

uno tras otro, con tal esfuerzo que sean  
muy lentos para quien ya ha pasado el tiempo;  
**DEVUÉLVELE A MI PECHO EL AGUA Y EL FUEGO,**  
si es que vas a volver a devorarme.

Y si, oh amor, sólo en realidad vives  
de las amargas y dulces lágrimas de las criaturas,  
ahora poco ganarás de quien está viejo y acabado.

Mi alma casi está en el otro lado,  
y **DARDOS** más compasivos me protegen de los tuyos,  
**LA LLAMA HACE EL FUEGO POBRE EN LA MADERA  
YA QUEMADA.**

~

Una **LLAMA ARDIENTE**, por gran **BELLEZA** repartida  
entre mil corazones **INFLAMADOS**,  
puede ser comparada a las pesas,  
leves y pequeñas para muchos, fatal para uno.  
Cuando estrechamente comprimida,  
la **ROCA DURA** se convierte en cal,  
y en un instante la disuelve el agua,  
así como con pruebas conoce la verdad quien la observa.  
Divina, prende una **LUMBRE**,  
por mil hombres en mí,  
que deja mi corazón **ABRASADO** al máximo.  
Pero las lágrimas que nunca cesan  
bien pueden disolver lo fuerte y duro;  
mejor no ser, que **ARDER** y no morir.

~

Si las cosas **BELLAS** están en la memoria,  
también debe haber muerte, que puede retirar  
su cara de ahí, como te la ha quitado a ti  
y cambias risa por lágrimas y **FUEGO POR HIELO**.  
Entonces se vuelven enemigas  
por lo que del corazón vacío no presumen.  
No obstante, si él fijara sus **BELLOS OJOS**  
hacia el punto familiar, ellos estarían  
como palos secos para **HOGUERA ARDIENTE**.

~

Esta mujer está aquí presa,  
en su ira ingobernable,  
de que voy a **QUEMAR** y transformarme  
a lo que no va a pesar ni una onza y morir  
mi **SANGRE** se pierde libra a libra,  
desanimando mi cuerpo, devaluando mi espíritu;  
le da placer acicalarse,  
ante su fiel espejo,  
donde se mira tan bella como el cielo  
después me pide que la aprecie,  
quien, edad aparte, puede lograr  
que su cara junto a la mía se vea más bella  
cubriéndome de repudio  
en tal **HOGUERA** prefiero la vejez.  
el daño es menos cuando la maldad no dura.

~

Tanto de sí misma ha prometido  
la amable señora,  
que yo en mi tardía edad,  
mirándola, me convertiría en lo que una vez fui.  
Pero, la envidiosa y fatal muerte  
estando a todas horas aposentada  
entre mi lúgubre y su benigna **MIRADA**,  
yo solo me **INCENDIO**  
al poco tiempo sus rasgos se olvidan.  
Pero cuando los malos pensamientos  
regresan a su lugar familiar,  
la bella **HOGUERA** es apagada por su severo **HIELO**.

~

**FUEGO**, en lo que todo se daña,  
**ME QUEMA** mas no me ha consumido,  
pero no a través de su poder mayor o menor.  
Yo, como la salamandra,  
sólo donde los demás mueren encuentro apoyo  
y no sé quién, calmado, **PUNZA** mi sufrimiento.  
Por ti mismo tu cara,  
por mí mismo mi corazón  
nunca fue hecho, por nosotros  
mi amor nunca será **DESGARRADO**.  
Ese maestro que ha puesto  
mi vida dentro de tus **OJOS** es todavía más alto.  
Te quiero, tú no sientes;  
perdóname por hacer esta miseria  
que pide mi muerte más allá de quien me mata.

~

Si el sentido deja que su **FLAMA TAN QUEMANTE**  
se disperse de la tuya a otra cara menos bella,  
señor, tiene menos fuerza  
como en sus arroyos, un raudo río montañés.  
Entonces, el corazón, cuya vida se prolonga  
en **FUEGO ABRASADOR**, casi no puede asentir  
con los suspiros menos **ARDIENTES** y extrañas lágrimas.  
El alma, que puede ver el error,  
se alegra de dejarlo morir  
y pedirle al cielo, al que aspira.  
Entonces la razón justamente comparte  
las **HERIDAS** entre ellos, y con cuerpos más duros  
los cuatro asienten en amarte siempre.

~

No puede transcurrir ninguno de mis días  
sin que en mi mente no la sienta o vea,  
jamás ha habido **CALOR MÁS GRANDE DE HORNO**  
**O CALDERA**,  
que no se vuelva más feroz por mis suspiros  
y cuando ocurre por un tiempo que lo tengo junto,  
hago **CHISPAS** como un hierro en una **FRAGUA**,  
y quisiera decir tanto si ella me escuchara,  
que digo menos que cuando no me precipito.

~

Si en mis años tempranos hubiera estado atento  
del **FUEGO EXTERIOR QUE AHORA ARDE EN MÍ**,  
menor mal sería, no sólo lo hubiera apagado  
sino de mi alma arrancado mi débil corazón.  
Yo lo culpo, ahora está muerto,  
pero sólo nuestro primer error falló;  
alma infeliz, si al comienzo  
un hombre no puede resistir,  
más tarde es muerto y **ARDE**  
**POR LA PRIMERA HOGUERA QUE SE PRENDE.**  
Puesto que quien puede ser **QUEMADO** y preso  
durante su juventud, cuando hay **LUZ** y espejo,  
ya viejo y débil, es destruido por **FUEGO** mucho menor.

~

¿Si la cara a que me refiero, que está en ella  
no hubiese prohibido mirar a sus **OJOS**  
entonces, Amor, cómo me pondrías a prueba  
con más intentos de **LLAMAS MÁS CALIENTES**,  
pues tú que al no verla más, me **QUEMAS**,  
de suerte no menor que sus **BELLOS OJOS**?  
«El hombre que no pierde  
es el que menos participa en el deporte,  
si todo deseo se desvanece en placer;  
cuando algo satisface,  
la esperanza no puede germinar  
en la dulzura que anula toda tortura.»  
De ella te digo sin embargo,  
si su gran riqueza se entrega a mis deseos,  
tu bondad no calmará mi alto anhelo.

~

No queda tiempo, Amor, para que **ARDA** mi corazón,  
o gozar o tener **BELLEZA** humana.  
aquí está la hora postrera,  
cuando el que menos tiempo tiene, se lamenta de su  
pérdida.

Los fuertes golpes que me puedan dar tus brazos  
la muerte los disminuirá,  
elevándolo mucho más de lo que acostumbrabas.  
las palabras y los pensamientos  
que, para mi daño, me lanzaste como **FUEGO**,  
ahora se han convertido en agua,  
y con ellos, todos juntos,  
quiera Dios que mis culpas también se deshechen.

~

El alma escancia y surte  
sus aguas interiores  
siempre y cuando no apaguen  
la **HOGUERA** en que se convierte.  
Tu **FUEGO** siempre ha provocado  
mis lágrimas, así que aunque cansado  
y viejo, no hay otra cosa que me ayude.  
Mi destino es duro, vencida mi fortuna,  
no obstante no son tan rigurosos  
pero su **PUNCIÓN** aminora, donde más te **QUEMA**,  
y así tu **MIRADA ARDIENTE**,  
llorando hacia fuera, me encierro en mí,  
y lo que más se muere solo gozo y cumplo.

~

Ellos apagan la **HOGUERA**, mucho más que tu **MIRADA**.

Mas todos mis remedios resultan cortos y vanos;  
si el agua prende el **FUEGO**, todo lo demás me falta  
para salvarme del **DAÑO QUE DESEABA Y QUIERO**,  
excepto el mismo **FUEGO**. Oh extraño asunto,  
¡Si el **DAÑO DEL FUEGO SE CURA A FUEGO!**

~

Ahora **FUEGO ARDIENTE**, luego **HIELO** cruel,  
ahora armado con vergüenza, luego con edad o tortura,  
trato de predecir el futuro dentro del pasado  
mi esperanza, lúgubre y triste.

Mi bien siendo breve, no menos  
que mi maldad, siento una urgencia que **HIERE**  
de mi mala, así como de mi buena fortuna,  
cansado de mí, constantemente pido perdón.  
Y las horas cortas y ligeras, como claramente veo,  
deben en nuestra vida ser de gracia y suerte,  
viendo que la muerte es el médico del sufrimiento.

~

¿Por qué no es más frecuente o más tardo  
que el **FUEGO** dentro de mí, con su porfiada fe,  
que me roba el corazón, elevándome de la tierra,  
donde de sí mismo su poder no lo permite?

Quizá cada período es otorgado  
entre tu primer y siguiente misiva amorosa,  
porque todas las cosas raras tienen más fuerza y poder  
cuanto menor la cercanía mayor el deseo.

La noche es el intervalo, el día la **LUZ**,  
uno **CONGELA** y el otro **INFLAMA** mi corazón  
con amor, fe y con **FUEGO** celestial...

~

Ahora muerte, Oh Amor, fuera del mismo lugar  
donde una vez en mí lo señoreaste, desnudándolo  
tanto con tu arco como con tu **PUNZANTE DARDO**,  
te corre y te rebaja, su severo **HIELO**  
apaga y te deja varios días en tu dulce **HOGUERA**.  
Tú cuentas menos que el corazón de cada hombre;  
aunque yo fui atrapado  
por las alas que llevas, tú escapas asustado;  
toda la juventud florida es tímida en la última hora.

~

Toda la fuerza que la naturaleza  
ha usado en la niña y la mujer  
fue sólo ensayo que condujo a esto,  
quien ahora **CONGELA** y **QUEMA** mi corazón.  
Donde antes ningún hombre estaba triste  
con una aflicción como la mía;  
angustia, suspiros y dolor,  
más fuertes en lo fuerte, el resultado es mayor.  
entonces también en mi encanto  
nadie ha sido más feliz que yo...

## PURGATORIO

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### XXVII

El primer día que admiré tantas BELLEZAS,  
inigualables y singulares, creí que me **CLAVARÍA**  
**ALFILERES EN LOS OJOS, COMO ÁGUILAS EN EL SOL,**  
por desear la menos valiosa de tales hermosuras.

Pero luego aprendí cómo había pecado y errado:  
a pesar de no tener alas corría tras un **ÁNGEL**;  
era como esparcir en vano simiente sobre **ROCA,**  
y lanzar palabras al **VIENTO** creyéndome hablar con Dios.

De esta manera, si la **BELLEZA** infinita no tolera  
mi corazón cerca y hace que mis **OJOS ENCEGUEZCAN**  
no parece que confíe o esté seguro al alejarme;

¿Qué hacer? ¿Qué guardián o guía alguna vez  
podría ayudarme contigo, o a soportarte?  
**CERCA ME INCENDIAS,** pero al partir me matas.

### XXXIII

Por tus hermosos **OJOS VEO GENTIL LUZ,**  
mientras que **LOS MÍOS SON TAN CIEGOS QUE NADA**  
**VEN;**



33



estar  
En  
en la bu-  
clo & las  
Cabeas.

Goya. No ha muerto todavía.

con tus pies sobre la espalda soporto gran carga,  
mientras que los míos están lisiados y son inanes;

no teniendo plumas sobre tus alas me elevo,  
con tu agudo ingenio siempre dirigido al Cielo;  
según decides me ruborizo o empalidezco,  
frío ante el **SOL** con el frío solsticio **ARDO**.

Mis ansias sólo están bajo tu albedrío;  
dentro de tu corazón cobran formas mis ideas;  
cuando coges aire, entonces puedo hablar.

Como si yo fuera la **LUNA** solitaria,  
que nuestros ojos no pueden ver en el Cielo;  
salvo la fracción que el **SOL** desprecia.

## LIX

### A Dante

Somos incapaces de decir todo lo que quisiéramos,  
**BRILLABA DEMASIADO REFULGENTEMENTE**  
**PARA LOS CIEGOS;**  
la ciudad que lo **HIRIÓ** merece mayor condena  
que el elogio más sublime de su mérito más nimio.

Fue él quien bajó donde el pecado se abandona,  
para nuestro provecho; después a Dios trepó.  
Aunque las puertas del Cielo no se mantuvieran cerradas,  
su país ante el justo deseo cerró cancelas.

Así la llamó ingrata y de su propia fortuna  
a su mismo daño la ama de cría, símbolo claro  
de cómo la perfección mayor se vuelve mayor tara.

Entre otras mil pruebas sólo ésta vale:  
si su misérrimo exilio no tuvo parecido,  
hombre tal o más ilustre tampoco existió.

## LXVI

¡Oh créame de tal forma que te vea por doquier!  
Si alguna vez me sintiese **QUEMADO POR MORTAL  
BELLEZA,**  
junto a tu lado creeré que es **FUEGO YA APAGADO,**  
y como fui seré, **POR TU BELLEZA ARDIENDO.**

A nadie sino a ti llamo e imploro, caro Señor,  
contra mi **CIEGO E INÚTIL TORMENTO,**  
sólo tú puedes renovarme, por dentro y por fuera  
mi voluntad, mi mente, mi lenta y mínima fuerza.

Esta alma sagrada entregaste al tiempo, oh amor,  
la encarcelaste dentro de este frágil y cansado  
cuerpo, y además le otorgaste inhumano destino.

¿Cómo, si los otros así viven, yo no puedo?  
Sin ti me falta todo lo bueno, mi dueño.  
Sólo es poder de Dios cambiar tal destino.

~

Todo objeto que veo me pide y me aconseja  
y me fuerza a seguirte y adorarte.  
Lo que no seas tú no es mi bien.  
Amor, que aminora todas las demás maravillas,  
me tendrá para buscarte y desearte  
como al solo **SOL**, puede sostener a mi espíritu  
alejado de altas esperanzas y de todo poder,  
deseoso vivo **ARDIENDO**  
no solo por ti, sino por cualquiera que se parezca  
en tus **OJOS** o cejas en lo más mínimo.  
Cualquiera que de ti se aleje,  
oh vida, **MIS OJOS NO TIENEN LUZ DE AHÍ EN**  
**ADELANTE,**  
porque no es el cielo donde tú no estés.

~

De las primeras lágrimas hasta los suspiros finales,  
que ahora están cerca de mí.  
¿Quién quiera que se haya topado con un destino tan duro,  
como yo de mi **ESTRELLA BRILLANTE** y feroz?  
No la llames vil o falsa;  
exteriormente sería mejor  
si su desprecio me hiciera cesar de amarle,  
pero ella, cuanto más la **MIRO**  
a mis **HERIDAS** promete  
más piedad dulce, aunque su corazón es amargo.  
¡Oh tan esperado **ARDOR!**  
Contra ti sólo los necios podrían vencerte.  
Yo, **SI TUVIERA MI VISTA**  
agradecido estaría por la primera y última hora

que la vi, que el error  
me sostenga, y que esté conmigo permanentemente,  
si todo lo que perdemos por él son esfuerzo e ingenio.

~

### **A Vittoria Colonna**

No puedo desmerecer en arte e ingenio  
de la que me quita la vida,  
siendo su ayuda tan excesiva  
que mucho más de menos gracia comprendemos.  
Entonces mi alma se marcha,  
como cuando un gran **BRILLO DAÑA LOS OJOS**,  
y lejos arriba de mí, se levanta  
a mí imposible, no me ha acercado  
con ello a mi alta y tranquila señora,  
para alcanzar su don menor, debo de comprender  
que lo que yo pueda hacer me conducirá indigno a ella.  
Ella, con sus muchas virtudes  
que esparce, y nos prende como una **FLAMA**;  
lo abundante **QUEMA** menos que lo débil.

## PARAÍSO

---

### VIII

De donde mi amor toma vida no es del pecho,  
no hay pecho en el amor con que te amo,  
ni puede quedarse donde todo es precedero,  
con toda su falsedad, ni con su pensar maldito.

Amor, cuando el alma dejó a Dios, te hizo **LUZ**  
**Y RESPLANDOR** y a mí en **FIJA PUPILA**  
así mi gran anhelo no se equivoca al verlo  
que, para nuestro duelo, tienes de muerte.

Como el calor del **FUEGO**, así mi admiración  
no sabe alejarse de la inmortal **BELLEZA**,  
ni dejar de alabarla como su seguro origen.

Pues en tus **OJOS LLEVAS TODO EL FIRMAMENTO**,  
y yo, para volver donde te amé al principio,  
**ARDIENDO** me apresuro a regresar bajo tus cejas.

### XIII

Cuando aquel que tan a menudo me hizo suspirar  
se apartó de sí mismo, mis **OJOS** y la tierra,  
la Natura que lo quería para regalo nuestro,  
se avergonzó, pues todo el que veía lo entristeció.



Goya. *La Verdad rescatada por el Tiempo, atestiguado por la Historia.*

Hoy, sin embargo, no se jacta de haber tomado  
y apagado **EL SOL DEL SOL** como el resto, con muerte,  
porque amor ganó, poseyéndole para darle vida  
en la tierra, y con los otros santos, en el cielo.

Así la falsa y perversa muerte creyó dominar  
el rumor de sus virtudes, regadas en la distancia,  
y también el alma, que quizá sería menos **HERMOSA**.

Pero el efecto contrario **RELUCE** sobre el papel  
con mayor vida que en vida era de esperar;  
muerto posee el cielo, mas antes todo lo contrario.

## **XVII**

Cuando amor jovial me eleva al cielo,  
más sobre los **OJOS** de esta mujer que del **SOL**,  
ahuyenta de mi corazón con rauda risa dolor  
y **HERIDA** y deja que aparezca su rostro.

## **XXXII**

Sin duda conmigo el cielo no tuvo merced,  
al fundir tu **VIVO HAZ EN SOLO DOS PUPILAS**,  
cuando con su rauda y eterno movimiento,  
el camino te trozó y a nosotros la **LUZ**.

Oh alegre **PÁJARO** que así nos sobrepasas,  
pues el hermoso rostro de **FEBO** conoces,

y más que el gran paisaje, la gracia óptima  
de volar a la colina de donde me caigo y quiebro.

## LVIII

### A Dante

Tras descender del cielo, aún en su carne,  
**VIO** ambos Infiernos: el justo y el bueno,  
y volvió de nuevo a contemplar a Dios,  
dejando que viésemos su **REFLEJO** genuino;

era una **ESTRELLA REFULGENTE Y CON SU HAZ**  
el nido donde nací injustamente **ILUMINÓ**.  
No era premio para él todo el mundo malvado;  
pues sólo fuiste Tú quien creó el genio.

Quiero decir a Dante, mientras su ingrata gente  
apenas sabía nada de sus proezas;  
sólo a los justos les arrebató su confianza.

¡Si yo hubiese podido ser él! Nacido con tal sino,  
con tan amargo exilio, y también virtud,  
renunciaría al rincón más espléndido del mundo.

~

Señora, mientras parpadea  
sus **BELLOS OJOS** cerca de mí,  
en ellos me contemplo, al igual,

que usted en los míos se observa.  
De todos los años y trabajos  
quien quiera que yo sea me han satisfecho  
como los míos a los suyos, más que una **ESTRELLA**  
**BRILLANTE.**

Por fuerza debe enojar al cielo  
que en **OJOS BELLOS** tan mal me vea,  
y usted en mis feos ojos se vea tan bella.  
Adentro, agudos y severos  
permitiré dejarla a usted pasar  
por ellos a mi corazón, para prohibirme  
no menos  
la entrada al suyo.  
Puesto que su gran poder incrementa  
su dureza hacia los niveles inferiores,  
ya que el amor iguala la juventud y la erudición.

~

### **A Luigi del Riccio**

Un regalo es demasiado ofensivo,  
tan bondadoso como puede ser,  
cuando preso y encadenado deja a otro;  
así que mi libertad se lamenta de su  
gran cortesía y llora más que un engaño.  
Y así como el **SOL** deja destruido  
el poder del **OJO**, que debe de crecer,  
ungido por él para ver y **LUZ** captar,  
el deseo anhelaría mi cortesía  
que capaz también de usted provenga.

Con frecuencia el pequeño se rinde ante el mayor  
y no lo puede perdonar.  
El amor requiere sólo amigos (raros les hace)  
iguales en la fortuna y el poder.

~

Debes de estar seguro de que  
la hora se acerca en el paso del tiempo  
a mis **OJOS** se les impedirá la salida de sus tristes lágrimas.  
La piedad debe mantenerte receptivo  
mientras que mi divina Señora  
se digna vivir en este mundo.  
Si la gracia deja al cielo abierto,  
como sucede para los santos  
y este, mi **SOL VIVIENTE** nos abandona,  
de nuevo ascendiendo allá arriba  
¿qué te quedó por ver después aquí?

~

Si un corazón feliz hace una cara bella,  
como un corazón triste una fea  
y lo hace una señora **HERMOSA** y cruel  
¿quién puede ser que no reciba un **FUEGO** como yo el suyo?  
Ya que mis **OJOS LOS HIZO MI ESTRELLA BRILLANTE**  
para ver la diferencia entre **BELLO Y BELLO**  
con frecuencia es menos severa contra sí  
cuando digo: de mi corazón, palidezco

puesto que si uno se pinta a sí mismo  
¿qué puede uno hacer por ella al pintarlo  
mientras ella le prepara esta dura prueba?  
Para ambos estaría bien pintarle  
el corazón feliz, la cara plácida,  
ella a mí no me pintaría feo, y a sí BELLA.

~

En la noche los cielos en lontananza se **ENCIENDEN**  
por una **LUZ GRANDIOSA Y ESTRELLAS MÁS**  
**BRILLANTES,**  
y sólo tú te sigues haciendo más BELLA  
mientras cerca hay cosas menos HERMOSAS.  
¿Qué, esto o aquello, puede mover  
y lograr que el corazón se ablande?  
Así que mientras **ARDO**, por lo menos no se HIELAN,  
¿quién te dio, sin haber tenido  
tu dulce y amorosa persona  
tu lindo pelo rubio, tu rostro y **OJOS?**  
Así para tu mal de éstos te apartas  
como de mí también, si lo BELLO DE LO BELLO CRECE  
donde nadie es HERMOSO.  
Pero si lo que el cielo nos robó, Señora  
y a ti te dio, debieras reponer,  
lo nuestro crecería a costa de la BELLEZA de tu cara.

~

LAS COSAS BELLAS son los anhelos de mis **OJOS**,  
así como el de mi alma es estar seguro  
mas ellos no tienen otro poder que eleva al cielo  
que contemplarlas.

Cae una gloria **BRILLANTE**,  
de las **ESTRELLAS** más lejanas en las alturas  
hacia ellas nos atrae el deseo  
y aquí lo llamamos amor.

Jamás se puede tener un buen corazón,  
al enamorarlo y **ENCENDERLO**, y aconsejar  
más que una cara con **OJOS** que se parecen.

PROTO-IDIOMA IN  
DANTE'S **DIVINE COMEDY**

Fredo Arias de la Canal

## INTRODUCTION

"Dante wrote from the center of a diamond," poet Richard Wilbur wrote. Like shafts of light, eloquent effusions of the physical and of the metaphysical emanated from Dante's mind to form the synthesis of the Middle Ages and to define Italian culture.

Dante's writings are also the story of the progressive awareness of the spirit, the reaffirmation of the will, and the strengthening of the faith. Above all, they testify to the need to reorder, within a system that was both philosophical and religious, the priorities of life in order to give it a sense of unity. All this in poetic form, hence the unrivaled scheme of symbols—the woman as angel, Beatrice as guide, the Empire as the form of wellbeing for the corruptible man, the Church as refuge of the believer in the immortality of man... The list goes on; the diamond grows bigger, and the facets multiply in number.

But only a dedicated scholar, who long ago accepted Freud's open challenge to use a clean razor blade, could have cut into Dante's mind to find flaws in that diamond, "faltas," as Maria Luisa Imbernón of the literary journal *A.L.A.N.* calls them. They are not flaws or **hamartias** in the Aristotelian sense, for they do not suggest moral weakness, deviations from ethical principles, or aberrations of character. Nor are they flaws related to style. As we shall discover, these flaws are inherent in a language that is neither standard nor poetic. It is a language psychoanalysts understand as if spoken in real-time situation. It is the **lingua franca** of poets of different languages. Fredo Arias calls it "proto-idioma," and Dante used it to narrate a facet of his life dictated not so much by the conscious requirements of the undertaking,

as by the unconscious yet natural need of the mind to vent a significant spectrum of psychic residua dating back to his infancy.

Proto-idioma is a relatively new concept in literary criticism and may well lessen the sense of mystery inside the enigma Dante had encoded in his verses in already intricate **terza rima**:

O you who have sound understanding,  
observe the meaning hidden  
beneath the veil of the strange verses.

( **Hell IX**, 61-63 )

The idea of something new in Dante should not surprise Arias' readers accustomed to his presentations—always clearly rational more than didactic, by which I mean that the flow of commentary always mounts to form something always palpable. On one hand, proto-idioma locks neatly into his penchant for closer and deeper scrutiny of poetic significance. On the other, we know that psychologists have long conceived poetry as the artistic creation where one finds languages other than the standard. Jung, for example, went as far as to state that poets were "possessed" by the language of myth.

The debate over "languages" used or to be used in poetry is an old one and it goes back to Hermogenes' **Ars Oratoria**, and to Aristotle's **Ars Poetica**, two "How-to" books that were to guide countless writers, Cicero among them. The **questione della lingua**, however, became very vociferous in Italy with the appearance of the poetics of Bembo, Trissino, Castiglione, and Vida. In Spain, the first serious debate began later with the publication of **Obras de Garcilaso de la Vega, con Anotaciones por Fernando de Herrera**. Though the primary goal of "El divino Herrera" was to spell out what made or made not good poetry at a time when books on the subject were unavailable to

Spanish "vates," the **Anotaciones** prompted Prete Jacopin to unleash the most vicious attack ever mounted against a writer of poetics.

The question of "language" or "languages" both as common tool of communication or personal tools of expression saw a brief renewal in the 19th century in Germany. However, it was only after the founding of the **Cercle Linguistique de Prague** —the famous Prague School— that scholars saw the need to reconsider and redefine standard language and poetic language as different yet mutually compatible.

For Jan Mukarovsky, the leading exponent of the school, poetic language was not a brand of the standard. "This is not to deny the close connection between the two, which consists in the fact that, for poetry, the standard language is the background against which is reflected the esthetically intentional distortion of the linguistic component of the work; in other words, the intentional violation of the norm of the standard," he wrote. Later, he coined the term "foregrounding" and used it to define these violations, such as those in journalistic writing which, in the opinion of this writer, becomes iconoclastic —though creative— in reporting sport events.

The "flaws" we talked about earlier are not due to foregrounding. They are not intentional violations, much less intentional distortions of the norms. The staggering amount of documentation prove otherwise. And this should call our attention, for the man undergoing scrutiny is none other than Dante, one of Italy's "tre corene."

Whether God had truly endowed him with **hormen** or "virtue of the generative spirit" (**Convivio**, XXI and XXII), Dante is as impeccable a poet as Western Civilization has ever seen. So how can there be flaws in his "Poema Sacro?" It's like being told that, because the development of a super electronic microscope, scientists have spotted imperfections in the ice crystal.

For those accustomed with traditional and often redundant literary analysis exalting a writer who, as T.S.Eliot observed, shares with

Shakespeare the only "real laurel wreath of poetry because of the width of human emotions" dealt with in unerring rhyme schemes, the idea of something odd in Dante makes one yearn for clarifications. More intriguing, however, is to learn that there exists a third language in addition to the standard and the poetic to which we have alluded briefly.

This third language is subliminal and it has vibrated inaudibly for centuries with the poetic language like the upper harmonics of a fundamental note. It is not, as we shall see, a language that might be considered as Dante's own, or one characterized by atypical use of linguistic or poetic variables. Nor it is what might sensibly be called stylistic intuition, something uncharacteristic, or something we can perceive as a sense of difference. **Proto-idioma**, a term foregrounded because of its newness, is a language that slips silently through the trapdoor of the dizzying complex, the conscious mind of the poet into the subterranean world of archetypes.

Within the context of the abundant documentary evidence which Fredo Arias has presented in other seminal studies, such as the series on "El Mamífero Hipócrita" as well as other studies too numerous to list here, the term **proto-idioma** is appropriate and descriptive. Proto-idioma does not mean the earliest form of language reconstructed by comparative linguistic. Rather, it is a first-rank language reconstructed by psychoanalysis. To be more specific, it is a language that reveals through unconscious yet constant archetypes, the images and symbols that are at the base of the evolutionary experience of mankind. Many of them, as Fredo Arias pointed out during the presentation of the "Premio José Vasconcelos" to José Rubia Barcia, are, for example, the unconscious archetypes of the Hispanic world as they relate to "rejection and death," or as they appear in association with "blood and wounds."

The study of archetypes having psychoanalytic value is relatively new. One reason is that the "Archetypal theory" did not really begin to appeal as a refreshing aid to literary analysis until the concept of the "personal unconscious" and that of a "collective unconscious" were presented and defined by Jung in a paper delivered to the Abernathian Society in London in 1936. According to the noted psychologist/physician, while the personal unconscious owed its existence to personal experiences whose contents were absent in our consciousness because "forgotten or repressed," there existed a second psychic system, that of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which was identical to all individuals. The collective unconscious, he went on to say, did not develop individually, but it was inherited, and it consisted of preexistent forms or archetypes.

Jung's assertion prompts a parallel with Ferdinand De Saussure's idea of "langue," as the collective linguistic element of a particular culture, and that of "parole" as the manifestation of the individual form of expression. The dual aspect is also related to the findings of David MacNeil, while visiting professor at Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard University. In his psycholinguistic book **The Acquisition of Language**, MacNeil seems to echo Jung when he states that: "...virtually everything that occurs in language acquisition depends on **prior** knowledge of the basic aspect of sentence structure." Though MacNeil's studies in linguistics came some thirty years after Jung's lecture on psychoanalysis at the Abernathian Society, the two scientists negate the **tabula rasa** concept from the point of view of two different academic disciplines. Archetypes and basic aspects of sentence structure, so it seems, move along the DNA's double helix.

