The Fire and the Light in the Divine Comedy and in Analytical Psychology

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Abstract: The authors propose a vision of the process of individuation, as proposed by Analytical Psychology and Dante's analogous journey in the Divine Comedy, integrated into a single path. From the symbols of the Fire and the Light, the authors uncover the psychic elements that act as a trait d'union between the two versions of the process: Dante's poetic-narrative version and Jung's psychological-analytical one. After identifying their conceptual differences and similarities, they propose that two such similar representations, made by authors so distant in time – about 700 years, demonstrate that some basic principles, the so-called Basic Rules of life, are like fixed stars in the inner firmament of mankind, as they are not subjected to the wear of time and perennially represent the warp and weft of the psychic and spiritual reality of humanity as a whole.

Introduction

In 2021, 700 years have passed since the death of Dante Alighieri. In such a historical time that witnesses humanity facing limits and deaths all over the world, pondering upon of those who represented an epochal turning point, like Dante who wrote The Divine Comedy, would be considered a tribute, perhaps daring, to the much-loved author. His influential work, pivotal not only for Italy but also for the entire Western school of thought, deals precisely with these human limits and death, which according to various viewpoints and dimensions, has never felt so relevant to us ever since the two Great Wars of the twentieth century.

Being Jungian psychoanalysts, we started from the Swiss author in a sort of comparison to emphasize the similarities and differences with Dante[1]*, who, despite not being a psychologist, was also interpreted in psychological terms (Mazzarella, 1991). We have chosen, in particular, the psychological and spiritual analysis of two symbolic elements, fire and light. From this perspective, we revisited Jung's*

[1] *Alighieri, 2016.*

immanentistic concepts in comparison with Dante's transcendental dimension which permeates especially the third canto, Paradise[2].

Since our article aims to identify the meeting points of the two authors' concepts and their divergence, we will first examine how the two symbolic elements - fire and light - are interpreted by each author, then distinguish their differences and similarities. The final objectives of the article are, firstly, to highlight how the work of the Sommo Poeta already crossed the path of therapeutic change theorized by Jung; this has already been done by other authors. Secondly we also aim to increasingly verify the existence of basic psychological and spiritual principles, highlighted by both the poetic narrative and depth psychology, which can represent cornerstones across the centuries and make up the weft and warp of the psychic and spiritual dimension of the human being in a perennial way.

The fire and the light and the word of the Divine Comedy

Fire and light are such an essential part of Dante's poem that the work would dissolve without them. It entire body lives thanks to these two elements. Dante refers to them as a symbol of boundless nature, until fire becomes light, fire and light become word and word becomes fire and light.

Fire, in Hell, is defined by Dante both in its essence and in its tormenting effect: it takes the form of lightning that emanates from broken clouds. The specific feature of the first cantica is that, the fire is there, but it is not visible, it does not break the darkness of the abyss of eternal damnation, which always remains dark. In Purgatory, however, the fire and the colors of life become the splendor of redemption. In Paradise it becomes light and expresses glory and eternal love (Magistretti, 1888, p.167). In fact, metaphors and symbols emerge from the fire of mercy and the light of divine truth to realize a sacred state; and faith becomes the way to ascend to the contemplation of eternal truth. Fire is considered by Romano Guardini[3] *as an instrument of punishment, purification and glory (1967) while it becomes redemption and mystical light in Purgatory; the latter is expressed in its highest form in Paradise (Magistretti, cit, p.15).*

The representation of Gehenna and the fire as symbols of Hell is a typically Christian concept, according to the words of Jesus: "If your hand [then: the foot and the eye, nda] is a scandal to you, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life handicapped than to go with both hands into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire" (Mk 9: 43-48). At the moment of the Last Judgment, this threat of Christ is reserved for the wicked: "Go away from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his followers" (Mt 25:41). A similar image can also be found in St. Paul, who destines the evil work "to be burned", because "(nda, The Last Judgment) for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire; the fire will test the quality of each one's work "(1 Cor 3: 13-15). St. James, in his letter, proposes that the sin of language is like a glimmer of the infernal flames: «Even the

[2] *Paradise is certainly the least revisited text among the three, and perhaps the least loved, also because it is not suited to the adolescent taste that always has to study it at an age where struggling with the pains of hell is more understandable compared to the ascetic visions of life and death and with their existential meaning.*

[3] *Romano Guardini was a naturalized German Italian theologian who lived between 1885 and 1968. He wrote a great deal, almost 500 essays. For what interests us, he wrote starting from the most important authors of Western culture in order to clarify what Christian thought was: Socrates, Augustine, Dante, B. Pascal, F. Hölderlin, S. Kierkegaard, F.M. Dostoevsky and R.M. Rilke. His university courses, based on his writings, attracted a large audience of students, Catholics and Protestants, as well as people outside the university setting.*

tongue is a fire! [...] it burns the wheel of our life and is then itself burned in hell "(Jas 3: 5-6). The Apocalypse will expand the meaning of the image, transforming the underworld into a "pile of fire and sulfur", where Satan, the false prophets, death, the vile, the incredulous, the abject, the murders, the immoral, the witches, the idolaters and all the liars are confined (cf Rev 20,10.14; 21,8). Fire in the Bible is a divine symbol, but it also manifests itself as a word spoken to Moses by the Tablets of the Law, as the theophany itself attests with the burning bush of Sinai. Christ declares: "I have come to set fire to the earth, and I really wish it were already lit!" (Lk 12:49). Fire is also the symbol of the Holy Spirit, as occurs at Pentecost and the Holy Spirit allows the apostles to speak the different languages of the people.

