

## **In (the) Place (s) of Thinking**

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In this article I explore the issue of the kind of thinking that recovers the roots of mind within nature, a kind of thinking that might qualify as a ground for a radical eco-psychology in the midst of our increasing ecological crises. The style of thinking that takes place in this essay was and is a kind of thinking that took place in a place. It was and is a way of thinking that arose from and within a landscape, specifically the majestic white emptiness of the Antarctic, which I visited in November 2009. It was and is a way of thinking that began at the edges of the 'round earth's imagined corners,' where one might fall out of words into the abyss, a way of thinking that one might call abysmal.

J.H van den Berg, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Martin Heidegger, James Hillman, Ed Casey, Michael Sypora, Christian Norberg-Schultz, among others, as well as a host of poets, especially Rilke, are some of the thinkers who over the years have informed my own thinking about thinking in place. I am indebted to them and they linger in the background of how for me thinking in place is a thinking that begins in the ear and not on the tongue, of how it is a style of mind that holds its tongue as it were while it is being receptive to being addressed, a kind of thinking that is responsive to otherness, including the radical otherness of nature, a way of mind that as receptive and responsive is response-able, that is able-to-respond because it has listened.

The beginning of this essay is not, however, identical with its origins, which go back more than forty years. Thinking in place means that ideas have roots, and if this essay has its beginning idea in roots in the splendid simplicity of the Antarctic world, then its originating ideas have their roots in the cultural and historical worlds of phenomenology and Jungian-

Archetypal psychology. In that soil, which I have described in some detail in two recent publications, a dialogue of ideas between these two ways of knowing the world and being present to it has shed light on the shadow of the scientific-technological way of thinking. Over the years, I have worked in the shadow of this style of mind, exposing its roots in works like *Technology as Symptom and Dream*, and “The Melting of the Polar Ice: Revisiting *Technology as Symptom and Dream*.” I have also explored over the years how this dialogue of phenomenology and depth psychology with scientific-technological thinking might have a therapeutic dimension, which I have tried to illustrate in the contexts of research, psychotherapy and education.

In this essay, I call thinking in place, that kind of thinking that has arisen between phenomenology and depth psychology, thinking as homecoming, and I contrast it with scientific-technological thinking, that kind of thinking I call here thinking in exile. This distinction, however, should neither be understood in either/or terms nor evaluated in terms of one being superior to the other. In an earlier essay, I spoke in detail about holding the tension between these two ways of thinking in terms of the differences between the way of the witness and the way of the critic. While the content of this essay owes much to its origins, its style is essentially informed by its beginning, formed by the place where it began. The silence and solitude of the Antarctic ensorcelled and transformed me beyond my wildest expectations. In moments that felt both hauntingly familiar and strange, I realized that in that place I had in some ways come home to a place that never was and always has been, and that in this homecoming I was still and would always be on the way home.

The issue of this essay’s style poses a challenge. How do I write about an experience that keeps its fluidity alive and thus remains true to its transient, fleeting, ephemeral qualities. Trying to capture the experiences

of such momentary epiphanies is like trying to hold ice in the palms of one's hands. The ice melts within one's grasp and the liquid it becomes slips away and indeed more quickly the more one tries to grip it more tightly. Like water naturally drips through one's fingers despite one's intentions, these elusive moments drip through the fixed categories of mind and reason.

I am neither philosopher nor poet. I am a psychologist who over the years has found himself in between the philosopher and the poet and their different styles of saying, inclined at times one way and then the other. In this essay I lean toward the side of the poet, toward a style that is deliberately descriptive and as such an invitation into a conversation about how between exile and homecoming we make our way. Or, if one prefers, my style is an invitation to eavesdrop on some stories I am telling while ambling my way towards home. In the ways of conversation and story, I am, therefore, less concerned with the logic and linearity of my remarks, and more concerned with their rhetorical and persuasive effects. In this context, my remarks are offered through a series of vignettes about thinking as homecoming and thinking as exile, punctuated now and then with some brief interludes.

