

CHAPTER 15

Seeding Liberation

A Dialogue Between Depth Psychology and Liberation Psychology

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Depth Psychology and the Liberation of Being

Over the past thirty years since my initial love affair with depth psychology – particularly Jungian and archetypal psychology – I have periodically wondered about what it was that so seduced and intrigued me. Was it its acceptance and valuing of inbreaks of the imaginal, of depression, of pathologized images and experiences, all of which frightened me as a young woman? Was it the impassioned deconstructing of cultural and psychological ideas beneath this acceptance that appealed to my fierce desire to see beneath the taken-for-granted? More recently I have thought that this long marriage between myself and depth psychology has been possible because I found in depth psychology a basic orientation to being that seeks to allow *what is* to be present in its animation and its difference. It is a desire for the liberation of being.¹

This paper is half of a longer presentation given at a Pacifica Graduate Institute conference, *Mythologies of Soul*, Spring 1997. The other half, previously published, traces the effort toward liberation in the methods of Freud, Jung, Reich, Winnicott, and existential-phenomenology (see Watkins, 2000).

In depth psychology our habitual point of view, the “ego,” is held suspect, and seen as partial and prejudiced. The various methods of depth psychology – Freud’s free association, Jung’s active imagination, Reich’s body work, Winnicott’s play, dream work, working the transference – attempt to have us listen into the margins of our experience for thoughts, images, and bodily knowings that hold alternative perspectives and insights. The stance is one of listening and humility, a practiced vulnerability to being wounded, questioned, brought up short. Such listening allows the diversity of psyche’s voices to come into audible range. There are various rewards for this intentional bracketing of the Western ego’s desire to control, dominate, define. For one, there is a simple relief in dropping the pretense of being in control, when, in truth, we are not. In addition, when the ego opens its strait-jacket, the realms of imagination, nature, and other people regain their animation. Differences and peculiarities become immensely interesting, rather than nuisances or threats to be avoided.

Van den Berg (1971) argues that the historical emergence of a strong, bounded, masterful ego constellated the co-emergence of what in depth psychology is called the dynamic unconscious. The logical rationality of the ego pushed emotion, intuition, and image into the shadows of the margin. The “discovery of the unconscious,” which characterizes the modern birth of depth psychology, is a radical commentary on the partialness of Western culture’s ordinary ego viewpoint. This discovery calls us out of an identification with ego consciousness and into dialogue with what has been pushed to the margins of our awareness. Through such hosting and dialogue, we become more aware of the diversity and multiplicity that characterize psyche. Unconsciousness is understood to be created by the repression and oppression of this diversity. An ego which cleaves to its own point of view – without seeing it as such – is contrasted with what Jung called “a non-ego centre” that can acknowledge multiplicity and be deepened and tempered by relation to it.

In a similar vein, Fromm (1976) argued that the rise of capitalism and industrialism created a cultural shift from an emphasis on being to having. Such a transition entailed a further strengthening of the colonizing ego, its desires for control and mastery, and its silencing of the voices of those it marginalized. This strengthening was won by disassociating from the broader base of psyche, body, nature, community, and the spiritual, until the autonomy of the ego became seen as a goal. Movements of mind that support such an ego involve copious comparisons between self and other, meticulous monitoring of issues of sufficiency, inferiority and superiority, a heightened

critical and judgmental capacity, scrupulous maintenance of power, control and autonomy. They also lend themselves to depressive, narcissistic, and obsessive-compulsive states of being. Fromm imagined the cultural unconscious (1960) as including all that one's culture excluded in its ways of perceiving, understanding, and acting. For Fromm, making the cultural unconscious conscious entailed a radical process of being able to see how one's identity is created by identifications with cultural norms, and to actively question these – indeed, a liberatory process. What are the processes by which this can be accomplished? How does such a project effect our views of selfhood, development, psychopathology, and healing?

To address these questions, over the last fifteen years my interest in liberation has led me to the work of liberation theology and psychology. Paulo Freire, Gustavo Gutierrez, Ignacio Martin-Baro, Sulak Sivaraksa and others have become my teachers from the South, and it is through their perspectives on liberation that I have a beginning sense of how depth psychology could more fully embody its own deepest desire for liberation. Turning to such teachers is a move to further encourage depth psychology to turn not only to the marginalized voices of individual consciousness, but to the marginalized voices within our culture, and outside of our culture. Just as attention to what has been excluded is healing on the individual level, attention to the voices excluded from our psychology, and our culture that gives rise to it, can be liberatory. The processes by which an unconscious is created on a cultural level are similar to those on the personal level. Identification with dominant ideas and practices, where power is coalesced, push to the margins all else. It is only through practices of concerted contact with what has been marginalized that dominant points of view can be challenged/critiqued, avoiding the very partialness depth psychologists are so leery of intrapsychically.