In Hell, however, the divine fire also plays another role, helping us discover a different image of God from the current one: it is not only the Savior, but it is also the Judge who does not ignore; on the contrary, He fulfills the demands of morality. Fire therefore becomes the love of God, the divine justice and the ethics for man at the same time. Hell can also be interpreted as a manifested and effective way to reveal the divine Judgment on the evil. "The Lord is the fire and, therefore, He cannot be manipulated as we please, He cannot be traced back to our counterfeits and our diversions. It is certainly a fire of love and deep passion, it warms many hearts and melts the cold of unhappy souls, but it is also a fire that burns those who try to grab it or put it out. Gehenna with its burning hearth is, therefore, the symbol of the just action of a God who is free and determined to engage in His victorious battle with the evil "(Guardini, cit.).

Purgatory represents a passage in between Hell and Heaven, and this is also the case for the concept of fire. In the Holy Scriptures there are only two references to this intermediate part of the afterlife. In the second book of Maccabees (12.43-45), the power of intercession for the dead through prayers is affirmed and, in the First letter to the Corinthians of St. Paul (3.15), he explains that salvation will come through fire: the same element that we usually associate with Hell in our imagination. Following "The Prayer for the Atonement of the Sins of the Dead", read by Georg Ratzinger, then Benedict XVI, on the occasion of the General Audience of 12 January 2011, certain inadequate images on Purgatory, and on its historical significance, can be overcome by revisiting the thought of St. Catherine of Genoa († 1515) reported in the Libro de la Vita mirabile et doctrina santa. It contains a useful et catholica demonstratione et dechiaratione del Purgatorio (Ibidem, Genoa 1551), whose final author was the confessor of the saint, the priest Cattaneo Marabotto. In Catherine's vision - affirms the Pope of the time - "... purgatory is not presented as an element of the landscape of the bowels of the earth: it is not an external fire, but an internal one. This is purgatory, an inner fire. The Saint speaks of the path of purification of the soul towards full communion with God, starting from her own experience of profound pain for the sins committed, in comparison with the infinite love of God (...) ". The soul - says Catherine - "presents itself to God, still tied to the desires and pain that derive from sin, and this makes it impossible for it to enjoy the beatific vision of God". She therefore affirms that God is so pure and holy that the soul with the stains of sin cannot be in His presence". "The soul is aware of the immense love and perfect justice of God and, consequently, suffers from not having responded correctly and perfectly to this love, and love itself for God becomes a flame, love itself for it purifies it from its dross of sin"(Ratzinger, 2011).

Dante also includes in his work this concept of interior search. Once out of Hell, the light appears, hitting him as if it was reflected, in this way:

"a ray leaps up in the opposite direction,
and in the same way mounts that down it came,
and from the falling of a stone departs […]
because of which my sight was swift to flee."
(Purgatorio,XV,16-23)

He asks Virgil what that splendor is and he invites him not to be surprised, if the sight of the angels still dazzles him, as does that heavenly messenger (The Angel of Mercy) who invites them to go up. Mercy belongs to the polarity of the opposites Justice-Mercy (Guggenheim, 2016), and symbolizes the boundless love of God who helps the sinner to redeem himself for his sins. Virgil explains that this is due to the fact that the poet's human nature does not allow him to fix his gaze on the heavenly messes, just as he cannot look directly at the sun in front of them. Entering the third terrace of the wrathful leads to another encounter of Dante with fire in Purgatory. For the poet, meekness must open the heart to the waters of peace, which are able to extinguish the fire of wrath punished in this terrace.

In Paradise, fire and light become dominant. The two terms, sometimes differentiated and sometimes merged together, complete Dante's theological and poetic ideology. Empyrean, in fact, means full of flame, but also luminous with fire or ardor of love and mercy (Convivio, 1,3, o.), Where everything is light and love (Paradiso, Canto XXVII°, v. 112; Canto XXX°, v. 3), the Empyrean, in which the souls of the blessed fix their eyes, is the Divine Essence itself: Trina Luce in unica stella. In Paradise we therefore witness a transition from the fire element to the light element, characterized by a relativization of the presence of fire, which circumscribes each of the celestial spheres, with an ever greater presence of light. For Dante himself, the Virgin is the Peaceful Oriflame[4], due to the golden blaze of its splendor. The celestial flames[5], that is, the spirits, lose their splendor at the blaze of love of the Virgin, the crowned flame (Magistretti, 1888). Along this path there are two beatitudes that man can reach, as Dante himself explains: one is the beatitude of this life which is configured as an Earthly Paradise and consists of the actualization of one's own virtue; the other is the beatitude of eternal life, which is configured as Heavenly Paradise, and which consists of the eternal enjoyment of the image of God (De Monarchia, book III).

