

# The “Sacred Marriage” of Beauty and Eros and Its Anthropological Condition

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Art composed of categories of the scale of beauty transmutes the aesthetic into eroticism, such that as an element of life it may be displayed as a love relationship between beauty and eros, the knowledge of which is referenced as early as Plato’s philosophical contemplations. Plato characterizes eros in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* as an invincible psychic force, capable, taking into account the fallibility of man, of compelling him toward the acquisition of that which will entail his completion. Eros, considered thusly, contributes to human ontogeny. Plotinus, who experiences beauty as eros and terror accompanied by pleasure, to the same degree will characterize it as the outcome and consequence of an intellectually and morally superior human soul. By this definition, the greatness of art lies in the fact that it compels the souls of men to eros for its spiritual content, the true nature of a work of art being the idea. As such, as long as it is not easy to know if this beauty exists as an ontologically, gnoseologically, and aesthetically idealized entity, so much the more we consider that we cannot entirely prove Freud’s erotic theory of primordial and desirable phantasms, which seems to differ only slightly from the Platonic theory, or from Jung’s theory of archetypes, as it seems not to recognize to an appropriate degree individual human experience. On the contrary and in agreement with the Lacanian theory on eros, in the environment of which eros is directed towards the other, so like it, it emerges in the life of the other, rupturing and reformulating it, we consider that each of us, in reality, in the erotic phenomenon, meets the other, and, behind him, our own self, which, enchanted by all that we sense that the other represents, rates all his characteristics as charmingly beautiful, because they have the privilege of coinciding, or at least of converging towards the aesthetic, entirely unique foundation of our self.

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There is no doubt that any inquiry relative to the ontological composition of art could not easily lead to a verdict without residual concerns. The eminent thinker Moritz Geiger, first to deal in a serious and systematic way with the investigation of the aesthetic categories for the purpose of defining the phenomenon of art, was led to the so-called “Aesthetic dilemma,”<sup>1</sup> a dilemma that he shared with other thinkers before and after him, such as Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Edmund Husserl, who, either occasionally or more analytically,

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attempted to deal with art.<sup>2</sup> One who would be consistent with regard to the epistemological imperatives of the delineation of art—as also in the case of philosophy and religion, the three great realms of the “absolute spirit” according to Hegel<sup>3</sup>—falls outside the henceforth delimiting capabilities made available to us by formal logic and invested with the mist of indefiniteness; thus, for the sake of their definition as belonging to the gnostic objects, we usually call upon the comparative method for the investigation into their causes, methods, aims, and the findings which appear to characterize the functional dimension of their presence, both of “objectionalities,” and, primarily, of exhibits of the psychosomatic dowry of the human entity; we should not forget that man is that being which, unique among all living things, engages in philosophy, religion, and artifice.

“Art,” notes Charalambos Theodoridis in his *Introduction to Philosophy*,

surpasses the other two realms, those of religion and of philosophy, in that which we might call fulfillment... it has a playfulness... it manages to soften even the serious, the heavy, the painful, the worrisome, raising them up to the sphere of dreams<sup>4</sup> and bringing catharsis to tragic crises... it belongs to the world of play and is free of care, like erotic intoxication and, like eroticism, it seizes us entire... thus also aesthetic commotion wants a man whole; it is a function of the whole, of our superindividual self.<sup>5</sup> (1997, 22 ff)

Art then is the function of the whole, of the entire, because, dealing with or rather, it fundamentally composed of the aesthetic categories: grace, form, beauty, tragedy, or comedy, that is to say with predicates of the scale of beauty, it follows that the aesthetic should transmute to the sensual, to sensual commotion, indeed to eroticism, so that it might, as an element of life, on the one hand, flow into all areas of human makeup: will, feeling, thought; and on the other hand be clearly displayed as the sensual embrace between beauty and eros: a loving relationship, not of the currently accepted sort, but referring back to the thinking of the sole individual to deal systematically, analytically, and lucidly with the erotic phenomenon, that is, the philosophic reflections of Plato.<sup>6</sup>

As we read in the *Symposium*, Plato receives eros as a daemon, a beneficent force that connects man to the divine and interprets to the gods the longings of man and contrariwise. Located between the two worlds, “it forms a complement, so that the universe is connected to itself” (202d):<sup>7</sup> Eros comprises a primordial, cosmological origin which flows throughout and connects the universe, unifying its partial sections into one cosmic totality, part of which is, of course, the human being.

