Daily, social-security-releated problems such as robberies, thefts, legitimate defenses or not, terrorist attacks, collapsing viaducts, etc. are said to have to be dealt with. We also hear regular discussions about disorganization in hospitals (with episodes of malpractice) or in schools, immigration or the perception of "the other", the one different from us, inconvenience in commuting and so on. Now, as any ordinary newscast is used to do, we introduce the political side by saying: "and now let's move to politics", as if politics was something completely different from what was said before. Different from environmental pollution, unemployment, lack of work or problems at work: different from the most delicate existential and ethical issues on the meaning of life and its end.

Nevertheless, as it often happens, it is precisely in the meaning of the term that the original and most authentically positive dimension is found: the term "*Politics*" comes from the Greek "Pólis", "city". Therefore, it implicitly alludes to "the government, the care, the caring and the preoccupation with the issues of the city" and by extension, to "the care, organization, and government of all areas and territorial bodies of coexistence (that includes localities, urban areas, cities, provinces, regions, nations, supranational realities)".

For this reason, politics must be re-discovered in its original light, as a cure, here on earth, capable of restoring dignity, brightness and positivity to a dimension that too often is confused with its shadow: corruption, occult embezzlement, intrigue, profiteering and, or, with the support of political power: strategies – more or less legitimate – for the employment of top government bodies positions and public administration, exclusively motivated by party affiliation or with the party to which they belong as the sole reference factor, sometimes disregarding completely any meritocratic, competitive or individual ethical criterion; alliances between parties for the constitution of a parliament majority, the birth and disintegration of coalitions, the adoption or the derailing of legislative measures: the so-called 'partitocracy' (or party politics) and the connected phenomenon of partitocratic subdivision.

But politics isn't necessarily power for power's sake; not only this, indeed.

Politics is feminine, it is Soul, care, sensitivity, respect for plurality – of the different traditions, the different belonging, the individual stories – the plurality that the word "Politics" has in its root *Poly* (from the Greek *Polius*, "many"); it is rooted in many words,

such as "*poly*functional", "*poly*centric", "*poly*cultural", always as an indication of plurality, diversity (of quality, not quantity) of what follows.

Politics as a *cure for Anima Mundi*, caring and concerning for the world in which we live, the local events as well as the national and international, inspired by the ancient idea of "Soul of the world" that connects everything.

In order to understand politics as the caring of the *Anima Mundi*[1] we are also solicited by the work of James Hillman, who in his "Politics of Beauty"[2] expresses himself as follows:

Where we are less able, what make us suffer more and in which we anesthetize ourselves, what we remove most – with earplugs, bolts, alcohol, electronics, hi-fi, coffee and shopping – is the world out there: Polis. We remove the psyche from the polis and we are unconscious to it: it's the polis of the unconscious.

We have become hyper-conscious patients and analysts, very aware individuals, very subtly interiorized and very unconscious citizens… The world does not ask us to be believed in itself; the world just asks that we become aware of it, that we appreciate it and that we have attention and care for it.

Hillman emphasizes the importance of dealing with things concerning the external world with a psychological perspective, attention to detail and individuality; but not only must we address to the so-called "inner world", with its symbolic, semiotic and metaphorical language, as psychoanalysis has done too often in its history, a little bit guiltily since its birth[3], but rather turning with the prerogatives of this perspective to the exterior world, "real", out there, the polis, the environment and the problems of coexistence.

And since this is the real field of politics, only by dealing with this can the citizens become more conscious; through it, the individual expresses himself and becomes a total being and the world becomes better.

A “psychoanalysis of the polis” seems to suggest Hillman (from these considerations came the idea and foundation of our Institute of Psychoanalysis of Politics, the first of its kind), where it is no longer just the individual and his inner world to be protagonists of the setting, but where “the world out there”, with its frantic and stressful rhythms, its ecological disasters (e.g. the invasion of microplastics in the seas and oceans, the persistence of an energy supply of activities still too much based on highly polluting fossil fuels, such as coal and oil, the main causes of global warming) and an urban environment made of artificial and polluting materials (concrete, asphalt, plastics, aluminum, efficient, functional and economical[4] as much as you want, but also very harmful for our physical and psychological health; materials that have deeply cut the healthy and vital relationship with the natural world made of wood, grass, green, trees, which in addition to casting us shadows, remove carbon dioxide to give us oxygen) becomes the protagonist of our experience.