Fire and Light in Carl Gustav Jung's Analytical Psychology

*Jung never referred to Dante in his works. Instead he often quotes Goethe, Shakespeare and other writers from Northern Europe. Regarding the symbols of fire and light, for example, Jung argues that in certain primitive fairy tales the old man that is the Senex, is identified with the sun, symbol of fire and light. In a North American fairy tale quoted by the author, the old man is a sorcerer who possesses fire (Jung, 1980, p.91-92; p.217). The Antichrist, that is, the devil or son of the devil, and therefore Typhon, has his abode of fire in the North (Jung, Works, volume IX **, p. 92).*

[4] *Oriflame was the warrior insignia shared by many peoples: a flag with a flame on a gold field, carried by an Angel (Pecorone, 9,2). Orea is equivalent to Aurea, Maria flamma ignis aeterni et aurea idest perfecta, pacifica quae facit pacem. Warm heat, even so Dante calls it*

[5] *See Paradiso, Canto XII°, v. 2; Canto XIV°, v. 66; Canto XXVI°, v. 2*

Jung continues, quoting the words of Christ: "The eye is the light of the body, but if your eye is bad or it becomes evil, your body too will become dark and will turn the light that is in you into darkness" (Ibidem, p.124). In the 17th chapter (Jung, 1988) the author states: "The Kingdom of God is already in you all from which it can be clearly seen that the knowledge of light in man must come first from his inner self and not be introduced from the outside". Jung quotes Nietzsche who in "Thus spoke Zarathustra" writes: "Alone you go on the path that leads to yourself! […] You must want to burn yourself in your own flame: how could you want to renew yourself, without first becoming ashes?" (Jung, 1988). The author states, therefore, that man, during this inner work, must therefore be heated in his internal structure until reaching the maximum degree of incandescence, in order to rise in the dimension of the spirit. The analytic psychologist takes Cristianos' comparison between the Inner Center and Paradise with its four rivers and Michael Mayer's idea that in the center is the indivisible punctum, which is not further divisible, but lasts forever. From this point-like element observed by Jung, we see a similarity extremely close to the point-like concept of God expressed by Dante in Paradise. The difference lies in the collocation of this element: Jung makes it an anthropological element, therefore immanent, so that according to his immanentistic-anthropological orientation, he also refers to Benedictus Figulus, who identifies this inner center of man as domus Ignis, that is house of fire, whose midpoint is fire (Jung, 1988, p.190). As we will see, Dante instead places the aforementioned point-like element in a space very far from the earthly world, following a concept of God of a transcendental nature.

For both Jung and Dante, there exists a parallelism between the fire and the word. The author cites different sources. According to an Indian story, from the mouth derives the most important discovery of the primitive man, which is the fire. In specific, in the Aitareya-Upanisad, it is stated: "drawing then from the Purusa waters, he fashioned it. Then he brooded it. And, having hatched it, he divided his mouth in two, just as a new one breaks: from the mouth came the word, from the word came the fire"(Jung, 1988, p.189-190). Also in the Avesta and in the Vedas, fire is the messenger from the gods.

In the Bible, Moses receives the Tablets of the Law from God through the word of God in the likeness of the Burning Bush, which burns perpetually. Here is another equivalence between the word of God and Fire. Later it is also said that it is fire that becomes word.

Also for Jung, the association of mouth, fire and word, despite being strange at first sight, is found in other places in the Bible. Summing up:

Isaiah 30. 27: "… the name of the Lord. […]. His lips are full of indignation, his tongue is like devouring fire."

Psalm 29. 7: "the voice of the eternal makes flames of fire leap".

Jeremiah 23. 29: "Is not my word like fire?"

Acts of the apostles 2, 3 and 4: "And there appeared to them tongues as of fire that were divided … And all were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues (glossais)."

James 3.6, who says in the negative: "Even the tongue is a fire, it is the world of iniquity";

Similarly it is said of the wicked in Proverbs 16.27: "on his lips there is as a devouring fire".

The connection of the mouth with speech and fire is therefore unequivocal, concludes Jung. The function of the meanings expressed by "resound, speak, shine, fire" suggests the existence of a preconscious identity between them. The two phenomena have something in common.

Analytical psychotherapy is a type of treatment based on the word, on the effectiveness of the word even on the body (see the treatment of psychosomatic symptoms). It is Freud's Talking Cure[6]*. The assumption of analytic psychotherapy lies in the transformative power of the word, but this transformation*[7]*, in its complete meaning, is an event produced by fire. This synopsis between word and fire consists of the aspect, or rather the sacred dimension of the analytic psychotherapeutic relationship as a "religious" space, in which the science of reason and the science of faith are realized as the spiritual dimension of the treatment. Even the archetype of the Jungian soul can be found in the symbol of the Virgin Mary Oriflamma, in our opinion, the highest and most profound expression of man's spirituality. Virginity is what Bion (1970) identifies in the dimension defined by Master Eckhart as the Depth of the Soul. This depth, virgin, that is, not contaminated by the worries and attachments of the individual's daily life, is of absolute purity and dwells in the human being in his deepest interior unity, beyond the Freudian and the Jungian unconscious (Grassi, 2012).*

Returning to Dante, Mazzarella (1991) has already compared Dante's path to Jung's individuation path. Regarding Hell and Purgatory, the author interprets these two phases as the poet's encounter with the archetypes, like the process of individuation as understood by the analytic psychologist. In this process, one proceeds through a long hierarchical path, going from analysis of the Person, the archetype of the social mask adopted by the individual in his relationships with the world, exploration and integration of the Shadow to reach the archetype of the Soul. Archetype in this case refers to both an inner psychic development and as an opening towards the Selbst. In short, we again come to the Soul-Beatrice. For Jung, the integration with the Soul expresses a double-sided archetype. This can be explained more clearly if we imagine an hourglass with an opening at the bottom and another at the top. The one below is implied as the harmonious collection of all the instances of the personality and all the aforementioned archetypes. The opening above refers to one towards transpersonal spirituality, whose limit is the collective unconscious in its double meaning as a set of archetypal elements predisposed in the psyche and at the same time the openness towards the transpersonal, understood as Anima Mundi, an immanentistic religious concept.

