Toward "Splendid Cities":

The Thirst for the Imaginal in the Life of Community¹

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Abstract: In a prophetic voice the poet Rimbaud calls out to us: ".... armed with a burning patience, we shall enter the splendid Cities," communities where peace, justice, and love flourish. In our individualistic time we are accustomed to turning toward dream and image to address our personal woes and well being, while often failing to understand sufficiently how intimately these are tied to cultural pathology and community well being. Without this critical insight we have forgotten how to practice community dreaming and visioning, severing ourselves from springs of communal understanding and regeneration that are sorely needed in our lives with one another. Practices of community dreaming, imaging, and visioning reconnect individual and community transformation, creating public spaces to hear the imaginal's critical and creative commentary on our lives and to vision together what is most deeply desired. In this essay I will try to awaken our thirst for the imaginal in the life of our communities through stories about people and groups who midwife the ever- present possibility of "splendid Cities," and suggest such a midwifing role for depth psychology.

Feeding "a burning patience" with the embers of image

When Pablo Neruda accepted the Nobel Prize for Literature he recalled a line of poetry from Rimbaud: "In the dawn, armed with a burning patience, we shall enter the splendid Cities" cities which Neruda said "will give light, justice and dignity to all mankind" (1972, pp. 33, 35). In the dark times we are now living in, it is clear that we must be armed with such patience. What are the seed embers that emblazon such patience and how do we care for them?

¹ This essay is part of a larger effort to explore how the theories and practices of depth psychology and liberation psychologies can orient and aid us in the work of cultural transformation and collective healing (see Watkins, 2000a,2000b; Lorenz & Watkins, 2002a,2000b, 2003; Shulman,1997). Through a dialogue between the liberatory aspects of psychoanalysis, Jungian, and archetypal psychology with liberation psychologies from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, depth psychology can more clearly see the interfaces between psyche, culture, and nature and re-imagine the restorative work of the development of critical consciousness, prophetic imagination, and ethical, participatory action.

Image and dream are potent seeds required to fuel our vision of the possible.

Indeed, "the Splendid City," or what Martin Luther King called "the Beloved

Community," are kindred images which function to express deep longings for

communities of peace and justice, where love flourishes and needs are met. Such images

orient us toward the deeply desired, revealing the gap between how things are and how
they could be.

Paradoxically, such a widening abyss can demoralize us,² leading our fatalism to express itself in our retreat into narrow lives, cut off from rootedness in community, insulated by consumerist preoccupations; lives which breed states of social amnesia and denial. To mitigate against this, we must invite images to chart the paths of what King called our "moral pilgrimage," while continuing to sketch our longed for destination, and to feed our "burning patience."

It is grace that images not only orient us toward a longed for future but help midwife moments in the present where what is longed for becomes incarnate, refreshing the soul. Martin Luther King, Jr.³ saw America itself as a dream, a dream where men and women of all races, nationalities, and creeds can live together as brothers and sisters (Smith and Zepp, 1988, p.139), a society governed by love. King believed that the purpose of the Civil Rights Movement was to create the beloved community. Coretta Scott King (1969) recalls the hushed silence that fell on a quarter million people, before a

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² Elise Boulding, a Quaker and a sociologist, in her work on "Imagining a world without weapons," has participants utopically imagine a peaceful world in thirty years. Because such images alone can be disheartening due to the gap between reality and vision, she then has participants imagine backwards from their utopic image in five year increments, asking "What would need to happen by this point, to prepare the way for the utopic reality to come into existence?" Working backwards, one asks what kinds of work in the present are needed to begin to prepare the ground for the more utopic state. In this way utopic images are partnered with images representing more intermediary states that point toward possible paths from the real to the desired, from the present into the future.

crash of applause, as King's "I Have a Dream" speech concluded in Washington in 1963: "The feeling that they had of oneness and unity was complete. They kept on shouting in one thunderous voice, and for that brief moment the Kingdom of God seemed to have come on earth" (p. 223).

King himself described this experience as he visited with protesters in the Montgomery airport after the boycott and march there.

As I stood with them and saw white and Negro, nuns and priests, ministers and rabbis, labor organizers, lawyers, doctors, housemaids and shop workers brimming with vitality and enjoying a rare comradeship, I knew I was seeing a microcosm of the mankind of the future in this moment of luminous and genuine brotherhood. (King, 1967, p. 10)

The ember image of the beloved community gives rise to such a moment in reality which itself feeds the subtle body of desire. Awash in the individualism of our time, we have primarily focused on image and dream for insight into our personal situations, defined narrowly and rarely taking in to account the interdependence of the personal and the communal, psyche and culture (see Asher, 1993; Watkins, 1992). We have failed to take seriously Jung's insight that "In the deepest sense we all dream not out of ourselves but out of what lies between us and the other" (Letters I: 172, to James Kirsch, 29 Sept. 1934)

In more communitarian cultures dreams have been understood as feeding the symbolic life of the community, they are incubated, shared, performed, remembered with one another, serving to connect people with the regenerative spring of imagination so that its waters can feed the roots and vision of the community. We are in continuing need of community dreaming that reflects insights about the situations in which we find

³ I am grateful for these examples to Jennifer Selig's (2003) doctoral dissertation scholarship on Martin Luther King, Jr. and depth psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute.

ourselves, and images that remind us of the world we want to create together, allowing us to liberate from their depth the energy with which to proceed.

The work of image in the decolonizing of psyche

Why in the face of this need have we largely failed to dream with one another? In my twenties I heard the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz (1984) deliver a Norton lecture on poetry at Harvard. I was astonished. He spoke of the role of poetry in Poland. Unlike America where poetry has been marginalized in mainstream media, in Poland, he said, it is a daily bread of the imagination, nurturing and sustaining the spirits of everyday people, helping them survive and reflect on the waves of history they are both caught in and are creating as a people.