The cornerstone of a pre-Socratic “Anima Mundi” idea returns.

The most important thing is that depression is a collective endemic disease and we feel it and think it’s just inside our brain. “In… my family, in my marriage, in my work, in my economy”… We have brought all this into a “me”. Instead, if there is an Anima Mundi, if there is a Soul of the World – and we are part of the Soul of the World – then what happens in the external Soul also happens to me and so I feel the extinction of the plants, animals, cultures, languages, customs, crafts, stories… They’re all disappearing. Of course, my soul necessarily feels a sensation of loss, of loneliness, of isolation, of mourning and nostalgia, and sadness too: it is the reflection in me of a matter of fact. And if I do not feel depressed, then I’m crazy! This is the real disease! I would be completely excluded from the reality of what is happening in the world, the ecological destruction.[5]

This is the reason why politics, also inspired by the fundamental Jungian conception of “collective unconscious” – the interview in which Jung himself declares that the “collective unconscious” is the idea that he considers perhaps most fruitful and that he feels most fond

of -, can be seen as the alchemical art of healing, mixing, synthesizing the different principles ("Principia" as Paracelsus would say), Various ἀρχή, who find themselves acting, not infrequently in conflict and in reciprocal countertendency, in interior and individual life as well as in the events and situations of collective life. The motions, the mechanisms and the motives of the Soul and of physics are one, to know them as phenomena or noumena, interior or exterior, comes instead from different disciplinary perspectives, but they remain one thing only: knowledge of the Soul, *Aletheia, Epistrophé*.

Precisely for this reason and to realize this curative dimension of politics it becomes necessary also to know the mechanisms (and related failures) that regulate their life, to get an idea of what are the main "political psychopathologies" and possibly be able to identify some solution to answer therapeutically.

The first pathology probably resides in the disaffection with politics, in the emotional distance that is perceived with increasing evidence with respect to this dimension, seen more and more as "dirty", the "psychic shadow" place of systematic deception and lying, where to become cleverer, even in defiance of every more ethically respectable rule of cohabitation, has become positive – to such perverse consequences led the "bad politics"! After all, the "good politics" was and still is paid at a high price, even with life itself, by those who become its interpreters.

This purulent rupture between subjectivity and politics, the art of dealing with the *polis* and the world, has produced the symptoms of electoral abstention – the percentage of citizens who vote and / or who trust in a party (emblematic, among many others, was the case of the latest regional elections in Emilia Romagna, where the percentage of voters was only 37.5% against the previous rounds that had seen a percentage of 70% and above; practically the last time voted half of those who usually went to the polls!).

This decline is not an isolated and occasional fruit, but has been repeated at all local and national administrative consultations in recent years; there is a progressive mistrust associated and coming from politics, a dimension of speaking without maintaining, of unreliability, irresponsibility, disloyalty – a progressive and very marked distancing of citizens from participatory processes, which is by no means casual; but strongly desired by the political class (leaders of parties, parliamentarians, regional and municipal councilors)

who certainly do not want to question themselves in their role of representation and therefore do not intend to hazard a consultation of direct democracy (i.e. Referendum and Deliberative Assemblies, municipal or local, open to resident citizens and therefore not only consultative as the institute of the "debàt publique"), even with respect to the problems that affect citizens more directly and sentimentally, and that could be denied here, as well as in the positions taken, even in their role as protagonists in the press and mass media.

He who works in professional politics (in which, with the connected limit of two mandates, we would have nothing to object) does not want to lose the role and sinecures connected, it is understandable, but in doing so produces the negative, perverse, highly harmful symptoms mentioned above: the disaffection, the electoral absenteeism, the drastic decline in participation not only in decision-making processes, but also in active political life (in parties, movements, associations)… it is now understood that in these contexts those who make the voice bigger and bigger, he who has more ability to resist and be arrogant, aggressive and generally get also away with it… *politics now is no longer, assuming it has ever been, a dimension for kind and sensitive souls*.