Liberation psychology, birthed from the inspiration of liberation theology, argues that psychology itself requires liberation before it can be a clear force for liberation. To aid this process I would like to compare and contrast several central ideas of depth psychology with ideas within liberation psychology/theology, in an effort to “see-through” (Hillman, 1975) some of the ideas/practices most familiar to depth psychologists. My aim is twofold: to critique how depth psychology can be practiced to mitigate against liberation, and to suggest how through several key re-visionings underlined by liberation psychology it could practice more deeply and broadly as a psychology for liberation. I have chosen Jung and Hillman's work as a place to bridge from toward liberation psychology, seeing in their ideas an anticipa-

tion of ways of holding psyche and culture together in our awareness, ideas, and practices.

Individuation

Jung's stated telos for psychological work was individuation, an idea I would like to compare to liberation, the telos of liberation psychology/theology. Jung focused on the emergence of individuality out of collectivity. For him, individuation “is the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated; in particular, it is the development of the psychological *individual* as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology” (Jung, 1971, § 757). I read “collective” here as the culture(s) one is residing in psychologically. Jung understood the power of a culture's dominant ideas over the individual and saw that simple identification with these norms provided no critique of them, no interest or power in resisting them, no moral center apart from them.

The goal of individuation is the recognition of and relationship with the Self, a center of organization and imagery apart from the control of the ego. The method of individuation is acute attention to “the exploration and experience of the archetypal symbols and figures in dreams, visions, active imagination, and everyday life” (Hopcke, 1989, p. 63). Jung felt that the imaginal would bring forth what had been cast aside in the culture and by the dominant viewpoint of the ego. Personally he was drawn to a method of exploration that was largely practiced alone, allowing images and visions to arise, trusting that through dialogue and interaction with them that the oneness of conscious thought and experience would be ameliorated.

Jung's focus on the individual and on individuation went hand-in-hand with a deep distrust of the group (see Colman, 1995), and even a fear of psychic contagion between analyst and analysand. For the latter reason he never even had patients do active imagination in the presence of the analyst. For him, consciousness could best be developed by a focus on the individual, hosting imaginal experience that arises at the margins. It was only this process – individual by individual – that could lead to a more conscious group.

Hence every man is, in a certain sense, unconsciously a worse man when he is in society than when acting alone; for he is carried by society and to that extent relieved of his individual responsibility. Any large company

composed of wholly admirable persons has the morality and intelligence of an unwieldy, stupid, and violent animal. (Jung, 1953/1966, § 240)

Once the individual is thus secured in himself, there is some guarantee that the organized accumulation of individuals in the State... will result in the formation no longer of an anonymous mass, but of a conscious community. The indispensable condition for this is conscious freedom of choice and individual decision ... (Jung, 1954/1966, § 227)

Jung was working out a psychology that deeply acknowledges interdependence, and yet he was doing so in a culture that was highly individualistic (see Watkins, 1992). This created a strain in his work, one he himself acknowledged. While he could see that the same attitude he was advocating for internally needed to be used externally, he was not clear about how one could become conscious while in relationship.

The present day shows with appalling clarity how little able people are to let the other man's argument count, although this capacity is a fundamental and indispensable condition for any human community. Everyone who proposes to come to terms with himself must reckon with this basic problem. For, to the degree that he does not admit the validity of the other person, he denies the 'other' within himself the right to exist – and vice versa. The capacity for inner dialogue is a touchstone for outer objectivity. (Jung, 1960, § 187)

There are moments in Jung where he tries to underline the interdependent nature of being and the necessity for individuation to surmount individualism and to take place in relationship. At the end of Jung's life he was clear about a felt-sense of interdependent being:

Yet there is so much that fills me: plants, animals, clouds, day and night, and the eternal in man. The more uncertain I have felt about myself, the more there has grown up in me a feeling of kinship with all things. In fact it seems to me as if that alienation which so long separated me from the world has become transferred into my own inner world, and has revealed to me an unexpected unfamiliarity with myself. (Jung, 1961, p. 359)

While much of his earlier work reflects the alienation he refers to here, there are significant points – particularly in his seminars on Nietzsche's Zarathustra – where he makes needed clarifications (see Perry, 1987).

