Liberation* (Palgrave Macmillan), co-authored with Helene Shulman Lorenz.

24

"Breaking the Vessels": Archetypal Psychology and the Restoration of Culture, Community, and Ecology

MARY WATKINS

> Breaking the vessels is the return, the turn again to the world, giving back what we have taken from it by storing inside ourselves its soul. By this return we regard the world anew, having regard for it as it shows its regard for us and to us in its face.
>
> —James Hillman, "*Anima Mundi*: The Return of the Soul to the World"[1]

In mystical Judaism, the original creation of the world went awry when the vessels intended to contain God's divine radiance burst, releasing shards of the divine into every being and thing. Each of these shards is said to be encased by a hard seed-covering, a husk (*klipoth)* that obscures the sacred. In this creation myth, human beings are enjoined to restore the world through both mystical prayer (*tikkun nefresh*) and the repair of the world (*tikkun olam*). In *tikkun olam*, we are to liberate and then gather together the sparks of divinity by recognizing the sacred in every being and thing through dialogical

relations.[2] Since creation was disrupted before it was finished, "restoration" is not imagined as a return to a previous idyllic state. Instead, restoration refers to living into possibilities for creation that manifest messianic goals of peace, justice, and sacred relations.

In his 1982 essay "*Anima Mundi*: The Return of the Soul to the World," Hillman breaks the primary vessel of Jungian analysis, the dyadic relationship anchored in a focus on the intrapsychic. He rejects the equation of the soul with subjectivity, noting the way it colludes with a sense of the material, public, and external world as dead and soulless, and of the self as cordoned off from culture, nature, and the built environment: "As the soul is without world, so the world is without soul."[3]

For Hillman, a "soul-spark" is not only within each of us, but in animals, plants, and "man-made things of the street."[4] He likens these sparks to the "seminal images" that offer themselves in the sensuous presentation of each particular, in its "availability to imagination" and its presence as a "*psychic* reality."[5]

The breaking of the analytic container releases the idea of psychopathology to be applied more widely. Hillman announces:

> My practice tells me that I can no longer distinguish clearly between neurosis of self and neurosis of world, psychopathology of self and psychopathology of world. Moreover, it tells me that to place neurosis and psychopathology solely in personal reality is a delusional repression of what is actually, realistically, being experienced. This further implies that my theories of neurosis and categories of psychopathology must be radically extended if they are not to foster the very pathologies which my job is to ameliorate.[6]

Breakdown, he argues, must now be seen in nuclear plants, the "traffic system, the school systems, the courts and criminal justice system, giant industries, municipal governments, finance and banking."[7] Hillman argues that by overfocusing on an individual's projections onto others, analysis ignores the projections on to us "by the unconsciousness of the world": "the world is inundating me with its unalleviated suffering."[8] Once awakened from an "anaesthetized slumber of subjectivism," Hillman hopes, we can then "analyze social forces [and] environmental conditions" with the same acuity formerly "reserved only for [ourselves]."[9]

Re-recognizing psyche beyond the intrapsychic opens the way for a psychopathology of the world, and a call for a *psychotherapeia*, a care of the soul of the world. Hillman's own break with the confinement of soul work within analytic practice encourages archetypal psychology to approach community, cultural, and ecological concerns. His soulful work on a wide variety of social and ecological concerns, including transportation, city, environment, war, money, and welfare, announces a radical widening of the field of concern for archetypal psychology. This widening concern places Hillman in alignment with many early psychoanalysts in Vienna and Berlin, and with subsequent branches of psychoanalysis that have concerned themselves with the cultural dimensions of psyche, collapsing the strict dichotomizing of internal and external, and of the private and the public.[10] Hillman's archetypal approach, however, offers a distinctive orientation to cultural, community, and ecological work, an orientation that I will take this opportunity to outline.

For the last decade, Hillman's work has been a founding and central pillar in the inspiration, design, and curriculum of the M.A./Ph.D. Depth Psychology Program at Pacifica Graduate Institute. My examples of Hillman's orientation are drawn from the work of doctoral students in this program, where I have coordinated depth psychological community and ecological fieldwork and research since 1997. These adult learners come to a study of depth psychology from a wide variety of disciplines, such as architecture, urban planning, the arts, law, prison reform, filmmaking, medicine, hospice work, media studies, organizational development, and psychotherapy. In our program, we have begun not with a clinical focus, but with the aim of creating and nourishing the practice of depth psychological mindedness in a wide variety of settings. Each year, in their fieldwork and research, students practice the application of depth psychological theories and approaches to community and ecological issues, paying attention to the interfaces between individual psychological suffering and cultural pathology in their efforts to restore liveliness and depth of insight. Their fieldwork experience allows them new vantage points on depth theory and practice, helping them to engage in critique, affirmations, and extensions of depth theories and methods.

Through immersion in community and ecological contexts, over five hundred improvisational works have been created that bridge depth psychological theory with "restoration" in the areas of

community, culture, and ecology.[11] Looking back over this burgeoning body of work, I want to describe some of the key themes in Hillman's archetypal psychology that have inspired and influenced the cultural, community, and ecological work of a new generation of depth and archetypal psychologists. How have and how might central ideas of archetypal psychology—*notitia*, aesthetic response, beauty and ugliness, multiplicity, dialogue, pathologizing, seeing through, archetypal dominants, holding reflection and action together, the call of the world soul, the imaginal—orient us as we work with psyche in the world? I offer this mapping of ideas and the kinds of work they have inspired not only to pay homage to Hillman's vision, but to hold open our imagination about the wide range of depth psychological engagement that is needed and possible.

