Retrospection and Re-orientation in Dante's Ante-Purgatory

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Contents

Short Abstract

This thesis investigates Dante's use of retrospection in Ante-Purgatory or, more specifically, of intratextual eches of *Inferno* in *Purgatorio* I-IX. Building upon earlier work on intratextuality in the poem, the thesis highlights and discusses vertical echoes between cantos of the same number, diegetic, and episode-related parallels, as well as other forms of repetition, including recalls of specific lexical fields, syntagms, and rhyme patterns. In so doing, the thesis aims, firsltly, to demonstrate that Ante-Purgatory constitutes a privileged space for retrospective reading, and secondly, to broaden the manner in which we conceive of intratextuality within the *Commedia*. This is achieved through considering the ways in which Dante develops a programme of recalls across the Ante-Purgatory cantos to the beginning of *Inferno*, to Limbo, and to the encounter with Ulysses, and by considering several less-established modes of retrospection, including thematic parallels, similarities in the presentation of certain figures, and landscape echoes. In Chapter 1, I consider how retrospection in *Purgatorio* I and II contributes to the re-orientation of the reader at the beginning of the new *cantica*. In Chapter 2, I explore the thorny and problematic issue of Virgil's damnation which, I argue, is developed especially in cantos III-VI through recalls to *Inferno* IV. In Chapter 3, I explore the value of landscape reading and how the poet makes important recalls to infernal landscapes and modes of travel through Hell. Overall, we see that in the liminal and transitional zone that is Ante-Purgatory, the preoccupation with retrospection interrogates and problematizes the division between the damned and the saved in the passage from Hell to Purgatory. Though retrospective elements are of course present throughout the *Commedia*, I argue that Ante-Purgatory is a particularly privileged space for retrospection precisely because of its liminal textual and geographic position.

Long Abstract

The central claim of this thesis is that Dante's Ante-Purgatory is a privileged space for recalling the *Inferno*, and that, by means of this repeated call to retrospection, the poet re-orientates the reader in the second realm. The first nine cantos of the *Purgatorio* are frequently associated with nostalgia, back-sliding, looking backwards, and a complex and prolonged desire for earthly bodies and earthly relationships. These associations are often based on poetic elements such as the famously nostalgic opening to *Purgatorio* VIII, but more consistently on the behaviour and narratives of the souls the pilgrim encounters on his first in day in Purgatory. Casella attempts to embrace the pilgrim, the newly arrived souls are transfixed by his song; Manfred, Jacopo del Cassero, and Buonconte da Montefeltro all recount the gruesome fates of their mortal bodies; and almost all souls in Ante-Purgatory ask the pilgrim to carry word of them back to their living relatives. While Ante-Purgatory is frequently considered for the manner in which souls look back to their past lives on earth, it is also a part of Dante's poem which frequently looks back to *Inferno*, consistently recalling previous episodes, encounters, landscapes, linguistic formulas and rhyme patterns. This dissertation provides a new and sustained focus on such modes of textual retrospection. These textual recalls, which the thesis will document and examine in detail, often appear to encourage the reader to contrast the behaviour or situation of the pilgrim, Virgil, or the damned souls in Hell with that of their behaviour in Ante-Purgatory. In this manner, I show that Ante-Purgatory may well be backward-looking but not exclusively in the manner it has been traditionally treated in Dante criticism.

Ante-Purgatory can be defined variously as the first nine cantos of the *Purgatorio*, the geo-topographical area outside the Gate of Purgatory, the area where

souls only suffer *poena damni* (pain of loss), or the area which the pilgrim and Virgil pass through on their first day in Purgatory. The term appears to be used for the first time by Benvenuto da Imola in the third redaction of his *Comentum* (c. 1375-80), and there has traditionally been relatively little critical interest in Ante-Purgatory – especially when compared with other areas of Dante's vision of the afterlife, such as Hell and the Earthly Paradise – even though this critical neglect has begun to be addressed in recent years.

One of the key aims of this thesis, then, is to contribute to and develop this recent revitalization of interest in Ante-Purgatory in Dante Studies by offering an extended and in-depth investigation of the first nine cantos of *Purgatorio*. Additionally, my analysis reveals and explores more textual echoes of *Inferno* in the first nine cantos than have been previously considered, thereby also broadening the manner in which we consider intratextuality and retrospective reading within the *Commedia*. Thirdly, and finally, I aim to show that Ante-Purgatory functions as a space for the re-orientation of the reader and the pilgrim, introducing new elements and themes for the new *cantica* by looking back contrastively to *Inferno*. At the same time, as I will demonstrate throughout this thesis, the transition between Hell and Purgatory is not always clear-cut, and often retrospective elements do as much to problematize the division between damnation and salvation as they do to re-enforce it. This is particularly evident in the case of Virgil's shifting role as guide in Purgatory as a damned pagan. I do not, therefore, present retrospective reading as a means of resolving some of the ambiguities, uncertainties, and paradoxes of Ante-Purgatory. Instead, I argue that the poet's persistent use of retrospective elements aim at teaching and educating the reader in how to read the second *cantica* while also calling on the reader to re-evaluate

episodes from *Inferno*, above all, the presentation of Limbo and the noble pagans in *Inferno* IV.

While this thesis builds on a new recent interest in Ante-Purgatory, it is also based on a much longer-standing and larger body of work on intratextuality within the *Commedia*. I identify what I term 'retrospective elements' throughout the first nine cantos by drawing on well-accepted forms of intratextuality such as vertical echoes, parallel episodes, the repetition of key words and formulas and rhyme patterns, as identified by critics such as Charles Singleton, Zygmunt Barański, Robert Durling and Ronald Martinez, Lloyd Howard, and Roberto Antonelli. However, I also explore less frequently referenced modes of allusion such as thematic echoes, similarities in the presentation of certain figures which tie certain characters together across *cantiche*, and landscape echoes. In this manner, I demonstrate that it is advantageous to explore the way in which the poet deploys a programme of retrospection across multiple cantos and explore new connections between Ante-Purgatory and *Inferno*.

The thesis is divided into an Introduction, three main chapters and an Epilogue. The Introduction gives an overview of the treatment of Ante-Purgatory in Dante Studies and outlines the historical context and possible precedents for Dante's liminal zone in theological writings and popular visions of the period. The introduction then proceeds to consider the structure and groupings of souls in Ante-Purgatory, discussing some of the problems this has raised for conceptualisations of Ante-Purgatory in Dante Studies. I avoid the temptation to group or divide souls any more than is strictly necessary, following Sordello's assertion that souls in Ante-Purgatory are able to move freely ('loco certo non c'è posto [*Purg.* VII, 40]). I then turn to the issues of re-orientation and relation in the first nine cantos, considering the manner in which references to the sun and requests for prayer already contribute to the re-orientation of both the pilgrim and

the reader in the new realm. Though the movement of the sun remains important throughout *Purgatorio*, it is in Ante-Purgatory that it is seen again for the first time since *Inferno* I. Moreover, reference to the sun, its movement across the sky, and impending nightfall are particularly concentrated in Ante-Purgatory, which, I argue, contributes to the particularly strong emphasis on time-telling and urgency. In a similar fashion, requests for prayer by souls are especially frequent and urgent in the Ante-Purgatory cantos. This is an element which, naturally, was impossible in *Inferno* where all souls are damned eternally and cannot be helped by the living. This concentration of requests for suffrage in Ante-Purgatory therefore establishes this new and important relationship with the living for the second *cantica.* These two elements remain important throughout the discussion of re-orientation within the thesis. In the Introduction, I also lay out the methodology behind retrospective reading within the thesis through a discussion of various approaches to intratextuality within the *Commedia.*

Chapter 1 examines the nature of retrospection in *Purgatorio* I and II. On the shores of Purgatory, the reader is offered the possibility to look back across the whole of *Inferno* for the first time. The opening canto can therefore be classed as a pivotal one. I examine the way in which *Purgatorio* I and II look back particularly to the opening cantos of *Inferno*, but also to *Inferno* XIII, and to the key Ulysses episode. I suggest that retrospective elements in the opening cantos are used to help the reader to measure the pilgrim's progress since the beginning of his journey, but also to measure the distance he has travelled from his sinister double Ulysses. Furthermore, through the encounter with Cato, I suggest that the poet begins to problematize the binary dichotomy between damnation and salvation by staging the exchange between the pilgrim's damned but beloved pagan guide and stern Cato who, despite his suicide and

paganism, is saved. Finally, I explore the manner in which we can read the souls' flight towards the mountain at the end of *Purgatorio* II as a result of Cato's rebuke works contrastively against the souls' crossing of the Styx in *Inferno* III.

In Chapter 2, I build on the complex issue of Virgil's damnation already raised in part through the discussion of the encounter with Cato. While several readers of Dante have attempted to find ways in which the 'più che padre' (*Purg*. XXIII, 4) might conceivably be saved beyond the narrative of the *Commedia*, I concentrate on how the problem of Virgil's damnation is developed in the Ante-Purgatory cantos and how this contributes to our understanding of the workings of the area outside the Gates of Purgatory. Though the poet undoubtedly establishes Virgil's limitations even in Hell, in Purgatory the pagan finds himself in unknown territory, having to ask for directions frequently. I argue that in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, the reader is particularly moved to consider Virgil's damnation because of conceptual similarities between Limbo and Ante-Purgatory, in particular, the liminality of the two zones and the lack of physical punishment. As the pilgrim travels through Ante-Purgatory he meets a number of souls who are saved against our expectations, or who appear less virtuous than Virgil. I explore the way in which the encounters with souls in *Purgatorio* III-VI place particular weight on the themes of fame, proper burial, and the need for urgency and discuss these themes in relation to Palinurus who is encountered in the underworld of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Through these themes, the poet asks his readers to re-think and re-evaluate the presentation of souls in *Inferno* IV.

In the third and final chapter, I analyse in further detail the landscape of Ante-Purgatory. I use the term *landscape* in a poetic context, and my discussion considers landscape as the textual representation of experience in a given environment. I consider not only the manner in which Dante describes and presents the landscapes of Ante-

Purgatory, but also the ways in which the pilgrim, Virgil, and souls in Ante-Purgatory interact with, move across, and experience these landscapes. I explore the ways in which modes of movement and the experience of certain landscapes differ between Ante-Purgatory and Hell, focussing particularly on hesitancy and uncertainty in *Purgatorio* II and III, and the climb up the initial cliff-face in *Purgatorio* IV. I then analyse in depth the most highly developed landscape within the Ante-Purgatory cantos: the Valley of the Rulers. I suggest that the Valley in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII looks ahead to Earthly Paradise but also back to the part of Limbo reserved for the noble pagans, developing observations made in Chapter 2 on the relationship between Limbo and Ante-Purgatory. I suggest that in both *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* VII-VIII, Dante's use of landscape description is revealing of the poet's ambiguous treatment of the inhabitants of both valleys.

Finally, in the epilogue, I consider the way in which Dante's reader is at times encouraged to look back to Ante-Purgatory from the terraces of Mount Purgatory, often through references to souls who have reduced the time spent in Ante-Purgatory or skipped the liminal zone entirely, having been accelerated up the mountain by prayers from the living or a final good deed.

In this thesis, I hope to show that much of what we understand about the liminal zone is informed by retrospective reading and the process of comparing and contrasting elements and episodes from *Inferno*. For the first time, Hell and the state of damnation are now viewed from the point of view of salvation and so thematic, structural, linguistic, and landscape echoes often serve to illustrate the contrast between the damned and the saved. However, sustained attention to the issue of Virgil's damnation in this thesis attests to the manner in which Dante also problematizes the dichotomy between the damned and the saved. By reading retrospection in the Ante-Purgatory

cantos, I explore how the poet re-orientates his reader in the liminal and transitional zone. The retrospective elements we find in Ante-Purgatory thus give us an indication of the poetic and interpretative possibilities of liminality.

Editions and Abbreviations

Dante's Works

All quotations from and references to the *Commedia* are taken from the Petrocchi edition.

Dante Alighieri, *La Commedia seconda l'antica vulgata,* ed. by Giorgio Petrocchi, 4 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994).

Rime. Giovanili e della Vita Nuova, ed. by Teodolinda Barolini, notes by Manuele Gragnolati (Milan: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 2017)

Convivio, ed. by Brambilla Ageno (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995).

Monarchia, ed. by Prue Shaw (Florence: Le Lettere, 2009)

Monarchy, trans. by Prue Shaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

Commentaries

The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, trans. by Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez, 3 vols (Oxford: University Press, 2003), II, *Purgatorio*.

The following commentaries on the *Commedia* are cited according to the *Dartmouth Dante Project.* http://dante.dartmouth.edu/ [accessed 10 January 2021]:

Jacopo della Lana (1324-28)
Guido da Pisa (1327-28[?])
L'Ottimo Commento (1333)
L'Ottimo Commento (1338)
Codice cassinese (1350-75[?])
Benvenuto da Imola (1375-80)
Francesco da Buti (1385-95)
Anonimo Fiorentino (1400[?])
Johannis de Serravalle (1416-17)
Cristoforo Landino (1481)
Alessandro Vellutello (1544)
Giorgio Porirelli (1804-05)
John S. Carroll (1904)
Carlo Steiner (1921)
Charles S. Singleton (1970-75)
Umberto Bosco and Giovanni Reggio (1979)
Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi (1991-1997)
Robert Hollander (2000-2007)
Nicola Fosca (2003-2015)

The citation style used throughout the thesis is as follows: 'name', *cantica,* canto in roman numerals, line.

eg: Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* I, 101.

All translations of Latin commentaries are my own, unless otherwise specified.

As the dates of commentaries are specified here, they will not be included in references unless relevant to the argument or for the sake of clarification.

Reference Works

Dante Encyclopedia, ed. by Richard Lansing (New York-London: Garland, 2000)

Enciclopedia Dantesca ed. by Umberto Bosco (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970-1978), 6 vols.

I (1970), A-CIL
II (1970), CIM - FO
III (1971), FR-M
IV (1973), N-SAM
V (1976), SAN-Z
VI (1978), Appendice

Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini, dir. by Paolo Squillacioti (1997–) [online] < http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it>

Bible

Unless otherwise stated, passages from the Vulgate Bible are taken from *Biblia sacra vulgata,* ed. by Michael Fieger, Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers and Andreas Beriger (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2018) 5 vols.

I: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium
II: Iosue, Iudices, Ruth, Samuhel, Malachim, Verba dierum, Ezras, Tobias, Iudith, Hester, Iob
III: Psalmi, Proverbia, Exxlesiastes, Canticum canticorum, Sapientia, Iesus Sirach
IV: Isaias, Hieremias, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel XII Prophetae, Maccabeorum
V: Evangelia, Actus Apostolorom, Epistulae Pauli, Epistulae Catholicae, Apocalypsis, Appendix.

All English translations of the Bible are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise stated.

The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphas. An ecumenical study Bible, ed. by Michael D Coogan, 4th ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Translations will be cited as follows: ('Translation' *NRSV,* with appropriate page numbers).

Abbreviations

Standard abbreviations have been used for the works of Dante and for the books of the Bible.

CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latina
DE – Dante Encyclopedia
EBDSA – Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America
ED – Enciclopedia Dantesca
PL – Patrologia Latina
SC – Sources Chrétiennes
PMLA – Publications of the Modern Language Association
MLN – Modern Language Notes
TLIO – Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini

Introduction

1. Ante-Purgatory in Dante Studies

This dissertation offers an extended investigation of Dante's Ante-Purgatory, and, in particular, the manner in which the first nine cantos of *Purgatorio* constitute a privileged textual space for the re-orientation of the reader during the transition from Hell into Purgatory. I will argue that this readerly re-orientation is accomplished, in part, through clusters of retrospective elements which look back to the *Inferno* by echoing or re-evoking a range of episodes, moments, characters, specific linguistic formulas, and rhyme patterns from the first *cantica.* These retrospective elements, I will suggest, encourage the reader, firstly, to consider and measure the pilgrim's spiritual progress as he begins the second stage of his journey, and secondly, to interrogate the dichotomy between the damned and the saved.

This introduction will outline various elements of the context which surrounds the Ante-Purgatory, considering the section of Dante's poem in relation to precedents in medieval culture and identifying some of its key features and themes. The introduction is made up of five sections. In this first section, I will give a brief overview of the treatment of Ante-Purgatory in Dante Studies. In section two, I will consider how Dante's Ante-Purgatory draws on eschatological geography from popular visions of the afterlife and doctrinal writings about Purgatory. In the third section, I will discuss the manner in which readers of the *Commedia* have conceptualised the liminal zone both topographically and through the division of souls into groups ('schiere'). In section four, I will explore the manner in which the poet seeks to re-orientate the reader by introducing requests for prayer and the sun as guide in Ante-Purgatory. These two elements are particularly relevant to the notion of retrospection and re-orientation and

will remain important in the subsequent chapters. Finally, in section five, we turn to a methodological overview of retrospective reading and an outline of the chapters.

Despite the fact that the earliest use of the term 'Ante-Purgatory' appears to be in Benvenuto da Imola's Latin commentary (c. 1375-80), there has been a considerable neglect of the liminal zone by scholars until quite recently. Significant work has been dedicated to important cantos and entire other sections of *Purgatorio,* above all, Peter Armour's two monographs on the Gates of Purgatory and the Earthly Paradise respectively, and Lino Pertile's work on the final cantos of the canticle.[1] More recently George Corbett has provided a detailed interpretation of three of the terraces (pride, sloth, and avarice) and their corresponding vices, emphasizing his attempt to read the terraces of Dante's Purgatory 'horizontally', that is, 'as narrative structural units and as moral regions'.[2] Other volumes have been dedicated to various themes or elements within the *Purgatorio*, such as Jeremy Tambling's recent treatment of states of affect and John Scott's well-known treatment of the political elements of *Purgatorio*.[3]

[1] Peter Armour, *The Door of Purgatory: A Study of Multiple Symbolism in Dante's Purgatorio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); ID, *Dante's Griffin and the History of the World: A Study of the Earthly Paradise (Purgatorio, cantos xxi-xxiii)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Lino Pertile, *La puttana e il gigante: dal Cantico dei cantici al Paradiso Terrestre di Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 1998).
[2] George Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics: Purgatory and its Moral Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 6. Corbett sees this as a means of complementing the vertical approach to reading the *Commedia.*
[3] Jeremy Tambling, *Dante in Purgatory: States of Affect* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010). Other studies devoted to *Purgatorio* include: Francis Fergusson, *Dante's Drama of the Mind: A Modern Reading of the Purgatorio* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1981); John A. Scott, *Dante's Political Purgatory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Paul Stern, *Dante's Philosophical Life: Politics and Human Wisdom in Purgatorio* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018) in which he dedicates a chapter to Ante-Purgatory: '"What Good Would Climbing Do?": The Rationale and Impetus for the Pursuit of Self-Knowledge (Cantos I-IX)', pp. 20-80; Anna Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto' al giardino. La costruzione del paesaggio nel Purgatorio di Dante* (Bologna: Bononia Press, 2007); F.M. Arcuri, *'"Asperges me" sì dolcemente udissi'. Il percorso liturgico di Dante alle origini dell'innocenza* (Alessandria: Edizione dell'Orso, 2008); *La Divina Foresta. Studi danteschi*, ed. by Francesco Spera (Naples: M. D'Auria, 2006). See also sustained interest in *Purgatorio* in Claire E. Honess, *From Florence to the Heavenly City: The Poetry of Citizenship in Dante* (London: Legenda, 2006); Catherine Keen, 'Creating Community' in *Dante and the City* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), pp. 156-92 esp. 'Poets and Politicians in the Community of Ante-Purgatory', pp. 167-75; Giuseppe A. Camerino, *'Con più arte la rincalzo'. Percorsi compositivi nella Commedia di Dante* (Foggia: Edizioni del Rosone, 2016).

Naturally, there are numerous individual *lecturae* of canto I-IX, and a number of essays on episodes which have attracted particular critical attention.[4] One of the episodes which has inspired a particularly vast amount of criticism is that of Casella in *Purgatorio* II. Barolini explores the tension between forward and backward looking desires, arguing that in Purgatory alone 'forward motion is a way of recuperating and redeeming the past, of returning to lost innocence and our collective point of origin, the garden of Eden.'[5] Tellingly, she argues that the Casella episode in particular 'captures the essence of earthly pilgrimage' because its structure 'faithfully replicates life's – and terza rima's – continual dialectic between forward motion and backward glance, voyage and repose, illicit curiosity and necessary desire.'[6] *Purgatorio* II has received much treatment as a canto which warns against the dangers of spiritual 'backsliding', and is arguably central to the association often made between Ante-Purgatory and negligence, backsliding, and attachment to mortal things, relationships, and bodies. If we are to use Augustinian terminology (as Barolini, for example, does), *Purgatorio* II foregrounds the dangers confusing *uti* and *frui*; of becoming distracted by our enjoyment of the earthly journey and temporal things.[7] This Augustinian tension between forward and backward facing desires which we see so clearly in *Purgatorio* II appears to be particularly strong in the Ante-Purgatory cantos where there is a concentration of requests for prayer, of references to mortal bodies, and relationships with the living. The Ante-Purgatory cantos appear to foreground the conflict between a forward-facing desire to reach the summit of the mountain (which is equally a return to innocence and

[4] See Bibliographical Note.
[5] See Teodolinda Barolini, 'Purgatory as Paradigm: Traveling the New and Never-Before Traveled Path of This Life / Poem' in *The Undivine Comedy: Detheologizing Dante* (Princeton: Princeton Univeristy Press, 1992, pp. 99-121, (p. 101).
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] For Augustine's discussion of *uti* and *frui* see, Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana,* trans. R. P. H. Grenn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), bk 1, 4, pp. 15-16. See also Elena Lombardi's discussion of this passage in *The Syntax of Desire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 34-36. For an extended bibliography on *Purgatorio* II, see Chapter 1, section 3, p. 99-100.