... and there really could be no self if it were not in relation: the self and individualism exclude each other. The self is relatedness. ... You can never come to yourself by building a meditation hut on top of Mount Everest; you will only be visited by your own ghosts and that is not individuation: you are all alone with yourself and *the* self does not exist. The self only exists inasmuch as you appear. Not that you *are*, but that you *do* is the self. The self appears in your deeds, and deeds always mean relationship.

Individuation is only possible with people, through people. You must realize that you are a link in a chain, that you are not an electron suspended somewhere in space or aimlessly drifting through the cosmos. You are part of an atomic structure, and that atomic structure is part of a molecule which, with others, builds up a body. (Jung, 1988, p. 795, 103)

These passages help reorient now common mis-uses of dream work, active imagination and inner dialogue that actually create a Mont Blanc situation of unconsciousness. I take it from the above that he did not intend this. The absence of a method to be able to ferret out the cultural ideas we have identified with, however, is largely missing in Jung, as is emphasis on how consciousness arises in and through relationship. How can one see-through collectivity unless there is an effort to look closely at the ways culture has become embedded in the psyche?

Psychopathology

To the extent that depth psychology unconsciously uses an individualistic paradigm of the self, it obscures the larger sociocultural context that gives rise to individual suffering (see Watkins, 1992). Too often in the practice of depth psychology the individual's issues/pathology are contextualized primarily within the local family situation and, at times, in universal/archetypal context. This leaves an individual suffering pathology unable to ferret out the ways in which their individual situation speaks to larger configurations that also create suffering for others. Most often psychotherapy is limited to working out personal solutions/accommodations to much larger cultural issues, without affecting or even clarifying consciousness about the larger context.

Depth psychologists would do well to carefully study the epidemiological evidence that reveals the impact of each of the following on the increased

incidence of psychopathology: poverty, the effects of Western capitalism on third world countries, urbanization, population mobility, family fragmentation, poor and inadequate housing and education, gender inequities, racism, homophobia, torture, rapid social change and social disintegration, war, genocide, forced migration, unemployment, failures of social and community support structures (Kleinman, 1988). The fact that "most mental disorders have their highest prevalence rates in the lowest socioeconomic class" (Kleinman, 1988, p. 54), where there is least access to healthcare, should give some weight to liberation psychology's "preferential option for the poor." Cross-cultural studies of psychopathology allow us to see that the Diagnostic Statistical Manual's "character disorders" are in fact cultural disorders, limited as most of them are to our culture and similar Westernized nations: paranoia, schizoid, antisocial, borderline, histrionic, avoidant, dependent, obsessive-compulsive, narcissistic. In addition, dysthymic disorder, anorexia, and agoraphobia may not be valid categories for many other societies (Kleinman, 1988). That the cultural differences provoked by gender profoundly impact mental health is amply displayed by the greater frequency in women of the following "disorders": borderline, histrionic, dependent, agoraphobia, major depression, panic disorder, somatization disorder, somatoform disorder, conversion disorder, pain disorder, dissociative identity disorder, anorexia, and bulimia.

In addition, the course and prognosis of various disorders is directly effected by cultural context. The most stunning example of this is schizophrenia which is eight times more prevalent in cultures where there is limited social belonging and a high sense of fatalism due to poverty and abusive working conditions (Shulman, 1997, p. 70). Despite American psychopharmacological sophistication, sufferers of this psychopathology in America endure a course of the illness that is more severe and chronic than similar sufferers in third world countries like India, where the disorder is seen as acute (not chronic), where the individual is not taken from the community and from work (Kleinman, 1988).

If, as depth psychologists, we keep psychopathology at the heart of our concern, but widen our conception of its cause and expressions to include culture, then to address psychopathology, to be in dialogue with it, our attention turns to world and community as well. The symptom as it appears in the individual points us also toward the pathology of the world, of the culture. When we are not able to follow the symptom into the culture on which it comments, we misinterpret its protest, and negate its voice. Perhaps we can see this most clearly in extreme examples. In China and Brazil during

periods of political oppression and chronic hunger, neurasthenia was seen as a biological condition and treated with drugs, silencing the protest of the body and the mind (Shulman, 1997).