Though Jung's ideas were officially presented in the aforementioned paper, they had created interest—and confusion—in academic circles years before the historic presentation. British psychologist and literary critic of distinction Maud Bodkin used Jung's insights into poetry as

the motivation for the book **Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination**. Spurred by Jung, and backed by critic Gilbert Murray, Bodkin's studies concluded that an archetypal pattern leaped "...in response to the affective presentation in poetry of an ancient theme.": Initiation, sky father-earth mother, fall from innocence, the search for the father, and the journey of the quest, were other themes likely to inspire archetypes. Even though references to a collective unconscious were not easy subjects for "objective analysis," (Bodkin revealed that she had to rely on the intuition of a selected group of readers to support her claims), her book resonated loudly in the minds of literary critics. Northrop Frye, who saw literary criticism as a social science having basic categories into which any given literary expression could fit, did pioneer the concept of literature "as a sophistication of a basic group of formulas that derived from primitive cultures."

Leslie Fielder who entered the arena with an attack to "New Criticism" for considering irrelevant anything biographical, proposed the idea of literary criticism as "useful insights into the individual psyche." It was this insight into the writer's psyche, he claimed, that was apt to help the critic define a writer's personal "signature," as opposed to the collective experience. Most important for us to consider, especially in the light of Fredo Arias' studies, is Fielder's theory that literature begins with the signature, or uniqueness of the writer (persona of the artist), and it ends by "...imposing itself on the archetype."

Fredo Arias has entered the arena of literary criticism to impose himself on the ongoing debate by asserting with a fast, fact-packed language of his own that there are other patterns of images or archetypes that leap "unconsciously" during the creative process. These, he claims, are traceable to childhood traumas. But even though they are repeated frequently, the poet is not aware of them as carriers

of meanings beyond those he has consciously intended to give. As such they form a body of psychic residua which are exclusively that of the poet, but also relatable to the residua in all human beings. They are **a priori** determinants of individual experiences. The language that articulates them is the proto-idioma, or as he aptly calls it, **the proto-idioma de la humanidad**. Cervantes, Juana Inés de Asbaje, Echeverri Mejía, Adriana Merino, St. John of Patmos, Delgado López, as we have seen, used that language. So, why not Dante?

As a language, the proto-idioma is not limited to articulating archetypes. Proto-idioma can also create tone, and it does so by force of the repetitive nature of some of the images. In **Macbeth**, it's the repetition of the word blood that creates the tone-color red and, by extension, death. Similarly, the archetypes and images Fredo Arias has singled out in his study do create a tone, such as that of fear, or "temor erotizado." All of which prompts an analogy to music, for in the same way the repetition of a tonic chord achieves a given tonality and frees the composer from any descriptive commentary, so does the repetition of certain images in poetic composition achieve a specific tone without verbal explanation. From these points of view alone, proto-idioma becomes as a necessary tool for understanding poetry as a good knowledge of the binary system is essential to understanding computers.

Fredo Arias' study presenting the thesis of a language that comes from innate, deeper forms and preserved in the author's mind is most timely. As a cursory reading of current Ph.D. theses abstracts or Frye's **Anatomy of criticism** will reveal, the problem of literary, historical, and philosophical meaning has become secondary to that of symbolic logic, semantics, and psychology. Literary criticism seems to have moved from text-centered analyses to anthropocentric studies. This interest, in my opinion, is not without Freud's initial fire-causing spark. Pirandello's **Six Characters in Search of an Author** and **Il Fu**

**Mattia Pasca** are examples of Freud's incredibly rapid influence on the theater and the novel. However, it was after World War II that anthropocentric criticism gained momentum by focusing on motives as the force behind human activities. I am referring to the studies of A.C. Bradley, Crowe Ranson, and Cleath Brooks. Motives and, therefore an understanding of human psychology, is the **sine qua non** of contemporary fiction. "Motives make characters live," writes Maren Elwood (**Characters Make Your Story**, 1976). "No motives, no novel", editors and publishers say today.

The application of the principles of psychology to literature has not been easy. Early academic psychologists were like atheists in a monastery. Maud Bodkin reminds us that they were quickly "routed by the attack of those medical writers who claimed access to the deeper layer of the mind, and because the demand for exact verifiable results have held academic psychologists to the mere outworks or surface of the mind." Another reason is that new thesis do not hang in the rarefied air of literary criticism very long. Like helium in a balloon, massive doses of documentary proofs must be pumped into them to keep them afloat. After all, criticism cannot achieve relevance nor can it gain the status of accepted "systematic analysis" without a determining factor and supporting documentation from texts analyzed.

In Fredo Arias', the proto-idioma is the determining factor, and he has accompanying evidences aplenty. Take that arsenal of easily-caught- by- the- eye, highlighted textual proofs he provides and the logic behind the proto-idioma argument. They combine to tell us that childhood traumas remain in the child's memory as psychic residua and that they predate the cognitive process. Both the proto-idioma theory and the supplied documentation tell us that the thesis is in consonance with the hard-to-debunk notion of psychic experiences inherent in the "phenomenology of the child archetype" Jung discussed at length. And for him, we know, abandonment, exposure, danger, etc.,

were all elaborations of the child's mysterious and miraculous beginning that the child could not "overgrow."

As we shall see, traumas are mostly those experienced during infancy, especially during while being breast-fed by the mother and do not operate in isolation. They relate to certain archetypes, hence their relevance and compounded latent energy. Of these, the sky father-earth mother motif is perhaps of primary importance to us, especially in the light of Fredo Arias' focus on oral traumas: rejection, bad milk, nipple penetration, etc.

Literary history, on the other hand, reminds us that "divine father" has taken on a variety of roles. The "good," the "power," the hero in the mythical world, and the personification of activity are some of them. Most important, however, is that they stress the positive. This is due to the fact that in the days predating the recognition of women as important and influential writers, the world of literature was a "macho" or "DWEM literature" (Dead White European Males). Recently, Yale University professor and literary critic Harold Bloom, listed names of the most influential writers of western civilization in his best seller book **The Western Canon**. Though arguably a predictable list (Dante, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Cervantes, Montaigne, Moliere, Milton, Johnson, Goethe, Wadsworth, Austen, Whitman, Dickinson, Dickens, George Eliot, Tolstoy, Ibsen, Freud, Proust, Joyce, Woolf, Kafka, Borges, Neruda, Pessoa, and Beckett), Bloom's selection of writers is telling. The male/female ratio is almost embarrassingly in favor of the male. Be that as it may, for millennia the creation of myths and the formation of archetypes and symbols in literature or folklore has been largely a male activity. It follows that as the father figure is given a superior image and a positive role, that of woman and/or mother can only assume something else. Divine, omniscient and omnipotent are adjectives that almost always modify the masculine noun "god". With the exception of the rise of the Marian

Cult phenomenon and its role in shaping the canons of courtly love, the modest love lyrics of troubadours, and the refined neoplatonic verses of Petrarch, Ronsard, and Herrera, the woman/mother image is often negative. Worse, it assumes a function that is often in opposition to the image of father. Hence the concept of woman as a terrible mother, a source of evil, and the seed of temptation (Circe) though seldom denying her association with fertility, birth, and/or womblike security. Eve, Pandora, and Cybele are good examples. Of note is James Joyce's *Ulysses*, where the rejection of his mother by Stephen is described with incredible mastery of child/mother psychology. Or the role of Molly Bloom both as a woman potentially capable of destroying man sexually and the hard-to deny embodiment of the regenerative principle of the universe. Gynophobia is a term that has been with us for a long time. As an archetype both in the collective unconscious, however, it has been with us even longer.

As I see it, the reason for Fredo Arias' long and sustained success as critic and innovator, is due to two assumptions: a) that each mode of literature develops not only its own existential projection but also projections that are primordial; b) that just as there are prehistoric memories of any given culture (macrocosm), there are also precognitive memories of a child (microcosm). Mythology, as we know, has tended to project itself as theology, hence the readiness on the part of mytho-poets to accept myth as truth and the very force shaping poetic structure. Likewise, romance has populated the world with unnatural powers, elemental spirits, and other supernatural entities. Dante wrote in the latter mode but only speculatively, that is to say, by invoking first the spiritual beings accepted by the Church. The result is a battlefield of modes, of pagan and Christian symbols, of real and imagined beings. But Dante, Fredo Arias wants us to know, wrote a literary masterpiece that is also a psychic battlefield of childhood experiences.

Poets must by necessity create an instrument capable of describing the world around them and their reactions to it. This task is a formidable one, for the instrument, like a mirror, allows the poet to see himself more than for others to see him. At the conscious level, poets are reluctant to distance themselves from past experiences which the creative process facilitates in the act of renewal. Love, as Joaquín Arce noted in the edition of **La Revista de la Universidad de Madrid** (Vol. XIV, n. 53) dedicated to Dante's studies, is one of those experiences and perhaps the most dominant. Its renewal, however, takes place at the conscious level. Poets, Fredo Arias argues, cannot distance themselves from childhood experiences as well. Memories of womblike security, of milk, of nipples, and of breasts are equally dominant components of the child's world. They, however, find expression in the form of archetypal images just as prehistoric memories of a culture do. If this is indeed true, then the act of giving "unita' poetica a una sfera di interessi umani che pare immesurabile" makes this statement of dantista Siro A. Chimenz sound even truer than ever before. For centuries historians have told us about the turbulence surrounding the political life of a mature Dante; for centuries literary critics have described us the vicissitudes of unrequited love experienced by youthful poets, now we can read about the fears and pains of infant Alighieri having "alucinaciones de base oral-traumática."

But Dante is not alone in giving projecting traumas in his work. In **La Virgen de Mesyco** (Mexico, 1993), to cite one example, the parade of poets doing the same with archetypes and symbols is most revealing. I am referring here to the symbolic foregrounding of breast (encendido, desnudo, amado, miedoso), or that of stars (pechos como las estrellas, encendí con mis dientes dos estrellas en ellos, estrella de fuego, mama la noche estrellas, llenar con mi livida saliva las estrellas, ya que a tanto conspiran mis estrellas). Numerous are other examples

of **alucinaciones de base oral-traumática**, such as the one induced by the "pezón traumatizante." There is something here that is neither accidental nor inconsequential.

The act of renewal is not limited to literature. With the same eyes that he identified childhood traumas in poetry, Fredo Arias has spotted them in paintings. Like the verses used as documentary evidences of his theory, in **La Virgen de Mesyco** he has reproduced paintings having pictorial representations of "pechos maternos en los símbolos de las estrellas." But in pointing out la "imago matris envuelta en el sol," he has also demonstrated the "alucinación" suffered by a traumatized child who grew up to be a visual artist.

This is quite revealing, for as we read Juan Delgado's analyzed poems in **Antología Amarilla** we realize that proto-idioma exists in the form of the sum of specific events impressed on the brain of each child almost like a dictionary of which identical copies have been made.

All of which makes us ask: Is Dante's "Hell" the only place where the physical is transformed for didactic purposes? Is his "Purgatory" only a place to contemplate earthly nostalgia and yearn for paradisiacal bliss? Is his "Paradise" only a place where the soul enjoys the beautifying vision of God? Is the **Divine Comedy** a literary masterpiece of maturity as well as a psychological record of Dante's childhood?

As the history of literature has documented, the formal criticism of a poem has followed the dictates of schools. Recent studies by Richard Ohmann identifies these schools and their interest. Diachronic stylistic, synchronic linguistics, impressionism, sound and rhythm, tropes, imagery, tone, structure, verb tenses, idiosyncrasies, lexicon and lexical cohesion, and grammatical features top his list. Of these, the study of imagery is number one. The purpose, of course, has been that of bringing out artistic merits, but only after solving the problem

of a poem as art at a communicable level. Literature, we agree, can remain an assertive tool or a technique for communication only if the verbal structures are themselves assertive.

The primacy of imagery, however, be it visual or auditory, has dominated literary analysis. After all, the interplay of supporting or contradicting images, or the effect of a single dominant image on which the whole structure of a poem depends, is not an aggregate of artifacts imitating nature. They are an aggregate of human artifice. A poem, Keats tells us in "Eve of St. Agnes," is particularly memorable when "All garlanded with carven imag'ries."

Critics look and study imagery with care. Why a poet favors images of war, battles, money, disease, or something else is what readers want to know. A good explanation, however, is hard to come by. "Why" infers something psychic and few schools of literary critics are psychoanalytic.

The emergence of a **proto-idioma school of literary criticism**, as it merits to be called, is not totally unexpected. Literary criticism can hardly be considered the simple one-level activity it was in the XIV century, when theology provided the first dialectics for interpreting literature and art. Rethoricians have seen things from the point of view of texture, structure, and verbal structure in order to comment on what was there; historians have applied their research techniques to look for praxis, establish traditions, and pinpoint sources; philosophers have looked for ethical and moral values.

During our lifetime, literary criticism has seen the establishment of synchronic linguistics and psychology as academic disciplines and, therefore, as schools training literary critics. What is interesting about these schools is same focus on language, albeit not quite simultaneously, and with different objectives and results.

The phenomenal growth of studies in "synchronic" linguistics is a North American phenomenon, just as "diachronic" linguistics is

European. First used in the 19th century for the study of language as an everyday reality, synchronic linguistics gained popularity and academic recognition as a contributory discipline to literary criticism after World War II. Literature, as a marketable product, had to be broken down into understandable components first. In short, narrative had to be considered as a flow of significant sounds and an imitation of real events prior to any consideration of meaning or meanings.

Noam Chomsky of M.I.T. must be singled out as the foremost linguist writing the manual in the field of learning theory and cognitive psychology. With Chomsky and his followers, language becomes the diagrammable and visually analyzable tool of expression first considered by the 19th century school of German linguists. Indeed, it was Chomsky and his followers who saw a close relationship between innate properties of the mind and linguistic structure, a concept that was to guide the many psycholinguists that followed.

Though these pioneers of psycholinguistics were the first ones to enter the mind in order to explain language acquisition and to state, as David MacNeil has, that among children of dissimilar cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the difference in utterances is "merely in sound, not in conceptual or linguistic structure," they did not enter the mind in the psychoanalytic sense. Had they done so, perhaps they would have discovered, as Fredo Arias de la Canal has, that among poets with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds there are similar utterances that define common childhood experiences, though having different sounds. Had the psycholinguists gone deeper into the mind, they would have discovered that structures carried images and these carried unconscious archetypes or typical and recurring images related to, say, death and rejection.

Diachronic linguists have reconstructed languages, such as Proto-Germanic language, by the comparative method, using changes in

phonetics, syntax, and morphology as common values. Using the same methodology of comparative analysis, but using symbols and archetypes as constant values, Fredo Arias has reconstructed the proto-idioma of poetry.

The pillars on which Fredo Arias built what we should call "the proto-idioma theory" have been erected over studies in psychoanalysis and accepted precepts of literary criticism. One of the latter is the notion that poems, as Emily Dickinson observed, are "oblique" representations of ideas made possible by the arsenal of poetic devices available to poets since Homer. Of these nothing is suited to the task of bending ideas obliquely than the symbol— a rebel within the definiteness or coherence implied by form and the facilitator of trips of the imagination.

The need for symbols is not for us to consider here. However, since all literature is an acting out of ideas and feelings, we know that surface narrative acquires significance beyond its literal import by standing or symbolizing for something.

In Hemingway's **For Whom the Bell Tolls**, "mechanized doom" symbolized something ominous for the hero Jordan and for the writer himself. The symbol, however, as a conscious creation was to become a component of the plot itself, rather than an utterance that implied overtones of archetypal images of which the author might or might not been aware of. The symbols were the product of reason and simple deduction more than the consequences of something else. The overpowering sounds and sights of German and Italian bombers stood in contrast to the weakness of human resources and the futility of bravery. The repetition of "mechanized doom," on the other hand, achieved another conscious purpose, that of interrupting tranquillity and of spelling out the imminence of "doom." Likewise, in **Farewell to Arms** "snow" is emblematic of the problem facing the hero and nothing else.

But the act of giving narrative the faculty of acquiring symbolic significance may not be just a conscious act, so argues Fredo Arias. As he writes in **La Virgen de Mesyco**, poets are possessed by the proto-idioma. And with meticulous care, he reproduces a poem by Cristina Lacasa to point out its lexicon such as (niños con hambre, hambre tiene estatua, áspid vencedor, las rosas son de sangre, espadas del mal decapitan estrellas). But as the reader will discover, these images are not there only to add or detract. They are there as unconscious outpourings of psychic impulses.

That childhood experiences should surface in compositions during years of maturity without the conscious awareness of the poet is another of the pillars sustaining Fredo Arias' thesis. It is intimately tied to recent studies in child development which posit, as Dr. B. Harris did in his ever popular book **I'm O.K., You're O.K.**, that the script of a child is completely written by age six. Acting like a genetic code of sort, this script, so claims the eminent psychologist, is what will influence the child throughout the rest of his life. But does the first line of the script get written before birth?

If we assume that it does, Fredo Arias claims, then symbols or archetypes "de base oral-traumatica" should also form part of a creative process as personal as poetry—though not as obvious as some of the others.

Language, be it standard, poetic, or proto-idioma, is a human and social behavior. As such, language events do not take place in isolation from other events. As Spencer and Gregory have pointed out a decade ago, any piece of language, written or oral, is part of a situation. And it is here where Fredo Arias establishes a solid foothold by claiming that certain linguistic activities are related to Dante's infancy. What has not been obvious, Fredo Arias tells us, is that these relationships are part of a psychic impulse that operates at the subconscious level and

something poets are not fully aware of. Hence proto-idioma and his rather novel concept of symbols within symbols.

Symbols are not simple, autonomous literary structures that can be isolated for single analysis. When recurring with other symbols they may support or contradict each other, or simply become the dominant image on which the structure of the poem relies on for meaning. The impact of symbols on the structure of a poem and, ultimately, on the meaning is such that criticism as a whole usually begins with a systematization of literary symbolism once those of language have been resolved. The relationship of dominant images to the plot such as the mechanized doom in **For Whom the Bell Tolls**, darkness in **Macbeth**, disease in **Hamlet**, or the animal and the sea in **Othello** are good examples of the above. They are also distinguishable and obvious under the light of traditional literary analysis. But others are not so distinguishable and obvious. Yet they are everywhere, so claims Fredo Arias. To see them one must switch on the penetrating light of psychoanalysis. And he has seen them in the works of the same Freud, whom he has psychoanalyzed in **Freud Psychoanalyzed** (México, 1978), in the poems of Juan Ramón Jiménez, in those of Domingo F. Failde, in those of Josefina Verde... And now in Dante's **Divine Comedy**.

The late Joseph Campbell wrote in **The Power of Myth** (New York, 1988): «Anyone writing a creative work knows that you open, you yield yourself, and the book talks to you and builds itself. To a certain extent, you become the carrier of something that is given from what have been called the Muses—or, in biblical language, "God". This is not fancy, it is fact. Since the inspiration comes from the unconscious, and since the unconscious minds of the people of any single small society have much in common, what the shaman or seer brings forth is something that is waiting to be brought forth... There has to be a training to help you open your ears so that you can begin

to hear metaphorically instead of concretely. Freud and Jung felt that myth was "grounded in the unconscious.">>

For his part, Jung believed that the symbol expressed an essential unconscious factor. For him the wider the range of symbol in which it functioned, the more valid the symbol was for evoking a resonance in a greater number of "souls". But, as Fredo Arias has been telling us, certain symbols and archetypes are equally grounded in the collective unconscious of poets because they evoke a resonance of common childhood experiences long forgotten but renewed by the creative process. And why not? Isn't the totality of the psyche a condition in which conscious and the unconscious are related to each other in reciprocity or, to put it differently, where each conscious element has its unconscious counterpart? And isn't the psyche a reflection of the world and man?

As the bulk of literary research testifies, formal criticism is devoted largely to the study and interpretation of imagery. The reason is the existence of patterns that often stand out by force of repetition. This, of course, is what gives a poem a given tonality, while all other incidental images or symbols relate to it in some meaningful order. This tonality and order are normally dictated by the genre, personal preference, or by something up to now not considered, as Fredo Arias proves. Certain identifiable symbols and archetypes arranged "a base de trauma oral," together with "unconsciously related" experiences (blood, wounds, rejection, death and son on) form, for example, a tonality of their own and reach a new level of significance.

The principle of manifold or "polysemous" meaning as Dante himself calls it, is a feature of poetry Juvenal considered around 90 A.D. A work of art is seldom "flat," if we can borrow the term from fiction. Roundness, or the poly-faceted aspect is what gives an artistic creation its ability to free itself from its physical dimensions in order to become emotionally something limitless in time and space.

Literature is the medium well suited to achieve this. The difference in the method of treatment, however, lies not merely in the amount of details used, say, on a character portrait. It involves the "sense" we have of the intended individuality. Seldom readers agree on the perception of the same sense. Characterization, language, atmosphere, tone, setting, and symbols all contribute to achieve a given sense. Of these, however, only symbols come with the greatest number of perceivable variants or variables, all alluding to a variety of associations. It's what gives symbols their elasticity.

The existence of schools each depending on selected symbols and or archetypes for analysis speaks of the reality "polysemous" meaning. Today, the major task facing the student of critical theory is that of gaining a point of view high enough to command attention among Aristotelians, Thomists, and even Marxists. And before that, Donald Freeman reminds us, he or she has to accept the notion that linguistics gives literary criticism an underpinning necessary to that undertaking as mathematics is to physics. Hence the old adage that a good critic is perforce a good linguist first and, if Fredo Arias is right, a good critic must be a good psychoanalyst as well.

Dante, the first linguist Italy ever had, was conscious of polysemous meaning by recognizing the complexity of his masterpiece and the resulting flexibility it offered. But he went a step further. In the famous "Epístola a Cangrande" Dante not only made known the number of meanings he had given his poem, he also spelled out what the four "sensi" were —literal, moral, allegoric, and anagogic. Hence the facile interpretation of Beatrice as the symbol of corrupted Church, piety and suffering, redemption and divine vision.

For obvious reasons, Dante never tipped anyone off about the possibility of more meanings. These could have resulted in the **Divine Comedy** becoming a procrustean bed with numerous legs and, therefore, a poem ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. Yet, the

number of "sensi" critics have given in addition to the stated four is as numerous as they—the critics—are. If criticism is the art of connecting things, then anyone can make connections. So, there are those who saw the **Divine Comedy** as a symbol of man's desire to abandon active life in favor of the contemplative life, and those who saw a connection between Dante's mystic voyage and the interpretation Saint Augustine gives to the life of Job. Or take the symmetry many have seen between the Cross and the flying eagle. Why not a connection between Dante's trip and the uphill battle to restore the Holy Roman Empire? Many have claimed that. Many will claim something else. But only in providing ample contextual disclosures will they succeed in giving factual resonance to their claim. And that is what Fredo Arias has done in establishing a connection between the adult poet and the traumatized child.

The key word in the following study is **connection**, connection between words written seven hundred years ago and a method of analysis that is scarcely seven decades old. As we have seen, literary criticism of the **Divine Comedy** was never strong in the area of psychology, much less in the analysis of psychic content. Literary critics never really saw the potentials of psychoanalysis and its methodology. Interdisciplinary rivalry aside, one possible reason is that from its early days, psychoanalysis was perceived as a new tool of medicine and something that worked in a clinic with living patients better than in a library with dead writers. The mistake was not to recognize the symbols or images fixed on paper with ink as utterances having the same impact as those spoken during in-clinic-induced regressions into the past. At the mature, intellectual level, the stars have long been symbols of the immutable laws of the universe. So nobody has dared to change this meaning. Neither linguistics nor rhetoric had the tools to uncover a new layer of meaning, let alone the analytical process needed to find out if stars were archetypes that

relate to, say, the development of the child. Similarly, breasts have come to mean consolation, compassion, and warmth. But no one has ever asked if the child, because of loneliness, darkness, or any other of the causes for psychic distress, could have seen them as something else. Isn't the total field of consciousness, as Jung stated, made up of the sum total of unconscious content?

Who's to say that this is not true, the Aristotelians, the Thomists, the Marxists, the linguists?

This Dante's study is not intended to demythologize the florentine poet. It is not intended to erode any other myth surrounding his poem either. It's simply a never-before-insight into Dante's childhood, a period in his life occupying little or no space at all in biographies written about him. Not even Boccaccio, the **Divine Comedy's** first critic and commentator, had much to reveal about Dante's life, much less of his childhood. Those who followed him were good in pointing out its grim life-forms (monsters, reptiles, harpies, furies, and more), its forbidding naturalism (jagged crags, dark abysms, whirlwinds, rivers of blood, and more), its system of suffering as regulated by the severity of the sin. Death is agony, fear, despair and incongruity. Boccaccio and the progeny of critics were scholarly enough not to rely on sources other than primary ones to fill gaps in their meager biographical sketches of Dante. Had they been serious students of psychoanalysis and its methodology, perhaps they would have discovered that birth is agony, fear, despair, and even incongruity. They would have discovered that, in addition to the poetic impact of "pinche," or "pinchado" as powerful descriptive images of a hellish place such as the one Dante describes in Canto XXI, the quasi alliteration produced by "pinchar" and the repetition of its grammatical forms had an archetypal content that made them also powerful voices of a proto-idioma. Hell is an incongruous place, just as incongruous a place is the bosom of the mother of a traumatized child.

It goes without saying, the archetypes do not spoil the **Divine Comedy**. Friendly snakes, the sea, and the sky do not spoil Shelley's work, nor do the images drawn from science and technology spoil the poems of **Donne**. As Herbert Read pointed out in **Myth, Dream and Poems** of his **Collected Literary Criticism**, the resemblance of poetic language to other phenomena is not limited to dreams. So, whether we accept the notion that images spring from an unconscious mind, or we remain romantic in our thinking and opt for the theory of divine inspiration, one thing seems inescapable: the poet does not always consciously choose his images; the images choose him. But these images, according to Fredo Arias, are not just images, they have substance.

Biographers have been silent about Dante's early life, leaving a gap which Fredo Arias' work fills with an approach that is systematic and based on the methodology of a discipline interested now in the written word as it was in the spoken one. To be sure, the biography that he offers is reconstructed and based exclusively on the psychoanalytic interpretation of archetypes as the only true and living testimony of Dante's mind. They are recordings, albeit not digital ones, but recordings nonetheless. They can be played back, studied, analyzed. They are our guides for the journey to Dante's unknown childhood the way Virgil was Dante's guide for the journey to the equally unknown world of the hereafter.

One interesting aspect of these archetypes is that they function almost too well as "archetypal characters." This is because they repeatedly appear within the cycle of the poem with consistent traits and function as orally articulated images do during clinical analysis. As the reader will see, they also exhibit consistent relationship with other images and symbols that go back to the period of the childhood traumas. All of which makes us conclude that beneath the poetic and the metaphysical there is an undercut of the prosaic and the earthliness.

This undercut is what is now clearing away much of the haze veiling Dante's life. If he was more consciously aware of his journey into life at a time when his intellectual faculties were at peak form, then the same journey, expressed unconsciously via archetypes, could also have begun soon after birth only to become just as nightmarish as the one through Hell.

Dante took apart and rebuilt all that was meaningful to him: love, philosophy, religion, politics, literature. And he relived them with the intellectual enjoyment of a thinker and a poet. The **Divine Comedy**, in addition to his literary merits, is basically an expression of all he dealt with. Above all, it was Christian life and medieval juridical thought expressed in the most elaborate intuitive form of western culture. If such an incredible task was to have the spiritual reality and the historical unity of a masterpiece, Dante had to be more thinker/historian than poet. The **Divine Comedy** could not have been a three-part confession or a remake of **Vita Nuova**, his "sweet little book" where Beatrice is **salus poetae**, or, as he called her, "la gloriosa donna della mia mente." Christ was the **salus noster** of the **Divine Comedy**, whose purpose was **ad majorem Dei gloriam**. He had to suppress many of the experiences renewed in the creative process characterized by subjectivity and sensuality of expression. Dante knew that he had to destroy in order to create, that he had to dissolve the dualism between spirit and nature, if he was to succeed in poetizing the substantial order and harmony of God's creation. He had to repress much of the personal, if he was to succeed in the task of making his microcosmic vision a reflection of the cosmos.

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started

so wrote T.S. Eliot, and this is what Fredo Arias has done—to arrive where Dante started and to discover that the poet was not really capable of destroying his past in order to create, nor was he capable of dissolving the symbolic psychic meaning rooted in "arpones, tridentes, herida, sangre" and more.

Another point which seems to strengthen the validity of this new study, is the ancient concept of the double, or the belief that within all men there operate complimentary opposites (Eros and Thanatos, love and hate, order and confusion, etc.) Anaximander called them "warring opposites." But only one of them is sublimated or repressed during the creative process. Or so we were told. In the light of Fredo Arias' thesis, that may no longer be true, for archetypes, like energy, cannot be destroyed. Indeed they follow man no matter where he goes. They are his shadows.

One interesting ancillary offshoot of Fredo Arias' thesis is that it prompts speculations. I was faced with one while writing this introduction: is Dante's trip an attempt to balance **anima and animus** within himself and, in the cosmic scale, an attempt to balance the world of the living and that of the dead?

**Hodie legimus in libro experientiae**, so went a medieval dictum. Even a cursory reading of Dante's **Vita Nova** testifies to the veracity of the dictum. More than experiences, poetry is a collection of memories, a fact we must not lose track of as we read Fredo Arias' work. It almost brings us to the point of saying, as T.S. Eliot did in **East Coker** that: "...the poetry doesn't matter."