Notitia

How are the archetypal and depth psychologically minded to enter into the fray of community and ecological work? Over lunch in 1981, I posed this question to Hillman around the nuclear dilemma. I was called by nuclear holocaust dreams and active imaginations to witness and address the nuclear, but felt unprepared by depth theory and my largely intrapsychically oriented psychotherapeutic training and daily work. Hillman used the analogy of a therapist beginning an hour with a new patient and said something like the following:

> When you start, you are completely helpless. You don't know a thing. The person may tell you a dream, and at first that only makes it worse, as it seems strange and incomprehensible. But things make you curious. You keep listening, *noticing*, not knowing what to do, and acknowledging your felt inferiority. Slowly you begin to see things, dimly as though in the dark. You keep listening, *noticing*, and following, and gradually a way is made.

This I did know how to do, and I began to see how it was possible to translate this way of proceeding clinically into encounters with cultural and environmental issues.

Hillman, like Sufi mystical poets before him, describes the heart's characteristic action not as feeling, but as sight. He says, "individuating begins with noticing, paying attention to the specifics of what is actually there so that it can become fully what it is."[12] All cultural and ecological

work needs to be continually grounded in what Hillman calls "*notitia.*" Noticing involves a gift of careful attention that is sustained, patient, subtly attuned to images and metaphors, tracking both hidden meanings and surface presentations. The practice of noticing addresses our "deprivation of intimacy with the immediate environment," which Hillman diagnosed in 1982.[13] Depth engagement begins with careful noticing: a "being-with" that is a form of doing that allows intimacy with a situation to develop.

The dwelling and participating with that careful noticing requires opens pathways to the depths of a phenomenon. Like a lover's careful noticing of the beloved, such attention finds ways of caring that are not superimposed, but arise from the ground of relationship spawned by careful attention. For Hillman, the activity of noticing is a countercultural one, resisting the mania of hyperactivity and overarousal that the dominant culture encourages. Paradoxically, the first step in archetypal activism is to stop. Only then do we discover ourselves already within a world that we can notice more deeply. This noticing is akin to Freud's basic method of free association, in which the analyst resists an overfocus and a premature directedness that issues from the ego. Instead, the analyst is encouraged to enjoy a widening of awareness and an evenly hovering attention so that new perceptions can emerge.[14] In American culture, slowing down is necessary not only to noticing, but also to the essential work of mourning, to which we will soon turn.

Because we have associated a turn to the world with a turn toward the public and toward action, it is difficult initially to discover a way of being with an area of concern in the world that is slow, observant, and participatory, and that invites reverie, image, and insight. We are used to going into a situation with something we are going to share or impose, some aim clearly in mind. This ego orientation makes it difficult to see and understand the place we have arrived at. We have dragged our agenda and presuppositions with us. Depth psychological engagement with the soul of the world begins differently, more as an apprenticeship, an openness to being tutored. It requires the vulnerability of coming without a plan or of knowing that the plan we arrive with will soon dissolve as we find the ideas we have come with inadequate to the situation we find ourselves in.

Many of us are starved for this mode of engagement in the world. We are exhausted by wrestling with situations in the world through

our work and other commitments and we take solace in a remove from the world. We have not learned how to be present to the interiority of each situation we enter, resting in a whole-hearted attentiveness. This takes time. When we learn how to make this shift, work in the world is no longer pitted against individual soul work. The two flow together, each a source of both challenge and restoration.

In her fieldwork Rosmarie Bogner[15] extended her architecturally oriented practice of listening to landscapes to listening carefully to the town of Ketchum, Idaho. Such listening for Bogner formed the basis of an attempt to harmonize human dwelling with the surrounding ecosystem. As she tried to "notice" her Idaho town, she meditated on buildings, spending time with them, and taking careful pictures of them. Through this noticing, she found herself in reverie with these structures, listening to their sense of being crazily juxtaposed to surrounding buildings, inquiring into their desire and distress, their sense of history. This kind of listening, where noticing joins forces with reverie, was necessary before there could be meaningful consultation with the architectural planning process in her town.

In love with the valley she lives in, a landscape and bioregion endangered by development, Laura Mitchell[16] apprenticed herself to the creek bed, to the dwindling fauna and flora, to earth and rock formations. In her careful noticing over time, her knowledge of the valley's peril became particularized and her advocacy on behalf of the area deepened. This noticing formed the basis of her participation with local groups in discerning the fate of the land. Advocacy flowed from the erotic connection engendered by noticing. Learning from others also attentive to this place, Mitchell proposed the idea of ecoimaginal identity, shifting her focus not only to how we become attuned to the places that home us, but also to how we are constituted by them and the imaginal activity they spark within us.

