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Chapter Seven

Imagining Earth

Jules Cashford

Both Jung and Einstein, among many others, agree no problem can be solved by the same kind of thinking which created it. Einstein warned that 'With the splitting of the atom everything has changed save our mode of thinking, and thus we head towards unparalleled catastrophes' (Calaprice, 2000, p, 184). This helps explain why, in the face of a global crisis of unthinkable devastation, the overwhelming response of many of us, and certainly almost all national governments, has been to do absolutely nothing - almost as though it was impossible to imagine what to do. Jung added his own terrifying image: 'The world hangs by a thin thread, and that thread is the psyche of man' (Jung, film interview, 1959).

The urgent question then becomes: what was, and still is, the thinking that has brought about this crisis, and can we assume that we will even be able to recognize it? We might suspect a kind of thinking so powerful as to destroy life forms all over the planet issues from a distinctly specific and long-established view of the world, one we have been thinking in for so long it now 'feels natural.' Yet we also know no way of thinking exists in a vacuum. Rather, it comes from an almost inconceivable plethora of other thoughts and feelings and, more crucially, the values which underpin them, the way of life which comes out of them, and, ultimately, who we are as human beings, living together on our one and only Earth.

If this is so, then the members of our culture will not simply be able to 'decide' intellectually that our former world view, once so convincing, is now 'wrong,' and resolutely pledge to give it up. Would we not first have to understand where it came from and why we have failed

to question it for so long? Let us see if another culture with a radically different relationship to their Earth may offer us a perspective on our own.

In the Imagination of Ancient Greece, Earth, *Gaia*, 'Mother of All, the first to arise from chaos,' was always honoured as a living presence whose laws were written into the lives of all creation to whom she had given birth (Cashford, trans. 2003, p. 140). It followed that Gaia's law was related to the moral law of human beings, or, as we might now say, Nature and human nature at the deepest level were not separately configured. In other words, the order of Nature was for the Greeks a dynamic moral order, both an agent and a reflection of human life. The first king, Erechthonius was 'crowned' by Gaia, bringing him up as a baby out of her dark depths into the light. Just as, in ancient Egypt, two thousand years before, the Pharoah received his right to rule by being seated on the 'Lap of the Goddess Isis,' as his throne.

It followed that Gaia's law could be profoundly disturbed by the immoral and unlawful behaviour of human beings. Sophocles, in his *Oedipus Rex*, draws an Earth intimately related to the moral life of humanity. Oedipus, the King, is quite content in his unconsciousness until Earth suffers. Suddenly, the land of Thebes begins to die:

> A blight is on the fruitful plants of the earth,
> A blight is on the cattle in the fields,
> A blight is on our women that no children
> are born to them.
>
> (Grene and Lattimore, trans.1995, p. 112).

It is Gaia's protest which initiates the drama of Oedipus's awakening to who he is and what

he has done. Oedipus sends to the Delphic Oracle of Phoebus Apollo to reveal the cause: the slaying of his father and the marrying of his mother. And the oracle, whose first law was 'Know thyself' and whose second law was 'Nothing in excess,' now defines for all time the meaning of *pollution* as a human crime against the divine order, the profaning of what is sacred:

> King Phoebus in plain words commanded us
> to drive out a pollution from our land,
> pollution grown ingrained within the land.

The word for pollution in Greek is *miasma*, from *miaino*, to stain, coming into Latin via *polluere*, to soil, defile, contaminate, and further back from Proto-Indo-European (PIE) *leu*, to make dirty. All these terms draw on the original archetypal distinction between clean and unclean, which carried the further meanings of sacred and profane. The Greek word *Katharsis*, from the verb *Kathairo*, to cleanse, draws on these dual meanings, as does the 'immaculate' conception of the Virgin Mary, coming from the Latin *immaculatus*, meaning literally 'unstained, 'not spotted or defiled,' in body and spirit.

Here, the pollution is the presence of the unwitting murderer of Laius, the former king and Oedipus's father. When Oedipus discovers he is himself the pollution and leaves the city, harmony between the human and divine order is restored and Earth comes back to life. It is significant how, even without Oedipus's intention to do wrong, pollution occurs. Later, in reverse, in *Oedipus at Colonus*, the place, Colonus, where the older and wiser Oedipus is to lay his body in the Earth, will bring blessings to the people who live there. Again, Gaia and the children of Gaia are shown to be profoundly related.