Listening into much of the suffering that I hear in the consulting room, I concur with Hillman (1992):

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 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. (p. 93)

Context for Liberation Theology / Psychology

It is too easy for us to forget the power that Old Testament ideas and stories still hold for many of us. The story of Exodus, of the Jews' struggle to liberate themselves from the dehumanizing and oppressive experience of being slaves, has inspired efforts toward liberation throughout the world. In America's history, we hear this influence in Puritan writing as they described their movement as "an errand into the wilderness," likening their bid for freedom to the early Jews. Despite Christianity being the religion of their oppressors, African slaves in America heard in Exodus the promise of a god who was on the side of the enslaved, helping them in their efforts toward liberation (Cone, 1972). Black gospel songs echo the words of Moses:

When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go;
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go;
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell ole Pharaoh
Let my people go

We also heard the use of the Exodus story in the fight against apartheid when South African church leaders met in Soweto in 1985 to draft the Kairos Document. This document used the Bible's description of oppression as

being crushed, degraded, humiliated, exploited, impoverished, defrauded, deceived, and enslaved (Ellis, 1987) to depict their current circumstance.

In 1968, at the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops at Medellin, Colombia, liberation theology was initiated with an invocation of the Exodus story – an invocation that united faith and social liberation. For Gutierrez, the founder of liberation theology and a Peruvian priest, faith in God requires our acting on behalf of justice, because God is seen through the Book of Exodus as encouraging and desiring liberation from oppression (Ellis, 1987).

What are the poetic images in Exodus that have quickened the thirst for freedom over time? In Exodus, the beginning of an attempt to become liberated is likened to entering the wilderness. One leaves behind the security of oppression and takes on the uncertainty of being neither a community of slaves nor a community of the emancipated. In Exodus, Moses learns that liberation is not immediate. It is a process filled with challenges, doubts, and backsliding. The thing that orients the process is utopic imagining.

To enter the wilderness one must carry close to the heart an image of the land of milk and honey.

A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything. (Deuteronomy 8: 7-9)

Isaiah, Micah, and Joel imagine the new Jerusalem, thusly:

And my people shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them; They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat. (Isaiah 65: 21-22)

They shall enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain. (Isaiah 65: 22-23)

They shall sit every man under his vine and his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid. (Micah 4: 4)

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids ... will I pour out my spirit. (Joel, 2: 28-29)

In South and Central America, community work led by followers of liberation theology and the related work of the radical pedagogist of the

oppressed, Paulo Freire, laid the foundation for the emergence of liberation psychology articulated by Ignacio Martin-Baro. In 1989 a United States government-funded Salvadoran death squad murdered Martin-Baro, a Jesuit and a psychologist. His "crime": a call for the creation of a liberation psychology. He was working to create the outlines for a psychology of liberation, inspired by liberation theology – a psychology that by its focus on liberation could be a force for justice, peace, human rights, psychological well-being, and humanity. What kind of light can the ideas and practices of liberation psychology and theology shine on depth psychology? How might their dialogue together enable depth psychology to more fully realize its liberatory impulse?

Individuation / Development / Liberation

Third World liberationists have rejected the term "development" to characterize cultural or economic progress, for too often it implied adopting an economic and cultural system that required their oppression or their neighbor's. The Third World has directly witnessed that the "development" of one may result in the underdevelopment of others, where in their experience inequality has been generated by others' economic growth (Goizueta, 1988, p. 5). Economic underdevelopment is understood to be a result of dependence, not interdependence. Dependence is defined as "the assimilation of one nation or region within another's sphere of influence to such a degree that the development or lack thereof is governed, controlled, and determined by the development of the latter" (Goizueta, 1988, p. 7). Dussel argues that "it is necessary to be able to undertake *one's own path of development*, different from the European (because up to the present we have been the other face of the same system, but the exploited, dominated, dependent face)" (in Goizueta, 1988, p. 230). To take one's own path requires uniting interior with community changes in consciousness. One has to be able to recognize and articulate one's own interests, aspirations, and hopes. What has been silent and unspoken needs to enter into dialogue with others in order to move toward desired transformations.

Liberation was chosen as a better term for the goal of cultural change, for it is relational, based on a paradigm of interdependence. The liberation of one is inextricably tied to the liberation of all. This is true on the psychological level, as well as on the material level, where oppression and domination in a culture are mirrored in the skewed and polarized dynamics of psyche. To

think in terms of liberation points us toward the roots of suffering in both psyche and world, not just the manifestations. Perhaps liberation is also a better term for psychological development in a perspective that strives for the acknowledgment of such interdependence.