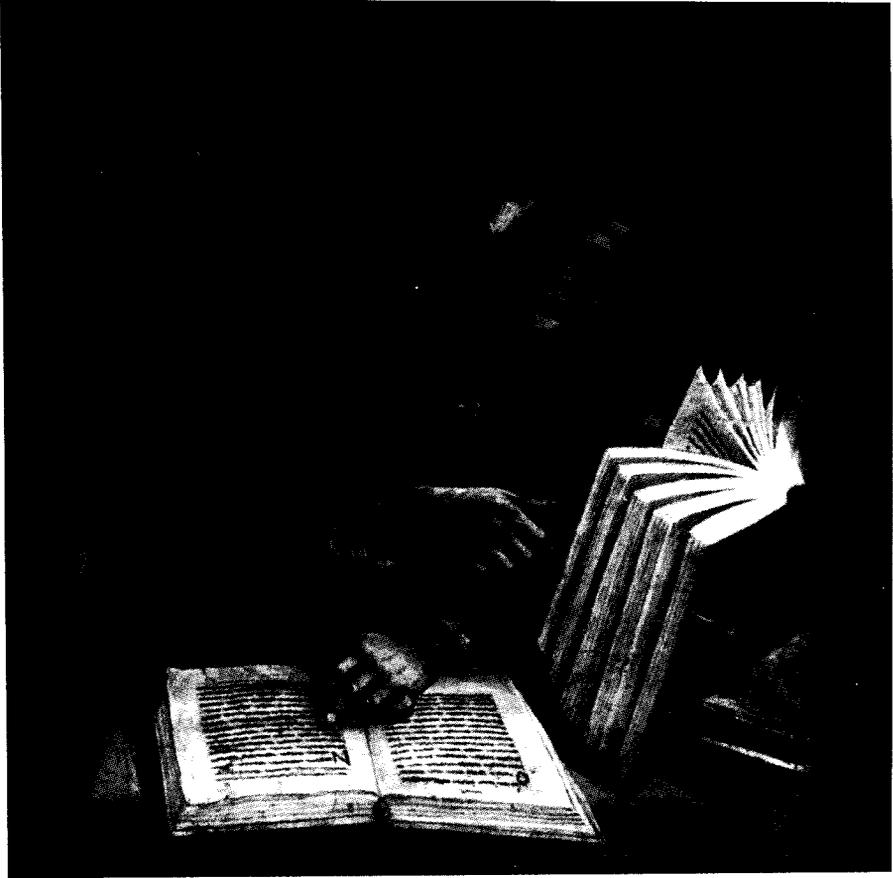
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If proto-idioma is here, so is its lexicon of archetypes uncovered through Fredo Arias' systematic study of constant similarities in semantic meaning that have resisted change in numerous poets. Which

bring us to consider that if the spoken language carries the very essence of who we are, then the function of proto-idioma may well be that of evoking the rhythm of feelings never intended to be voiced. Whether this psychoanalytic approach to poetic language has, to borrow from science, the critical mass to give the poetic experience a new dimension is for us readers to determine. As I see it, Fredo Arias' work does more than take us to Dante's infancy. It leaves us with a new morphology of literary symbolism.

Yet there will be those who, like surgeons, because they are blessed with the curious art of taking things apart, will see things differently. But, as Dante himself said: "I fatti solveranno questo enigma forte". [The facts will solve this great enigma]. (**Purgatory**, XXXIII, 51)

**Ubaldo DiBenedetto**, Professor  
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December, 1994



*Dante.* Luca Signorelli.

# PROTO-IDIOMA IN DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY

...the idiom which I used  
and which I made.

(Paradise, XXVI)

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), author of **Divine Comedy**, like every great poet, experienced an oral trauma in his infancy from which a horrendous mother image was formed. The oral trauma consists of a condensation of eight infantile fears. The erotized fear of being pricked-penetrated by the malignant nipple can be observed in Canto XXI of **Hell**:

That one sank under, and rose again doubled up, but the demons that had cover of the bridge cried out: "Here the Holy face has no place; here one swims otherwise than in the Serchio; therefore, if thou dost not want our **GRAPPLES**, make no show above the pitch." Then they **PRICKED HIM WITH MORE THAN A HUNDRED PRONGS**, and said: " Here thou must dance under cover, so that, if thou canst, thou mayst swindle secretly." Not

otherwise do the cooks make their **SCULLIONS** plunge the meat with their **HOOKS** into the middle of the cauldron, so that it may not float.

The good Master said to me: "In order that it be not apparent that thou art here, squat down behind a jag, that thou mayst have some screen for thyself, and at any offence that may be done to me be not afraid, for I have knowledge of these things, because once before I was in such a wrangle."

Then he passed on beyond the head of the bridge, and when he arrived upon the sixth bank, he had need to have a steadfast front. With that fury and with that storm with which dogs run out upon the poor wretch who, where he stops, suddenly asks alms, they came forth from under the little bridge, and turned against him all their **GRAPPLES**. But he cried out: "Let no one of you be savage; before your **HOOK** take hold of me, let one of you come forward that he may hear me, and then take counsel as to **GRAPPLING** me."

The erotized fear of being penetrated by a poisoning nipple, aroused in him the following archetypal image in Canto XVII of **Hell**:

Behold the **WILD BEAST WITH THE POINTED TAIL**, that passes mountains, and breaks walls and weapons; behold him that **INFECTS ALL THE WORLD**." Thus began my Leader to speak to me; and he beckoned to him that he should come to shore near the end of the **MARBLES** we had walked on. And that loathsome image of fraud came onward, and **LANDED HIS HEAD AND HIS BUST**, but did not draw up his tail on the bank. His face was the face of a just man (so benignant the skin it had outwardly), and all his trunk was of a **SERPENT**; he had two **PAWS**, hairy to the armpits; his back and his breast and both his sides were painted

with nooses and rings. Tartars or Turks never made cloth with more colors of groundwork and pattern, nor were such webs laid on the loom by Arachne.

As sometimes boats lie on the shore, and are partly in water partly on the ground, and as yonder, among the gluttonous Germans, the beaver settles himself to make his war, so lay that **WORST OF BEASTS UPON THE EDGE OF STONE** which closes in the sand. In the void all his tail was quivering, twisting upwards **ITS VENOMOUS FORK WHICH IN GUISE OF A SCORPION ARMED THE POINT.**

The leader said: "Now needs must our way bend a little toward that **WICKED BEAST** which is couching yonder.

There is a similar vision in Canto XXIV of **Hell**:

And I saw within it a terrible **CROWD OF SERPENTS** and of such strange kind that the memory still **CURDLES MY BLOOD.** Let Libya with her sand vaunt herself no more; for though she bring forth chelydri, jaculi, and phareae, and cenchri with amphisboena, she never, with all Ethiopia, nor with the land that lies on the Red Sea, showed either so many or so **MALIGNANT PLAGUES.**

Amid this cruel and most dismal swarm were running people naked and terrified, without hope of hole or heliotrope. They had their **HANDS TIED BEHIND WITH SERPENTS, WHICH FIXED THEIR TAIL AND THEIR HEAD** through the loins, and were twisted up in front.

And Lo! at one, who was near our bank, **DARTED A SERPENT THAT TRANSFIXED HIM** there where the neck is knotted to the shoulders. Nor O nor I was ever so quickly written as he took **FIRE AND BURNT**, and needs must become all ashes

as he fell; and when he was thus destroyed on the ground, the dust drew together of itself, and in an instant into that same one returned.

And Canto XXV of **Hell**:

At the end of his words the thief raised his hands with both the fists, crying; "Take that, God! for at Thee I square them." From that time forth the **SERPENTS** were my friends, for then one coiled about his neck, as if it said: "I will not have thee say more"; and another about his arms and bound him up anew, clinching itself so in front that he could not give a shake with them. Ah Pistoia! Pistoia! why dost thou not decree to make ashes of thyself, so that thou last no longer, since in evil-doing thou dost surpass thine own seed? Through all the dark circles of Hell I saw no spirit so arrogant toward God, not even that one who fell down from the walls at Thebes. He fled away, and spoke not a word more.

And I saw a Centaur full of rage come crying out: "Where is he, where is the obdurate one?" I do not believe Maremma has so many **SNAKES** as he had upon his croup up to where our semblance begins. On his shoulders, behind the nape, a **DRAGON** with open wings was lying upon him, which **SETS ON FIRE WHOMSOEVER IT ENCOUNTERS**. My Master said "This is Cacus, who beneath the rock of Mount Aventine often made a lake of **BLOOD**."

Every oral trauma that has to do with the fear of being poisoned gives way to what Freud called the anal phase. Canto VII of **Hell**:

We crossed the circle to the other bank, above a fount that bubbles up and pours out through a trench which proceeds from it **THE WATER WAS FAR DARKER** than perse; and we, in company with the dusky waves, entered down to strange way. This dismal little stream, when it has descended to the foot of the malign gray slopes, makes a **MARSH** that is named Styx. And I, who was standing intent to gaze, saw **MUDDY PEOPLE IN THAT SWAMP** all naked and with look of hurt. They were smiting each other, not with hand only, but with the head, with the chest, and with the feet, mangling one another **PIECEMEAL WITH THEIR TEETH**.

The good Master said: «Son, now thou seest the souls of those whom anger overcame; and also I will that thou believe for certain that under the water are folk who sigh, and make this water bubble at the surface, as thine eye tells thee wherever it turns. Fixed in the **SLIME**, they say: "sullen were we in the sweet air that gladdened by the Sun; bearing within ourselves the sluggish fume; now we are sullen in the **BLACK MIRE**." This hymn they gurgle in their throats, for they cannot speak with entire words.»

Thus we circled a great arc of the **FOUL FEN** between the dry bank and the **SLOUGH**, with eyes turned on those who **GUZZLE THE MIRE**. We came at length to the foot of a tower.

The resulting trauma from the erotized fear of starvation which, via projection, is turned into the erotized fear of being devoured (decapitated-castrated) also causes the state of petrification symbolized in the archetype: **STONE**. Let's see Canto XXVIII of **Hell**:

I saw truly, and I seem to see it still, a **TRUNK WITHOUT A HEAD** going along, even as the others of the dismal herd were going. And it was holding its **CUT OFF HEAD** by the hair,

dangling it in hand like a lantern, and that was gazing on us, and saying. "O me!"

Of itself it was making a lamp for itself; and they were two in one, and one in two; how it can be he knows who so ordains. When he was right at foot of the bridge, he lifted his arm high with the **WHOLE HEAD** in order to bring its words near to us, which were: "Now see the dire punishment, thou that, breathing, goest seeing the dead: see if any other be great as this!"

(...)

Who, even with words unfettered, could ever tell in full, though many times narrating, of the **BLOOD AND OF THE WOUNDS** that I now saw? Every tongue assuredly would come short, by reason of our speech and our memory which have small capacity to comprise so much.

If all the people were again assembled, that of old upon the storm-tossed land of Apulia lamented for their **BLOOD** shed by the Trojans, and in the long war that made such vast spoil of the rings, as Livy writes, who does not err; together with those who, by resisting Robert Guiscard, felt the pain of blows, and the others whose bones are still heaped up at Ceperano, where every Apulian was false, and there by Tagliacozzo, where the old Alardo conquered without arms and one should show **HIS LIMB PIERCED THROUGH**, and one his lopped off, it would be nothing to equal the hideous mode of the ninth pouch.

Truly a cask by losing mid-board or stave is not so split open, as one I saw who was **CLEFT** from the chin to where the wind is broken; his entrails were hanging between his legs, his pluck was visible, and the dismal sack which makes ordure of what is swallowed. While I fix myself all on seeing him, he looked at me, and with his hands **OPENED HIS BREAST**, saying: "Now see how I rend myself; see how mangled is Mahomet. In front of me

goes Ali weeping, **CLEFT IN THE FACE** from chin to forelock; and all the others whom thou seest here were, when living, sowers of scandal and of schism, and therefore are they so **CLEFT**. A devil is here behind that fashions us so cruelly, putting again to the **EDGE OF THE SWORD** each of this throng when we have circled the doleful road; because the **WOUNDS** are closed up before one passes again before him. But who art thou that art musing on the **CRAG**, perhaps to delay going to the punishment that has been adjudged on thine own accusations?"

In Canto XIII of **Hell** appears also the archetype **FIRE**, associated to those of poison and mutilation which results from the memory of the hallucinated mother's breast, due to the state of starvation suffered by Dante:

Then I stretched my hand a little forward and plucked a little branch from a great thornbush, and its trunk cried out: "Why dost thou **BREAK ME?**" When it had become dark with **BLOOD** it began again to cry: "Why dost thou **TEAR ME?** hast thou not any spirit of pity? Men we were, and now we are become stocks; truly thy hand ought to be more pitiful had we been souls of **SERPENTS.**"

As from a green log that is **BURNING** at one of its ends, and drips from the other and hisses with the air that is escaping, so from that broken twig came out words and **BLOOD** together; whereon I let the tip fall, and stood like a man who is afraid.

"If he had been able to believe before," replied my Sage, "O **INJURED** soul, what he has seen only in my verse, he would not have stretched out his hand on thee; but the incredible thing made me prompt him to an act which weighs on myself. But tell him

who thou wast, so that, by way of some amends, he may refresh thy fame in the world above, whereto it is allowed him to return,"

In Canto XXIX of **Paradise** Dante associated the archetypes of FIRE and LIGHT:

The **PRIMAL LIGHT THAT IRRADIATES** it all is received in it by as many modes as are the **FLAMES** with which It pairs Itself.

The reason why we can call Dante a cosmic poet is because he perceived the archetypes EYE, STAR (hallucinated breast) in association with LIGHT and FIRE (burning sensation when thirsty). The only archetype that Jung could compare, was precisely a SUN (STAR), from which hanged a tube (nipple) that exhaled wind (maternal breath).

In the chapter **The Concept of the Collective Unconscious** of his book **The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious**, Jung mentioned the examples he was able to compare. There was an schizophrenic-paranoic who saw a sun's penis where the wind came from. The same vision is written in a Mythraic text that comes from the Alexandrian school of mysticism that says:

**LIKEWISE THE SO-CALLED TUBE, THE ORIGIN OF THE MINISTERING WIND. FOR YOU WILL SEE HANGING DOWN FROM THE DISC OF THE SUN SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE A TUBE.**

(...)

I [Jung] mention this case not in order to prove that the vision is an archetype but only to show you my method of procedure in the simplest possible form. If we had only such cases, the task of

investigation would be relatively easy, but in reality the proof is much more complicated. First of all, **certain symbols have to be isolated clearly enough to be recognizable as typical phenomena**, not just matters of chance. This is done by examining a series of dreams, say a few hundred, for typical figures, and by observing their development in the series. The same method can be applied to the products of active imagination [poetry]. In this way it is possible to establish certain continuities or modulations of one and the same figure. You can select any figure which gives the impression of being an archetype by its behavior in the series of dreams or visions. If the material at one's disposal has been well observed and is sufficiently ample, one can discover interesting facts about the variations undergone by a single type. Not only the type itself but its variants too can be substantiated by evidence from comparative mythology and ethnology. I have described the method of investigation elsewhere and have also furnished the necessary case material.

Lets see **Spell 15 of The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead**, (University of Texas Press 1993. Translation by R.O. Faulkner):

Hail to you, O **RE**, at your rising, O Atum-Horakhty! Your beauty is worshipped in my **EYES** when the **SUN-SHINE** comes into being over my **BREAST**. You proceed at your pleasure in the Night-bark your heart is joyful with a fair wind in the Day-bark, being happy at crossing the sky with the blessed ones. All your foes are overthrown, the Unwearying **STARS** acclaim you, the Imperishable **STARS** worship you when you set in the horizon of Manu, being happy at all times, and living and enduring as my lord.

Hail to you, O **RE** when you rise and Atum when you set. How beautiful are your rising and your **SHINING** on the back of your

mother Nut, you having appeared as King of the Gods. The Lower Sky has greeted you, justice embraces you at all times. You traverse the sky happily, and the Lake of the Two Knives is in contentment. The rebel has fallen, his arms are bound, a knife has severed his spine, but **RE WILL HAVE A FAIR WIND**, for the Night-bark has destroyed those who would attack him. The southerners, northerners, westerners and easterners tow you because of the praise of you, O primeval god, whose images have come into being. The voice goes forth, and the earth is inundated with silence, for the **SOLE ONE** came into existence in the sky before the plains and the mountains existed. The Herdsman, the Sole Lord, who made whatever exists, he has fashioned the tongue of the Ennead. O you who took what is in the waters, you issue thence on to the bank of the Lake of Horus. **I BREATHE THE AIR WHICH COMES OUT OF YOUR NOSE, THE NORTH WIND WHICH COMES FORTH FROM YOUR MOTHER.** You glorify my spirits, you make the Osiris my soul divine. I worship you; be content, O Lord of the Gods, for you are exalted in your firmament, and your **RAYS OVER MY BREAST** are like the day.

We shall observe some poems (fragments) where the cosmic archetypes of the Egyptian Spell are associated to the oral traumas:

Francisco Medina Cárdenas (Chile), in his book **Human Dialogues and a Rainbow**, wrote his poem **Green Breath**:

**THE SUN WITH ITS TONGUE HOT AND DRY**  
the damp flower that sings in the **EYE**  
the giant tree with its leaves and branches  
the tender **UDDER THAT THROWS LIFE**

the galloping horse and destiny  
of the man who shortens the space  
often an unfinished memory.  
Words, pieces of veins, flower dreams.  
I don't Know, is that child owner of the **WIND**  
being reborn?

Mariano Esquillor (Spain). From his book **Existence, my Companion**:

There, from its hopeful oasis, begs before  
**THE SHINY BLOOD OF THE SUN ASKING IT  
TO DRINK THE JUICE OF ITS SWEET VEIN**  
in order not to die, like I, among so many  
raggy shacks, blind and sunk by the **WINGS**  
of the terrible realm of the ice.

Juan de Gregorio (Uruguay), in his book **The Shakings**, offers his poem **Absence Ritual**:

**UNIQUE HONEY CANAL, SWEET AND SOUR**  
fallen tree and always raised  
that flourished, broken off branch  
**DESCENDING SIDEREAL ARTERY:**  
manna sawing its obstinate load.  
I know that you are present, living antenna  
extended with aromas  
on the hill of roses.  
Your vertical chore,  
gorge of venturous islands  
where coral and **HURRICANE**

banish and sleep guardians arrange  
its well-disposed material-blue chain.

Edith Llerena (Cuba). Her poem **Autum Sorcery** from the book **Eight Spanish-American Poets in Madrid**:

**THE MOON WAS RATHER  
A WHITE HONEY UDDER  
SUCKLING ME WITH CRUEL MAGIC  
AND THE AIR COLUMNS.**

Jorge Enrique Ramponi (Argentina). From his book **The Limits and the Chaos**:

Oh like the sunken bird  
that plays the **EXILE'S DRY WIND**  
wishing to hold the broken warp  
of a greenning scale in space.  
Singing I tutor myself, refracting my **ARTERIES**,  
perhaps I originate some other way  
where **AN INNATE LIGHT DRINKS THE MILK  
OF A BODILESS SUN.**

Lolita Lebrón (Puerto Rico). Poem taken from magazine **Vortice** (1979):

**A FINGER IS POINTING AT THE STAR**  
this touch crosses like a bell sound!  
This rope crosses like spader wire!  
This night crosses like the scream of dawn!

**BURNS OVER THE BLACK SMOKE A RED BLAZE  
THE VEIN TURNS RED IN FIRE AND FLAME**

Breaks the rock. On earth  
a new pound is proclaimed.

(...)

My **EYES** are going yonder the clouds

**SHINING IN THE FLAME OF YOUR LAMP  
TO DRINK FROM THE JOY OF YOUR BREEZES**  
in scarlet blooming of sacred spades.

Maité Pérez Larumbe (Spain). Poem taken from magazine **Rio Arga**  
Nº 14:

It is then, when our hands sunk in the soil  
we are spread on the earth and the **AIR**  
like a sweet drunkenness, screams less  
with a simple pound as shield  
life is all a **FLIGHT**, as **FLIGHT AS SUN** and song  
and perhaps even more for feeling from the grass  
that dumb **UMBILICAL CORD THAT LINKS US TO  
THE SUN.**

Adriana Merino (Spain). Her poem **Return** from the book **The Signs  
of the Wind**:

There are **SOLAR KNIVES  
DANCING WITH THE WIND**  
for untimely discovering  
the known, a **THORN  
PIERCES MY BREAST.**

David Escobar Galindo (El Salvador). From his book **Primera Antología**:

For the **BLOOD IN THE WIND**, not among the **VEINS**,  
wherever you are born, violence, damn you.

(...)

We shall never be **EYES** full of life  
but instead vegetate in dirty lava  
near a **SUN FULL OF WORMS THAT ARE  
HANGING**

while blood springs from one thousand mirrors  
darkening the water with dead blood.

Luz Machado (Venezuela). From her book **Poesía** her poem **The Threads**:

Yellow swells the **SUN'S VEINS**  
in tall sunflowers.

(...)

**NIPPLES** that Spring multiplied in the days  
that most ancient dawn thought  
it had lost **LIGHT'S MILK**.

**BY THE AVENUE WHERE THE WIND  
FLOWS OUT** into life.

If we accept the oral-traumatic genesis of the Mythraic visions, we shall understand why Jung named them **Phallic**. The relation nipple-penis is evident. Narzeo Antino (Spain) in his book **Consecration to Death**, shows this in his poem **Solar Frenzy**:

So is the chastity of your misfortune  
messenger of death  
because in **MAN'S SEXUAL ORGAN SHINES**  
**THE SOLAR FRENZY**  
**HANGS ITS DART LIKE A STERILE FRUIT.**

Carlos de la Ossa, in his poem **Time**, taken from **Critical Anthology of Poetry in Costa Rica** by Carlos Monge, projected also a phallic vision:

Crosses in front of this window  
a woman full of time  
disappears under the rain  
the ship swims in a sun paddle  
**TIMELESS SUN DRINKING ROSES' BLOOD**  
**GOLDEN CUP-METALLIC AND BRIGHT PENIS**  
**LUMINOUS** drop of time.

Manuel Quiroga Clérigo (Spain). His poem **Solitary History of a Solemn Solitude**, taken from the magazine *Caracola* N° 252-4:

Boring music cut the phrases,  
destroy my sleep.  
And they announce merry Springs  
ineffable **EXPERIENCE WITH THE PENIS**  
**SOLAR HURRICANES.**

Now we shall try to enter Dante's archetypal universe:



64)



*Estas brujas lo dirán*

## HELL

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### CANTO XIV

The floor was an **ARID AND DENSE SAND**, not made in other fashion than that which of old was trodden by the feet of Cato.

O vengeance of God, how much shouldst thou be feared by every one who reads that which was manifest to my **EYES!**

I saw many flocks of naked souls, that were all weeping very miserably, and divers law seemed imposed upon them. Some folk were lying supine on the ground, some were seated all crouched up, and others were going about continually. Those who were going around were the more numerous, and those the less so who were lying down under the torment, but they had their tongues more loosed by the pain.

Over all the sand, with a slow falling, were raining down **DILATED FLAKES OF FIRE**, as of **SNOW** on alps without a wind. As the **FLAMES** which Alexander in those hot parts of India saw falling upon his hot, unbroken to the ground, wherefore he took care to trample the soil by his troops, because the vapor was better extinguished while it was single; so was descending the eternal **HEAT** whereby the sand was **KINDLED**, like tinder beneath the steel, for doubling of the dole. The dance of the wretched hands was ever without repose, now there, now here, shaking from them the fresh **BURNING**.

I began: «Master, thou that overcomest everything, except the obturate demons, who at the entrance of the gate came out against us, who is that great one that seems not to heed the **FIRE**, and lies despiteful and twisted, so that the rain seems not to ripen him?»

And that same one who was aware that I was asking my Leader about him, cried out: «Such as I was alive, such am I dead.» Though Jove weary out his smith, from whom in wrath he took the **SHARP THUNDERBOLT** wherewith on my last day I was smitten, or though he weary out the others, turn by turn, in Mongibello at the black forge, crying, «Good Vulcan, help, help!»

## CANTO XXII

I have **SEEN** ere now horsemen moving camp, and beginning an assault, and making their muster, and sometimes retiring for their escape; I have seen foragers over your land, O Aretines, and I have seen the starting of raids, the onset of tournaments, and the running of jousts, now with trumpets, and now with bells, with drums, and with signals from strongholds, and with native things and foreign –but never to so strange a pipe did I see horsemen or footmen set forth, or ship by sign of land or **STAR**.

We were going along with the ten demons. Ah, the fell company! but in the church with the saints, and in the tavern with the gluttons. My attention was only on the pitch in order to see every condition of the pouch, and of the people that were **BURNING IN IT**.

Like dolphins, when by the arching of their back, they give a sign to the sailors to take heed for the safety of their vessel, so, now and then, to alleviate his pain, one of the sinners would show his back and hide it in less time than it **LIGHTENS**.

## CANTO XXVI

As many as the fireflies which, in the season when he that **BRIGHTENS** the world keeps his face least hidden from us, the rustic, who is resting on the hillside what time the fly yields to the gnat, sees down in the valley, perhaps there where he makes his vintage and ploughs –with so many **FLAMES** all the eighth pit was **GLEAMING**, as I perceived so soon as I was there where the bottom became apparent. And as he who was avenged by the bears saw the chariot of Elijah at its departure, when the horses rose erect to heaven,—for he could not so follow it with his **EYES** as to see aught save the **FLAME** alone, like a little cloud, mounting upward,—thus each of those **FLAMES** was moving through the gully of the ditch, for not one shows its theft, and every **FLAME** steals away a sinner.

I was standing on the bridge, risen up to look, so that, if I had not taken hold of a rock, I should have fallen below without being pushed. And my Leader, who saw me thus intent, said: «Within these **FIRES** are the spirits; each is swathed by that wherewith he is **BURNT.**»«My Master,» I replied, «Through hearing thee am I more certain, but already I deemed that it was so, and already I wished to say to thee: Who is in that **FIRE** which comes so divided at its top that it seems to rise from the **PYRE** on which Eteocles was put with his brother?» He answered me: «Therewithin Ulysses and Diomed are tormented, and thus they go together in their punishment, as in their wrath. And within their **FLAME** they groan for the ambush of the horse which made the gate whence the noble seed of the Romans issued forth.



*Pesadilla*



Goya. *Pesadilla*. (*Caprichos*).

## PURGATORY

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### CANTO I

But here let dead poesy rise again, O holy Muses, since I am yours, and here let Calliope somewhat mount up, accompanying my song with that sound of which the wretched Picae felt the stroke such that they despaired of pardon.

A sweet color of oriental sapphire, which was gathering in the serene aspect of the mid sky, pure even to the first circle, renewed delight to my **EYES**, soon as I issued forth from the dead air which had afflicted my **EYES** and my breast. The fair **PLANET** which incites to love was making all the Orient to smile, veiling the fishes that were in her train. I turned me to the right hand, and gave heed to the other pole, and saw four **STARS**, never seen save by the first people. The heavens appeared to rejoice in their **FLAMELETS**. O widowed northern region, since thou art deprived of beholding these!

When I had withdrawn from regarding them, turning me a little to the other pole, there whence the Wain had already disappeared, I saw close to me an old man alone, in aspect worthy of so much reverence that no son owes more to his father. He wore his beard long and mingled with white hair, like his locks, of which a double list fell upon his breast. **THE RAYS OF THE FOUR HOLY STARS SO ADORNED HIS FACE WITH LIGHT, THAT I SAW HIM, AS THOUGH THE SUN HAD BEEN IN FRONT.** «Who are ye that, counter to the blind stream, have fled from the eternal prison?» said he, moving those venerable plumes. «Who

has guided you? Or who was a **LAMP** to you, issuing forth from the deep night which ever makes the infernal valley black?

## CANTO IX

At the hour near the morning when the little swallow begins her sad lays, perhaps in memory of her former woes, and when our mind, more a wanderer from the flesh and less captive to the thought, is in its **VISIONS** almost divine, in dream I seemed to see an **EAGLE** with feathers of gold poised in the sky, with wings spread, and intent to stoop. And I seemed to be there where his own people were abandoned by Ganymede, when he was rapt to the supreme consistory. In myself I thought perhaps this **BIRD** strikes only here through wont, and perhaps from other place disdains to carry anyone upward in its feet. Then it seemed to me that, having wheeled a little, it descended terrible as a **THUNDERBOLT**, and snatched me upwards far as the **FIRE**. There it seemed that it and I **BURNED**, and the imagined **FIRE SO SCORCHED** that of necessity my sleep was broken.

Not otherwise Achilles shook himself –turning around his awakened **EYES**, and not knowing where he was, when his mother stole him away, sleeping in her arms, from Chiron to Scyros, thither whence afterwards the Greeks withdrew him– than I started, as from my face sleep fled away; and I became pale, as does a man who, frightened, turns to **ICE**. At my side was my Comforter alone, and the **SUN** was now more than two hours high, and my face was turned toward the sea.

### CANTO XIII

«If to enquire one waits here for people,» said the Poet, «I fear that perhaps our choice will have too much delay.» Then he set his **EYES FIXEDLY ON THE SUN**, made of his right side the centre for his movement, and turned the left part of himself. «**O SWEET LIGHT**, with confidence in which I enter on the new road, do thou lead us on it,» he said, «as there is need for leading here within. Thou warmest the world, thou **SHINEST** upon it; if other reason prompt not to the contrary, thy **RAYS** ought ever to be guides,»

### CANTO XV

As much as, between the beginning of the day and the close of the third hour, appears of the **SPHERE** which is ever sporting in manner of a child, so much of his course toward the evening appeared to be now remaining for the **SUN**. It was vespers there, and here midnight; and the **RAYS** were striking us full in the face, because the mountain had been so circled by us that we were now going straight toward the sunset, when I felt my forehead weighed down by the **SPLENDOR** far more than at first, and the things not known were a wonder to me: wherefore I lifted my hands toward the top of my brows, and made for myself the visor which lessens the excess of what is seen.