So here, what happens to humans happens to Earth, and what happens to Earth happens to

humans – the soul of the one is also the soul of the other. Or, put another way, the human story and the universe story are one and the same. And without an innate harmony between them, both suffer – Earth and all creatures on Earth, including human beings. With so rich and complex a tradition who would have suspected this was the last time in the west the Earth was formally revered as sacred - nearly two and a half thousand years ago? Even to talk, then, of the sacredness of Earth is to press against the weight of two thousand years of religious and cultural history, together with conscious and unconscious assumptions about the nature of reality.

Perspectives on the Evolution of Consciousness

The philosopher and literary critic Owen Barfield (1898-1997) has offered a unique perspective on the evolution of human consciousness which has led us to this point, and suggests a way of looking at our history which may free us to imagine a way out of our present impasse. In his *History in English Words, Poetic Diction,* and *Saving the Appearances,* Barfield understands the evolution of consciousness as falling into three distinct stages of different kinds of what he calls 'Participation' with the world. To begin briefly with his definitions, which will be explored more fully later:

The first stage, existing from the beginning, he calls 'Original Participation,' which he describes as an *instinctive union* with the Earth and all her creatures, where the human individual soul and the Soul of the World are experienced as one whole. As in *Oedipus,* the human and the natural world, being indivisible, cannot be conceived in isolation from each other.

The second stage Barfield defines as a *withdrawal* of participation from the Earth, when the individual soul separates from the World-Soul. Earth then loses numinosity and is set in opposition to humanity, while the lost numinosity of Earth is then transferred to the inner life of human beings. At its best this leaves humans freer to explore the complexities of their own specific natures, but at its worst allows humans to exploit the now 'soul-less' Earth for human ends alone. The inevitable danger was withdrawing our instinctive participation from Earth meant not only would we identify exclusively with ourselves, but also specifically with our new experience of an independent inward life, no longer at one with the outward Earth. So we could no longer respond to, and learn from, our so-called 'animal instincts' - our longings, passions and terrors - which fell under the opprobrium of being too susceptible to the now banished non-human world. So, while we have finally become aware of the devastating consequences for Earth, and ultimately for ourselves as 'Children of Earth,' we may not realize we have also been distorting our own consciousness which may still carry the loss of 'the source' in some deep place of the heart. This may be another reason why we feel hopeless and helpless.

The third stage Barfield calls 'Final Participation.' He defines this as a new kind of participation with Earth, not in the old, original way – which in any case is impossible, consciousness inevitably moving on – but at a new *level* through 'the Imagination.' This involves, he explains, a *dual* relation to the world, which acknowledges our present experience of Earth as separate from us, but creates a new poetic union by participating with the natural world, consciously *and* imaginatively. The aim is to bring about a new kind of relationship with our Earth, recognizing our essential identity while exploring the specific human role of consciousness within Earth. And he sees this as the unique moral opportunity

of our time, offering a way to transform both of the earlier stages, reconciling them in a new whole.

All these stages of consciousness are understood as necessary, on an analogy of children 'growing up.' Yet while they are presented as *historical* phases, they are also phases inherent in all human consciousness. As we learn from our dreams, nothing in the psyche is ever lost; only our understanding of it may grow and change, and while *we* may forget, the psyche does not. So although Original Participation, for instance, is placed in the distant past, and Final Participation is suggested as the future, with 'Withdrawal of Participation' mediating in between, all three possibilities exist within us in different degrees, and one or another may take precedence at different times. May not all of us, on occasion, return to 'the infancy of the world when everyone was a poet and language itself was poetry' - Shelley's evocation of Original Participation by a different name (Shelley, 1995, p. 250)? It is only the experience of the numinous, Jung wrote, which brings about transformation in a person. (Jung, 1973, 1: 377).