As far as man is concerned, Plato understands eros as an invincible psychic force, which, emerging from the sense of his fallibility, compels him to the search and acquisition of that which will complete him: Eros for Plato participates, complementarily but also crucially, in human ontogeny.

In this human attempt at completion, we see, as we have said, the element of beauty playing the primary role, knowledge of which comprises the highest aim of the erotic trajectory from sensory to extrasensory beauty. Plato writes in the *Symposium*:

Such is the right approach or induction to love-matters. Beginning from obvious beauties he must for the sake of that highest beauty be ever climbing aloft, as on the rungs of a ladder, from one to two, and from two to all beautiful bodies; from personal beauty he proceeds to beautiful observances, from observance to beautiful learning, and from learning at last to that particular study which is concerned with the beautiful itself and that alone; so that in the end he comes to know the very essence of beauty.<sup>8</sup> (1999, 212b-211d)

We note, then, that in this mount towards the observance-knowledge of beauty, the first rung aims at the knowledge of natural and bodily beauty, the second rung at the observance-knowledge of ethical beauty, the third at gnoseological beauty, and the fourth at the envisioning of authentic beauty, beauty in itself, a beauty

that is not beautiful from one perspective and ugly from another, nor one that is beautiful today but not tomorrow, nor one that is beautiful in relation to this but not in relation to that, nor that which is here beautiful and there ugly, as it were, beautiful to some but ugly to others, but something which exists in and of itself, by itself, and with itself, unified in form and eternal, within which all other beautiful things of earth and heaven are held.<sup>9</sup> This beauty for Plato is not a phenomenon but an essence, first provided by the sight and hearing<sup>10</sup> and as it begets goodness;<sup>11</sup> it is guileless, clean, unalloyed, unmixed with human flesh, money, and with the whole of mortal frenzy;<sup>12</sup> it is a thing divine which the soul observes differently from other sensory beauties, no longer presented as a particular form, but being itself, which is to say, idea; it is observable only by the governor of the soul: the mind.<sup>13</sup>

Eros, Plato would insist, leads man to the sight of the true being, of truth, of ideas and, compelling him along the right approach, and summarizes the steep path toward beauty.<sup>14</sup> Let us here recall the passionate trajectory of the soul towards truth, as expressed in the *Republic*: Is he who ardently desires learning, asks Plato, not he who,

continues along his path, his eros for being neither weakened nor softened, until he touches the nature of every true being by that part of his soul to which it is fitting to come into contact with each thing—and is akin to it—so that by approaching the true being and coalescing with it, begetting nous and truth, he arrives at knowledge and in true life, and to be nourished, and only then is released from his suffering?<sup>15</sup> (1935, 490b)

In the *Phaedrus*, however, the relationship between eros and the good, which appears as a thing continuously reproduced, thus creating a condition of transcendence of mortality and taking on the character of erotic love for philosophical knowledge, is that which ultimately makes eros a philosopher manic and bacchic.<sup>16</sup> Betwixt eros and philosophy, there is created henceforth a special relationship, a strong binding, which strongly predetermines the historical trajectory of philosophy. The place is where eros lies, as eros of the idealized beauty is, according to Plato, the discourse of the philosopher and not the deceitful discourse of the orator who creates “erotic” words for the employ of those wishing to exert sophist novelties about the erotic. For this reason, it is the duty of the philosopher to become a dialectic who, full of philosophical inspiration, will turn to the soul not as a thing apart, but in its entire character. Having become a soul-leader, the philosopher will help the soul to traverse the circle of the universe and to see all things.