As when from water, or from a mirror, the **RAY** leaps to the opposite quarter, mounting up in like manner to that in which it descends, and at equal distance departs as much from the fall of the stone, as experiment and art show; so it seemed to me that I was struck by **LIGHT REFLECTED** there in front of me, wherefore

my **SIGHT** was swift to fly. «What is that, sweet Father, from which I cannot screen my **SIGHT** so much that it may avail me, » said I, «and which seems to be moving toward us?» «Marvel not if the family of Heaven still **DAZZLE** thee,» he replied to me; «it is a messenger that comes to invite one to ascend. Soon will it be that to **SEE** these things will not be grievous to thee, but will be to thee a delight as great as nature has fitted thee to feel.»

## CANTO XVII

As sleep is broken, when of a sudden the new **LIGHT STRIKES THE CLOSED EYES**, and, broken, quivers before it wholly dies, so my imagining fell down, soon as a **LIGHT, GREATER BY FAR THAN THAT TO WHICH WE ARE ACCUSTOMED, STRUCK MY FACE**. I was turning to see where I was, when a voice said: «Here is the ascent»: and this withdrew me from every other objet of attention, and made my will so eager to behold who it was that was speaking, that it never rests till it is face to face. But, as before the **SUN WHICH WEIGHS DOWN OUR SIGHT**, and by excess veils its own shape, so here my power failed. «This is a divine spirit who directs us, without our asking, on the way to go up, and with his own **LIGHT** conceals himself. He so deals with us as a man does with himself; for he who waits for asking and sees the need, malignly sets himself already to denial. Now let us accord our feet to such an invitation; let us press forward to ascend before it grow dark, for after, it would not be possible until the day returns.»

Thus said my Leader; and I and he turned our steps to stairway; and, soon as I was on the first step, I felt near me a motion as if of

a wing, and a fanning on my face, and I heard say: «**Beati pacifici**, who are without evil anger.»

Already were the last **SUNBEAMS**, on which the night follows, so lifted above us, that the **STARS** were appearing on many sides.

## CANTO XXV

«And when Lachesis has no more thread, this soul is loosed from the flesh, and virtually bears away with itself both the human and the divine; the other faculties all of them mute, but memory, understanding, and will far more acute in action than before. Without a stop, it falls of itself, marvellously, to one of the banks. Here it first knows its own roads. Soon as the place there circumscribes it, the formative virtue **RAYS** our around it, in like shape and size, as in the living members. And as the air when it is full of rain becomes adorned with divers colors, by reason of the **RAYS** of another which are reflected in it, so here the neighboring air shapes itself in that form which the soul that has stopped virtually imprints upon it. And then like the **FLAMELET WHICH FOLLOWS THE FIRE** whithersoever it shifts, so does its new form follow the spirit. Since thereafter it has its aspect from this, it is called a shade; and thence it organizes every sense even to the **SIGHT**; thence we speak, and thence we laugh, thence we make the tears and the sighs, which thou mayst have heard on the mountain. According as our desires and our other affections impress us, the shade is shaped; and this is the cause of that at which thou wonderest.»

And now we had come to the last circuit, and had turned to the right hand, and were upon another care. Here the bank shoots forth **FLAME**, and the ledge breathes a blast upward which drives it

back, and sequesters a path from it. Wherefore it was needful to go one by one along the open side; and on the one hand I was afraid of the **FIRE**, and on the other I was afraid of falling off. My Leader said, «Along this place, one must **KEEP TIGHT THE REIN UPON the EYES**, because for little one might go astray.» «**Summae Deus clementiae,**» I then heard being sung, in the **BOSOM OF THE GREAT BURNING**, which made me care not less to turn. And I saw spirits going through the **FLAME**; wherefore I looked at them and at my own steps, apportioning to each my **SIGHT** from moment to moment. After the end that is made to that hymn, they loudly cried: «**Virum non cognosco**»; then began again the hymn with low voice; this finished, they cried anew: «To the wood Diana kept herself, and drove therefrom Helice, who had tasted the **POISON** of Venus.» Then they returned to their singing; then they cried aloud wives and husbands who were chaste, as virtue and marriage enjoin upon us. And I believe this mode suffices them for all the time that the **FIRE BURNS** them. With such cure it is needful, and with such diet, that the last **WOUND** of all should be closed up.

## CANTO XXVI

While we were thus going on along the edge, one before the other, the good Master was often saying: «Take heed! let it avail that I warn thee.» The **SUN**, which now, with his **RADIANCE**, was changing all the west from azure to a white aspect, was **STRIKING** me on the right shoulder; and with my shadow I was making the **FLAME** appear more ruddy, and only to that indication I saw many shades, as they went on, giving heed. This was the occasion which gave them a beginning to speak of me, and

they began to say: «He does not seem a fictitious body»; then certain of them came toward me, so far as they could do so, always with regard not to come out where they would not be **BURNED**. «O thou, who goest behind the others, not from being slower, but perhaps from reverence, reply to me, who am **BURNING IN THIRST AND FIRE**: nor by me only is thy reply needed, for all these have a greater thirst for it than Indian or Ethiop for cold water. Tell us how it is that thou makes of thyself a **WALL TO THE SUN**, as if thou hadst not yet entered within the net of death.» Thus spoke one of them to me; and I should at once have made myself known, if I had not given attention to another new thing which then appeared; for along the middle of the **BURNING** road were coming people with their faces opposite to these, which held me engaged to look at them.

## CANTO XXVII

The way mounted straight, through the **ROCK**, in such direction that in front of me I cut off the **RAYS OF THE SUN** which was already low. And of few stairs had we made essay ere, by the vanishing of my shadow, both I and my Sages perceived the setting of the sun behind us. And before the horizon in all its immeasurable regions had become of one aspect, and night had all her dispensations, each of us made his bed of a stair; for the nature of the mountain took from us the power, more than the delight, of ascending.

As goats, that have been swift and wanton on the peaks ere they were fed, become tranquil while they ruminate, hushed in the shade so long as the sun is hot, watched by the shepherd, who on his staff is leaning and, leaning, tends them; and as the herdsman,

who lodges out of doors, passes the night beside his quiet flock, watching that the wild beast may not scatter it: such were we all three then, I like a goat, and they like shepherds, hemmed in on this side and on that by the high rock.

Little of the outside could there be seen, but in that little **I SAW THE STARS BOTH BRIGHTER** and larger than their wont. Thus ruminating, and thus gazing upon them, sleep overcame me, sleep which off before the deed be done knows news thereof.

At the hour, I think, when from the east Cytherea, who with **FIRE OF LOVE SEEMS ALWAYS BURNING**, first **BEAMED** upon the mountain, I seemed in dream to see a lady, young and beautiful, going through a meadow gathering flowers, and singing she was saying: «Let him know, whoso asks my name, that I am Leah, and I go moving my fair hands around to make me a garland. To please me at the mirror I here adorn me, but my sister Rachel never departs from her looking-glass, and sits all day. She is as fain to look at her fair **EYES** as I to adorn me with my hands. Her, seeing, and me, doing satisfies.»

### CANTO XXX

I have seen ere now at the beginning of the day the eastern region all rosy, and the rest of heaven beautiful with fair clear sky, and the face of the **SUN** rising shaded, so that through the tempering of vapors the **EYES** sustained it a long while; thus within a cloud of flowers, which was ascending from the angelic hands and falling down again within and without, a lady, with wreath of olive over a white veil, appeared to me, robed with the color of **LIVING FLAME** under a green mantle. And my spirit which now for so long a time had not been broken down, trembling with awe at her

presence, without having more knowledge by the **EYES**, through occult virtue that proceeded from her, felt the great potency of ancient love.

Soon as the lofty virtue smote my **SIGHT**, which already had transfixed me ere I was out of boyhood, I turned me to the left, with the confidence with which the little child runs to his mother when he is frightened, or when he is troubled, to say to Virgil: «Less than a drachm of **BLOOD** remains in me that does not tremble; I recognize the signals of the ancient **FLAME**.»

## CANTO XXXI

The beautiful lady opened her arms, clasped my head, and immersed me where I had perforce to swallow of the water. Then she took me, and presented me, thus bathed, within the dance of the four beautiful ones, and each of them covered me with her arm. «Here we are nymphs, and in heaven we are **STARS**: before Beatrice had descended to the world we were ordained unto her for her handmaids. We will lead thee to her **EYES**; but for the joyous **LIGHT** which is within them, the three yonder who look more deeply shall sharpen thine own.»

Thus singing, they began; and then to the **BREAST OF THE GRIFFON** they led me with them, where Beatrice was standing turned toward us. They said: «See that thou spare not thy **SIGHT**: we have placed thee before the emeralds, whence Love of old drew his **DARTS** against thee.» A thousand desires **HOTTER THAN FLAME BOUND FAST MY EYES TO THE RELUCENT EYES** which ever stayed fixed upon the Griffon. Not otherwise than as the **SUN** in a **MIRROR**, was the twofold animal

**GLEAMING** therewithin, now with one, now with the other mode of being.

Think, Reader, if I marvelled when I saw the thing stay quiet in itself, and in its image transmuting itself.

While, full of awe and glad, my soul was **TASTING THAT FOOD** which, sating in itself, causes longing for itself, the other three, showing themselves of the loftier order in their bearing, came forward dancing to their angelic carol. «Turn, Beatrice, turn thy holy **EYES**,» was their song, «upon thy faithful one, who to see thee has taken so many steps. Of thy grace do us the favor that thou unveil to him thy mouth, so that he may discern the second beauty which thou dost conceal.»

**O SPLENDOR OF LIVING LIGHT** eternal! Who has become so pallid under the shadow of Parnassus, or has so drunk at its cistern, that he would not seem to have his mind encumbered, trying to render thee as thou didst appear there where with its harmony the heaven hangs over thee, when in the open air thou didst thyself disclose?

## **CANTO XXXII**

So fixed and intent were my **EYES TO RELIEVE THEIR TEN YEARS' THIRST**, that my other senses were all extinct: and they themselves, on one side and the other, had a wall of indifference, so did the holy smile draw them to itself with the ancient net; when perforce my **SIGHT** was turned toward my left by those goddesses, because I heard from them a «Too fixedly.» And the condition which exists for seeing, in **EYES BUT JUST NOW SMITTEN BY THE SUN, CAUSED ME TO BE FOR A WHILE WITHOUT SIGHT**. But when my vision reshaped itself

to the lesser sensation (I say to the lesser, in respect to the great one wherefrom by force I had removed myself), I saw that the glorious army had wheeled upon its right flank, and was returning with the **SUN AND WITH THE SEVEN FLAMES IN ITS FACE.**

As under its shields to protect itself a troop turns and wheels with its banner, before it all can change about, that soldiery of the celestial realm which was in advance had wholly gone past us, before its front **BEAM** had bent the chariot round. Then to the wheels the ladies returned, and the Griffon moved his blessed burden, in such wise however that no feather of him shook. The beautiful lady who had drawn me at the ford, and Staius and I were following the wheel which made its orbit with the smaller arc. Thus passing through the lofty wood, empty through fault of her who trusted to the **SERPENT**, an angelic song set the time to our steps.

Perhaps an **ARROW** loosed from the string had traversed in three flights as great a distance as we had advanced, when Beatrice descended. I heard «Adam» murmured by all: then they encircled a plant despoiled of flowers and of other leafage on every bough. Its tresses, which the wider spread the higher up they are, would be wondered at for height by the Indians in their woods.

«Blessed art thou, Griffon, that thou dost not break off with thy **BEAK** of this wood sweet to the taste, since the belly is ill racked thereby» Thus around the sturdy tree the others cried; and the animal of two natures: «Thus is preserved the seed of all righteousness.» And turning to the pole which he had drawn, he dragged it to the foot of the widowed trunk, and that which was of it he left bound to it.

As when the great **LIGHT** falls downward mingled with that which **SHINES** behind the celestial Carp, our plants become

swollen, and then renew themselves, each in its own color, before the **SUN** yokes his coursers under another star, so, disclosing a color less than of roses and more than of violets, the plant renewed itself, which at first had its boughs so bare.

I did not understand, nor here is sung, the hymn which that folk then sang, nor did I bear the melody to the end.

If I could portray how the pitiless **EYES** sank to slumber, while hearing of Syrinx –the **EYES** to which much watching cost so dear– like a painter who paints from a model I would depict how I fell asleep; but whoso would, let him be one who can represent slumber well. Therefore I pass on to when I awoke, and I say that a **SPLENDOR** rent for me the veil of sleep, and a call: «Arise, what doest thou?»

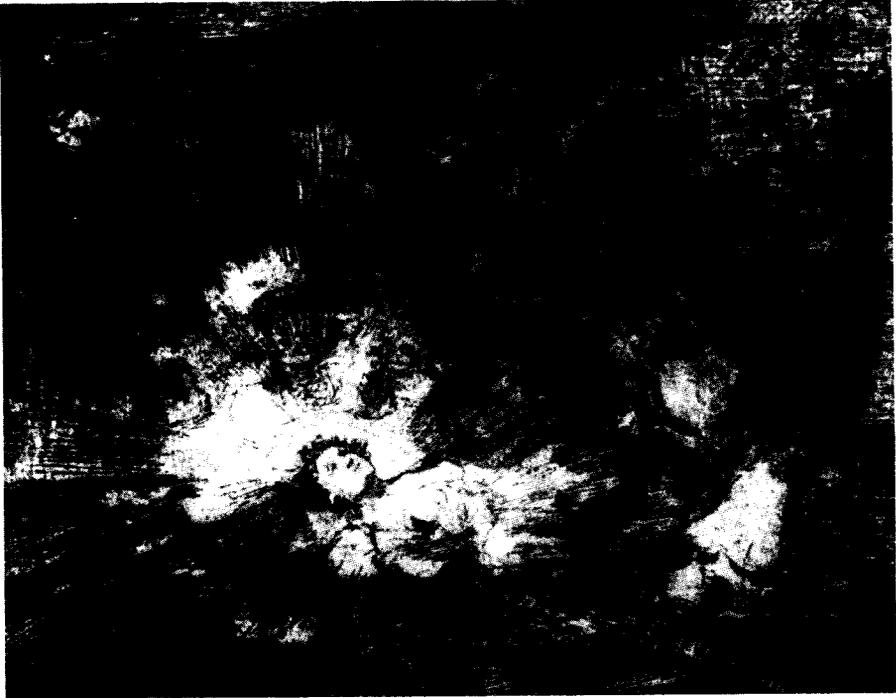
## PARADISE

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### CANTO I

O good **APOLLO**, for this last labor make me such a vessel of thy worth as thou demandest for the gift of the beloved laurel. Thus far one summit of Parnassus has been enough for me, but now with both I need to enter the remaining arena. **ENTER INTO MY BREAST, AND BREATHE THOU** in such wise as when thou drewest Marsyas from out the sheath of his limbs. O divine power, if thou lend thyself to me so that I may make manifest the image of the Blessed Realm imprinted within my head, thou shalt see me come to thy chosen tree, and crown myself then with those leaves of which the theme and thou will make me worthy. So rarely, Father, are they gathered for triumph or of Cæsar or of poet, (fault and shame of human wills,) that the Peneian leaf should bring forth joy unto the joyous Delphic deity, whenever it makes any one to long for it. **GREAT FLAME FOLLOWS A LITTLE SPARK:** perhaps after me prayer shall be made with better voices, where to Cyrrha may respond.

The **LAMP** of the world rises to mortals through different passages, but from that which joins four circles with three crosses it issues with better course and conjoined with a better **STAR**, and it tempers and seals the mundane wax more after its own fashion. Almost such a passage had made morning there and evening here; and there all that hemisphere was white, and the other part black, when I saw Beatrice turned to her left side, and **GAZING UPON THE SUN:** never did **EAGLE** so fix himself upon it. And even as a second **RAY** is wont to issue from the first, and mount upward again, like a pilgrim who wishes to return; so from her action,



Goya. *¿Sí resucitará?* (*Desastres de la guerra*).

infused through the **EYES** into my imagination, mine was made, and **I FIXED MY EYES UPON THE SUN** beyond our wont. Much is permitted there which here is not permitted to our faculties, by virtue of the place made for the human race as its proper seat. Not long did I endure it, nor so little that I did not see it **SPARKLE** round about, like **IRON THAT ISSUES BOILING FROM THE FIRE**. And on a sudden, day seemed to be added to day, as if He who has the power has adorned the heaven with another **SUN**.

Beatrice was standing with her **EYES** wholly fixed on the eternal wheels, and on her I fixed my **EYES** from thereabove removed. Looking at her I inwardly became such as Glaucus became on tasting of the grass which made him consort in the sea of the other gods. Transhumanizing cannot be signified in words; therefore let the example suffice him for whom grace reserves the experience. If I was only that of me which Thou didst the last create, O Love that governest the heavens, Thou knowest, who with Thy **LIGHT** didst lift me. When the revolution which Thou, being desired, makest eternal, made me attent unto itself with the harmony which Thou dost attune and modulate, so much of the heaven then seemed to me **ENKINDLED BY THE FLAME OF THE SUN**, that rain or river never made so widespread a lake.

The novelty of the sound and the **GREAT LIGHT KINDLED** in me a desire concerning their cause, never before felt with such keenness. Whereon she, who saw me as I see myself, to quiet my perturbed mind opened her mouth, ere I mine to ask, and began: «Thou makest thyself dull with false imagining, so that thou seest not what thou wouldst see, if thou hadst shaken it off. Thou art not on earth, as thou believest; but **LIGHTNING**, flying from its proper site, never ran as thou who art returning thereunto.»

## CANTO II

And she: «Surely thou shalt see that thy belief is quite submerged in error, if thou listen well to the argument that I shall make against it. The **EIGHTH SPHERE DISPLAYS TO YOU MANY LIGHTS**, which may be noted of different aspects in quality and quantity. If rarity and density effected all this, one single virtue, more or less or equally distributed, would be in all. Different virtues must needs be fruits of formal principles; and these, all but one, would, in pursuance of thy reasoning, be destroyed. Further, if rarity were the cause of that duskiness about which you ask, this **PLANET** would either be thus deficient of its matter in part quite through and through, or else, as a body divides the fat and the lean, so this would interchange the leaves in its volume. If the first were the case, it would be manifest in the eclipses of the **SUN**, by the **SHINING THROUGH OF THE LIGHT**, as when it is poured upon any other rare body.

«This is not so; therefore we must look at the other supposition, and if it happen that I quash this, thy opinion will be proved false. If it be that this rarity does not pass through, there must needs be a limit, beyond which its contrary allows it not to pass farther; and thence the **RAY** from another body is thrown back, just as color returns through a glass which hides lead behind itself. Now thou wilt say that the **RAY** shows itself dimmer there than in the other parts, because it is reflected there from farther back. From this objection experiment, which is wont to be the fountain to the steams of your arts, may deliver thee, if ever thou try it. Thou shalt take three **MIRRORS**, and set two of them at an equal distance from thee, and let the other, more remote, meet thine **EYES** between the first two. Turning toward them, cause a **LIGHT** to be placed behind thy back, which may **SHINE** upon the three

MIRRORS, and return to thee reflected from all. Although the more distant image may not reach thee so great in quantity, thou wilt there see how it must needs be of equal **BRIGHTNESS** with the others.

«Now, as beneath the blows of the warm **RAYS** that which lies under the **SNOW** remains bare both of the former color and the cold, thee, thus remaining in thy intellect, will I inform with **LIGHT** so living that it shall tremble in its aspect to thee.

«Within the heaven of the divine peace **REVOLVES A BODY**, in whose virtue lies the being of all that it contains. The following heaven, which has so many sights, distributes that being through divers essences distinct from it, and contained by it. The other circles, by various differences, dispose the distinctions which they have within themselves unto their ends and their sowings. These organs of the world thus proceed, as thou now seest, from grade to grade; for they receive from above, and operate below.

«Observe me well, how I advance through this place to the truth which thou desirest, so that hereafter thou mayst know to keep the ford alone. The motion and the virtue of the holy **SPHERES** must needs be inspired by blessed motors, as the work of the hammer by the smith. And the heaven, which so many **LIGHTS** make beautiful, takes its image from the deep mind which revolves it, and makes thereof a seal. And as the soul within your dust is diffused through different members, and conformed to divers potencies, so does the Intelligence display its goodness multiplied through the **STARS**, itself circling upon its own unity. Divers virtue makes divers alloy with the precious body that it quickens, wherein it is bound, even as life in you. Because of the glad nature whence it flows, the mingled virtue **SHINES** through the body, as gladness through the living **PUPIL**. From this comes what seems different between **LIGHT AND LIGHT**, not from density and

rarity; this is the formal principle which produces, conformably with its own goodness, the dark and the **BRIGHT.**>>

### CANTO III

«And this other **SPLENDOR**, which shows itself to thee at my right side, and which is **ENKINDLED WITH ALL THE LIGHT OF OUR SPHERE**, understands of herself that which I say of me. She was a sister; and from her head in like manner the shadow of the sacred veil was taken. But after she too was returned unto the world, against her liking and against good usage, she was never loosed from the veil of the heart. This is the **LIGHT** of the great Constance, who from the second wind of Swabia conceived the third and the last power.»

Thus she spoke to me, and then began singing «**Ave Maria,**» and singing vanished, as through deep water some heavy thing. My **SIGHT**, that followed her so far as was possible, after it lost her, turned to the mark of greater desire, and wholly reverted to Beatrice; but she so **FLASHED UPON MY GAZE** that at first my **SIGHT** endured it not: and this made me more slow in questioning.

### CANTO V

«If I **FLAME** upon thee in the heat of love, beyond the measure that is seen on earth, so that I vanquish the valor of thine **EYES**, marvel not, for it proceeds from perfect **VISION**, which, according as it apprehends, so does it move its foot to the apprehended good. I see clearly how already in thy intellect is **SHINING THE**

ETERNAL LIGHT, which, only seen, always **ENKINDLES** love; and if any other thing seduce your love, it is naught but some vestige of that **LIGHT**, ill-recognized, which therein **SHINES** through. Thou wishest to know if for an unfulfilled vow so much can be paid with other service as may secure the soul from suit.››

(...)

Thus Beatrice to me, even as I Write; then all desireful turned again to that region where the world is most alive. Her silence and her changed look imposed silence on my eager mind, which already had new questions in advance. And as an **ARROW** that hits the mark before the bowstring is quiet, so we ran into the second realm. Here I saw my lady so joyous as she entered into the **LIGHT** of that heaven, that **THE PLANET ITSELF BECAME THE BRIGHTER FOR IT**. And if the **STAR** was changed and smiled, what did I become, who even by my nature am transmutable in every wise!

As in a fishpond, which is still and clear, the fish draw to that which comes in such manner from without that they deem it their food, so I saw full more than a thousand **SPLENDORS** drawing toward us, and in each was heard: ‹‹Lo, one who shall increase our loves!›› And as each one came to us, the shade was seen full of joy by the **BRIGHT EFFULGENCE** that issued from it.

Think, Reader, if that which is here begun should not proceed, how thou wouldst have a grievous craving to know more; and by thyself thou wilt see what my desire was to hear from these of their conditions, soon as they became manifest to mine **EYES**.

‹‹O well-born, to whom Grace concedes to see the thrones of the eternal triumph ere the warfare is abandoned, with the **LIGHT** which spreads through the whole heaven we are **ENKINDLED**, and therefore if thou desirest to enlighten thyself by means of us, sate thyself at thy pleasure.›› Thus was it said to me by one of

those pious spirits; and by Beatrice: «Speak, speak securely, and trust even as to gods.» «I see clearly, how thou dost nest thyself in thine own **LIGHT**, and that thou drawest it through thine **EYES**, because they **SPARKLE** as thou smilest; but I know not who thou art, nor why, O worthy soul, thou hast the grade of the **SPHERE** which is veiled to mortal by another's **RAYS**.»

This I said, addressed to the **LIGHT** which first had spoken to me; whereon it became far more **LUCENT** than it had been. Even as the **SUN**, which, when the heat has consumed the tempering of the dense vapors, conceals itself by excess of **LIGHT**, so, by reason of more joy, did the holy shape hide itself from me within its own **RADIANCE**, and thus close enclosed, it answered me in the fashion which the following canto sings.

## CANTO VIII

The world in its peril was wont to believe that the beautiful Cyprian revolving in the third epicycle **RAYED OUT** mad love; wherefore the ancient people in their ancient error not only unto her did honor with sacrifice and with votive cry, but they honored Dione also and Cupid, the one as her mother, the other as her son, and they said that he had sat in Dido's lap; and from her, from whom I take my beginning, they took the name of the **STAR WHICH THE SUN WOOS**, now behind her now before. I was not aware of the ascent to it; but of being in it, my Lady gave me full assurance, whom I saw become more beautiful.

And as a **SPARK IS SEEN WITHIN A FLAME**, and as within a voice a voice is distinguished when one is steady and the other goes and returns, I saw **WITHIN THAT LIGHT OTHER LAMPS** moving in a circle, speeding more or less, according to

the measure, I believe, of their eternal **VISION**. From a cold cloud **WINDS**, whether visible or not, never descended so swiftly, that they would not seem impeded and slow to him who had seen these divine **LIGHTS** coming to us, leaving the circling begun first in the exalted Seraphim. And within those who appeared most in front was sounding **Hosanna**, in such wise that never since have I been without desire of hearing it again.

## CANTO IX

And now the life of that holy **LIGHT** had turned again unto the **SUN** which fills it, as that Good which suffices for every thing. Ah, souls deceived, and creatures impious, who from such Good turn away your hearts, directing your foreheads unto vanity! And lo! another of those **SPLENDORS** made towards me, and by **BRIGHTENING** outwardly was signifying its will to please me. The **EYES** of Beatrice, which were fixed upon me, as before, made me assured of dear assent to my desire. «Pray, blessed spirit,» I said, «afford speedy satisfaction to my wish, and give me proof that what I think I can reflect on thee.» Whereon the **LIGHT** which was still new to me, from out its depth, wherein before it was singing, proceeded, as one whom doing good delights: «In that part of the wicked Italian land which lies between Rialto and the founts of the Brenta and the Piave, rises a hill, and mounts not very high, wherefrom a **TORCH** descended which made a great assault upon that district. From one root both I and it were born; I was called Cunizza; and I am **REFULGENT** here because the **LIGHT OF THIS STAR** overcame me. But gladly do I grant myself indulgence for the occasion of my lot, and it does not trouble me; which perhaps would seem a hard saying to your

vulgar. Of this **RESPLENDENT** and precious jewel of our kingdom, which is nearest to me, great fame has remained, and ere it die away this hundredth year shall yet come round five times. See if man ought to make himself excellent, so that the first life may leave another!

## CANTO X

The greatest minister of nature, which imprints the world with the worth of the heavens, and with his **LIGHT** measures the time for us, conjoined with that region which is mentioned above, was circling through the spirals in which from day to day he earlier presents himself. And I was with him; but of the ascent I was not aware, otherwise than is a man, before his first thought, aware of its coming. It is Beatrice who thus conducts from good to better, so instantaneously that her act does not extend through time.

How **LUCENT** in itself must that have been which was apparent not by color but by **LIGHT** within the **SUN** where I had entered! Though I should call on genius, art, and use, I could not tell it so that it could ever be imagined; but one may believe it, and let him long to see it. And if our fancies are low for such loftiness, it is no marvel, for beyond the **SUN** there was never **EYE** could go. Such was here the fourth family of the exalted Father, who always satisfies it, showing how He breathes forth, and how He begets. And Beatrice began: «Give thanks, give thanks to the **SUN** of the angels, who to this visible one has raised thee by His grace.»

Heart of mortal was never so disposed to devotion, and so ready, with its whole will, to render itself up to God, as I became at those words; and all my love was so set on Him that it eclipsed Beatrice

in oblivion. It did not displease her; but she so smiled thereat that the **SPLENDOR OF HER SMILING EYES** divided upon many things my mind intent on one.

I saw many living and surpassing **EFFULGENCES** make of us a centre, and make of themselves a crown; more sweet in voice than **SHINING** in aspect. Thus girt we sometimes see the daughter of Latona, when the air is so impregnate that it holds the thread which makes her zone. In the court of Heaven, wherefrom I return, are found many jewels so precious and beautiful that they cannot be brought from the kingdom, and of these was the song of those **LIGHTS**. Let him who does not wing himself so that he may fly up thither, await tidings thence from the dumb.

After those **BLAZING SUNS**, thus singing, had circled three times round about us, like **STARS** near to the fixed poles, they seemed to me as ladies not released from a dance, but who stop silent, listening till they have caught the new notes.

And within one I heard begin: «Since the **RAY** of grace, by which true love is **KINDLED**, and which then in loving grows multiplied, so **SHINES** on thee that it conducts thee upward by that stair which, without reascending, no one descends, he who should **DENY TO THEE THE WINE OF HIS FLASK FOR THY THIRST**, would not be more at liberty than water which descends not to the sea. Thou wishest to know with what plants this garland is enflowered, which, round about her, gazes with delight upon the beautiful Lady who strengthens thee for heaven. I was of the lambs of the holy flock which Dominic leads along the way where they fatten well if they do not stray. This one who is nearest to me on the right was my brother and master; and he was Albert of Cologne, and I Thomas of Aquino.

«If thus of all the rest thou wouldst be informed, come, following my speech, with thy **SIGHT** circling around upon the blessed

wreath. That next **FLAMING** issues from the smile of Gratian, who so aided one court and the other that it pleases in Paradise. The next, who at his side adorns our choir, was that Peter who, like the poor woman, offered his treasure to Holy Church. The fifth **LIGHT**, which is most beautiful among us, breathes from such love that all the world there below is greedy to know tidings of it: within it is the lofty mind wherein wisdom so profound was put, that, if the truth be true, to see so much no second has arisen. At its side behold the **LIGHT** of that candle which, below in the flesh, saw most inwardly the angelic nature, and its ministry. In the next little **LIGHT** smiles that advocate of the Christian times, with whose discourse Augustine provided himself.