Speaking of Hell, like speaking about the Shadow, the archetype of the evil within us refers to a path that consists of thus facing all our darkest instances. The souls of the damned in Hell described by Dante are, by its very definition, lacking the ability to philosophize. To philosophize can be easily understood as the capacity for self-reflection. On the analytical psychological level, this inability is revealed especially in the psychoanalytic concepts of repeat compulsion (Freud, 1920, p.193) and lack of mentalization (Fonagy, 2016). Repeat compulsion in the damned takes the form of a character trait, unconsciously ego-syntonic, and for this reason it cannot be placed under the glimpse of self-exploration in an objective way. The lack of mentalization, on the other hand, highlights the lack of communication between the emotional and cognitive spheres and the inability to think thoughts (Bion, 1962): rigid, repetitive traits that prevail over the meaning of relationships and the emotionality behind them and that require discretion.

[6] *This is what Bertha Pappenheim, or Anna O, called Breuer's patient who was considered the patient zero of psychoanalysis.*

[7] *We will see in a later work (nda).*

We know that Beatrice accompanies Dante on this long journey, but only St. Bernard of Clairvaux will play a role in the last part of the journey as the Selbst for Jung, that is, as a mediator for the access to God. It is in this passage that the aforementioned fundamental difference between Jung's and the Sommo Poeta's visions is highlighted. For Jung, it is the immanent God, while for Dante, it is the transcendent God. In other words, in our opinion, exactly at this point, Jung's greatest clinical theoretical contradiction becomes visible. The archetype of the self, which inextricably binds man to the Unus Mundus, the collective unconscious, has a collocation that remains essentially anthropological. Jung, however, makes it the ultimate destination of man. But if we look at the final stage of Dante's journey, specifically at the moment when Bernard of Clairvaux appears, a Christian symbol of the highest level of mystical enlightenment, we couldn't essentially miss that his essence is human, therefore anthropological. However, this essence acts as a mediator for man's access to God, clearly transcendental in Dante's Vision, since God, the Empyrean or Indivisible Punctum, is not part of the earthly world in his subsistence.

We already discussed Jung's immanent vision previously by reading the Red Book, the analytic psychologist's diary written approximately from 1913 to 1930, during the time of its publication in Italy in 2009 (Grassi, Berivi, 2011). In particular, among other things, between Elijah and Salome, we highlighted Jung's preference for the latter. We then wrote: "We have seen that Salome represents both instincts, as a mere satisfaction of desire, as well as the destruction of the forms and contents of the Logos, as depicted by the beheading [of John the Baptist]. "She is blind because she does not see the meaning of things" (Jung, 1961: 210). Therefore, if we interpret the girl, in matriarchal terms, as the disposition of the Soul, both female and male, to establish an undifferentiated and boundless relationality, therefore promiscuous and incestuous, we can see in her the representation of an increasingly strong tendency today to abolish limits and roles in relationships, in the blind existence of an emotional marasma where reign the indistinct and the multiple. What we call "mere relationality", in its one-sidedness, extends exclusively along the horizontal dimension of human existence, without the boundaries of the vertical dimension of meaning, and becomes a form of exercising power" (Berivi, 2011, p.152-153). The choice of transcendence would have manifested itself instead in Jung's adherence to Elijah's message, the theological metaphysics (Grassi, 2011), but the immanent attitude of his ego leads him to prioritize the relationship with Salome, the symbol of anthropological phenomenology, hence raising phenomenology to the metaphysical dimension, a phenomenology whose ultimate principle is the method. Each conceptualization is evident from externally observing the phenomenon, separated from its symbolic meaning, which leaves room for as many interpretations as there are methods, which are the interpretative criteria. In the end, these criteria equate, as in relativism, or they can reach extreme forms of falsification, where even the facts abandon temporality and verifiability[8]. After all, although Jung in the Red Book succinctly and honestly remarks that the choice he made as a result of his inner quest was personal, subjective, non-absolute and relatable, he lays out a path that is clearly stated in his works, as we are trying to demonstrate. This path leans more towards the phenomenological multiplicity of human experience and knowledge (Salome) rather

[8] *Let's think, for example, of virtual reality, that of social networks, where the facts, indeed the words lose their temporality, can be written today as they were years ago, and the facts expressed by the words lose their verifiability, that is, they are true only because they are affirmed.*

than those in the basic unitary perspective of an ethically religious attitude (Elijah). In other words, this refers to the primacy of immanent phenomenology over the unitary metaphysical position of transcendence, with the obvious repercussions[9] on the anthropological, cognitive and ethical level.
Consequently, the Jungian Self replaces the metaphysical God with the anthropological superman (übermensch), as Nietzsche (Jung, 1988) and Comte (De Lubac, 1900 p.132) did before him with Zarathustra and the Great Priest of Humanity, respectively, who take God's place in the explicit intention of the authors. The historical failure to concretize both forms of superman, the fall of the national socialism and subsequently real socialism, inevitably led modern mankind to the failure of this concept of the Self. The desperate attempt at a transpersonal reference that is valid in all senses: cognitive, emotional, sensorial, behavioral, therefore gives birth to a new inspiring principle, the method, in particular the hermeneutic method, which is placed at the basis of all choices inherent in truth, goodness, justice, beauty. Unfortunately, in our opinion, it is man who can change the hermeneutical method and, therefore, precisely in the perspective of the classical Greek vision of the method, it is always man who can change the God whose procession follows, a formidable symbolic image of the concept of process. We know how Jung generally prefers to represent concepts with images, and in the case of the method he refers to the phenomenological multiplicity of the images of pandemonium. In fact, in the past, some Jungian followers have even gone as far as speaking of the analyst's myth, meaning this pattern of internal organization of the system of truth-value-ethics-beauty that follows a certain specific "view", represented by the god who it is decided to follow the procession of one of these archetypes of the mind. It is precisely this conclusion, also by Jung, that lays the foundation for such a theorization of the analyst's personality, which however poses, from our point of view, a thorny question: can a single view be enough to interpret all phenomena and the psychological events of a patient, in the absence of a unitary transcendent reference that is above all individual views and can illuminate them all with its unitary light? Isn't it the analyst's limit that will become the limit of the patient's psychological maturity?
We could say that compared to Dante, Jung is unable to make that leap, that crossing of the wall of fire that would have allowed him access to transcendence, and therefore to the objective and unitary dimension of truth, ethics, justice and goodness. Romano Guardini (2012), on the other hand, affirms that Christian thinking considers creation fundamental and conceives a total differentiation between the creator and the creature, expressed with the formula that "the creative act translates the creature from nothing into reality; his participation in God consists of a relationship of exemplarity "(cit: 464). Regarding men's reaction to this unitary concept of truth, Dante makes two statements[10] that are very much psychologically profound and relevant. Alighieri writes:

[9] *Although Jung speaks in the Red Book of the spirit of the times, of phenomenological type and mold, and of the spirit of the profound, of an eminently mystical religious type and mold, in reality he ends up endorsing the existence of so many truths, constitutive of the spirit of the times and justified precisely by having identified many views in the sky, that is, many stars in the night sky, therefore spiritual views, and many fish eyes in the deep sea, therefore many emotional views.*

[10] *In this his thought precedes that of great psychoanalysts: Jung, Langs and Bion. Jung points out the sour taste of truth expressed by the image of the Amaritudo Maris (Jung, 1988). Langs particularly emphasizes the crudeness of inner images (1974), while Bion openly says that those who make themselves the bearers of truth will be persecuted by all falsifiers of truth, and that the latter are the overwhelming majority of human beings (1970).*

"and afterward through Heaven
from light to light, things have I heard which, if
repeated, will for many have the taste
of bitter herbs; and yet, if I 'm to truth
a timid friend, I fear lest life I lose
with those who shall of this age speak as ancient.""
(Pd XVII,115-120).

With these two triplets, Dante, in Paradise, specifies that the truth has a sour taste for most of humanity and that the truth, witnessed by the mistic, can be an activator of envious persecution (See the fate of Christ in the religious field). In the psychoanalytic field Bion supports the same thesis (Bion, 1974, p.22-23; 1970, p.137-138).
In other words, following Dante, even in psychoanalysis, the transcendent vision can answer our question, but also it opens the way to an extremely uncomfortable and opposed perspective of objectivity in our contemporary world. Its reference is found in the verses mentioned above.

Convergent views between Dante and Jung: order and ethics in the Divine Comedy and in Analytical Psychology

The verses of the Divine Comedy have their own sequential order that gives meaning to the entire symbolic language that animates them. "Si licet magna componere parvis", Virgil wrote in the Georgiche[11], and if in the sequence of Dante's verses we are able to identify a communicative coherence through the decoding of the symbolic language used, even the associations, dreams and symptoms produced by the patient in psychotherapy end up being usable and used in Dante's way. By Dante's way, we mean an apparently concrete language which, freed from the constraints of the coherence of logical links, in the unconsciously ordered symbolic sequence of its contents, can be a source of communications that come from beyond the deep unconscious as a commentary on what happens in the hereafter of ordinary consciousness. In our opinion, this is a consonance between the two communicative universes. The analyst's invitation to associate the fact with the patient therefore also takes on the meaning of an invitation to "contemplate" one's inner world.
In the Divine Comedy, Dante gives importance to the concept of order and ethics and consequently to a hierarchical vision of spiritual asceticism: the latter is described as "absolutely orderly and expressed in an highly accurate poetic form" (cit.: 464 et seq.). Each step of this order is therefore similar to God.
Alighieri develops with great clarity the sequential order made up of various steps, where each stage of the journey has its own internal logic, proceeding linearly from the darkness of Hell to the light of Heaven. This is the order that Dante would define the divine. From our point of view, the divine could also be observed in the sequence of the patient's associations, especially in a secure framework made up of a set of rules that preserve the divine order of the analytic process. By divine here we rather refer to the universality and crafting of this order by a higher authority. Associations therefore, although defined as "free" by a unilaterally conscious and rational vision, are in fact not free at all.

[11] *Virgil, Georgics "If it is permissible to compare small things with large things", 1st century BC, IV, 176.*

Their sequence certainly does not obey the cause – effect principle, but rather the principle of order. However, in this internal associative order that obeys the laws of analogy and sequential contiguity, in their manifest content they can betray apparent contradictions, incongruity and disorder. In reality they represent the expression of a symbolic communication, in which the succession of communications can then be translated in the order of the rational logic of the left hemisphere.
The divine nature of this order is emphasized by Dante in an extraordinary passage from Paradise:

"and then began:
"All things, whate'er they be, an order have
among themselves; and form this order is,
which makes the Universe resemble God.
Therein exalted creatures see the trace
of that Eternal Worth, which is the end
for which the mentioned order is created.
Within the ordered state whereof I speak,
all natures have their place with different lots".
(Pd I, 103-111)