Mike Denney,[17] a physician, noticed that a young male coma patient seemed to be spiritually affecting his caregivers. Having been trained to assume that coma patients are non-expressive, he was surprised to realize that those around the patient were acting as though communication was happening. Apprenticing himself to the young man's mother, the physical therapist, and several other caregivers, Denney began to develop the capacity to sense the subtle field of communication between himself and his patient. He too began to partake in the sacred experience of being-with. How, he then

wondered, is this dimension related to medicine? How can we heal the rift that our allegiance to science and its secularized ways of being have established in Western practices of healing? These questions opened dialogue among nurses and doctors in his hospital setting, leading to a widening of their field of attention while tending the ill.

Gay Bradshaw's[18] work in interspecies communication and the traumatic effects of habitat destruction on animals began with years of devoted living with and careful noticing of animals. Through this noticing, she was able to slip out of the anthropocentric grasp that Hillman sees as plaguing psychology.[19] By refusing the usual privileging of human language, she invited the animals' lived realities and communicative efforts to come forward to her attention. These shifts were necessary to understanding the applicability of human trauma theory to animals and their communities. This opened to work that led to advocacy to stop the forces that undermine animal well-being as well as to an engagement in restorative work in animal healing.

Noticing requires a de-centering from the heroic ego, an activation of what Hillman has called the imaginal ego. We need to step aside, but not to the distance of an objective observer. The stepping aside is an interior move away from premature intentions forged in isolation. Contrary to the dictates of natural science, it clears the way for greater intimacy and opens up the possibilities of collaboration.

Aesthetic Response: Beauty and Ugliness

> But the deepest evil in the totalitarian system is precisely that which makes it work: its programmed, single-minded monotonous efficiency; bureaucratic formalism, the dulling daily service, standard, boring, letter-perfect, generalities, uniform. No thought and no responsiveness. Eichmann …. So, the question of evil, like the question of ugliness, refers primarily to the anaesthetized heart, the heart that has no reaction to what it faces, thereby turning the variegated sensuous face of the world into monotony, sameness, oneness. The desert of modernity.
>
> —James Hillman, *The Thought of the Heart and the Soul of the World*[20]

Hillman describes "noticing" as the basis of classical depth psychology; the noticing of dream images, of bodily feelings, memories, omissions, and slips of tongue. This noticing contributes to an

awakening. This same noticing must, he says, be extended to the world from which we have withdrawn our attention. We need, he says, a "depth psychology of extraversion," through which depth can be found "in the objects, in the images presented by the world."[21] When we begin to notice the world, we are struck by both ugliness and beauty. Hillman, unlike Jung, links this aesthetic response with the ethical. It "does not replace the ethical," but it gives "sensate images that direct our longings toward ideals," visions that we can "become seduced by."[22] Hillman argues that we have repressed our aesthetic involvement with the world, numbing our perception of both beauty and ugliness. Once awakened, aesthetic response—be it "naïve recoil or desirous advance"—pulls us into relationship with the polis and with politics. We awake from conformity, says Hillman, and can no longer think that our miseries are wholly occasioned by our personal relationships. "Beauty evokes love," says Hillman.[23] Aesthetic response fuels protest.

In Deborah Mac Williams'[24] work the devotion to the beauty of place led to her intense grief about its desecration in the anonymity and ugliness of strip malls and through careless development in her city of Bend, Oregon. She realized that addressing this desecration depended on her confronting numbed responses. Mac Williams and her co-researchers got out of their cars and walked the unfriendly and ugly strips they usually tried to ignore. Using clay, image, and words, these participants struggled to give form to their reactions to the lifeless asphalt tracts their town was giving way to. Here a love for and advocacy of the beauty of place feeds the intent to note carefully what is ugly and create a psychic space to bear the feelings of mourning, disgust, impotence, and sorrow that arise. From this starting point, reveries of the deeply desired could unfold, offering a path to active participation and creation in the design of the city.

Nancy Welliver[25] is a scientist who works in nuclear waste management at the Hanford Nuclear Site in Washington. She has allowed herself to be open to the environmental catastrophe that has unfolded over sixty years of nuclear contamination there, studying the environmental changes that have occurred both at Hanford and in Nagasaki. Nagasaki was destroyed in 1945 with plutonium processed at Hanford. Knowing the insufficiency of words to convey this tragic situation, she has explored combining images from Hanford and Nagasaki with early music devoted to Mary.

> My belief is that post-Enlightenment images cannot adequately express the profound psychological and somatic fallout of the Bomb. It is time to return to something more ancient. This presentation of a series of images and music illustrates what I believe to be an overwhelming grief for the way in which humanity has chosen to deploy the intellectual mastery of nature's secrets to create the Enlightenment's most frightening and misused contribution to Western culture. In an effort to reach back past this heritage, I take the viewer through time, to the ancient Nichiren Buddhist practice of chant and to the Western medieval and Renaissance periods when chants to the Virgin Mary and other goddesses were sung. This ancient music is layered with images of Hanford, Nagasaki, and the Virgin of the Urakami Cathedral. The Cathedral was destroyed and the Virgin burned black in the 1945 atomic fire. Onlookers are invited to view Hanford, Nagasaki, and the destruction of both environments through a mythological lens.