As we are now in a late stage of 'Withdrawal of Participation,' we are at least in a position to look critically upon its limitations, and so also upon the limitations of ourselves at this point in history, even while recognizing that we are only able to do this because we have in fact already withdrawn participation from the whole. This offers a unique opportunity to consider whether this present state of withdrawal should be seen as a *phase* in the evolution of consciousness, and so *not* the only and ultimate way to relate to the world. In order to do this, it seems essential to 'get behind' some of the ideas which have been taken as absolute.

Original Participation

We might already understand this stage of human life through the familiar term '*participation mystique*,' coined by the anthropologist Levy-Bruhl; also from Palaeolithic cave art and the continuing way of life of Indigenous Peoples. More precisely, Barfield writes: 'The essence of *original* participation is that there stands behind the phenomena, *and on the other side of them from me*, a represented which is of the same nature as me' (Barfield, 1957, p. 42). This is not accidental or mechanical but psychic and voluntary, whether we call it the spirit world or mana or by the many names of 'God.'

The time of Original Participation was originally identified with the lunar cultures of the Goddess, where all children of the universe – animals, plants and humans - came from her body, and, being of the same substance, were related to each other, as in the Sumerian culture of Inanna-Ishtar and in early Greek thought. The world of early people was a Thou not an It; a presence both numinous and personal, and so a Subject in the dialect of thinking, not an inanimate object of thought. All life forms belonged to the same continuum of feeling and were related through imaginative sympathy: they did not have to be apprehended by different modes of cognition. What, in contemporary terms, we would now distinguish into the objective, natural world, and contrast with the subjective, human world, were inexorably bound together, so Earth was both more awesome - loving and terrifying - and more personal - peopled with divine presences. This is immanence, where the visible appearance and the invisible source are one and the same. For the ancient imagination was concrete, as was the origin of language, embedded in, and rising out of, deeply lived experience, similar, in this respect to poetry of all ages. This union was either destroyed, or gradually diminished, at different times around the world, though surviving in Britain in an attenuated form up to the 17th century.

Withdrawal of Participation

Broadly, in the Second phase, the Soul of the World lost its numinosity – beginning in the late Bronze Age roughly around 2000 BC, when nomadic tribes conquered the native agricultural communities and withdrew the immanent divinity from Earth, placing it either in the patterns of the heavens or in the invisible world, transcendent to all creation. Mythologically, this was the time when Gods of the Heavens – sky, storm or sun - replaced Goddesses of the Earth - Enlil and then Marduk in Mesopotamia, Yahweh-Elohim in Canaan. Typically, the old Mother Goddess - if she was there at all - was seen no longer as life-giving but as dark and chaotic and had to be slain for the sake of light and order. The Babylonian god Marduk slays the Sumerian Mother Goddess Tiamat, depicted as a dragon, by splitting her dead body in two to re-create heaven and earth.

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden, which stands at the beginning of our western tradition, registers this disruption of the original human bond with Earth. Yahweh-Elohim - creating the world apart from himself - brings a new polarity into life, of transcendence and immanence. In one of three creation myths in *Genesis* - when taken literally - we inherit a transcendent god, a fallen universe, original sin inherent in human nature, a curse on the Earth and child-bearing, and, more pervasively perhaps, a distrust of our own spontaneous natures from which Imagination comes. Numinosity was now found in what could *not* be seen or touched, the 'graven image' was forbidden, and even the longings of the heart were to be punished:

> If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking *in* brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand. This also *were* an

> iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have denied the God *that is* above. (*Job*, 31: 26-8).

Consciousness, for the first time, is defined as wholly beyond creation, not immanent in, or as, creation.

This worshipping of Transcendence was inherited by the Roman Christian Church - in astonishing contrast to the Immanence of the unedited Gnostic texts of the teachings of Jesus, only rediscovered in an urn at Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1948. In the *Gospel of Thomas*, we read:

> *Logion 77*: Jesus said: I am the All, the All came forth from Me and the All attained to Me.
> Cleave a piece of wood, I am there; Lift up the stone and you will find Me there.'
>
> (Guillamont *et al*, 1959, p. 43).

> *Logion 113*: His disciples said to Him: When will the Kingdom come?
> Jesus said: It will not come by expectation; they will not say "See, here", or "See, there".
> But the Kingdom of the Father is spread upon the Earth and men do not see it.
>
> (Ibid., p. 57).