Janmohamed (1993) says that when we try to step outside of the safety zone of the way our culture and its theories have informed our work and structured our relationships to others, that we must become "archaeologists of the site of [our] own social formation" (p. 113). So I must begin by noting how different Milosz's description of the life of image and poetry in Poland was from my experience of growing up in a commuter town east of New York City in a displaced Southern family, amid other upwardly mobile white families who had become part of the "privileged" and glad of it. There was little criticism of the status quo, because we were trying to be the status quo, identified with Madison Avenue's imagination for us, rendering our own imaginations inert. There was no public artwork, no community visioning processes. The activities of shopping and arranging appearances stood in where dialogues did not appear. Our manicured lawns in summer, our stretches of upscale stores, called the "Miracle Mile,"

were the embodiment of what people felt they desired. Desire had been intensely channeled into the personal, narrowing all possible desire into the realms of personal consumption, ambition, and pleasure seeking. No amount of quiet alcoholism, of housewives disappeared to mental institutions, of domestic violence that was not named as such, of restless boredom or feelings of emptiness could move the town to paint, to imagine, to articulate what psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas (1989) has called "the unthought known." The potential metaphors were lived in an unreflected manner. In the morning the men streamed onto trains to conduct the city's commerce, leaving mothers sorted in neat rows in suburban houses, children in their own rows in schools built on the model of industrial settings. Gates and fences protected each plot from one another. To win remove from one's neighbors was a sign of prestige, worthy of jealousy, not mourning or alarm.

In <u>Damaged Life: The Crisis of the Modern Psyche</u> Tod Sloan (1996), following Habermas, describes the underlying dynamic our society is captive to: "the state and the market project the existing or near future reality as the ideal, filling the space in which alternative collective and personal ideals could be formulated through ongoing interaction and debate. The individual's task becomes one of adjustment, of 'fitting in' rather than individuation or self-realization through intersubjective communication" (pp. 62-63). While seemingly offered more and more choices and options, "the frames within which [we] chose are themselves manufactured to a large extent to coincide with market and state imperatives for social reproduction" of the prevailing economic and political system (p. 63). Sloan describes the process of accommodating to these large, invisible, powers as entailing the *colonization* of the personality, "replac[ing] symbolic cultural sources of

meaning with mere stimulation. Decolonization of this sphere would require that ideological desymbolization be countered by de-ideologizing resymbolization" (p. 131). Our own vital capacities for imagining would need to replace those of the state and the market, reawakening the springs of our visioning together.

I want to pause here with this idea. We are accustomed to thinking of colonization as something that happened to those in colonized countries; a process by which one culture invades another, displacing and silencing its symbolic life—such as spiritual beliefs, mythologies, artistic expressions--attempting to replace it with that of the conquering system. The latter is deemed superior, more advanced, casting a shadow of inferiority not only on the indigenous culture but within the subjectivities of its people, urging them to disidentify with their own sources of symbolic meaning and renewal. What Sloan is pointing to is an analog of this process from which we suffer in the present, here in the United States, a process of which we are largely unconscious.

In Jung's psychology individuation is understood to entail an ongoing effort to differentiate oneself— one's values and perspectives—from a blind identification with collective norms. Similarly, object relations theorist Winnicott argued that conformity and adaptation to prevailing norms—here he was thinking of the child's relation to the mother—establishes the center of the personality in what he termed the "false self," a center that is robbed of connection to psychic vitality and meaning. Such precocious compliance renders our lives tainted with feelings of futility, while working to guarantee our fitting into—and thus perpetuating—the pre-established order of things, the status quo.

Without any gap between us and the collective images produced for us, there is no public space opened to call forth alternate images or to even create images that reflect back everyday life so that it can be grasped on a more conscious level. Analytic work can open a private space to begin the work of disidentifying and resymbolization necessary to individuation, but, I will argue, it must take place within a wider yet related cultural effort to see-through dominant ideologies with which we—and even depth psychologies themselves—become compliant and complicit. What if on the wall of the shopping mall in my childhood town, we had seen the following image from The Great Wall mural, the longest mural in the world, painted in Los Angeles by Judy Baca and 400 teenagers: Rosie the Riveter from World War II is seen being sucked into a vacuum cleaner and a washing machine as she is deposited into a 1950's suburban home, alongside car, husband, and children? As World War II broke out women were chastised by psychological studies for spoiling their children with their doting presence. In order to encourage women's exodus from the home to bolster war efforts such studies were used to make it appear that mothers could actually be better mothers by leaving the home, thus saving their children's character. When soldiers returned home in need of jobs, women were again upbraided by psychological studies that blamed increases in juvenile delinquency to women's being out of the home pursuing work. In Baca's process of mural painting, itself a process of community individuation, a group explores a period of history within a community and searches for metaphors that can convey the spirit and conflicts of that time. The viewer is not only initiated into seeing the hidden dynamics of a historical period, but is quickened to the task of inquiring what the metaphors are that forge the present. It provides an active process of insighting the prevailing ideologies,

while at the same time involving both muralists and spectators in processes of symbolization that have been systematically eroded.

For communities to individuate they, like individuals, need to recognize where they are identified with the status quo, reflect on these identifications, and grapple ethically with the morality of their position. Such art forms, as collective dreaming, activate what Jung called the transcendent function, mediating the known and the unknown, the visible and the invisible. Such collective dreaming is "the reservoir of our deepest understandings and desires and hopes, as essential as water" (Levins,1998, p. 129). To drink from this reservoir we must leave open a space where our identifications are questioned, and, further, where perspectives, experiences, and pieces of history that have been pushed into the margins, can be retrieved and re-integrated in to the known

"Events forgotten reappear in dreams..."