Welliver's visual juxtaposition of two cities intertwined in their destinies, Nagasaki and Hanford, conveys a deep truth: the land of the "victor" is currently more deeply disturbed than even the object of the bomb's original destructive energy, Nagasaki. Hanford is a literal and metaphorical wasteland. Vast portions of its 600 square miles are no longer habitable. Its former verdant orchards are destroyed. Much of its land is soaked with radioactive and poisonous chemicals from abandoned reactors and plutonium processing buildings. Ironically, the land is teeming with animals and plants because of the lack of human inhabitants. These living creatures are often laden with radioactivity and are routinely put to death to prevent radiation from spreading over the range of their habitat. The towns within Hanford's borders are ghost towns and will likely remain so in perpetuity. Working with image and music, Welliver finds a way to memorialize and mourn what is difficult to grasp in its extremity. Without this grasp, transformation of the mentality that continues to produce Hanford-like scapes is impossible.

Depression

Hillman has consistently advocated for the necessity of entering and bearing depression, that soul movement that slows or stops us, pulling us downwards, away from habitual activities. In *Suicide and*

the Soul,[26] Hillman describes the surprising energy that arises from yielding to the difficult images of suicidal ideation. He advises analysts not to ignore and starve, through inattention, the nightmares and "daymares" of depression, but to trust that attention to them will release an autonomous vitality from within the difficult images themselves. Hillman's return of the soul to the world has also broken our containing understanding of the causes of depression. Hillman argues that depression must not be seen only as a result of personal history and problems, but that it is a response to a world shared with others. As we widen our attention, we discover that the hoarding of soul within interiority has served a defensive function, protecting us from the tragedies and travesties in our midst.

Our emergence into a felt sense of interdependence is paradoxically marked by both depression and joy. Welliver reports that finding a visual and musical language to present what she witnessed at Hanford has released a new sense of vibrancy and health. The same was true for Mac Williams, who, while beginning her fieldwork from a sense of overwhelming grief for the environment, found that her mourning gave way to a joy born of engagement.

Robert J. Lifton describes the current age as one of psychic numbing.[27] There is no way to restore our sensitivity without bearing the grief we so actively defend against. Regardless of the area of our engagement in the world, the capacity to turn toward depressive feelings, to accept a sense of being overwhelmed and inadequate to the situation is necessary. If we are to break our attention free from its circumscription by purely personal pursuits, we will find ourselves feeling small, amidst many bits and pieces that do not seem to cohere into any understandable patterns.

Multiplicity

Psyche as described by Hillman is polytheistic, sounding forth a complex layering of often contradictory and paradoxical voices of multiple figures and perspectives. The "heroic ego" is that part of us that attempts to deny and silence this multiplicity, asserting unilateral power and control. It denies diversity and eschews dialogue, proceeding with a monologue that does not understand its own viewpoint as a perspective. The multiplicity of the psyche arises spontaneously, however, and when repressed or negated, it voices itself through

symptom and pathology. The methodology for understanding and healing in Jung and Hillman calls for an attempt to bracket the dominating and oppressive aspects of the ego, making space for the unlistened-to and the silenced to speak directly. One turns to the margins of awareness, to greet and coax other points of view into dialogue, and to listen to what has been voiced but unheeded.

Archetypal psychology's radical critique of a colonizing form of ego consciousness that feigns singleness or unity has its analog in cultural and ecological life. This should not be surprising, since we each tend to internalize the pattern of relations prevalent in the dominant culture in which we are located. The heroic ego might well be named the colonizing ego, to mark its connection to the colonial era, a time stained by the exploitation and oppression of the many by the few.[28]

The multiplicity of psychic voices includes the multiplicity of cultural voices that go unheeded by dominant cultural forces. As with the individual, the neglected, unheard, repressed, and denied viewpoints assert themselves through symptom and pathology. Thus, an archetypal psychologist attuned to psyche in the world listens for the multiplicity of viewpoints that comprise situations and events. She is attentive to the dynamics that prevent certain voices from speaking or being heard, and she works to create situations in which these can come to voice and be heard and in which those who are accustomed to speaking over the voices of others can learn the value of listening.

Sandra Paul[29] found herself struggling with both a distance from the earth in her North Carolina community and alienation between the cultural groups that compose its citizenry. While the beauty of the earth is often referred to in her community, it is often treated as only a commodity. To gain a better understanding of the gaping wound between self and earth, self and other, that she carried—and that she felt much of her community to carry—she decided to interview elder women about their relation to the earth and to neighboring cultural groups. She was careful to include individuals from each of the main cultural groups that comprised her community: Cherokees, African-Americans, Euro-American longtime southerners, and recent Euro-American émigrés from the North. The lack of dialogue between these women in their everyday lives extended back generations, both to the forced march of the Cherokee from their lands, and to the forced exile of Africans from Africa and their further domination through the

institution of slavery. As the historical narratives of their families crisscrossed, the defensive silence between them in the present became understandable. For instance, a Euro-American woman's great-great-grandfather was an army escort for Cherokee families during their forced displacement. One African-American woman had ancestors who were owned by the ancestors of current Euro-American families residing in the town.

The way in which Christianity had led some to treat the land as lifeless was contrasted starkly with the earth-centered Cherokee cosmology. Paul sees healing in her community as entailing a hosting of dialogue among its multiple cultural groups. Such a dialogue holds several seeds of possibility for a deepened sense of community in the present, for historical healing, and for the sharing of indigenous ecological sensibilities with settlers who may not yet have experienced an ecstatic and grief-laden relationship to the earth and its other-than-human inhabitants and presences.

