

## FOREWORD

Over the last eighteen years I have had the privilege of following the birth and growth of this book, written by Adriana Mazzarella not only with profound psychological insight and wide learning, drawing on a lifetime's experience and her unstinting commitment to those who turn to her for friendship or professional help, but, above all, written from the heart.

It seems to me that this work provides a fundamental contribution for the individual of today, who, to avoid being atomized by and in collective desperation, needs to rediscover faith in his or her own soul and feeling, for these alone distinguish men and give them dignity.

As the author says, the depths of Dante's feeling restores courage to the "moral man" living in each of us. Dante belongs to the whole of mankind, but especially to Italian men and women. As C.G. Jung observes, each eternal symbolic verity needs to be translated again and again into the language and spirit of every epoch. A people that loses its history, because it no longer understands it, is destined to die.

Today a threat hangs over the whole of mankind and the responsible individual, the most precious fruit of creation and evolution. Jung himself, who provides the inspiration for Adriana Mazzarella's book, established that faith is not enough for modern man, who also needs to understand.

From this point of view, this book is of irreplaceable value, because it nourishes the reader and urges him to have greater faith in himself – through a critical response to his own thought and feeling – whenever he encounters the dangerous, destructive, and also saving forces of the Unconscious which conditions us. Such forces are either evil or beneficent depending on the attitude of each individual, who, nevertheless finds them before him at every step, even when they are denied with the rational mind, the intellect, or the obsessive desire to dominate and exploit nature at a physical or psychic level.

Adriana Mazzarella revives the full force of the message that Dante, through his life and work, passed on to modern man. This book encourages the modern reader to have a critical belief in personal feeling and in individual uniqueness so as to face the creative journey of a life lived in the quest for “meaning”.

Towards the end of his life, Jung said that he cherished the anxious hope that “sense” would prevail over “non-sense”. In order that this struggle may contribute to the survival of life on this planet, each of us, according to his or her lights, is called on to act as a responsible actor on the stage of life, engaging in a constant dialogue with the other actors who have also made their entry from the wings of the unconscious.

Understanding the figures in the *Divina Commedia* may provide a precious point of reference for all those who need to shed more light on their personal darkness, a need that has never been a luxury.

Dante’s poetic language is a humanizing light, because it not only leads us to rational awareness but to heart-felt understanding.

Today’s world stands in great need of this.

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