By the 4th century AD, the orthodox Roman interpretation of Christianity had completely suppressed the Gnostics' understanding of a Jesus who belonged to this Earth, proposing

instead a heaven for believers and a hell to which ‘pagans’ went, a name from the Greek, ‘*paganos,*’ meaning ‘of the countryside.’ One seal remains:

Fig. 4 *Jesus as Orpheus and Bacchus/Dionysos. Haematite cylinder seal. c. 300 AD. Formerly in the Berlin Museum (now lost).(from Joseph Campbell’s Goddesses: mysteries of the feminine divine, © Joseph Campbell Foundation 2013 p. 255. Used with permission.)*

Jesus hangs outstretched on the cross, crucified, as one with *Orpheos-Bakkikos*, with the crescent moon of rebirth at the crown of the cross, and the seven stars of the Pleiades arching above, also known as the Lyre of Orpheus. Orpheus and Bakkos / Dionysos were also Greek names for Osiris, placing Jesus in the 3000 year old immanent tradition of the dying and resurrected gods of the Earth’s annual cycle of renewal and transformation. The image invites us to see through the outward names and forms to the shared essence within, so all these manifestations of the sacred are enriched through their mutual affinity – a joyous way of seeing life called Syncretism. But though the Gnostics’ Jesus belongs to the millennial tradition of a divine Earth, orthodox Christianity took ‘Christ’ out of the seasonal cycles of

natural life, proposing him instead as the saviour of human history from the ceaseless round of an inanimate Earth. Doctrinally, then, when taken literally, Christ would 'return' only at the end of time upon which time would end, and the world would then be 'redeemed' – though from what?

For nearly two thousand years formal Christian doctrine has perpetuated the oppositional paradigm of a Soul or Spirit belonging exclusively to human beings, while Earth and all Earth's non-human creatures were deprived of Soul or Spirit, and so presumed to have no feelings or needs, no intrinsic life of their own. They became simply inanimate objects to serve human purposes, effectively dead matter, forgetting that the word 'matter' came originally via *mater* for Mother. This can be seen in the history of the Church's attitudes to women and childbirth - the 'faeces and urine of birth' as St. Augustine puts it (Baring and Cashford, 1993, p. 530) - as well as anything 'earthly' belonging to 'this world,' along with its focus on original sin and the corresponding need for redeeming it. The idea of the universe as consciousness immanent in all creation was from the 11th century called 'heresy,' a word ironically coming from the Greek *hairesis*, to choose. Over the centuries, the Papal Bulls insisted on the literal 'virginity' of Mary, and also (logically) of her lineage, but did eventually concede to millions of pleas from Catholics all over the world for Mary to play a more significant role in the Christian story. She was declared 'Assumed into Heaven – Body and Soul' in 1950, and 'Queen of Heaven' in 1954 - to tumultuous applause in St. Peter's Square in Rome. But in a still doctrinally fallen universe, she was never called Queen of Earth. In many paintings and sculptures she sits enthroned with the Moon beneath her feet, often drawn as the black dragon of death complete with claws and tail, and Earth continues to be excluded from any kind of divinity. (Baring and Cashford, 1993, pp. 547-608). This polarisation is typically justified by a radical distinction between 'Spirit and Nature,' which

(to make matters worse) is not confined to doctrinal Christian thinking - formally arising with the pre-Socratic Greeks, and still lurking within the 18th century Enlightenment's 'worship' of Reason over Passion, and the superiority of the Inner over the Outer world.

Spirit and Nature

When 'Spirit' is contrasted with, or more doctrinally, *opposed to*, 'Nature,' it carries the implicit assumption that this is the way things are - that is, an objective reality, sad but true! Yet oppositions inevitably arise together, the result of a new way of looking at what was once one whole. It is then surprising to discover that the origin of our word 'Nature' (deriving from Latin) as an oppositional term to 'Spirit,' was only formulated by the pre-Socratics in Greece around 600 BC. Although people in Original Participation lived in a numinous world, this world would not have been called 'Nature' in the way in which we now use the term. 'Nature' is a Latin word from *Natus* meaning being born, and is itself a translation of the Greek *Phusis* – a verbal noun based on *phuo*, to 'grow, appear.' C.S. Lewis, Barfield's great friend – one of the 'Oxford Inklings,' along with Tolkien – points out, in his book *The Discarded Image*, that *phusis* was an idea first invented by the pre-Socratics around 600 BC to talk about the great variety of growing phenomena under a single name – *phusis* - instead of each place having its own different individual name for their own kind of growing phenomena, and everyone getting in a muddle. The specific particularities of what grew where, and what did not, had become less important than the convention of understanding the idea common to all of them.