The political framework, practically everywhere (even if in Italy we seem more apparent, but perhaps it is only because we live here), is based on a permanent conflict, "us or them", where we are the citizens, spotless workers, honest and strenuous, but defeated (even to survive or live in dignity and they, "politicians or public administrators", dishonest, shady, climbed to the bench with methods at least impervious, corrupt, "shadow incarnate", object of every abject consideration already firstly, condemned even before any investigation as enriched unworthily and unfairly, economically as well as in the position and in social facilities, precisely by virtue of their status as politicians, elected to institutional positions).

This extremely purulent skirmish between "us and them", between "beautiful and kind souls", but impotent and "dirty souls, dirty, dishonest, liar and corrupt, hellish", but powerful, is the cause of the most serious damage and poison in the social fabric, in the social cohesion and social coexistence: what is the *polis* if not a special and larger condominium?

The same duel, the harsh dyad, which is found in the permanent and vivid opposition between "Left" and "Right", the two parts of the whole (psychologically the self = single

part, party, against the Self = All, Self = State) that are in permanent conflict and skirmish, but that feed upon, or are the fruits of, a vision of politics as war, *Polemos*; actually, while psychiatry speaks of "bipolar disorder" as a disease to be treated, the politics of the second republic (second, not by chance, remember that the words "duality" and "duel" concearn and are directly derived from "Two", the number of the conflict – in its positive meaning the Two translates into comparison, dialectics, ambivalence) had even found in the so-called "bipolarism" or "bipolar system" (in the permanent and ideological opposition "right-of-cetre against center", ample coalitions, containing anything and everything, and for this reason also a low coefficient of governability) the balm of good politics, that politics antithetical to consociationalism, to which in fact the first decades of republican life, especially since the eighties, got us used to.

This permanent opposition becomes in political jargon that "crystallized opposition" to which we are now perniciously accustomed and that we mean, mistakenly, as a natural game, according to which, even if today we all see the sky clear, there will always be the part that plays the role of opposition that wants to differentiate forcefully – with a press note, through the spokesman on duty -, perhaps to say "if it's clear, in two hours it will rain and it is the fault of the government", or and even more, up to avoiding the obvious: "the sky is not clear"… so far we as know, the perceptual alteration capacity of a conflicting psyche arrives.

If a "situational opposition" is a right, prerogative and guarantee of democratic freedom and expression, the "permanent or crystallized opposition" is a pathology, the pathology of a war policy, inspired by the conflict, the sentence of the general and Prussian military theorist Karl von Clausevitz, according to whom war is nothing more than the continuation of political work by other means – and also vice versa, we are saying here – the symptom and product of the manichaean conflict between Good and Evil: perhaps an inevitable conflict in certain moments of life, but still a primordial conflict between the opposites.

The political vision as alchemy referred to above, aims to reconcile opposites in a framework that is not harmonic, certainly less based on the only taste of war and the acrimonious and permanent confrontation, dual, whose mechanism of "pendulum functionality", years of center-left government, which are followed literally by years of center-right government, is sincerely banal and decidedly strenuous.

As a therapy to all this we propose to look at the Swiss political system, where the harmful mechanism of "crystallized opposition" does not exist, and it's replaced by a special and higher level of political awareness, the result of centuries of direct democracy *(i.e. Landsgemeinden,* Referendum and popular petitions, all institutes that in Switzerland were born many centuries ago) that among other things has been able to produce the so-called "magic formula", thanks to which for decades Switzerland has made the stability of government a characterizing element like in no other country (the Helvetic Confederation was also left unscathed by the two war conflicts world), where the parties of at least a minimal representative parliamentary force, right and left, sit together around the same table of government, are in the same executive (not only together in parliament, that is, as it is conceived here by us) and where they dispute on individuals measures to be taken, but, precisely because of greater psychophysical proximity, standing next to the seats of government, much less harsh than commonplace among us.