### **Soul on Ice**

The perfect stillness of the ancient ice,  
In the early morning of the world's light:  
A blank white page  
before the trace of the word.  
It is snowing inside us.  
It has been snowing inside us for thousands  
of unnumbered nights  
beneath the cold blue stars.

A vast landscape of awful beauty lives within.

That poem was written one evening aboard the MS Fram after one of the landings that my wife and I had made during our journey to the Antarctic in November 2009. I use the passive voice here intentionally because it is truer to my experience of being there. In the stillness and silence of that vast white landscape, there were so many occasions when the 'I' who I was and have been slowly dissolved. More than thirty years earlier I had had a dream in which I met an old man sitting by the side of a road in an abandoned gas station whose weathered sign said, 'Last Gas Before The Arctic Circle.' That old man held my gaze as he pointed his ancient crooked finger north and said to me, "Bring fire to the ice."

In the solitude of the Antarctic, the dream came back to me. The dream that I had forgotten had not forgotten me. Thirty years melted away, and two roads—north and south-, and two landscapes—inner and outer--, became one, and all the words in between seemed at that moment hardly a beginning. Did I dream that dream thirty years ago, or did the ice dream me?

In not forgetting me, the dream dis-membered and re-membered me. How strange it was that in this place so far from home, in a wilderness that is perhaps the last place where one might still sense the presence of the early morning of the world before the trace of the word, I was overtaken by the presence of the orphan who was on the way home. In this uncluttered place, the busy ways of the world had no place--at some primordial beginning I was beginning to be again. In this place of beginning, nature was not first a problem to be solved; it was first a mystery to be lived. 'Antarctica: Inner journeys in the Outer World' and the clip of it embedded with this essay is about that mystery, about the majesty of the ice and how it addressed me, forced me to listen, bewitched me, wove its mysteries

around me, and awakened in me a longing that has deep roots, the longing of the archetypal orphan who heard in the sounds of silence the long slow night of an ancient deep serenity.

As I sit now in my study, the question that has haunted me for many years returns: How did we get so far from home?

### **Galileo's Telescope**

He pointed it at the stars  
and invited the assembled schoolmen to look.  
The moon, he said, had craters on it.  
Too shocked by such blasphemy  
that corrupted its perfection,  
they refused his invitation.  
With their beliefs held firmly in place,  
they retreated to their books  
and plotted their revenge  
as their world tumbled into oblivion.

Galileo is as much a symbol as he is a fact. As a symbol he mediates between a way of thinking and being in the world that has become taken for granted and as such functions globally as the ideology of science and technology, and what that way of thinking leaves behind and forgets. In this context, we have all become Galileo; we all have telescopic eyes!

In *Technology a Symptom and Dream* I traced the development of the scientific-technological world-view, of which Galileo is a type, to its origins in the 15th century invention of linear perspective art. Immersed for many years in the research for that very complex task, I began to appreciate that alongside

the many wonderful achievements of this way of thinking was a sacrifice that had to be made. One key aspect of that sacrifice was the epistemological assumption that we can best know the world the more distance we have from it. The rituals of that sacrifice demanded cutting the bonds between a mind that would now separate itself from the flesh of the body and its erotic ties to the flesh of the natural world. The practice of that ritual transformed mind into a spectator behind a window with its eye upon the world, body into a specimen for the anatomical gaze, and the world of nature into a spectacle to be mapped, measured and quantified for our use.

Writing the book on technology was, unbeknownst to me, a step toward the Antarctic. Working on it I began to feel a sense of loss, whose origins I could not fathom. I knew only that that the sacrifice demanded by this way of thinking that mapped, measured and quantified the world left a residue of sorrow for the world that in its sensuous beauty and allure was slipping away. Deeper still was a sorrow born of the realization that not only had the sacrifice itself been forgotten, but also that the sorrow for what had been sacrificed was evident by its absence. Indeed, this forgetfulness and absence of sorrow was at the very origins of the book, a book that I did not even conceive or ever planned to write. It started for me with an innocent stroll in a museum when my young son, standing in front of a painting by Giotto—'Lamentation'-- that predated the origins of linear perspective art, said in a loud voice to me that that guy did not know how to paint. He was sure of it because, he said, the bodies of grief gathered around the tomb and the dead body of Christ looked like cartoon figures. And indeed he was right because those bodies had not yet become anatomical specimens. The invention of the modern anatomical gaze was awaiting its birth within the context of the development of linear perspective vision.