However, Aristotle (384-322 BC) later divided the universe into two regions: the lower region of change he called *phusis*, literally now *'*growth*'* (from which we get *physical and*

physics), and the upper region he called *ouranos,* sky (the name of the god *Ouranos*). But because the sky also 'changed' with atmosphere and weather, he proposed a still higher level above sky, which he called Aether, which did not change and so was where the divine unchanging gods lived. By introducing this religious element, and confining it to what was both changeless and invisible, the implication followed that everything 'below the Moon' – that is, where *Ouranos* ended and *Phusis* began - was not divine. Having opposed eternity and time, 'change' inevitably took on the ideas of irregularity and inconstancy - disregarding the changeless pattern of phases of change in the lunar model of waxing and waning – corresponding to the living patterns of growth, death and rebirth taking place on Earth below. Cicero took this up, translating *Phusis* into *Natura* from *Natus*, birth, which was now contrasted to death (whereas growth, flowering, death and rebirth were all originally understood as inherent phases of the divine process). Along with Aristotle, Cicero placed all that is eternal 'Above the Moon.' So by Roman times *Natura* was nearer to a concept than an original deity, and the former identification with Mother Earth, Goddess of All, was lost, and Earth moved still further away from the hearts of human beings. (Cashford, 2016, pp 178-81). Lewis comments:

> Nature may be the oldest of things, but *Natura* is the youngest of divinities… 'Mother Nature' is a conscious metaphor. 'Mother' Earth is something quite different. When, in Greek times, for instance, she lies beneath Father Sky, he begets, she bears. You can see it happening. This is geniuine mythopoeia. But while the mind is working on that level, what, in heaven's name, is Nature? Where is she? Who has seen her? What does she do?' (Lewis, 1964, pp. 37-8).

It may be significant that, while many people call our Earth 'She,' the usual unreflective pronoun for 'Nature' is 'It.' This essentially depersonalised language is then extended to all creatures – invariably calling an animal or bird 'it,' rather than he or she (even when the gender is obvious), and describing them in clauses beginning with 'which' and 'that,' rather than 'who.' More disturbingly, this distinction is enshrined and resolutely defended in official editing books on grammar, which declare anything else to be 'wrong.' Only our 'pets' get away with personhood as an indulgent exception of our own! In such minutiae as this is the old paradigm of Earth as a spirit-less, soul-less resource for the human project continually reinforced. So, there is a loss of presence buried in our everyday language, which those of us who see both 'Earth' and 'Nature' as sacred, may underestimate. It follows that any language which is anthropocentric, manipulative (using Earth as a resource), oppositional, dualistic, divisive, hierarchical, spirit- and soul-less belongs to the 'withdrawal stage' of participation, and so persistently inhibits the imagining of a new kind of relationship with Earth.

The Internalisation of the Outer World

The Withdrawal of Participation intensified in the mid-17th century in the west, when what was left of Earth's wisdom was transferred to humans, and specifically the saving power, so it was thought, of Reason in the Age of Enlightenment. Human consciousness could now expand inwards and learn to name and control those outward phenomena whose beauty would otherwise tempt it away from the moral law and the law of Reason (believed by many at the time to be the same). The further loss of numinous power in what could be seen and felt in the outer world of Nature left humanity more free to shape its surroundings - though also more alone in the midst of them and so less open to their correction when things went wrong.

Nonetheless, the freeing of the outer and inner worlds from each other would allow each to be explored separately, making possible empirical science at one pole and a psychology of consciousness at the other, as well as all stations in between. Out of this latest phase, the flowering of the rational mind was fostered which was supposed to defy the once overpowering numinosity of Nature and banish what it now called supersitition.