#### CANTO XIV

That One and Two and Three which ever lives, and ever reigns in Three and Two and One, uncircumscribed, and circumscribing all things, was thrice sung by each of those spirits with such a melody that for every merit it would be adequate reward. And I heard in the divinest **LIGHT** of the smaller circle a modest voice, perhaps such as was that of the Angel to Mary, make answer: «As long as the festival of Paradise shall be, so long will our love **RADIATE** around us such a garment. Its **BRIGHTNESS WILL FOLLOW OUR ARDOR, THE ARDOR OUR VISION**, and that is great in proportion as it receives of grace above its own worth. When the flesh, glorious and sanctified, shall be clothed on us again, our persons will be more acceptable through being all complete; wherefore whatever of gratuitous **LIGHT** the Supreme Good gives us will be increased –**LIGHT** which enables us to see Him; so that our **VISION** must needs increase, our **ARDOR** increase which by

that is **KINDLED**, our **RADIANCE** increase which comes from this.

But even as a coal which gives forth **FLAME**, and by a vivid **GLOW** surpasses it, so that its own aspect is defended, thus this **EFFULGENCE**, which already encircles us, will be vanquished in appearance by the flesh which all this while the earth covers; nor will so great a **LIGHT** have power to fatigue us, for the organs of the body will be strong for everything which can delight us.» So sudden and ready both one and the other choir seemed to me in saying «Amen,» that truly they showed desire for their dead bodies, perhaps not only for themselves, but also for their mothers, for their fathers, and for the others who were dear before they became sempiternal **FLAMES**.

And lo! round about, of a uniform **BRIGHTNESS**, arose a lustre, beyond that which was there, like an horizon, which is growing **BRIGHT**. And as at rise of early evening new appearances begin in the heavens, so that the sight seems and seems not true, it seemed to me that there I began to see new subsistences, and a circle forming outside the other two circumferences. O true **SPARKLING** of the Holy Spirit! how sudden and **GLOWING** **IT BECAME TO MY EYES**, which, vanquished, endured it not! But Beatrice showed herself to me so beautiful and smiling that it must be left among those **SIGHTS** which followed not my memory.

Therefrom my **EYES** regained power to raise themselves again, and I saw myself, alone with my Lady, translated to more exalted salvation. That I was more uplifted I perceived clearly by the fiery smile of the **STAR**, which seemed to me ruddier than its wont. With all my heart and with that speech which is one in all men, I made to God a **HOLOCAUST** such as was befitting to the new grace; and the **ARDOR** of the sacrifice was not yet exhausted in

my breast before I knew that offering had been accepted and propitious; for with such a **GLOW** and such a ruddiness **SPLENDORS** appeared to me within two **RAYS**, that I said: «**O HELIOS**, who dost so adorn them!»

Even as, distinct with less and greater **LIGHTS**, **THE GALAXY SO WHITENS** between the poles of the world that it makes even the wise to question, thus, **CONSTELLATED** in the depth of Mars, those **RAYS** made the venerable sign which joining of quadrants in a circle make. Here my memory overcomes my genius, for that cross was **FLASHING** forth Christ, so that I know not find worthy example. But he who takes his cross and follows Christ shall yet excuse me for that which I omit, when he beholds Christ **LIGHTENING IN THAT GLOW**.

## CANTO XV

As, through the tranquil and pure evening skies, a sudden **FIRE** shoots from time to time, moving the **EYES** which were steady, and seems to be a **STAR** which changes place, save that from the region whence it was **KINDLED** nothing is lost, and it lasts short while; so from the arm which extends on the right, ran a **STAR OF THE CONSTELLATION WHICH IS RESPLENDENT** there, down to the foot of that Cross. Nor from its ribbon did the gem depart, but through the radial strip it ran along and seemed like **FIRE** behind alabaster. With like affection did the shade of Anchises stretch forward (if our greatest Muse merits belief), when in Elysium he perceived his son.

**O sanguis meus! a superinfusa gratia Dei! sicut tibi, cui bis unquam coeli janua reclusa?** Thus that **LIGHT**; whereat I gave heed to it; then I turned back my **SIGHT** to my Lady, and on the

heed to it; then I turned back my **SIGHT** to my Lady, and on the one side and the other I was awestruck; for within her **EYES WAS GLOWING** such a smile, that with my own I thought to touch the depth of my grace and of my Paradise.

Then, joyous to hearing and to **SIGHT**, the spirit added to his beginning things which I did not understand, so deep was his speech. Nor did he hide himself from me by choice, but by necessity, for his conception was set above the mark of mortals. And when the blow of his **ARDENT** affection was so relaxed that his speech descended towards the mark of our understanding, the first thing that was understood by me was: «Blessed be thou, Trine and One, who art so greatly courteous in my seed.»

And he went on: «a pleasing and longfelt **HUNGER**, derived from reading in the great volume where white or dark is never changed, thou hast relieved, my son, within this **LIGHT** in which I speak to thee, thanks to her who clothed thee with plumes for the lofty flight.

## **CANTO XVII**

Down through the world of endless bitterness, and over the mountain from whose fair summit the **EYES** of my Lady uplifted me, and then through heaven from **LIGHT TO LIGHT**, I have learned that which, if I tell again, will have for many a savor of great bitterness; and if I am a timid friend to the truth, I fear to lose life among those who will call this time ancient.»

The **LIGHT**, within which my treasure that I had found there was smiling, first became **FLASHING AS A MIRROR OF GOLD IN THE SUNBEAM...**

## CANTO XXII

As was her pleasure **I DIRECTED MY EYES, AND SAW A HUNDRED LITTLE SPHERES**, which together were making themselves more beautiful with their mutual **RAYS**. I was standing as one who within himself represses the point of his desire, and attempts not to ask, he so fears the toomuch. And the largest and most **LUSTROUS** of those pearls came forward to make my wish concerning itself content. Then within it I heard: «If thou couldst see, as I do, the charity which **BURNS** among us, thy thoughts would be expressed; but that thou, by waiting, mayst not retard thy high end, I will make answer to thee, even to the thought about which thou so restrainest thyself.

«That mountain on whose slope Cassino is, was of old frequented on its summit by the deluded and ill-disposed people, and I am he who first bore up there the name of Him Who brought to earth the truth which so high exalts us: and such grace **SHONE** upon me that I drew away the surrounding villages from the impious worship which seduced the world. All these other **FIRES** were contemplative men, **KINDLED BY THAT HEAT** which brings to birth holy flowers and fruits. Here is Macarius, here is Romualdus, here are my brothers, who fixed their feet within the cloister, and held their heart steadfast.»

And I to him: «The affection which thou displayest in speaking with me, and the good semblance which I see and note in all your **ARDORS**, have expanded my confidence as the **SUN** does the rose, when she becomes open as wide as she has power to be. Therefore I pray thee, and do thou, Father, assure me if I am capable of receiving so great grace, that I may see thee with uncovered shape.»

## CANTO XXIII

But short while was there between one and the other when; of my awaiting, I mean, and of my seeing the heavens become more and more **RESPLENDENT**.

And Beatrice said: «Behold the hosts of the Triumph of Christ, and all the fruit harvested by the revolution of these **SPHERES**.» It seemed to me her face was all **AFLAME**, and her **EYES** were so full of joy that I must needs pass on without description.

As in the clear skies at the full moon Trivia smiles among the eternal nymphs who paint the heaven through all its depths, I saw, above thousands of **LAMPS**, a **SUN THAT WAS ENKINDLING EACH AND ALL OF THEM, AS OUR KINDLES** the supernal shows; and through its **LIVING LIGHT THE LUCENT SUBSTANCE GLEAMED SO BRIGHT UPON MY FACE THAT I SUSTAINED IT NOT**.

Oh Beatrice, sweet guide and dear!

She said to me: «That which overcomes thee is a virtue against which naught defends itself. Here is the Wisdom and the Power that opened the roads between heaven and earth, for which there erst had been such long desire.»

As **FIRE** is unlocked from a cloud, by dilating so that it has not room there, and contrary to its own nature falls down to earth, so my mind, becoming greater amid those feasts, issued from itself, and what it became it cannot remember.

«Open thine **EYES** and look on what I am; thou hast seen things such as thou art become able to sustain my smile,» I was as one who comes to himself from a forgotten **VISION** and endeavors in vain to bring it back to mind, when I heard this invitation, worthy of such gratitude that it is never to be effaced from the book which records the past. If now all those tongues which Polyhymnia and

her sisters made most rich with their **SWEETEST MILK** should sound to aid me, it would not come to a thousandth of the truth in singing the holy smile and how it **LIGHTED** up the holy face. And-thus, depicting Paradise, the consecrated poem must needs make a leap, even as one who finds his way cut off. But whoso should consider the ponderous theme and the mortal shoulder which is laden therewith would not blame it if under this it tremble. It is no voyage for a little barque, this which my venturous prow goes cleaving, nor for a pilot who would spare himself.

«Why does my face so enamour thee that thou turnest not to the fair garden which blossoms beneath the **RAYS** of Christ? Here is the Rose, in which the Divine Word became flesh: here are the lilies by whose odor the good way was taken.»

Thus Beatrice: and I, who to her counsels was wholly ready, again gave myself up to the battle of the feeble brows.

As my **EYES**, covered with a shadow, have ere now seen a meadow of flowers under a **SUNBEAM** which streams **BRIGHT** through a rifted cloud, so saw I many trongs of **SPLENDORS FLASHED UPON FROM ABOVE BY BURNING RAYS**, though I saw not the source of the **GLEAMS**. O benignant Power which dost so imprint them, thou didst raise thyself on high to bestow scope there for my **EYES**, which were powerless.

The name of the fair flower which I ever invoke, both morning and evening, wholly constrained my mind to **GAZE UPON THE GREATER FIRE**. And when the **BRIGHTNESS AND THE MAGNITUDE OF THE LIVING STAR**, which up there conquers as it conquered here below, were depicted in both my **EYES**, from within the mid heavens a **TORCH**, formed in a circle in fashion of a crown, descended and engirt her, and revolved around her. Whatever melody sounds sweetest here below, and to itself most draws the soul, would seem a cloud which, being rent,

thunders, compared with the sound of that lyre wherewith was crowned the beauteous **SAPPHIRE** by which the **BRIGHTEST** Heaven is ensapphired.

«I am Angelic Love, and I circle round the lofty joy which breathes form out the womb which was the hostelry of our Desire; and I shall circle, Lady of Heaven, until thou shalt follow thy Son and make the supreme **SPHERE** more divine because thou enterest it.» Thus the circling melody sealed itself, and all the other **LIGHTS** made the name of Mary resound.

The royal mantle of all the revolutions of the world, which is most fervid and most quickened in the breath of God and in His ways, had its inner shore so distant above us that sight of it, there where I was, did not yet appear to me. Therefore my **EYES** had not power to follow the crowned **FLAME**, which mounted upward after her offspring. And as an **INFANT WHICH, WHEN IT HAS TAKEN THE MILK, STRETCHES ITS ARMS TOWARD ITS MOTHER, BECAUSE OF ITS AFFECTION WHICH FLAMES UP OUTWARDLY**, each of these **SPLENDORS** stretched upward with its **FLAME**, so that the exalted love which they had for Mary was manifest to me.

## CANTO XXVI

And as at a keen light sleep is broken by the spirit of **SIGHT**, which runs to the **SPLENDOR** that goes from coat to coat, and he who awakes shrinks from what he sees, so ignorant is his sudden wakening, until his judgment comes to his aid; thus Beatrice chased away every mote from my **EYES WITH THE RADIANCE OF HER OWN**, which were **REFULGENT MORE THAN A THOUSAND MILES**; so that I then saw better

than before; and, as one amazed, I asked concerning a fourth **LIGHT** which I saw with us. And my Lady: «Within those **RAYS** the first soul which the First Power ever created **GAZES** with joy upon its maker.»

As the bough which bends its top at passing of the wind, and then uplifts itself by its own virtue which raises it, so did I, in amazement, while she was speaking; and then a desire to speak, wherewith I was **BURNING**, gave me again assurance, and I began: «O fruit, that was alone produced mature, O ancient Father, to whom every bride is daughter and daughter-in-law, devoutly as I can, I supplicate thee that thou speak to me; thou seest my wish, and that I may hear thee speedily, I do not tell it.»

Sometimes an animal, when covered up, so stirs, that its impulse must needs be apparent because of the corresponding movement which its wrapping makes; and in like manner the first soul made evident to me, through its covering, how gladly it came to do me pleasure.

Then it breathed forth: «Without its being uttered to me by thee, I better discern thy wish, than thou whatever thing is most certain to thee; because I see it in the truthful **MIRROR** which makes of itself a **REFLECTION** of other things, while nothing makes of itself a **REFLECTION** of it. Thou wouldst hear how long it is since God placed me in the lofty garden where this Lady made thee ready for so long a stairway; and how long it was a delight to my **EYES**; and the proper cause of the great wrath; and of the idiom which I used and which I made.

«Now, my son, the tasting of the tree was not by itself the cause of so great an exile, but only the overpassing of the bound. In that place whence thy Lady moved Virgil, I longed for this assembly during four thousand three hundred and two revolutions of the **SUN**; and while I was on earth I saw him return to all the

**LIGHTS** of his path nine hundred and thirty times. The tongue which I spoke was all extinct long before the people of Nimrod attempted their unaccomplishable work; for never was any product of the reason durable for ever, because of human liking, which alters, following the heavens. That man speaks is work of nature; but, thus or thus, nature then leaves to you to do according as it pleases you.

### **CANTO XXVIII**

After she who imparadises my mind had disclosed the truth counter to the present life of wretched mortals; as one who **SEES IN A MIRROR THE FLAME OF A TORCH WHICH IS LIGHTED BEHIND HIM**, ere he has it in **SIGHT** or in thought, and turns round to see if the glass tell him the truth, and sees that it accords with it as the note with its measure; so my memory recollects that I did, looking into the **BEAUTIFUL EYES**, wherewith Love made the cord to capture me. And when I turned, and mine were touched by what is apparent in that **SPHERE** whenever one **GAZES FIXEDLY ON ITS CIRCLING, I SAW A POINT WHICH WAS RAYING OUT LIGHT SO KEEN THAT THE SIGHT ON WHICH IT BLAZES MUST NEEDS CLOSE BECAUSE OF ITS INTENSE KEENNES**. And whatever **STAR** seems smallest from here would seem a **MOON** if placed beside it, as **STAR WITH STAR** is placed.

Perhaps as near as a **HALO SEEMS TO GIRDLE THE LIGHT** which paints it, when the vapor that bears it is most dense, at such distance around the point a **CIRCLE OF FIRE** was whirling so rapidly that it would have surpassed that motion which most swiftly girds the world...

## CANTO XXXI

They had their faces all of **LIVING FLAME**, and their winds of gold, and the rest so white that no **SNOW** reaches that limit. When they descended into the flower, from bench to bench, they imparted of the peace and of the **ARDOR** which they acquired as they fanned their sides. Nor did the interposing of so great a flying plenitude, between what was above and the flower, impede the **SIGHT OR THE SPLENDOR**; for the divine **LIGHT PENETRATES THROUGH THE UNIVERSE**, according as it is worthy, so that naught can be an obstacle to it. This secure and joyous realm, thronged with ancient and with modern folk, had its look and love all on one mark.

O trinal **LIGHT, WHICH IN A SINGLE STAR, SCINTILLATING ON THEIR SIGHT**, dost so satisfy them, look down here upon our tempest!

## CANTO XXXIII

The **EYES** beloved and venerated by God, fixed on the speaker, showed to us how pleasing unto her are devout prayers. Then to the eternal **LIGHT** were they directed, to which it may not be believed that **EYE** so clear of any creature enters in.

And I, who to the end of all desires was approaching, even as I ought, ended within myself the **ARDOR** of my longing. Bernard made a sign to me, and smiled, that I should look upward; but I was already, of myself, such as he wished; for my **SIGHT**, becoming pure, was entering more and more through the **RADIANCE OF THE LOFTY LIGHT** which in itself is true.

Thenceforward my **VISION** was greater than our speech, which yields to such a **SIGHT**, and the memory yields to such excess. As is he who dreaming sees, and after the dream the passion remains imprinted, and the rest returns not to the mind, such am I; for my **VISION** almost wholly departs, which the sweetness that was born of it yet distils within my heart. Thus the **SNOW** is by the **SUN** unsealed; thus by the **WIND**, on the **LIGHT** leaves, was lost the saying of the sibyl.

O supreme **LIGHT**, that so high upliftest Thyself from mortal conceptions, re-lend to my mind a little of what thou didst appear, and make my tongue so powerful that it may be able to leave one single spark of Thy glory for the folk to come; for, by returning somewhat to my memory and by sounding a little in these verses, more of Thy victory shall be conceived.

I think that by the keenness of the **LIVING RAY** which I endured, I should have been **DAZED IF MY EYES** had been averted from it: and I remember that on this account I was the more hardly to sustain it till I conjoined my **GAZE** with the infinite Goodness.

O abundant Grace, whereby I presumed to **FIX MY LOOK THROUGH THE ETERNAL LIGHT TILL THAT THERE I CONSUMMATED THE SEEING!**

I saw that in its depth is enclosed, bound up with love in one volume, that which is dispersed in leaves through the universe; substance and accidents and their modes, fused together, as it were, in such wise, that of which I speak is one simple **LIGHT**. The universal form of this knot I believe that I saw, because, in saying this, I feel that I rejoice more spaciously. One single moment only is greater oblivion for me than five and twenty centuries to the emprise which made Neptune wonder at the shadow of Argo.

Thus my mind, wholly rapt, was **GAZING FIXED**, motionless, and intent, and ever with **GAZING GREW ENKINDLED**. In

that **LIGHT** one becomes such that it is impossible he should ever consent to turn himself from it for other **SIGHT**; because the Good which is the object of the will is all collected in it, and outside of it that is defective which is perfect there.

Now will my speech fall more short, even in respect to that which I remember, than that of an **INFANT WHO STILL BATHES HIS TONGUE AT THE BREAST**. Not because more than one simple semblance was in the **LIVING LIGHT WHEREIN I WAS GAZING**, which is always such as it was before; but through my **SIGHT**, which was growing strong in me as I looked, one sole appearance, as I myself changed, was altering itself to me.

Within the profound and clear subsistence of the lofty **LIGHT** appeared to me three circles of three colors and of one dimension; and one seemed **REFLECTED** by the other, **AS IRIS BY IRIS**, and the third seemed **FIRE** which from the one and from the other is equally breathed forth.

O how inadequate is speech, and how feeble toward my conception! and this toward what I saw is such that it suffices not to call it little.

O **LIGHT** eternal, that sole abidest in Thyself, sole understandest Thyself, and, by Thyself understood and understanding, lovest and smilest on Thyself! That circle, which appeared in thee generated as a **REFLECTED LIGHT**, being awhile surveyed by my **EYES**, seemed to me depicted with our effigy within itself, of its own very color; wherefore my **SIGHT** was wholly set upon it. As is the geometer who wholly applies himself to measure the circle, and finds not by thinking that principle of which he is in need, such was I at that new **SIGHT**. I wished to see how the image was conformed to the circle, and how it has its place therein; but my own wings were not for this, had it not been that my mind was smitten by a **FLASH** in which its wish came.

To the high fantasy here power failed; but now my desire and my will were revolved, like a wheel which is moved evenly, by the Love which moves the **SUN** and the other **STARS**.



*Petrarca.*

# PETRARCH'S COSMIC ARCHETYPES

You call poets liars and fools? No, they sing truth, even to despicable deaf ears. You call our labors childish? Ah, look at the noble utterances of the ancients! A certain divine power of spirit lodges in poets; they cover the beauty of things with a teasing veil, which only a sharp eye can pierce.

**PETRARCH**  
**Letter in defense of poetry**

The contribution that I have made to psychology is to have discovered that the archetypes of the collective unconscious that Jung related to the mythological and schizophrenic languages, **have an oral-sexual base**; that is to say: when a human being suffers an oral trauma in his infancy and later remembers it in his dreams, daytime inspirations or in his borderline or schizoid states, he or she usually projects it in poems or art works in the form of archetypes, just as if millions of people before him or her had suffered a similar oral-traumatic experience in the evolutionary history of man on planet earth.

This means that Freud's theory on the infantile oral-sexual traumas, matches perfectly with Jung's theory of the collective unconscious. As a result of this conciliation between Freudian and Jungian theory, thanks to my discovery of constants in poetry, a new thesis on humanity's proto-idiom is born (the word proto-language was coined by Leibnitz), which establishes the existence of humanity's erotized oral fears in the form of inherited archetypes, this means that it is not possible to have neotypes as Jung suggests in Chapter II, **A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of Trinity** of his book **Psychology and Religion: West and East**:

A symbol cannot be made to order as the rationalist would like to believe.

In his essay **On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry** of his book **The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature** (1922). Jung presents his psychic image of symbolism and the importance it would have the day its meaning were discovered:

**The primordial image**, or archetype, is a figure —be it a daemon, a human being, or a process— that constantly recurs in the course of history and appears wherever creative fantasy is freely expressed. Essentially, therefore, it is a mythological figure. When we examine these images more closely, we find that they give form to countless typical experiences of our ancestors. **They are, so to speak, the psychic residua of innumerable experiences of the same type.** They present a picture of psychic life in the average,

divided up and projected into the manifold figures of the mythological pantheon. But the mythological figures are themselves products of creative fantasy and still **have to be translated into conceptual language. Only the beginnings of such a language exist, but once the necessary concepts are created they could give us an abstract, scientific understanding of the unconscious processes** that lie at the roots of the primordial images.

In Foreword to **Custance: Wisdom, Madness and Folly** (1951), Cap. V, **The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease** of his book **The Symbolic Life**, Jung said:

I still remember vividly the great impression it made upon me when I succeeded for the first time in **deciphering the apparently complete nonsense of schizophrenic neologisms**, which must have been infinitely easier than deciphering hieroglyphs or cuneiform inscriptions. While these give us authentic insight into the intellectual culture of ancient man—an achievement certainly not to be underestimated—deciphering of the products of insanity and of other manifestations of the unconscious unlocks the meaning of far older and more fundamental psychic processes, and opens the way to a psychic underworld or hinterland which is the matrix not only of the mental products of the past but of consciousness itself.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), in **A short account of Psycho-analysis**, written in 1923 and published five years later, he referred to the phenomenon of poetic creativity (v. XIX, **The Ego and the Id and other Works**):

We have seen that one part of human mental activity is directed towards obtaining control over the real external world. Psycho-analysis now tells us further that another, particularly highly-prized, part of **creative mental work** serves for the fulfillment of wishes—for the substitutive satisfaction of the repressed wishes which, from the days of childhood, live in the spirit of each of us unsatisfied. Among these creations, whose connection with an incomprehensible unconscious was always suspected, are myths and works of imaginative writing and of art and **the researches of psycho-nalysts have in fact thrown a flood of light on the fields of mythology, the science of literature, and the psychology of artists**. It is enough to mention Otto Rank's work as an example. We have shown that myths and fairy tales can be interpreted like dreams, we have traced the convoluted paths that lead from the **urge of the unconscious wish to its realization in a work of art**, we have learnt to understand the emotional effect of a work of art on the observer, and in the case of the artist himself we have made clear his internal kinship with the neurotic as well as his distinction from him, and we have pointed out the connection between his innate disposition, his chance experiences and his achievements. The aesthetic appreciation of works of art and the elucidation of the artistic gift are, it is true, not among the tasks set to psycho-

analysis. **But it seems that psycho-analysis is in a position to speak the decisive word in all questions that touch upon the imaginative life of man.**

Let us analyze a mythological example in the dialogue where Isis informs her son Horus about souls, in part III of **The Sacred Book of Hermes Trimegistos**. Cosmic archetypes can be observed:

The souls were to be incarcerated in a body; some whined and lamented as if they were savage animals, that when enslaved, abandon the cherished solitude of the desert, and rebel and fight, refusing to follow their hunters. Some souls hissed like **SERPENTS**, others were shrieking and uttering words of pain, looking up and down indistinctly.

Good heavens! they said, Prince of our realm, ether, air, hands and almighty God's **BREATH**, and ye **SHINING STARS**. God's **STARING**, untiring **SUN AND MOON LIGHT**, our first family. How heart-wrenching and painful! To abandon this beautiful **LIGHT**, this sacred **SPHERE**, all the magnificence of the pole and the blessed land of the Gods, to be thrown abruptly in this miserable and vile dwelling! What crime have we deserved, miserable sinners, the sorrows that await us? Our destiny will be to provide for the necessities of a frail and feeble body. Our **EYES** shall hardly distinguish heaven, our first dwelling! We shall be gradually blinded. (It is **LIGHT** that allows one to see: the **EYES** can see nothing by themselves, says Orpheus). For this curse we have been deprived of direct vision, as we shall only be able to see

with the help of **LIGHT**; we have windows not **EYES**. How pitiful to feel the fraternal breath of the **WINDS**, unable to breath back to them, which will be in the narrow prision of the breast. But, Thou, who expells us, making us descend so low from so high, put an end to our anguish, Lord and Father, that have become so soon indiferent to your deeds. Set us a limit, we implore you to address the last words while we can still see the whole of the **LUMINOUS** world.

In the following writings of five great poets, we shall observe the occurrence of the archetypes: **STARS**, **EYES**, **LIGHT-FIRE**, triad that frequently comes together in single poems, and is related to oral-sexual traumas, in this instance an hallucinating experience as a result of having almost died from starvation and thirst, as we have already seen in Dante's poems:

Sappho from Lesbos, Greek poetess who flourished in VI B.C., in her poem **To Athis**:

Though in Sardis now,  
she thinks of us constantly  
and of the life we shared.  
She **SAW** you as a goddess  
and above all your dancing gave her deep joy.  
Now she **SHINES** among Lydian women like  
the rose-fingered **MOON**

rising after sundown, erasing all  
**STARS** around her, and pouring **LIGHT** equally  
across the salt sea  
and over densely flowered fields  
**LUCENT** under dew. Her **LIGHT** spreads  
on roses and tender thyme  
and the blooming honey-lotus.  
Often while she wanders she remembers you,  
gentle Athis,  
and desire eats away at her heart  
for us to come.

The Roman poet Catullus (87-54 A.C.) in book VII of **Carmenes**:

You ask Lesbia, how many of your kisses  
are enough or too many for me.  
How great amount of Libic sand  
lays in Cirene, rich in laserwort,  
between Jove's **ARDENT** oracle  
and old Bato's sacred tomb;  
Oh, how many **STARS** in the silent night  
**LOOK** furtively the loves of men,  
that you kiss so many kisses, is enough  
for crazy Catullus and too much,  
that not even count the curious could  
nor bewitch foul language.

Horace (65-8 B. C.), in **Epistle to Numicius**:

"Marvel at nothing"—That is perhaps the one and only thing, Numicius, that can make a man happy and keep him so. Yon **SUN**, the **STARS** and seasons that pass in fixed courses— some can gaze upon these with no strain of fear: what think you of the gifts of earth, or what of the sea's, which makes rich far distant Arabs and Indians—what of the shows, the plaudits and the favours of the friendly Roman—in what wise, with what feelings and **EYES** think you they should be viewed?

And he who fears their opposites "marvels" in much the same way as the man who desires: in either case 'tis the excitement that annoys, the moment some unexpected appearance startles either. Whether a man feel joy or grief, desire or fear, what matters it if, when he has seen aught better or worse than he expected, his **EYES** are fast riveted, and mind and body are benumbed? Let the wise man bear the name of madman, the just of unjust, should he pursue Virtue herself beyond due bounds.

Go now, gaze with rapture on silver plate, antique marble, bronzes and works of art; "marvel" at gems and Tyrian dyes; rejoice that a thousand **EYES** survey you as you speak; in your diligence get you to the Forum early, to your home late, lest Mutus reap more grain from the lands of his wife's dower, and (oh the shame, for he sprang from meaner stock!) lest you "marvel" at him rather than he at you. Time will bring into the **LIGHT** whatever is under the earth; it will bury deep and hide what now **SHINES BRIGHT**.

Propertius (47-15 B. C.), in his first **Elegy**:

Cynthia first with her **EYES** ensnared me, poor wreath, that had previously been untouched by **ARDENT** desire. It was then that Love made me lower my looks of stubborn pride and trod my head beneath its feet, until the villain taught me to shun decent girls and to lead the life of a ne'er-do-well. Poor me, for a whole year now this frenzy has not abated, while I am compelled to endure the frown of heaven.

It was, friend Tullus, by shrinking from no hardship that Milanion broke down the cruelty of harsh Atalanta. For now he wandered distraught in the glens of Parthenius, and now he would go to confront shaggy wild beasts. He was also dealt a **WOUND** from the club Hylaeus bore, and on the rocks of Arcady he moaned in pain.

(...)

In my case dull-witted Love thinks up no stratagems, and remembers not to tread, as formerly, his well-known paths. But you, whose practice it is to lure the **MOON** down from the sky and to propitiate spirits over the magic **FIRE** come, alter the heart of my mistress and see that she turn paler than this cheek of mine. Then should I credit you with the power of summoning ghosts and **STARS** with spells.

Else you, my friends, who too late call back the fallen, seek medicines for a heart that is sick. I shall bravely submit to the knife and **FIRE**, if only I were free to utter the promptings of anger.

Ovid (43 A.C.- 17 B.C.) in book II of **Metamorphoses**:

If this be fate's resolve, if I have deserved this doom, why, most mighty god, why are your **THUNDERBOLTS** slow to come? If I must perish by **FIRE**, let it be by yours: disaster is easier to bear when you are its author. I can scarcely open my lips to speak these words! –for the heat had gripped her throat– look, see my **SCORCHED** hair, and the ashes in my **EYES**, covering my face. Are these my rewards, is this the honour you bestow in return for my fertility and my services? Is it for this that I endure the **WOUNDS** inflicted by the mattock and the crooked plough, for this that I am given no rest throughout the whole year? Is this what I get for supplying the cattle with leaves and tender grazing, for providing grain for the human race, aye and incense for you gods?