There are events in our lives that we cannot understand because we keep a part of what we know away from understanding...

Events forgotten reappear in dream. And fragments of memory left in the mind cry out as if for some connecting knowledge. Unless of course another false order of events has been created from the fragments so that even the scent of memory is threatening.

Griffin, 1992, pp. 32, 53

When members of a community have suffered greatly, their travail becomes traumatic when it exceeds what can be expressed or represented; when the means for such expression and representation are denied; or when such expression fails to find itself believed and witnessed. Following French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva (2002), the philosopher Kelly Oliver (2002) says that it is "through representation, [that] trauma is

assimilated into the social order and thereby no longer traumatic, even if still painful or humiliating" (p. 57) For Kristeva, she says, revolt is

the experience of inclusion through representation, through making language and meaning one's own in order to speak to others....Revolt becomes the way that 'I' will express my specificity by distorting the nevertheless necessary cliches of the codes of communication and by constantly deconstructing ideas/concepts/ideological philosophies that 'I' have inherited. This process of distorting and deconstructing is the way in which 'I' make the cliches of culture mine; it is a way of belonging that counteracts alienation from meaning and dominant culture. These distortions can be playful or angry, subversive or conservative, conscious or unconscious, but they must be creative and born from passion. They are ways of finding or creating the living social space that can support and open psychic space. (p. 57).

"[P]sychic revolt, analytic revolt, artistic revolt," says Kristeva (2002), "refers to a continuous questioning, of transformation, change, an endless probing of appearances" (p. 120). She suggests that "[I]f we understand the analytic adventure through this act of questioning, we can arrive at a freer and more open conception of psychoanalysis than the one assigned to normative therapy. This act of questioning is also present in artistic experience, in the rejection and renewal of old codes of representation staged in painting, music, or poetry" (pp. 120-121). Indeed, does not the work of symbolization in painting, music and poetry, as it breaks open social and psychic space, provide a psychotherapeutics—a taking care of the soul—that could ideally flow into and out from depth therapies that honor revolt⁴, understanding, as does Kristeva, the elements of renewal and regeneration it makes possible?

A dream that deeply affects us arises from some place outside of our usual knowings. It arrests our attention and orients us to its way of seeing. Its images place us in a world we cannot yet fully understand, often wordlessly posing questions to our

being. When we think of "dream" in this way, images from many sources qualify as dreams: poetic images, song images, paintings, certain memories, photographs, pieces of news that haunt us. As archetypal psychologist Hillman (1964) pointed out in <u>Suicide</u> and the <u>Soul</u>, we need to welcome even the most disturbing images when they visit us, as in our relation to them an energy becomes available, paradoxically liveliness becomes possible through our relation to grotesque or difficult, even traumatic, images.

The song "Strange Fruit" arose from such a haunting by an image. It was written by Abel Meeropol, a white, Jewish, New York high school teacher, communist sympathizer, poet and songwriter, known for his adoption of the Rosenberg children after their parents' execution. One day he was looking through a Civil Rights magazine and came across a photograph of a particularly ghastly lynching of two African-American teens in Marion, Indiana in 1930, Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith. The faces of the crowd are deeply disturbing, particularly those of two young girls in the left corner who look happy and excited as though they were at a school prom. Like a nightmare image, it haunted him for days. From this haunting he first wrote a poem about it that was published in a teacher's union publication. Then he set it to music. As Jungian analyst, Russell Lockhart describes, "the artist is the means of liberation of images struggling for visibility not only in psyche but in all of matter as well" (1987, p. 74).

In 1939 when Billie Holiday at the age of 24 took Abel Meeropol's tragic song about racial lynching in the South, "Strange Fruit," onto the nightclub stage, she broke her audience's set of expectations about the kind of song they would hear in such a setting. Samuel Grafton, a columnist for the New York Post, put it this way: "It is as if a

⁴ Rimbaud's sensitivity to the need for a "burning patience" is resonant with Kristeva's (2002) retrieval of the term "revolt," etymologically "associat[ed] with return, patience, distance, repetition, elaboration.

game of let's pretend has been ended and a blues singer who has been hiding her true sorrow in a set of love ditties had lifted the curtain and told us what it was that made her cry...[It was] a fantastically perfect work of art, one which reversed the usual relationship between a black entertainer and her white audience: 'I have been entertaining you,' she seems to say, 'now you just listen to me'" (quoted in Margolick, 2001, p. 56). "Strange Fruit" is considered to be not only the first significant song of the Civil Rights

Movement, but also the first representation of lynching in song. It has been called the "first unmuted cry against racism," a "declaration of war...the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement," one of the "ten songs that actually changed the world" (quoted in Margolick, 2001, pp. 4-5, 8).

Southern trees bear a strange fruit, Blood on the leaves and blood at the root, Black body swinging in the Southern breeze, Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Pastoral scene of the gallant South, The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth, Scent of magnolia sweet and fresh, And the sudden smell of burning flesh!

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck, For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck, For the sun to rot, for a tree to drop, Here is a strange and bitter crop.