In the *Phaedrus*, then, the central theme of the work revolves around beauty, unfolding as a dialectical struggle between the philosopher’s discourse and the rhetor’s, between natural talent and education, between learning and the disfigurement of the soul, between experiential and theoretical understandings of beauty. For this very reason, in this dialogue examining the theory of eros at a personal level, in contrast to the *Symposium*, there is no place for encomia; only a close cultural reading focusing on man and the world. The study of man, as Plato emphasizes, has no meaning if not oriented towards his nucleus, that is, his soul. Rhetorical and philosophical discourse revolves around this same nucleus; their means differ, as does their aim. The former, connecting the soul to persuasion, is interested in expedient distance and external persuasiveness, and in their effectiveness. Such a discourse, distorting reality for the sake of self-interest, can trap and can be managed; the latter however, relating the soul to truth, dramatizing the erotic movement of the soul, is activated in every case as the memory of the primordial observation of supreme beauty, and makes possible the internalization of the relationship of the discourse to the mania for personal beauty.

Philosophical discourse then does not engage with the pleasures of the many, which it renders external, i.e.,

actions of selfish possessiveness; nor is it interested in that which appears to be true or, as we have said, in self-interest.<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, it is oriented faithfully towards passion and the energy of a living soul. Plato presents this passion and energy of the soul, the turning of the soul towards the idealized dimension of beings, in the *Second Discourse* of Socrates, where he narrates the great myth of the soul, reminding us that the shining eros of true beauty lies in the very social reality and comprises a permanent ability for cultural cleansing from ugliness and evil.<sup>18</sup> Thus Socrates, for whom the glimmer of entities like prudence and justice and, primarily, the unalterable knowledge of truth of being is visible, identifies with the forms of divine mania and sacred initiation of eros (condensing of logic, method, and incentive). He reflects, then, and rages. And this Good mania for beauty, for the loveliness of forms, which is in tune with the erotic intensity of speech, is nothing other than a divine gift, giving every man like Socrates the ability to be overtaken by every type of inspiration, whether mantic, prophetic, poetic, or erotic. The man overtaken by such an eros achieves a euphoric eros.<sup>19</sup>

The Neoplatonic Plotinus understands loveliness in its absolutism and uniqueness as psychic essence, in his *On the Good*:<sup>20</sup> Beautiful is anything that is directly connected to the soul<sup>21</sup> and is visible only by it, under the condition however that it is something beautiful in itself,<sup>22</sup> and because the beauty of the soul comprises the virtues, such as just ethics, pure prudence, valor with a manly visage, modesty and propriety that make it calm, tranquil, free of passion and lit with the radiance of the mind, divine in nature,<sup>23</sup> beauty cannot be visible and comprehensible except by a virtuous soul.

Set in opposition to the Stoic principle on beauty, which, taking plastic beauty as a starting point, understands beauty as the symmetry of pieces amongst themselves and in relation to the whole, with beautiful coloration added,<sup>24</sup> Plotinus understands beauty as amazement, sweet surprise, longing, eros, and fear accompanied by pleasure,<sup>25</sup> countering thus the Stoic version of beauty with its confusion of thought and sensuality; beauty for Plotinus is the outcome and consequence of an intellectually and morally superior human soul which, nonetheless, comprises a metronome and scale of other, lesser beauties, such as those of actions and of occupations,<sup>26</sup> which acquire their beauty because a beautiful soul engraves on them its form.<sup>27</sup>

According to Plotinus, when someone enjoys the blessed sight of supreme beauty, he himself becomes beautiful and worthy of eros. On the contrary, wretched is he who is prevented from this observation. This beauty cannot, as we have said, be replaced by beautiful colors or bodies, nor even by power or authority.<sup>28</sup> Here there is no doubt that this observation is identified with aesthetic perception itself, in the context of which the sensual subject, participating in this process, becomes beautiful.

