



THE FIRMAMENT

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Sigmund Freud speculated with the two tremendous psychological blows to mankind that were the revolutions of Copernicus and Darwin. Copernicus destroyed the powerful myth about terra firma forever when he recognised the planet within a cosmos in which it only plays a tiny and marginal role. Darwin, on the other hand, made it clear that human beings are not supreme beings and kings of the universe, but rather, the result of evolution that has left us related to the entire animal kingdom and with most of the material universe.

Freud being Freud, he could not resist noting that the effects of both blows on human narcissism were also followed by another blow: psycho-analytical discoveries have revealed that we are not even the absolute masters of ourselves when managing our rationality and our freedom.

Freud, a master of the existentialist pessimism of his time, realised that a growing and inevitable process of alienation of mankind had taken place with regard to both the firmament and to the Nature on earth itself; and that we were neither protected by the constellations and the heavenly gods nor were we rooted as sovereigns of planet earth.

The advances in cosmology and molecular biology now mark the path of reconciliation with our true reality as minute particles in a barely conceivable maelstrom and, at the same time, as part of a small and fragile earth that we share with a nature that we also form part of.

Astronomy observatories have made there ever more powerful telescopes more introspective, allowing us to experience the very echoes of the first seconds of time after the universe hatched. The Copernicus blow has been transformed into a profound sense of admiration for our most distant origins and, in turn, a greater and more private look at our human reality. The loss of confidence in the unmovable firmness of the earth has in reality been sublimed by the firmness of the firmament and human beings and the earth find their right place in this firmament.

Starlight, guide to our deepest identity. Reconciled with the universe, we can undoubtedly find ourselves with Pablo Neruda for instance, on a night of love lost, he said:

Tonight I can write the saddest lines / Write, for example, the night is starry ...