Eden), and a backward-facing desire for earthly relationship and pleasures as seen in Casella's attempted embrace and his song. Though (as Manuele Gragnolati has pointed out) these desires can perhaps be fulfilled in Paradise after the day of judgment, and so are perhaps also forward-facing, looking ahead to the mode of relation and music of the paradisaical state.[8] The critical interest in this tension makes Ante-Purgatory a particularly stimulating textual space for considering the notion of textual retrospection.

Despite considerable interest in certain cantos, it remains the case that Ante-Purgatory, when considered against critical interest in the rest of the *cantica*, has received less attention. The situation has begun to change in the last two decades with some closer consideration of certain themes or topics exclusively within the Ante-Purgatory cantos.[9] Gary Cestaro has suggested that the deconstruction of subjectivity is particularly privileged in the Ante-Purgatory cantos.[10] Sandra Carapezza has considered the range and diversity of the pilgrim's encounters with the 'anime in attesa dell'ascesa' and considers a range of themes which run through the first eight cantos, including, politics, an interest in family dynamics (be they *in bene* or *in malo*), an insistence on the pilgrim's physical presence and the souls' 'vanità', and an interest in art.[11] More recently, she has devoted three chapters to the consideration of Ante-Purgatory in her

[8] Manuele Gragnolati, 'Nostalgia in Heaven: Embraces, Affection and Identity in the *Commedia*', in *Dante and the Human Body: Eight Essays*, ed. by John C. Barnes and Jennifer Petrie (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 117-137 in which he looks ahead to *Paradiso* where the blessed's desire for their mortal bodies does not appear to be misplaced: 'che ben mostrar disio d'i corpi morti: | forse non pur per lor, ma per le mamme, | per li padri e per li altri che fuor cari' (*Par.* XIV, 63-65).
[9] Earlier interest in Ante-Purgatory is notable in Francesco D'Ovidio's discussion in *Nuovi studi danteschi. Il Purgatorio e il suo preludio* esp. 'Il primo canto del Purgatorio', pp. 3-147; XXIX, 'Il concetto dell'Antipurgatorio ebbe suo germe in un passo dell'Eneide…', pp. 404-412; XXXI, 'Più poetica che teologica la concezione e costruzione dell'Antipurgatorio, pp. 422-44; (Dr) Pierre-Inès Prompt, 'L'Antipurgatorio', *Giornale dantesco,* 2 (1895), 285-294. In twenty-first century, see Georges Méautis, *Dante. L'antépurgatoire. Essai d'une interprétation* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1963); Silvio Pasquazi, 'Antipurgatorio', in *ED*, I, pp. 304-306; Antonio Illiano, *Sulle sponde del prepurgatorio. Poesia e arte narrativa nel preludio all'ascesa (Purg. I-III, 66)* (Florence: Cadmo, 1997).
[10] Gary P. Cestaro, 'Deconstructing subjectivity in Antepurgatory', in his *Dante and the Grammar of the Nursing Body* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), pp. 109-34.
[11] Sandra Carapezza, 'Le anime in attesa dell'ascesa', in *La Divina Foresta*, pp. 139-99.

2013 volume *E cielo e terra.*[12] Giuseppe Ledda has dedicated a chapter to animal similes within the Ante-Purgatory cantos and an article to the role of the classical world within the Ante-Purgatory,[13] and Chiara Cappuccio has considered music within the Ante-Purgatory cantos.[14] Heather Webb has focused on the specific nature of gesture within the Ante-Purgatory cantos arguing that in the first nine cantos 'gestures take on a primary importance in opening dialogic relations between individuals'.[15]

There is one particularly striking (and perhaps ironic) gap in Dante scholarship on Ante-Purgatory that has yet to come under thorough investigation: the issue of negligence.[16] This is perhaps surprising as negligence has long been associated with Ante-Purgatory.[17] Genaro Sasso's 2019 volume *Purgatorio e antipurgatorio. Un'indagine dantesca* offers a theoretical analysis of the structural relationship between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory-proper and does much to problematize and address the ambivalent role of negligence on the slopes of the mountain. The scholar argues that in Dante's Purgatory, penance appears to take place 'in due tempi: il primo dei quali sia caratterizzato da un'espiazione "generica" e un'espiazione "specifica" sul monte', and suggests that negligence, is portrayed as 'un peccato che consiste nella disposizione al peccare', noting that this same notion of negligence as a disposition to sin is found in

[12] Sandra Carapezza, 'Legge, luce, e libertà. Richiami testuali ed efficacia rappresentativa nell'approdo al Purgatorio', pp. 19-33; 'Persistenze terrene e legge divina nell'antipurgatorio', pp. 34-72; 'Belacqua', pp. 73-83 in *E cielo e terra: echi biblici e strategie poetiche nella Commedia* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2013).
[13] Giuseppe Ledda, 'Similitudini animali nell'Antipurgatorio: per un bestiario della resurrezione' in his *Il bestiario dell'aldilà. Gli animali nella Commedia di Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 2019), pp. 199-213; ID, 'Il mondo classico nei canti dell'Antipurgatorio (Dante, *Purgatorio* I-IX)', *Chroniques Italiennes,* web 39.2 (2020), 215-245.
[14] Chiara Cappuccio, '"Seguitando il mio canto con quel suono". La natura musicale dell'Antipurgatorio', in *Italianistica*, 50.1 (2021), 3-49. See also her '"Quando a cantar con organi si stea"' (*Purg*. IX, 144). Riflessi danteschi della polemica contro la polifonia?', *Tenzone*, 8 (2007), 31-63; 'Gli effetti psicologici della musica sui personaggi del *Purgatorio*', *Tenzone*, 6 (2005), 35-80.
[15] Heather Webb, 'Gestural Persons' in *Dante's Persons: An Ethics of the Transhuman* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2016), pp. 35-83 (p. 35).
[16] John Scott discusses negligence briefly in relation to Sordello in *Political Purgatory,* pp. 116-17.
[17] Pietro Alighieri [3rd redaction], *Purg.* I, Intro Nota; Jacopo della Lana, *Purg.* I, Nota; *Purg.* II, 91-92 and 133; Johannis de Serravalle, *Purg.* III, Nota.

Aquinas.[18] While Sasso's work does much to discuss the ambiguities and uncertainties of the second *cantica,* the subject of negligence in Ante-Purgatory remains fraught with difficulties and merits further, contextualized exploration – though this is unfortunately beyond the parameters of this thesis.

Sasso's volume marked a telling reprioritization since Marc Cogan's 1999 study of the structure of the *Divine Comedy*, in which the scholar notably passes over Ante-Purgatory in the main body of his work, instead, relegating his consideration of the liminal zone to the peripheries of his own volume in an appendix.[19] The absence of critical engagement with Ante-Purgatory has recently been highlighted and addressed through projects such as the 2021 series of workshops on the Ante-Purgatory organised by the University of Notre Dame and the series of papers organised under the title 'Passages, seuils, sauts: du dernier cercle de l'*Enfer* à la première terrasse du *Purgatoire* (*Enf.* XXXII – *Purg.* XII)' at the University of Sorbonne (2020-2021).[20] This thesis aims to build on the recent, though still sparse, critical interest in the first nine cantos by investigating retrospection within the Ante-Purgatory.

2. Purgatory and Ante-Purgatory in Context

The first suggestions the poet gives to his reader regarding his vision of Purgatory appear in the poem's prologue. In *Inferno* I, Virgil outlines the pilgrim's journey across the three realms in three *terzine*, predicting that the pilgrim will see 'color che son

[18] Genaro Sasso, *Purgatorio e antipurgatorio. Un'indagine dantesca* (Rome: Viella, 2019), p. 37. Sasso cites Aquinas on negligence. See *Summa Theologiae,* ed. by Roberto Rea, Leonine edition (1888-1906) consulted online via the Corpus Thomisticum: www.corpusthomisticum.org [accessed 9 April 2022], IIae II, q. 54.
[19] Sasso, *Purgatorio e antipurgatorio*; Marc Cogan, 'Appendix 2: The Antepurgatory', in *The Design in the Wax: The Structure of the Divine Comedy and its Meaning* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. 299-303.
[20] 'Passages, seuils, sauts: du dernier cercle de l'Enfer à la première terrasse du Purgatoire (*Enf*. XXXII – *Purg.* XII)' has been published online: *Chroniques Italiennes,* web 39.2 (2020) and web 40.1 (2021). See Bibliographic Note for details.

contenti | nel foco, perché speran di venire | quando che sia a le beate genti' (*Inf.* I, 118-120). At this stage in the poem, the use of this periphrasis is in keeping with the well-accepted understanding that purgatory[21] would involve some form of cleansing fire. This notion was based largely on the authority of the Biblical notion of a trial by fire after death whereby the sinful man will be saved: 'quasi per ignem'.[22]

Though fire was an important motif in popular visions of Purgatory, it is not afforded such predominance in Dante's vision of the other world.[23] The first mention of fire in *Purgatorio* arrives just before the entrance to Purgatory-proper in the Valley of the Princes when the two angels descend to guard the Valley with 'due spade affocate' (*Purg.* VIII, 26), recalling the cherubs set outside Eden to guard its entrance after the Fall (Genesis 3.24). This fiery barrier is recalled again at the entrance to Earthly Paradise when the pilgrim must pass through a wall of flame (*Purg.* XXVII, 7-57).[24] The motif of fire is also present in the pilgrim's visions and dreams on the mountain,

[21] I follow Isabel Moreira her useful distinction of upper-case 'Purgatory' to refer papal doctrine which governed ideas about Purgatory later in the middle ages, and lower-case 'purgatory', to describe 'the myriad purgatorial beliefs' attested to in ancient and medieval sources. See Isabel Moreira, *Heaven's Purge: Purgatory in Late Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 12 and her 'Purgatory's Intercessors: Bishops, Ghosts and Angry Wives', in *Imagining the Medieval Afterlife*, ed. by Richard Matthew Pollard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 133-152 (p. 142).

[22] 1 Corinthians 3.15 ('but only as through fire.'). Another key scriptural reference point for discussions of Purgatory was 1 Malachi 3. 2-3. See Moriera's discussion of commonly used 'scriptural proofs' for Purgatory in *Heaven's Purge,* pp. 18-24, §'Citing the Scriptures'. It should be noted that Augustine remained ambiguous on the issue of purifying fire. 'Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate' ed. by E. Evans in *De fide rerum invisibilium; Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide et spe et caritate; De catechizandisrudibus; Sermoadcatechumenos de symbol; Sermo de disciplina christiana; De utilitateieiunii; Sermo de excidiourbis Romae; De haeresibus,* ed. by M.P.J. van den Houte *et al*, *CCSL* 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), pp. 49-114, ch. 18, 69, p. 87.

[23] Discussed in Alison Morgan, *Dante and the Medieval Other World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 149-156. See for example: The Vision of Tundale (1149), St Patricks' Purgatory (earliest c. 1190), and the Vision of the Monk of Eynsham (1196). Translated in English in Eileen Gardiner, *Visions of Heaven and Hell Before Dante* (New York: Italica, 1989). Dates of the works are taken from Gardiner's useful notes on the texts.

[24] See Zygmunt G. Barańksi, 'Structural Retrospection in Dante's *Comedy*: The Case of *Purgatorio* XXVII', *Italian Studies,* 41.1 (1986), 1-23, (p. 18). Notably, Barański only lists *Purg.* XXV-*Purg.* XXVII from *Purgatorio,* see note 32 on cantos in which fire plays an important role. Le Goff considers fire in Dante's *Purgatorio* briefly but offers little analysis of the passages he cites which are predominantly from the Terrace of Lust, see *The Birth of Purgatory,* pp. 345-346.

such as in the pilgrim's dream of the eagle in *Purgatorio* IX,[25] and on the Terrace of Wrath where rage is figured as fire (*Purg.* XV, 106-114).[26] Though the notion of solace or pleasure in suffering which is also suggested by the line from *Inferno* I is expressed at various points throughout the second cantica,[27] the only vice which is cleansed through fire is that of lust. In his conception of Purgatory, Dante thus moves away from previous 'infernalized' visions and depictions of Purgatory and develops a much more complex, morally coherent and topographically detailed vision of the second realm.[28]

In his seminal work, *The Birth of Purgatory*, Le Goff traces the development of the idea of Purgatory from the Greek Fathers' belief that souls could be purged after death in a purifying fire to the appearance of the noun *purgatorium* (which he dates to somewhere between 1170-80) and the development of Purgatory as a distinct place.[29] Though by the early twelfth century, Purgatory seems to have been generally accepted as a temporary state between death and Judgement Day, its location and the exact nature of the process of purification remained very much a matter for debate.[30] As Anna

[25] *Purg.* IX, 30-33: 'e me rapisse suso infino al foco. | Ivi pare anche ella e io ardesse; | e sì lo 'ncendio imaginato cosse, | che convenne che 'l sonno si rompesse'

[26] Stephen's martyrdom is recounted in the Acts 6-7. In *Purg.* XV (94-114) the pilgrim has a vision of the saint being stoned to death by 'genti accese in foco d'ira' (106). On the terrace of fire, the smoke which blinds the pilgrim recalls Hell rather than gesturing to purgatorial fire, see *Purg.* XVI, 1-5.

[27] Most famously expressed in the encounter with Forese: 'io dico pena, e dovria dir sollazzo' (*Purg.* XXIII, 72) and 'lo dolce assenzo d'i martìri' (*Purg.* XXIII, 86).

[28] See Morgan, *Medieval Other World,* pp. 144-45: 'Dante is indisputably the first write to offer such a morally coherent, and topographically and historically consistent, scheme for the description of the other world, and it has generally been accepted that his originality extends to the adoption of a mountain on which to locate Purgatory.' See also Marcello Aurigemma, 'Purgatorio', in *ED*, IV (1973), pp. 745-50 (p.747). On the infernalization of Purgatory, see Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London: Scholar Press, 1984), pp. 205-213.

[29] Le Goff's emphasis on the use of the noun *purgatorium* in doctrinal texts is disputed by some, mainly for the fact that in popular visions of the period the notion of Purgatory as a place appears to have already developed *avant la letter.* See for example A. Ja. Gurevich, 'Popular and scholarly medieval traditions: notes in the margin of Jacques Le Goff's book' *Journal of Medieval History*, 9.2 (1983), 71-90; Graham Robert Edwards, 'Purgatory: "Birth" or Evolution?', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985), 634-46; Moreira, *Heaven's Purge,* pp. 8-9. See Le Goff on the Greek Fathers, *The Birth of Purgatory,* pp. 52-57; and on Purgatory as place: '"Locus Purgatorius": A Place for Purgation', pp. 154-76.

[30] See Aquinas, *Commentary on the Sentences Book IV: Distinctions 14-25,* trans. by Beth Mortensen, Peter A. Kwasniewski, and Dylan Schrader (Green Bay: Aquinas Institute, 2017), d. 21, q. 1, art. 1, solutio II, p. 481 'dicendum, quod de loco purgatorii non invenitur aliquid expresse determinatum in Scriptura, nec rationes possunt ad hoc efficaces induci' ('It should be said that concerning purgatory's location, nothing specific is expressly found in Scripture, nor can one offer effective arguments about it').

Pegoretti notes, there were a range of 'receptacles' in which souls might find themselves after death: 'a seconda degli orientamenti degli autori del periodo storico compaiono due Limbi, due Inferni (superiore e inferiore), due Paradisi (terrestre e celeste), il seno di Abramo, *i loca purgatoria.*'[31]

Our first glimpse of Dante's particular vision of Purgatory as a mountain famously appears in *Inferno* XXVI when the impossibly high mountain is spotted by Ulysses 'bruna per la distanza' (*Inf.* XXVI, 133-35). In Ulysses' canto, however, the mountain is not explicitly connected with Purgatory. Similarly, at the end of *Inferno,* when Dante proposes a new cosmogonical myth for the creation of Mount Purgatory produced by Lucifer's fall as the earth recoiled in horror (*Inf.* XXXIV, 121-126), it is not explicitly named as Purgatory.[32] It is only in retrospect with the arrival on the shores of Purgatory at the beginning of the second *cantica* (and with an important recall to the Ulysses episode) that the reader is truly able to put these pieces of information together through Cato's clear indication of 'il monte' (*Purg.* I, 108) and his reference to 'le mie grotte' (*Purg.* I, 48).

Dantists have paid attention to the originality of Dante's placement of Purgatory and notable contributions include those by Graf and Nardi. [33] Though the

[31] Anna Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, p. 15. Bonaventure identifies five areas of the afterlife: for the blessed (Heaven), for temporary punishment through pain of loss (bosom of Abraham); for temporary punishment through pain of sense (Purgatory); for eternal punishment through pain of loss (Limbo); for eternal punishment through pain of sense (Hell); see *In IV Sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*, in *Opera omnia* ed. PP. Colleggi a S. Bonaventura, 10 vols (Florence: Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi], 1882-1902), V, d. XLV, art. 1, q. 2, pp. 940-41. See Gregory the Great on an 'upper' and 'lower' Hell in his *Moralia in Job*, CCSL 143, ed. by Marci Adriaen, 3 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979-85), II (1979), bk. 12, 13, p. 63. Le Goff discusses Gregory in *The Birth of Purgatory,* pp. 89-90. On the Bosom of Abraham see Luke 16.22.

[32] On the location of Eden, see: Bruno Nardi, 'La tragedia d'Ulisse', in *Dante e la cultura medievale. Nuovi saggi di filosofia dantesca* (Bari: Laterza, 1949), pp. 153–65, (p. 160). ID, 'Il mito dell'Eden' in *Saggi di filosofia dantesca*, (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1967), pp. 311-40. Alessandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth* (London: The British Library, 2006). On the 'twin birth' of Hell and Purgatory, see Cogan, *The Design in the Wax*, pp. 79-80.

[33] Nardi and Graf cite a number of possible sources of inspiration which indicate the variety of beliefs regarding the location of Eden in Dante's time. See Nardi, 'Il mito dell'Eden', and Arturo Graf, 'Il mito del paradiso terrestre', in his *Miti, leggende e superstizioni del medio evo*, 2 vols (Turin: Loescher, 1892), I, p. xi-128. More recently, see Mirko Tavoni, 'Dante e la scoperta del Paradiso in mezzo all'oceano',

originality of Dante's choice of a mountain for Purgatory is often underlined, Ante-Purgatory also represents a considerable re-conceptualization of contemporary ideas about Purgatory. Indeed, Jacques Le Goff's calls Ante-Purgatory Dante's most original innovation. However, while Dante's Ante-Purgatory is undoubtedly inventive, Le Goff arguably attributes too much creative originality to Dante, speculating that, disapproving of the tendency to promise Purgatory in exchange for an act of contrition *in extremis*, 'Dante, inclined though he was to believe that God's mercy is bountiful, felt it necessary to establish this period of waiting as an additional trial to be endured before admission could be gained to Purgatory proper.'[34] Le Goff gives no indication of any precedents for the invention of Ante-Purgatory, suggesting Ante-Purgatory was simply the poet's method of settling his own personal theological quarm. [35]

A further major strand of study – alongside the biblical, patristic, and theological traditions – has concerned possible 'precursors' to the Ante-Purgatory, especially in the popular tradition of the afterlife as studied by Morgan and others.[36]

Studi Danteschi, 84 (2019), 1-14 and Scafi, *Mapping Paradise*. On the implications of Dante's choice of a mountain, see also Le Goff's in *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 338-339. For a more detailed and recent treatment, see Morgan's chapter 'The Mountain of Purgatory' in *Medieval Other World,* pp. 144-165; Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, pp. 13-42; Carol V. Kaske's 'Mount Sinai and Dante's Mount Purgatory', *Dante Studies* 89 (1971), 1-18.

[34] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* p. 342. See Morgan on Le Goff's claim of a strong precedent in the popular tradition for its use, *Dante and the Medieval Other World,* p. 157.

[35] On precedents to Ante-Purgatory, see Diego Sbacchi, 'I contributi delle visioni popolari alla formazione dell'antipurgatorio', *Lettere Italiane,* 58.2 (2006), 181-207.