Owen Barfield defines this further stage as 'Internalisation,' where the inner world is emphatically opposed to the outer world. We can see it in the proliferation of words expressing something new in human thinking, and *about* human thinking. John Locke, for instance, in 1634, adopts the word already coined - 'consciousness' – but defines it for the first time as a 'perception of what passes in a man's own mind,' giving *self*-consciousness its modern meaning. That was ten years before Descartes in 1644 came up with his *Cogito ergo sum. S*ince Descartes, philosophy has typically worked outwards from the individual thinking self, rather than inwards from the cosmos to the soul – as in Original Participation, and as Indigenous people still do. What T.S. Eliot called a 'dissociation of sensibility' (Eliot, 1932, p. 288), the poet Yeats memorably portrayed as 'that morning when Descartes discovered that he could think better in his bed than out of it' (Yeats, 1935, p. 192). Yeats also wrote of a 'bursting into fragments' (ibid., p. 189), the chief of which was a fragmentation of human beings from Nature, both outer Nature and our own inner nature, assumed up till then to be of the same essence.

Barfield warns this new kind of consciousness has become so invisibly embedded in the way we now perceive we can hardly recognize it:

> With the 17th century, the consciousness of 'myself' and the distinction between 'my-self' and all other selves, the antithesis between 'myself,' the observer - and the external world, the observed - is such an obvious and early fact of experience to every one of us, such a fundamental starting point of our life as conscious beings, that it really requires a sort of *training of the imagination* to be able to conceive of any different kind of consciousness. (Barfield, 1926, pp. 164-71).

This new radical distinction between inner and outer kept on growing until it became 'self' and 'not-self,' and then 'self' and 'other.' And at this time many self-reflective words suddenly appeared – 'self-knowledge,' for instance – which are now almost impossible to think without. But this division of self and not-self may have encouraged a *habit* of thinking in oppositions as a way of searching for the truth of anything, in direct contrast to the Imagination which seeks to unify opposites into a new whole.

The conception of 'laws' governing the outer world arises and grows steadily more impersonal, and then even what is already called 'matter' is described objectively and disinterestedly, while at the same time Earth ceases to be the centre round which the cosmos revolves. It was as though the European drive was to disentangle itself from what it now called its 'environment' – a word from the French, *environs,* which simply means 'round about' - while at the same time inevitably becoming more of a spectator than an actor. Barfield concludes that: 'We have to accustom ourselves thoroughly to the thought that the dualism, *objective, subjective,* is fundamental neither psychologically, historically, not philosophically' (Barfield, 2010, p. 204). It is, then, simply a stage in our thinking, a necessary one, but not inherent in the nature of things. Rather, it is the apotheosis of two thousand years of polarisation, resulting in beliefs about 'the nature of reality' which are

difficult to see, let alone suspend. This is what the literary critic Northrop Frye, in the introduction to his book *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature,* has called our 'mythological conditioning:' (Frye, 1982, p. xviii). The term suggests we may be caught in an old myth without realizing it, and this prevents us from responding to Earth's cry for our help.

In the light of these comments, it is possible to see Jung experiencing and foreseeing the end of this two thousand year period of history. When Jung writes that 'hemmed around by rationalistic walls we are cut off from the eternity of nature' (Jung, CW 8: para 739), he is expressing his awareness of the limitation of Reason upon us, but almost as if this is inevitable. However, in his *Autobiography,* it is as though the 'eternity' of nature has come irresistibly to life, when he describes his feeling of being 'spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the splashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the processions of the seasons' (Jung, 1965, pp. 225-6). And it is significant that some pages later he says: 'The more uncertain I have felt about myself, the more there has grown in me a feeling of kinship with all things (Jung, 1965, p. 392). The implication here is that it is *uncertainty* which opens the heart, and releases us from the dualism which both separates us from Earth and interprets the life of Earth as 'nothing but' our own 'projected' life. Similarly, Coleridge's suggestion of 'a willing suspension of disbelief for the moment' (Coleridge, 1975, pp. 168-9), and John Keats's plea for 'Negative Capability,' that is, when a man is capable of being in 'uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason' (Keats, 1952, p. 71), also summon the virtue of 'not knowing' to free the Imagination.