The proximity in this sense is certainly a factor that reduces political tension; here instead it is often shaken by malevolent factors of personal confrontation between the leaders of the various political forces.

Also for this reason we propose to establish the new figure of the "Street Mayor", equally as the first political-administrative reference for citizens – it would be up to that Mayor, with his/her office of collaborators, to interface with the departments and departments of the municipal administration, regional, national or otherwise, through its help and support; it is the office of the "mayor of the street" that then gives welcome and receives the new residents, who communicates the works needed to keep the road surfaces, sidewalks, the activation and maintenance of the underground services, the periodic cleaning of the roads (and any other communication necessary to the good management of street cohabitation); it is always this office that helps foreign citizens and the elderly in all the bureaucratic practices (definitively replacing the "Public Relations Offices") and it would always be this office that becomes an essential point of reference for safety by setting up a voluntary service permanent, 24 hours a day (such as the voluntary service of public assistance, for example) of surveillance and vigilance of one's own road that supports in a capillary, concrete and widespread way the task entrusted to the police.

Street therefore, the first reality just above the condominium and before the district and the

district; these last realities perceptively already less identifiable by the citizens (perhaps Siena apart and as an exception, with its historical and always active “districts”); the street-path, as a basic administrative unit, much less large than the city, the provinces, the regions, the nations and the supranational realities like the European Union, which due to their large size are a sure factor of disaffection and detachment from politics.

The individual in these gigantic dimensions gets lost, becomes debased, is frustrated by the sense of loss of all decision-making power; he/she feels like a grain of sand on a beach, he/she feels he/she does not count for anything. Which, added to the feeling of the postal package serving the needs of the bureaucracy – and not vice versa, as it should be -, makes an explosive mixture of frustration, detachment, resentment, disaffection towards all political actors and towards politics itself, with consequent, very dangerous symptoms of non-participation, electoral abstention and populist indifference.

The psychopathologies of a harbinger of “Gigantism” and “Titanism”, and not just the result of modern living stressed (stress has to do with the same etymology of the words “stretch”, “fatigue”) and with anxiety, are curable, find therapies and remedy in the “small is beautiful”: the small size returns the politics to the beauty of attention to details, that Soul which being in the details makes beautiful, hospitable, functional and well-livable a place, a town, a city.

Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, was literally in love with the stones of the streets of central Florence, as many are the sanpietrini of Rome and many others of the labyrinthine alleys of our small villages, of that architecture inspired by the beauty and the sacred of the our villages, the beautiful little villages of central Italy, with their intimate rhythms, the true soul of my country and the authentic cornestone of Italy.

These elements make the “Soul of Places”[6], a harmonious union with the *Genius Loci* and able, in a well-administered locality, to give us *Salus*.

Huge realities such as hypermarkets, the United States of America, China, Russia, the European Union that in a period of evident gigantism did not want to lag behind – we prefer, as we have said and written elsewhere, the structure of “European Confederation”[7], certainly more responsive to combining the autonomy and the sovereignty of the single

European nations, each with a history often stretching back centuries, with the strength of a center of supranational coordination (perhaps on precise and circumscribed areas and subjects and for example not on the quotas imposed to each State in the production in agriculture and in the agri-food sector, and only for the fact that what we eat and drink more tends to rely on a zero km supply chain, the better it is for health, otherwise for goods and services not perishable and in virtue of their exclusive quality, even if they are free, reciprocal, even if regulated, their exchange and their production) – are the fruits and symptoms of this historical period of gigantism.

But in the eschatology of the Greek myth of which Hesiod speaks, the giants and titans in the end are defeated, defeated by the anthromorphous Deities led by Zeus.

The small and medium wins and will win; there are also famous episodes of sinking of giants' gigantic ships – the most recent, the Concordia, on the Island of Giglio -: among all those of the two ships called "Titanic" (usually we remember only one, but two ships with this name were touched by the same fate). The arrogance of the titanic, after the initial boldness, or precisely for this, sooner or later sinks and finds its Nemesis.