Dialogue

In both Jungian and archetypal work, the bridging of the conscious and the unconscious occurs through dialogue, as in the practice of active imagination. Such bridging activates what Jung called the transcendent function. Hillman uses the language of "soul" for the space that opens up through dialogue.

Cheryl Hashman Sheinman[30] worked with the idea of dialogue in a large conservative Jewish synagogue in South Florida that was dominated by a few loud voices. As members of the community began to engage in dialogue, some voices began to be listened to for the first time. In addition, as the group heard more about previously unknown perspectives, they developed the capacity to begin to listen for the voice of the soul of the temple. It became clear that such active efforts to connect across diverse perspectives through dialogue can give rise to a soulful experience that transcends any individual voice. Opening a sacred space for mindful dialogue also melted away illusions of consensus on charged and crucial matters, such as Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Paul Jones,[31] an urban planner in Flagstaff, Arizona, explored how to listen to a city from a depth-psychological perspective. He began to see that few were actually involved in the city planning process. What dreams did they have for it? As he stretched to see Flagstaff from other ethnic, class, and cultural points of view, he found himself in unfamiliar places and conversations. As he witnessed art-making within the marginalized communities of Flagstaff, it became clear how vibrant a city it could be if more of its residents were invited to the table.

Jim Gossett's[32] fieldwork involved the threat and shadow of violence in the wake of the naming of a national monument near Escalante, Utah. Here the environmental disputes and the rapid onslaught of ecotourism affected Native American communities, centuries-old ranching families, and a Latter-Day Saints community. Community dialogue directed at metabolizing the changes was absent. Gossett, grounding himself in careful noticing and listening to members of the different groups and his own psychic resonance to them and their land, imagined ways to use dialogue to bridge the divide that violence otherwise threatened to widen.

Pathologizing

> You know, the soul is always being rediscovered through pathology. … The world has become full of symptoms.
>
> —James Hillman, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy*[33]

Hillman turns our attention to the pathological and the symptomatic. He directs us to bend towards the wounded, the twisted and deformed, to listen into what they have to say to us. We are not to move quickly to an eradication of symptom, but to listen carefully to its messages. To do so requires us to participate alongside that which suffers, to apprentice ourselves to that which we might otherwise try to dominate, to hear its critique and discern its implicit vision. Hillman turns directly to pathology, particularly attentive to it as a critique of "normal" or dominant consciousness.

Matthew Green, in his archetypally inspired cultural work with adolescent Chicano boys in Oceano, California, had to listen past as well as into the job he was assigned: teenage pregnancy prevention. While the goal seemed well-intentioned, it was imposed from outside the boys' community. Other "symptoms" for these boys included poverty, drug use, a high dropout rate at school, and gang affiliation. Green reflects,

> I have come to realize that this model, which is based on the strategy of finding the "cause" and then developing the best

> "solution" to eradicate it, never asks an essential question: "What might the unwanted teen pregnancy epidemic be telling us about our society, ourselves, the community in which the teens live, about the teens themselves?" Without asking this question I sense that we can never really come to terms with the dilemma of unwanted teen pregnancy. Until we hear what it is trying to say, it will keep saying it in this or other ways, despite all our prevention efforts. Unknowingly the model serves to hide, and even deny, the essence of the dilemma. Most tragically, the structures and actions of these programs proposed by this model inhibit us from becoming aware of and fully experiencing the reality of who and what we are as a society. What we do not realize is that our strategy of attempting to "eradicate" the problem without listening into what it is telling us cuts us off from experiencing soul.[34]

Here Green attempts to enact Hillman's methodology of "seeing through" the way the "problem" is initially posed. Following Hillman in giving attention to the pathologized, Green works carefully to listen into the boys' experiences, desires, and hopes, rather than imposing the agenda of the state agency on them.

Working alongside them to help them fulfill their goal of creating a teen center and striving to promote a milieu in which they can enjoy handball tournaments, dance, rap, Djing, and Graffiti art, Green listened in to the stories they told as well as the stories that seemed present, yet untold. He worked with his resistances so that he might be able to listen without moralizing to the lyrics of the boys' favorite rap songs as well as to the emerging narratives of gang conflict. "I tried to suspend my vision for them and see instead what their vision might be saying to me." Just how had these families come to live in Oceano? What were their stories of immigration and struggle? He wondered what the feeling of shame that he sensed in the boys was about. The adolescents and adult men began meeting in *circulos*, or councils, and this made it possible for the community to listen deeply to the concerns and histories of each of its members. Their choice of this form reclaimed an indigenous tradition that their forebears had used in pre-colonial times. From these circles, an oral history project for the community was launched. As the boys engaged in these activities, they were openly shunned by many in the larger community, making the dynamics of oppression that their stories spoke about even more palpable. One boy said, "Matthew, you don't know how it feels to live this every day!" Hillman's words were a mantra: "The study of lives and the care of souls means above all a prolonged encounter with what destroys and is destroyed, with what is broken and hurts—that is, with psychopathology."[35]

"Seeing Through"