A museum can be a place of unexpected epiphanies, and on that day I

glimpsed for the first time that the scientific-technological way in which we perceive the world and which has become a cultural and global habit of mind had forgotten its origins in the invention of linear perspective vision. My young son's remark was evidence of that amnesia, and in that state of forgetfulness Giotto's figures of lamentation could only be 'cartoonish' figures, bodies with no insides and with strange elongated arms all out of proportion with the anatomical body we have come to equate with the reality of the body. Not unlike the emotional impact of the landscape of the Antarctic, my young son's remark awakened in me the sense of a lost world.

Giotto's figures of lamentation belong to a lost world, which, though forgotten, still lingers in the depths of the collective imagination and expresses itself everyday in the ways in which we live the world straight-forwardly and under special and specific conditions, like, for example, a medical examination, transform the bodies that we are into bodies that we have.

During a causal stroll through a museum on an ordinary day, Giotto's figures of lamentation became occasions of remembering, invitations to come home to the body one is, to the body in place whose gestures and postures are the expression of a living emotion, situated bodies that live in the world with others to whom they make their appeals, living bodies in a tableau, gestural bodies, as I called them, and not specimens.

It is and has been a long journey from that day in a museum in the hot, sunny, dry landscape of Fort Worth, Texas to the cold, dark, wet, and icy landscape of the Antarctic, a journey on a road that was not deliberately mapped. The road was opened not via an idea but via a mood, that mood of sorrow. That sense of loss and the sorrow that it brought turned one kind of thinking into the other. Loss of a world and the sense of sorrow left in its

wake opened a road into thinking as homecoming.

### **The Gorilla and the Orange**

It was a dark winter day when I made a visit to the zoo. I have always been drawn to zoos in moments of melancholy, pulled by a loneliness and a hunger that beckons me toward the animal. Winter days, particularly in mid-week, have always been for me the best time for such visits, as they allow solitude and a private time with the animals.

On this occasion I was going to see the gorillas. Standing in front of the cage of a large, silver-back male, I keenly felt the presence of the bars between us. The gorilla was sitting in the front corner of his cage, and I could see him only in profile. On occasion, however, he would turn his head for a quick glance in my direction. His dark, black, deeply set eyes seemed like time portals, and in those few brief moments of exchange I felt dizzy, as if I was being drawn through his eyes into another world. But the gorilla would just as quickly look away, and the spell would be broken.

The cage was so small, especially for so large an animal, and I wondered how he could bear it. His lethargy was inescapable and I thought of the many hours of boredom he must daily endure, wondering, too, if I was reading my own sense of melancholy through him.

But I had also been with animals in the wild, and the difference in behavior and gesture was pronounced. Caught up in these reveries, I had absent-mindedly withdrawn an orange from my pocket and was tossing it in the air. The gorilla turned and began to watch me. Without thinking, I tossed the orange through the bars, momentarily oblivious to the prohibition against feeding the animals. The toss of the orange through the bars covered a distance of only a few feet in measured space and took perhaps only a second in clocked time. But the gesture and what

unexpectedly followed went beyond these calculative structures of time and space.

One would have expected the gorilla to take the orange and retreat to the far corner of the cage to eat it. But this gorilla did not. Instead, he tossed it through the bars back to me, I caught it, and in my astonishment, I tossed it to him again. We continued like this for perhaps three exchanges, until this ribbon between us, this gesture of play, was broken by the sound of a voice from the far end of the corridor: "Don't feed the animals!". When I turned toward the voice, the gorilla turned away. He retreated to the far end of the cage. He kept the orange.