Even if I have deserved destruction, what have the waves done, or what your brother? Why should the seas, which have fallen by lot to him, contract their waters and shrink away further from the sky? But if neither your brother's influence nor mine has any power to touch you, at least show pity for your own realm of heaven. Look around on either side: both poles are smoking hot; if the **FIRE** should undermine them, it is your own palace which will crash. See, Atlas himself is in difficulties, and can scarcely hold up the **GLOWING WORLD** on his shoulders. If earth and sea and the citadel of heaven perish, we shall be thrown into primeval chaos. Save anything that still survives from the **FLAMES**, and take thought for the safety of the **UNIVERSE**.

Now, let's look into the first humanist, who in his adoration for Laura, followed the steps of Catullus and Propertius.

Francesco Petrarch (1304-74) is one of the three great poets given to us by the Italian Renaissance. The other two are Dante and Michelangelo. His indifference toward his contemporaries was such that in his solitude he created an ideal world populated by the great figures of old to whom he wrote letters like the one to Homer that started like this:

I didn't have the fortune to learn Greek and the Latin translations the Romans made of your poems have been lost...

In **My secret**, he composed a platonic dialogue with Saint Augustine who acts like a superego that reproaches Petrarch his psychic masochism that was causing his depression:

You, in particular, are an absolute genius at working your own destruction.

And for the love that Petrarch suffered for Laura, he reproached him:

Think how during it all she behaved with lofty and ungrateful disdain.

Petrarch confirms Edmund Bergler's theories on the masochistic love of poets, be it platonic or homosexual.

In the proem to **My secret**, Petrarch declared that one night, he could not sleep, he saw his anima:

To my astonishment, a woman seemed to stand before me. I do not know how she came to be there, and I cannot describe her youthful **radiance** nor her beauty, which corresponds only imperfectly to anything in human experience; but I could tell from her carriage and appearance that she was a young woman. **I was stunned by the brilliant light which surrounded her and did not dare to meet the gaze which flashed from her eyes like the rays of the sun.**

Now we shall enter into the archetypal universe of this great poet:

## HELL

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### XLI

When from its own dwelling the tree departs that **PHOEBUS** loved in human form, **VULCAN** pants and sweats at his work in order to renew the **HARSH ARROWS** for Jove,

who now thunders, now snows, now rains, without respecting Caesar more than Janus; earth weeps, and the **SUN** stays far from us, for he sees his dear friend elsewhere.

Then Saturn and Mars regain boldness, cruel **PLANETS**, and armed Orion shatters the unfortunate mariners' tillers and shrouds.

Aeolus, angry, makes Neptune and Juno feel, and us, how the lovely face awaited by the angels disappears.

### LXXI

Because life is short and my wit is afraid of the high undertaking, in neither do I have much confidence; but I hope my pain will be understood there where I desire it to be and where it must be, my pain which in silence I cry out.

Lovely **EYES** where Love makes his nest, to you I turn my weak style, sluggish in itself, but the great pleasure spurs it; and he who speaks of you receives from the subject a gentle habit, which, with amorous wings lifting him, parts him from every low thought;



Goya. *Las resueltas*. (*Desastres de la guerra*).

raised up by them, I come now to say things that I have long carried hidden in my heart.

Not that I do not see how much my praise injures you; but I cannot resist the great desire that is in me since I saw what no thought can equal, let alone speech, mine or others'.

Cause of my sweet bitter state, I know well no other but you understands me. When in your burning **RAYS** I become snow, your noble disdain is perhaps offended by my unworthines.

Oh, if that fear did not temper the **BURNING THAT LIGHTS ME**, happy death! for in their presence I prefer to die rather than live without them.

Thus that I am not undone, so frail an object to so powerful a **FIRE**, it is not my own worth that rescues me; but fear, a little, which **FREEZES MY YEARNING BLOOD** through my veins, makes more solid my heart, that it may **FLAME** the longer.

O hills, O valleys, O rivers, O woods, O fields, O witnesses of my heavy life, how many times have you heard me call death! Ah, dolorous fate! staying destroys me and fleeing does not help me. But if a greater fear did not rein me in, a short and speedy way would bring to an end this bitter and hard suffering; and the fault is hers who does not care.

Sorrow, why do you lead me out of the way to say what I do not wish to say? Suffer me to go where pleasure impels me. For I do not complain of you, **EYES** serene beyond the mortal course, nor of him who binds me in such a knot.

You see well how many colors Love often paints in my face, and you can think what he does to me within, there were night and day he stands over me with the power he has gathered from you, happy and carefree **LIGHTS**—except that to see yourselves is denied you, but whenever you turn to me you know in another what you are.

## LXXIII

Since through my destiny that **FLAMING** desire forces me to speak which has forced me to sight always, you, O Love, who arouse me to it, be my guide, and show me the way, and tune my rhymes to my desire;

but not so that my heart is untuned with too much sweetness, as I fear from what I feel where no **EYE** reaches; for speaking **INFLAMES ME AND PRICKS ME ON**, nor through my wit (whence I fear and tremble), as sometimes occurs, is the great **FIRE** of my mind lessened; rather I **MELT** in the sound of words, as if I were a man of **ICE** in the **SUN**.

At the beginning I thought to find, through speech, for my **BURNING** desire some brief repose and some truce. This hope gave me the daring to speak of what I feel; now it abandons me in my need and dissolves.

But still I must follow the high undertaking, continuing my amorous notes, so powerful is the will that carries me away; and Reason is dead, who held the reins, and cannot withstand it. At least let Love show me what to say in such a way that if it ever strikes the ear of my sweet enemy it may make her the friend, not of me, but of pity.

I say: if in that age when spirits were so desirous of true honor the industry of certain men wound itself through various countries, passing mountains and seas and seeking out honored things, and plucked of them the loveliest flower; since God and Nature and Love wished to place completely every virtue in those lovely **LIGHTS** on account of which I live in joy, I need not change countries and pass over this and the other shore: to them I always come back as to the fount of all my health; and

when I run desirous to death, only with their sight do I help my state.

## XC

Her golden hair was loosed to the BREEZE, which turned it in a thousand sweet knots, and the lovely **LIGHT BURNED** without measure in her **EYES**, which are now so stingy of it;

and it seemed to me (I know not whether truly or falsely) her face took on the color of pity: I, who had the tinder of love in my **BREAST**, what wonder is it if I suddenly **CAUGHT FIRE**?

Her walk was not that of a mortal thing but of some angelic form, and her words sounded different from a merely human voice:

a celestial spirit, a **LIVING SUN** was what I saw, and if she were not such now, a **WOUND** is not healed by the loosening of the bow.

## C

That window where one **SUN** can be seen whenever it pleases her and the other at noon, and that window where the cold air rattles in the short days when Boreas strikes it,

and the stone where, when the days are long, my lady sits thoughtful and converses alone with herself, with however many

places her lovely body ever covered with its shadow or marked  
with a foot,

and the cruel pass where Love struck me, and the new season that  
year by year renews on that day my ancient WOUNDS,  
and the face and the words that are fixed deep in my heart –these  
make my eyes desire to weep.

## CXLII

To the sweet shade of those beautiful leaves  
I ran, fleeing a pitiless **LIGHT**  
that was **BURNING** down upon me from the third heaven;  
and already the SNOW was disappearing from the hills  
thanks to the loving BREEZE that renews the season,  
and through the meadows the grass bloomed and the branches.

The world never saw such graceful branches  
nor did the WIND ever move such green leaves  
as showed themselves to me in that first season;  
so that, fearing the **BURNING LIGHT**.  
I chose for my refuge no shade of hills  
but that of the tree most favored in Heaven.

A laurel defended me then from the heavens;  
wherefore often, desirous of its lovely branches,  
since then I have gone through woods and across hills:  
nor have I ever again found trunk or leaves

so honored by the supernal **LIGHT**  
that they did not change their quality according to the season.

Therefore, more and more firm from season to season,  
following where I heard myself called from Heaven  
and guided by a mild and clear **LIGHT**,  
I have come back always devoted to the first branches,  
both when on earth are scattered their leaves  
and when the **SUN** turns green the hills.

Woods, rocks, fields, rivers, and hills  
—all that is made— are vanquished and changed by time;  
wherefore I ask pardon of these leaves  
if, the heavens turning many years,  
I have made ready to flee the enlimed branches  
as soon as I began to **SEE THE LIGHT**.

So pleasing to me at first was that **SWEET LIGHT**  
that joyfully I traversed great hills  
in order to approach the beloved branches.  
Now the shortness of life and the place and the season  
show me another pathway to go to Heaven  
and bear fruit, not merely flowers and leaves.

Another love, other leaves, and another **LIGHT**,  
another climbing to Heaven by other hills  
I seek (for it is indeed time), and another branches.

## CXLVI

O noble spirit beauteous and warm with **BURNING** virtue, for whom I line so many pages, O sole unblemished dwelling place of chastity, tower founded secure on deep worth,

O **FLAME**, O roses scattered on a sweet drift of living snow, in which I mirror and polish myself, O pleasure for which I lift my wings toward your lovely face, which **SHINES BRIGHTER THAN ALL THE SUN WARMS**:

with your name, if my rhymes were understood so far away, I would fill Thule and Bactria, the Don and the Nile, Atlas, Olympus, and Calpe.

Since I cannot bear it to all four parts of the world, the lovely country shall hear it that the Apennines divide and the sea and the Alps surround.

## CXLVII

When my desire, which turns and rules me with two **BURNING SPURS** and a **HARD BIT**, transgresses from time to time our usual law, in order to make my spirits partly contented,

he finds one who on my brow reads the fear and boldness of my deepest heart; and he sees love, who corrects his interprise, **LIGHTNING IN HER PIERCING ANGRY EYES**.

Therefore, like one who fears the blow of angry Jove, he draws back, for great fear reins in great desire;

but **COOLING FIRES** and trembling hopes in my soul, which is transparent as glass, sometimes make clear again her sweet countenance.

## CLXII

Happy and fortunate flowers and well-born grass, whereon my lady is wont to walk in thought, shew that listen to her sweet words and keep some print of her lovely foot,

slender trees and green unripe leaves, delicate pale violets, shady woods where strikes the **SUN** who makes you with her **RAYS** tall and proud,

O lovely countryside, O pure river that bathes her lovely face and **BRIGHT EYES** and take your nature from that living **LIGHT**:

how much do I envy you her virtuous and dear gestures! by now there cannot be among you even one stone that is not learning to **BURN WITH MY FLAME**.

## CXCV

From day to day my face and hair are changing, but not for that do I give up the sweetly baited hook or unhand the green enlimed branches of the tree that regards neither **SUN** nor **FROST**.

The sea will be without water and the sky without **STARS** when I no longer fear and desire her lovely shadow and no longer hate and love the deep **WOUND** of love that I hide so ill.

I do not hope ever to have rest from my labors, until I am disboned and dismuscled and disflshed or my enemy feels pity for me.

Every impossible thing will happen before another than she or death heals the **WOUND** that Love made in my heart with her lovely **EYES**.

### **CXCVIII**

The soft **BREEZE** spreads and waves in the **SUN** the gold that Love spins and weaves with his own hands; there with her lovely **EYES** and with those very locks he binds my weary heart and winnows my light spirits.

I have no marrow in my bones or **BLOOD** in my tissue that I do not feel trembling if I even approach where she is, who often weighs and balances in a frail scale my death and life together,

when I see those **LIGHTS BURN FROM WHICH I TAKE FIRE** and those knots **SHINE** which have bound me, now on the right shoulder, now on the left.

I cannot tell it, for I cannot comprehend it, my intellect is overcome by **TWO SUCH LIGHTS** and oppressed and wearied by so much sweetness!

## CCXX

Where and from what mine did Love take the gold to make two blond tresses? From what bush did he pluck the rose and in what meadow the fresh and tender frost, to give them pulse and breath?

Where the pearls with which he breaks and reins in sweet words, chaste and strange? Where the beauties, so many and so divine, of that forehead **BRIGHTER** than the heavens?

From what angels and from what **SPHERE** did he send that heavenly singing which so melts me that by now little remains to melt?

From what **SUN WAS BORN THE HIGH KINDLY LIGHT OF THOSE LOVELY EYES** from which I receive war and peace, that **BURN MY HEART IN ICE** and **FIRE**?

## CCXXI

What destiny of mine, what compulsion, or what deception brings me unarmed back to the field where I am always conquered? and if I escape from it, I shall marvel; if I die, the loss is mine.

Not loss at all, but gain: so sweet in my heart are the **SPARKS AND THE BRIGHT LIGHTNING THAT DAZZLE** and torment it, and in which I take **FIRE** and am already **BURNING** for the twentieth year.

I hear the messenger of Death when I see her lovely **EYES APPEAR AND LIGHTEN** from afar; then, if it happens that drawing near she turns them toward me,

Love with so much sweetness both **WOUNDS** me and anoints my **WOUND** that I cannot recapture it in thought, let alone tell it: for neither my wit nor my tongue can equal the truth.

### **CCXLI**

That high lord before whom one cannot hide or flee or make any defense had **KINDLED** my mind to sweet pleasure with a **BURNING ARROW OF LOVE**;

and, although the first blow was bitter and mortal in itself, to advance his undertaking he took a **DART** of pity; and from both sides he **PIERCES** and assails my heart.

One **WOUND BURNS AND POURS FORTH SMOKE AND FLAME**; the other, tears, which sorrow distills through my **EYES** on account of your suffering state.

Nor in spite of those **TWO FOUNTAINS** does any **SPARK DECREASE OF THE FIRE THAT INFLAMES ME**; rather my pity increases my desire.

### XXX

A youthful lady under a green laurel  
I saw, whiter and colder than snow  
not touched by **THE SUN** many and many years,  
and her speech and her lovely face and her locks  
pleased me so that I have her before my **EYES**  
and shall always have wherever I am, on slope or shore.

Then my thoughts will have come to shore  
when green leaves are not to be found on a laurel;  
when I have a quiet heart and dry **EYES**  
we shall see **THE FIRE FREEZE, AND BURNING SNOW;**

I have not so many hairs in these locks  
as I would be willing, in order to see that day, to wait years.

But because time flies and the years flee  
and one arrives quickly at death  
either with dark or with white locks,  
I shall follow the shadow of that sweet laurel  
in the most **ARDENT SUN** or through the **SNOW**,  
until the last day closes these **EYES**.

There never have been seen such lovely **EYES**,  
either in our age or in the first years;  
they melt me as the **SUN** does the **SNOW**:  
whence there comes forth a river of tears  
that Love leads to the foot of the harsh laurel  
that has branches of **DIAMOND** and golden locks.

I fear I shall change my face and my locks  
before she with true pity will show me her **EYES**,  
my idol carved in living laurel;  
for, if I do not err, today it is seven years  
that I go sighing from shore to shore  
night and day, in **HEAT** and in **SNOW**.

Inwardly **FIRE**, though outwardly white **SNOW**,  
alone with these thoughts, with changed locks,  
always weeping I shall go along every shore,  
to make pity perhaps come into the **EYES**  
of someone who will be born a thousand years from now  
—if a well-tended laurel can live so long.

Gold and topaz in the **SUN** above the **SNOW**  
are vanquished by the golden locks next to those **EYES**  
that lead my years so quickly to shore.

## PURGATORY

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### LXX

Yearning thoughts, which thus step by step have led me to such high speech: you see that my lady has a heart of such **HARD STONE** that I cannot by myself pass within it. She does not deign to look so low as to care about our words; for the heavens do not wish it, and resisting them I am already weary; therefore, as in my heart I become hard and bitter: "So in my speech I wish to be harsh."

What am I saying? or where am I? and who deceives me but myself and my excessive desire? Nay, if I run through the sky from **SPHERE TO SPHERE**, no **PLANET** condemns me to weeping. **IF A MORTAL VEIL DULLS MY SIGHT**, what fault is it of the **STARS** or of beautiful things? With me dwells one who night and day troubles me, since she made me go heavy with the pleasure of: "The **SWEET SIGHT** of her and her lovely soft glance."

All things with which the world is beauteous came forth good from the hand of the eternal Workman: but I, who do not discern so far within, **AM DAZZLED BY THE BEAUTY** that I see about me, and if I ever return to the true **SPLENDOR**, my **EYE** cannot stay still, it is so weakened by its very own fault, and not by that day when I turned toward her angelic beauty: "In the sweet time of my first age."



*¿Dónde va mamá? que por yá que, sacan a pase los niños; bolitas.*

¿Dónde va mamá? (Caprichos)

## CVII

I do not see where I can escape anymore; those lovely **EYES** make such long war on me that I fear, alas, the excessive torment will destroy my heart, which never knows a truce.

I wish I could flee, but those love-inspiring **RAYS**, which are in my mind night and day, **SHINE** so that at the fifteenth year they **DAZZLE ME** much more than on the first day;

and their likenesses are scattered all around, so that I cannot turn without seeing either that **LIGHT** or a similar one lit from it.

From only one laurel tree such a wood grows green that my adversary, with marvelous art, leads me wherever her wishes, desirous and wandering among the branches.

## CLI

Never did weary pilot flee to port from the black tempestuous wave of the sea, as I flee from my dark and turbid care to where my great desire spurs and inclines me;

nor did any divine **LIGHT EVER VANQUISH MORTAL SIGHT, AS DOES MINE THAT HIGH RAY** from the lovely sweet mild white and black where Love gilds and sharpens his **ARROWS**.

**NOT AT ALL BLIND I SEE HIM** but bearing a quiver, naked except where shame veils him; a boy with wings, not depicted but alive.

There he shows me what he hides from many: for bit by bit within her lovely **EYES** I read whatever I say of love and whatever I write.

## CCXII

Blessed in sleep and satisfied to languish, to embrace shadows, and to pursue the summer breeze, I swim through a sea that has no floor or shore, I plow the waves and found my house on sand and write on the wind;

and **I GAZE YEARNING AT THE SUN** so that he has already **PUT OUT WITH HIS BRIGHTNESS MY POWER OF SIGHT** and I pursue a wandering, fleeing doe with a lame, sick, slow ox.

**BLIND** and weary to everthing except my harm, which I trembling seek day and night, I call only Love and my Lady and Death;

thus for twenty years –heavy, long labor– I have gained only tears and sighs and sorrow: under such a star I took the bait and the hook!

## CCCXXXIX

I knew (so much did Heaven open my **EYES**, so much did eagerness and Love raise up my wings) things new and full of grace, but mortal, which all the **STARS** showered on one subject.

Those many other high celestial and immortal forms, so strange and so wondrous, because they were not accommodated to my intellect, my weak **SIGHT** could not endure.

Thus whatever I spoke or wrote about her, who now before God returns me prayers in exchange for praises, was a little drop from infinite depths

for one's style does not extend beyond one's wit, and though one **HAS HIS EYES FIXED ON THE SUN, THE BRIGHTER IT IS THE LESS HE SEES.**

## CCCLXIII

Death has extinguished **THE SUN THAT USED TO DAZZLE ME**, and my **EYES THOUGH WHOLE AND SOUND ARE IN DARKNESS**; she is dust from whom I took chills and heat; my laurels are faded, are oaks and elms,

in which I see my gain but am still pained. There is no one to make my thoughts fearful and hold, nor to freeze and **SCORCH** them, no one to fill them with hope and overflow them with sorrow.

Out of the hands of him who PIERCES and heals, who once made  
of me such a long torture, I find myself in bitter and sweet liberty;

and to the Lord whom I adore and whom I thank, who governs and  
sustains the heavens with His brow, I return, weary of life, not  
merely satiated.

## PARADISE

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### III

It was the day when the **SUN'S RAYS** turned pale with grief for his Maker when I was taken, and I did not defend myself against it, for your lovely **EYES** Lady, bound me.

It did not seem to me a time for being on guard against Love's blows; therefore I went confident and without fear, and so my misfortunes began in the midst of the universal woe.

Love found me altogether disarmed, and the way open through my **EYES** to my heart, my **EYES** which are now the portal and passageway of tears.

Therefore, as it seems to me, it got him no honor to **STRIKE ME WITH AN ARROW** in that state, and not even to show his bow to you, who were armed.

### IX

When the **PLANET** that marks off the hours returns to dwell with the bull, from his **FLAMING HORNS** falls virtue which clothes the world in fresh color.

And not only that which opens to us without, the riverbanks and the hills, he adorns with flowers, but within, where day never dawns, he makes the earthly moisture pregnant of himself,



Goya. *Murió la verdad. (Desastres de la guerra).*

that it may yield such fruit as this and others like it. Thus she who among ladies is a **SUN**, moving the **RAYS** of her lovely **EYES**, in me

creates thoughts, acts, and words of love; but however she governs or turns them, spring for me still never comes.

## **XI**

Lady, I have never seen you put aside your veil for **SUN** or for shadows since you knew the great desire in me that lightens my heart of all other wishes.

While I carried my lovely thoughts hidden (with desire they are bringing death into my heart) I saw you adorn your face with pity; but since Love has made you aware of me, your blond hair has been veiled and your lovely **GAZE** kept to itself.

What I most desired in you has been taken from me; thus the veil controls me and to cause my death shades the sweet **LIGHT** of your lovely **EYES** in both warm and icy weather.

## **XVII**

Bitter tears rain from my face with an anguished wind of sighs, when it happens that I turn my **EYES** to you for whom alone I am divided from the world.

It is true that your sweet mild smile quiets my **ARDENT** desires  
and withdraws me from the **FIRE** of my torments, as long as I am  
intent and fixed on watching you,

but my spirits turn cold later, for at parting I see my fated **STARS**  
–your **EYES**– turn away from me their gentle motions.

Finally, let loose with the key of love, my soul leaves my heart to  
follow you; and with much care does it uproot itself thence.

## **XIX**

There are animals in the world of **SIGHT** so audacious that it  
**WITHSTANDS EVEN THE SUN**; others, because the great  
**LIGHT** harms them, do not come out except toward evening;

and others, with their mad desire that hopes perhaps to enjoy the  
**FIRE** because it **SHINES**, experience the other power, the one  
that **BURNS**; alas, and my place is in this last band.

For I am not strong enough to **LOOK ON THE LIGHT** of this  
lady, and I do not know how to make a shield of shadowy places  
and late hours;

therefore my destiny leads me, with tearful and weak **EYES**, to see  
her: and I know well I am pursuing what **BURNS ME**.

## XXII

For whatever animals dwell on earth,  
except the few that hate the **SUN**,  
the time to labor is while it is day;  
but when the sky **LIGHTS UP ITS STARS**  
some return home and some make a nest in the wood  
to have rest at least until the dawn.

And I –from when the lovely dawn begins  
to scatter the shadows from about the earth,  
awakening the animals in every wood–  
I never have any truce from sighs with the **SUN**;  
and then when I see the **STARS FLAMING**  
I go weeping and longing for the day.

When the evening drives away the bright day,  
and our darkness makes elsewhere a dawn,  
I **GAZE** full of care at the cruel **STARS**  
that have made me out of sensitive earth;  
and I curse the day on which I **SAW THE SUN**,  
for it makes me seem a man raised in the woods.

I do not believe that there ever grazed in any wood  
so cruel a beast, either by night or by day,  
as she whom a weep for in the shadow and in the **SUN**,  
and I am not slowed by the first sleep or the dawn,  
for although I am a mortal body of earth  
my firm desire comes from the **STARS**.

Before I return to you, **BRIGHT STARS**,  
or fall down into the amorous wood  
leaving my body which will be powdered earth,  
might I see pity in her, for in but one day  
it could restore many years, and before the dawn  
enrich me from the setting of the **SUN**.

Might I be with her from when the **SUN** departs  
and no other **SEE US BUT THE STARS**,  
just one night, and let the dawn never come!  
and let her not be transformed into a green wood  
to escape from my arms, as the day  
when Apollo pursued her down here on earth!

But I will be under the earth in dried wood,  
and the day will be lit by the tiny **STARS**,  
before the **SUN** arrives at so sweet a dawn.

## **XXIV**

If the honored branch that protects one from the anger of heaven  
when great Jove thunders had not refused me the crown that  
decorates those who write poetry,

I would be a friend to these goddesses of yours, whom the world so  
basely abandons; but that injury drives me far away from the  
inventor of the first olives,

for the sand of Ethiopia does not boil under the **HOTTEST SUN**  
as much as I **BURN** at losing a thing of my own so dearly loved.

Seek therefore a more tranquil fountain, for mine suffers a dearth  
of all moisture, except for that which weeping I let fall.

## XXIX

Green garments, crimson, black, or purple, did never lady wear,  
nor ever twisted her hair in a blond braid, as beautiful as this one  
who deprives me of choice and draws me with her from the path  
of freedom so that I bear no lesser yoke.

And if at times my soul arms itself to complain –for it lacks all  
counsel when its torments draws it into doubt– the very **SIGHT** of  
her calls it back from its unbridled will, for from my heart she  
erases every delirious undertaking and the **SIGHT** of her makes  
every disdain sweet.

For all that I have ever suffered for love and am still to suffer until  
she who **WOUNDED** my heart makes him whole again, that rebel  
against mercy who still makes him yearn, vengeance shall be  
taken; as long as pride and anger do not close and lock against  
humility the lovely way that leads to her.

But the hour and the day when I opened my **EYES** on that lovely  
black and white which drove me out from the place where Love  
ran in –they were the new root of this life which pains me, and she  
in whom our age marvels at itself; and whoever sees her without  
being awed is made of lead or wood.

No tear, therefore, that I may pour from my **EYES** for those  
**ARROWS** which in my left side make **BLOODY** him who first

felt them— no tear turns me from my desire, for the sentence falls on the right place; because of him my soul sighs, and it is just that he wash her WOUNDS.

My thoughts have become alien to me: one driven like me once turned the beloved sword upon herself; nor do I beg her to set me free, for all other paths to Heaven are less straight, and certainly one cannot aspire to the glorious realm in any stronger ship.

Kindly **STARS** that accompanied the fortunate womb when its lovely fruit came down here into the world! for she is a **STAR ON EARTH** and as the laurel its leaf so she preserves the worth of chastity. No **LIGHTNING** ever comes, or unworthy **WIND**, to bend her down!

I know well that to enclose her praises in verse would vanquish whoever put the worthiest hand to writing: what cell of memory is there that can contain all the virtue, all the beauty that one sees who looks in her **EYES**, sign of all worth, sweet key of my heart?

However much the **SUN** goes round, love has no dearer pledge, Lady, than you.

### **XXXI**

This noble soul that departs, called before its time to the other life, if up there it is prized as much as it should be, will hold of heaven the most blessed part;

if it dwells between the third **LIGHT** and Mars, the appearance of the **SUN** will be dimmed, since to **GAZE** on this soul's infinite beauty the worthy souls will all be scattered around it;

if it should settle under the fourth nest, each of the three would be less beautiful and it alone would have the fame and the cry;

in the fifth circle it would not dwell; but if it flies higher, I am sure that Jove and every other **STAR** will be vanquished.

### **XXXIII**

Already **THE STAR OF LOVE WAS FLAMING** in the east, and the other that makes Juno jealous wheeled its **RAYS** in the North, **BRIGHT** and lovely;

the frail old woman, ungirt and barefoot, had already arisen to spin and had awakened the **COALS**; and that time was **PIERCING** lovers which by custom calls them to lament;

when my hope, already reduced to the quick, reached my heart, not by the usual way, for sleep kept that closed and pain kept it wet,

how changed, alas, from what she was before!— and she seemed to say: "Why does your worth languish? Seeing these **EYES** is not yet taken from you."

## XLVIII

If **FIRE WAS NEVER PUT OUT BY FIRE**, nor river ever made dry by rain, but always like is made to grow by like, and sometimes opposite has kindled opposite;

Love, you who govern our thoughts, on whom my one soul in two bodies depends, why in my soul, in unaccustomed guise, do you make desire grow less through desiring much?

Perhaps, as the Nile, falling from on high, with its great noise deafens those who dwell nearby, and as **THE SUN DAZZLES HIM WHO LOOKS ON IT FIXEDLY**,

thus desire, which keeps no proportion with itself, is lost in an objet too immense, and through too much spurring flight is slowed.

## L

At the time when the swift heaven inclines toward the West and our day flies to people who perhaps await it, beyond, seeing herself alone in a distant country the tired old woman redoubles her pilgrim steps and hastens more and more;

and then though alone at the end of her day she is sometimes consoled by some brief repose where she forgets the labor and the pain of the way she has passed through. But, alas, whatever pain the day brings me grows when the eternal **LIGHT** moves to depart from us.

When the **SUN** turns his **FLAMING** wheels to give place to night and the shadows descend more widely from the highest mountains,

the poor hoer takes up his tools and with words and mountain tunes lightens his breast of all heaviness;

and then he burdens his table with poor food, similar to those acorns which all praise and avoid. But let who will be gay from time to time: for I have never had, I shall not say a happy, but a restful hour, for all the turning of sky or **PLANET**.

When the shepherd **SEES THE RAYS OF THE GREAT PLANET** falling toward the nest where it dwells, and the eastern countryside becoming dark, he rises to his feet and, leaving the grass and the fountains and the beech trees, with his accustomed staff he gently moves his flock...

## LXXII

My noble Lady, I see in the moving of your **EYES A SWEET LIGHT** that shows me the way that leads to Heaven; and through long habit, there within where with Love I sit, almost visibly your heart **SHINES** through.

This is the sight that induces me to do well and guides me toward the glorious goal; this alone separates me from the throng. Nor could any human tongue relate what the two divine **LIGHTS** make me feel, both when winter scatters frosts and when, later, the year becomes young again, as it was at the time of my first yearning.