Billie Holiday always demanded that people stop talking during the song, that waiters not serve, and cashiers and busboys stop their activities. The room would go completely dark except for a single light on her face, creating a ritual space in which her audience was asked to witness the living nightmare of the lynching of African-Americans in the South. At the end of the song, the stage would go completely dark; Holiday would

leave and not return for a bow. She wanted the images of the song to stick inside of her audience, doing their psychic work. The images performed a healing function in the community, bringing marginalized facts into consciousness through the soulful, difficult lyrics and disjunctive melody of the song. Holiday's mother worried about Billie singing this song, fearing it could bring her harm. Holiday is said to have told her mother she thought singing the song could make things better and that when she died, she thought she would be able to feel this better state of affairs from her grave (p. 31). Margolick, the biographer of this song, interviewed many who heard it in the early 1940's. He says,

They credit it with helping awaken them to the realities of racial prejudice and the redemptive, ameliorative power of art. Whether they protested in Selma or took part in the March in Washington or spent their lives as social activists, many say that it was hearing "Strange Fruit" that triggered the process. (p. 6).

Angela Davis wrote that "Strange Fruit" "put the elements of protest and resistance back at the center of contemporary musical culture" (quoted in Margolick, 2001, p. 7).

Part of the power of Holiday's singing of "Strange Fruit," according to Vernon Jarrett, was that she impressed her audience as

someone who had also been wronged, as if she'd been lynched herself in some fashion or another.... To me, that was part of the whole lynch syndrome, the lynching of the body and the spirit together. That's the way her face looked when she sang that. All over this woman was the fact that 'we're all taking a screwing, someone is messing with us, this is a fucked up situation'--like she was psychoanalyzing herself and the black condition, telling us there was 'no escape' signs up, regardless of how great you were. (quoted in Margolick, pp. 43-44

Members of New York's Theatre Arts Committee sent the lyrics of "Strange Fruit" to members of the U.S Senate as Southern senators who were about to filibuster antilynching legislation. Frank Bolden, a newspaper writer and a member of the Black elite, said the song was almost sacred; that listening to it was like sitting in church (p. 75). Indeed, it provided a form of sacred witness.

Jack Schiffman, whose family ran the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, described how Billie Holiday's singing of "Strange Fruit" awakened the African-American audience's empathic imagination:

if you heard it done anywhere else you might have been touched and nothing more," he wrote. "But at the Apollo the song took on profound intimations. Not only did you see the 'fruit' evoked in all its graphic horror, you saw in Billie Holiday the wife or sister or mother of one of the victims beneath the tree, almost prostrate with sorrow and fury...Perhaps, if your orientation was such--as it surely was for Apollo audiences--you even saw and felt the agony of another lynching victim, this one suspended from a wooden cross at Calvary. And when she wrenched the final words from her lips, there was not a soul in that audience, black or white, who did not feel half-strangled" (quoted in Margolick, p. 77).

As testament to the subversive power of the image, Billie Holiday and Abel Meeropol were both questioned by the Committee on Un-American Activity about whether or not they had communist affiliation because of their singing and writing of "Strange Fruit."

Columbia Records refused to record it. Despite the fact that radio stations refused to play it on the air, it rose to #16 on the music charts? "Strange Fruit" exemplifies what Kristeva means by "revolt," through its subversive passion, its deconstructing representation, it created a social space in which the brutal expression of racism, lynching, could be taken out of the dark of night and placed in the spotlight to confront denial and to stimulate public witnessing. Its images addressed a need, psychic and communal.

Limit-acts and the imagination

In our lives we come up against what Alvaro Vieira Pinto and Paolo Freire call "limit-situations," situations which block our freedom, and which are often initially experienced by us as fetters and insurmountable obstacles. Refusing to accept the usual idea of "limit," Vieira Pinto says that limit-situations can be seen not as "impassable

boundaries where possibilities end, but the real boundaries where all possibilities begin": they are not "the frontier which separates being from nothingness, but the frontier which separates being from being more" (quoted in Freire, 1989, p. 89).

As a recent émigré to California from Boston, I have found myself living in the dark shadow cast by the United States government's creation and maintenance of the U.S.-Mexico border, an embodied limit-situation that is stark in the misery it creates by extracting human labor to sustain privileged life styles that result in countless people sliding into poverty, often separating families, and-as though that were not enoughtaking the lives of many who in desperation try to cross this man made border. This past summer I joined a work camp of sixteen teenagers and eight adults sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee. We set out on a pilgrimage to Maclovio Rojas, near the Tijuana border. The AFSC has developed an ongoing relationship with Maclovio Rojas, helping with community projects and providing a witnessing presence to discourage ongoing assaults on the community by the Mexican government. Here I experienced a place where image work is central to discovering the other face of the limit-situation, where possibility breaks in on demoralizing life conditions. I am grateful to Manuel Mancillas (1996,1998, 2002) for his writings about Maclovio Rojas, and for his generous conversation with me about this community. I draw my account largely from his.

In 1988 twenty-five women and their families migrated from Oaxaca to a dusty hillside area southeast of Tijuana near the U.S.-Mexico border to find work. Since NAFTA this area has spawned huge factories to produce American goods with cheap Mexican labor. The working conditions are notoriously poor, with inadequate safety

precautions, and often even lack of adequate ventilation. Workers are poorly paid and are expected to work overtime, often for no compensation except the retention of their jobs. Many young people work for less than a dollar an hour, receiving from \$35 to \$50 dollars for a six-day week. 58% of jobs in the Tiajuana area are in the *maquiladores*; with over one million *maquiladora* workers in Mexico as a whole. *Maquiladores* or sweat shops are foreign owned assembly plants. The products they make do not flow back to the communities creating them. The components they assemble rarely come from Mexico and their assembly does profit the Mexican economy.

The families formed a land-squatter community, building their homes from cast off American garage doors. They were banking on a Mexican law that gives to such squatters the land on which they have lived after a certain number of years. In the past 14 years more than 1200 families have settled in Maclovio Rojas, no more than 600 acres. There is no governmental provision of electricity, sewer system, or clean water. Both electricity and water must be pirated from supplies running to neighboring *maquiladores*. Their story is emblematic of the human suffering United States' policies have created at the border through the implementation of NAFTA. It is also emblematic of noble efforts to wrest dignity even in grossly inhospitable circumstances. Community dreaming and the art making that flows from it are central to this effort. They are not sufficient, but they are key ingredients.