I left the zoo and walked out into the city. The cold, dark, winter afternoon did little to cheer the sadness I felt at having left the gorilla inside. I was different, changed by that encounter, and even more lonely in the midst of the crowded city. The gorilla had suspended his appetite for a moment. For the sake of an encounter, he had bridged with his gesture an immense gap between our worlds. In that gesture of tossing the orange back to me, he had reached out his hand across an emptiness so vast as to be beyond measure. Together we had built a tremulous bridge of gestures. And for a brief time we stood on opposite sides of that bridge, connected in a way that seemed to acknowledge in each other some bond of connection.

Even to this day, as I recall the eyes of my winter companion on that cold, dark day, I know again as I did then that he remembered me, and as strange as it might sound, I feel again as before gratitude for his recognition. In this moment of recollection, I also remember the sadness I felt that we would remain forever more on opposite sides of that bridge, and that in the best moments of my life I would be able only to stop and linger and turn around to see, once again, what was left behind. I knew all that, and I knew too that what I saw in his eyes before the spell was

broken was his sadness for me.

### **Interlude**

Earlier I used the term flesh to describe that style of embodiment that has been sacrificed for the sake of mind divorced from the natural world, a sacrifice that has given rise to that style of thinking in exile. This term was coined by the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty to describe the carnal love affair between the sensual body and the sensuous world. While even a cursory presentation of this term is well beyond the boundaries of this essay, a few remarks will give some understanding of its meaning and its relevance to the toss of the orange between the animal and myself.

For Merleau-Ponty, flesh is the pivot where the things of the world, including the other, have their internal equivalence in me. In this chiasm, Merleau-Ponty says, “they arouses in me a carnal formula of their presence.” Illustrating this point he quotes the artist Paul Klee:

“In a forest, I have felt many times over that it was not I who looked at the forest. Some days I felt that the trees were looking at me, were speaking to me...I was there, listening...I think that the painter must be penetrated by the universe and not want to penetrate it...I expect to be inwardly submerged, buried. Perhaps I paint to break out.”

With verbs like penetrated, submerged, buried, Merleau-Ponty’s notion of flesh challenges any notion of mind as a disembodied spectator who inspects the world from afar, and who, as a subject over against the world as a spectacle, imposes meaning upon it. Flesh is the site of an impregnation by the other, the locus of a crossing where the dichotomies of subject and object and self and other are for a moment overcome. The elemental flesh is where self and other are for a moment dissolved, where

in fact for a moment the equivalence is an exchange, a transformation in which 'I' who look at a thing or at you am also looked at by things and by you, a site where one is simultaneously the one who sees and the one who is seen, the one who acts and the one acted upon.

In that game of toss between the animal and myself, the bars of separation that exiled each from the other were dissolved. In that place and time beyond calculative measure we were awakened to an ancient and mutual hunger for connection that is the flesh. The toss of the orange was an embodied style of thinking in place, a moment of thinking as homecoming.

### **Newton's Rainbow**

"Nature and Nature's law lay hid in night.  
God said, 'Let Newton be!' And all was Light."

The poem is the poet Alexander Pope's praise of Newton's way of seeing the light. In 1666 Newton went into a darkened room to explore the light, an action that in its very nature signaled a way of knowing that begins with a retreat from what he wishes to know, an act whose character illustrates a prior decision to think about the light in exile from it. In that room Newton cut a small hole in his window shade to funnel in one ray of sunlight, and between that streaming light now squeezed into that single ray and the far wall on the opposite side of his room, he placed a prism. And there in his darkened room and on that far wall Newton sees what those in the full radiance of sunlight outside his room do not ordinarily see. He sees, " Difform Rays, some of which are more refrangible than others."

No one can nor should dispute the accuracy of the achievement. But one can and should question how that achievement is understood and applied. When Newton leaves his room and goes back into the world he publishes

what he did and what he saw and in that article he makes an astonishing claim. In one sentence, tucked innocently enough within the technical details of his experiment, Newton says that his experiment makes evident “why the colors of the rainbow appear in falling drops of rain.” In his darkened room, Newton, who was also an alchemist, opened a path with this simple, elegant and even brilliant experiment that exemplifies the power and precision of how the light of mind in exile from the light of the world took its measure and, like a piece of magic, transformed the rainbow into the spectrum.