I think: if up there, whence the eternal Mover of the **STARS** deigned to show forth this work on earth, the other works are as beautiful, let the prison open in which I am closed and which locks me from the way to such a life.

## CX

Since Love was pursuing me to my accustomed place, I drawn up like one who expects war and who prepares and closes the passes round about, was armed with my old thoughts.

I turned and saw a shadow on the ground to one side, cast by the **SUN**, and I recognized by it her who, if my judgment does not err, was more worthy of immortal state.

I said within my heart: "Why are you afraid?" but the thought had no sooner come within than the **RAYS** that melt me were present;

as with **LIGHTNING** the thunder comes at the same instant, so I was overtaken by those beautiful **SHINING EYES** together with a sweet greeting.

## CXV

Between two lovers I saw a virtuous and haughty lady, and that lord with her who rules over men and gods; and on one side was the **SUN**, I on the other.

When she saw that she was excluded from the **SPHERE** of her more handsome friend, she turned all happy to my **EYES**, and I may well wish that she never be more fierce toward me.

Suddenly into joy was turned the jealousy that at the first sight of so high an adversary had been born in my heart;

his face, tearful and sad, a little cloud covered over, it so displeased him to be vanquished.

## CXIX

A lady much more beautiful than the **SUN**, more **BRIGHT** and of equal age, with famous beauty drew me to her ranks when I was still unripe.

She in my thoughts, my works, and my words, since she is one of the things that are rare in the world, she along a thousand roads always guided me, gaily and proudly.

Only for her I turned back from what I was; after I endured her **EYES** from close by, for her love I put myself early to difficult undertaking; so that if I reach the port I desire, I hope through her to live a long time, when people will suppose I am dead.

This my lady led me for many years **BURNING** full of youthful longing, as I now understand, only to have of me more certain proof.

Showing me only her shadow or her veil or her garment, but hiding her face; and I, alas, thinking I saw a great deal, passed all my young age

happily, and the memory pleases me, now that I see further into her. I say that just recently, such as I had never before seen her, she showed herself to me; whence was born ice in my heart, and it is still there and shall be always until I am in her arms.

But my fear and chill did not prevent me from giving so much daring to my heart that I threw at her feet, to draw more sweetness from her **EYES**;

and she, who had taken the veil from my **EYES**, said to me:  
"Friend, now see how beautiful I am, and ask for whatever befits  
your years."

## CXXVII

When sometimes I see from afar new **SNOW** on the hill struck by  
the **SUN**, love controls me as the **SUN** does **SNOW**, as I think of  
that face of more than human beauty, which from afar can make  
my **EYES** wet but from close by **DAZZLES** them and vanquishes  
my heart,

where between the white and the gold there is always shown what  
no mortal **EYE** ever saw, except my own; and of the hot desire  
that, when she sighing smiles, **INFLAMES** me so that my  
forgetfulness prizes nothing but becomes eternal: nor does summer  
change it or winter put it out.

I never saw after nocturnal rain the wandering **STARS** going  
through the clear air and **FLAMING** between the dew and the  
frost, that I did not have before me her lovely **EYES** where leans  
my weary life, such as I saw them in the shadow of a lovely veil;  
and as the sky **SHONE** with their beauty that day so I see them  
still **SPARKLE**, bathed in tears, whence I ever **BURN**. If I see the  
**SUN** rise, I sense the approach of the **LIGHT** that enamors me; if  
setting at evening, I seem to see her when she departs, leaving all  
in darkness behind her.

If my **EYES** ever saw white with crimson roses in a vase of gold,  
just then gathered by virgin hands, they thought they saw the face

of her who excels all other wonders with the three excellences gathered in her:

the blond tresses loosened on her neck, where every milk loses by comparison, and the cheeks adorned with a **SWEET FIRE**. If the breeze but a little moves the white and yellow flowers in the meadows, the place comes back to mind and the first day when I saw freed to the air the golden hair from which I so quickly caught **FIRE**.

Perhaps I thought I could count the **STARS** one by one and enclose the sea in a little glass when the strange idea came to me to tell in so few pages in how many places the flower of all beauties, remaining in herself, has scattered her **LIGHT** in order that I may never depart from her; nor shall I, and if at times I flee, in Heaven and earth she has circumscribed my steps, for she is always present to my weary **EYES**, so that I am all consumed; and thus she stays with me, for I never see another, nor do I wish to, nor in my sighs do I call the name of another.

## CXXXV

Whatever most strange and new thing ever was in whatever wondrous clime, if judged aright it most resembles me: to such a pass have I come, Love. There whence the day comes forth flies a bird that alone, without consort, after voluntary death, is reborn and all renews itself to life.

Thus my desire is unique and thus at the summit of its high thoughts it turns to the **SUN**, and thus it is consumed and thus returns to its former state; it **BURNS** and dies and takes again its sinews and lives on, vying with the phoenix.

There is a stone out there on the Indian Sea so bold that by nature it draws iron to itself and steals it from the wood, so that ships founder. This prove I among the waves of bitter weeping, for that lovely rock has with its hard pride brought my life to where it must founder.

thus a **STONE** has robbed my soul (stealing my heart which once was a hard thing and held me, who now am divided and scattered), a **STONE** more greedy to draw flesh than iron. Oh my cruel chance, being in the flesh I see myself drawn to shore by a living sweet magnet!

In the farthest west there is a wild creature more quiet and gentle than anything else, but weeping and sorrow and death she carries within her **EYES** most wary must be whatever sight turns toward her: as long as it does not meet her **EYES** it can see all the rest safely.

## CXLI

As sometimes in the summertime the simple butterfly, seeking the **LIGHT**, will in its desire fly into someone's **EYES** whereby it dies and the other is pained:

so always I run to my fated **SUN**, her **EYES** whence such sweetness comes to me, for Love cares nothing for the rein of reason, and discernment is vanquished by desire.

And I see well how much they shun me, and I know truly that I shall die of it, for my strength cannot hold out against the suffering;

but so sweetly does Love **DAZZLE** me that I bewail another's pain and not my own harm, and my soul, blind, consents to her own death.

#### CLIV

The **STARS** and the heavens and the elements vied with all their arts and put every ultimate care into that **LIVING LIGHT, WHERE NATURE IS MIRRORED AND THE SUN**, which finds its equal nowhere else.

The work is so high, so lovely and new, that a mortal glance cannot look at it fixedly, Love in her beautiful **EYES** so seems to rain down sweetness and grace without measure.

The air struck by their **RAYS BURNS** with chastity and becomes such that it far surpasses our speech and thought;

no low desire is felt there, but desire of honor, of virtue. Now when was base desire ever extinguished by highest beauty?

#### CLVI

I **SAW** on earth angelic qualities and heavenly beauties unique in the world, so that the memory pleases and pains me, for whatever I look on seems dreams, shadows, and smoke.

And I **SAW THOSE TWO BEAUTIFUL LIGHTS** weeping that have a thousand times made the **SUN** envious; and I heard amid sighs words that would make mountains move and rivers stand still.

Love, wisdom, worth, piety, and sorrow made, weeping, a sweeter music than any other to be heard in the world;

and the heavens were so intent upon the harmony that no leaf on any branch was seen to move, so much sweetness filled the air and the wind.

#### CLVIII

Wherever I rest or turn my weary **EYES** to quiet the yearning that impels them, I find one who portrays a beautiful lady there, to make my desires spring always green.

She seems with graceful sorrow to breathe deep pity that wrings a noble heart; beyond sight, my ears seem to hear her speak aloud her eloquent words and holy sighs.

Love and truth were with me to say that those beauties I saw were unique in the world, never seen before under the **STARS**;

nor were such devoted and sweet words ever heard before, nor did the **SUN** ever see such lovely tears come forth from such beautiful **EYES**.

## CLX

Love and I, as full of wonder as anyone who ever saw some incredible thing, **GAZE** on her when she speaks or laughs, who resembles herself and no other.

From the lovely clear sky of her tranquil brow my **TWO FAITHFUL STARS SO SPARKLE** that there is no other **LIGHT TO INFLAME** and guide whoever wishes to love nobly.

What a miracle it is, when on the grass she sits like a flower! or when she presses her white breast against a green tree-trunk!

What sweetness it is in the spring to **SEE** her walking alone with her thoughts, weaving a garland for her polished curling gold!

## CLXXV

When I remember the time and the place where I lost myself, and the dear knot with which Love with his own hand bound me (he so made bitterness seem sweet and weeping, pleasure),

I am all sulphur and tinder, and my heart is a **FIRE** lit by those gentle words which I always hear, so **AFLAME** within that I joy in my **FLAMES** and I live on that, and for aught else I care little.

That **SUN WHICH SHINES ONLY TO MY EYES WITH HER LOVELY BEAMS** warms me at evening just as she did early today;

and from afar she so **IGNITES AND KINDLES** me, that the memory, still fresh and whole, points out to me that knot and the place and the time.

## **CLXXVI**

Through the midst of the inhospitable savage woods, where even armed men go at great risk, I go without fear, nor can anything terrify me except the **SUN** that has Love's living **RAYS**.

And I go singing (oh my unwise thoughts!) of her whom the heavens could not make far from me, for she is before my **EYES** and with her I seem to see ladies and damsels, but they are firs and beeches.

I seem to hear her, when I hear the branches and the breeze and the leaves, and birds lamenting, and the waters fleeing with a murmur across the green grass.

Rarely has the silence, the solitary chill of a shady wood pleased me so much; except that I lose too much of my **SUN**.

## **CLXXXVI**

If Virgil and Homer had seen that **SUN** which I see with my **EYES** they would have exerted all their powers to give her fame and would have mixed together the two styles:

for which Aeneas would be angry; and Achilles, Ulysses, and the other demigods, and he who ruled the world so well for fifty-six years, and he whom Aegisthus killed, would all be sad.

That ancient flower of virtue and arms, what a similar **STAR** he had with this new flower of chastity and beauty!

Ennius sang of him an inelegant song, I of her; and ah! may my wit not displease her, may she not despise my praises!

## **CXC**

A white doe on the green grass appeared to me, with two golden horns, between two rivers, in the shade of a laurel, when the **SUN** was rising in the unripe season.

Her look was so sweet and proud that to follow her I left every task, like the miser who as he seeks treasure sweetens his trouble with delight.

"Let no one touch me," she bore written with **DIAMONDS** and topazes around her lovely neck. "It has pleased my Caesar to make me free."

And the **SUN** had already turned at midday; my **EYES** were tired by looking but not sated, when I fell into the water, and she disappeared.

### CCIII

Alas, I **BURN** and I am not believed; rather all believe me except for her, who is above all others and whom alone I wish to believe me; she does not seem to believe it, but still she sees it.

Infinite beauty and little faith, do you not see my heart in my **EYES**? if it were not for my **STAR**, I should surely find mercy at the very fountain of pity.

This **ARDOR** of mine, which matters so little to you, and your praises in my well-known rhymes, could perhaps yet **INFLAME** thousands;

for in my thought I see, O my sweet **FIRE**, a tongue cold in death and two lovely **EYES** closed, which after us will remain full of embers.

### CCVI

If I ever said it, let her hate me by whose love I live, without which I would die; if I said it, let my days be few and miserable, and my soul the minion of some low power; if I said it, let every **STAR** be armed against me and at my side be fear and jealousy and my enemy more cruel toward me always and more beautiful!

If I said it, let Love use all his golden **ARROWS** on me and the leaden ones on her; if I said it, let Heaven and earth, men and gods be against me, and she ever more pitiless; if I said it, let her who with her blind **TORCH** sends me straight to death still stays as she

is wont and let her never show herself kinder or more merciful to me either in act or speech!

If I ever said it, let me find this short and harsh road full of what I least desire; if I said it, let the fierce **ARDOR** that makes me go astray grow equally with the fierce **ICE** in her; if I said it, let my **EYES** never see the **SUN** clear nor his sister, nor lady nor damsel, but only a terrible whirlwind such as Pharaoh saw when he pursued the Jews!

## CCXVIII

However many graceful, lovely ladies she finds herself with, she who has no equal in the world, with her lovely face she makes of the others what the day makes of the lesser **STAR**.

Love seems to speak at my ear, saying: "As long as she is seen on earth, life will be good; afterward we shall see it darkened, see virtues die and my realm with them.

"As if nature were to take away the **SUN AND THE MOON** from the heavens, the **WINDS** from the air, from the earth grass and leaves, from man intellect and words,

"from the sea the fish and the waves: so dark and darker will things be and deserted, if death closes and hides her **EYES**."

## CCXXV

Twelve ladies virtuously languid –rather **TWELVE STARS—AND IN THE MIDST A SUN I SAW**, gay and alone in a little bark such that I know not if its like ever plowed the waves;

I do not believe its like carried Jason to the fleece with which everyone wishes to be dressed today, nor the shepherd on whose account Troy still grieves, of which two so much noise is made in the world.

Then I **SAW** them in a triumphal chariot, and my Laurel with her holy, retiring manner sitting to the side and sweetly singing:

not human things or a mortal **VISION** Happy Automedon, happy Tiphys, who steered such charming folk!

## CCXXVI

No sparrow was ever so alone on any roof as I am, nor any beast in any wood, for I do not see her lovely face, and I know no other **SUN**, nor do these **EYES** have any other object.

To weep always is my highest delight, laughing is pain, food is gall and poison, night is labor, and a clear sky is dark to me, and my bed is a harsh battlefield.

Sleep is truly, as they say, akin to death, and relieves the heart of the sweet care that keeps it in life.

Sole in the world, rich, happy country, green flowering banks,  
shady meadows: you possess and I yearn for my treasure.

### CCXXX

I wept, now I sing; for that **LIVING SUN** does not hide from my  
**EYES HER HEAVENLY LIGHT**, in which virtuous Love  
clearly reveals his sweet power and his holy ways;

thus he is wont to draw from me such a river of tears to shorten the  
thread of my life, that wings and feathers could not rescue me, let  
alone bridge or ford or oars or sail.

So deep and from so full a source was my weeping and so distant  
the shore, that I could hardly reach it even in thought.

Pity sends me not laurel or a palm but the tranquil olive, and clears  
the weather, and dries my tears, and wishes me still to live.

### CCXXXI

I was living contented with my fate, without tears and without any  
envy; for if other lovers have more favorable fortune, a thousand  
of their pleasures are not worth one of my torments.

Now those lovely **EYES**, for which I shall never repent my  
sorrows and would not wish them less even by one, are covered by  
so heavy and dark a cloud that it has almost extinguished the **SUN**  
of my life.

O nature, merciful and **CRUEL MOTHER** whence do you have such power and such contrary wills, to make and unmake things so charming?

From one living Fountain all powers are received; but how do You consent, O highest Father, that another despoil us of your dear gift?

### **CCXXXIII**

What good fortune was mine, that from one of the two loveliest **EYES** that ever were, when I saw them disturbed and darkened by pain, there came a power that made my own sick and dark!

I having returned to relieve the hunger of seeing her whom alone in the world I care for, Heaven and Love were less cruel to me than ever, if I put together all the other graces they have bestowed on me.

For from my lady's right **EYE** –rather her right **SUN**– to my right **EYE** came the illness that delights me and does not pain me;

and, just as if it had intellect and wings, it passed into me like a **STAR** flying through the heavens; and Nature and Pity held their course.

## CCXXXVII

The sea has not so many creatures among its waves,  
nor up there beyond the circle of the **MOON**  
were so **MANY STARS EVER SEEN** by any night,  
nor do so many birds dwell in the woods,  
nor did any field ever have so much grass, or any meadow,  
as I have cares in my heart every evening.  
From day to day I hope now for the last evening,  
which will separate in me the living earth from the waves  
and let me sleep in some meadow:  
for so many troubles no man under the **MOON**  
ever suffered as I do, the woods know it  
that I go searching through alone day and night.

I have never had a tranquil night,  
but have gone sighing morning and evening  
since Love made me a citizen of the woods.  
Before I rest, the sea will be without waves,  
and **THE SUN WILL RECEIVE HIS LIGHT FROM THE**  
**MOON,**  
and the flowers of april will die in every meadow.

I go consuming myself from meadow to meadow  
full of cares all day; then I weep at night;  
nor have I any steadfastness except as does the **MOON**.  
As soon as I see the darkening of evening,  
sighs from my breast and from my **EYES** waves  
come forth to wet the grass and blow down the woods.

Cities are hateful to me, friendly the woods  
to my cares, which through this high meadow  
I go venting with the murmuring of the waves  
through the sweet silence of the night:  
so that all day I await the evening,  
for the **SUN** to depart and make way for the **MOON**.

Ah, would that with the lover of the **MOON**  
I had fallen asleep in some green wood,  
and that she who before vespers gives me evening  
with the **MOON** and with Love to that shore  
might come alone to stay there one night,  
and that the day might stay, and the **SUN**, forever under the waves!

Beside harsh waves in the **LIGHT OF THE MOON**,  
O song born at night amid the woods:  
you shall see a rich shore tomorrow evening.

## CCXLVI

The breeze that softly sighing moves the green laurel and her  
golden hair, with sights new and charming makes souls wander  
from their bodies.

White rose born among hard **THORNS**, when will anyone find her  
like on earth? Glory of our age! O living Jove, send, I pray, my end  
before hers!

so that I may not see that great public loss, and the world left without its **SUN**, nor my own **EYES**, which have no other **LIGHT**;

nor my soul, which does not wish to think of anything else, nor my ears, which cannot hear anything else, left without her chaste sweet words.

### **CCXLVIII**

Whoever wishes to see all that Nature and Heaven can do among us, let him come gaze on her, for she alone is a **SUN**, not merely for my **EYES** but for the blind world, which does not care for virtue;

and let him come soon, for Death steals first the best and leaves the wicked: awaited in the kingdom of the blessed, this beautiful mortal thing passes and does not endure.

He will see, if he comes in time, every virtue, every beauty, every regal habit, joined together in one body with marvelous tempering;

Then he will say that my rhymes are mute, my wit overcome by the **EXCESS OF LIGHT**, but if he delays too long he shall have reason to weep forever.

## CCLII

Fearing for my state I now weep, now sing, and hope and fear, and in sighs and rhymes vent my burden. Love files away at my afflicted heart with all his might.

Now will it ever be that her lovely holy face will give back to these **EYES THEIR FIRST LIGHT** (alas, I do not know what to think of myself), or will it condemn them to eternal weeping?

Will Heaven, to take what is due it, not care what happens to those on earth, whose **SUN** her **EYES** are, for they see nothing else?

In such fear and in such perpetual war I live that I am no longer what I was before, like one who on a perilous road is afraid and loses his way.

## CCLXXV

My **EYES**, darkened is our **SUN**, rather it has risen to Heaven and there **SHINES**, there we shall see it again, there it awaits us and perhaps is pained by our delay.

My ears, the angelic words are sounding in a place where there is someone who understands better. My feet, your province does not extend to where she is who used to make you work.

Therefore why do you fight against me? I was not the reason that you can no longer see her, hear her, and find her on earth.

Blame death; rather, praise Him who binds and looses, and in an instant opens and closes up, and after weeping can make one glad.

### CCLXXXIX

The glorious **FLAME** that enlivened me, beautiful beyond the beautiful, to whom Heaven was so kind and so courteous here, too early for me has returned to her own country and to her **STAR**, which is worthy of her.

Now I begin to awaken, and I see it was for the best that she resisted my desire and tempered those **BURNING** youthful lusts with a face both sweet and angry.

I thank her for it and her high counsel, who with her mild face and her gentle angers made me think of my salvation as I **BURNED**.

Oh charming arts and worthy effects of them! One of us worked with words, the other with **GLANCES**: I, glory in her; she, virtue in me.

### CCXCIX

Where is the forehead that with a little sign used to turn my heart this way and that? where is the lovely brow and the two **STARS** that gave **LIGHT** to the course of my life?

Where is the worth, the knowledge, and the wisdom? the skillful virtuos humble sweet speech? Where are the beauties gathered in her, which for a long time had their will of me?

Where is the noble image of the kindly face that gave refreshment and repose to my tired soul and where all my thoughts were written?

Where is she who held my life in her hand? How much the miserable world has lost, and how much **MY EYES** have lost, which will never be dry!

## CCCVI

That **SUN** which showed me the right way to go to Heaven with glorious steps, returning to the **HIGHEST SUN**, has closed up in a few stones my **LIGHT** and her earthly prison,

so that I have become an animal of the woods, and with wandering, solitary, and weary feet I carry about a heavy heart and **EYES** wet and cast down in the world, which is for me a mountainous desert.

Thus I go searching through every region where I saw her, and only you who afflict me, Love, come with me and show me where to go;

her I do not find, but I see her holy footprints all turned toward the road to Heaven, far from the Avernian and the Stygian lakes.

## CCCXII

Not wandering **STARS** going through the clear sky, nor oiled ships through calm seas, nor armed knights through the fields, nor swift happy wild creatures in lovely woods,

nor fresh news of a hoped-for good, nor poems of love in high and ornate style, nor amid clear fountains and green meadows the sweet singing of virtuous and beautiful ladies,

nor will there ever be anything else that can reach my heart: she has so buried it who was alone **THE LIGHT AND MIRROR TO MY EYES**.

Living is such heavy and long pain, that I call out for the end in my great desire to see her again whom it would have been better not to have seen at all.

## CCCXXV

Silent I cannot be, and I fear that my tongue may produce an effect contrary to my heart, which would wish to honor its lady who listens to us from Heaven. How can I, if you do not teach me, Love, with mortal words equal divine works concealed by high humility gathered into itself?

The noble soul had not long been in the lovely prison from which now she has been set free, at the time when I first saw her; and so I quickly ran, for it was the April of the year and of my years, to gather flowers in those meadows around, hoping so adorned to please her **EYES**.

The walls were of alabaster and the roof of gold, the entrance of ivory and the windows of sapphire whence the first sigh reached my heart and the last shall reach; thence the messengers of Love came forth armed with **DARTS** and **FIRE**, and I, thinking of them all crowned with laurel, tremble at them as if it were now.

In the midst could be seen a proud throne of squared and faultless **DIAMOND**, where the beautiful lady sat alone; before her was a crystalline column, and every thought written within it appeared without so clearly that it made me often glad in my sighing.

I saw that I had come to the **PIERCING, BURNING, SHINING** arms, to the green ensign of victory, against which in battle Jove and Apollo and Polyphemus and Mars lose, where weeping is forever fresh and green again; and, unable to escape, I let myself be captured, and I know neither the way to escape nor the art.

But as sometimes a man who departs weeping sees things that gladden his **EYES** and heart, so when she for whom I am in prison, who was the only perfect thing in her days, was standing on a balcony, I began to gaze at her with such desire that I forgot myself and my misfortune.

I was on earth and my heart in paradise, sweetly forgetting every other concern, and I felt my living form become marble and full of wonder; when a lady very swift and confident, ancient in years but young of face, seeing me so intent by the expression of my forehead and brow,

said to me: "With me, take counsel with me, for I have more power than you think, and I can gladden and make sad in an instant, lighter than the **WIND** and I rule and revolve all you see in the world! Keep your **EYES STILL ON THAT SUN**, like an eagle, but at the same time listen to my words.

"The day she was born, the **STARS** that produce among you happy effects were, in high and noble places, turned one toward another with love; Venus and her father with benign aspects held the most noble and beautiful parts of the heavens, and the baneful cruel **LIGHTS** were almost entirely dispersed.

"The **SUN** never opened so beautiful a day, the air and the earth were joyful, and the waters of the sea and of the rivers were at peace. Among so many friendly **LIGHTS**, one distant cloud displeased me, which I fear will **BURN** to weeping, if Pity does not revolve the heavens to prevent it.

"When she came down to this low life, which to tell the truth was not worthy to have her, wondrous to see, already holy and sweet although unripe, she seemed a pearl enclosed in fine gold. And, now crawling, now with trembling steps, she made trees, water, earth, or stone green, clear, or soft,

"and with her hands or feet the grass fresh and proud, and with her **EYES** she made the fields blossom, and with the words not yet ready of a tongue that was **BARELY WEENED**, she quieted **WINDS** and tempests: clearly showing the deaf, blind world how much heavenly **LIGHT** was in her.

"When, growing in years and in virtue, she reached her third, her blossoming age, the **SUN** never saw, I think, so much charm and beauty, her **EYES** full of gladness and virtue, and her speech of sweetness and of health. All tongues are dumb to tell of her what only you know.

"so bright is her face with celestial **LIGHT** that your **SIGHT** cannot rest on it, and because of that beautiful earthly prison of hers your heart is full of such **FIRE** that no other even **BURNED** more sweetly but it seems to me that her sudden departure will soon make your life bitter."

Having said that, she turned to her revolving wheel, with which she spins our thread, the sad and certain prophetic of my losses; for after not many years she on whose account I so hunger to die, my song, was killed by untimely and cruel death, who could not kill a more beautiful body.

## MICHELANGELO'S COSMIC ARCHETYPES

Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), besides being a great sculptor and painter, is also a magnificent poet whose madrigals and sonnets depict his inner life and, similarly to Dante's poems, show the archetypes that govern the homosexual, like those of **PIERCING**:

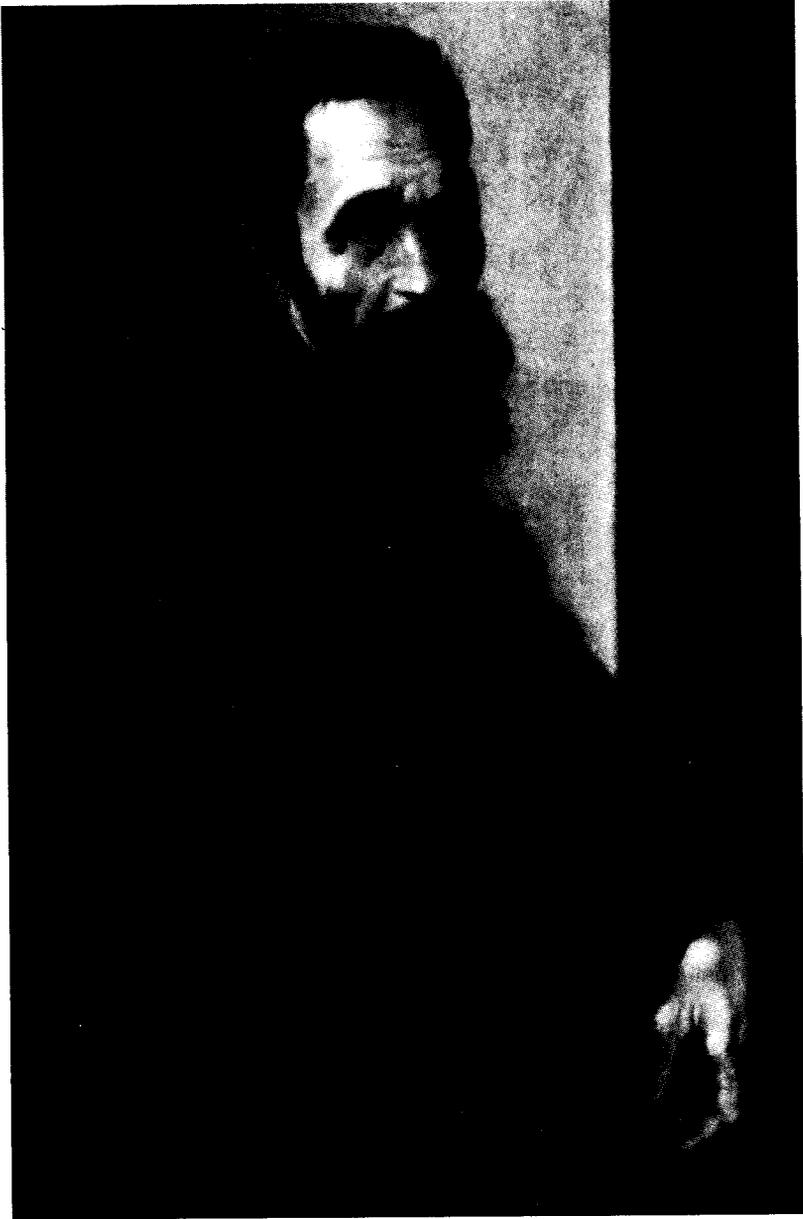
From the hard blow and from the **BITING ARROW**  
My heart would be repaired, if **CUT CLEAN THROUGH**,  
But this is what **MY LORD** alone can do,  
Adding to life with added **INJURY**.

And though the first **BLOW** that he gave was deadly,  
A messenger from love came with him too,  
To say: «Love, rather **BURN**, for those who die  
Have no wings else on earth for a heavenly journey.

«I am the one who in your earliest years  
Made your powerless **EYES TURN TO THAT BEAUTY**  
That leads up from the earth to Heaven alive.»

Those of **POISON**:

O heart, cruel, unpitying and **SOUR**,  
Entirely **BITTER** although sweetly clothed,



*Miguel Angel. Retrato anónimo.*

Since it is born only in time, your faith  
Lasts less than, in the sweet spring, any flower.

Time passes on, distributing each hour,  
A very **HARMFUL POISON** in our life;  
We are like straw and it is like the scythe,

.....

For faith is short and **BEAUTY** does not last,  
But seems to eat itself, as much as that,  
Just as **MY HARM IS WHAT YOUR SIN DESIRES.**

.....

.....

Life will always be so between us.

Those of **FIRE**:

**To Tommaso Cavalieri**

If a chaste love, if an excelling kindness,  
If sharing by two lovers of one fortune,  
Hard lot for one the other one's concern,  
**TWO BREASTS** led by one spirit and one wish,

And if two bodies have one soul, grown deathless,  
That, with like wings, lifts both of them to Heaven,  
**IF LOVE'S ONE STROKE AND GOLDEN DART CAN BURN**  
And separate the vitals of **TWO BREASTS**,

Neither loving himself, but each one each,  
With one delight and taste, such sympathy  
That both would wish to have a single end,

If thousand thousand would not be one inch  
To love so knotted, such fidelity—  
And mere affront can shatter and unbind?