Final Participation

To recapitulate: Final Participation is the opportunity to bring back together the human soul and the Soul of the World at a new level through the Imagination – by which is meant not only all the Imaginative Arts, but also bringing Imagination into all aspects of life. Einstein often said that 'Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution' (Calaprice, 2000, p. 10). Since myths are also forms of Imagination, a new way of being inevitably seeks a new myth or, equally, to turn it around, a new myth, becoming numinous, changes our way of being in the world. As Joseph Campbell said:

> The old gods are dead or dying, and people everywhere are searching, asking: "What is the new mythology to be, the mythology of this unified earth as of one harmonious being?" (Campbell, 1986, p. 17).

This, in Barfield's third stage of Final Participation, would be a mythology which is held both with conscious awareness and with the sustained courage and passion of Imagination, allowing us to experience our essential identity with Earth in a 'new way'- one both more modest and responsible. Restoring poetry to our vision resembles Thomas Mann's understanding of restoring myth as a 'late and mature' stage of the individual which comes out of the early youthful engagement with myth, but renders it conscious, and so can live it and not be lived by it (Mann, 1936, pp. 89-90). This union, or reunion, with our sacred world would be in mythological terms the reunion of the goddess and the god in the 'child' of a new vision beyond them both.

In one sense, the only change which is needed – if 'only' were not in this case 'everything' – is for us to experience our Earth again as '*Thou*' – as many people already do without even thinking of it. Yet this is not 'the same' *Thou* of some thousands of years ago, but one unique to our time – a new '*Thou*' – arising from a consciously willed choice which we, or our Imaginations, have made for the first time. The difference between the two states of mind spans the evolution of consciousness from Original Participation, through Withdrawal of Participation, to Final Participation. Here, the world becomes again a *Thou*, but a *Thou* with all the complexity of any personal relationship. Our Inner Nature would be free to unite and become one with Outer Nature – both experienced as aspects of each other – but now with the awareness inherited from the last evolutionary phase. We now know that we ourselves have brought about the crisis in which the inherent life of Earth now depends upon the kind of relationship we are able to make with Her. The question then becomes: can we transform ourselves into willing and compassionate participants in the unfolding of Earth's Mysteries which, for all our so-called intelligence, we barely even understand?

Barfield's insights draw on Shakespeare and the Romantic movement in Germany and Britain, especially Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whose work on Imagination came more and more to include the idea of the conscious will, without 'harming' Imagination or driving it away, but on the contrary, bringing Imagination into the realm of a higher consciousness as a 'unifying, synthetic power, which brings the whole soul of man into activity:' He writes: 'Imagination is the soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.' It reveals 'the eternal in and through the temporal' (Coleridge, 1975, p. 174). If we look with William Blake's 'double vision' – with the inner and the outer eye together – then nature and human nature become permeable to each other:

A double vision my eyes do see,

> And a double vision is always with me.
> With my inner eye 'tis an old man grey,
> With my outer a thistle across my way.
>
> (Keynes, ed., 1961, p. 860)

'To a Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself,' Blake says, 'As a Man is, so he sees.' (Keynes, ed., 1961, p. 835). So here, it is we who, following Blake's insight, have to move beyond our customary ways of being and seeing in such a way as to transform them into a new whole – one where Nature may finally be seen anew as 'Imagination itself.'

Thomas Berry: The Great Work

If this sounds unduly idealistic, let us listen to the words of Thomas Berry (1914-2009), a lifelong Passionist Monk, who would introduce himself with a twinkle in his eye as someone who at the age of 11 fell in love with a meadow and decided then and forever afterwards that 'Good is what is Good for the Meadow.' Earth comes first, and humans cannot be moral beings without a corresponding morality to Earth. All his studies opened out into the rest of the world. His study of theology became a study of history, western history became Asian history and the history of Indigenous Peoples, and human history became the history of the Earth - past, present and future. Whatever was missing from a particular dimension of thought, *that* was what he sought to explore, forever reaching for the widest, most comprehensive, whole: the Story of the Universe. He was, then, in a unique position to place human and Earth history within the Universe Story, and to understand, as Mary-Jayne Rust also points out, we are now 'between stories.' Like Barfield, Thomas diagnosed a way out of our current impasse through the Imagination: 'Loss of Imagination and loss of Nature, they're