[36] For a good overview of critical treatment of popular visions, see Jean-Michel Picard, 'Dante and Irish Vision Literature', in *Dante and His Literary Precursors: Twelve Essays,* ed. John C. Barnes and Jennifer Petrie (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 51-67. Picard notes that scholarship in the late-seventeenth-century and early-eighteenth-century may have been excessive in attempts to establish direct correspondences or influences between Dante's *Commedia* and individual visions for example, C.S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante: A Study on the Vision of Heaven and Hell, Ascribed to the Eighth-century Irish Aaint, Adamnán* (London: Nutt, 1908), and Alessandro D'Ancona, *I precursori di Dante* (Florence: Sansoni, 1874). More modern scholarship, on the other hand, has tended to consider the *Commedia* in the context of popular traditions, rather than forcing correspondences between certain texts, for example, Morgan, *Medieval Other World*; Sbacchi, 'I contributi'; Yolande de Pontfarcy, 'The Topography of the Other World and the Influence of Twelfth-century Irish Visions on Dante', and Jean-Michel Picard, '*Inferno* V, 73-142: The Irish Sequel', in *Dante and the Middle Ages,* ed. John C. Barnes and Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995), pp. 93-116 and pp. 271-86. Morgan provides a very useful appendix in her volume with details of popular visions, Appendix 2, in *Medieval Other World,* pp. 201-33. See also Eileen Gardiner ed., *Medieval Visions of Heaven and Hell: A*

Diego Sbacchi has shown how popular visions of the afterlife often detail a plurality of purgatories with a more complex geography, such that 'i pellegrini si trovano spesso davanti non ad un Purgatorio, ma a più luoghi destinati all'espiazione dei peccati.'[37] In a recent investigation of possible contributions to Dante's conception of Ante-Purgatory, Sbacchi considers the notion of a 'double Purgatory' in Thomas Aquinas:

> Tamen probabiliter, […] locus purgatorii est duplex. Unus secundum legem commune; et sic locus purgatorii est locus inferior inferno conjunctus, […] Alius est locus purgatorii secundum dispensationem; et sic quandoque in diversis locis aliqui puniti leguntur, vel ad vivorum instructionem, vel ad mortuorum subventionem, ut viventibus eorum poena innotescens, per suffragia Ecclesia mitigaretur.[38]

The first purgatory Aquinas mentions agrees with the traditional late-scholastic approach ('secundum legem commune'), in which Purgatory was affirmed to be liminal zone for purgation but which was nonetheless connected to Hell. The second Purgatory reserved for 'special dispensation', however, remains of uncertain location. Aquinas does not offer an alternative location for this second Purgatory and it instead seems to be born from a desire to accommodate and include anecdotal evidence of Purgatory (as found, for example in Gregory the Great's *Dialogi*) and popular visions of Purgatory.[39] Moreover, it appears to be linked specifically to the education of the living ('ad vivorum instructionem') and the benefits for the dead ('ad mortuorum subventionem'). Though the geography of Aquinas' double Purgatory clearly differs from the division

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Sourcebook (New York: Gardland Publishing, 1993) for useful bibliographical material on a number of popular visions.

[37] Sbacchi, 'I contributi', p. 188.

[38] Aquinas, *Sentences Book IV,* dist. XXI, q. 1, art. 1, solutio II, p. 481 ('Yet probably, […] there are two places for purgatory. One, according to the general law, according to which purgatory's location is a lower place connected with hell, […] There is another place for purgatory by special dispensation; and this is why it is read sometimes that certain people are punished in different places, whether for the instruction of the living, or for the assistance of the dead, so that by making their suffering known to the living, it might be reduced by the Church's intercession'). See also Sbacchi, 'I contributi', pp. 186-187 who reproduces the whole of solutio II.

[39] Gregory the Great*, Dialogues*, ed. Aldalbert de Vogüe, *SC* 251, 260, 265, 3 vols (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978-1980), III (1979). See for example, bk 4, ch. 37, 40, and 60.

between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory-proper in Dante's poem, the emphasis placed on reciprocal benefits to the living and the dead in this second Purgatory is of interest and resonates with the prominence given to suffrage in the Ante-Purgatory cantos.

Sbacchi, however, ultimately dismisses the theologian's 'double Purgatory' as a major influence on Dante's vision and turns instead to popular visions of the afterlife as a possible source of inspiration for Dante's Ante-Purgatory. In such visions, a plurality of Purgatories often includes a separate space for the late penitent, a feature which is strongly evocative of Dante's own Ante-Purgatory and shows that there were ideas circulating in popular culture at the time that either inspired or allowed for this possibility.

The Vision of Drythelm from Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* narrates the vision of a Northumbrian householder who died one night and was taken through Purgatory, Hell, and the Earthly Paradise before being revived the next morning.[40] In the account of the vision, the souls of the dead are divided into four categories: unrepentant sinners in Hell; saints in Heaven; souls awaiting the Day of Judgement in a pleasant place; and – most interestingly for our consideration of Ante-Purgatory – the late repentant who inhabit a valley of fire and ice until the Day of Judgement:

> qui tamen quia confessionem et poenitentiam vel in morte habuerunt, omnes in die iudicii ad regnum caelorum perveniunt. Multos autem preces viventium et eleemosynae et ieiunia et maxime celebratio missarium, ut etiam ante diem iudicii liberentur, adiuvant.[41]

[40] The Vision of Drythelm is first related in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History,* trans. John Edward King, 2 vols, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), II, bk 5, ch. 12, pp. 253-269. Bede lists the vision under 696 but the date is disputed. See Gardiner, *Visions of Heaven and Hell*, pp. 242-243.
[41] Bede, *Ecclesiastical History,* pp. 262-63 ('and yet, because they have made confession and repented even in death, they come all to the kingdom of heaven at the Day of Judgment. Moreover, the prayers, almsgiving, fasting and especially the celebration of masses of those that yet liveth help to deliver many even before the day of judgement.').

As Alison Morgan points out, the three conditions included in Drythelm's vision, that is, late repentance, the need for assistance from the living, and exclusion from the realm of the imperfectly good, 'are precisely the conditions which keep souls in Dante's Antepurgatory'.[42]

In another afterlife account, the *Vision of Thurkill* (1206), Paradise is imagined at the summit of a mountain, an intriguing geographical precursor to Dante's Earthly Paradise at the summit of Mount Purgatory.[43] At the summit of the Mountain is an enormous Church but those who died before they could repent their sins are made to wait in the atrium to the south of the temple:

> Anime vero, que ibidem expectando subsistebant, nulla alia penalitate afficiebantur, nisi quod diutina expectationis fatigatione ab introitu templi suspendebantur, prestolantes aliquod speciale suffragium, quamvis omnes de die in diem approximent ad ianuam ecclesie et paulatim magis ac magis delabentur per generalia totius ecclesie suffragia.[44]

Morgan observes that while in Drythelm 'the precedent was mainly conceptual – the exclusion from the company of the imperfectly good of those who repented at the last moment. Here it is geographical – these souls, who perhaps are intended to include the late repentant, are made to wait on the lower slopes of a mountain before they may be admitted by the prayer of the living through the gate which bars their progress.'[45] This gate which bars the progress of the souls in Thurkill is strikingly similar to the Gate of

[42] Morgan, *Medieval Other World*, p. 151. See 'Thurkill's Vision' in *Visions of Heaven and Hell,* pp. 219-36 and accompanying note to the text, pp. 256-58. See also Morgan, 'Appendix 2' in *Medieval Other World*, p. 217 and pp. 230-31.
[43] *Visio Thurkilli realtore, ut videtur, Radulpho de Coggeshall,* ed. by Paul Gerhard Schmidt (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1978).
[44] *Visio Thurkilli,* p. 31 (ll. 19-24) ('The spirits who were waiting for admission suffered no punishment, except that they were waiting for special assistance from their friends. Nevertheless, all the spirits who stood there approached nearer the entrance of that church every day by the general assistance of the whole church'). Translation 'Thurkill's Vision', in *Visions of Heaven and Hell,* pp. 219-36 (p. 233).
[45] Morgan, *Medieval Other World,* p. 162.

Purgatory in *Purgatorio* IX. Moreover, like the souls in Ante-Purgatory, the souls in Vision of Thurkill suffer no punishment besides waiting.

Dante's vision of Purgatory as a mountain has largely been accepted as one of the poem's most original elements. The creation of Ante-Purgatory at the base of the mountain, then, initially seems to have even less precedent. And yet, on further examination Ante-Purgatory appears to dialogue with the desire in the popular tradition to separate repentance *in extremis* from timely repentance before death. While visions like the Vision of Thurkill and the Vision of Drythelm offer geographical and conceptual precedents for Dante's Ante-Purgatory, the major difference is to be found in the fact that Dante links his Ante-Purgatory to Purgatory-proper rendering the former a type of preparation, or at least a requirement before preceding to the latter. Dante's Ante-Purgatory therefore appears to dialogue (if only minimally) with an emphasis on repentance *in extremis* and with additional topographical divisions beyond Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven in visions of the afterlife. As will be demonstrated in this thesis, in Dante's poem, Ante-Purgatory additionally functions as a space of preparation for the reader and as an area of transition in which the reader is encouraged to look back to *Inferno* and re-consider the division between damnation and salvation.

3. Ante-Purgatory's Structure or 'schiere'

Thanks to the maps and diagrams of Dante's three realms which introduce the poem, readers today are inevitably aware of the three principal divisions which Dante commentary and criticism has given the *Purgatorio*: Ante-Purgatory; Purgatory-proper; and the Earthly Paradise.[46] These topographical areas have well-established textual

[46] See Simone Albonico, 'Un'interpretazione della struttura del *Purgatorio*', in *Letteratura e filologia fra Svizzera e Italia. Studi in onore di Guglielmo Gorni,* ed. by Maria Antonietta Terzoli, Alberto Asor Rosa, Giorgio Inglese, 3 vols (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2010), I, *Dante: La Commedia e altro*, pp. 213-37.

parameters, the first nine cantos of *Purgatorio* are devoted to Ante-Purgatory, cantos X-XXVII treat Purgatory-proper, divided into seven terraces (pride, envy, wrath, sloth, avarice and prodigality, gluttony, and lust), and the Earthly Paradise is the subject of cantos XXVIII-XXXIII.

As is frequently noted, the entry to Purgatory-proper in canto IX finds a parallel in *Inferno* in the entrance to the City of Dis across *Inferno* VIII and IX.[47] Similarly, in *Paradiso,* the first three planetary spheres (Moon, Mercury, and Venus) are in the cone-shaped shadow of the earth (*Par.* IX, 118-19). Dante uses the earth's shadow to separate the souls with specific defects in the first three spheres, namely, unfulfilled vows (Moon), vainglory (Mercury), irrepressible ardour (Venus).[48] Marc Cogan also reads the Ante-Purgatory cantos as organized by defective virtue, arguing that each group of souls displays a defective theological virtue; the excommunicates being defective in faith (*Purg.* III), the negligent and late penitents in hope (*Purg.* IV and V); and the negligent rulers in Christian charity (*Purg.* VII and VIII).[49]

Cogan's suggestion is interesting, and elements of defective faith, hope, and charity can arguably be detected in the groups as he suggests. For example, Belacqua's question at the end of *Purgatorio* IV is problematic and strangely hopeless despite his status as a saved soul: 'O frate, andar in sù che porta?' (*Purg.* IV, 127). However,

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[47] On *antinferno* and *antipurgatorio*, see Silvio Pasquazi, 'La questione degli "anti"', in his *All'eterno dal tempo. Studi danteschi*, 2nd ed. (Florence: Le Monnier, 1966; 1972), pp. 33-47. Not included in the 1st ed. See George Corbett, 'Moral Structure' in *The Cambridge Companion to Dante's Commedia,* ed. Zygmunt Barański and Simon Gilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 61-78. Corbett notes there is a threefold distinction in Hell. Firstly, between incontinence and malice (Upper and Lower Hell); between malice through violence (circle seven) and malice through fraud (circles eight and nine); between simple fraud (circle eight) and treacherous fraud (circle nine), see pp. 63-68 on the structure of Hell.

[48] See the pilgrim's exchange with Piccarda on degrees of bliss: *Par.* III, 65-90. George Corbett argues that these defects arguably reflect (although only implicitly) the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love, see 'Moral Structure', p. 75.

[49] Cogan, 'The Antepurgatory', in *Design in the Wax*, esp. pp. 301-302. For Cogan, Ante-Purgatory is a space dedicated to the acquirement of these virtues: 'Until the souls in antepurgatory acquire the theological virtues they lacked, which alone open the route to Heaven, they are compelled to remain outside Purgatory', p. 303.

Cogan's brief discussion of Ante-Purgatory in the appendix to his volume seems to drive at finding symmetry and order within the Ante-Purgatory cantos at the expense of offering an in-depth treatment of Dante's exploration of the three virtues within the first nine cantos. Sasso, on the other hand rejects any notion of division within Ante-Purgatory apart from a division (though devoid of hierarchy) between the souls in the Valley of Rulers and all other souls in Ante-Purgatory, which he describes as a division between 'da una parte, coloro che erano stati negligenti nel chiedere per sé stessi il perdono divino e, da un'altra, coloro che negligenti erano stati verso i propri doveri nei riguardi della giustizia e della vita civile'.[50] Teodolinda Barolini, in her discussion of difference and transition in the *Commedia,* takes a rather different approach. She argues that in *Purgatorio* 'Dante enjoys an ideological freedom that gives him carte blanche for the creation of difference and the consequent blurring of distinction', suggesting that in the Ante-Purgatory cantos he 'explores this freedom to the hilt' causing 'sustained critical bewilderment'.[51]

Part of this bewilderment is perhaps rooted in the fact that the poet never gives a name to the area through which the pilgrim travels on his first day in Purgatory. The term 'Ante-Purgatory' (*antipurgatorium*) is instead the invention of the commentary tradition. The term appears to have been first used by Benvenuto da Imola who divides Mount Purgatory into three parts in the third redaction of his *Comentum* (c. 1375-80). His definition of Ante-Purgatory is quite succinct: 'Prima pars continet solum aliquos relegatos extra purgatorium propter tardatam poenitentiam, qui vadunt errando, nec possunt intrare purgatorium, sed ad tempus sunt circumvagantes; et ista pars durat

[50] Sasso, *Purgatorio e Antipurgatorio*, p. 37.
[51] Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 34.

usque ad nonum capitulum.'[52] For Benvenuto, topographically, Ante-Purgatory is the zone *extra purgatorium* which stretches from the beach in *Purgatorio* I to the gates in *Purgatorio* IX. Notably, after his opening note on the structure of Purgatory, Benvenuto da Imola next mentions *antipurgatorium* in his gloss on the 'primo ministro' (whom he identifies as the angel at the Gates of Purgatory in *Purgatorio* IX): 'quia unus Angelus sedet supra porta veri purgatorii, tenens claves, quibus claudit et aperit portam fortiorem quam ista sit, ubi stat Cato in introitu antipurgatorii.'[53] For Benvenuto, then, there appears to be some symmetry between Cato's presence at the entrance (*introitu*) of Ante-Purgatory, and the angel's presence at the Gates of Purgatory-proper (*porta veri purgatorii*), book-ending the beginning and end of Ante-Purgatory.[54]

Though Benvenuto demarcates Ante-Purgatory topographically, it is important to recognize that the term *Ante-Purgatory* functions across multiple levels and can be considered as encompassing formal, temporal, topographical and moral dimensions. In this way, Ante-Purgatory can be considered as a grouping of formal containers (the first nine cantos), as a temporal container (the zone the pilgrim passes through on the first day), as a topographical container (outside Purgatory-proper), and as a moral container (late penitents who are relegated to erring and are excluded from purgatory proper). What is more, each of these categories of 'container' appears to be subtly disrupted by the poet. Most obviously, as mentioned above, the souls in Ante-Purgatory, though 'relegated' (*relegatos extra purgatorium*) to the initial mountain slopes, are nonetheless among the saved. Strict formal boundaries are disrupted by the fact that the door to

[52] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* I, Nota ('The first part contains only those who delayed repentance and who are relegated outside purgatory proper, here they travel in error, neither can they enter purgatory, but circumnavigate it for a period of time, and this part lasts up until the ninth chapter').
[53] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* I, 91-99. 'Here an angel sits above the door of Purgatory-proper, he holds the keys, and here he closes and opens the doors.'
[54] It is worth noting that, though Cato's reference to the 'primo ministro' here is frequently read as a gesture towards the Gates of Purgatory at the very beginning of Ante-Purgatory. The reference is ambiguous and could equally be read as simply the first angel, namely, the angel which propels the new arrivals to the shore of Purgatory from the Tiber.

Purgatory swings shut in *Purgatorio* X (1-6), unsettling an absolute divide across canto IX and X as the sound of the door reverberates at the beginning of *Purgatorio* X: 'sonando la senti' esser richiusa' (*Purg.* X, 4). Similarly, an absolute division of days is undercut by the fact that the pilgrim wakes up from his dream in *Purgatorio* IX when ''l sole er' altro già più che due ore' (44), that is, at roughly eight o'clock in the morning, so that we might question whether he spends the whole of the second day in Purgatory-proper.[55]

Topographical divisions within Ante-Purgatory are even more complex and debated. Though there is little doubt about the location of the entrance to Purgatory-proper, it is worth noting that Dante does subtly disrupt clear divisions between Ante-Purgatory and the terraces. *Purgatorio* IX is clearly marked as a canto of transition and this is achieved by means of the clear topographical marker of the gates, the ceremony and ritual required to pass through them (94-129), the warning against looking back (130-132), and the poet's own sign-posting of this particular marker in *Purgatorio* IV when Belacqua references 'l'angel di Dio che siede in su la porta', in *Purgatorio* VII ('là dove purgatorio ha dritto inizio' [39]) and in *Purgatorio* IX ('tu se' omai al Purgatorio giunto' [49]).[56] However, it is equally worth noting that the declaration of arrival by Virgil in *Purgatorio* IX occurs before the pilgrim reaches or even glimpses the Gates (70-75).[57]

Where Ante-Purgatory may be said to begin is even more difficult to disentangle and there is certainly no clear 'entrance' as Benvenuto da Imola's commentary seems to

[55] See for example, the 'Proemio' in the British Library, Egerton 943 manuscript which discusses the structure of the mountain in terms of formal divisions of cantos and days spent on the mountain: 'Prima die stetit continue extra purgatorium […] Secunda die et tertia stetit Dante in purgatorio […] Quarta die stetit in paradiso terrestri […]' ('The first day he spent outside Purgatory […] On the second day and the third day, Dante was in Purgatory […] On the fourth day, he was in the Earthly Paradise […]'). *Anonymous Latin Commentary on Dante's Commedia. Reconstructed Text*, ed. by Vincenzo Cioffari (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1989), p. 146.
[56] These are also the only two occurrences of the world 'purgatorio' in the *Commedia*.
[57] See Barolini, *Undivine Comedy,* p. 34.

suggest. In *Inferno,* as Barolini has noted, after the prologue cantos, 'there is a one-to-one correspondence between canto and geographical section of Hell: one canto is devoted to one infernal place'.[58] By contrast, at the beginning of *Purgatorio,* Dante abandons this clear one-to-one correspondence. In cantos I-III the pilgrim travels across the beach towards the mountain; in III and IV he locates the entrance point to the path up the initial slopes and climbs the initial slopes; in cantos V and VI he is in an undisclosed location and in VII and VIII he spends the evening and night in the Valley of the Rulers. This has caused some readers to argue for a distinction between the Ante-Purgatory and the beach, or, what Antonio Illiano terms the 'prepurgatorio'. Illiano demarcates this 'prepurgatorio' textually as *Purgatorio* I-III, 66 (that is, just before the meeting with the excommunicates) and defines it, within the diegesis, as 'il ciclo narrativo della condizione psicologica ed etico-anagogica delle anime che, sbarcate, devono raggiungere il monte ed iniziare la scalata penitente.'[59] At a geo-topographical level, he suggests that the 'prepurgatory' might be considered as 'la fascia costiera che si estende dalla battigia ai piedi della montagna.'[60] According to this model, then, Ante-Purgatory might be said to begin with the encounter with the excommunicates at the 'piè del monte' (*Purg.* III, 46).

Though I believe Illiano is correct to underline the continuity of a narrative sequence from *Purgatorio* I to III across the formal divisions of cantos, I will not use the term 'prepurgatorio', as I believe it adds another unnecessary 'area' or 'zone' to Ante-Purgatory. Dante's Ante-Purgatory has a deliberately vague landscape in which

[58] Teodolinda Barolini, 'Dante, Teacher of His Reader', *Approaches to Teaching Dante's Divine Comedy,* ed. by Christopher Kleinhenz, Kristina Olson (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2020), pp. 36-44 (p. 37). *Inf.* III, the pusillanimous and Ante-Inferno; *Inf.* IV, Limbo; *Inf.* V, the Lustful; *Inf.* VI, the Gluttonous. This exact alignment is interrupted in *Inf.* VI which begins with the fourth circle of Hell (avarice and prodigality) but ends with the entrance into the fifth circle (anger).
[59] Illiano, *Sulle sponde,* p. 7. Before Illiano, D'Ovidio also excludes the beach from Ante-Purgatory, *Il Purgatorio e il suo preludio*, pp. 405 and 422.
[60] Illiano, *Sulle sponde,* p. 7.

the souls' movements are, with the exception of the excommunicates, without limitations below the barrier of the Gates – as is revealed by Sordello in *Purgatorio* VII: 'Loco certo non c'è posto; | licito m'è andar suso e intorno' (40–41).[61] This thesis is concerned with the manner in which certain themes, motifs, and linguistic details look back to *Inferno* and are developed through the first nine cantos. As a result, an additional division is not useful when considering retrospective elements in the Ante-Purgatory cantos.