Their community is named after Maclovio Rojas Marquez, a Mixteca Indian from Oaxaca, who traveled with his family to the North, looking for agricultural work. In San Quintin, Mexico he became the Secretary General of the CIOAC, an effort to establish the first union in Mexico for farm workers, a union to fight for decent working and living

conditions. In 1987, when Macolovio Rojas was only 24, an anti-union grower contracted his murder by having him run over with a car.

The community leaders at Maclovio Rojas struggle for their own existence, having suffered both being jailed and put under house arrest for their role in fighting the Mexican government's attempt to dislodge Maclovians from the land and their homes. While legally entitled to the land at this point, the value and desirability of the land has skyrocketed due to the expansion of the *maquiladores* in this area. The neighboring Korean Hyundai plant that makes trailer-cargo containers is eager to annex the land in Maclovio Rojas and the government would like them to do so.

Maclovians draw inspiration from the Zapatista movement in Chiapas that has encouraged communities to form cultural centers of resistance that can help to mobilize and support community self-determination and dignity. In 1995 the leader of the Zapatistas, Subcomandante Marcos, convened the first National Democratic Convention from a stadium stand called *Aguascaliente*, hot springs. Six months later when the government betrayed the peace negotiations, the government destroyed this site. Marcos then called for such cultural centers of resistance to be built in communities throughout the world.

The people in Maclovio answered this call and began to build a community center in a small shed with the beginnings of a stage in an open area. Such sites of resistance have been called "public homeplaces." bell hooks (1990) describes public homeplaces in the African-American community as providing "the warmth and comfort of shelter, the feeding of our bodies, the nurturing of our soul. There we claimed dignity, integrity of being; there we learned to have faith" (pp. 41-42). In Bond, Weinstock, and Belenky's

(1999) discussion of public homeplaces art-making is seen as essential to the expression of experience, to the welcoming of marginalized voices, and to the emergence of common dreams.

Manuel Mancillas and Michael Schnorr, of the Border Arts Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo (BAW/TAF), enter the story as the public homeplace of the *Aguascaliente* began to emerge. Mancillas had met Maclovio Rojas Marquez before his death and believed he had a photograph of him. When he met some friends who told him they had spent the day in Maclovio working on the community center, he had the idea of offering to paint a mural of Marquez. He and Schnorr went to visit the community who liked their idea.

The Border Arts Workshop was created as a transborder partnership to work on issues around the U.S.-Mexico border. Like many public art projects a lot of the community workshops they had done up to this point had not involved a long-term commitment to the community and had limited community participation. As they spoke with the Maclovians they began to see a different possibility for their work, one of a collaborative partnership that could evolve over the long haul, one that combined art-making with the ongoing social struggle of the community, and that linked people from both sides of the border to dream past the U.S. government's present policy regarding the border. They offered to help create further murals and to help build a larger community arts center where art and ceramic classes could be taught. At this moment the three leaders of the community were arrested and there was a 400 mile march planned to protest their imprisonment. Their involvement with the community became one of

that houses the stage came to depict the struggle of the Maclovians for their land and homes, including scenes from the march of 400 of its citizens. On one of the interior walls, the Maclovians have painted "...luchamos por el derecho de una vivienda digna" ("We fight for the right to a dignified way of life"). The murals are a form of what Aurora Levins Morales (1998) calls medicine history, a radical history which distills" a legacy of pride, hope and rebellion from ordinary people's lives," as opposed to imperial history which is used to strip hope and further agendas of domination (p. 5). Such medicine history, she says, is medicine for the "cultural and psychological effects of poverty, enslavement, intense racism, and patriarchal colonial rule" (p. 5). It resists the amnesia engendered by those attempting to escape accountability. As they involved the young people in the design and execution of the murals, further images came forth. Mancillas stresses that these images were not born out of formal focus groups, but out of day-to-day living with the community and being involved in all the facets of community life.

One such image was of a night-flying woman, soaring over the community, parallel to the earth. Perhaps this image is expressing some of the qualities of the women founders and present leaders of this community. The image shows the woman at night released from earthly constraint, reaching past the dictates of what is, of who one is, and drawing on the resources of the night for visions and dreams for the world below. Perhaps it is an image drawing on the tradition of the night-flying of women shamans or *curanderas* in Oaxaca (see Martinez-Cruz, 2003), a mystical tradition that may feed the springs of creativity in this community.

The backside of the community is separated by a hilly area and is particularly susceptible to annexation by the *maquiladores*. To protect this land for the community a

plan was conceived to create a cemetery, as burial space is scarce in Tijuana. From its involvement with border issues, Border Arts Workshop suggested that a cemetery for the community be combined with a place where unidentified Mexicans in San Diego County could be buried, John Does. The site would also be the first memorial for victims of the U.S. Operation Gatekeeper.

We all know that our economy profits not only from the cheap labor of the maquiladores, but from that of undocumented workers, whom our government calls "aliens" and treats as criminals; obscuring the criminality of our governments passively sanctioning the use of their labor, while publicly decrying it to avoid the provision of fair wages, health care, education and rights of citizenship to those who labor for our welfare. This hypocrisy is further enacted by Operation Gatekeeper's new policies regarding the border. The U.S.-Mexico border, as we know, is far too long to monitor successfully. Nor would the government want to successfully patrol it, as we are dependent on the labor that crossing it provides. The government would like to avoid the embarrassment of people flowing across freely in an urban area like San Diego. So out of discarded Gulf War materials a new barrier is being created in San Diego that all know will not diminish the numbers crossing, but which has been successful in pushing migration into the desert in Arizona. Due to the intense heat and cold of the desert, and to the unscrupulous behavior of human coyotes who after taking their travelers' money abandon them to the harsh desert, 1500 have died crossing in the last five years since the institution of Operation Gatekeeper, many others have been subjected to rape and abuse. One third of these deaths have happened at the California/Mexico border.