### **Interlude**

In the 1980s while I was working on my technology book, I was also volunteering to teach science to first graders. I did this because I was deeply concerned about the implications of teaching children in those early formative and impressionable years the facts of science without their contexts. One of the examples I used was Newton’s experiment, and I was always saddened but not surprised by how easy it was for so many of the children to forget that the rainbow as spectrum is not, for example, the rainbow as a promise of hope. I was never surprised but always saddened to see how straightforward it seemed to be for them to substitute the explanation for the experience, to forget this difference and equate the rainbow as spectrum with that epiphany of light in the world and even reduce the latter to the former.

Of course, these children were not spontaneously metaphysicians, but they had unknowingly imbibed a metaphysics inscribed within that way of thinking about the world in exile from it. Does it matter that nestled within this way of thinking was an amnesia for the world as we live it, an amnesia for what the phenomenologist J H. van Berg calls the first structure of existence, that world where, for example, the rainbow is the visible

expression of God's promise after the flood not to destroy the world?

Does it matter that, forgetful of the context of Newton's achievement, the first structure of the world as we live it where, for example, the rainbow exists within a cultural matrix of myths and stories like, for example, the pot of gold that is present at the end of the rainbow, has increasingly slipped away into the unconscious of that way of thinking in exile that has transformed the world into a spectacle? Does it matter that in this condition of amnesia the story of science with all its power, beauty, truth and majesty has become the story, the privileged story, the only story that counts as true and is worth believing, the only story that matters? How far down the road of exile we have traveled!

The passion that fuels this article and that has sustained my work these forty-five years is my commitment to the fact that it does matter. But not just to us, for that would be only a further expression of the will to power that characterizes thinking in exile, that masters the light of the world through the light of mind, a way of thinking that remakes the world in our own image through ideas and concepts that give us control over the world and subdue it to our own ends. Such a way of thinking is deaf to the other partner in the conversation. It is deaf because it has turned a deaf ear to the world.

Thinking as homecoming is an experiment in learning to hear again, in learning how to listen. How we think about the world matters not just or even primarily to us; it primarily matters to the world. The melting polar ice is its appeal to become more conscious of who we are when we do what we do.

Alexander Pope's praise of Newton's rainbow was a defense of the legitimate virtues of thinking in exile. John Keat's poem about Newton's

rainbow is a defense of a lost world, and as such opens a path of return to thinking as homecoming.

“Do not all charms fly  
At the mere touch of cold philosophy?  
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:  
We know her woof, her texture; she is given  
In the dull catalogue of common things.  
Philosophy will clip an Angel’s wings,  
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,  
Empty the haunted air and gnomed mine-  
Unweave a rainbow.”

### **If the Leopard Comes**

We set out in the Land Rover in the cold early morning. Michael, our driver and guide, had warned us to dress accordingly. Joe, our Xhosa tracker, took his customary seat on the hood of the Land Rover. I climbed into the front seat next to Michael, as Lawrence and Kate, my traveling companions jumped into the back. Soon we were in the midst of the sounds and the smells of the bush. The animals were already beginning their morning trek to the water hole and from our place in the hide we could watch the procession of bushbuck, antelope, zebra, warthog, and giraffe nervously take their turn. Their gestures seemed to register an invisible but permanent presence of lion and leopard.

On the drive back from the hide, Joe suddenly made a quick movement with his right hand. Michael stopped the Land Rover and both of them jumped out. They were looking at the ground where Joe had seen something. He bent low and very lightly brushed aside the sand. I could see nothing there except the tracks of other Land Rovers that earlier had

crossed the road. Joe stood up and smiled. He had found the leopard. The landscape showed it. Across the tracks of the Land Rovers were drag marks that indicated a leopard had pulled a kill over the ground. The leopard's spoor disappeared into the thick grass off to our left, but Joe seemed certain that the leopard had recently crossed this way. Michael came back to the Land Rover and took his rifle from the mounting across the windshield. He strapped on his side arm and said to the three of us, "Let's go."