Given the uncertainty of the topography of Ante-Purgatory, the liminal area is often conceptualized through the grouping of souls, which, in maps and diagrams of Dante's mountain, are often given placed on increasingly high ledges or 'balzi' of the mountains initial slopes.[62] Notably, though *balzo* is not a term used to describe the terraces by the poet (he consistently uses *cornice* or *girone*), the commentary tradition uses the term indiscriminately to refer to both the slopes of Ante-Purgatory and, occasionally, the terraces.[63] There is, however, no indication in Dante's text that the pilgrim climbs any higher up the mountain after the meeting with Belacqua until he is transported by Lucia. The Holkham manuscript appears to pay particular attention to this consistently horizontal movement in Ante-Purgatory. The mountain provides a constant presence in the background of the illuminations, featured as an undulating mass of rock, but in the Ante-Purgatory cantos the pilgrim and Virgil are only shown

[61] On the ambuguity of these lines, see Ciro Perna, 'Canto VII. 'Aver si può diletto dimorando'', Dove si può aver diletto dimorando' in *Lectura dantis romana. Cento canti per canto anni*, 3 vols in 6 (Rome: Salerno, 2013-2014), III, *Volume 2. Purgatorio 1. Canti I-XVII* (2014), pp. 179-208.
[62] See Appendix 3.
[63] See Amedeo Quondam, 'balzo', in *ED,* I, p. 506 who defines the term as 'ripiano sopra un pendio' or 'sporgenza sopra un ripido scoscendimento'. See *Inf.* XI, 115; *Inf.* XXIX, 95; *Purg.* IV, 47; *Purg.* VII, 88; *Purg.* IX, 50, 68 and varient 'balco' *Purg.* IX, 2. For cornice see *Purg.* X, 27; XI, 29; XII, 4 and 80; XVII, 131; XXV, 113; *Par.* XV, 93. See also Lucia Onder, 'cornice', *ED,* II, p. 211. Francesco da Buti uses 'balzi' to refer to the terraces 'li sette balzi del monte', see, for example, *ad loc. Purg.* I, 70-84. Cf. Cristoforo Landino, *Purg.* IX, 4-6 who refers to 'balzi dell'antipurgatorio' but also affirms that Dante 'finge, che intorno a questo monte sieno septe balzi' *ad loc. Purg.* X, 22-27. Pasquazi uses the term in his entry 'Antipurgatorio', *ED,* II, p. 305. See also Antonio Illiano, 'Ante-Purgatory', in *DE,* pp. 50-51.

climbing up the rockface in *Purgatorio* IV. This attention to the details of movement is clearly present in Purgatory-proper, as movement between terraces is clearly depicted by Virgil and the pilgrim passing an angel and ascending a rocky slope.[64] The hierarchical ordering of groups of souls in Ante-Purgatory as they are often visually represented on maps of the mountain is thus arguably misleading. The only real topographical divisions are the sheer cliff face which keeps the excommunicates on the beach, and (though much more ambiguously), the Valley.[65]

Ante-Purgatory is often conceptualised as a series of encounters with groups of souls, or 'schiere'.[66] The pilgrim encounters five groups of souls in Ante-Purgatory, but the first group of souls who arrive on the beach in *Purgatorio* II and Sordello are not explicitly placed within a clear group with a specific manifestation of negligence. Some critics have classified the souls in *Purgatorio* II as 'spiritually tardy' for the fact that they are distracted first by the pilgrim's shadow, and then by Casella's song (*Purg.* II, 70-75 and 118-120).[67] However, there is no overt mention of a unifying form of negligence, as is the case with the excommunicates in the following canto (*Purg.* III, 136-141), despite the fact that the group of souls which disembarks from the angelically piloted vessel are the first souls the pilgrim and Virgil meet in Purgatory as a whole.[68]

Furthermore, as Casella explains to the pilgrim, the souls who arrive in *Purgatorio* II have had to wait at the banks of the river Tiber to be collected by the angel and transported to the shores of Purgatory. Though the 'vasello snelletto e

[64] See Appendix 3.
[65] In the Yates Thompson manuscript (c.1450), this cliff appears as a wall around the edge of Ante-Purgatory. Another wall appears visible from the Valley of Princes which represents another wall of rock before Purgatory proper. See Appendix 3.
[66] This term is used for groups of souls in Hell and Purgatory, see usage to describe the excommunicates *Purg.* IV, 24 and the late penitents *Purg.* V, 42. Alessandro Niccoli, 'scheira', *ED,* V, p. 67. See also Pasquazi, 'Antipurgatorio' on these divisions.
[67] Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics,* p. 33.
[68] Cato is the first individual encountered in Purgatory but he clearly functions in the role of a guardian. The figure of Cato will be explored in more detail in Chapter 1, section 2.1.

leggero' (*Purg*. II, 41-42) strongly echoes the boat which Charon navigates across the river Styx in *Inferno* III, there is no precedent in *Inferno* for a period of waiting on earth before arriving in Hell. The additional period of waiting is arguably suggestive of the extension of Ante-Purgatory into the northern hemisphere and the realm of the living, extending Ante-Purgatory back into the space and time of the living.[69] Interestingly, this journey across the ocean is recalled towards the end of Ante-Purgatory when Nino Visconti mistakenly assumes the pilgrim has reached Purgatory after death as the other souls have: 'Quant'è che tu venisti | a piè del monte per le lontane acque?' (*Purg.* VIII, 57). Nino's comment is suggestive of the fact that for souls temporarily residing in Ante-Purgatory, their spiritual journey began in the northern hemisphere.

In *Purgatorio* III, IV and V, Dante appears to return to associating a canto with a particular group and moral element. *Purgatorio* III takes place in an unspecified, desert-like environment, perhaps even a continuation of the beach up until the imposing initial slopes ('l'alta ripa' [*Purg.* III, 71]) where the pilgrim and Virgil meet the excommunicates. In *Purgatorio* IV, the pilgrim and Virgil leave the excommunicates and climb up the initial part of the mountain where they encounter Belacqua, and, in *Purgatorio* V, the poet details the encounter with souls who repented in their final moments. *Purgatorio* VI reports the encounter with Sordello, a soul whose specific form of negligence remains unclear,[70] but, the canto is, of course, best known as being part of the 'political 666s' and for Dante's invective against the political state of Italy.[71] *Purgatorio* VII and VIII describe the evening passed in the Valley of the Rulers before the pilgrim's nocturnal ascent in the arms of Saint Lucy to the Gate of Purgatory which

[69] See Pasquali, 'La questione degli "anti"', p. 37.
[70] On the uncertain categorization of Sordello, see Luigi Peirone, 'Sordello personaggio anomolo dell'Antipurgatorio' *Tenzone,* 18 (2017) 179-183.
[71] Claire E. Honess, 'Divided City, Slavish Italy, Universal Empire', in *Vertical Readings in Dante's Comedy,* ed. George Corbett and Heather Webb, 3 vols (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2015-17), I (2015), pp. 119-43.

he passes through in *Purgatorio* IX. The topographical divisions between these groups of souls, however, remain ambiguous and unclear, rendering the experience of the first encounters in Ante-Purgatory very different from the more clear-cut divisions in *Inferno* and from the more marked moral-topographical divisions on the terraces.

4. Relation and Re-orientation

Critics and commentators have frequently associated Ante-Purgatory with a sense of nostalgia or attachment to the realm of the living and living bodies. This appears to be chiefly due a series of episodes which make mention of the living, or in which is demonstrated an apparent nostalgia for their mortal bodies or earthly relationships.[72] Firstly, Cato's disavowal of Marcia in *Purgatorio* I, as Elena Lombardi has recently put it, makes Cato a symbol of the 'necessità di lasciare indietro tutto ciò che vi è terreno per inseguire e conseguire un processo ordinato e lineare di salvezza, in cui ha posto solo il desiderio prolettico ed esclusivo per Dio.'[73] The encounter with Casella in *Purgatorio* II appears, at first glance, to represent the opposite – a nostalgia for earthly things, for earthly pleasures, and earthly relationships. Indeed, as noted above, the second canto is frequently read as an allegory of 'backsliding' and distraction. The souls' requests for prayers in *Purgatorio* III and V, along with the visually striking

[72] The most famously 'nostalgic' passage in Ante-Purgatory is *Purg.* VIII, 1-6. See Nino Borsellino, 'Una poetica del tempo. Lettura di *Purgatorio* VIII, in his *Sipario dantesco. Sei scenari della Commedia* (Rome: Salerno, 1991), 46-53; Enrico Malato, 'La nostalgia che 'volge il disio'. Lettura del canto VIII del *Purgatorio*,' *Rivista di studi danteschi*, 1 (2001), 91-119. In *Purg.* II, Casella details their arrival from the Tiber (100-102), and the failed embrace reminds us of earthly relationships (76-81). In *Purg*. III, Manfredi details his death and asks Dante to emplore his daughter for suffrage on his behalf (112-145); in *Purg*. V, Jacopo and Buonconte narrate the circumstances of their death and ask for prayers from the living. In *Purg.* VI, Sordello embraces Virgil upon learning that he is also from Mantu (70-75). In *Purg.* VIII the pilgrim recognizes Nino Visconti and greets him warmly (49-57).

[73] Elena Lombardi, '*Purgatorio* 1 e 2: Catone, Marzia, e la sfida alla lettura figurale', *Chroniques Italiennes,* 39.2 (2020), 225-41 (p. 254).

accounts of their deaths, have further caused several readers of the *Commedia* to detect a nostalgia for earthly relationships and mortal bodies in these cantos.[74]

I would like to re-frame the notion of (excessive) attachment to the world of the living in Ante-Purgatory as an interest in re-orientation and in re-establishing the mode of relation between the living and the dead after the journey through Hell. While I will concentrate on textual recalls of *Inferno* throughout the thesis, it is worth interrogating some of the ways Dante encourages the reader to think across the eschatological and geographical boundaries set between both the living and the dead. Firstly, I will consider how, in Ante-Purgatory, the poet spurs the reader to think about the relationship between the living and the dead through the multiple requests for prayer in Ante-Purgatory, and secondly, how the reader is urged to imagine and contemplate the physical distance between the living and the souls in Ante-Purgatory through the frequent references to the movement of the sun.

4.1. Requests for Prayer

A recurrent element in the history of the development of purgatory is the question of the efficacy of suffrages for the dead. Moreira notes that in late antiquity 'purgatory was often a loose system of compatible ideas about prayer, intercession, afterlife belief, and theology concerning infernal realms.' Indeed, she goes so far as to argue that '[i]intercession […] was the hallmark of early medieval purgatory.' [75] Though suffrage may be the particular reserve of Purgatory, in Dante's poem, intercession is perhaps the hallmark of Ante-Purgatory. As has been recognised by many readers of Dante, in the

[74] See, for example, the commentaries by Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, *Purg*. V*, Nota*; and Nicola Fosca, *Purg.* V, 46-51. See also Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Faith Imagining the Self: Somatomorphic Soul and Resurrection Body in Dante's *Divine Comedy*' in *Faithful Imagining: Essays in Honor of Richard R. Niebuhr*, ed. by Sang Hyun Lee, Wayne Proudfoot, and Albert Blackwell (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 81-104.
[75] Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 20 and p. 7 respectively. An important reference point in Scripture was 2 Maccabeees 12:46.

first nine cantos (and particularly cantos III-VI) that the theme of suffrage for the dead is particularly prominent.[76] In his 2019 volume *Dante's Prayerful Pilgrimage,* Alessandro Vettori provides a useful list of occurrences of prayers and blasphemous utterances, distinguishing between types of prayer, namely, sacramental prayer, intercessory prayer, liturgical prayer, and citations of the Psalms and other biblical passages.[77] Vettori lists twelve intercessory prayers in *Purgatorio*, half of which are concentrated across *Purgatorio* III, IV, V, and VIII.[78] The intercessory prayers on the terraces which Vettori lists, however, are spread out more sparsely over five cantos: XIII, XVI, XIX, XXIII, and XXVI. In other words, half of the prayerful utterances related to intercession take place in the first third of the poem.

Seeing the distribution of intercessory prayers across *Purgatorio* in this form arguably only reveals something readers of the *Commedia* have long sensed instinctively, and that is that requests for prayer are more urgent and more concentrated in Ante-Purgatory. The first request for prayer in Ante-Purgatory is made by Manfred who asks the pilgrim to pass word onto his daughter so that she might shorten his stay in Ante-Purgatory (*Purg.* III, 143-145). While Belacqua does not ask the pilgrim directly for his prayers, he bemoans his delay outside the Gates of Purgatory and emphasises his total reliance on prayers from the living for progression (*Purg.* IV, 130-

[76] See, for example, Ledda who identifes the theme of suffrage in Ante-Purgatory (and its strong link to bodies), Giuseppe Ledda, 'Esilio, penitenza, resurrezione – *Purgatorio* VII, VIII, IX', *Esperimenti danteschi. Purgatorio* 2009, ed. Benedetta Quadrio (Genoa-Milan: Marietti, 2010), pp. 71-104 (p. 77).
[77] Alessandro Vettori, *Dante's Prayerful Pilgrimage: Typologies of Prayer in the Comedy* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 5-8. On prayer in Dante's work, see also Erminia Ardissino, *Tempo liturgico e tempo storico nella Commedia di Dante* (Vatican City: Libreria editrice vaticana, 2009); Anna Maria Chaiavacci Leonardi, 'Le beatitudini e la struttura poetica del *Purgatorio*', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 161.513 (1984), 1-29; Stanley V. Benfell III, '"Una nuova legge": the Beatitudes in the *Purgatorio*', in his *The Biblical Dante* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), pp. 107-142 and the edited volume *Preghiera e liturgia nella Commedia*. *Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna, 12 novembre 2011*, ed. by Giuseppe Ledda (Ravenna: Centro Dantesco dei Frati Minori Conventuali, 2013).
[78] *Purg.* III, 112-17 (Manfred); *Purg.* IV, 130-135 (Belacqua); *Purg.* V, 67-72 (Iacopo del Cassero); 88-90 (Buonconte); 130-136 (Pia); *Purg.* VIII, 70-72 (Nino Visconti). As Vittori notes in *Prayerful Pilgrimage,* p. 11. See also his chapter 'Intercessions, Prayerful Locations, and the Theatrics of Prayer', in *Prayerful Pilgrimage*, pp. 128-174.

133). *Purgatorio* V is composed of the well-known accounts of violent deaths from Jacopo del Cassero, Buonconte di Montefeltro, and La Pia who all include requests for prayer (70-73, 85-87, and 130-136) and interrupt each other in their urgency to be heard.[79] *Purgatorio* VI continues the sense of urgency as the 'turba spessa' (10) of 'ombre che pregar pur ch'altri prieghi' (26) presses against the pilgrim (10-24).[80] However, Sordello does not realise that the pilgrim is alive – perhaps because of the fading light, or perhaps because of his interest in Virgil – and is instead shocked when the pilgrim's status as living traveller in Purgatory is revealed to him and Nino Visconti in *Purgatorio* VIII (62-63). Nino subsequently asks the pilgrim to implore his daughter Giovanna to pray for him 'là dove a li 'nnocenti si risponde' (72).[81] With Nino, our account of requests for and references to intercessory prayers in Ante-Purgatory is concluded. Five souls on the terraces will ask the pilgrim for prayers from the living or from himself, namely, Sapia, Marco Lombardo, Pope Adrian, Forese Donati, and Arnaut Daniel. Though there is not space to compare and contrast all of these instances here with the requests for Ante-Purgatory, the epilogue will address the manner in which the reader is encouraged to look back to some of these scenes of requests for suffrage in Ante-Purgatory from the terraces.

Thus far, this overview of intercessory prayer has focussed mostly on verbal requests for prayer, a survey which, of course, excludes gestural supplication, like

[79] Heather Webb has recently spoken on the use of the word 'Deh' in *Purgatorio* V as a form of 'verbal pointing' at Notre Dame Ante-Purgatory Workshop (5 March 2021). Now revised and published in Italian: Heather Webb, 'La gestualità della richiesta in *Purgatorio* 5 e 6: coreografie classiche e cristiane a confronto', in *Italianistica*, 50.1 (2021), 169-183.

[80] Benincasa da Laterina (l'Aretin), Federigo Novello, Count Orso degli Alberti della Cerbaia, Pier de la Brosse are mentioned by name. 'quel da Pisa | ch'e fé parer lo buon Marzucco forte' is recognised as the son of Marzucco degli Scornigiani. See Hollander, *Purg.* VI, 16-18.

[81] Towards the end of *Purgatorio* VIII Corrado Malaspina does not ask for suffrage but does ask for news of Val di Magra (*Purg.* VIII, 115-117).

souls' outreached hands in *Purgatorio* VI reveals.[82] Indeed, Heather Webb has suggested that gesture is of particular importance in the Ante-Purgatory cantos where they are frequently used as a mode of opening dialogic relations.[83] Moreover, she suggests that 'the language of hymn and the kinaesics of the gesture [implicit in prayer] work together to foster a sense of community that is a necessary precedent for the penance that each of these souls will eventually go on to enact within groups before they may proceed to the paradisiacal community.'[84] It is often noted that the concentration of requests for intercession in Ante-Purgatory appears to hint at a particularly strong connection between the living and the most-recently dead, or a more urgent need for intercession.[85] Webb's reading of non-verbal communication in the early cantos of *Purgatorio*, however, is particularly intriguing for the suggestion that prayer is needed to reconstruct the souls' participation in a community.

If we read the souls' requests for prayer in Ante-Purgatory in contrast to reports of souls being accelerated through Ante-Purgatory on the terraces (Sapia, and Forese), Buonconte's lament, for example, over the fact that no-one has prayed for him can also be read as an indicator of broken relationships:

> […] io son Bonconte;
> Giovanna o altri non ha di me cura;
> per ch'io vo tra costor con bassa fronte.' (*Purg.* V, 88-90)

[82] This is touched on by Vettori, *Prayerful Pilgrimage*, p. 140. Heather Webb has considered gesture in the *Commedia* more broadly in *Dante's Persons*. On prayer particularly, see § 'Buonconte's Marian Attitude' which looks at gesture and prayer, pp. 64-77 and § 'Gestures of Supplication', pp. 77-83.
[83] See Webb's chapter, 'Gestural Persons' in *Dante's Persons,* pp. 35-83.
[84] Webb, *Dante's Persons,* p. 82.
[85] See for example, Vettori, *Prayerful Pilgrimage,* p. 141: 'The penitents of ante-purgatory feel stronger ties to earth, partly because they may have departed from it more recently than the souls on the seven ledges, partly because their condition as ante-purgatorial souls makes them more need of divine intervention through intercession of the living.'

Here, Buonconte explicitly links his position in Ante-Purgatory 'con bassa fronte' to the fact that no-one has prayed for him; 'non ha di me cura'. While his penitence *in extremis* is, first and foremost, the primary reason for his delay in Ante-Purgatory, the poet is nonetheless careful to point out that, had the community of the living prayed for him, he would not still be waiting to enter the gates. Delay in Ante-Purgatory is not just simply an indicator of excommunication or a given form of negligence, but also articulates an absence of maintained connection with the living. There is a sense, then, in which Ante-Purgatory is not simply for the negligent, but also for the forgotten.[86]

Vettori also touches on the strained relationship between the living and the dead, arguing that the souls picked out by the poet in the crowd in *Purgatorio* VI, 'seem to want restitution for their delayed purification, and they want it from the living'.[87] He points out that the fact that murdered souls are now reliant on the prayers of the living creates 'an interesting dynamic of counter-redemption' or a 'subtle form of *contrapasso,* which communally involves the living and the dead, in an interchange between earth and the afterworld.'[88] However, Vettori arguably places too much emphasis on murder as the reason for the placement of these souls in Ante-Purgatory, when, as Sabrina Stroppa has recently noted, *Purgatorio* V engages deeply with the importance of repenting for sins in a timely fashion in the case of sudden and unexpected death.[89] Vettori's observations are perhaps more usefully taken as another mode of underlining the dead's particularly strong dependence on the living in Ante-Purgatory as, outside the gates, souls are entirely dependent on the actions of the living to progress towards the terraces, whilst on the terraces spiritual progress is made

[86] Thus, contrary to Sasso's theoretical analysis, such observations suggest that Ante-Purgatory is not a space where the disposition towards sin is universally punished by delay. Instead it is only punished in those who do not receive suffrage from the living.
[87] Vettori, *Prayerful Pilgrimage,* p. 140.
[88] *Ibid.*
[89] Sabrina Stroppa, 'De his qui in fine poenitent', *L'Alighieri,* 45 (2015), 71-102.

through their pain and suffering: 'Spirto in cui pianger matura | quel sanza 'l quale a Dio tornar non pòssi' (*Purg.* XIX, 91-92).

Only the prayers of the good on earth or the blessed in Heaven are of any use to the souls in Purgatory. Moreover, there is a sense in which those who forget the dead are automatically counted among the inconsiderate and immoral.[90] These aspects appear particularly frequently in the Ante-Purgatory cantos where souls appear more desperate for the prayers of the living. What is often read as an excessive attachment to the mortal world or a corporal nostalgia is perhaps not so much an indicator of souls' negligence or of the ease with which they become 'distracted' in Ante-Purgatory, but perhaps rather, or also, serves as a mode for Dante to explore the new relationship between the living and the dead in Purgatory after the journey through Hell.

4.2. The Return of the Sun

One of the most obvious differences between *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* is the re-appearance of the sun, stars, and planets which allow the pilgrim and Virgil to accurately tell the time of day on the mountain. In this section, I will briefly explore the theme of time-telling in *Purgatorio* as a whole, offering some consideration of how this theme differs across the Ante-Purgatory cantos and the terraces. There is a particular concentration of references to the sun's movements in the Ante-Purgatory cantos which informs the pilgrim's fictional re-orientation within the second realm, but also re-orientates the reader as they begin the second cantica.

The sun is a clear symbol of the emergence from darkness into light, from damnation to salvation, and represents Christ (and God) as guide. The pilgrim's progress no longer depends on Virgil's knowledge of the topography of the afterlife,

[90] This is perhaps particularly evident in the contrasting efforts of Nino and Forese's wives across *Purg.* VIII, 70-78 and *Purg.* XXIII, 85-90. See also Buonconte's wife Giovanna in *Purg.*V, 89.

and instead the two travellers are instructed by Cato to follow the sun's path: 'Lo sol vi mosterrà, che surge omai, | prendere il monte a più lieve salita.' (*Purg*. I, 107-108), recalling the notion of Jesus as 'the way' in John 14.6; 'ego sum via et veritas et vita nemo venit ad Patrem nisi per me'.[91] Similarly, towards the end of *Purgatorio* before Virgil's disappearance when the pagan guide declares that the pilgrim's will is 'libero dritto e sano' (*Purg.* XXVII, 140), he also reminds the pilgrim of the sun's presence and function as a guiding light, 'Vedi lo sol che 'n fronte ti riluce' (*Purg.* XXVII, 133).