The teenagers I traveled with had the summer before spent days constructing and painting white wooden crosses for each of the border's victims. This summer we returned to paint the wooden backdrop to the cemetery. Covered with yellow and red paint and sweat from working in the intense summer heat, these relatively privileged teens came close to lives quite different from their own, as each cross they painted symbolized a life needlessly lost due to the hypocritical policies of the U.S. government. The cemetery is called the Pantheon of Maclovio Rojas. Artists of international renown have come to work on pieces of art that are gradually transforming this barren hillside into a museum, memorial, and cemetery, where the dead are honored and whose presence, it is hoped, will protect the living from further encroachments on their community and homes. The fame of the international artists and the interesting work they are creating will hopefully give the government pause. To bulldoze a living museum known by others around the world, a memorial to Mexico's own citizens, and a graveyard would require an embarrassing show of brutality by the government. Here art itself bears witness, where otherwise further encroachment by corporate capitalism would erase the community and its creative, persevering struggle for community individuation.

Winnicott, a psychoanalytic theorist, talked about the need for the analyst to provide a protected, safe, reliable, what he called "transitional space," in which experience can freely arise; a space that welcomes what is neither wholly private or public, inner or outer. Having arrived at Maclovio Rojas in the dark, I was struck in the morning when I woke up on the upstairs porch of the *Aquascaliente* to see Maclovio Rojas looking at me, his image asking me and others to come into relation to his struggle, shared by Maclovians. Like the analyst, images of such figures protect the space and

invite the viewer to remember the struggle for what Freire calls the vocation of humanization, to move from being objects of a culture we are passively used by to standing in opposition to dehumanizing processes, taking on the task of creating and claiming a different future. The preservation in art of such figures in our moral imagination is critical. At an elementary school in the largely Latino Mission District of San Francisco, Cesar Chavez protects the asphalted play space of the children, reminding the children in English, Spanish, and Chinese: "Help me take responsibility for my own life so I can be free at last." On the right side of the mural, Dolores Huerta, who has continued Chavez's work, is cutting open a chain link fence, helped by a mighty falcon near her right shoulder. She hands a ribbon to a girl that says "Si Sé Puede," lending her example and encouragement to the children in the mural and to those playing beneath it.

In a public library in East Los Angeles, a portrait of Mary Bethune (sp?), the founder of the first college for African-Americans in the South looks over the school children studying below engaged, reminding them of the liberatory potential of their studies. Now in the face of war young people in Los Angeles are busy at night pasting drawings of Martin Luther King, the Dalai Lama, and Gandhi on to lampposts and the walls of building. Beneath each simple portrait, appears a word "Waiting," "Watching," or "Dreaming." These images provide ancestral witness and inspiration to us in our current impasse to engender peace instead of war. Under the protective, watchful eye and embrace of a cultural father or mother, we are oriented by such images to the values

incarnated in their living, as we pursue our own studying, playing, art making, and activism.⁵

"In Dreams Begin Responsibilities": Prophetic Dreaming and Moral Pilgrimage

...the map to a new world is in the imagination, in what we see in our third eyes rather than in the desolation that surrounds us.

Robin Kelley, 2002b, p.B8

Deborah Saunders (2003), an African American cultural worker and leader speaks of how she was helped to develop a prophetic voice. Her grandmother would first ask her to still herself and to listen for the voice of God. Then, importantly, she would ask the child, "What did you hear?" Slowly Saunders' life became a rhythmic motion orienting to the still, small voice of God, bringing her experience of it forth in community in relation to others' visions, and then working through action with others to honor the prophetic voices and images. This year I had the deep pleasure of encountering such a prophetic image and to witness the moral pilgrimage it is inspiring.

After 9/11 when the United States began bombing Afghanistan, Edith Cole, a woman in her seventies, sat one Sunday morning in Quaker meeting, feeling the deep sadness of the situation and asking for guidance for a way to be in relation to what was tragically unfolding. Another woman arose to share something from her worship, and was used the metaphor of different ways to help someone when he is drowning such as throwing him a life ring or forming a human chain to help pull him from the water. Edith

⁵ For resources on the use of public murals and art for community identity, renewal, and transformation see www.sparcmurals.org (Social and Public Art Resource Center), www.muralarts.org (Mural Arts Program), Dunitz (1997), Younge (1988), www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy

⁶ A line of Yeats, borrowed by Delmore Schwartz for the title of his poem "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" (see Watkins, 1987).

said she immediately recognized that this was the image she was waiting for. She grasped that this image of forming a human chain allows not only the recipient to be pulled to safety but that it helps those in the chain to actively embody their concern as they witness the danger and difficulty of the drowning person. Through the eye of the image she came to understand that she needed to find some way of responding to the war that would not only have the possibility of helping those in Afghanistan, but also to help those of us in America who were and are feeling deeply about the bombing and occupation and who need to be in some form of human relationship with the Afghans. Her clarity on this point was /is very moving to me: that we are in as much need as they to be in relationship to one another in this dark time.

