

Mediterranean Journal of Clinical Psychology MJCP

ISSN: 2282-1619

VOL. V, N.2 (2017)

Book Review

In search of Soul: the encounter and the return

by Floro R.

Ed. Moretti & Vitali, 2016.

In the texts written by Dr. Raffaele Floro, psychologist, psychotherapist, Jungian analyst, the two volumes, I “Alla ricerca di Anima- L’incontro. Per una psicologia poetica del sentimento” p. 368, and II “Alla ricerca di Anima- Il ritorno” p. 392, editore Moretti & Vitali, 2016, exist a continuous research of the unconscious female part of personality. The archetype of Anima introduces to aspects of feeling without whose connection man is easily lost in concrete, material, rational, and meaningless traits.

In the first volume, entitled “L’incontro”, the author presents a link between “psyche” and “matter”, while in the second one, entitled “Il ritorno”, he rediscovers the reality of Anima in the experience of analytical clinics and literature, starting from the writing of poets who proposed in verse and prose the encounter with Anima, in order to explore intrinsic dynamics and deep

aspects that contemporary man almost denies, and which sometimes are the cause of disconnection with deep aspects of feeling and the consequent emergence of suffering.

Even for C.G. Jung just the meeting and the connection with Anima is able to bridge with the deeper part of our being, in order to evaluate reality on a less rational and more affective level.

In this text it is possible to feel the experiences of Anima as a psychic reality that goes from the maternal feminine to the depths of feeling: we find her in the relationship with the beloved woman (see chapter IV), in the significant correspondence with the odd attraction of non-linear dynamic systems (see chapter VI), in the archetypal dynamics between rationality and sentiment at the border between order and disorder, also in relation to the psychic parts yet unknown.

The feminine theme goes through the text towards the encounter with the inner woman, also through various phenomenal forms of feminine (in example "Fenomenologia di Eva" and Elena, Maria, Sofia (see chapters VIII-XII). Eva, Elena, Maria and Sofia, four women we find both in Greek mythology and in Catholic religion, represent the progressive spiritual elevation to Sapientia, because reaching Sofia means to mystically live the psychic depth of the soul. A psychoidal link between psyche and body connects the two volumes from "L'incontro" to "Il ritorno".

In the second book, entitled "Il ritorno" there is an analysis of feeling as the soul in life and of the four degrees of Anima in the symbolism of classical works such as "Faust" by W. Goethe (see chapters II-IV), "Divina Commedia" by Dante (see chapters V-VII) and "L'asino d'oro" by Apuleio (see chapters IX-XI).

The "thought of the heart", we find in poets as in writers, translates in verse the encounter with Anima in the life. It is interesting to read in psychological terms the evolution of Anima through the four figures in classical works that crossed the story.

Therefore it is possible to bring back to the existential condition of those who look for Anima and meet her.

Existential conditions crossed are very current, such as the Faust, characterized by dissatisfaction and unhappiness, who sells his soul to the devil. In Faust we find the example of the developmental scale of the Jungian Anima in Eva, Elena, Maria to the Eternal Feminine; only the feeling will save Faust from the eternal misery of damnation.

In this case, the dominant thought is to reach happiness by extending from his own Anima; his *hýbris* makes him believe that it is possible to command the Archetype of Anima, making a personal replacement, instead of the final result.

The appearance of Anima is always preceded by the comparison with Ombra, which besides making consciousness of personal refused aspects, allows to understand that personal reality is in fact universal and archetypal.

Precisely this passage from personal to impersonal is what we find in Dante in the encounter with Beatrice, in that love as a suffering that drives him to the knowledge of parts of himself.

Beatrice in the *Divina Commedia* covers two stages of Anima, combining Elena's archetypal passion with the Sofia's Sapiencia, we find in Paradise.

In Apuleio we find the theme of perfection and the search for success, along with the fear of a mature sexuality. Lucio's journey into "L'asino d'oro" is like the journey of the hero who passes from the personal state of the Ego to the bestial and yet, through various vicissitudes, discovers Anima.

The Lucio's transformation into a donkey is the symbol of spiritual transformation within the themes of renewal and rebirth.

The donkey in fact, has an ambivalent archetypal symbology, suspending man between two opposite possibilities: the elevation of his condition in the light of Anima or the condemnation to a state of inertia.

The author Raffaele Floro carries us by hand in the Anima discovery trail in a captivating way, giving us vivid images of this meaningful encounter that can give us visual sensations which can drive the readers to an intimate reflection on their bond with Anima.

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