It is no coincidence that Dante speaks about order in such a way in Paradise. Reading from a symbolic perspective, order is part of a paradisiacal condition, and it is also very close to God, where truth is that ray of light that makes being equivalent to being true, good and meaningful. According to Dante, therefore, the religious nature characterizes the world per se, in an objective sense; similarly, the order of the universe is not the expression of a mechanical fact, but of God's very intention. On the other hand, Guardini writes: "... modern man does not see the world in this way because it is so, but because of how he wants to see it, and on the basis of this premise he chooses" (cit: 480).
Furthermore, we find also another similarity between what the Italian theologian writes and what we clinically observe in people who undergo psychotherapy. Guardini argues that one problem of the future, on which it will be essential to decide, will be precisely whether to recognize the good not as a characterization of existence set up by man, but as the objective constitutive premise, present during the realization of life (cit: 48). Similarly, according to the clinical model with a communicative orientation adopted by us analytic psychologists, we believe the deep unconscious informs us of the truth about our behavioral motivations towards others and towards ourselves (Langs, 1998). In fact, the deep unconscious, according to the neurocognitive scholar, S.W. Porges (2017), knows and evaluates the information coming from our interior, from the world and the human universe that surrounds it, way before our conscious ethical choice does. In summary, Porges ends up reinforcing that ethics has neurobiological roots that therefore justify an objective subsistence, as the potential of all human beings. In other words, it is a truthful-ethical activity that is completely independent from conscious choices and hence able to tell us how things actually are, not how we want to see them. Therefore, the strong similarity between the two visions is evident both in the order of succession in the psychological and spiritual journey of man, as well as in the hierarchy of values that he is called to realize. In fact, the path's sequential order is indicated precisely by Jung's conceptualization of the path, with the diction about the identification process. The process represents precisely the ordering aspect.

Ultimately, Dante defines the stars as "views", that is, luminous points of awareness of reality (Paradiso, canto II, v. 115). Jung likens luminous islands of awareness to the visible stars in the night sky of the unconscious (Jung, 1988, p.205). In a language more relevant to the clinical method of analytic psychotherapy, in the deep perceptive-cognitive unconscious, Langs (1998) identifies an attitude, misunderstood both by classical psychoanalysis and by psychoanalysis of object relation. For Langs, as for Jung, the deep unconscious offers us its "view" of everything that happens or what we do in our ordinary and extra-ordinary life. Jung argues there exists an unconscious awareness, which he defined as "Midnight Sun" (Jung, 1988, p. 83, n.14) of the process of individuation that characterizes the patient's analytic journey. All this seems to be confirmed by the works of scholars such as Bucci (1997a) and Porges (2017). In specific, Bucci focuses on the sub-cortical limbic system and its activity of producing symbolic emotional pattern, while Porges concentrates on the concept of neuroception and the polyvagal subsystem belonging to the neurovegetative nervous system. With neuroscientific and neurocognitive references, the authors offer discoveries that confirm both Dante's poetic intuition, that is, the stars as views of the afterlife, if by afterlife we mean the unconscious, and the notions of Jung and Langs.

The types and psychological functions of Jungian thought as archetypal forms of the philosophical transcendentals of St. Thomas Aquinas in the therapeutic relationship

Finally, we would like to address a final correlation between Dante and Jung, comparing the Poet's transcendental concepts, which are drawn from the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, with Jung's theory of psychological Types, in order to explain why we think a transcendent vision and a truthful psychology can be comparable.

The essence of the Empyrean is defined by Dante as "Light intellectual which is full of Love..." [Pd 30-40]. The two phenomena of love and light are accompanied by a third phenomenon - beauty. In the cognitive life, the things that are memory and fantasy for the eyes, are prolonged in the light, in the life of feelings and will, in love and in ethics; memory and fantasy are particularly prolonged in beauty. Truth, goodness, beauty and intuition of the Unum are in fact the four transcendentals of the philosophical-metaphysical vision of St. Thomas Aquinas and of the subsequent scholastic philosophy, which inherited them from Aristotle. The notions of bonum and verum, and of their metaphysical identity, are already present in the Aristotelian corpus, even if the Greek philosopher lacks a systematic treatment like the one that St. Thomas Aquinas later elaborated: Unum, Verum, Bonum, Pulchrum. In Jungian psychological terms, the constitutive functions of these transcendentals, understood as views and forms of experience, appear to be the same psychic functions described in Jung's Psychological Types (For the Unum, the intuition; for the verum, the thought; for the bonum, the feeling and for the pulchrum, the sensoriality). The transcendentals, for Aquinas, are precisely those characteristics that qualify being as such and therefore belong to every entity. The Being par excellence in this perspective is God in his transcendence. The transcendental is valid and applicable only in the context of experience, expressing the law of knowledge corresponding to the different objects of experience.

If we now transfer the meaning of this concept of the transcendental to Jung's archetypal conception, expressed among other things in the Psychological Types (Jung, 1969), we cannot help but notice

that if the truth is the intellectual light, the goodness is an expression of love and beauty, the sensoriality is the ability to preserve what is contemplated in the vision into a visual form, therefore a synthesis of memory and fantasy, and intuition is the unconscious perception of Unum. Then it is evident that the four psychological functions identified by Jung represent nothing but a further anthropological-psychological extension of the aforementioned transcendentals.

These functions are archetypal functions, that is, constitutive of the essence of the psyche. For example, only one of them can characterize the main "view" used by the person's ego. Healing, according to Jung's perspective, will be determined integrating all other functions with the main one. At the same time, as archetypal functions, since they are numinous, they also have a transpersonal side, which assimilates them to the concept of transcendentals.