We were walking into the bush to track the leopard. Joe, unarmed, had already entered. Did he know how far he could walk into the bush without Michael and the weapons? Did Joe know the leopard that well?

We met Joe on a small rise. He was standing there, motionless and waiting. Not speaking, he gestured to Michael that he was moving off to the left to enter the bush below the rise. Michael went off to the right. I wondered for a moment who to follow. Joe seemed to know where and when he would meet the leopard. Michael had the rifle and the gun. Neither man waited for a decision. I followed Michael, with Lawrence and Kate close behind.

We had walked about one hundred yards when we saw Joe again. He appeared from behind a clump of bush and said something to Michael that I could not understand, but which clearly indicated that he had found the leopard's kill. We followed him until we came to the base of a large tree and there on the ground were the remains of a half-eaten female bushbuck. Her throat had been sliced open by the leopard's paw, and the leopard had already eaten the hindquarters and some of the lower internal organs. The blood was still fairly warm. Apparently the leopard had moved off only recently.

To leave the kill on the ground would have certainly meant that the scavengers would claim it, and Michael was determined to draw the

leopard back. He decided to place the buck into the tree, to do the leopard's work as it were. We spent the morning moving the Land Rover through the thick bush to the base of the tree, hoisting the buck and securing it on the lowest branches. As we were lifting it, a few drops of the blood of the animal fell on our hands and clothes. The buck that the leopard had killed earlier that morning was now binding us and the leopard together with its blood. We knew we would return that night to wait for the leopard.

It was already late in the evening when we returned. The night was dark but there was a full moon. Framed by the branches and leaves of the tree where we had placed the buck, the moon was larger and closer to the earth than I had ever seen. Its yellow surface spread a cold white light onto the landscape immediately before us. To the right of us and beyond the tree, the bush reached deeply into a soft, inviting, blackness. In this landscape, we would wait without speaking. Watched by the moon we would wait in silence and in the night for the leopard to return.

*Driven by hunger, they would have overcome their fear and hunted the leopard. In the beginning, when night came, they would have gathered in the darkness, drawn together by their fear. The leopard was out there and together they would wait for the morning. For a few, however, the moon and its pale white light would draw away the fear and they would wonder. Dimly on the edge of a consciousness perhaps not yet fully born, they would feel drawn beyond the bush. The moon would overcome the leopard.*

*"Hello Houston. Tranquillity base here. The Eagle has landed!"*

The night had grown colder. Michael seemed to be asleep. Joe, still atop the hood of the Land Rover, was motionless. The bush was silent except for the

sounds of an occasional bird. I had awakened from my dream and when I looked up the moon had retreated. It was now far away. I felt cold, chilled by the knowledge of how far we had come waiting for the leopard.

We waited, but the leopard never came. We were too far away, strangers watched now by the leopard with a dim remembrance of kinship. The moon had separated us and was now a measure of our distance.

When the sun began to rise we drove away. The leopard had won. It had waited and I wondered if it would continue to wait for our return. We had left the bush so long ago, but it was still with us, and this, I felt, the leopard knew. Throughout the long night it had been waiting for us, but we were not yet ready. How long would it continue to wait?

### **Interlude**

“Hello Houston...The Eagle has landed.” Neil Armstrong spoke those words in 1969. They are connected to the moment in 1609 when Galileo tuned his telescopic eye on the moon. We began with Galileo and his vision of the moon, and we made our way into the darkness of Newton’s room where the light of the sun was made into a spectrum.

Two moons and two kinds of thinking! The moon of the African Bush on that evening more than twenty-five years ago is not the moon that Galileo examined from afar. We have an obligation to know the difference. That moon in the darkness and chill of the night was an intimate presence, which in inviting dream and reverie returned me to that subtle kinship with nature, with leopard and the bush and the night and the blood of the animal. That moon has grown far away, so far in fact that we have created and have had to create powerful energies to travel to the moon that Galileo saw through the telescopic eye.

