

Then care is a must before starting something, because we become attached to “something” forever. Hence, the importance of awareness and proper evaluation (see all stages of the act of will). Stopping means to leave “pending”, is to disperse and defeat all the energy that had been recalled and drawn and partly used, with great loss of life and energy, which is equivalent to a “betrayal” (of the initiative); the incompleteness generates karma, which is the law of equilibrium, (of course the whole thing is commensurate), and excludes us from the positive effects produced by completing what we started: satisfaction, achievement, increase of vital energy on a personal level, acceleration of the evolutionary process of Synthesis, the One Life, on the spiritual plane.

12 As for “rhythmic pulsation” it is important to keep in mind that rhythm and pulse are qualities, do not relate to the category of matter, but to the essence of every living and “sentient” thing, which then has a heart, and express, as the rhythmic pulse of our heart, the connection and interdependence from moment to moment with all that lives.

Let us, therefore, to assess what we have started and not completed, and try to close the “Gestalt” still open, we will be better! Psychological note: If we have experienced difficulties in our lives to bring to completion or to recognize when something has reached its completion, let us ask how we overcome the frustrations, what we report we have with the death, the fear we have of that emptiness that is determined as soon as something important is made and closes... Emphasize in us the value of patience, endurance, persistence, determination, detachment, qualities of the Will that lead us to our achievements! “Conquering to abandon”.

Maintain in us the awareness that Humanity too has to be performed in each of us, as consciousness expressing integration and synthesis of all human experience, “Man to Man”. Then we could truly say, “All is finished” and go to another level of life.

## THE SYMBOLISM OF THE DIVINE COMEDY

(Translation by Damiano Pagani)

*Quali i fioretti dal notturno gelo  
Chinati e chiusi poi che 'l sol l'imbianca  
Si drizzan tutti aperti in loro stelo  
Tal mi feci io di mia virtude stanca  
E tanto buon ardire al cor mi corse  
Ch'io cominciai come persona franca  
“Oh pietosa colei che mi soccorse  
E te cortese che ubbidisti tosto  
A le vere parole che ti porse!  
Tu m'hai con desiderio il cor disposto  
Si al venir con le parole tue  
Ch'io son tornato nel mio primo proposto.  
Or vâ, ch'un volere è d'ambedue  
Tu duca tu signore e tu maestro”  
Cosi 'l'i dissi e poi che mosso fue  
Intra per lo cammino alto e silvestro.\**

*\* As the flowers closed and folded because of the chill of night as the sun warms them rise and flourish, so I did with my weary forces and so daring came back to my heart me that I began to say with deep sincerity: “Oh how was pitiful one who helped me and you were polite to obey immediately to sincere requests she placed! You with your words revived my heart to the point that I returned to desire what I had already proposed. Now begins the journey because my will is identical to yours, you will be my guide, my lord and my master”. So I said, and after that he started to go I went into that path among the tall trees.*

With these words Dante spurs Virgil to show him the way to begin a journey that will take him to his spiritual realization, and that begins with a descent into hell. We all know what happened before, the loss in the forest, hoping to climb the mountain lit by the sun, the inability to proceed because the road is blocked by three wild beasts. All this has a profound symbolic meaning.

Dante says openly that in his work you can find a literal meaning, a reference to the history and politics of his time (allegorical meaning), an educational sense (moral meaning), and a reference to the spiritual path (anagogical meaning) that is what more we will be interested to. The Divine Comedy then, just because it was written with symbolic purposes, can be read in different “levels” and to do this you have to have the key to each level; as well as for a reading of political symbolism of the Divine Comedy you must possess a deep knowledge of the Italian and European political situation of the time, also for an understanding of its anagogical meaning you must play a similar study of the initiatory symbolism. We know that Dante “in the middle of the journey” of his life finds himself “in a forest wild and rough and hard”. He seems upset by this experience, so that states that it is “so bitter that a little more is death”. For those who know the inner state that usually precedes the spiritual awakening the meaning is clear, Dante speaks of what Assagioli has called “the dark night of the soul” and of which we have countless descriptions by many spiritual seekers, as Tagore, Tolstoy, Eckhart Tolle, to name a few. This is a time of deep crisis in which occurs the intimate understanding of the illusion of all that until then had fulfilled the individual. This inner revelation though deeply painful and disorienting allows the person to then reorient his life to the most essential and high values. It’s what happens to Dante, too, he comes out of the forest at the same time he sees a high mountain enlightened by the sun, who invited him to climb. The vision of the enlightened mountain can be a symbol of what Maslow called “peak experience”, the individual has an experience of elevation of consciousness that can bring down in the illusion of being able to easily reach a stable state of enlightenment. Unfortunately it is not so, the peak experience is only a temporary condition and all in all common and Dante immediately realizes that to win this high state of consciousness permanently he has to face three fierce adversaries, the three wild beasts. Those who commented on the Divine Comedy by a literary-historical point of view see a reference to Florence in “lonza” (a leopard-like allegorical beast), to France in lion and the Church in wolf and I feel this correct like politically reading, but I think it is even more important