Liberation is a holistic term that urges us to consider economic, political, socio-cultural, spiritual, and psychological liberation together, and in community. In its holism it helps us to resist thinking that one could be psychologically liberated or individuated while economically or culturally enslaved or curtailing of the freedom of others. As psychologists it urges us to look at how psyche reflects these other levels of human existence. The Thai liberationist Sulak Sivaraksa outlines that there are four levels of freedom that are indispensable for the realization of peace and happiness: physical freedom, social freedom, emotional freedom, and intellectual freedom. He would argue that these are interdependent, not achievable in isolation from one another.

Liberation means to set free, to emancipate, to release from bondage, captivity or slavery. The Chinese characters for liberation mean to let go, to release, to unite. In Mahayana Buddhism, liberation is seen as freedom from conventional views of reality (Queen, 1996, p. 9), as it is in depth psychology and liberation psychology. In both Greek and Sanskrit, liberality – meaning both generosity and freedom from prejudice – is *desire* (Hyde, 1979, p. 35). It is this link between liberation and desire that implicates the imagination. Liberation attempts to move what is toward what is *desired*.

Individual Work / Group Work

Liberation psychology values the coming to awareness through dialogue within a group, because it is in the group that we can most clearly see that much of what we have thought of as individual fate, virtue, failure, and suffering is shared beyond the individual. Such insight links individuals so that they can work together to address the cultural conditions that impact their well-being. In the group it is easier to see how the culture has gotten into our hearts and minds, into our intimate relationships – as partner, as son/daughter, parent, and friend. To focus on what are the problems of the people or of a group helps us orient to suffering that arises more broadly.

Instead of directing the participants' attention to search for personal 'causes' of a feeling, such as fear, worry, anger – in Freire's method of developing critical consciousness the leader (called the animator) asks ques-

tions to help raise to awareness the relationship between the feeling and the cultural reality one is in. Change is directed first and foremost not toward individual change, but to cultural change that will ultimately effect the participants. Freire argues:

I don't believe in self-liberation. Liberation is a social act. Liberating education is a social process of illumination. ... Even when you individually feel yourself *most* free, if this is not a *social* feeling, if you are not able to use your recent freedom to help others be free by transforming the totality of society, then you are exercising only an individualist attitude toward empowerment or freedom. (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 109)

Martin-Baro calls this psychology's critical error: "to change the individual while preserving the social order, or, in the best of cases, generating the illusion that, perhaps, as the individual changes, so will the social order – as if society were a summation of individuals." (p. 37)

Liberation psychology argues that psychological work within a group is necessary for the development of critical consciousness. This difference between individuation and Freire's "conscientization" is central to understanding what liberation psychology can contribute to depth psychology.

It is important to note, however, that the composition of the group that is required for critical consciousness is radically different when one is working with those who have been oppressed and silenced by the dominant culture(s) as compared to those whose roles foster domination. In the former, the sharing of the group with those who suffer the same context helps members clarify the connections between their psychological life and their cultural life. Those who have enjoyed colonizing situations, often employing silencing techniques (consciously or unconsciously) need a group context where sociocultural differences are encountered. Such encountering demands that one's usual stance of speaking and holding power is bracketed, allowing others to speak who bring awareness from the margins. Relying solely on intrapsychic confrontation in an upper-middle class, white population isolates the individual from more radical challenge of their standpoint. In some ways Jung intuited this, and in his travels tried to encounter other ways of being – African, Native American. In his writings from these forays, however, one is struck by how little dialogue actually occurred and how much projection ensued.

The Self / The Other

In general, depth psychology focuses on the development of the self; analytical psychology on the arising awareness of the Self. If this Self/self is conceptualized in Cartesian terms, it will be imagined separate from the wider world. Within this framework, "the other" becomes most likely an intrapsychic other, a dream image, the analyst, or a close friend or family member. There is a sustained focus on interiority, locating processes of development and individuation as occurring within the individual, and through the dyad of therapist and patient. One can work on one's own "development" without regard to the other, even while acting in ways that use the other or impede the other is his or her own development.

Liberation psychology links interior with exterior, shifting the focus to community and inter-relatedness, from "self" to "the other," underscoring the self's encounter and treatment of the other. Development from this perspective has to do with how I interact with the other, and with otherness. The self is seen to be in chains if the other – person, nature, group – is only a means to my own gratification – objectified, appropriated, de-animated, de-humanized.