In *Purgatorio* VII, the reader learns that souls' movement in Ante-Purgatory is only permitted during hours of light.[92] Sordello informs Virgil and the pilgrim that 'andar sù di notte non si puote' (*Purg.* VII, 44), not because of any external impediments, but rather because of an inner will and the fear that they might accidentally wander down the mountain 'e passeggiar la costa intorno errando' (*Purg.* VII, 59). While it is not clear from the exchange with Sordello if souls on the terraces continue movement during the night, the pilgrim's journey up the mountain is halted at nightfall. This limitation on movement during the hours of darkness allows the pilgrim time to sleep, giving rise to the three dreams we find through *Purgatorio* (*Purg.* IX, 13-42; XIX, 7-33; and XVII, 91-114).[93] While in Ante-Purgatory, the pilgrim and Virgil, are conducted by Sordello to the Valley of Rulers specifically to rest during the hours of

[91] John 14.6 ('I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' *NSRV*, p. 1906).

[92] We can assume from the encounter with the slothful on the terrace (who run past the immobile pilgrim and Virgil) that this is not the case on the mountain – though the removal of nocturnal delay could be a particular feature of the Terrace of Sloth. This remains a hypothesis since as at the close of the third day they have passed through all the terraces and the pilgrim sleeps outside the Earthly Paradise. See *Purg.* XVIII, 88-145 and particularly Virgil's address to the souls at 109-110: 'questi che vive, e certo i' non vi bugio, | vuole andar sù, pur che 'l sol ne riluca'.

[93] On dreams, see: Charles Speroni, 'Dante's Prophetic Morning-Dreams', *Studies in Philology*, 45 (1948), 1, 50-59; Dino S. Cervigni, *Dante's Poetry of Dreams* (Florence: Olschki, 1986); Peter Armour, 'Divining the Figures: Dante's Three Dreams in the *Purgatorio*' in *The Shared Horizon: Melbourne Essyas in Italian Language and Literature in Memory of Colin McCormick,* ed. T. O'Neill (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 13-26; Zygmunt G. Barański, 'Dante's Three Reflective Dreams' *Quaderni d'Italianistica*, 10.1-2 (1989), 213-36; and more generally A.C. Spearing, *Medieval dream-poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Steven F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

darkness (‘è buon pensar di bel soggiorno.’ [*Purg.* VII, 45]), at the end of the second day, the journey grinds suddenly to a halt when the pilgrim feels ‘la possa de le gambe posta in triegue’ (*Purg.* XVII, 75), providing opportunity for Virgil’s explanation of the mountain’s structure.

As many readers of Dante’s *Commedia* have observed, in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* there is a persistent interest in the economy of time.[94] However, while Virgil occasionally reminds the pilgrim (and reader) of the need for urgency (*Inf.* IV, 22), or reprimands the pilgrim for dawdling (*Inf.* XXIX, 10-12) or for his apparent laziness (*Inf.* XXIV, 46-48), the sense of urgency in *Purgatorio*, where ‘’l tempo è caro’ (*Purg.* XXIV, 91), is greatly elevated. Though there are various modes in which this sense of urgency is articulated, the most dominant method is undoubtedly that of referring to the position of the sun.[95] In *Purgatorio*, readers are asked to tell the time through frequent references to the position of the sun where in *Inferno* this was only possible through approximations of the unseen moon (*Inf.* VII, 98-99 and XXIX, 10-12).[96]

In *Purgatorio,* there are forty-four references to the sun’s position in the sky, to stars and planets which place emphasis on the time of day, or on impending nightfall.[97] Strikingly, twenty-three of these references occur in the Ante-Purgatory cantos. There are fourteen references to the time of day on the terraces (cantos X-XXVI) and six in *Purgatorio* XXVII alone which mark the final evening on the mountain. After the entrance to Earthly Paradise there is only one final reference towards the very end of the poem (*Purg.* XXXIII, 103-104). It should perhaps be noted that there is a period of

[94] See J.A. Burrow, ‘Economy of Time and Word in Dante’s *Commedia*’*, The Medieval Journal,* 7.2 (2017), 59-71.
[95] Eg. the nautical metaphor at *Purg.* XII, 4-6.
[96] Luigi Blasucci, ‘Tempo e penitenza nel *Purgatorio*’, *Soglie,* 2.2 (2000), pp. 33-46, See also ID, ‘La dimensione del tempo nel *Purgatorio*’, in *Letture e saggi danteschi*, ed. by Lina Bolzoni and Claudio Ciociola (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2014), pp. 35-57. See *Inf.* IV, 22; *Inf.* VII, 98-99; *Inf.* XI, 13-15; *Inf.* XIII, 80-81 and 12; *Inf.* XXIX, 10-12. Burrow, ‘Economy of Time’.
[97] See Appendix 1.

time on the Terrace of Wrath when the sun is no longer visible due to the thick smoke which might account for reduced reference to the sun in cantos XVI and XVII, but otherwise, with only fourteen references to the sun in seventeen cantos, we see that there is a clear interest in timekeeping in Ante-Purgatory.[98] The lack of emphasis on time once the pilgrim has reached the summit of the mountain is logical; he has reached his destination and so must no longer rush.

In *Purgatorio*, there are a series of more lengthy and erudite descriptions of the sun's location. Alison Cornish has noted that these numerous astronomical periphrases tell time by referring to four points around the world, namely, Jerusalem in the North, Purgatory in the South, the Ganges in the East, and the straits of Gibraltar in the West, as is the case, for example, in *Purgatorio* II (1-9).[99] Cornish argues that these time-references in *Purgatorio* should be counted among the poem's addresses to the reader, and suggests that 'the multiple time-references of *Purgatorio* amount to a utopian gesture, inviting us to compare the corrective world of Purgatory with our own present state and to examine the distance between the two.'[100] Cornish's argument centres on the periphrasis at the beginning of *Purgatorio* IX which has had a long and tortured critical history,[101] but it is interesting to observe more generally that there are four other instances in Ante-Purgatory alone of similarly astronomically erudite passages which require consideration of the sun's movements around the globe: most famously *Purgatorio* II, 1-9 and the exchange between Virgil and the pilgrim over the position of the sun in *Purgatorio* IV, 67-84. However, Virgil's description of the location of his tomb also invites the reader to consider time in the northern hemisphere: 'vespero è già

[98] The smoke is spotted for the first time at the end of *Purg.* XV (139-145), and the pilgrim emerges from the smoke to find the sun setting (*Purg.* XVII, 9).
[99] Alison Cornish, *Reading Dante's Stars* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 62.
[100] *Ibid.*
[101] See Cornish, *Dante's Stars,* pp. 69-72.

colà dov'è sepolto | lo corpo dentro al quale io facea ombra; | Napoli l'ha, e da Brandizio è tolto' (*Purg.* III, 25-27). Similarly, at the end of *Purgatorio* IV, Virgil hurries the pilgrim on from Belacqua with a reference to the time not only in Purgatory, but also in Morrocco (taken as equivalent to Gibralatar): 'vienne omai; vedi ch'è tocco / meridian dal sole, e a la riva | cuopre la notte già col piè Morrocco' (*Purg.* IV, 135-139).[102]

Similar instances of astronomical periphrasis which refer to the time of day in more than one location are seen in *Purgatorio* XV, 1-6; XVII, 76-81; and XXVII, 1-6. However, the repeated use of time references in Ante-Purgatory not only initiate this mode of time-telling, but also repeatedly draw the reader into examining the distance between this world and the next in the concentrated space of the first nine cantos. As noted in the previous section, it is here that we also find a concentration in the requests for prayers, thus urging reflection on the relationship between the living and the dead. Furthermore, Ante-Purgatory, it is frequently observed, appears to be characterized by a stronger link to the mortal world, a feature which is arguably enhanced by the repeated consideration of the time in the populated northern hemisphere.

The appearance of the sun is also key to a rephrasing of the manner in which souls recognize the pilgrim's extraordinary presence on the mountain. While in Hell, the pilgrim had been identified by his breathing, his weight, his effect on objects around him or 'l'atto de la gola' (*Inf.* XXIII, 88), in Purgatory, the shadow he casts becomes a primary means of identifying the pilgrim as one who travels 'con quelle membra con le quai nascesti' (*Purg.* V, 47).[103] Indeed, in Ante- Purgatory, the re-appearance of the

[102] See Singleton's gloss to *Purg.* IV, 138-139.
[103] The pilgrim is identified by his breathing in *Purgatorio* II, 67-69 shortly after the sun has risen but before the pilgrim notices the presence of his own shadow in *Purgatorio* III, 16-18. However, the souls are aware of the pilgrim's mortal body because of his shadow in *Purgatorio* III, 88-9; *Purgatorio* V, 4-6, 25-27. In cantos VI, VII and VIII, due to the fading light, the souls do not see the pilgrim's shadow and are informed of the pilgrim's unprecedented journey 'in prima vita' in *Purg*. VIII, 58-60.

pilgrim's shadow is notably contrasted with his guide's 'missing' shadow in *Purgatorio* III (16-21), highlighting the very different nature of Virgil and Dante's journeys and looking ahead to Virgil's inevitable departure. As a point of contrast, souls in Purgatory-proper have less opportunity to notice the pilgrim's shadow, but instead perceive his living body in different manners.[104]

In the Ante-Purgatory cantos, increased emphasis is placed on the urgency of the journey up the mountain through more frequent references to the sun and its movement across the sky. The sun is both a source of distraction in Ante-Purgatory, in that souls notice the pilgrim's shadow and consequently ask him for prayers, but it is also the guiding light which is continuously used to reinforce the urgency of the journey.

5. Methodology: Retrospective Reading

The concern to return to *Inferno* at the beginning of *Purgatorio* is a natural reaction for many readers of the *Commedia,* as is made evident by the striking regularity with which early commentators compare Purgatory to Hell in their opening descriptions of the second realm in which they are alert to both contrasts and connections.[105] While this desire to look back to Hell in *Purgatorio* I and II may seem obvious, I will show throughout this thesis that retrospective elements are particularly prevalent throughout the Ante-Purgatory cantos and will argue that they contribute fundamentally to its characterization as a space of transition and re-orientation. In this final section I will

[104] See Appendix 2.
[105] Rebekah Locke, 'The Role of Dante's Purgatorio in the Development and Representation of Purgatory from the Early Fourteenth Century to the Council of Trent in the Sixteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Bristol, 2020) looks at commentaries written in the Italian vernacular from 1322 to 1568 which include Alighieri (1322), Jacopo della Lana (1324- 28), L'Ottimo Commento (1333), Chiose cagliaritane (1370?), Francesco da Buti (1385-95), Chiose vernon (1390?), Anonimo Fiorentino (1400?), Cristoforo Landino (1481), Giovan Battista Gelli (1541-63), Trifon Gabriele (1525-41), Alessandro Vellutello (1544) and Bernardino Daniello (1547-68), see esp. pp. 65-69.

discuss the methodological background for this approach with an overview of critical engagement with intratextuality in Dante studies, and, more specifically, with the notion of retrospective reading before giving an overview of the chapters.

From the Latin *retrospect* or *retrospicere* (to look back), *retrospection* can take palce at a deeply personal level with reference to one's own life, but might equally refer to looking back over a cultural movement or series of historical events in what might be termed as 'cultural' or 'collective' or 'social' memory.[106] The broad and interdisciplinary field of memory studies has increasingly gained traction since the late 1980s and increasingly offers an important point of intersection between the humanities (for example, history, art, and literature), social and natural sciences (for example, sociology, psychology, and neuroscience). The notion of memory, is of course proper to the individual brain, but the notion of 'remembering' has been subsequently transferred to groups of individuals. It is through this operative metaphor that we speak of the memory of a nation, a religious community, or a literary memory. [107] Though this thesis will not engage specifically with ideas of cultural memory, it is interesting to note the importance retrospection has taken on in our culture and in our scholarship in recent years as we review the way we look back at the past and the way the past has previously been looked back upon. Indeed, Erll's definitions of cultural memory as as 'the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts'[108] is useful for understanding the dynamics of retrospection. In as much as our present is constantly changing, so too does our past and our relationship with this past.

[106] See Sarah Gensburger, 'Halbwach's Studies in Collective Memory : A Founding Text For Contemporary 'Memory Studies' ? *Jounral of Classical Sociology*, 16.4 (2016), 396-413 for a useful overview of founding elements and recent developments and challenges in the field.
[107]Astrid Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction', in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* ed. Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning, and Sara Young (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 1-15.
[108] Erll, 'Introduction', p. 2.

In Medieval studies, there has been considerable attention to the issue of both individual memory and collective memory.[109] Scholars like Frances Yates and Mary Carruthers have drawn greater attention to the dominance of memory in medieval culture and the importance of *ars memoriae* in rhetoric, contributing to a change in the way we perceive the importance and status of memory within medieval culture and its impact or reading and writing.[110] Mary Carruthers has shown the manner in which the process of reading was intertwined with memory, pointing to the fact that a medieval readers relationship with a text was as 'a source of communally experienced wisdom for one's own life, gained by memorizing from it however much and in whatever fashion one is able or willing to do'.[111] This re-evaluation of the role memory had in medieval reading is an important conceptual base for the way in which thesis will pay particular attention to the manner in which readers might have honed in on repeated rhyme patterns, formulas, or certain words because the act of reading was more closely entwined with the act of memorization. While Carruthers primarily explores this phenomenon in terms of intratextuality (that is, relationships or 'dialogues' between different texts recreated in the reader's memory), there is good precedent for the practice of intratextual recalls in preacher's sermons.[112] A. C. Spearing points to the practice of linking the parts of the modern or 'university' sermon (which had a more complex structure) through a system of verbal 'correspondences' (*correspondentia*),

[109] *Writing Battles: New Perspectives on Warfare and Memory in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, Rory Naismith and Elizabeth Ashman Rowe (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020)
[110] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; 2008); Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1966).
[111] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 202. See the chapter 'Memory and the ethics of reading', in *The Book of Memory*, pp. 195-233.
[112] The importance of the *ars praedicandi* to Dante's work has received increasing attention. Carlo Delcorno's work has been particularly prominent in Dante Studies. For a selection of some of his articles, see Carlo Delcorno, '*Quasi quidam cantus': Studi sulla predicazione medievale*, ed.by Giovanni Baffetti, Giorgio Forni, Silvia Serventi, and Oriana Visani (Florence: Olschki, 2009). See also George Ferzoco, 'Dante and the Context of Medieval Preaching' in *Reviewing Dante's Theology.* 2 vols, ed. by Claire Honess and Matthew Treherne (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013), II, pp. 187–210.

that is, the frequent reappearances of the same sets of words and ideas.[113] He notes that this repetitive element would likely have afforded aesthetic pleasure to more educated members of the congregation but would also have served to 'hammer home the main points of the preacher's message to the lower layers'.[114]

When considering intratextual recalls, there is inevitably some risk of forcing parallels and allusions between certain moments in the text. It is thus worth establishing what we might consider to be justifiably termed a 'recall' or 'retrospective element'. Within this thesis, I will look at more linguistically precise elements, such as repeated rhyme patterns, formulas, and linguistic elements, alongside broader elements such as thematic echoes, echoes in the presentation of characters, landscape echoes. In each case of retrospection, however, I am interested in the manner in which these different elements combine to create consistent patterns or 'constellations' of retrospective elements which look back to certain areas of *Inferno*. In this sense, I do not take a repeated rhyme pattern, or repeated word as cause alone for looking back to a certain canto in *Inferno*, but rather suggest that a series of retrospective elements encourage the reader to look back to certain cantos in *Inferno*.

The network of echoes which develops throughout the *Commedia* has been considered in a variety of manners and a critical vocabulary has developed around Dante's use of intratextuality. Critics have long been aware of connections between cantos and vertical parallels (such as the famous 'political 666s') which offer 'highly alluring glimpses'[115] of the ornate fabric of the *poema sacro* and support the fiction of the poem as a work willed by God. Though canto-by-canto readings often attempt to

[113] Anthony Colin Spearing, *Criticism and Medieval Poetry* (London: Edward Arnold, 1972), p. 75.
[114] Spearing, *Criticism*, p. 76. Spearing points to *Three Middle English Sermons,* ed. by D.M. Grisdale (Kendal, 1939) and *Middle English Sermons*, ed. by. W.O. Ross (London, 1940) for examples of this technique. See also Zygmunt G. Baranski, '*Inferno* VI, 73: A Controversy Re-examined', *Italian Studies*, 36.1, 1-26, esp. pp. 11-12.
[115] Zygmunt G. Barański, 'Without Any Violence', in *Vertical Readings*, I, pp. 181–202 (p.202).

take the poem's complex network of intra- and intertextual references into account, the format of reading a single canto, though helpful for reading and teaching the *Commedia,* has certain limitations.[116] In recent years, various experiments have worked to expand the scope of the traditional *lectura dantis* format. The Cambridge Vertical Readings series explored long-suspected connections between cantos of the same number,[117] while L'Università degli Studi di Milano experimented with the traditional format of the *lectura,* reading cantos in 'horizontal', narratively chronological groups. In a similar vein, the University of Basel and St Andrew's University read blocks of cantos – though still following a traditional *lectura Dantis* format.[118] Though these experiments have provided an interesting opportunity to read groups of cantos together, the complex network of recalls in *Commedia* stretches far beyond numerical affinity or textual proximity.[119] Paolo Cherchi and Selene Sarteschi have promoted the advantages of a 'lettura a "lunghe campate"', arguing that 'le analisi canto per canto possono peccare di miopia.'[120] In their article on the Sphere of the Sun, Cherchi and Sarteschi expand on traditional modes of reading intratextuality in the *Commedia*, defining this mode of reading as 'una lettura che colga raccordi di motivi o di temi o di allusioni fra

[116] A few key studies on intratextuality in *Commedia* include: Michelangelo Picone, 'Parte Seconda: Dante e la cultura classica e mediolatina' in *Studi danteschi*, ed. by Antonio Lanza (Ravenna: Longo editore, 2017), pp. 149-342. Amilcare A. Iannucci, 'Autoesegesi dantesca: la technica dell''episodio parallelo' (Inferno XV-Purgatorio XI)', in his *Forma ed evento nella 'Divina Commedia'* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1984), pp. 83–114.
[117] The readings ran from 2012–2016 at Trinity College in Cambridge University. On the 'political 666' see Camillo Massi, 'A proposito dei sesti canti della *Commedia*', *L'Alighieri*, 7 (1996), 91-94. There is some debate over the vertical alignment of cantos. Richard Kay argues that *Inf.* I should be considered as a prologue so that *Inf.* II should be read with *Purg.* I and *Par.* I and so on, see: Richard Kay, 'Parallel Cantos in Dante's *Commedia*', *Res publica litterarum* 15 (1992), 109-13.
[118] Università di Milano ran this series of *lecturae* from 2008-2010: *Esperimenti danteschi*, 3 vols (Genova: Marietti, 2009-2010). University of Basel read *Inferno* over the course of 5 meetings from March 2019-March 2021. Now published as *Voci sull''Inferno' di Dante. Una nuova lettura della prima cantica*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Maria Antonietta Terzoli, 3 vols (Rome: Carocci, 2021). The *Lectura Dantis Andreapolitana* began on 9th October 2009, and ended on 6th November 2021. '*Lectura Dantis Andreapolitana* http://lecturadantisandreapolitana.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/public-lectures/ [accessed 15 March 2020]. See Bibliographic Note.
[119] See Simon A. Gilson, 'The Wheeling Sevens', and Barański, 'Without Any Violence', in *Vertical Readings*, pp. 143–60 and pp. 181–202.
[120] Paolo Cherchi and Selene Sarteschi, 'Il cielo del Sole. Per una lettura della *Commedia* a "lunghe campate"', *Dante oggi. Critica del testo,* 14.2 (2001), 311-331 (p. 312).

loro distanti e non ovvi'.[121] In my study of retrospection in Ante-Purgatory, I will use this definition as a premise for reading intratextuality expansively in the first nine cantos of *Purgatorio*, arguing that such an approach is justified because of Ante-Purgatory transitions the reader not only between two *cantiche*, but also because it also marks a transition between the damned and the saved. I will, however, build on Cherchi and Sarteschi's parameters of 'retrospective elements' to include repeated rhyme patterns, key formulas or words, echoes between characters or the presentation of characters, and landscape echoes.