For a man to come face to face with beauty, he must, emphasizes Plotinus, have vision, of which there are two types. The first is aesthetic vision, the vision of the eyes, with which he observes the beauty of colors and of bodies, that is, aesthetic beauty that is nothing more than images, traces, and shadows that herald that which lies beyond the sensory. Aesthetic beauty is the lowest rung in the hierarchy of beauty.<sup>29</sup> True beauty, however, genuine beauty, we can observe only by closing our eyes. In this way it becomes the object of another, internal vision. Closing our eyes, the soul retreats into itself and gradually accustoms itself to begin to discern not the beauty in art but the beauty in beautiful living. Afterwards, he observes the beautiful works of good men and then the beauty in their good souls.<sup>30</sup> The aesthetic experience comprises then the entrance of beauty through the observer. Internal observation of beauty is described by Plotinus as intoxication, as a bacchic ecstasy that passes through the entire soul. This supreme euphoria is equivalent, we could say, to a state of change in the consciousness of self; here, the observer and the observed are confounded and in the end identified with one another.

In what sense does art refer to primordial beauty? Plotinus, employing an example from sculpture encourages man writing:

Withdraw into yourself and look: and if you see yourself not to be yet beautiful, as the creator of a sculpture that must become beautiful will chisel, carve, polish, and burnish, until a beautiful face should show forth from the stone, thus you too must remove that which is extraneous, straighten that which is crooked, and whatever is dark, make shine by polishing; do not cease from chiseling your sculpture until the gleam of virtue, divine in form, should shine over it, and you see prudence raised on a sacred plinth.<sup>31</sup> (1969, 7-15)

The greatness of art, then, lies in the fact that it compels the souls of men towards eros for its spiritual content, for the true essence of a work of art is idea. For precisely this reason it induces amazement.<sup>32</sup> As a man comes forth into the idea of nous, meaning that he has managed to arrive at the sight of the world of ideas and its absolute beauty, he is no longer sated by gazing on the clarity of this world and its beauty. This demonstrates that the human soul, while it is aloft in the sphere of this world, moves with absolute fullness in beauty, becoming beauty itself. As the soul is transformed into beauty, the philosopher emphasizes, man's ego retreats, is lost, in order to spread itself out in the authentic, superior, beautiful reality of the world of ideas. "If in looking at yourself" he notes, "... when you yourself will have become sight, trusting in yourself, having already ascended you need to be shown by no man, direct your gaze and look. This eye alone sees great beauty... No eye could see the sun if it had not the form of the sun, thus no soul can see beauty if it has not first become beautiful itself."<sup>33</sup> Therefore only a good, clean soul has the ability to gaze on supreme beauty, because it itself has been transformed into beauty. Man, then, who has arrived as a lover to ascend to see the limitless beauty will have become capable of seeing to the one, the divine, from which the soul, the spirit, and the mind flow.

It is true that it is not easy to know if in fact absolute beauty exists as an ontologically, gnoseologically, and aesthetically idealized entity; nor that the beauty of a being is related to the memory and revival of the erotic relationship that another human soul had contracted with the ideas, during its symbiosis with them in their super-heavenly realm, as the greatest of the philosophers has claimed.<sup>34</sup> Nor however can we readily accept and in its entirety the Freudian erotic theory of primordial and desirable phantasms,<sup>35</sup> implanted, unconscious, imaginary figures innate in man and which seem to differ only slightly from Platonic theory or from the Jungian theory of archetypes, being entirely independent from the individual human experience, as it appears that Freud did not recognize in this context, to the degree to which he ought, individual human experience.

It is certain that Freud was familiar with discussion among poets and philosophers on eros. Eros appears throughout his work contributing to the cohesion of men, compelling them to minimize dispersion and to create unities, which is to say, to form relationships. Of course as he himself notes, eros in his reflection edges toward "divine Plato."<sup>36</sup> In his work *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, he will in fact insist that not only Platonic Eros but even the Agape of the Apostle Paul should be identified with the expanded definition of eros in psychoanalysis, i.e., of the libido.<sup>37</sup> Stood opposite death, in any case, eros, as Freud sees it, is that which makes life possible and allows, as Alain Badiou expresses so well, the advent of the two, the scene of the two.<sup>38</sup>