She says she had no idea what this response would be, that it was the image of people forming a human chain, connecting across space amid difficulty that oriented her. Her daughter had married a Pakistani and Edith was due to visit them in Pakistan. She and a colleague and friend, Joe Franko, decided to go and visit the Afghan refugee camps to see what their needs might be. While there one person mentioned the need for a 1000 blankets: another for food. But Edith could feel that these single acts were not the right embodiment of the image that was guiding her. At one point she met with a group of women and Joe with a group of men. Both, however, given their histories as a school psychologist and as an educator, had been attuned to listening to the needs of schools for Aghan children. When they reconvened they realized they had come away with different impressions. Joe had heard that there was no school for Afghan girls at the camps. He had given his card to a man who said he wanted to create one in case he might need some assistance. Edith had heard there were three schools that had some girls. She decided

that on her next trip she would take the 2000 notebooks she had been asked for (14 cents each), so that she could visit the schools and see for herself if they existed and if they had further needs.

The first school she visited on her next trip had 1000 students, some of whom were girls. It was in fairly good shape, as were the other two schools she saw. At the last one the principal asked her if she would like to see a very poor school that was really struggling. She said she did and found it was in yet another refugee camp. When she arrived she saw some eroded mud walls, without a real roof, with the students exposed to the elements. Due to the shortage of wood the roof timbers had been taken long before as people traveled back to Afghanistan. The students had no notebooks or books. There were mainly boys. In speaking with the principal he said he had a dream of creating a school for girls. Edith immediately resonated with this dream, and saw helping to create such a school as a way to activate the image of the human chain that guided her. She helped the principal write a proposal for a school for 200 girls and six teachers that Edith would then bring back to America to seek funding for. As she was leaving, the principal said he had met someone else who might be helpful. He pulled out a card from his wallet, and it was Joe Franko's, her colleague, who had given it to him some months before. This confirmed her sense that, as Quakers put it, "a way had opened."

It is now a year later and there are 400 girls at the school. It has been difficult keeping teachers because they are understandably eager to return to Afghanistan when they can. Edith Cole and Joe Franko go back and forth four times a year to help in the development of the school and to hear its ongoing needs for support. Back home they meet with an advisory board of people who have felt moved to witness and support their

work, joining hands in the human chain Edith saw on her initial vision. As part of that board I can attest to the healing power Edith imagined would be possible from being a small part of such a chain.

I saw in Edith's approach a confirming resonance with the approach we have developed at Pacifica Graduate Institute for depth psychologically oriented cultural and ecological fieldwork and research.

Listening to the imaginal field for the image(s) that call us, be it from dream, conversation, newspapers, art, poems, songs, movies

Honoring the images that haunt us through study, reflection, participation, and action

Participation with a given community so that one can begin to learn where, as Buechner (1993) puts it, our deep gladness meets with the deep hunger of the world. The particularity of our lives gives us each unique paths between the depths of who we are and community and ecological life.

Preparing the ground so that the way can open requires a suspension of premature knowings, a careful listening to the dreams of the community, and an ability to patiently wait for a resonant chord that links individual and community life at their deeper levels

Once the opening has been found, a sustained careful listening informs our participation. Such participation heals, as it creates, self and community.

We are in need of such healing. Depth psychology could use its sensitivities and practices to support the multiplicities of healings this time requires. As imaginal

psychologists we must use our abilities to ask people to dream and image in relation to the limit-situations we struggle with, and then to listen together to the emerging images in a way that bears witness.

Without public homeplaces to do such listening we are each left alone to struggle with the images that haunt us. When Adolf Harash, a Russian psychologist, traveled to Chernobyl after the nuclear accident to offer trauma assistance, he was struck by the number of plant workers who reported that they had dreamed of the plant's malfunction, but had never discussed their dreams and fears to those close to them, let alone to the plant management, whom it was feared would feel such forebodings to be almost unpatriotic.

Without a witnessing community the images that find us fall to the status of mere fantasy for we fail to find relation to their catalytic, dynamic power (see Casey, 1976), what Hillman (1983) has called their archetypal nature, to allow their inner embers to emblazon our patience in meeting their implicit ethical demands. When our relationship to images falls into being a pastime, we sever ourselves from the regeneration they might otherwise provide. The depth of meeting the ethical demands of the image together in our ongoing living is replaced by the superficiality of being stimulated by an ongoing barrage of prepackaged images in commercials, television, and political discourse that aim to program our consumption and elicit our complicity while eroding opportunities for dialogue, debate and public dreaming.

"the inexhaustible ovary of another way of being..."

Danilo Dolci (1987), the Sicilian poet and social activist who helped to free Sicily from the oppressive grasp of the Mafia, says, "perhaps the pollen of words penetrates the inexhaustible ovary of another way of existing." Dreams, images, and the actions they can give rise to provide such pollen.

In December 2002 I traveled to the island of Guana in the British Virgin Islands to attend a small ecopsychology gathering. It was there that I met Professor Liao, an ornithologist and biologist in his 70's who works each day to restore and preserve a peaceable kingdom on Guana. His making of sculptures, poetry, and songs is woven with his creating paths, planting new trees, creating breeding grounds for disappearing species of flamingoes and iguanas.

Liao was born into extreme poverty at the same latitude as Guana on Hainan Island in the South China Sea. He witnessed horrifying atrocities during World War II, his neighboring village doused with gasoline and lit afire by Japanese soldiers, who then machine gunned people fleeing the flames. Later he witnessed the assaults perpetrated during the Cultural Revolution. He changed his name from what is translated as "Dung beetle" to Wei-ping, "safeguard for peace," an apt name for the life that was to unfold. As a child he wanted above all else to learn, but had no money for school. He became a school janitor as an adolescent and gradually convinced the teachers that he should be given the chance to learn. In time he became a leading authority on the ecologies of Guandong Province and Hainan Island, which were in a serious crisis of erosion, with species dwindling. He met an American biologist, James Lazell, who was studying Guana Island, which turned out to not only be an island at the same latitude, but probably

having the richest wildlife diversity of an island of its size in the West Indies, and perhaps in the world. It shared many plant and animal species in common with Hainan Island. Liao understood that if he studied Guana, he might be able to create a plan of restoration for Guandong Province.