To replace the gigantic of the politics of big numbers (Macro): impersonal, collective, herd instinct, distant, frustrating, irritating, harbinger of depression and a sense of impotence, a policy that is administered by many finally trained (*id est* politically educated), periodically renewed in their offices, street by street, always in contact and communicative and operative exchange: this is the commitment that awaits us.

Naturally without renouncing that globality of the movements, of the business, of the world as we know it and perceive it, but positively compensating this perception of globality (gigantic) with an administration of small realities, attentive to small things.

These things, these remedies, these therapies and even before this attitude of taking care the world, with its wonders and its resources, are doing politics in the noblest and most elevated sense, which is an improvement, a response akin to the "soul making" that Hillman told us about.

Here, together with the first and most important solution, that of a "guaranteed work" by

law (such as that of free health care and accessible in emergency for all, as also provided by our constitution and now acquired in our culture; “guaranteed work” must become too a universal, acquired right which, among other things, would fully and finally achieve Article 1 of the Italian Constitution), reside fundamental ingredients of involvement and participation capable of effectively counteracting those symptoms of “depersonalization”, “anesthetization”, “annihilation” caused by the nefarious politics, all inspired and aimed at Gigantism, the gigantic, the macro. We said of a “guaranteed job”, offered as a social deal (if you did not find a job, the State will provide one to you among the services that the administration needs) and paid naturally only in a basic (eg. € 500 for ten, twelve, hours of weekly work, a sort of universal civil service that for young people, among other things, should be mandatory). Having more will always be possible, in a direct and proportional relationship to one’s “professional individuation” and work and social skills.

This fact, together with the gradual disappearance of cash, to the creation of the figure of the “financial tutor” (among the Municipalities or Banks, quite another thing, much more meritorious, noble and more difficult than the operation of “private bankers” who manage the assets already in place) that helps entrepreneurs, professionals and individuals to recover, in a guaranteed way, from situations of financial difficulty, together with the abolition of rejection in the various grades of school in the age of obligation (replaced by the stay at school in the months of June and July for the recovery in the subjects in which the preparation is considered insufficient by the teachers) – the fundamental and irreplaceable psychological point remains that one of the 1970s must always go to class (except in exceptional cases, such as, for example, anticipating by a year the beginning of the elementary school cycle) with those of the ‘70s, with his peers, without suffering in childhood or adolescence the trauma of rejection!

The rejection trauma should be reserved for the higher grades of the training path, such as the University.

These concrete solutions, based on the analysis of the political pathologies that we have reported above, return to the Politics the capital “P”, the nobility of the healing dimension for the Soul and for the bodies, the Lucidity and Luminosity of the Divine which is realized here in this precious and sacred scenario that is our Earth.

Endnotes

[1] Institute for Psychoanalysis of Politics [it] www.confederati.org

[2] James Hillman, “Politica della bellezza”, ed. Moretti e Vitali, Bergamo.

[3] James Hillman, Michael Ventura, “We’ve Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy – And the World’s Getting Worse”, 1992.

[4] It is now widely demonstrated and not only in that ecopsychological key to which we refer in the text, that an economy dissociated from ecological knowledge – and after all the two words “eco-nomy” and “eco-logy”, lett. “The administration (nomìa, from the Greek *Nomos* = Administer) of the environment (eco)” and “eco-logy, “the study (*logìa*) of the environment (eco)”, do not coincidentally have the same root – is harmful and in the devastating medium and long term. Here we see as the highest Politics, far-sighted, not short-sighted or idiotic (the Greeks identified with a word that translated brings the English “idiot” precisely those who cannot see beyond the immediate), makes a positive difference in the care health and well-being (even economic in the long run) of populations, places, cities

[5] James Hillman, interview with Silvia Ronchey.

[6] James Hillman, Carlo Truppi, “L’anima dei luoghi”, ed. Rizzoli.

[7] On the idea of “European Confederation” instead of “European Union” cfr. Daniele Cardelli www.confederati.org