Development goes hand-in-hand with releasing the Other from objectification, so that he or she becomes the center of his or her own world, rather than determined by another's (Goizueta, 1988, p. 68). Such a release of the Other is also a liberation of the self. Perfection does not consist in a "realization of my 'potential-being,' but in a love that first loves the Other: love-in-justice" (Goizueta, 1988, p. 72). The process is one that involves listening and serving.

In oppression, the capital of one group builds itself by depleting the capital of another. In oppression, need does not draw resources but continues toward utter depletion. There is a rigid boundary between groups: one being valued, the other denigrated; one being used as a tool for the other. Instead of witnessing the thoughts and feelings of the other, these are attributed to, projected upon, the other in ways that serve the ends of the self: "Negroes prefer slavery because they are well cared for."

A focus on liberation requires that we carefully look at how otherness is experienced and related to. A focus only on the self is insufficient and misleading. In a psychology of liberation, the term "the Other" is as crucial as the term "the Self." Openness to the revelation of the Other is as necessary as openness to the liberation of one's own thoughts, feelings, and images. Focus on allowing the other to freely arise would turn depth psychology

toward a more penetrating study of the silencing of the other, violence, the stranger, to the psychology of hate and love, racism and prejudice, dehumanization, greed, injustice, poverty, the abuse of nature and animals. This openness to the revelation of the Other is an act of liberation (Goizueta, p. 68).

"Seeing-through" / The Development of Critical Consciousness

The work of liberation in depth psychology involves giving attention to two related areas: the margins and reflection on the ideas of the ego. Hillman (1975) calls the latter "seeing-through." It is by bracketing the ego position and moving toward the margin, that one can begin to see-through the identifications of the ego. Hillman makes it clear that ideas we are not able to see-through dominate us, and sustain our unconsciousness. The importance of such seeing-through has been echoed by many in depth psychology such as Freud, Jung, Adler, Horney, Sullivan, Fromm, but their advocacy for seeing-through cultural ideas has often been forgotten or neglected.

Freire also focuses on seeing-through the cultural ideas one is identified with that create and sustain the day-to-day reality one lives in. His method of working with groups oppressed by cultural realities linked the gaining of literacy with becoming able to decode the sociocultural world one lives in. Such decoding paved the way for imagining desired transformations and action on behalf of them. This decoding is at the same time a shift in how one sees one's self.

Freire describes that initially we experience the problems we suffer as inevitable and normal. In this "magical" stage, we sense that things are being caused by factors beyond our control, and thus our acting is futile. We experience ourselves as impotent, without the power to comprehend or to change our circumstances. Next, we begin to see the problems we suffer, but understand them to be caused by single individuals: ourselves or some evil or deficient other. There is not yet an understanding of how an unjust and oppressive social system creates oppressors. In the third stage, critical consciousness, "the individual has an integrated understanding of the sociopolitical system, enabling him/her to relate instances of oppression to the normal functioning of an unjust and oppressive system" (Alschuler, 1997, p. 290). One can now reject the oppressor's ideology and seek to transform the system in collaboration with others. What was previously seen as personal problems are often now seen as community problems, and often as class

problems. Only at this point is collective action used to transform the context. This progression is possible through dialogue, Freire says, "reflecting together on what we know and don't know, we can then act critically to transform reality" (1987, p. 99). "Libertory dialogue is a democratic communication which disconfirms domination and illuminates while affirming the freedom of the participants to re-make their culture." (1987, p. 99)

In American culture we can cite many recent examples of such linking of what is suffered as a personal problem to cultural issues that require profound redressing: from suffering post-traumatic symptoms of sexual abuse by a particular father to questioning patriarchal prerogatives and the use/abuse of the feminine; from suffering a crippling sense of personal inferiority to insighting the reproduction of racism in a society that gives rise to it; from being a medical patient dealing with a disease to growing into awareness of its link to unacknowledged environmental pollution and degradation of various kinds. This path between symptom and culture needs to be tread by depth psychologists, as surely as the path between symptom and family dynamics, archetypal patterns, and neurochemistry.

Liberation psychology critiques depth psychology for not adequately understanding and articulating the relationship between sociocultural/economic structures and individual suffering. The focus on intrapsychic dynamics and the dyadic transference relationship between patient and therapist often neglects the relationship between cultural and individual pathology and healing. Indeed, the underlying paradigm of self in American culture would have us each think we are individually responsible for our shortcomings, gifts, pain, pathologies, and health. A more contextualized view of self would seek to articulate the interrelations between what we have cordoned off as internal/private and what we take to be public/ social.