One key way of exploring intratextuality that avoids narrative or vertical blocks of cantos, has been through parallel episodes, a term used to describe the incorporation of the critical act of exegesis into the poem itself, referring to the manner in which two episodes might be read together, the second episode offering a new insight about the first and vice versa.[122] Barański and Iannucci also use the term self-exegesis (*auto-esegesi*),[123] which has been termed 'a particularly privileged form of reading Dante with Dante,'[124] and underscores the self-reflective nature of Dante's poetry as *poesia critica*.[125] Two such parallel episodes are often linked with *Purgatorio* V. Firstly, there is the parallel episode of Guido da Montefeltro's account of his failed repentance in *Inferno* XXVII and the subsequent battle over his soul between St Francis and 'un d'i neri cherubini' (*Inf.* XXVII, 112-117). In *Purgatorio* V, Buonconte da Montefeltro

[121] Cherchi and Sarteschi, 'Il cielo del Sole', p. 312.
[122] See Iannucci, 'Autoesegesi'. Richard Kay uses the term 'cross-canto parallelisms'. Kay 'Parallel Cantos' p.113. Nicolò Crisafi discusses parallel lives, arguing that this device allows for alternative modes of reading the *Commedia* besides the teleological norm. See Nicolò Crisafi, *Dante's Masterplot and Alternative Narratives in the Commedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022). See also by Teodolinda Barolini, Nicolò Crisafi, Jennifer Rushworth, and Francesca Southerden in 'Part IV. A Non-Linear Dante' in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante,* ed. Elena Lombardi, Manuele Gragnolati, and Francesca Southerden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).
[123] For a definition of 'autoesegesi', see Iannucci, 'Autoesegesi', p. 94.
[124] Gilson, 'The Wheeling Sevens', p. 143.
[125] See Iannucci, 'Autoesegesi', p. 91: 'La poesia della Commedia è poesia 'critica' in quanto si ripiega continuamente sul proprio significato.'

repents *in extremis* and, in the parallel battle over his soul (this time between an angel and a devil), he is saved. In both cases, there is a reversal of expectations leading to Guido's unanticipated damnation in Hell (unanticipated by Guido at least because he has been absolved in advance of his sin [*Inf.* XXVII, 100-102]) and Buonconte's unexpected salvation in Ante-Purgatory. A vertical reading of *Purgatorio* V and *Inferno* V also offers another, if partial, parallel episode through the murders of Francesca and La Pia who are both murdered by their husbands.[126] We see from the example of *Purgatorio* V that reading episodes in parallel pairs can limit an understanding of intratextuality within the *Commedia* to privileging a few episodes. Indeed, as Durling and Martinez's 'inter cantica' notes in their commentary to *Purgatorio* V demonstrate; there are multiple echoes and recalls within one episode beyond the examples of *Inferno* V and XXVII.[127] A 'lettura a "lunghe campate"' thus allows for a more intricate and complex treatment of allusions, recalls, and echoes within Dante's poem than the parallel episode.

The most important precedent for an examination of the *Commedia*'s macro-structure is provided by Charles Singleton. Singleton's notion of retrospective reading is best revealed in his well-known 1966 essay, 'The Vistas in Retrospect', where he uses the rhetorical device *hysteron proteron* as a conceptual basis for retrospective reading, a rhetorical technique which Dante himself uses frequently and which encourages 'seeing from the end.'[128] For Singleton, this device not only functions as a means of expressing the centrality of destination in the pilgrim's fictional itinerary towards God, but also illustrates the fact that the multitude of patterns (or vistas) will

[126] See Robin Kirkpatrick, 'Massacre, Misere and Martydom' in *Vertical Readings*, pp. 97-118.
[127] Durling and Martinez, *Purgatorio*. For *Purg.* V they also note echoes from *Inf.* VI, XXVIII, and XXX. They also list other cases of a condemned father and saved son: Frederick and Manfred; Ugolino and Nino Visconti, as well as the metaphorical paternal relationship between Brunetto Latini and Virgil and the poet.
[128] See Charles Singleton, 'The Vistas in Retrospect', *MLN*, 81.1 (Jan., 1966), 55-80.

only be visible 'in memory'. In other words, as readers, we can only fully understand from the endpoint (or from pivotal points) of the poem, underlining Dante's vision of history as *sub specie aeternitatis* (from the perspective of eternity).[129] Barański develops Singleton's ideas on retrospection, suggesting that *Purgatorio* XXVII offers an example of a 'pivotal point' in the poem.[130] He argues for what he terms 'structural retrospection' in order to encourage 'a definition of the formal organization of the *Comedy* as essentially "progressive", like the pilgrim, inexorably moving towards its fulfilment and completion.'[131]

Central to both Singleton and Barański's conceptions of the retrospective element of the *Commedia*'s structure is its conceptual affinity with the pilgrim's itinerary and Dante's view of history *sub specie aeternitatis.* Retrospection is key on the terraces where souls look back to their sins and vices with far more clarity and, at times, even condemn humankind's tendency to vice and misdirected love. [132] However, in Ante-Purgatory retrospection leaves a stronger impression on the reader because this section of the canticle affords greater and more immediate contrasts with Hell where retrospection can have no meaningful effect. Arrival on the shores of the mountain affords souls, the pilgrim, and the reader a new vantage point.

Drawing on a Singletonian notion of retrospection, Lloyd Howard has paid closer attention to the mechanics of this process in his 2001 study on 'formulas of

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[129] See Charles Singleton, *Dante Studies 1: Elements of Structure* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), pp. 61-2; Albert Russell Ascoli, *Dante and the Making of a Modern Author* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 35.
[130] Singleton cites the transition between *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* as one such 'pivotal point'. Singleton, 'The Vistas', p. 64. Barański glosses the Singletonian 'goal' or 'pivot' as 'a major moment of arrival and transition.' Barański, 'Structural Retrospection', p. 6.
[131] Barański, 'Structural Retrospection,' p. 73. Crisafi suggests additional, alternative modes of reading in *Dante's Masterplot,* pp. 23-24.
[132] Corbett has read this in particular relation to the terrace of pride: George Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics*, p. 120. See *Purg.* XI, 91-92: 'Oh vana gloria de l'umane posse!' This might be contrasted with the vision souls have in Hell where distant future events become increasingly blurry as they near the present. See *Inf.* X, 100-108. There is dispute over whether this applies to all the damned or just the Epicureans. See Hollander, *Inf.* X, 100-108.

repetition' in the *Commedia.* Howard argues that linguistic patterns or formulas occur as 'an obvious signal or cue to the reader that the poet wishes to underscore his point.'[133] These formulas serve to guide the reader 'on an alternate journey across the cantos of the text,'[134] operating outside a simple alignment of parallel cantos. He argues that through repetition of certain linguistic formulas (words, phrases, or rhyme patterns), 'the careful reader is afforded an interpretive opportunity which takes shape only if, as in a puzzle, the pieces scattered through textual space are placed side by side and fitted together to form new pictures'.[135] Howard thus sees the reader's memory as being implicated in the success of these markers and pays some attention to the issue of medieval memory practices. Roberto Antonelli has placed even greater focus on *ars memoriae* in several articles published between 2003-2011 with relation to intratextuality, but with greater attention to rhyme patterns than Howard.[136] Antonelli argues that Dante's use of *terza rima* forces the reader to look back once they have reached the end of the line.[137] Antonelli's work demonstrates the manner in which the reader's memory is consistently involved in the *Commedia*'s complex macrostructure which is created through relationships between multiple cantos.

This dissertation, then, builds upon this body of work, considering more established forms of intertextuality such as vertical echoes, parallel episodes, the

[133] Lloyd Howard, *Formulas of Repetition in Dante's Commedia: Signposted Journeys across Textual Space* (Montreal, London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), p. 3.
[134] Howard, *Formulas of Repetition,* p. 5.
[135] Howard, *Formulas of Repetition,* p. 22.
[136] On memory techniques see Howard, *Formulas of Repetition,* pp. 6-7. On oral culture see John Ahern, 'Singing the Book: Orality in the Reception of Dante's *Comedy*', in *Dante: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. by Amilcare A. Iannucci (Toronto-London: Toronto University Press, 1997), pp. 214–39. On rhyme and memory see Roberto Antonelli, 'Tempo testuale e tempo rimico', in *La costruzione del testo poetico: metrica e testo*, ed. by Roberto Antonelli (Rome: Aracne, 2004), pp. 143–70. See also 'Come (e perché) Dante ha scritto la *Divina Commedia*?', *Dante Oggi,* 113 (2011), 3-23. Originally published under the title ''*Memoria rerum'* e '*memoria verborum''*, *Criticón,* 87-89 (2003), 35-45. Antonelli draws heavily on Weinrich's work on *ars memoria,* see in particular: Harald Weinrich, *Lethe: The Art and Critique of Forgetting* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Harald Weinrich, *La memoria di Dante* (Florence: Accademia della Crusca, 1994).
[137] Roberto Antonelli, 'Tempo testuale', p. 160. See also in the same volume the essay by Arianna Punzi, 'Le rime della *Commedia* di Dante Alighieri', pp. 269–310.

repetition of formulas and rhyme patterns, but also less frequently referenced modes of allusion such as thematic echoes, similarities in the presentation of certain figures, and landscape echoes. I will demonstrate that, for certain cantos, there exists a more complex textual network than has previously been revealed. Furthermore, I will explore the particularly distinctive role of retrospection in Ante-Purgatory, arguing that it is key to the poet's staging of the pilgrim's re-orientation among saved souls and equally fundamental to the re-orientation of the reader. The reader is frequently called upon to look back to *Inferno* and to reflect on the journey so far across the nine Ante-Purgatory cantos, marking Ante-Purgatory as an extended zone of textual and conceptual transition.

This thesis is divided into three chapters and an epilogue. In the first chapter, 'Renewal and Retrospection in *Purgatorio* I and II', I will consider retrospective elements in *Purgatorio* I and II, focussing on the manner in which the beginning of the second *cantica* looks back to the beginning of the first (cantos I-IV) but also to the key episodes of *Inferno* XIII and XXVI. I will argue that, firstly, this encourages the reader to measure the pilgrim's progress from the beginning of the poem, and, secondly, retrospective elements serve to dramatize the problematic appearance of Cato as purgatorial guardian and the thorny and complex role of Virgil as pagan guide in Purgatory.

In Chapter 2, 'Virgil in Ante-Purgatory', I will suggest that *Inferno* IV is frequently recalled in Ante-Purgatory through similarities in the two areas of the afterlife, namely Ante-Purgatory's liminal state, and the fact that souls only suffer *poena damni.* These conceptual similarities provide the basis for a wide range of more precise textual and thematic recalls of *Inferno* IV which are spread particularly across *Purgatorio* III, IV, V, VI and VII. I will also look at the manner in which Virgil's

damnation and the damnation of the noble pagans is repeatedly contrasted with the salvation of souls in Ante-Purgatory.

In the third and final chapter, 'Landscape in Ante-Purgatory', I will examine the manner in which the landscape of Ante-Purgatory recalls various landscapes of *Inferno*, concentrating especially on the re-valuation of expertise in *Purgatorio* II and III and the recall of strenuous climbs in Hell in *Purgatorio* IV. I will then focus on *Purgatorio* VII and VIII, arguing that the landscape of Valley of the Rulers presents a particularly strong parallel with the landscape of the Limbo of the noble pagans in *Inferno* IV.

Finally, in the Epilogue, by way of conclusion, I will consider the warning to the pilgrim not to look back in *Purgatorio* IX and the manner in which the rest of the *cantica* proceeds, in fact, to look back to Ante-Purgatory.

Chapter 1

Renewal and Retrospection in *Purgatorio* I and II

Purgatorio I is a canto concerned with spiritual progress, looking ahead to the journey up Mount Purgatory, and to some extent to Paradise. This chapter, however, will focus on the way in which the poet also encourages the reader to look back in the first two opening cantos of *Purgatorio*. Firstly, I will examine the pivotal status of *Purgatorio* I, concentrating on the manner in which the canto combines a deep interest in the theme of renewal alongside a concentration of retrospective elements from a number of different cantos, above all, *Inferno* I, II, III, IV, XIII, and XXVI. Secondly, I will turn to *Purgatorio* II, focussing particularly on the strong relationship between this canto and *Inferno* III. By examining the echoes of *Inferno* in *Purgatorio* I and II, I will aim to show that retrospection is emphasized in the opening cantos through an engagement with multiple earlier cantos from the first *cantica*. These 'clusters' of retrospective elements have several purposes. Firstly, by looking back to earlier moments of the pilgrim's journey in *Inferno,* the reader is able to measure the pilgrim's progress. Secondly, retrospective elements serve to dramatize the problematic appearance of Cato as purgatorial guardian, to introduce the knotty issue of Virgil as damned pagan guide in Purgatory, and to underline the change in souls' behaviour by encouraging the reader to compare the arrival and entrance into Hell with the arrival on the shores of Purgatory. I will additionally suggest that the use of retrospection contributes to a changing relationship with the textual past, as the reader is invited to reflect on the entirety of the *Inferno* for the first time. In this manner, I will argue that retrospection in *Purgatorio* I is particularly pronounced given the canto's structural placement and the

transition between the two *cantica*, and that *Purgatorio* II continues this interest in retrospection, one which is sustained and developed throughout the Ante-Purgatory cantos. Finally, by engaging with echoes from multiple cantos within the opening two cantos, I hope this chapter might contribute to new modes of reading intratextuality within the *Commedia*, building on the work of scholars considered in the final section of the Introduction.[1]

The present analysis of *Purgatorio* I and *Purgatorio* II will seek to establish a 'constellation' of echoes from multiple cantos. Besides an attention to verbal echoes as privileged by critics like Singleton, Howard, and Antonelli, I will also demonstrate relationships created through thematic echoes, as has been suggested by Cherchi and Sarteschi who argue for the necessity of taking into account 'raccordi di motivi o di temi o di allusioni fra loro distanti e non ovii.'[2] In this chapter, then, I will identify echoes through a combination of structural parallels (in part suggested by Durling and Martinez's inter-cantica notes to *Purgatorio* I and II), thematic echoes, linguistic formulas of repetition, recalls established between characters, and landscape echoes. It is, of course, important to acknowledge the risk of forcing certain reminiscences when attempting a broader mode of reading across multiple cantos. However, in *Purgatorio* I and II, there emerges a cluster of echoes from the beginning of *Inferno,* namely cantos I, II, III, IV, and I argue that the nature and extent of these patterns of retrospective recalls suggest that the poet intended for his reader to recall the beginning (or multiple beginnings)[3] of *Inferno* in ways that would encourage reflection on the proemial functions of *Purgatorio* I. Furthermore, these retrospective functions are in keeping with *Purgatorio* I's foregrounding of the themes of renewal and rebirth. The strong

[1] See Introduction, section 5.
[2] Cherchi and Sarteschi, 'Il cielo del Sole', p. 312.
[3] Barolini, 'Infernal Incipits: The Poetics of the New', in *The Undivine Comedy*, pp. 21–45.

sense of a new beginning which the poet creates in *Purgatorio* I is balanced by retrospective elements which encourage the reader to recall the beginning of the pilgrim's journey. Similarly, the memory of Ulysses (a 'structurally determinate' episode in itself)[4] will be shown to emerge particularly strongly in *Purgatorio* I, allowing the reader to measure the pilgrim against his dark double. Due to the prominence of *Inferno* XXVI throughout the opening of *Purgatorio*, Ulyssean echoes will be integrated into various sections within the chapter.

The chapter will be divided into three principal sections. The first section will focus on the way in which retrospective elements contribute to an understanding of the pilgrim's progress, and to a lesser extent, the poet's progression since *Inferno* I. The analysis here will primarily focus upon two structural parallels between *Purgatorio* I and the beginning of *Inferno*, focusing particularly on the pilgrim's vision, and turning. The second section of the chapter will examine the ways in which a strict binary between damnation and salvation is rendered problematic by considering recalls surrounding the two pagans present at the beginning of the canticle, namely, Cato and Virgil. I will consider the manner in which Cato recalls *Inferno* XIII and *Inferno* IV, while Virgil's address to Cato recalls *Inferno* II. In the third section, I will turn to *Purgatorio* II, where I will show how *Purgatorio* II appears to recall the beginning of *Inferno*; in particular the encounter with Charon in *Inferno* III through the approach of the angelically piloted vessel.

[4] See Amilcare A. Iannucci, '*Paradiso* XXXI', *Lectura Dantis Virginiana*, 3.16-17 (1995), 470–85 (p. 471).

1. Measuring Progress

1.1 'La morta poesì resurga'

Purgatorio I offers an obvious example of a Singletonian 'pivotal point' or 'goal' within the poem.[5] It is a major moment of arrival and transition, offering an important vantage point from which to look back over *Inferno*.[6] The opening lines immediately engage the reader in retrospective reading by evoking the beginning of *Inferno* and the Ulysses episode, encouraging the reader to consider the progress the pilgrim has made:

> Per correr miglior acque alza le vele
> omai la navicella del mio ingegno,
> che lascia dietro a sé mar sì crudele;
> e canterò di quel secondo regno
> dove l'umano spirito si purga
> e di salire al ciel diventa degno.
> Ma qui la morta poesì resurga,
> o sante Muse, poi che vostro sono;
> e qui Caliopè alquanto surga
> seguitando il mio canto con quel suono
> di cui le Piche misere sentiro
> lo colpo tal, che disperar perdono. (*Purg.* I, 1-12)

The opening twelve lines illustrate the play between the classical poetry of the past and the *novitas* of the *Commedia,* but also between infernal poetry which is to be superseded through purgatorial poetry.[7] Recently, Elena Lombardi has also suggested that Ulysses can be seen 'non solo come imagine del poeta-scrittore, ma anche come

[5] Singleton cites the transition between Inferno and Purgatorio as one such 'pivotal point'. Singleton, 'The Vistas', p. 64. Barański glosses the Singletonian 'goal' or 'pivot' as 'a major moment of arrival and transition.' Barański, 'Strucutral Retrospection', p. 6.
[6] On transition in *Purg.* I see: See Edoardo Sanguineti, '*Purgatorio* I' in his *Dante reazionario* (Rome: Riuniti, 1992), pp. 125-47; Ezio Raimondi, 'Canto I', in *Lectura Dantis Scaligera: Purgatorio* (Florence: Monnier, 1967), pp. 1–41.
[7] Zygmunt G. Barański, 'Purgatorio I', in *Lectura Dantis Bononiensis*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini and Carlo Galli (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2011), v (2015), pp. 105–33. Lucia Battaglia Ricci argues that in the opening cantos of *Purgatorio* there is an increased emphasis on the unique situation of the Dante character as not only a traveller, but also as a poet. See Lucia Battaglia Ricci, 'Canti I-II: la cantica della trasformazione' in *Esperimenti Danteschi*, pp. 3-39.

imagine del poeta-lettore, il suo modo per mettere in evidenza fallimenti e nuovi inizi nel campo della lettura e dell'interpretazione.'[8] This notion of Ulysses as a poet-reader is particularly pertinent to the retrospective elements concentrated at the beginning of *Purgatorio* which often require the reader to look back, not only to *Inferno* XXVI, but also to the beginning of the poem through the lens of the Ulysses episode.

The meta-poetic beginning of *Purgatorio* recalls the prominence of poetry in the opening two cantos of the poem. In *Inferno* I, the poet's voice is similarly present as he struggles to narrate the beginning of his journey 'Io non so ben ridir com'i' v'intrai' (10).[9] Furthermore, the appearance of Virgil as guide, the 'maestro' and 'autore' (85), from whom the pilgrim declares to have taken 'lo bello stilo che m'ha fatto onore' (87), continues the discovery of the pilgrim's identity as poet, hinting at the future revelation of his poetic mission in the Earthly Paradise.[10] Beyond a common thematic interest, the opening lines of *Purgatorio* I additionally recall *Inferno* II, 7-8 through two key elements; the invocation of the Muses, and the use of the word 'ingegno': 'O Muse, o alto ingegno, or m'aiutate; | o mente che scrivesti ciò ch'io vidi.' In *Purgatorio* I, the invocation to the 'sante Muse' gestures to *Inferno* II, but the addition of 'sante' introduces a difference appropriate for the arrival in among the saved in Purgatory. While 'alto ingegno' in *Inferno* II can be understood as a reference to God, the Muses,

[8] Lombardi, '*Purgatorio* 1 e 2', p. 252.
[9] *Inf.* I and II are frequently read together as a prologue, *Inferno* II often being referred to as the 'prologue in heaven'. This pattern is continued in the first two cantos of *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. Scott discusses links across *Inf.* I and II and *Purg.* I and II in 'The 'Comedy', Prolegomena. The Prologue Scene (*Inferno* 1-2)', in his *Understanding Dante* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), pp. 167–90. On *Paradiso,* see Massimo Verdicchio, 'Prologue II: The Poetics of *Paradiso*' and 'Prologue I: DXV and *Paradiso*', in his *The Poetics of Dante's Paradiso* (Toronto-London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 6–11; pp. 12–22.
[10] See also *Inf.* II in which Virgil's narration of Beatrice's descent to Hell reveals the operating grace at work, justifying the journey through the afterlife as poet. See Scott, 'Prolegomena', p. 187-88 and Antonio C. Mastrobuono, *Dante's Journey of Sanctification* (Washington D.C: Regnery Gateway, 1990). The pilgrim's poetic mission will eventually be revealed in *Purg.*XXXII, 100-105 and re-affirmed by Cacciaguida's prophecy in *Par.* XXVII.

or the poet's own genius,[11] in *Purgatorio* I the metaphorical 'navicella del mio ingegno' demonstrates a new certainty in the poet's own 'ingegno', a far cry from the famous doubtful line: 'Io non Enëa, io non Paolo sono' (*Inf.* II, 32). In this manner, *Purgatorio* I recalls the initial hesitance of the first cantos through these linguistic repetitions, affirming greater conviction in the poet's role assigned by God.[12]

The first four terzine gesture to classical *exordia* through the metaphor of the poet's *ingegno* as a boat at sea.[13] Above all, this nautical imagery recalls Ulysses, a figure to which the poet will continue to return throughout the poem as an example of the misuse of language, of prideful overreaching, and of the dangers of ignoring divine limitations.[14] The choice of the word 'ingegno' is particularly provocative in combination with this nautical imagery, recalling the insertion of the poet's voice in *Inferno* XXVI: 'quando drizzo la mente a ciò ch'io vidi, | e più lo 'ngegno affreno ch'i' non soglio' (20-21).[15] Before narrating his meeting with Ulysses, the poet reins in his poetic genius,[16] emphasizing, at this point, Dante's fear of poetic overreaching. By contrast, at the beginning of *Purgatorio,* the poetic interest is in a renewed affirmation of Dante's divinely guided poetic mission to narrate his journey through Purgatory and Paradise. In *Inferno* XXVI there is an awareness of proximity to Ulysses; both physically for the pilgrim and morally for the poet. While in *Purgatorio* I the poet's

[11] See Robert Hollander, 'Canto II: Dante's Authority', in *Lectura Dantis: Inferno*, ed. by Allen Mandelbaum, Anthony Oldcorn, and Charles Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 25–35. See esp. pp. 27-29.
[12] The bibliography on Dante and prophecy is vast, but see Giuseppe Ledda, '*Paradiso* XVII' in *Il trittico di Cacciaguida: Lectura Dantis Scaligera 2008-2009,* ed. by Ennio Sandal (Rome-Padua: Antenore, 2011); Raol Manselli, 'Profetismo', *ED,* IV, pp. 694-699; Andrea Battistini, 'Dalla "parola ornata" alle "vere parole" in his *La retorica della salvezza* (Bologna: Mulino, 2016), pp. 17-41.
[13] On this metaphor in Dante and classical literature, see Ernst Robert Curtuis, 'Metaphorics' in his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 128-44, esp. 'Nautical Metaphors', p. 130.
[14] On some of the ways in which the Ulysses episode reverberates throughout the poem, see: Elena Lombardi, 'The Poetics of Trespassing' in *Vertical Readings*, III, pp. 71-88.
[15] See Hollander, *Allegory in Dante's 'Commedia'* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 115-16; Lino Pertile, 'Dante e l'ingegno di Ulisse', *Stanford Italian Review*, 1.1 (1979), 35-65
[16] For an echo of 'affrenare' and overreaching see *Inf.* XXVI, 19-21.