to read these symbols from the point of view of the difficulties in spiritual evolution. The greatest enemy in this key is the separateness, established in the research of physical pleasure (leopard), due to pride (lion), but mainly caused by deep ancestral sense of ego that identified us and which, as Dante says, is source of all greed. While Dante is about to lose the “hope of the high” because of the “beast without peace” who goes by rejecting him “where the sun is silent”, he sees someone who can help him.

*Mentre che rovinava in basso loco  
Dinanzi a li occhi mi fu offerto  
Chi per lungo silenzio parea fioco\**

*\*While I found myself slipping lower and lower, in front of me appeared who seemed faint before because of his long silence.*

Many critics have shown concern in interpreting these words. Why does Dante tell us that Virgil is faint because of his long silence? In fact, all the inhabitants of the Dantesque afterlife speak and are heard immediately. But if we give these words an inner value we find immediately the significance.

Dante returns to hear a voice that already had guided and inspired him, but for the fact that he turned elsewhere, for a long time, the attention, now dimly perceives his directions. Virgil is the guide that so inspired him in the past. Represents the voice that seeks to direct us from the upper floors of consciousness, the source of what we call inspiration, a voice that, if we stop listening to, becomes increasingly dim. And Dante affirms all of this openly saying “You are my master and my author”. Only after meeting and recognition of his Master Dante can begin this journey that does not begin directly with the ascent to glimpsed mount, but with a passage throughout hell, because every initiatory journey starts from the awareness and the consequent transformation of the energies of the lower unconscious. The painful descent into hell so represents the work on his own instinctual and unresolved parts, as the ascent of Purgatory the difficult reconstruction of a more conscious and harmonious personality, which, it is no coincidence, will culminate

in the Earthly Paradise, representation of Man now in control of himself, where Dante is crowned Pope and King of himself. Just arrived at this point he can start the real ascesis which led him to the spiritual realization. No coincidence Assagioli defines the Divine Comedy "Poem of Psychosynthesis"; the triplet which begins Paradise

*La Gloria di Colui che tutto move  
Per l' Universo penetra e risplende  
In una parte più e meno altrove\**

*\*His glory, by whose might all things are moved,  
pierces the universe, and in one part sheds more  
resplendence, elsewhere less.*

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is a metaphor at the same time of the divine light that pervades unequally the universe and of human consciousness that fades in its unconscious. The human being is a microcosm and his/her ego has a partial awareness of its being, in the same way the divine light illuminates unevenly all creation. The spiritual progression is the conquest of new territories for this unique light. Assagioli also defines Paradise "Canticle of Light." The continuous adaptation of Dante's view in passing from one to another upper sky represents this expansion of consciousness and the development of a greater understanding. The most important symbol of this poem is Beatrice herself, symbol confirming us that Dante in his initiatory culture. I believe that today there are no more doubts about Dante's belonging to a initiatory school. He himself tells us to be a "Faithful to Love".