> First there is the psychological moment, a moment of reflection, wonder, puzzlement, initiated by the soul which intervenes and countervails what we are in the midst of doing, hearing, reading, watching. With slow suspicion or sudden insight we move through the apparent to the less apparent. We use metaphors of light—a little flicker, a slow dawning, and a lightning flash—as things become clarified. When the clarity has itself become obvious and transparent, there seems to grow within it a new darkness, a new question or doubt, requiring a new act of insight penetrating again toward the less apparent.
>
> —James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*[36]

Hillman asserts that "[w]e are always in the embrace of an idea," that "our wrestling with ideas is a sacred struggle," "that soul-making takes place as much through ideation as in personal relationships or meditation."[37] Indeed, his opus is a staggering gift teaching us at *every* turn how to live in relationship to ideas: loving them, critiquing them, turning them, seeing through them, being devoted to them, being animated by them, sacrificing to them, caring for and tending them. Without such careful attention to ideas, he says, psyche turns to ideologies. Indeed, breaking the norms of knowing by "seeing through" is fundamentally related to breaking the oppressive aspects of human existence.[38] When ideas are not seen through, the sense of reality they spawn is experienced as natural and inevitable. It is the process of seeing through that liberates us to create with ideas rather than merely be a victim of them. This seeing through is never done once and for all, but is a continual process. Hillman calls us to situate our ideas and practices within the historical and cultural context from which they arise, to see each idea as one perspective among many—each with its own history and consequences.

In the context of her creative writing classes at a state penitentiary, Suzan Still[39] committed herself to an ongoing process of seeing through

the ideas by which this system of incarceration functions. Throughout her time at the prison, she encountered rules against "overfamiliarity." Forbidden to respond to her students' letters, not even allowed to call them by their first name, she began to see a system of progressive dehumanization that is focused on treating the men, whose poems moved her to tears, as raw commodities to be profited from. Following the implications of the commodification of prison labor and the corporatization of the American penal system, Still exposes the profit incentive that is fed by the *failure* to rehabilitate inmates. To withhold normal human relations from prisoners, to treat them as numbers and as a disposable resource is consistent with the idea of profiting from them as though they were abject objects. Longer prison stays and increased recidivism mean larger corporate profits, while at the same time it re-inscribes the institution of slavery and the related practice of "apartheid" under the rubric of punishment.

The kind of seeing through of ideas that Still's work embodies moved her to an ethic of soulful participation and intimate familiarity with her students, and stimulated both her and them to envision actively together a restorative justice system that does not flay the very skin of the soul. She confessed that she felt most at home and alive with these men, whose lives necessitated their own seeing through of gross senses of failure and inadequacy, of violence that was received and perpetuated, and of a system that preys upon their mistakes. In such work, the depth of "down" and "in" is joined with the depth "between" self and other.

Archetypal Dominants

As Still saw through to the archetypal ideas structuring our prisons, she found the shadow fantasies of the *senex*: "imaginings around how to control, suppress, repress, disempowered, punish, humiliate, depotentiate, depersonalize and dehumanize."[40] Hillman's own cultural work is wedded to his early and abiding interest in exposing and learning from the archetypal dominants in our experiences. Here "seeing through" allows insight into persistent patterns that unconsciously repeat outside of awareness.

In his fieldwork, Craig Chalquist made a pilgrimage to the sites of the original California missions established by the Spanish Catholic Church in its colonizing move up the coast of California.[41] Open to

his and others' dreams and fantasies, he researched each place's history, looking for persistent archetypal chords that affect its inhabitants over generations. Ruth Meyer,[42] a psychohistorian, followed Clio, the muse of history, in her study of historians' imaginal lives around the historical period that fascinates and compels their scholarship. Phillip Gibson[43] turned to African Verdun cosmology in his attempt to understand the embrace of the cadence call in the U.S. military at the moment of its racial desegregation. Tracing the cadence call's root in Verdun worship, Gibson reflects on the integration of African-based ecstatic practices into the U.S. induction of young men into the warrior archetype.

Reflection And Action

> Ideas allow us to envision, and by means of vision we can know. … But when an insight or idea has sunk in, practice visibly changes. The idea has opened the eye of the soul. By seeing differently, we do differently. Then "how" is implicitly taken care of.
>
> —James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*[44]

As Still listens to the burning, lava-like poems of her prison students, her seeing through is ignited into a liberatory potential, and she imagines with her prison poets how our culture might reverse its draconian soul-killing proclivities and create a system of justice worthy of the name. Meyer re-imagines and practices the teaching of history in such a way as to invite her students into an empathic engagement with the historical moment being studied. Gibson educates fallen warriors within the justice system who are struggling to understand the deformation of their psychic landscape as it was inflicted on them by their training as army recruits and soldiers. Seeing through begins a momentum that often delivers us into grief and outrage, making necessary the tasks of address, protest, creation, and restoration.

For Hillman, "action and idea are not inherent enemies, and they should not be paired as a contrast."[45] He sees reflection as an activity, and action as always enacting an idea. Hillman speaks of our need to bring soul into action, and action into soul.