'navicella' runs across 'miglior acque', Ulysses and his crew were submerged near the shores of Purgatory where the pilgrim now stands. Though the diminutive 'navicella' is suggestive of humility or, perhaps, some degree of trepidation at the beginning of this second part of the journey, there is nonetheless a clear contrast with Ulysses' vessel. Dante's poetry, with the grace of God, will succeed where Ulysses' attempt to reach Purgatory, for all his eloquent rhetoric, failed.

It is also worth noting the verb *surger* is common to both the opening lines *of Purgatorio* (Ma qui la morta poesì resurga, […] e qui Caliopè alquanto surga) and *Inferno* XXVI. In the latter, the verb is used to describe firstly, the approach of Ulysses' flame: 'quel foco che vien sì diviso | di sopra, che par surger de la pira | dov' Eteòcle col fratel fu miso?' (52-54). Here *surgere* is suggestive of the physical properties of the flame while also communicating the powerful hatred between the pair contained within. Interestingly, a past participle of *surgere* is used in the description of the pilgrim's stretching towards the same flame: 'Io stava sovra 'l ponte a veder *surto*' (43).[17] The pilgrim and Ulysses' flame both appear to stretch towards one another. The second use of the verb in *Inferno* XXVI denotes the crossing of the equator as the stars from the northern hemisphere are no longer visible: 'che non surgëa fuor del marin suolo.' (*Inf.* XXVI, 127-129). By contrast, the pilgrim's arrival in the southern hemisphere is marked with the thematic of Christian rebirth through the verbs *surgere* and *resurgere*. The memory and proximity of Ulysses arguably reminds readers how close the pilgrim came to perdition at the beginning of poem, recalling in turn and reactivating the simile of the shipwreck in *Inferno* I.[18] Similarly, Virgil will later refer to *Inferno* I and Dante's spiritual state before the journey is undertaken with a Ulyssean

[17] Domenico Consogli describes this usage as: '"dritto e proteso" per guardar nella bolgia sottostante.' Domenico Consoli, 'Surgere', *ED*, V, pp. 491–492.
[18] *Inf.* I, 22-27.

lexis: 'per la sua follia le fu sì presso' (59), recalling Ulysses' famous 'folle volo' (*Inf*. XXVI).[19] The *exordium* would thus appear to draw attention to the distance the pilgrim has put between himself and Ulysses by encouraging a retrospective comparison between *Inferno* I, *Inferno* XXVI and the arrival in Purgatory.

The opening lines of *Purgatorio* highlight the theme of renewal and underscore the arrival in Purgatory as a new beginning. The pilgrim's progress can be measured both geographically and morally through the evocation of Ulysses. The inclusion of a Ulyssean lexis throughout the canto also encourages the reader to look back at *Inferno* I afresh, through the new lens of the Ulyssean episode. The subsequent section will concentrate on structural parallels which emerge between *Purgatorio* I and the beginning of *Inferno* (*Inferno* I and III). Firstly, the pilgrim's gazing at the sapphire sky on the shores of Purgatory will be read as a restoration of vision, contrasting with the descent into Hell in *Inferno* III where the pilgrim's eyes adjust to the darkness. A similar disparity between the effects of vision emerges through contrast between this same upwards gaze and the pilgrim's glance to the sunlit hill in *Inferno* I.

1.2. Glancing and Gazing

After the *exordium* of the opening four terzine, the narrative action of the canto picks up where *Inferno* XXXIV ended with the pilgrim and Virgil's emergence into the light, marking a second beginning for the canto with an extended description of the pre-dawn sky.

> Dolce color d'orïental zaffiro
> che s'accoglieva nel sereno aspetto
> del mezzo, puro infino al primo giro,

[19] *Inf.* I 61-63. *Inf.* XXVI, 125. The notion of flight will also be transformed in *Purgatorio* where it has a spiritual significance; see esp. *Purg.* IV, 27; *Purg.* XX, 37-39; this usage is continued and developed further in the *Paradiso* in both Dante-character's successive flights to each Heaven and his 'alto volo' (*Par*. XV, 54).

a li occhi miei ricominciò diletto,
tosto ch'io usci' fuor de l'aura morta
che m'avea contristati li occhi e 'l petto.
Lo bel pianeta che d'amar conforta
faceva tutto rider l'orïente,
velando i Pesci, ch'erano in sua scorta. (*Purg.* I, 13-21)

In the first eighteen lines of the *narratio,* the relationship between delight and sight is clearly established with nine references to sight in conjunction with a lexical field associated with wonder, delight, purity, and beauty. The use of the adjectives 'sereno', 'puro', 'bel', and the noun 'diletto' mark the pilgrim's arrival in Purgatory with a quasi-paradisaical vocabulary suggestive of the assurance that all souls who reach Purgatory are among the saved.[20] The verb *rider* used here to describe the scintillating effect of the sun's light on the horizon, offers an example of a particular metaphorical usage in the *Commedia* which associates smiling with luminosity.[21] While in *Paradiso* there are more examples of this metaphoric sense, its use to this effect in *Purgatorio* I is unique, underlining the importance of this emergence from *Inferno* and the transition from damnation to salvation.[22]

The transition between dark and light, despair and delight, is emphasized by the repetition 'occhi' in lines 16-18 which contrasts the return of sight which gives delight with sight in Hell which only caused horror and sorrow: 'che m'avea contristati li occhi e 'l petto.' (*Purg.* I, 18). The line 'tosto che io usci' fuor del aura morta' similarly draws attention to the transition from damnation and spiritual death into salvation and eternal

[20] Virgil's words in *Purgatorio* III confirm this: 'O ben finiti, o già spiriti eletti,' (73).
[21] On the classical tradition behind the metaphoric sense of the verb *ridere* see: Diego Sbacchi, 'Il cielo che sorride a Dante', *Italica*, 92.2 (2015), 298–308. Emilio Pasquini, 'ridere', *ED,* VI, pp. 920-921. On smiles in *Paradiso,* see Peter S. Hawkins, 'All Smiles: Poetry and Theology in Dante, *PMLA*, 121.2 (2006), 371-87 and Giulia Gaimari, 'Il sorriso dei beati nella *Commedia*. Un'interpretazione letterale', *Lettere Italiane* 66.4 (2014), 469-95 who draws attention to the definition of 'ridere' in *Conv.* III, viii, 11 as: 'una corruscazione de la dilettazione de l'anima, ciè uno lume apparente di fuori secondo sta dentro'.
[22] In *Paradiso* see, for example: V, 97-99; XIV, 85-87; XXIII, 25-29; XXVIII, 79-86. In *Purgatorio* other uses of the verb involve a more literal sense of smiling: VI, 48; XVI, 87; XXI, 122-127; XXV, 103; XXVIII, 67.

life, while the formula 'aura morta' recalls the pilgrim's entrance into Hell in *Inferno* III: 'sempre in quell'aura senza tempo tinta' (*Inf.* III, 29).[23] A further echo is to be found in the pilgrim's joy at seeing the stars in the pre-dawn sky, contrasting with the starless sky in hell which provokes the pilgrim's tears: 'aere senza stelle | per ch'io al cominciar ne lagrimai' (*Inf.* III, 23-24).[24] The clear echo of *Inferno* III signposted by the phrase 'aura morta' is particularly interesting given the initial focus on lack of sight in *Inferno* III where horrific hellish sound underlines the lack of light upon entering Hell, 'Quivi sospiri, pianti e alti guai | risonavan' (*Inf.* III, 22-23).[25] Maria Picchio Simonelli notes that in *Inferno* III, the pilgrim's questions are characteristic of a person who can hear but cannot see: 'che è quel ch'io odo? … che è tanto greve | a lor che lamentar lì fa sì forte' (*Inf.* III, 32 and 43-44). She adds that 'only when Virgil says "look" will Dante be able to see': 'ma guarda e passa. | E io, che riguardai, vidi una 'nsegna' (*Inf.* III, 51-52).[26] Once the pilgrim is able to see in *Inferno* III, he is horrified and incredulous.[27] From the new vantage point of Purgatory, the restoration of sight as the pilgrim's eyes adjust to the darkness in *Inferno* III is recalled as an ironic counterpoint to the restoration of sight in the predawn.

In *Purgatorio* I, restoration of sight is also hinted at in the reference to sapphire in the opening line of the *narratio*: 'dolce color d'orïental zaffiro' (13).[28] Besides its rich

[23] *Purgatorio* I, 17. Chiavacci Leonardi glosses this particular expression as 'quell'aria dove non è luce, né cielo né stelle'.
[24] See also *Inf.* V, 28: 'Io venni in loco d'ogne luce muto,'
[25] See also *Inferno* V, 25-27 'Or incomincian le dolenti note | a farmisi sentire; or son venuto| là dove molto pianto mi percuote.'
[26] Maria Picchio Simonelli, *Lectura Dantis Americana: Inferno III* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993; repr. 2016), p. 27.
[27] The pilgrim is shocked by the infinite number of dead: 'Ch'i' non averei creduto | che morte tanta n'avesse disfatta.' (*Inf.* III, 56-7). Disgust and horror are perhaps most prominently evoked by the description of the pusillanimous souls' punishment in lines 61-69. *Inferno* VI also provides a particularly good example of the pilgrim in horror: 'novi tormenti e novi tormentati | mi veggio intorno, come ch'io mi mova |e ch'io mi volga, e come che io guati.' (*Inf.* VI, 4-6)
[28] See Caron Ann Cioffi, '"Dolce color d'orïental zaffiro": A Gloss on *Purgatorio* 1.13', *Modern Philology,* 82.4 (1985), 355-64. Cf. 'zaffiro' in *Par.* XXIII, 101.

symbolic value, representing eternal life, and as a symbol of clarity, serenity, virtue, humility, and chastity (themes all pertinent to *Purgatorio* I), the gem was also thought to have cleansing properties, linked to both the body and the spirit.[29] In particular, the belief that the sapphire could cleanse or restore sight has clear resonance with the ritual at the end of the canto when Cato orders the pilgrim to wash 'ogne sucidume' from his face, 'ché non si converria, l'occhio sorpriso | d'alcuna nebbia, andar dinanzi al primo | ministro' (96-99).[30] Caron Anne Cioffi argues that the precious stone not only has a symbolic value, but also refers to a passage from Exodus 24 where Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abiu and the elders of Israel ascend Mount Sinai to see the sapphire pavement above which God is enthroned:

> ascenderuntque Moses et Aaron Nadab et Abiu | et septuaginta de senioribus Israhel et viderunt Deum Israhel | sub pedibus eius quasi opus lapidis sapphirini | et quasi caelum cum serenum est.[31]

Cioffi posits that the limit imposed on the elders in Exodus 24 who are not permitted to approach the mountain. They are commanded to 'worship at a distance' and told that 'the others shall not come near'.[32] resonates with the notion that the pilgrim 'is not yet ready for an immediate vision of God.'[33] Eventually, both Moses and the pilgrim will be granted a fuller vision of God and the promise of a fuller vision of God in Exodus 24 arguably establishes a relationship between the pilgrim and Moses.[34] The possible relationship between the pilgrim and Moses at this point is made more convincing given

[29] See Cioffi, 'Dolce color', pp. 358-360 for an extended discussion of these sources.
[30] See for example, Marbode, Bishop of Rennes, *Libellus de lapidibus precisosis* (Per Hieronymu[m] Vietroem, Philouallem, 1511), fol. 7: 'Tollit et ex oculis sordes ex fronte dolores'. On Dante's scientific understanding of the eye, see *Conv.* III, ix, 8-13.
[31] Exodus 24.9-10, p. 338 ('Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness', *NRSV,* p. 117).
[32] Exodus 24.1-2, p. 338.'adorabitis procul' and 'non adpropinquabunt'. *NRSV,* p. 116. Only Moses is permitted to ascend to see God, and when he does ascend, a cloud covers the mountain and he remains there for 40 days and 40 nights. See Exodus 24: 12-18.
[33] Cioffi, 'Dolce color', p. 357.
[34] Cato is typically more readily associated with Moses in *Purg.* I. See Robert Hollander, *Allegory*, pp. 124-26.

the pilgrim's trajectory towards a vision of God, the strong presence of Exodus in the opening of *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, and the suggestive relationship between Mount Sinai and Mount Purgatory.[35]

Furthermore, if, like Cioffi, we read the reference to Exodus 24 in *Purgatorio* I as an expectation of a fuller vision to come, then his restored vision of the beautiful sky appears to anticipate his fuller vision of God at the end of the poem. Indeed, Dante will later define hope in *Paradiso* XXV :

> '"Spene" diss'io, "è uno attender certo
> de la gloria futura, il qual produce
> grazia divina e precedente merto. (*Par.* XXV, 67-68).

This definition is found in Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, who goes on to specify that without merits, hope is only presumption.[36] It is in this sence that hope is the result of a combination of Grace and personal merit. The pilgrim's restoration of sight and delight as he emerges into Purgatory is equally a restoration of hope, that is, the certainty of the successful completion of his journey, the certainty of salvation which is thus also an assurance of the pilgrim's merits and the bestowing of divine Grace. The reference to *Inferno* III and the structural parallel observed through an ironic restoration of vision in the entrance to Hell has more impact when considered alongside the command written on the gates of Hell: 'Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate.' (*Inf.* III, 9). The linguistic echo of 'aura senza tempo' in 'aura morta' and the structural parallels evoked through the restoration of vision arguably give emphasis to the centrality of hope in dividing the damned from the saved.

[35] On the Exodus pattern see: Charles S. Singleton, 'In Exitu Israel De Aegypto' in *Dante. A collection of Critical Essays*, ed. by Freccero (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 102-121; repr. in *Dante Studies,* 118 (2000), 167-87. All references are to the 2000 reprint. Carol V. Kaske, 'Mount Sinai'.
[36] See Charles Singleton's commentary to *Par.* XXV, 67-9. See *Sent.* III, xxvi, 1.

While *Inferno* III provides an infernal parallel for the restoration of vision and the loss of hope, *Inferno* I offers a structural parallel for the pilgrim's action of looking up. This parallel is similarly intertwined with the issue of hope (or loss of hope) and the effects of sight. The delight the pilgrim experiences in emerging into the pre-dawn stands in stark contrast to the panic and fear in *Inferno* I. The first reference to sight in the prologue scene is the pilgrim's upward glance to the sunlit hill, which, as Durling and Martinez suggest, provides a strong structural parallel with the upward gaze in *Purgatorio* I, 13-30:[37]

> guardai in alto e vidi le sue spalle
> vestite già de' raggi del pianeta
> che mena dritto altrui per ogne calle.
> Allor fu la paura un poco queta (*Inf.* I, 16-19)

The brief glance towards the hill succeeds in quietening the pilgrim's fears momentarily, but his path to the hill is ultimately blocked by the three beasts and his hope is soon seen to be short-lived. We read less than 40 lines later: 'ch'io perdei la speranza de l'altezza' (54). Gazing aloft offers only momentary relief from fear and ultimately does not provide a route to safety, as Virgil affirms later: 'A te convien tenere altro viaggio'(91).[38] By recalling the brief moment of hope in *Inferno* I, the poet encourages the reader to differentiate between the pilgrim's spiritual state in *Inferno* I and *Purgatorio* I, but also marks hope as a distinguishing factor in the bifurcation between salvation and damnation. As Virgil reminds us, the pilgrim came very close to the latter (*Purg.* I, 59).

[37] Durling and Martinez, 'intercantica notes' to *Purgatorio* I, p. 33.
[38] Cassell argues that the glance to the hilltop is a sign of excessive pride. Anthony K. Cassell, *Lectura Dantis Americana: Inferno I* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), p. 27. See pp. 19-30 for full discussion of the lines 16-18.

Purgatorio I recalls the pilgrim's brief moment of hope in *Inferno* I, contrasting this fleeting upward glance with the gaze on the shores of Purgatory which evokes joy and hints at a fuller vision of God to come. In a similar fashion, the echo of *Inferno* III, which we might read through the reference to 'aura morta' and the restoration of vision, would equally appear to suggest a binary between hope and hopelessness. Fleeting hope, loss of hope, and restoration of hope are all recalled through the triangulation of these three moments and their common interest in sight. By recalling the beginning of the journey and the entrance into Hell, the reader is stimulated to imagine the frontier between damnation and salvation in terms of hope, a theme which will become particularly prominent in the Ante-Purgatory cantos and especially in relation to Dante's pagan guide who lives 'sanza speme' (*Inf.* IV, 42).

1.3. Turning: 'mi son più volte vòlto'

Structural parallels with *Inferno* I also emerge through the pilgrim's action of turning as he takes in his new surroundings on the shores of Purgatory. As was discussed briefly in the Introduction, the re-appearance of the sun in Purgatory is an important symbol for the passage from damnation to salvation, but within the Ante-Purgatory cantos, there is a marked emphasis on the passage of time conveyed through the position of the sun.[39] In *Purgatorio* I and II, the references to the pre-dawn sky, planetary bodies, stars, and rising sun are particularly condensed. Furthermore, in *Purgatorio* II we find the first of in a series of astronomical periphrases, which tell time by referring to four points around the world. In this section, I will build on the affirmation that re-orientation is a key factor in the opening cantos of *Purgatorio,* but will additionally suggest that references to stars and the rising sun are also used to measure the pilgrim's progress

[39] See Introduction 4.2.

since *Inferno* I when he last saw the sun. In this way, attention to the pilgrim's gaze at the pre-dawn sky serves the triple function of representing the re-orientation of the pilgrim, presenting his spiritual progress, and re-orientating the reader in the new realm.

While in *Inferno* I the pilgrim's frantic turning demonstrates fear and panic, in *Purgatorio* I turning is illustrative of a process of re-orientation. The pilgrim's stargazing as he turns between the north and south poles is emblematic of a geographical, historical and spiritual re-orientation:

> I' mi volsi a man destra, e puosi mente
> a l'altro polo, e vidi quattro stelle
> non viste mai fuor ch'a la prima gente.
> Goder pareva 'l ciel di lor fiammelle:
> oh settentrïonal vedovo sito,
> poi che privato se' di mirar quelle!
> Com'io da loro sguardo fui partito,
> un poco me volgendo a l'altro polo
> là onde 'l Carro già era sparito (*Purg.* I, 22-30)

The geographic position of Purgatory has already been established in *Inferno* XXXIV where Dante imagines that Satan's fall to earth which caused the earth to recoil in horror, creating the funnel of Hell and the conical Mount Purgatory at the antipodes to Jerusalem.[40] The pilgrim's stargazing re-affirms this geographic position through reference to the two poles. In the first instance, 'e puosi mente | a l'altro polo'(22-23), 'l'altro polo' refers to the south pole which is 'other' in relation to our northern hemisphere. In the second use of 'altro polo' in *Purgatorio* I, 'un poco me volgendo a l'altro polo'(29), the 'other pole' is now the northern hemisphere, in opposition to the south pole at which the pilgrim was just looking. The reader is aware that the pilgrim began his journey in the northern hemisphere and now finds himself at the antipodes,

[40] *Inf.* XXXIV, 122-126.

thereby casting her mind back to the point where the journey began and reinforcing the connection with *Inferno* I and II.