The Faithful to Love, so in fact called themselves the followers of Moyaddin Ibn Arabi, are a Muslim initiatory fraternity born in the Middle East. Moyaddin is a nickname, meaning "one who renews the religion." Ibn Arabi was a great philosopher-mystic and Sufi and poet, master of the mighty Sufi poet Mevlana Rumi. Countryman of Averroes, who knew personally, he was definitely influenced by Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic philosophy. We know that it was the Arab world to rediscover the two greatest Greek philosophers and the Islamic world passed this knowledge to the Christian world by allowing the Renaissance. Dante shows this

influence in his way of going beyond the medieval dogmatism. In the Divine Comedy he continuously seeks a scientific explanation of both earthly and astronomical phenomena, an attitude which at that time belonged almost exclusively to the Arab culture. Ibn Arabi master of Faithful to Love is the author of two books related in a clear manner to the Comedy, "The Book of the Night Journey" and "The Revelations of Mecca". These two books tell the Ibn Arabi's journey in Hell and Paradise. The similarities between Dante and Ibn Arabi are too many to be able to believe random; Also for the Sufi poet hell is a giant funnel under Jerusalem and is divided into several groups according to the sins of the damned and as for Dante culminates at the center of the Earth. As the Florentine poet, Ibn Arabi also makes a threefold purifying ablution before getting to Heaven, but still the heavens governed by the seven planets known at that time, the angelic choirs, the Mystic Rose even the three circles of light representing the Divine and the nine concentric circles of angels in Empyrean we find also in the Moyaddin's poems. More particularly significant that in heaven and even in the Garland of Sages, in which combine according to the poet the twelve greatest Christian philosophers, along with Albert the Great, St. Thomas and St. Dominic, we find a certain Siger of Brabant. Siger is a French philosopher of the time, not surprisingly to us almost unknown, large and open admirer of the Islamic philosopher Averroes and therefore condemned by the Pope and persecuted and finally killed by the Inquisition. Ibn Arabi called the Soul daughter while mother of God. Daughter because created by Him, mother because only thanks to her Man can have the vision of God. This definition cannot but bring to mind the St. Bernard's final invocation to the Virgin, "Virgin mother, daughter of thy Son". For engraved remember that Bernard of Clairvaux was the one who dictated the rule of the Templar Knights and were these knights together to the Swabian-Norman kingdom major importers of Arab culture. Becoming links between Dante's poetry and mystical Arabic poetry more obvious, also become more understandable interpretations of many poems of the "dolce stil novo". Many were the Sufi poets and many of their poems praising the woman and the wine would have to appear scandalous to the

Islamic world, but this was not the case because it was obvious symbolism. The beloved woman represented the wisdom that comes from mystical union and inebriation represented the ecstatic spiritual status. All this in turn was derived from the Neo-Platonic vision for where the loved individual represents our missing half. In other words human beings fall in love with who appears to them the symbol of their unexpressed and potential part, that is, their soul. From this point of view the famous literary controversy about Beatrice and the fact that she was a young really existed of which Dante was in love or was simple metaphor of mystical wisdom is actually exceeded because your loved one is both a symbol and a means for spiritual knowledge. On the other hand words like these

*Ogne dolcezza ogne pensiero umile  
Nasce nel core a chi parlar la sente  
Onde è laudato chi prima la vide\**

*\*Every sweetness, every humble thought born in the heart of whom that hears her speaking, that is praised who first sees her*

would be inexplicable and meaningless (as other poems of “stil novo”) if interpreted literally. Why should it be praised who first sees a woman? Instead the meaning is clear when we remember that the beloved woman is a metaphor of mystical wisdom, or spiritual insight. The one who first sees her, that has the insight, feels the sweetness that comes from this inner contact and at the same time remain humble because he knows that it does not come from himself but comes from an upper level, but of course is praised by brothers who share his research. Not by chance in Paradise Beatrice is alerted (made active) by St. Lucy which is the Divine Grace and who sits next to Rachel, whom in turn represents the state of contemplation. We know that Paradise is divided into nine heavens seven of which inhabited by the souls that were human beings. Every heaven is a different level of consciousness and perfection. Even the human beings who inhabit the earth rising step by step connect themselves to these different levels of reality and by these ones are inspired. This concept is also present

in Ibn Arabi’s work but also modern mystics one like Bailey and Aurobindo (Yoga Synthesis) have expressed similar concepts. In the Comedy the heaven of the Moon is inhabited by the souls safe but fickle, to emphasize that in the progress of the spiritual path persistence is crucial. In that of Mercury are those who have acted for the good of humanity but had also the vanity of earthly glory. And then the lover spirits, the scholars, the activists, the righteous and finally just the most deserving, the contemplatives. If in Hell are some mighty individual figures and the souls in Purgatory often express in a choral tone singing together and moving together, the spirits of Paradise tend to synthesis joining together in form of symbolic figures; garlands for the wise spirits, crosses for the activists, the Scale for the contemplatives and the Eagle for the righteous, which even takes the floor and speaks to Dante like a single being. It is clear to Dante that evolution and synthesis are one, proceeding on the path is proceeding in a continuous synthesis, and the union of souls in Paradise does not negate the individuality but multiplies happiness in the merger and in the discovery of being so a part of a higher reality and drawing. In Paradise Love Light and Will are one thing as expressed by last verses