The Freudian discovery of the unconscious in the context, of which the theory of impulse has been greatly discussed, is deeply ambiguous in some aspects. Of course it could not be otherwise. According to Freud, psychic activity is known to be sparked by the function of the impulses. Impulses act like systems of tendencies derived from bodily functions. In 1915, Freud divided impulses into two basic types: impulses of the ego and sexual impulses. In 1920 in his work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he recategorized them.<sup>39</sup> Impulses of the

ego and sexual impulses (libido) were subsumed into one type called eros; opposite them, he placed the death impulse (*Thanatos*), i.e., a self-destructive impulse that relates to every process of living things and which is expressed by the tendency to return to an earlier state.<sup>40</sup> Both the impulses to life and death surface in the psychic sphere as primordial phantasms and play a most central role in ontogeny. Likewise the orientations of life impulses, i.e., the forms of satisfaction that they demand, are strictly defined, in opposition to those of the libido, which are more flexible. The attempt, however, of eros to deduce in ever larger and more permanent unities the nature of life finds death in opposition to it, which seeks to annihilate life, to reduce it to inorganic matter. Eros desires to live according to the principle of pleasure, but the environment runs counter to the fulfillment of this desire.

Impulses exist in a limitless alchemy of the imaginary. Here the subject is dominated by a fantasy which is lived as if more real than the real. Here, however, we find the essentiality of alienation which, in the general sense of the term, works on the individual level and is none other than the domination by an autonomous imaginary which has usurped from the subject, the task of defining reality, and his desire. And here it is perhaps not necessary to say that neither Heraclitus nor Plato, as even a cursory reading of the *Symposium* allows us to see, was unaware of the depth of psychic activity.

Accordingly we should furthermore say that when, as generally happens in psychoanalytic praxis, we attempt to find within the individual that which transcends him and represents the universal, which may be appropriate and necessary, still we cannot assume each individual to be an example of generality, or a simple chain of substitutions and transpositions. The individual cannot be only a first link of representations from which all others flow, a type of development. He is always also a continuous emergence of representations, feelings, and intentions, as well as a singularity of this representational flow and so forth.

Freud, of course, could not fail to refer to beauty, primarily in his work *Civilization and Its Discontents*, in which he discusses its significance with regard to the avoidance of anguish and recognizes as intoxicating the aesthetic pleasure which flows from it. He becomes ambiguous however when he insists that it is difficult to be bereft of it in the context of culture, but notes that its benefit is not sufficiently clear.<sup>41</sup> This beauty is fatefully connected with eros, which, transformed, that is to say channeled towards higher aims, will be reshaped in the act of creation. By this definition, the work of art is a creation of eros.

In the 1930s, Jung, a student of Freud's, and proponent of the so-called theory of archetypes, in a sense subjugated the individual to the collective. According to this theory, some primordial images, actions, and ideas, which surfaced from amongst the earliest experiences of mankind, intrude and function as archetypes in the so-called collective unconscious of the human race and, as a result, in the individual unconscious, whence they emerge in every case through phantasms related to myth, religion, art, or psychopathological-neurotic behavior.<sup>42</sup> Jung in his theory of archetypes, subjugating the individual to the collective, insisted that the situations connected to these archetypes and governed by strong emotional meaning express wholly typical human experiences which hold very great significance for the human race. These experiences make up the nuclei around which the soul circles, shaped by numberless alterations.

These archetypes allow for the existence of the work of art, which can, through the archetypes, move us with its beauty: Through it, the deeper meaning of life is revealed. A master artist's perspective in revealing this meaning demands him to distance himself from himself, approaching a meaning that transcends his subjects. Transforming art into meaning, he works flawlessly, resulting in beauty free from representational clumsiness

or imperfections. Giving pleasing form to the archetypal images, the artist creates, according to Jung, a work of art that contributes to the transcension of conscious defense mechanisms, permitting the assimilation of anguish and fear, working redemptively. Such a work expresses the collective unconscious memory; it is located beyond the limits of logic and, for this reason, according to Jung, it is deeply associated with the truth of human nature. It is clear that the archetype of Jung is located quite close to the Platonic *eidos*, and even to the Heraclitan understanding of the soul or to the Pythagorean understanding of the number. Primarily, however, we should say that it is located close to the Plotinian conception of perceptible beauty.<sup>43</sup>

But how, we wonder, could we not consider to be exceedingly individual the erotic phenomenon in man as an experience, as, in other words, an emotional mark on his psychic life? Certainly there is no doubt that this experience relates to the other, the well-formed external appearance and internal individuality of whom, arranged in aesthetic formations of his own self, embody its ability to fulfill its eidologically flawed makeup: As such, the form or beauty of the other is the stimulus for the lover's fascination, in the context of which his personal representations emerge, through which a continuous and hopeless attempt is expressed, as well as the nostalgic desire for his ontological fulfillment.