In fact, the transcendentals are anthropologically rooted, but since they qualify being as such and therefore belong to every entity, considering God as the Being par excellence, they are metaphysically and theologically determined. Instead, Jung, in his psychological vision of an immanentistic nature expressed with the concept of the collective unconscious, a universal but anthropological concept needs to anchor in itself the psychological functions, but stopping at the anthropologized metaphysics of the earthly Paradise. For Jung, this is the final destination of each individual path. In fact, once this has been identified with the Selbst, consequently the four psychological functions (thought, feeling, sensoriality and intuition) are symbolically represented in the four rivers of the aforementioned paradise and can represent unchangeable cornerstones over the centuries.

Following the comparison between Dante and Jung's concepts, we identify the basic principles of psychotherapy below, intended as prodromal for a spiritual development: order-truth-ethics-goodness-beauty.

The Order is the fundamental element that can be found:

a) in the psychotherapeutic field, following Langs (1998), in the rules of the setting, as an expression of the Basic Rules of Life[12]*;*

b) in the patient's associative sequences: the free association concept realized by the patient is in fact transformed into a sequence of associations whose unconscious meaning can be deduced by the therapist who interprets symbolically the unconscious communication of the patient;

c) in the hierarchy of value-disvalue the patient encounters on his inner journey (Person, Shadow, Soul, Personality Mana, Selbst).

Truth, ethics, aesthetics and goodness are therefore not only the transcendentals of a philosophy expressed in poetry by Dante. They are also a priori categories of experience and knowledge, from a Jungian perspective, and can represent the psychological functions of a therapy that is based on corresponding archetypes: thought, feeling, sensoriality and intuition. However, these are also the objectives that psychotherapy, analytically structured in a communicative sense, intends to achieve through the symbolic language of the deep unconscious. Understanding all these considerations, we can assume that the deep unconscious knows truth better than the consciousness of the ego (still not fully recognized today). It knows better how to evaluate the choices made, to meaningfully represent

[12] *The basic rules of life are realized in psychotherapy, according to Langs, in the rules of the setting that make the framework where the plot of transference and countertransference unwinds and where the unveiling of the patient's primary anxieties is actualized (Langs, 2011; 1980; 1988; 1996).*

what Langs defines as "derivatives" and to realize what the deep unconscious proposes as "good" for the patient.

It is obvious that taking this path represents a real catastrophic change (Bion, 1974) for the patient whose ordinary consciousness is so used to the false interpretation of reality made by the left hemisphere (Grassi, 2012), to the false memories of this past life and ethics formed by the aforementioned mystifications, without any reference to the Basic Rules of Life (Lang, 1998). The therapist, in order to achieve this result, must have undergone a similar psychological discipline, and subsequently spiritual, through their own personal analysis. From this viewpoint, Bion (1965) suggests a path that will undoubtedly be, for the analyst himself, marked by fire and light. For him, the fire will be the torment of his repeat compulsion; however it can also be the torment of his redemption from the dialectic of opposites, which need, step by step, their dissolutive synthesis. This can then lead him to a higher level of psychological maturation. Bion, 1970, p.93 et seq.) writes: "The prospect of being in unison with zero or its unity is scary. […] The center of the question is the painful nature of the change directed towards maturation. […] Desire, memory and the understanding of the consciousness of the ego therefore can falsify the beliefs that keep at a distance the state of mind defined by the author as Faith. "Memory" is used to settle on what is not significant, eliminating what is instead important. Even "desire" allows into the analyst's mental state something that prevents them from seeing the central point: that aspect of zero is continually presented by the unknown and the unknowable. Bion writes that K's transformations into zero (his thoughts, memory, conscious desires, expectations relating to the future and memories of the past) are experienced by everyone, therefore also by the analyst, as a serious attack on the ego, until a new mental state is established: the state of Faith (Bion, 1970, p. 39-58).

K: This is the "blind" spot that must be illuminated by "blindness" (Bion, 1970, p.94). It is a blind spot because it obscures the analyst from seeing the profound meanings emerging from the unconscious, generally harmful for the psychic balance (Bion, 1965, p. 219-220). It must be enlightened by blindness because only a work of spiritual discipline, such as the one outlined by the "dark nights of the soul" spoken by St. John of the Cross (Bion, 1965, pp. 219-220), can eliminate their blinding effect. Only then a blinding effect of conscious perceptions, memories and desires (S. Giovanni della Croce, 1978) can desaturate the preconception, making it an empty form, similar to Jung's concept of the "archetype as empty form". In this way it can perceive and experience elements of the inner world that cannot be experienced by the ordinary senses. The author's use of the metaphor of light and blindness is interesting, which draws our attention precisely to the light that also characterizes Dante's psychological and spiritual path. Even more, by memory, Bion means exclusively the experience related to conscious attempts to recall memories. These attempts are once again the manifestation of the fear over the intrusion of destabilizing elements to the analyst' mental state: "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts"[13]. As an alternative, Bion proposes the dream-memory state as "the fabric of which the analysis is made" (Bion, 1970, p. 95). The author argues that the experience of the session involve the material similar to a dream, in the sense that both the dream and the material with which the analyst faces contribute to dream-like qualities. In order to make Bion's somewhat cryptic language more accessible, it is to emphasize that