... psychology has for the most part not been very clear about the intimate relationship between an unalienated personal existence and an unalienated social existence, between individual control and collective power, between the liberation of each person and the liberation of a whole people. Moreover, psychology has often contributed to obscuring the relationship between personal estrangement and social oppression, presenting the pathology of persons as if it were something removed from history and society, and behavioral disorders as if they played themselves out entirely in the individual plane. (Martin-Baro, 1994, p. 27)

When depth psychology operates within the cultural paradigm of radical individualism, development is largely seen as the individual differentiating

out of the collective. This interpretation of depth psychology reinscribes the heroic ego as on its own in a hostile world. Its psychology is implicitly based on upper-middle-class experience. Part of this experience is the negation that culture and economics have critical impacts on development. Martin-Baro says that when working with the well-to-do,

social context is thus converted into a kind of natural phenomenon, an unquestioned assumption before whose 'objective' demands the individual must seek, individually and even 'subjectively' the solutions to his or her problems. (1994, p. 37)

When this is the case, psychological suffering that arises from a given social order can not be deeply addressed, as its roots are not clearly seen. Psychotherapy can act then as a palliative practice, and also as one that perpetuates blindness about some of the causes of suffering – and thus the possible redressing of such suffering.

Desire / Creative Imagination / Annunciation

The second part of the process of developing critical consciousness Freire calls "annunciation": a process of conceiving a more just social order. Here utopic imagination is central. How do members of a community most desire their community to be? Imaging what is desired is the link between critical consciousness and creation, action that attempts to nurture and bring into reality the desired.

Depth psychology's focus on creative imagination has ordinarily taken us in one of two directions: the personal or the universal. Relatively lacking has been a sense of how the cultural shapes images and conveys the historically conditioned to our inmost being. It has anticipated the contents of the imaginal with its interpretive designs – bad breasts, phallic towers, anima figures, puer voices, Hera figures – rarely inviting awareness of the cultural through the imaginal. We know from dreams and fleeting images that it comes unbidden anyway: images of war, nuclear accidents, rape, racism, holocaust imagery, the death of nature. These inbreaks are rarely met by the creation of a space in which what is deeply desired in our world can come forth imaginally. Such desire is restrained by hopelessness, apathy, complacency, fear of failure and a depth psychology that too often continues to see us as apart from the world, a depth psychology that makes little room for cultural desire.

In depth psychology, consciousness and action, imagination and action have been sundered, depriving imagination of some of its creative and transformative power. Freire (1989) charges us to hold reflection and action together, to avoid a non-reflective activism on the one hand or a detached and universalizing reflection on the other. Perhaps a participatory action form of research brings us closest to this ideal, as self-and-other-in-community is imagined, reflected upon, and enacted to achieve creative practices of liberation.

Coming Home

As I have worked clinically within the theories and practices of depth psychology, I have been moved by how their methods and manner of listening release from bondage images, memories, thoughts, and desires, that radically decenter one's identity. I am left, however, with the clear sense that depth psychology – to the degree that it has remained in a collective, Cartesian world – has over-focused on interior liberation without sufficiently insighting how inseparable the interior is from the so-called exterior, or how psyche cannot be isolated from the culture, economics, and politics that in part form it. To work toward a psychological liberation without such awareness can actually subvert that very goal.

In retrospect, the myopic quality of depth psychology's desire for the liberation of being should not have surprised me. Any theory that creates a radical path from the cultural norm inevitably also bears the mark of the culture it is departing from. It conserves as well as creates. It is hard to see this from within the culture, as any culture naturalizes its practices and ideas, making them seem universal and normal. While we can never completely look in on the culture we are part of from an outside position, being in dialogue with the viewpoint(s) of another culture(s) is an excellent way for us to begin to see more deeply into our own. It is such dialogue that I want to practice here, as I hold together the liberational impulses and insights of depth psychology and liberation psychology/theology.

While depth psychology can be seen as an effort which radically challenges dominant cultural paradigms of selfhood and reality, it may also be seen as reflecting, conserving, and perpetuating aspects of the cultural status quo that contribute to human suffering. At this point it is a confusing mixture of oppressive and liberatory practices and theories. It is a mixture which perhaps the lens of a psychology of liberation can help us clarify, so

that liberation on one level of existence does not mitigate against but supports liberation on other levels.