Lacan imposes himself on the search for the ontological character of eros from this perspective; Lacan is who, penetrating the philosophical debate on eros, contends that eros is that which takes the place of the non-place. In eros, the subject attempts to approach the nature of the other. The subject exposes himself, and exposes his narcissism. While desire is directed toward the other, onto certain objects, eros, according to Lacan, is directed at the other as it emerges in the life of the other, rupturing and reconfiguring it.<sup>44</sup>

Granting this, we consider that there can be no doubt that the other exists; and very much so in fact; and he is essential because only the beloved with his irreplaceable uniqueness could recall those things which we hold within us, and be guarantor of our desires' satisfaction.<sup>45</sup> In reality, however, the loving similarity of the erotic horizon follows between two solitudes, two genuinely solitary existences, each of which projects onto the other, its own self, filled with desirable expectations: In the phenomenon of eros, each of us meets the other and behind him, our own self, which, enchanted by all that we sense the other to represent, rates all his characteristics, even those which others would consider ugly, charmingly beautiful, because they have the privilege of coinciding, or at least of converging towards, the aesthetic archetype of our self; coincidentally, we may say that the tremendous aesthetic variation of art is owed to this, especially that of late modernity. Aesthetic movements like cubism, expressionism, constructivism, surrealism, dadaism, and kitsch, which abandon, or better, crush the “well-formed” outline of the visual worldview, even the grotesque<sup>46</sup> or atonal music of Schönberg and thereafter, like burlesque, are put forth as aesthetic categories of beauty, because the creator and his supporters discover in them a harmony: the echo of their deep internal aesthetic need.

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1. Ivo, Frenzel. “Ästhetik.” Eds. Diemer Alwin and Ivo Frenzel. *Philosophie*. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, (Fischer-Lexicon), 1973. 15-24.

2. Frenzel. *op. cit.*

3. Hans Joachim Störig. *Kleine Weltgeschichte der Philosophie*. II, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1981. 131. Ioannis, Theodorakopoulos. *Introduction to Philosophy [Eisagogi sti Filosofia]*. Vol. III, Athens, 1975.

4. Plato, Meno, 99d “Knowing Nought of What They Say.” The artist cannot explain that which he produces.

5. Charalambos Theodoridis. *Introduction to Philosophy [Eisagogi sti Filosofia]*. Athens: Hestia, 1997. 22 ff.

6. Let us remember here that the issue of the relationship between eros and beauty was proven, not only by philosophy, but also in incomparable fashion in the context of ancient Greek tragic poetry. The tragic poets, indeed, did not follow beauty as an aesthetic category, but as that which relates to the whole world, beyond its subdivided forms. See for example the *Helen* of Euripides, which represents an entire beauty as a figure: It represents *arete* (excellence).

7. Plato, *Symposium*, 202d.

8. Plato, *Symposium*, 212b-211d. I. Theodorakopoulos, *op. cit.* 411. Also, Konstantinos, Georgoulis. *History of Greek Philosophy [Istoria tis Ellinikis Filofofias]*, Vol. I. Athens: Papadimas, 1975. 212 ff.

9. Plato, *Symposium*, 211a. I. Theodorakopoulos, *op. cit.* 399.

10. Plato, *Greater Hippias*, 298a and 299b.

11. Plato, *Greater Hippias*, 297b.

12. Plato, *Symposium*, 210 ff.

13. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247c. Beauty, ultimately, in the experiential world, is presented, according to Plato, with the form of that idea which gloriously illuminates human existence, which comprises its internal current and transcends the dispersal of everyday life, leading to the perfect, the full. The philosopher, calling the erotic motion of the soul towards absolute beauty and transforming thus into the philosopher-lover, activates the internalization of the relationship of discourse with the mania for beauty and knows that this path is marked by a furious dialectic intensity, which is akin to the nucleus of the being of man. With the observation and the touch of this beauty of the human body, he is reminded, moving towards the super-aesthetic beauty, of the eternal image of beauty which his soul could at one time see, during its primordial erotic experience.