“Hello Houston...The Eagle has landed!”

Two kinds of darkness and two ways of thinking! From the darkness of Newton's room a new world was born, a world measured mapped and made in our own image. From the darkness of the African night a dream, a dim remembrance, a reverie of and hunger for a lost world emerged.

"And yet, within the wakefully-warm beast  
there lies the weight and care of a great sadness.  
For that which often overwhelms us clings  
to him as well,-- a kind of memory  
that what we're pressing after now was once  
nearer and truer and attached to us  
with infinite tenderness. Here all is distance,  
there it was breath. Compared with that first home  
the second seems ambiguous and draughty." (Rilke)

### **The Melting Polar Ice**

The philosopher Martin Heidegger makes an important distinction between earth and world. In his later thought earth becomes for him the funding source of being that beckons us into the creative work of making worlds. More poetically, it is the same point that Rilke makes in his profound Duino Elegies:

"For the wanderer doesn't bring from the mountain slope  
a handful of earth to the valley, untellable earth, but only  
some word he has won, a pure word, the yellow and blue  
gentian.....  
Earth, isn't this what you want: an invisible  
re-arising in us?..."

Ideas have roots and thinking is a creative act that

transforms earth into world at the behest of--? The philosopher calls it being, the poet earth, and the psychologist calls it soul. It is not the name that matters; it is the experience of being responsive to what summons us into life.

The world that we have been making within the framework of thinking in exile is dissolving, and the melting polar ice is the earth's appeal to become responsive to this dissolution. The DVD that I made, 'Antarctica: Inner Journeys in the Outer World', is an aesthetic response to our global climate crisis, a visual, musical, poetic dream/reverie, which asks us to be still, invites us to sink deeply into ourselves through the images, music and words, into a dream of belonging, and challenges us to let go of our busy ways of doing in order to begin again to be.

That DVD ends with the image of the blue heart in the melting ice, the last photo I took on my journey to the southern ice. I caught sight of it at the last moment on the final landing and I cannot help but regard it as a vocation to become a spokesperson for that way of thinking that is a homecoming. What in us has to dissolve? What are we called to become in relation to the earth in this time of global environmental crises? That melting blue ice at the heart of that image is a call to awaken to our condition of exile.

We exist and make our way today between two ways of thinking, between two moons and two kinds of darkness. In this thin place we are faced with the task and obligation of knowing who is thinking and, in knowing that, becoming able to appreciate the differences between the thinker who thinks in exile and the thinker whose thinking is a matter of homecoming. Essential to this appreciation is the capacity to eschew our usual and familiar either/or ways of thinking, to get beyond evaluation and judgment. The differences are just that—differences--, and yet they are differences

that do matter.

As I near the end of this essay, I have before me the image of that same melting blue heart that is on the last page of the 2010 calendar of images from the journey to the Antarctic. It is December 31 and I wonder how long we might have before our capacity to become responsive to the appeals of the earth to awaken to the kind of thinking that has created our crisis disappears. We are at a pivotal moment and in this pivotal place I know two things.

One is that the kind of thinking that has created the crises is not only also a kind of thinking that is awakening us to the crises, but also a thinking that turns round itself toward thinking as homecoming. The satellites in earth orbit, for example, are mapping the extent of the retreating and melting ice. Seen from that distance, which is so much a part of the unfolding of Galileo's telescopic eye, the earth offers an image of itself that opens up both paths of thinking.

The second thing is that thinking as homecoming as it arises on the margins and edges of thinking in exile has at least the two qualities that the vignettes about Galileo's moon and Newton's rainbow suggested. While I could have chosen other vignettes to illustrate thinking in exile, I chose these two because each is a symbol of a deep psychological motif. The moon and darkness allude to the place of the feminine and the unconscious in thinking as homecoming.