He knew there was a symbiotic relationship between certain bird and tree species that influenced the temperature of the ground, which in turn influenced local rainfall...Trees were the crucial link. Trees anchor topsoil and lower the temperature around them. When clouds passed over these cooler areas, their moisture condenses enough to fall as rain. If large numbers of trees die off or are cut, the topsoil around them washes away into streams—or in the case of a small island like Guana—the ocean. Scrub and bushes soon replace trees, but they do not hold soil or lower local temperatures nearly as well as trees. Rainfall decreases, and when it comes, it washes away more soil. The forest ecosystem—including the birds who nest in the trees and spread the trees' seeds—vanishes and is replaced by a hotter, drier local climate and an eroded landscape. The process often ends when the land becomes a desert…Dr. Liao hoped that Guana would show him precisely which species of birds and trees could be used to reverse the cycle and bring back the forests of Guandong and Hainan. (Van Lare, 2001)

In the process of studying Guana, he found it too was beginning the process of erosion, and so he also developed a plan to increase forest, bird, and plant species there. After going back and forth for a number of years, Liao now makes his home on Guana, combining biological study with ecological restoration and art. As he walks with visitors to the island, the images in his poems, his Chinese songs, and hand hewn sculptures are part of the ecology of the place; called forth by the landscape, but not standing out from it. Their simple beauty is resonant with the beauty of the place itself. His acts of restoration, like our own, are responses to the way the world addresses him and us. Standing in his orchard garden, where he is familiar with each tree he has planted and sheltered until it could grow on its own, he shares that one day at dusk as he was finishing his work he heard the words, "I love you" coming from his own banana plant. His solidarity with the place has created a space to open where the trees and creatures

address him as though in a dream, and where resonant images as expressed in his sculpture and poetry unfold to mark the community relationships that he nurtures.

These sculpted images, as the paths he has created and the trees he has planted are akin to the idea of the Sabbath in Judaism. The Sabbath is thought of as a homecoming, to our source and to our destination (Heschel, 1951,p. 30), a time during which we become attuned to the ways in which Paradise is already upon us, to how existence is completed and fulfilled. It awakens us to the latent possibility of such homecoming in each moment. In Hasidism it is believed that heaven and earth are one, though moved apart. Buber says we were "created for the purpose of unifying the two worlds [through] holy living, in relationship to the world in which [we have] been set, at the place on which [we] stand" (p. 41).

Our communities have need of pollination by images that bring us into creative relationship with the limit-situations of our time, that nourish us with the sense of the possible, that refresh our spirits, renew our hope. What is the image that haunts you, as the photo of the lynching of teenagers Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith haunted Abel Meeropol, which led to the writing of "Strange Fruit"? What is the history in your community that needs to be placed on a public wall to inspire and educate, to be retrieved from the processes of social amnesia? What are the limit-situations that your particular being is attuned to which dreams and imagination must be brought to bear? What is the dream or image that could provide a path for you in relation to others, to link your own well-being and liberation to that of others, like Edith Cole's image of linking hands in the face of drowning that led to the creation and nurture of the Afghan girls refugee school? And in your efforts to forge a bit of heaven on earth, what images might flow from

psyche to grace our shared spaces, as Liao's wooden sculptures showed our capacity to create in resonant relation to the rest of creation?

Our relationship to the imaginal is crucial for the building of "splendid cities," of the Beloved Community. We must be careful not to sequester its images in small ideas of who we are and upon what our well being and soul depend. We have often been too quick to use dreams to secure our boundaries within a personal self that opens periodically to a collective set of so-called universals that sidesteps culture, community, and nature. There is danger here. We do not want to be like the poor souls who upon hearing recently that the U.S. had been placed on the highest terrorist alert rushed to duct tape their windows and doors, only to find out several days later that such a secure environment is one ripe for asphyxiation. Individualism's tropism to retreat to the narrow boundaries of an encapsulated self needs to be countered by a turn to the creation of what Thich Nhat Hanh (1975) has called "communities of resistance," public homplaces where "people can return to themselves more easily, where the conditions are such that they can heal themselves and recover their wholeness," where they can come to see more clearly, where there is support for resistance to being "invaded, occupied, assaulted, and destroyed by the system" (p. 129). Such communities are created and nurtured by image.

The moral pilgrimage that require us and that our individuation requires is best undertaken in the company of others. Those tutored in depth psychology have a critical role to play in the opening of public spaces to receive and work with image. While not letting go of our sensitivity to listen in to such images in relation to the personal psychological life of the individual, we must not rest here. To do so would silently collude with the cultural forces that would have us accept this poor world as it is,

barreling toward the largest extinction of plants and animals ever known (see Ulansey, 2003), the death of countless indigenous communities throughout the world as the bureaucracies of the powerful seize their lands and negate their values, a world where racial and economic apartheid is accepted as an inevitable cultural terrain, and where the desire to bring our children and grandchildren up in a peaceful world can hardly be held as a hope without deep grief following close behind. It is into this world that we must welcome the embers of image that are gifted to us. We must together fan their glowing core with the breath of our attention and love, praying they will ignite in the reorienting of our lives and in the creative actions undertaken together in the light of their vision.

Arundhati Roy, author of <u>The God of Small Things</u>, talking to the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil (1/27/03) said, "Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing." If we listen together we too can hear this other world breathing on the ember images that will mark our paths. If only we can add our breath to hers...

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