[13] *John Keats, letter George and Thomas Keats, 21 December 1817. In Bion, attention and interpretation, publisher Armando Roma, 1970, page 95.*

the material the author mentions are the patient's associations, dreams, slips, missed acts, and his body language. For example, associations can report concrete facts of the patient's current daily life (as well as the manifest content of dreams), but all these communications, in order to be truly understood, need precisely a "dreaming memory", that is, a symbolic key to reading which allows the analyst to understand them as a form of coded communication of what the patient is experiencing at that moment. It is a form of communication in the symbolic code that is specifically inherent to the true nature of the developing relationship between him and the patient. To reach this "visionary" level, the therapist has to avoid the unilateral knowledge of the patient's transference, possibly in action at that moment, and that of his countertransference in the dynamics of opposites in play during the session. The therapist needs to reach a higher level of development that allows them to go beyond the dialectic of opposites, into an interior dimension that allows them to see clearly what is happening[14]*. The sacrifice of both concrete memory and desire allows the analyst to develop the "dreaming memory", that is, the ability to read the patient's communication from point of view granted by the "purification" process that he accomplished along his path across purgatory. For example, regarding the truth, Bion is very categorical to affirm that the lie needs a thinker who thinks, while the truth does not need a thinker. It is a strong statement, to which we fully agree, that places the truth in the context of the objective data of the world; all the rest is made not of truth but of beliefs, that is, of artifacts and lies. Indeed, Bion states: "true thought does not need anyone who thinks it: it awaits the arrival of the thinker who acquires meaning through true thought. […] [Vice versa] the lie and its thinker are instead inseparable. The only thoughts for which a thinker is absolutely necessary are lies" (Bion, 1970, p.1339).*

We often define lies with the interpretations made by the left hemisphere in the analysis of reality[15]*. The interpreter uses the left hemisphere, responsible for the processing of cognitive and metacognitive thinking (Gazzaniga, 2011). The other extreme is Bion's reflection regarding the lie, in particular on the fact that this term is usually applied to the field of conscious thinking, but that it actually has a counterpart in the field of being: for liars, it is possible to have not only false thoughts, but even being a lie precludes being in unison with zero. In this other statement, we can observe a correlation with Jung's concept of the archetype: if to develop a knowledge it is first necessary to have the relative experience, in compliance with the specific definition of the archetypal term, it then becomes paradoxically obvious to consider that a false thought, or a false "knowledge" is the fruit of an experience of falsehood made by a person which therefore becomes a "lie" (Bion, 1970, p. 159).*

Conclusions

The truth, in our view, is one, and it cannot be multiple. For Dante, many are the beliefs of men dictated by the individual "views" that are falsified to occupy the central and absolute point of reference which is instead the topos of the light of truth in God. The Sommo Poeta argues implicitly that the elimination of this unitary theological perspective leaves the need for truth in its essentiality unfulfilled and man gets lost "greedily" with the single "views". In fact Dante writes in Paradise:

[14] *To understand, however, what we mean by vision and perspective of a higher order, we refer the reader to the next article which will deal with the "Baptism of fire" as an unavoidable and authentically significant stage for the therapist.*

[15] *This mechanism has been translated into a specific image, that of the Interpreter, according to the neuro-scientific model of Micheal Gazzaniga (2011).*

"I well see that our mind is never sated,
unless it be illumined by the Truth,
outside of which no truth extends".
(Parad, Cant IV, v. 124-126)

Truth, in its catastrophic realization (Bion, 1974), also drags ethics and the concept of good along with it. The experience of truth is intimately connected with the experience of justice and goodness. This experience is carried out, even before consciousness, by the deep unconscious. It is not a question of considerations and reflections linked exclusively to a spiritual journey, which could be questioned by anyone and at any time. The neurocognitive research of Porges (2017) on the autonomic nervous system and of Bucci (1997a) on the sub-symbolic and subsequently symbolic emotional system, led to the discovery that the practice of the cognitive verification of truth and its emotional value, as well as of the ethical meaning of the information from the external and internal world, are the prerogative of the profound unconscious, long before the consciousness of the ego itself. They are transmitted to the rational consciousness of the ego through the symbolic language of the deep unconscious. At this point, our neuroscientifically founded knowlegde becomes understandable that the deep unconscious indicates to the consciousness of the ego the path of truth, ethics, and therefore of goodness, as a path to achieve healing, also in line with Langs (1998) and with his profound teaching.

The concept of freedom changes: the patient does not come to analysis to be free to do whatever he wants, what he likes or what he wants on a conscious level. His freedom concerns his emancipation from the slavery of his own desires, his memories, his beliefs and the consequent so-called "ethical" choices that keep his ego and his behavior subjugated. His freedom consists of adapting to the perspectives opened by the deep unconscious or by opposing them, according to the principle of free will. Today, however, we know that true freedom consists of adhering, even with sacrifice, to the proposals of the profound unconscious. This is because this adhesion, superficially considered by the ego as constricting (see the anxieties of a secure framework in the analytic relationship), will instead reconcile it with him and with the realization of his individuation: a higher level of freedom from the values of the world around him. The profound unconscious, understood in this sense, obviously also indicates him the good path to take.

The Empyrean depicts that single point of the world towards which this search for freedom is directed, the point towards which the Depth of the Soul opens, an anthropological topos in which the relationship between Transcendent God and man is realized. The Depth of the Soul is therefore a psycho-spiritual factor that we call the archetype of transcendence, a psychological concept that extends upwards and is remodeled into a mystical concept precisely because of its openness to Transcendence (Guardini, 1995, p. 174). The ascent towards this topos requires the effort to release the "cloud of non-knowledge" (Anonymous English, 1981) made up of all the activities related to the everyday world and all the correlated rational dissertations, so that one can access the inner light, the Punctum Unicum separated from any multiplicity, both sensible and intelligible; if Transcendence is simultaneously fire, light and word, and if, moreover, psychotherapy is a cure based on the word and the word is divine language, the not only scientific but also "sacred" nature of psychotherapy and of the Word of the Unconscious becomes understandable in the its multidimensional expressions.

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