14. This idea seems to be located at the base of Freudian thought on the idealization of sexual impulse. Sigmund, Freud. *Un souvenir d'enfance de Léonard de Vinci*. Trad. M. Bonaparte. Paris: Gallimard, 1977.

15. "... ἀλλ' ἴοι καὶ οὐκ ἀμβλύνοιτο οὐδ' ἀπολήγοι τοῦ ἔρωτος, πρὶν αὐτοῦ ὃ ἔστιν ἐκάστου τῆς φύσεως ἄψασθαι ᾧ προσήκει ψυχῆς ἐφάπτεσθαι τοῦ τοιοῦτου—προσῆκει δὲ συγγενεῖ—ᾧ πλησιάσας καὶ μιγείς τῷ ὄντι ὄντως, γεννήσας νοῦν καὶ ἀλήθειαν, γνοίη τε καὶ ἀληθῶς ζῶη καὶ τρέφοιτο καὶ οὕτω λήγοι ὠδίνος, πρὶν δ' οὐ;" Plato, *The Republic*, 490b.

16. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 211a-b and 218b.

17. Of course, Plato will note that he who understands that which appears to be true cannot help but to understand that which is true. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 273d-e.

18. The relationship between the soul's power of mental observation and the place of being is not only a reflective relationship but also a loving one, that is to say, one of wide pleasure. The soul, gazing on the imagined realm of essences, simultaneously thinks, loves, and enjoys: "... ἰδοῦσα διὰ χρόνου τὸ ὄν ἀγαπᾷ τε καὶ θεωροῦσα τάληθῆ τρέφεται καὶ εὐπαθεῖ..." Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247d.

19. Plato, *Phaedrus*, Socrates' second speech, 243e9-256b6.

20. Plotinus with his treatise *On the Good*, while he appears to be aiming at a commentary and exegesis of the Platonic perspective on beauty, in fact, transcends the Platonic view, conflating Plato's understanding of beauty, as exhibited in *Greater Hippias*, the *Symposium*, and the *Phaedrus* with the theory of forms of Aristotle. The reference, furthermore, of Plotinus to non-sensual beauty, appears to be supported by the ideas on the cathartic function of *arete* which are set out in Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Theaetetus*, and are not immediately and directly connected with the Platonic dialectic on eros.

21. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.1.

22. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.9.

23. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.5., 10-14.

24. Cicero, *Tuscul.*, IV, 31.

25. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.4., 13-15.

26. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.6.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.7., 25-39.

29. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.8., 5-8.

30. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.8., 25-27 and I.6.9., 1-2.

31. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.9., 7-15.

32. Before a work of art, writes Plotinus, "... for, indeed, even in pictures those who look at the works of art with their eyes do not see the same things in the same way, but when they recognise an imitation on the level of sense of someone who has a place in their thought they feel a kind of disturbance and come to a recollection of the truth; this is the experience from which passionate loves arise." And also: "... the man who has not seen it may desire it as good, but he who has seen it glories in its beauty and is full of wonder and delight, enduring a shock which causes no hurt, loving with true passion and piercing longing; he laughs at all other loves and despises what he thought beautiful before;" respectively Plotinus, *Enneads*, II.9.16., 45-48, and I.6.7., 14-19.

33. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.9., 22-25 and 30-32.

34. Georgoulis, *op. cit.* 211.

35. Aldo Carotenuto. *Eros and Pathos*. Athens: Itamos, 1998. 13.

36. Freud writes: "As for the 'expansion' of the meaning of sexual urge, which the analysis of children and of the so-called anomalies requires of us, let all those who from their superior eye cast a condescending gaze on psychoanalysis be pleased to recall how closely related the expanded sexual impulse of psychoanalysis with the eros of divine Plato." See the last line of the fourth Prologue of his 1920 work *Trois essais sur la théorie de la sexualité*. Trad. B. Reverchon-Jouve. Paris: Gallimard, 1962.