the same thing.' (Telephone conversation, 2008). The way to imagine the New Story and bring it to life was to include *all* the beings in the universe in their own right, given to them with their birth - their own particular right to be who they are: whether predator or prey, mountain or valley, river, sea or forest, birds, fish, insects, trees, flowers – animal, vegetable and mineral. In his Schumacher Lectures and in his last books, he taught and wrote the manifesto: *Every Being has Rights.* He explored the idea that 'the natural rights of natural beings come from the same source as human rights: from the universe that brought us, that brought all things, into being... the right to be, the right to habitat, and the right to fulfill one's role in the great community of existence' (Berry, 2006, p. 149) It followed from this that existing laws oriented only to human beings had to be transformed to include the whole Earth Community of which humans are only a part. He called this Earth Jurisprudence. By now he was calling himself not a Theologian, but a *Geo*logian, pointing to the 'grand liturgy of the universe' as sacred in itself, beyond any and all categories of faith. This is what he says:

> The natural world on the planet Earth gets its rights from the same source that humans get their rights, from the universe that brought them into being.' ... 'Every component of the Earth community has three rights: the right to be, the right to habitat, and the right and responsibility to fulfil its role in the ever-renewing processes of the Earth community. All rights are species-specific and limited. Rivers have river rights. Birds have bird rights. Insects have insect rights. Humans have human rights. Difference in rights is qualitative, not quantitative. The rights of an insect would be of no value to a tree or a fish. Human rights do not cancel out the rights of other modes of being to exist in their natural state. Human property rights are not absolute . . . Each component of the Earth

> community is immediately or mediately dependent on every other member of the community for the nourishment and assistance it needs for its own survival. This mutual nourishment, which includes the predator-prey relationship, is integral with the role that each component of the Earth has within the comprehensive community of existence . . . (Berry, 2006, pp.149-50)

Thomas was not entirely happy with the language of rights, but it was the best we had to be going on with. Since, in 1886, the collective life of corporations were, astonishingly, given the rights of individuals, then so at least should Earth, in all her gloriously diverse manifestations, have the rights of individual life. But we have to begin from where we find ourselves. So Law is necessary where morality has failed, and morality is necessary where love is absent. If you know and love the meadows and the woodlands and the rivers and all the creatures who live in their community, then you feel *with* them and understand what they need to flourish. Their wounds become our wounds: we are all mutually dependent, mutually reflecting and mutually enhancing. That is why we need to learn the language of mountains and rivers, trees, birds, animals and insects, and also the language of the stars in the heavens.

Is this not – in one of its infinite dimensions - what Final Participation might look like? If, with this in mind, we return to the protest of the Greek Earth at the unwitting crimes of Oedipus, then it seems quite reasonable that King and Earth would be bound together in mutual relationship, and that the Earth would suffer the King's folly, both in itself, and also as the only way to bring the King to an awareness of what he has done, and who he is. It is perhaps no more than what is happening now all over the planet, only we have learned for many centuries to ignore or explain away the connection between human acts and natural devastation, habitually reinterpreting the causes and effects so we can rarely recognize them as our own. Gaia called out once, and She was heard. But what if, in a Silent Spring, Gaia

calls, Persephone calls, and no-one is listening? And now there is no Delphic Oracle to remind us of who we are and what is true, unless we seek it in our hearts and trust what our hearts say to us. So, to end with Einstein:

> Human beings are part of the whole called by us 'the universe,' a part limited in time and space. We experience ourselves, our thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest – a kind of optical illusion of our consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free us from this prison by widening our circle of understanding and compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. (Calaprice, 2000, p. 316).

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Ruin of the Lesser Kestrels

So many mysteries in this land

How is life sustained?

There are no separate identities;

No edges

The sun claims everything

Including the brain's

Hard won gift of discrimination

Entities flow together

Softened on the anvil

Of the plain,

To be hammered

By the sun's imagination

Into now

Grant Clifford