Both of these qualities play a central role in Jung's psychology, which is among many other things a psychology that is responsive to the weight and wait of history, to the unfinished business of thinking in partnership with the earth, responsive to what remains unresolved and as yet unredeemed. In the ambience of this thought I offer a final vignette to close

this essay. It is about descent, darkness, the gap between the light of nature—*lumen naturae*—and the light of mind. It is a reverie of the gift of sorrow for what is left behind and the role of grief as a beginning of homecoming.

### **The Sea Lion Cave**

It is a relatively short drive from Eugene, Oregon to the coast where, if you are so inclined, you can turn north for the road to Florence. A few years ago I took such a drive with a colleague in order to see something of the rugged Oregon coastline. Quite unexpectedly we encountered an invitation, a sign on the side of the road, 'Sea Lion Cave,' so many miles ahead. It was raining and cloudy, as it had been for the four or five days we had been in Oregon, so it seemed like a good idea to have a destination.

At the entrance to the cave is a series of long winding stairs leading to an elevator that takes you the last 300 feet or so into its depths. By the time we had arrived the day was already quite chilly and the wind needled our faces as we stood on the outside platform awaiting our descent. Low, dark gray clouds hung close to the water intensifying my growing feeling of quiet isolation, as if the world in the physiognomy of this landscape was silencing the busy ways of mind.

When the elevator doors opened I was not prepared for the experience that awaited me--or was it waiting for me? The journey I had been taking in the world became a journey into the depths of soul.

I stood about fifty feet above the hollowed out inlet to view the sea lions, females actually with their pups born from the last mating. It is the largest rookery on the North American coastline, a deep, wide scar cut into the rocks by the perpetual thrashing of the ocean tides. How long this has gone

on is difficult to say, but I could not escape the impression of a kind of patient force at work here, a force of wind and tide marked with the index of eternity. Layer upon layer of rock has been sculpted by these forces and as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I saw that almost every inch of layered rock was pulsating and quivering, animated by the sea lions which inhabit that place. It was not, however, my eyes that drew me even deeper into the cave, because before I saw those rocks, I had already heard the incessant, continuous barking of those sea lions. Deep, throaty sounds had sculpted the space, and all around me those sounds, echoing off the cavernous walls, filled the air with a sense of perpetual, unending hunger.

In my descent into this cave, I was hearing the insistent voice of the animal soul, barking, pounding, rhythmical crescendos of longing, crashing like the tides against the rocks in the darkness of an everlasting night, blind appetites knowing nothing but hunger and its urgencies.

Animal flesh: appetitive, instinctual, voracious and eternal--the terror of the dark and of blind, carnal hunger!

I stood there, mesmerized by the sound, enveloped by it, and it was only in retrospect, only after noticing another feature of the landscape, that I realized the numinous power of this event and why and how it had affected me as it did. What broke my bewitchment by that sound was the dim ray of winter light that was weakly struggling to enter the cave from the upper right. I was hypnotized by that light when I saw it; I felt a cellular resonance with it, and in a way that was completely foreign to the light of my mind I knew that somehow I was once that light in the midst of all that darkness, struggling with the darkness, and perhaps even against it. In that moment, with a feeling of awe, terror, and sadness, I also knew that it was that light which distanced me from those sea lions, that light which placed between me and them an unbridgeable gap, that light which was at

that moment and had been once before the tremulous bridge we had crossed out of the blindness of those instinctual hungers, out of the darkness of the night.

How full of awe, however, that journey is and has been. Only in the crossing and only in it can we recognize not only what we have gained but also what we have also lost. Having taken the journey out of the darkness of the night; having struggled upward in a move that ascends from that light of nature that has descended and reached down into that darkness, we know we can never return to that kind of ignorance, which, perhaps, in not knowing the eternity of those hungers can perhaps better endure them.

It was time to leave and as I turned away from this landscape the sounds of that place of darkness drifted away. As I rode the elevator up from those depths of night to the surface above, I realized that the light of nature had ignited the spark that has become the light of mind. We had become the agents of nature's own increasing unfolding, its companion, as it were, in its on going experiment of coming to know itself. I felt in that moment grateful for this gift. But I also felt ashamed, wondering if we have forgotten our debt and obligation to this origin.