*Ma già volgeva il mio disio e l’velle  
Si come rota ch’igualmente mossa  
L’amor che muove il sole e le altre stelle.\**

*\*But the Love that moves the sun and other stars already changed my desire and my will, as a simple wheel that moves equally to the other.*

Let me conclude with a final triplet that I believe none of you remember of having read.

*Ei mi rispose “noi miriam la terra  
Poi ch’arduo è guardar lo sole  
È di Chi v’è riuscito la Coscienza  
Che poi ci abbraccia tutti come Amore”\**

*\*He replied to me: “We observe the Earth because it is difficult to look at the Sun, is the Consciousness of Whom succeeded in it that embraces us all as Love.*

You cannot have read it because after having read so much Dante came to me spontaneously, it was written by me. We always look at the ground because it is relatively easy to understand partial truths. Recognizing the real is extremely difficult, but the One who was able to do it embraces humanity, has become the Love itself. Understanding and loving are the same thing.

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Sergio Guarino

## THE REPRESSION OF SUBLIME

16

(Translation by Achille Cattaneo)

Man's journey towards full self-realization is long and tortuous and does not always proceed in a peaceful and smooth way, but it is littered with obstacles, conflicts and crisis. However, this should not scare us or do hesitate, because these difficulties have a purpose and a meaning useful to our maturity that we need to understand and use. The obstacles are in fact actually "steps" to climb, conflicts reveal dualities and polarities to be balanced, crisis indicate choices and maturation that we have to do. The man has a very complex psychological structure, and he lives, without knowing it, on various dimensions and levels of consciousness, as indicates the ovoid of Assagioli. However, he generally is aware only of a small part of himself, and lives identified with an Ego that, at best, is only a limited and distorted reflection of his true Being, the Self.

Our field of usual consciousness is limited to only those psychic contents that our attention reveals, and is conditioned by identifications, unconscious automatism and external influences that we have absorbed. We believe to be aware, to know us, and instead we are "false" and conditioned, and we know (in a vague and incomplete way) only what appears on the surface of consciousness, ignoring or underestimating all the deep and vast world of the unconscious.

Quite rightly Jung says that "the consciousness is by nature a kind of superficial layer of epidermis, floating

on the unconscious, which extends into the depths, like a vast ocean of perfect continuity."

However, this superficial "consciousness field" (or the conscious, as psychoanalysis calls) is susceptible to expansion and insights, and its "quality" and contents may become increasingly clear, authentic and profound as the man evolves and gets in touch with the deeper dimensions of his psyche, both down, that is towards the inferior unconscious, both upwards, that is towards the superior unconscious or Superconsciousness. The average unconscious is more easily explorable, because it consists of all those psychic states which we could call "current" and that continually "enter and exit" from the field of consciousness (is the preconscious of psychoanalysis). On the contrary, the inferior unconscious represents our past, and it is that area which is occupied mainly by Freudian psychoanalysis and that contains the instincts, the atavistic impulses, the complexes, the trauma, the buried memories and everything that the conscious I *wanted* to forget. The superior unconscious represents, in a sense, our future, that is what we potentially are, all our capacities and higher and authentic faculties: intuition, creativity, love, idealism, truth, beauty, universal feelings, etc. In short, everything that is most noble and "sublime" in the man, and that is his more real and authentic dimension. However, strangely these two areas of the psyche, the inferior and the superior, are not easily accessible to our investigation and our exploration because between the conscious part of our psyche and the unconscious there is a barrier, a diaphragm which can be more or less impenetrable or thin.

Few are the persons who have created a harmonious relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, two poles of our psyche, as this represents the achievement of an integration and a balance that require a long process of development of the consciousness. On the contrary, many are those who have a diaphragm very durable and often between these two poles, because without realizing, continuously repress the instances and the flow of energy that come from the unconscious, and have created a "removal".

The term "removal" was introduced by Freud and indicates an unconscious mechanism that has been formed