From the perspective of archetypal psychology, social activism can be grounded in noticing, reflecting, seeing through, in reverie and dialogue, in aesthetic sensitivity. Pathology is not overridden by premature eradication, but needs to be listened to with patience for

its insights. While the will and the discipline of the ego are often necessary, they are in service to the erotic field of interconnection engendered by these practices. "Love, too," says Hillman, "can be a method of psychologizing, of seeing into and seeing through, of going ever deeper."[46]

Hillman's archetypal psychology and Paulo Freire's radical liberatory pedagogical praxis[47] share the space created by the dual conjunctions of reflection and action and of love and seeing though. Freire's work approaches love through justice, while Hillman arrives at love through beauty. Each understands how radically necessary de-ideologization is for moving towards the effort of re-visioning and both appreciate the creative actions needed to embody the process. In Freirean work, seeing through is understood as "conscientization," or the development of a critical consciousness about the ideas and ideologies that structure everyday reality. Such insight opens the way for annunciation, the imagining of alternative groundings of "reality" and ways of being. Students studying at the boundaries of depth and liberation psychologies are taking Hillman's sensibilities into the areas of justice and human rights, feminist and cultural studies, community education and the arts, and the addressing of collective trauma, including racism, poverty, forced migration, and the destruction of neighborhoods and wild corners. Here, archetypal and liberation psychologies are being stewed together to create new variants of community, cultural, and ecological work that are infused with the sensibilities outlined above.[48]

The Call Of The World Soul

When we begin to notice the world attentively, we find ourselves particularly attuned to certain issues, problems, and situations. Particular aspects of the world soul call out to us, as though we have been singled out by our unique combination of temperament, history, wounds, and passions. The path of individuation is in part a fine-tuning to the ways in which we are called and obligated. Both individuation's meandering path *and* its insistent directives reflect the ways in which the world has entered, formed, and spoken to us. The kind of activism Hillman describes arises less from egoic intention than from the slow dilation of the self that Walt Whitman lyricizes, that rhythm of sympathetic inhalation of the world into the self, and

the creative and erotic exhalation of the self toward the world that signals our belonging.[49]

The desire and energy for witness emerges in strange ways: dreams, visions, recurring images, unbidden feelings, and preoccupying thoughts. Sometimes they emerge from the center of our concern and intention. At other times something from the margin of our awareness whispers insistently, asking for our attention. Each path provides the possibility of healing a stance of bystanding. Paradoxically, living into the interdependent web of which we are a part does not deplete us, but provides membership in a gift economy where it is possible to draw sustenance from beyond narrowly defined selves. As Lewis Hyde puts it, "Our generosity may leave us empty, but our emptiness then pulls gently at the whole until the thing in motion returns to replenish us."[50]

The Imaginal

It was through my interest in the imaginal that I came to Hillman's work, and it is to the primacy of the imaginal that my students and I continually return. Released from the confines of subjectivism, we continually re-discover how the imaginal registers, conveys, and amplifies the calls of the world. It awakens us through image and animated perceptions to what suffers and to what is beautiful. With exacting specificity, free-rising images convey the way the soul perceives the daily realities we live amidst. Through its stark and direct renderings, the imaginal cuts through our denial, dissolving our distance from grief and outrage.

When perceived through the heart, the imaged presentation of "what is" leads to longings and imaginings of what might be. The imaginal surpasses the given, announcing the transgressive. For this reason, cultural work on every continent encourages the arts, knowing that they will give birth to images of the deeply desired, utopic images toward which a community orients itself in common striving.

Brent Blair, a liberation arts educator working with teenage boys incarcerated at Central Juvenile Hall, East Los Angeles, offered his students the opportunity to learn about and then deconstruct and reconfigure the myth of Orpheus. Their theater work enabled this tale to evoke the struggles and tragedies of their journeys into that darkness they lived within our inner cities and the prisons too often connected

with them. "In the end," says Blair, their dramatic work was "a testimony to the ineffability of the human spirit to awaken possibility in an atmosphere of such defeat." [51] In such work with image, not only does one find archetypal threads that can be followed to diverse collective mythic traditions, but one encounters the not-yet-thought, unexpected conjunctions and barely tolerated desires that point towards new possibles. For these reasons, openness to the imaginal and to the arts in all their forms is never merely an adjunct to cultural, community, and ecological work, but essential and indivisible from it.

Coda

Alive in all of Hillman's work is a penetrating questioning, a bursting open of the terms in which we might otherwise seek a false sense of security. Here we find a steady refusal to turn the gaze from what is difficult, from what suffers. A devotion to beauty awakens us, and challenges us to act on behalf of what we love.

One night in 1999, when Hillman was visiting with my students, they succeeded in coaxing him into commenting on the question of praxis around their community and ecological fieldwork and research. He replied:

> Think of when you are sailing. You are never on course. You are always correcting. Only through these constant corrections do you find your course. You need to ask yourself, "Am I too personal here, thinking only of my own 'growth'? Am I too much like a 'missionary' there, bringing 'light' to these people?" The movement, movement through it, is part of the essence. … At any moment as you travel on a circle you can think, "I got it." You fix on the point and can easily go off on a tangent. *The plan is the sensitivity* ….

Regardless of the topic he touches, Hillman's work teaches us sensitivity. While goals are not to be utterly abandoned, they are not to be taken literally but as "guiding fictions."[52] We reflect on them, looking for the ideas and myths that animate them, and the shadow they are capable of casting. The vessels we have so carefully crafted must also be broken, not as a pure act of destruction, but as part of an ongoing process of seeing through and re-creation that demands our thinking, imagining, acting, and our looking again with what Hillman calls "the eye of the heart."

