

The Divine Comedy is an epic poem written by Dante Alighieri between 1308 and 1321. The poem is divided into three canticas: Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise each consisting of thirty-three cantos plus one introductory canto, which sums up to 100 cantos in total. The verse scheme used is hendecasyllabic (11 syllables) with the lines composing tercets according to the rhyme scheme *aba, bcb, cdc, ded*, and so on.

Dante tells the story a journey, made by the poet himself through the three realms of the afterlife. The notion of the Underworld is rooted in both, Western Medieval and Islamic cultures. However, Dante's inspiration travels all the way back to more ancient times, to the Latin poet Virgil and to his epic poem *Aeneid* (XXIX - XIX B.C).

The main purpose of the Divine Comedy, as stated by the Florentine poet himself, is to bring mankind back on the road of Truth through the representation of the punishments and the rewards awaiting the respective sinner and saints in the eternal life.

Dante, whose soul is lost in a shadowed forest, is firstly led to the light by Virgil but only after having visited Inferno and Purgatory. Secondly, it is Beatrice to guide Dante to the presence of all saints and finally to the presence of God in Paradise. This divine journey through the three realms is the allegorical representation of the fall of the human soul: first is the fall into error and sin, which is then followed by the acknowledgment of one's own mistake under the guidance of Wisdom.

As Dante himself describes in the *Epistola XIII*, a letter written to his patron Cangrande della Scala, the Comedy has to be interpreted in four different ways: literal, allegorical, moral and anagogic. Endless speculations have been proposed about the last three interpretation methods. However, until now, no one except for Giancarlo Gianazza considered the first, most pragmatic method of interpretation of the Comedy.

It is in the spirit, only a mathematician has, that Gianazza begun reading the Comedy not as an imaginary journey but rather as a journey that *literally* occurred – the journey of Dante in Iceland.