37. A number of reservations could be expressed with regard to the identification of Greek eros or Freudian libido with Christian agape. Sykoutris in his Introduction to Plato's *Symposium* will note that Christian agape is not selective, it is not evaluative; it is not reciprocating. As a psychic phenomenon, it transcends the distinction of the sexes. Rightly, as well, in his *Freud and Plato*, Santas claims that Freud's libido, even after the expansion of its content, is not to be identified with Platonic eros, despite assertions to the contrary by Freud himself and his students Nachmansohn and Pfister. Freud's medical infrastructure, he notes, led him to think of agape in terms of symptom and cause, almost as if it were a disease. Gerasimos, Santas. *Freud and Plato*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988.

38. Alain, Badiou. "La scène du Deux." Badiou, Alain, et al. *De l'amour* (sous la direction de l'école de la cause freudienne). Paris: Flammarion, 1999. 177-90. Badiou, studying the ontological composition of eros, will show us that eros is a demand for truth that demands universality. As such it is not located far from political enlistment for social liberation. Respectively Alain Badiou and Nicolas Truong. *Eloge de l'amour*. Paris: Flammarion, 2011 and Alain Badiou. "Pour une politique illimitée." Eds. Badiou Alain, Francois Jullien, and Hubert Reeves. *De la limite*. Paris: Parenthèses, 2005. 147-68.

39. Sigmund, Freud. Au-delà du principe de plaisir: *Essais de psychanalyse*. Trad. A. Bourguignon, Paris: Payot, 1981. Freud will continue the relevant conversation with the new categorization of impulses in the context of his metapsychology and the texts of *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, and *The Ego and the Id*. Sigmund Freud. *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. Trans. J. Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990 and *The Ego and the Id*. Trans. J. Riviere, ed. J. Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990. Also, Sigmund Freud. *Psychologie des foules et analyse du Moi: Essais de psychanalyse*, *op. cit.* and *Le Moi et le Ça: Essais de Psychanalyse*, *op. cit.*

40. It is clear that the distinction Eros-Thánatos arises from the influence of Empedocles, whom Freud explicitly recognizes, and correspondingly to the Philotes-Neicus bipolarity. The close relationship between Eros and Thanatos comprised, as we know, beginning with the ancient Greek tragic poets (see for example the excellent tragedy of Sophocles, *Antigone*) and Plato, a popular topic of study for many writers. For example, Henry Staten. *Eros in Mourning: Homer to Lacan*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

41. Sigmund, Freud. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Trans. G. Bambalis. Athens: Epicurus, 1994. 37.

42. Carl, Jung. *Psychologie de l'inconscient*. Trad. R. Cahen. Paris: Le livre de poche, 1996, where he discusses the theory of eros; Carl Jung. *L'homme et ses symboles*. Trad. M.-L. von Franz. Paris: R. Laffont, 1990. Let us note here that in the same period that Jung was researching archetypes in the context of analytical psychology, a Scot anthropologist, J. Frazer, studied complex interconnections between myth, religion, and art from the same perspective. He recorded a rich collection of myths that work as common imaginary constructions to confirm the symbolic function of the collective unconscious. With this study he reinforced Freud and Jung's psychoanalytic theory in regards to the "social character" of the unconscious on the one hand, and on the other, he fell into the illusion of structuralism, which was gaining adherents at the time. Sir James Frazer. *The Golden Bough*. Mineola NY: Dover Publications Inc.; Abridged Edition, 2003.

43. Plotinus, *Enneads*, V.8.8., 11-15.

44. Primarily Jacques Lacan. *Le séminaire. Livre I. Les écrits techniques de Freud*. Paris: Seuil, 1991.

45. Carotenuto, *op. cit.* 24.

46. For the aesthetic movements of the 20th century, Maurice Besset. *20. Jahrhundert. Belser Stilgeschichte im dtv. band. 11*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1978, *passim*. John Nash. *Kubismus, Futurismus und Konstruktivismus*. München-Zürich: Droemer Knaur, 1975. 43 ff.

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