NOTES

[1] In James Hillman, *The Thought of the Heart and the Soul of the World* (Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications, 1992), p. 129.

[2] Martin Buber, *The Way of Man* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[3] Hillman, *Thought of the Heart,* p. 95.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 101.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] *Ibid*., p. 93.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 96.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 99.

[9] *Ibid*., p. 100.

[10] Mary Watkins, "Sketches for the Recovery of Night Vision: Re-Orienting Depth Psychology to Engage the Inconvenient Truths of the 21st Century," see <www.online.pacifica.edu/watkins> (May 8, 2008).

[11] For a list of representative projects, sites, and guidelines, see <www.online.pacifica.edu/depthfieldwork> (July 15, 2006).

[12] Hillman, *Thought of the Heart*, p. 52.

[13] *Ibid*.

[14] Mary Watkins, "Depth Psychology and the Liberation of Being," in *Pathways into the Jungian World: Phenomenology and Analytical Psychology,* ed. R. Brooke (London: Routledge, 2000).

[15] Rosmarie Bogner, "Toward Ketchum's Architectural Design Guidelines," Community/Ecological Fieldwork paper, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1999.

[16] Laura H. Mitchell, "The Eco-Imaginal Underpinnings of Community Identity in Harmony Grove Valley: Unbinding the Ecological Imagination," Ph.D. dissertation, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2005.

[17] Mike Denney, "Interview with a Coma Patient," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1999.

[18] G. A. Bradshaw, Mary Watkins, "Trans-Species Psychology: Theory and Praxis," *Spring 75, Part I—Psyche and Nature* (Fall 2006): 69-94.

[19] James Hillman, "Justice, Beauty, and Destiny as Foundations for an Ecological Psychology," in *City and Soul*, ed. Robert J. Leaver (Putnam, CT: Spring Publications, 2006), p. 211.

[20] Hillman, *Thought of the Heart,* pp. 62, 64.

[21] James Hillman, "Aesthetic Response as Political Action," in *City and Soul*, ed. Robert J. Leaver (Putnam, CT: Spring Publications, 2006), p. 143.

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 152.

[23] *Ibid*., p. 154.

[24] Deborah Mac Williams, "To Know a Place," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1999.

[25] Nancy Welliver, "Nagasaki and Hanford: A Tale of Two Cities," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2007, p. 1.

[26] James Hillman, *Suicide and the Soul* (Dallas, TX: Spring Publications, 1976).

[27] Robert J. Lifton, February 2007, from the author's notes of Lifton's lecture delivered to the International Trauma Studies Program, Columbia University, New York.

[28] Helene Schulman Lorenz and Mary Watkins, "Depth Psychology and Colonialism: Individuation, Seeing Through, and Liberation," in *Psychology at the Threshold,* ed. Dennis Slattery and Lionel Corbett (Einsiedeln, Switzerland: Daimon Verlag, 2002), pp. 281-298.

[29] Sandra Paul, "Sacred Connections through Women's Stories," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1999.

[30] Cheryl Hashman Sheinman, "Introduction of a Dialogue Group in a Contemporary, Conservative Jewish Synagogue," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2000.

[31] Paul Jones, "The City Revealed: Uncovering Soul in a City through Voices from Its Edges," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2000.

[32] Jim Gossett, "Monumental Rupture," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2000.

[33] James Hillman and Michael Ventura, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy—and the World's Getting Worse* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers), p. 4.

[34] Matthew Green, "Re-Thinking Our Work with At-Risk Youth," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2000, p. 9.

[35] James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 56.

[36] *Ibid*., 140.

[37] *Ibid*., pp. 121, 115.

[38] Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger, and Jill Tarule, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

[39] Suzan Still, "The Hero's Journey: Breaking Depth Psychology *into* Prison" and "We Wish We Could Write This in Fire: Writings of Marginalized Men," Community/Ecological fieldwork, Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 1998 and 1999 respectively.

[40] *Ibid*., p. 15.

[41] Craig Chalquist, *Terrapsychology: Re-Engaging the Soul of Place* (New Orleans, LA: Spring Journal Books, 2007).

[42] Ruth Meyer, *Clio's Circle: Entering the Imaginal World of Historians* (New Orleans, LA: Spring Journal Books, 2006).

[43] Phillip Gibson, "The Singing and Dancing God of War," Pacifica Graduate Institute, unpublished paper.

[44] Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, pp. 121-122.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 116.

[46] *Ibid*., p. 136.

[47] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1989).

[48]Mary Watkins, "Seeding Liberation: A Dialogue between Depth Psychology and Liberation Psychology," in *Depth Psychology: Meditations in the Field*, ed. Dennis Slattery and Lionel Corbett (Einsiedeln, Switzerland: Daimon Verlag, 2000); Mary Watkins and Helene Lorenz, *Toward Psychologies of Liberation* (London/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[49] Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[50] *Ibid*., p. 23.

[51] Brent Blair, "Looking in Darkness," Depth Psychology Doctoral Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2000, unpublished paper, p. 1.

[52] James Hillman, "Goals for Dallas," in *City and Soul*, ed. Robert J. Leaver (Putnam, CT: Spring Publications, 2006), p. 275.