Those of PETRIFICATION:

**To Tommaso Cavalieri**

I feel how a cold face that FIRE HAS LIT  
BURNS ME from far, and turns itself to ICE;  
two lovely arms submit me to a force  
that **DOES NOT MOVE**, but moves all other weight;

unique, and grasped by me alone, a spirit  
that has no death, but others' death can compass,  
I see and meet, that binds my heart, being loose;  
from one who helps I feel the only spite.

Lord, of such a BEAUTIFUL face, how can  
effects so far opposed be borne on mine?  
It's hard to give to men what you have not.

As for the happy life he's snatched from me,  
he may, if you're not kind, act as the SUN.  
Which heats the world although it is not hot.

Another outstanding characteristic about homosexuals is their unconscious adaptation to rejection: their **masochism**:

**To Tommaso Cavalieri**

Wherefore should I let loose still more my keen  
Longing in mournful words or in lament,  
If Heaven, which clothes us all with such a fate,  
Strips no one of it ever, late or soon?

Wherefore should my tired heart still URGE ME ON  
TO DIE, if others also die? So let  
My EYES feel in their final hours less hurt,  
All other good counts less than all my pain.

Therefore if I cannot evade the blow  
I steal and snatch from him, if it is fated,  
Who at least comes between **DELIGHTS AND HARMS?**

**IF CAPTURE AND DEFEAT MUST BE MY JOY,**  
It is no wonder that, alone and naked,  
I remain prisoner of a knight-at-arms.

The extraordinary fact about Michelangelo is that he was possessed by the archetype of BEAUTY, which, like a diamond, is rarely found in the poems which I have analyzed and collected during the course of twenty years. Let us see:

## To Tommaso Cavalieri

Violent passion for tremendous **BEAUTY**  
Is not perforce a bitter mortal error,  
If it can leave the heart melted thereafter,  
So that a holy **DART CAN PIERCE IT QUICKLY.**

Not hindering high flight to such vain fary,  
Love wakens, rouses, puts the wings in feather,  
As a first step, so that the soul will soar  
And rise to its maker, finding this too scanty.

The love for what I speak of reaches higher;  
Woman's too much unlike, no heart by rights  
Ought to **BLAZE** for her, if wise and male.

One draws to Heaven and to earth the other,  
One in the soul, one living in the sense  
Drawing its bow on what is base and vile.

We are now going to enjoy the beautiful cosmic archetypes of  
Michelangelo:

## HELL

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### IX

When it happens that wood does not maintain  
its own dampness, far from its earthly seat,  
it can't but be that, more or less, great heat  
will dry it out and **KINDLE IT AND BURN**.

My heart, taken by one who'll not return,  
once **FED ON FIRE** and nurtured on lament,  
now it's away from its own place and seat,  
what harm, through death, will not inflict its pain?

### X

O lovers, run from love, run from the **FIRE**,  
the **FLAMES** are cruel and the **WOUND** is deadly.  
And after the first thrust there is no virtue  
in change of place, in reason or in power.

Run, now that the precedent's not meager  
that the arm can be savage, **SHARP THE ARROW**;  
you can read in my face your injury,  
and how the game will be ruthless and bitter.

At the first **GLANCE**, do not lag back, but run;  
I thought I could have peace at any time,  
but now I feel and you see how I **BURN**.



Miguel Angel. *El Juicio Universal*.

## XVII

### To Tommaso Cavalieri

If when I first caught sight of it I'd thought  
that in this FOSTERING PHOENIX'S WARM SUN  
I'd be renewed by **FIRE, IN WHICH I BURN**,  
as is in her extreme old age her wont,

Then, as the swiftest lynx, leopard or hart  
will follow its OWN FOOD, SUFFERING WHEN LOST,  
toward her actions, her laughter, I'd have run,  
toward her chaste words, where now I am quick but late.

But why should I be sorry since I've seen  
in the **EYES** of this single happy angel  
that I shall be at peace, rested and safe?

To see or hear you sooner would have been  
perhaps worse, for now, in flight, her equal,  
she gives me wings to follow her strength.

## XVIII

Only with **FIRE** the smith can bend the iron  
as he's conceived his dear and beautiful work;  
and gold, except with **FIRE**, to its high mark  
no artisan can carry and refine.

And single PHOENIX cannot live again  
unless it first **BURNS**, so, if I die **BURNT**,  
**BRIGHTER** I hope among those to come back  
whom death enhances, time does not demean.

The **FIRE** of which I speak, my great good fortune,  
still, to renew me, being within me settled,  
who am almost numbered with the dead already,

If by its nature it goes up to Heaven,  
to its own element, and I'm converted  
to **FIRE**, how could it shun me then?

## **XIX**

So friendly to COLD ROCK is the **INNER FIRE**  
that if, drawn out therefrom, it circumscribes,  
**BURNS** it and breaks, in some way it survives,  
itself a bond for others, fixed forever.

And if it can outlast winter and summer  
in the hard **KILN**, its earlier worth will rise,  
as if a soul returned from hell, chastised,  
to Heaven among the others high and pure.

Also the **FIRE** drawn from me may dissolve,  
whose play has been concealed internally,  
and I may have more life, **BURNT** and then cold.

Thus, turned to smoke and dust, I still may live  
if I can stand the **FIRE** eternally,  
for I am beaten not by iron but gold.

## **XXIV**

If the **FIRE POURING OUT OF YOUR EYES**  
were equal to the **BEAUTY** you have within them,  
no part of earth so thoroughly could **FREEZE**  
it would not then **BURN LIKE A KINDLED ARROW**

But Heaven, which is kind to all our trouble,  
cuts and deflects our faculty that sees  
from all the **BEAUTY** of which you dispose,  
to make our bitter mortal life more tranquil.

So the **FIRE** is not equal to the **BEAUTY**,  
for a man catches **FIRE** and loves alone  
the **BEAUTY** of Heaven of which he is aware.

Lord, at my age this is what happens to me;  
if you don't think I die for you, or **BURN**,  
my **FIRE** is small because I have little power.

## **XXIV**

I live on my own death; if I see right,  
my life with an unhappy lot is happy;

if ignorant how to live on death and worry, I enter  
this **FIRE, WHERE I'M DESTROYED AND BURNT.**

## XXV

Since I live most on what most **HEATS AND BURNS,**  
the more the **FIRE BLAZES** from wood or wind,  
the more the one who kills me gives me aid,  
and helps me all the more, the more he harms.

## XXV

From an eternal to a short-lived peace,  
to grievous laughter from a sweet lament  
I've fallen down, for where the truth is silent  
its survivor, cut off from it, is sense.

I don't know if my heart or if your face  
is to blame for the evil, less unpleasant  
the more it grows, or else the **BURNING LIGHT**  
**IN YOUR EYES** which was robbed from paradise.

There is, though, nothing mortal in your **BEAUTY,**  
divine for us, and made above in heaven,  
so I, losing and **BURNING,** have this comfort,

even if I cannot be thus by you.  
If Heaven allots the weapons of my dying,  
who, if I die, can say you were at fault?

## XXIX

While I'm deprived and hunted by the **FIRE**,  
perforce I'll die where people safely live;  
my only **FOODS** are those that **BURN** and sethe,  
and I can live on what would kill another.

## XXX

**I BURN**, I consume myself, I cry;  
o sweet lot! and on this my heart is nourished.  
Does anyone **LIVE ONLY ON HIS DEATH**,  
**ON PAIN, AND ON HIS SUFFERINGS, AS I?**

Ah cruel **BOWMAN**, you can tell exactly  
when to bring quiet to our anxious, dry  
unhappiness, using your hand's strength;  
**FOR HE WHO LIVES ON DEATH WILL NEVER DIE.**

## XXXI

I wish to want, Lord, what I do not want,  
and **ICY** veil hides between heart and **FIRE**  
and damps the **FIRE**, making my page a liar,  
Since my pen and my conduct do not fit.

I love you with words, then I lament  
love does not reach the heart, and can't tell where

to open the door to grace so it can enter  
and thrust all ruthless pride out of my heart.

Tear the veil thou, O break that **WALL**, my Lord,  
which with its hardness keeps in check the **SUN**  
of your own **LIGHT**; on earth it is put out.

Send that same **RAY OF LIGHT** to your fair bride  
which we are then to have, so I may **BURN**,  
and my heart feel you only with no doubt.

### **XXXV**

Why is it not more frequent, why so late,  
that **FIRE WITHIN ME**, with its steadfast faith,  
that takes my heart, lifting me from the earth,  
where of itself its power does nor permit?

Perhaps each interval is granted it  
between your first and next loving despatch,  
because all rare things have more force and strength  
the less the nearness and the more the want.

The night's the interval, the day the **LIGHT**,  
one freezes and the other **INFLAMES** my heart  
with love, with faith, and with a heavenly **FIRE**...

## XXXVII

Since I have straw for flesh and in my **BREAST SULPHUR**,  
since I have bones consisting of dry wood,  
since my soul lacks a rein and lacks a guide,  
since I jump at desire, at **BEAUTY** further,

since all my brains are weak and blind, and totter,  
and since quicklime and traps fill all the world,  
it will be no surprise when I am **BURNED**  
**BY A FLASH OF THE FIRST FIRE** I encounter.

Since I've the **BEAUTIFUL** art, that those who bear it  
from Heaven use to conquer Nature with,  
even if she can parry everywhere,

if I, not blind or deaf, was born for it,  
a true match for my heart's **FIRE-SETTING** thief,  
he is to blame who fated me to **FIRE**.

## XLII

As once in the cold **ICE** my **BURNING FLAME**,  
now **BURNING FLAME** for me is only cold **ICE**;  
that indissoluble knot, O Love, is loose,  
death is for me what once was sport and game.

## LIV

If slight slow **FIRE**, **FLARING** since my youth,  
can rapidly destroy a fresh new heart,  
then what will happen to one often **BURNT**  
when final hours shut in a greedy **FLAME**?

If passing of more time provides less room  
for my life, for my powers and my might,  
to a thing that must die in nature what  
will **FIRE** do then, keen from the amorous game?

With me it will make just as expected,  
ash in a **WIND** as mild as it's severe,  
robbing my body from the worms' disdain.

If, green in a small **FLAME**, **I BURNED** and wept,  
in **FIRE** so large shall I now hope for more?  
For my soul in my body to remain?

## LXII

Everytime that my idol is presented  
to the **EYES** of my strong and feeble heart,  
in between the two objects death is brought  
and drives it off the more, the more I'm frightened.

Such havoc leaves my soul far more contented  
in joy, than hope of any other sort;

unconquered Love, with his most **BRILLIANT** court,  
then arms for his defense, which thus is stated:

Death, as he says, can happen only once,  
there's no rebirth; what next for one who dies  
with my love, if he had it not yet dead?

Then, **BURNING** love, by which the soul's let loose,  
since it's a magnet to its matching **BLAZE**,  
like gold purged in a **FIRE** returns to God.

### LXIII

If luck and grace to long postponed desires  
are more than pity often given them early,  
mine **HURTS** and pains me, since my years are many,  
for aged pleasure a short time endures.

A **FLAME** in what by rule are freezing years,  
like mine for a woman, makes the heavens angry,  
if they're concerned for us, and so I tally  
my ripe age by my sad and lonely tears.

Yet perhaps, though I'm at the end of day,  
with sun already set below the horizon,  
and amid the thick shadow, cold and somber,

since love **INFLAMES** us only when halfway,  
and that's true, for I'm old but **BURN WITHIN**,  
there's a woman who'll make of my end my center.

## LXIV

### On the death of Vittoria Colonna

What wonder if, since I was **BURNT** and crushed  
next to the **FIRE**, which outwardly is spent,  
inwardly it can still **CONSUME** and hurt,  
and bit by bit reduces me to ash?

So **SHINING, AS I BURNED**, I saw the place  
which was the source of my oppressing torment,  
that just the sight of it made me content,  
games and delights for me death and abuse.

But Heaven has taken away from me the **SPLENDOR  
OF THE GREAT FIRE THAT BURNED AND  
NOURISHED ME**;  
I am left to be a **COAL**, covered and **BURNING**,

and if love will not offer me more timber  
to raise a **FIRE**, in me there will not be  
a single **SPARK**, all into ashes turning.

## LXV

Restore me to the time when curb and rein  
were mild and loose on me, in my blind **FLAME**;  
return whence it's with virtue in the tomb,  
the face that was angelic and serene,

and my steps, close together, with such strain,  
which are so slow in one who's passed his time;  
**RESTORE THE FIRE AND WATER TO MY BOSOM**  
if you will gorge yourself on me again.

And if, O Love, you only live indeed  
on mortal creatures' sweet and bitter tears,  
now you'll gain little from one old and spent.

My soul has almost reached the other side,  
and more compassionate **DARTS** shield me from yours;  
**FIRE MAKES A POOR FLAME ON A WOOD ONCE**  
**BURNT.**

~

A **BLAZING FLAME**, by a great **BEAUTY** strewn  
through a thousand **BURNING** hearts,  
may be compared to weights,  
slight and small upon many, fatal to one.  
When narrowly shut in,  
**HARD ROCK** is turned to lime,  
and water then dissolves it instantly,  
as he who observes the truth well knows by test.  
Divine, she sets a **FLAME**  
for a thousand men in me,  
which leaves my heart **BURNT** to the innermost.  
But tears that never cease  
may yet dissolve what was so strong and tough;  
better not be than **BURN** and not have death.

~

If **BEAUTIFUL** things are in the memory,  
there must be death as well, which can withdraw  
his face therefrom, as it has him from you,  
and turn laughter to tears and **FIRE TO FROST**.  
Then they're the enemy,  
such that the empty heart no more they boast.  
But still, if he should cast his **BEAUTIFUL EYES**  
toward the familiar spot, they would be  
as dry sticks to a **FLAMING BLAZE**.

~

This woman here is bound,  
in her ungoverned rage,  
that I'm to **BURN**, and change  
to what won't even weigh an ounce, and perish,  
my **BLOOD** lets, pound by pound,  
unnerves my body, for my spirit worthless;  
it gives her joy to furbish  
before her trusted mirror,  
where she observes herself as fine as Heaven,  
then turn to me to cherish,  
who, age apart, can render  
her face by mine more beautiful therein,  
heaping me with disdain.  
In such a **FIRE** I find old age is best,  
the hurt is less where evil does not last.

~

So much out of herself  
has kind fair lady pledged,  
that I in my slow age,  
watching her, might become as once I was.  
But, envious fatal death  
being at all hours lodged  
between my mournful and her kindly **GAZE**,  
I only keep **ABLAZE**  
the little while his features are forgot.  
But when the evil thought  
comes back again to its familiar place,  
the lovely **FIRE** is quenched by his grim **ICE**.

~

**FIRE**, in which all is harmed,  
**BURNS ME**, has not consumed,  
but not through my greater or its less power.  
I, like the salamander,  
only where others die find my support,  
and do not know who, calm, **PRODS** my distress.  
By you yourself your face,  
by me myself my heart  
was never made, by us  
my love will not be ever **TORN APART**.  
That master who has placed  
my life within your **EYES** is higher still.  
I love, you do not feel;  
forgive me, as I do this misery  
that wills I die outside who murders me.

~

If Sense will let its **FLAME, TOO SCORCHING**, scatter  
away from yours to some less beautiful face,  
lord, it has far less force,  
as, in its branches, a fierce mountain river.  
Then Heart, whose life goes further  
in **HOTTER FIRE**, can hardly then agree  
with the less **BURNING** sighs and rarer tears.  
Soul, which can see the error,  
is glad to have it die  
and turn to Heaven, whither it aspires.  
Then Reason justly shares  
the **WOUNDS** among them, and with tougher bodies  
all four of them agree to love you always.

~

Not one of my days can run its course  
that in my mind I do not feel or see her,  
there's never **HEAT SO GREAT IN OVEN OR FURNACE**  
that would not from my sighs become still fiercer.  
And when a while it happens I have her close,  
I **SPARKLE** then like iron in **BURNING FIRE**,  
and want to say so much, if she will listen,  
that I say less than when I do not hasten.

~

If in my early years I had taken heed  
of the then **OUTWARD FIRE NOW BURNING IN ME**,  
lest worse be, I had not only  
quenched it, but from my soul torn my weak heart.  
I blame it, now it's dead,  
but only our first error is at fault;  
unhappy soul, if at the very start  
a man could not resist,  
late he is killed and **BURNS**  
**BY THE FIRST FIRE THAT'S LIGHTED.**  
For he who can be **BURNT** and captured  
during his youth, when there is **LIGHT** and mirror,  
is destroyed, old and tired, by much less **FIRE**.

~

If the face that I mean, which is in her,  
had not withheld her **EYES** debarred against me,  
then, Love, how would you test me,  
with further trials of a **HOTTER BLAZE**,  
since, seeing her no more,  
you **BURN ME** in no small sort with her **FAIR EYES?**  
«The man who does not lose  
has least part in the sport,  
if every longing vanishes in pleasure;  
when a thing satisfies,  
hope has no place to sprout  
in the sweetness that cancels every torture.»  
Of her I tell you, rather,  
if her great wealth surrenders to my yearning,  
your kindness will not calm my height of longing.

~

No time is left, Love, for my heart to **FLAME**,  
or human **BEAUTY** to enjoy or fear.  
The final hour is here,  
when he who has least time most mourns its loss.

The great blows that your arm  
may give me, death will lower,  
heightening his much more than was his use.  
The words and the thoughts  
which, to my harm, shot out in **FIRE** from you,  
have now turned into water,  
and with them, all together,  
may God will that my sins be poured out too.

~

The soul has poured and spouted  
its inner waters out  
only so they will not  
put out the **FIRE** to which it is converted.  
Your **FIRE** has always started  
tears in me, so, though tired  
and old, I could not get other assistance.  
My destiny is hard, my fortune thwarted,  
yet they are not so hard  
but that their **STING**, where more you **BURN**, decreases.  
And so your **BURNING GLANCES**,  
outwardly weeping, I shut up within me,  
and what most die of only enjoy and live by.

~

They'd quench the **FIRE**, much more than just your **LOOK**.  
but all my remedies turn vain and short;  
if water lights the **FIRE**, all else I lack

to save me from the HARM I WISHED AND WANT,  
except the **FIRE** itself. O strange affair,  
if the **FIRE'S HARM IS OFTEN CURED BY FIRE!**

~

Now with **HOT FIRE**, again with cruel ICE,  
now armed with shame, again with age or torture,  
I mirror out the future  
within the past, my hope mournful and sad.  
My good, being short, no less  
than my evil I feel a WOUNDING goad.  
Of my bad fortune just as of my good,  
tired of me, I beg pardon constantly.  
And swift short hours, as I can plainly see,  
must in our life be the best luck and grace,  
seeing that death's the doctor for distress.

~

Why is it not more frequent, why so late,  
that **FIRE** within me, with its steadfast faith,  
that takes my heart, lifting me from the earth,  
where of itself its power does not permit?

Perhaps each interval is granted it  
between your first and next loving despatch,  
because all rare things have more force and strength  
the less the nearness and the more the want.

The night's the interval, the day the **LIGHT**,  
one **FREEZES** and the other **INFLAMES** my heart  
with love, with faith, and with a heavenly **FIRE**...

~

Now death, O Love, out of the very place  
where once in me you lorded it, stripped bare,  
as much as with your bow and **PRICKING DART**,  
drives you away and slights you, its grim **ICE**  
quenches and leaves few days to your sweet **FIRE**.  
You count for less than it in each man's heart;  
even though I was caught  
by wings you wear, you run away with fear;  
all blooming youth is shy at the last hour.

~

All the strenght that nature  
has used in girl and woman  
was only practice, leading up to this one,  
who now **FREEZES** and **BURNS** my heart together.  
Wherefore no man was ever  
sad with a grief like mine;  
anguish and sighs and pain,  
stronger in source, are greater in result.  
Then too in my delight  
no one was ever happier than I...

## **PURGATORY**

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### **XXVII**

I thought, on the first day I admired  
so many **BEAUTIES**, matchless and alone,  
**I'D PIN MY EYES, LIKE EAGLES IN THE SUN,**  
on the smallest of many I desired.

But then I learned how I had sinned and erred:  
To have no wings, yet after an **ANGEL** run,  
is to strew seed upon a **ROCK** in vain,  
and words upon the **WIND**, mind upon God.

Hence, if the infinite **BEAUTY** won't abide  
my heart close by, and makes my **EYES GO BLIND,**  
nor seems to assure or trust me when I'm further,

what shall I do? What guardian or guide  
can ever assist me with you, or withstand?  
**NEARBY YOU SET ME ON FIRE,** and parting, murder.

### **XXXIII**

I with your **BEAUTIFUL EYES SEE GENTLE LIGHT,**  
while **MINE ARE SO BLIND THEY NEVER CAN;**



Miguel Angel. *El Juicio Universal*.

with your feet, on my back can bear a burden,  
while mine are crippled, and are useless;

having no feathers, on your wings my flight,  
by your keen wits forever drawn toward Heaven,  
as you decide it I am flushed and wan,  
cold in the **SUN**, at the cold solstice I **BURN**.

My wishes are within your will alone,  
within your heart are my ideas shaped,  
when you have taken breath, then I can speak.

It seems that I am like the lonely **MOON**.  
Which our **EYES** fail to see in Heaven, except  
the fraction of it that the **SUN** may strike.

## **LIX**

### **To Dante**

As much as should be said of him we cannot,  
he was too **BRIGHTLY SHINING FOR THE BLIND**;  
the town that **HURT** him can be more condemned  
than all the greatest rise to his least merit.

This is he who went down where sin is quit,  
for our advantage; then to God he climbed.  
Though Heaven's gates against him did not stand,  
his country's to his just desire were shut.

I call her thankless, and of her own fortune  
to her own hurt the nurse, which is a symbol  
how the most perfect come to the most harm.

Among a thousand other proofs just this one;  
if his unworthy exile had no equal,  
a like or greater man was never born.

## LXVI

Oh make me so I'll see you everywhere!  
If ever I feel **BY MORTAL BEAUTY BURNT**,  
set beside yours I'll think it **FIRE THAT'S SPENT**,  
and as I was I'll be, **IN YOURS ON FIRE**.

No one but you I call on and implore,  
dear Lord, against my **BLIND AND USELESS TORMENT**,  
you only can renew, within, without,  
my will, my mind, my slow and little power.

You gave this sacred soul to time, o love,  
imprisoned it within this frail and tired  
body besides, and with a savage fate.

What other can I do not thus to live?  
I without you lack all that's good, my Lord,  
it is God's power alone to change a lot.

~

Every object I see begs me and counsels  
and forces me to follow and adore you.  
Whatever is not you is not my good.  
love, which belittles all the other marvels,  
will have me for my sake seek and desire you,  
as the sole **SUN**; my spirit it can hold  
away from all high hope, and from all power,  
willing I live on **FIRE**  
not just for you, but in any who sesembles  
your **EYES** or brows in any slightest part.  
Any who from you part,  
o life, **MY EYES THEREAFTER HAVE NO LIGHT**,  
because it is not Heaven where you are not.

~

From the first tears until the final sighs,  
which now are close to me,  
who ever met so hard a destiny  
as I do from my **STAR, SHINING** and fierce?  
Call her not vile or false;  
outwardly it were better  
if scorn from her would make me cease to love her,  
but she, the more I **GAZE**,  
to my **WOUNDS** promises  
sweet pity more, although her heart is bitter.  
O much awaited **ARDOR!**  
Against you only fools could win a fight.  
I, **IF I HAD MY SIGHT**,  
were grateful for the first and the last hour  
I saw her; let the error

bear me, and be within me permanent,  
if all we lose from it is strength and wit.

### To Vittoria Colonna

I cannot not fall short in wit and art  
of her who takes my life,  
her help being so excessive  
that far more from less grace we realize.  
Then does my soul depart,  
as when a too great **BRIGHTNESS HURTS THE EYES**,  
and, far above me, rise  
to my impossible; it has not drawn  
me with it to my high and tranquil mistress,  
to let me match her least gift; I must learn  
what I can do will lead me to her worthless.  
She, with abounding graces,  
strews them and sets us with some **FLAME ALIGHT**;  
the too much **BURNS** less warmly than the slight.

## PARADISE

---

### VIII

What sets my love alive is not my heart,  
There's no heart in the love I love you by,  
It cannot stay where there's mortality  
With all its falsehood, nor in vicious thought.

Love, when the soul quit God, made you be **LIGHT**  
**AND BRILLIANCY**, and me a steady **EYE**,  
So my great longing cannot fail to see  
Him in what's mortal in you, to our hurt.

As heat from **FIRE**, likewise my admiration  
Cannot be parted from eternal **BEAUTY**,  
praising Him most like it who is its cause.

Since in your **EYES** you carry all of heaven,  
I, to return there where I loved you early,  
Hurry back, **BURNING**, underneath your brows.

### XIII

When the one who had made me sigh so often  
Took himself from himself, my **EYES**, and earth,  
Nature, that wanted him to be our gift,  
Was left ashamed, and all who saw it saddened.



Miguel Angel. *El Juicio Universal*.

Today no boasting, though, of having taken  
And quenched the **SUN'S SUN** like the rest, by Death;  
For Love won, taking him to give him life  
On earth and, with the other saints, in Heaven.

Thus false and evil death thought it could quell  
The rumor of his virtues, scattered far,  
And his soul, which might be less **BEAUTIFUL**.

But the reserved effect **GLOWS** upon paper  
With more life than in life was usual;  
dead, he has Heaven; not at all, before.

## **XVII**

When merry Love would lift me up to Heaven,  
Upon this woman's **EYES**, on the **SUN** rather,  
He chases from my heart with rapid laughter  
What **HURTS** and aches, and her face come in.

## **XXXII**

Heaven didn't have pity on me, no doubt  
when it cast your **LIVING SHAFT IN ONLY TWO EYES**  
and with its swift and eternal movement  
cut you route and **LIGHT** to us.

Oh joyous **BIRD** that flies by us  
as you know **FEBO'S** gracious face

and more than the sceanery, the utmost charm  
to fly to the hill from where I fall and break.

## LVIII

### To Dante

When he'd come down from Heaven, and had **SEEN**,  
still in his flesh, both Hells, the just and good,  
he went again alive to look on God,  
so as to let us have the whole true **GLEAM**;

this was a **SHINING STAR, AND WITH ITS BEAM**  
the nest where I was born unfairly **GLOWED**.  
No prize for him were the whole wicked world;  
that art thou only who created genius.

Dante I mean, while his ungrateful city  
had hardly any knowledge of his action;  
only the just do they deprive of trust.

If I could have been he! Born to such fortune,  
to have his bitter exile and his virtue  
I would forego the world's most splendid place.

~

Lady, while you are blinking  
your **BEAUTIFUL EYES** near me,  
in them, myself I see,

Just as yourself, in mine, you are observing.  
From all the years and slaving,  
Whatever I am they render to me fully,  
As mine do you to them, more than **BRIGHT STAR**,  
It needs must anger Heaven  
That in **FAIR EYES** I see myself so ugly,  
And you in mine, ugly, see yourself so fair.  
Within, sharp and severe  
decree will let you pass  
Through them to my heart, but bar  
Me out of your no less.  
This since your mighty prowess  
Heightens its hardness toward each lower level,  
For love would have youth and condition equal.

### **To Luigi del Riccio**

A gift is too injurious,  
As kind as it may be,  
Whenever it leaves another caught and fettered;  
So my freedom, at this,  
Your height of courtesy,  
Laments and weeps more than at being cheated.  
And, as the **SUN** leaves shattered  
The power of the **EYE**, which ought to grow,  
Spurred on by it to see and have more **LIGHT**,  
Desire would wish uncrippled  
My courtesy as well, derived from you.  
Often the small gives up before the great  
And does not pardon it.

For love wants only friends (this makes them rare)  
Equal and like in fortune and in power.

~

My **EYES**, you must be certain  
The hour grows nearer with the passing time  
When mournful tears will find their passage barred.  
Pity must keep you open  
So long as my divine Lady  
Will deign to live within the world.  
If grace leaves Heaven unbarred,  
As for the saints is done,  
And this, my **LIVING SUN**,  
Departs from us, again ascending there,  
What will you have to see hereafter?

~

If happy heart makes beautiful face, and sad  
Makes ugly, and a **BEAUTIFUL** cruel lady  
Does it, who can she be  
That won't take **FIRE** from me as I from her?  
Because my **EYES** were made  
By my **BRIGHT STAR** to see  
The difference between the **FAIR AND FAIR**,  
She is no less severe  
Often against herself  
When I say: from my heart my face turns pale.  
For if one paints himself,  
Painting her, what can he

Do for her, while she sets him this ordeal?  
For both it would be well  
to draw her heart happy, her face clear;  
she would not paint me ugly, herself FAIR.

~

By greater **LIGHT**, and by a **BRIGHTER STAR**,  
at night the heavens theirs from far set **BURNING**,  
and only you keep turning  
more BEAUTIFUL as less BEAUTIFUL things are near.  
Which, this or that, can move  
and spur the heart to soften,  
so, while I **BURN**, at least they will not freeze  
who give you, without having,  
your sweet and lovely person,  
your beautiful blonde hair, your face and **EYES**?  
Thus to your hurt from these  
you shrink, from me as well,  
if BEAUTY ON BEAUTY grows  
where none are beautiful.  
But if what Heaven stole  
from us, lady, and gave you, you should replace,  
ours would grow out of your BEAUTIFUL face.

~

BEAUTIFUL things are the longing of my **EYES**,  
just as it is my soul's to be secure,  
but they've no other power  
that lifts to Heaven, but staring at all those.  
A **SHINING** glory falls  
from furthest **STARS** above,  
toward them our wish it pulls,  
and here we call it love.  
Kind heart can never have,  
to enamor and **FIRE IT**, and to counsel,  
more than a face with **EYES** that are similar.

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