Cushman (1995) argues that when we question why in our time the interior or the psychological has been chosen as the backdrop for human concern and activity, we discover that it has allowed us to retreat from disappointment and disillusionment about the lack of community and tradition that we suffer from. I would add that this retreat to the psychological has also buffered us from our feelings of impotence and ineffectuality in creating the kinds of communities and social order that we most deeply desire to be homed by, and that we already know are more conducive to psychological well-being.

Our excursion through Exodus to liberation psychology/theology in South and Central America returns us back to our everyday practice and theory within depth psychology. Can we see the link between psychological liberation and economic, political, and spiritual liberation, and will depth psychologists know that each of these domains essentially forms psyche and needs such things as poverty, social fragmentation, the injuries of violence and prejudice, the desecration of the material and natural worlds, then we must follow its voice and heed its commentary. It would place our work both in the consulting room and in the world that surrounds it.¹⁰

If we have colluded in silencing utopic imagining by cordoning off the private from the public, the inner from the outer, we must take down the dividers and bear the pain of seeing what is desired next to what has been sadly created or destroyed. We learn from our Southern neighbors that this work with the cultural unconscious is best done together rather than alone, so that we can begin to hear the resonances between our experiences, and find the collective energy to address the contexts we share. At the same time, we must challenge our perspectives by placing ourselves in the company of others whose experiences bring into focus our assumptions and practices.

Alongside Jung's sense of our work as an *opus contra naturam*, a work against nature, we can see it as a work against culture, the unconsciousness

¹⁰ Pacifica Graduate Institute has begun a Ph.D. program in depth psychology that has – among other areas of attention – precisely this focus of creating a bridge between cal/sociocultural/economic understandings. Its hope is to assist students in creating collaborative community fieldwork and research that broadly imagines liberation. Participatory action research and other dialogical models are used as means of collaborative intervention and assessment.

of culture about its dominant ideas, their shadow, the suffering in them. If we do not see that depth can also be between self and Other, then the vertically and interiorly of the way we have imagined depth becomes a hideout, mitigating against the effort of consciousness it is supposedly supporting.

Returning from this journey to liberation psychology, I cannot help but remark on the multiple threads that link liberation psychology and depth psychology: the acknowledgment of multiplicity, the listening into what has been marginalized, the use of dialogue as the principal methodology (see Watkins, 1999), the careful attempt to see-through dominant ideas, the valuing of the free-arising of being, the knowledge of the potency of image and story and the necessity to engage them, the effort to liberate from domination. These are pathways to depth and to the ongoing process of liberation. When depth psychology draws itself near to liberation psychology with these threads, it emerges from its unconsciousness about its cultural origins. It gains a way of working in groups toward critical consciousness. Its polarizing splits between reflection and action and image and action are healed. Further, the complexity of forces that forge the psyche are more deeply acknowledged. The imagination, instead of being relegated to personal exploration and to being a preserve of images to shelter one from a forbidding world, is recognized as the potential power it is to bring into being what is most deeply desired. The lens of liberation rescues depth psychology from the paradigm of radical individualism, from which much of our psychological suffering issues. It reconnects the individual with community, culture, and nature, further grounding depth psychology in a psychology of interdependent being.

The dialogue between depth psychology and liberation psychology sews back together the personal and the collective with the cultural and the ecological. It begins to correct the myopia in depth psychology which has distorted our perception of causes and our vision for healing. It is not for me to say how depth psychology might enrich and critique liberation psychology. But if depth psychology is to move toward engagement with the life of the community, it would be well-served to learn from those already there who share its fundamental sensibilities. Through this joining of hands and of visions, possibilities for liberation may indeed be seeded.

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CHAPTER 16

The Presence of Absence: Mapping Postcolonial Spaces

Helene Shulman Lorenz

This is the map of the forsaken world.
This is the world without end
where forests have been cut away from their trees.
These are the lines the wolf could not pass over.
This is what I know from science:
that a grain of dust dwells at the center
of every flake of snow,
that ice can have its way with land,
that wolves live inside a circle
of their own beginning.
This is what I know from blood:
the first language is not our own.
There are names each thing has for itself,
and beneath us the other order already moves.
It is burning.
It is dreaming.
It is waking up.

(from "Map" by Linda Hogan in *The Book of Medicines*)