Furthermore, the pilgrim's physical location is provocatively linked to the site of Ulysses' shipwreck. His arrival on the shores of the mountain which the Greek hero only saw 'bruna per la distanza' (*Inf.* XXVI, 133-134) distances the pilgrim physically from Ulysses. This geographical coincidence is accentuated by the phrase, 'l'altro polo' which is found in *Inferno* XXVI:

> Tutte le stelle già de l'altro polo
> vedea la notte, e 'l nostro tanto basso,
> che non surgëa fuor del marin suolo. (*Inf.* XXVI, 127-129)

It is interesting to note here the the formula 'l'altro polo' is in rhyme position, rhyming with the famous 'folle volo' (125) and 'marin suolo', making the recall to Ulysses's journey to 'l'altro polo' here in *Purgatorio* I all the more prominent.[41] Barolini notes this echo of *Inferno* XXVI, and points out that if Ulysses in the course of his journey sees 'tutte le stelle', then the pilgrim cannot be the first to have seen the four stars again since Adam and Eve.[42] However, looking beyond this literal sense, she notes that the 'dialectic between vision denied and vision vouchsafed is essential to this canto'.[43] As suggested by the previous section, the pilgrim's vision of the stars serves to highlight his status among the saved. By contrast, Ulysses' brief vision of Purgatory puts him among the damned. The repetition of the formula 'l'altro polo' also appears to contrast the two travelers' arrivals in the southern hemisphere: one by night, one by day; one

[41] Note that 'suol marino' appears in *Purg.* II, 15. The volo : polo : suolo rhyme pattern is unique in the *Commedia.* In *Purg.* I the rhyme pattern is figliuolo : polo : solo. See Arianna Punzi, *Rimario della Commedia di Dante Alighieri* (Rome: Bagatto libri, 2001), pp. 166-167.
[42] Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 112.
[43] Ibid.

against God's will, one with God's grace.[44] The fleeting moment of happiness Ulysses and his crew experience is also arguably re-evoked by the joy which infuses the opening canto: 'Noi ci allegrammo, e tosto tornò in pianto' (*Inf.* XXVI, 136).[45]

The four stars which the pilgrim sees are generally understood as representing the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The sight of the stars triggers consideration of Salvation history, identifiable through mention of Adam and Eve, 'la prima gente'. The stars inspire not only joy and delight ('*goder* pareva 'l ciel') but also a lament for the loss of humankind's virtue.[46] The co-existence of joy and loss is fundamental to the liturgical paradox of *felix culpa* which is a pervasive narrative pattern throughout the Bible.[47] The tragedy of the Fall, after the event of Christ, can be seen in a positive light because it necessitated the descent of Christ, leading to the Redemption of all humankind. This particular motif is present within the first lines of *Commedia:* 'Tant' è amara che poco è più morte; | ma per trattar del ben ch'i' vi trovai […]' (*Inf.* I, 7-8).[48] By making reference to the Fall upon the pilgrim's arrival in Purgatory, the poet maps the pilgrim's individual journey onto salvation history, re-affirming the fact that the pilgrim's journey is also universal, that of the *homo viator*.[49]

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[44] Ulysses' voyage is measured by night *Inf.* XXVI, 130-131. *L'Ottimo Commento* (1333) suggests a link between the two passages. *Inf.* XXVI, 127: 'Cioè del polo antartico, del quale si tratta capitol primo *Purgatorii*.'

[45] See Lamentations 5.15, p. 500: 'Defecit gaudium cordis nostri; versus est in luctum chorus noster' ('The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning, *NSRV*, p. 1158).

[46] Masciandaro observes that at this point in the narration 'the poet is expressing the contiguity of two experiences or of two perspectives: delight at the sight of these stars and sadness for their loss: in other words, of innocence and bliss possessed and soon lost.' Franco Masciandaro, 'The Recovery of the Way to Eden', in his, *Dante as Dramatist: The Myth of the Earthly Paradise and Tragic Vision in the Divine Comedy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 110-145 (p.115). See *Par.* XXVI, 139-142 where Adam reveals the brevity of his stay in the garden of Eden.

[47] Barbara Newman, *Medieval Crossover: Reading the Secular against the Sacred* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), pp. 15–17.

[48] For reference to the Fall in *Inf.* I, see Masciandaro, 'The Prologue: The Nostalgia for Eden and the Rediscovery of the Tragic' in *Dante as Dramatist*, pp. 1–35.

[49] This link is strengthened by the fact that reference to *felix culpa* is made every Easter (the day of the pilgrim's emergence onto the shores of Purgatory) in the *Exsultet*. 'O arte necessarium Adae peccatum quod Christi morte deletum est! O felix culpa, quae talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem' ('O truly needful sin of Adam, blotted out by the death of Christ! O fortunate fault that deserved to have so great a Redeemer!') cit. and trans. in Newman, *Medieval Crossover,* p.13. Newman cites from 'De

The gesture towards the notion of *felix culpa* also reaffirms the importance of gratuitous love which is so fundamental to Purgatory. Furthermore, retrospection is fundamental to the notion of *felix culpa,* and this retrospective understanding does not have to come from the end of time (*sub specie aeternitatus*) but rather only from an understanding of the Christ event. This is particularly pertinent to the pilgrim's arrival in Purgatory, a point of partial vision, as the retrospective logic of *felix culpa* arguably serves to underline the centrality of the Christ event in salvation history (rather than at the end of time).

While in *Purgatorio* I turning is a mark of re-orientation, in *Inferno* I the pilgrim's frantic turning is suggestive of panic and disorientation. This is clearly demonstrated when the pilgrim encounters the first of the three beasts which block the 'corto andar' (*Inf*. I, 120) to the sunlit hill:

> e non mi si partia dinanzi al volto,
> anzi 'mpediva tanto il mio cammino,
> ch'i' fui per ritornar più volte vòlto. (*Inf*. I, 34-36)

Here, the paronomasia on 'volto', 'volte' and 'vòlto' serves to enhance the effect of the pilgrim frantically turning in an attempt to escape. Similarly, the pilgrim's physical glance back over the metaphorically perilous waters in the first simile of the poem also contributes to the notion of turning as a sign of panic in *Inferno* I. In the *selva oscura* the pilgrim's turning underlines the immediacy of his own individual predicament. By contrast, turning in *Purgatorio* I invites reflection on salvation history and the universal journey towards God.

A foreshadowing of Ulysses' shipwreck is also found, as we have noted, in the opening canto (one that the reader understands in retrospect from the vantage point of

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Vigilia Paschali,' in *Liber Usualis Missae et Officii*, ed. monks of Solesmes (Tournai: Desclée, 1960), 776N.

Inferno XXVI) as the pilgrim's soul turns at the last minute to gaze back across the stormy waters he has escaped:

> E come quei che con lena affannata,
> uscito fuor del pelago a la riva,
> si volge a l'acqua perigliosa e guata,
> così l'animo mio, ch'ancor fuggiva,
> si volse a retro a rimirar lo passo
> che non lasciò già mai persona viva
> Poi ch'èi posato un poco il corpo lasso,
> ripresi via per la piaggia diserta,
> sì che 'l piè fermo sempre era 'l più basso. (*Inf.* I, 22-27)

John Freccero has discussed these *terzine* at length, affirming that Dante here places spiritual flight from sin in contrast with the weak flesh, or rather, the pilgrim's tired and heavy body ('il corpo lasso').[50] Freccero suggests that the 'piè fermo' 'signifies the pilgrim's will, unable to respond to the prompting of the reason' leaving the fallen will to limp in its efforts to reach God.[51] At this point in the poem, though the pilgrim's soul metaphorically looks back at danger narrowly avoided, he is not yet safe and his will continues to limp onwards. The use of the verb *rimirar* in *Inferno* I and *mirar* in *Purgatorio* I, 27 additionally invites a comparison between the pilgrim looking back over dangerous waters 'lo passo' (a noun used by Ulysses just before seeing Mount Purgatory),[52] and the pilgrim's wondering at the stars. The proximity of the ocean and the nautical imagery at the beginning of the canto, which already recalls Ulysses, call the reader to compare how close the pilgrim came to meeting the same fate as the Greek hero in *Inferno* I from the safety of the shores of Purgatory.

There is thus a marked difference between looking back at and turning to avoid danger in *Inferno* I and turning to gaze with wonder at novelty in *Purgatorio* I. Durling

[50] See, John Freccero, 'The Firm Foot on a Journey Without a Guide' in *The Poetics of Conversion,* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 29-54.
[51] Freccero, *Poetics of Conversion*, p. 8.
[52] *Inf.* XXVI, 132: 'poi che 'ntrati eravam ne l'alto passo'.

and Martinez argue that the metaphorical glance back over perilous waters in *Inferno* I finds a structural parallel with the turn towards the sea towards the end of the canto:[53]

> L'alba vinceva l'ora mattutina
> che fuggia innanzi, sì che di lontano
> conobbi il tremolar de la marina. (*Purg.* I, 112-117)

Here, Virgil, following Cato's commands, leads the pilgrim back towards the sea. Turning back to look across the sea is transformed into another instance of beauty and wonder. The verb *fuggire*, previously used to describe the pilgrim's soul in peril in *Inferno* I, is used here to describe a scene of exquisite beauty at breaking of dawn over shimmering water as darkness flees from the coming of light. The pilgrim turns back to look at the sea where Ulysses was drowned, simultaneously evoking his near perdition in *Inferno* I.

Ulysses is similarly evoked at the close of the canto through a Ulyssean lexical field and a shared rhyme pattern:

> Vennimo poi in sul lito diserto,
> che mai non vide navicar sue acque
> omo, che di tornar sia poscia esperto.
> Quivi mi cinse sì com'altrui piacque:
> oh maraviglia! Ché qual elli scelse
> l'umile pianta, cotal si rinacque
> subitamente là onde l'avelse. (*Purg.* I, 130-136)

The assertion that no one has navigated the seas near Purgatory and returned to survive clearly recalls Ulysses' failed attempt.[54] This situational echo is reinforced by the

[53] See Durling and Martinez, *Purg.* I, p. 33.
[54] See Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* I, 130-132: 'Per hoc vult dicere quod nulli possunt accedere ad antipodes, si tamen sunt, sicut negat Augustinus libro de Civitate Dei: *Nullus ergo vivens ivit, qui unquam reverteretur*. Hoc dicit pro Ulyxe, qui tentavit illuc accedere secundum fictionem poetae, sed cito ipsum poenituit' (By this he wants to say that no-one is able to reach the southern hemisphere, and if they were able, they should see Augustine's denial in *De Civitate Dei*: "therefore no-one living ever went there who then returned." This is said of Ulysses, who, according to the poet's fiction, attempted to reach it, but soon regreted it.' David Bowe references Benvenuto's comment and discusses the echo in his *Poetry in Dialogue in the Duecento and Dante* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 178.

particularly Ulyssean vocabulary in these closing lines ('navicar', 'omo' and 'esperto').[55] The formula 'com' altrui piacque' is repeated from the end of *Inferno* XXVI, describing the moment in which Ulysses and his crew are shipwrecked: 'e la prora ire in giù, com'altrui piacque' (141). Furthermore, in *Inferno* XXVI we find the rhyme words, *nacque*: *acque*: *piacque*, while in *Purgatorio* the poet repeats the pattern almost identically: *acque*: *piacque*: *rinacque*.[56] However, neither the broader significance of this echo, nor its existence in a cluster of other references which permeate the canto has really been considered. Firstly, the key divergence between the two rhyme schemes is the use of a ri- prefix in *Purgatorio* I (as was the case with *resurgere* and *surgere* in the *exordium*), and this is especially pertinent to the canto's interest in rebirth, renewal, recapitulation and retrospection. Where in *Inferno* XXVI the verb *nascere* was used to describe the emergence of the wave which would drown Ulysses and his crew, in *Purgatorio* I, *rinascere* is used to refer to the miraculous rebirth of a humble reed. Secondly, by recalling Ulysses and his arrogant prideful journey against the will of God, the necessity for humility at this particular juncture is highlighted further. The flexible reed as symbol of humility and the pilgrim's own humble actions thus stand in stark relief to the arrogance of the Greek hero.

The prominence of humility is further highlighted by the descent to lower ground as, following Cato's command, the pilgrim and his guide turn away from the

[55] See *Inf.* XXVI, 97-99.

[56] See, for example, see Howard, *Formulas of Repetition,* pp. 137-38. Benvenuto da Imola observed a relationship between *Purg.* I and *Inf.* XXVI (see n. above) but does not note the repeated rhyme. In modern commentary the reference to Ulysses is a commonplace. See for example, Chiavacci Leonardi, *Purg.* I, 133; Bosco and Reggio, *Purg.* I, 133-136; Singleton; *Purg.* I, 132 and 133. Fosca is among the few to note the rhyme pattern Fosca, *Purg.* I, 133-136. Carlo Steiner (1921) appears to be the first to note the use of 'come altrui piacque' in *Inf.* XXVI and *Purg.* I (but not the whole rhyme pattern) *ad loc. Purg.* I, 133. Luigi Portirelli (1804-05) notes that Ulysses drowned in 'queste medesime acque' – though he references *Inf.* XXVI, 91-142 rather than the rhyme pattern.

mountain, towards the lowest point of the 'isoletta' before taking a different path towards the mountain:

> El cominciò: 'Figliuol, segui i miei passi:
> volgianci in dietro, ché di qua dichina
> questa pianura a' suoi termini bassi.' (*Purg.* I, 112-114)

Turning back on oneself to a lower place, emphasised by the verb *dichinare* and the adjective *bassi*, can be read as a clear sign of humility, a virtue which is crucial in beginning the process of purgation.[57] The insistence on humility at the end of the canto not only contrasts with Ulysses, but also with the pilgrim's actions in *Inferno* I as the slope and the return to lower ground echo the topography of *Inferno* I. In the opening canto, the pilgrim finds himself initially 'al piè d'un colle' (13), and the *lonza* appears to the pilgrim 'quasi al cominciar de l'erta,' (31). The pilgrim, fleeing from the wolf, turns back and descends to lower ground where Virgil appears:

> Mentre ch'i' rovinava in basso loco,
> dinanzi a li occhi mi si fu offerto
> chi per lungo silenzio parea fioco (*Inf.* I, 61-63)

The use of the verbs *ripingere* (60) and *rovinare* (echoing *fuggiva* from line 25) are suggestive of the pilgrim's being both cornered and pushed back in contrast to the purposeful and guided descent in *Purgatorio* I. This distinction is emphasized by Chiavacci Leonardi in her gloss of the verb *rovinare* as 'il ritornare indietro nella selva è la rovina della speranza'. In *Inferno* I 'basso loco' is typically read as a mark of ignorance. *L'Ottimo Commento* suggests that 'basso loco' refers to a return to 'ignorantia, per la forza delli detti tre vitii'[58], while the *Codice cassinese* offers the gloss, 'in vallem vitiorum', 'in the valley of vice', combining the topographical and

[57] On humility in this scene, see Hollander, *Purg.* I, 100-105.
[58] *L'Ottimo Commento* (1338), *Inf.* I, 61-63.

allegorical senses of Dante's descent.[59] Looking back at *Inferno* I from *Purgatorio* I, the reader is encouraged to measure the pilgrim's progress and to consider humility as a key mode for Purgatory.[60] We might also, in retrospect, see the pilgrim's descent in *Inferno* I as an expression of the humility needed to begin the journey.

Structural parallels and linguistic echoes between *Purgatorio* I, and *Inferno* I, III and XXVI encourage the reader to look back to the beginning of the pilgrim's journey and the structurally determining Ulysses episode in order to measure the pilgrim's physical and spiritual progress. These echoes also arguably serve to dramatize the binary between damnation and salvation, inviting the reader to consider hope, humility, and the Christ event as fundamental to their understanding of this divide and the pilgrim's journey. The next section will focus on the manner in which the figures of Cato and Virgil problematise this apparently simple binary.

2. Problems in Purgatory: Cato and Virgil

2.1. Cato 'nel lito deserto'

Cato appears unexpectedly to the pilgrim and the reader. The pilgrim's gaze falls on the famous pagan alone on the beach and he is described as 'un veglio solo' (31), recalling the sudden appearance of Virgil alone in *Inferno* I: 'quando vidi costui nel gran diserto' (64). This immediate connection between Virgil and Cato proves particularly interesting given the fact that Cato's appearance as saved pagan and Purgatorial guardian might be seen as dramatizing Virgil's problematic role as guide in Purgatory

[59] *Codice cassinese, Inf.* I, 61.
[60] The pilgrim's genuflecting is also a key indicator of humility, *Purg.* I, 49-5.

but resident in Limbo. The current section will suggest, firstly, that retrospective patterns in *Purgatorio* I encourage the reader to look back to *Inferno* XIII and distinguish Cato's suicide from those of the suicides in that canto. Secondly, it will be argued that Dante's emphasis on Cato's relationship with the desert implicate him in the Exodus motif which is so prominent in *Inferno* I and II as well as *Purgatorio* I and II. Cato thus plays a crucial part in the network of retrospective threads which encourage the reader to look back to *Inferno* I and II and that emerges in contrast with Virgil, the damned pagan.

Cato's presence in Purgatory has troubled critics and commentators for centuries. For Benvenuto da Imola, Cato's appearance on the shores of Purgatory as a guardian was an 'error satis enormis'.[61] While Benvenuto da Imola primarily takes issue with the salvation of a pagan, Cato's role as guardian is also troubling for his act of suicide.[62] Furthermore, given Dante's firm belief in the Roman Empire, Cato's status as a Republican and 'Caesar's great opponent' is equally perturbing,[63] especially since the reader has just encountered two of Caesar's enemies, Brutus and Cassius, in the mouth of Lucifer in *Inferno* XXXIV (61-67).[64] Giuseppe Mazzotta additionally sees Cato's old age as being surprising, pointing out that typically, representations of the afterlife

[61] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purgatorio* I, 28-33. Anonimo Fiorentino also acknowledges the difficult of Cato's presence but attempts to resolve it. He argues that Cato has either been saved like Trajan, or that 'l'Auttore mette Catone come per uomo virtudioso'. *Purg.* I, 31-36. Jacopo della Lana also suggests that Cato is positioned in Purgatory 'per allegorìa' *Purg.* I, 28-30.
[62] See particularly Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans,* trans. William Chase Greene, (Cambridge MA: Havard University Press, 2014), bk 1, ch. 23 and 24. See also section 'Suicide in St Augustine's *The City of God*', in Alexander Murray, 'Suicide in St Augustine's *The City of God*', in ID, *Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self Murder*, 2 vols (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), II, pp. 113-117.
[63] Scott, *Dante's Political Purgatory*, p. 69.
[64] See also *Inf.* IV, 123 for a surprisingly negative view of Caesar, echoing Lucan's image of Caesar: 'armato con li occhi grifagni.'. Similarly, *Par.* XI, 69, Caesar is 'colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura.' See Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*, II, pp. 313.

include a young man or woman welcoming new souls.[65] Cato, on the other hand, is neither young nor welcoming.

Dante's representation of Cato is complex. In large part, it follows classical sources, emphasizing his virtue and role as a lawgiver.[66] Cato's presence in Purgatory is typically considered as surprising (as is affirmed most famously by Hollander).[67] However, the of Cato as morally worthy was stressed by other medieval writers,[68] and Filippo Gianferrai has recently considered the way Dante combines the figure of Cato Uticensis and another Cato who was the supposed author of the *Disticha Catonis*, a primary text studied by students learning to read.[69]The unorthodoxy of the poet's choice has led to a torturous critical tradition. Dante's creation of a separate liminal area within Limbo itself for the noble pagans is unorthodox enough, however, his decision to save Cato and make him guardian of the shores of Purgatory is even less conventional.[70] Furthermore, it is important to note that Cato is the only saved pagan who remains a pagan (or at least there is no mention of his conversion) so that his salvation would not appear to rely on an argument of explicit or implicit faith.[71] Critical debate has tended to

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[65] Giuseppe Mazzotta, 'Purgatorio I and 2', in his *Reading Dante* (London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 116–29.

[66] *Mon.* II, v, 15 where Dante quotes Cicero, *De Officiis,* I, xxxi. See also examples in Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Epistles*, trans. Richard Mott Gummere, 3 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1917; repr. 2014), I, Epistles vii, 14; xxiv, 6-8; lxx, 19; lxxi, 16. See also Lucan's portrayal of Cato in *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, trans. J. D. Duff, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928; repr. 2014) esp. bk 2 and 9. For example, bk 2, l. 380-81: 'Hi mores, haec duri inmota Catonis | secta fuit' ('Such was the character, such was the inflexible rule of austere Cato'), pp. 84-85 and bk, 9, l. 50 'motura Catonis' ('stern Cato'), pp. 508-509.

[67] Hollander, *Purg.* I, 31. It should be noted that there is some

[68] On the Medieval image of Cato, see Richard Hazelton, 'The Christianization of Cato: The Disticha Catonis in the Light of Late Medieval Commentaries', *Mediaeval Studies*, 19 (1957), 157–73. Serena Connolly, 'Binarism in *Disticha Catonis*' in *Mnemosyne*, vol. 66, 2 (2013), 228-246; Filippo Gianferrari, 'Pro Patria Mori: From the *Disticha Catonis* to Dante's Cato, *Dantes Studies,* 135 /2917), 1-30.

[69] Filippo Gianferrari, '*Pro Patria mori*: From the *Disticha Catonis* to Dante's Cato', in *Dante Studies*, 135 (2017), 1-30. George Corbett suggests that Cato may remain eternally alone in Ante-Purgatory in *Dante's Christian Ethics*, pp. 55-6.

[70] See Amilcare A. Iannucci, 'Dante's Limbo: At the Margins of Orthodoxy in *Dante & the Unorthodox: The Aesthetics of Transgression*, ed. by James L. Miller (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), pp. 63-82. Dante also saves Statius (see *Purg.* XX-XXI) and Trajan and Ripheus who appear in the eye of the Eagle in the sphere of Jupiter, see *Par.* XX, 45 and 67-72.

[71] Romans 1.20 and Romans 9.14-15 and 21 were the main points of reference for an argument of implicit faith. Also referred to as the Pauline minimum, these passages were used to argue that knowledge of God

explore a range of classical, biblical and medieval sources for Cato in Purgatory (including Dante's earlier references to Cato in the *Convivio*) as well as allegorizations of Cato,[72] but discussion surrounding one of the poet's most unorthodox figures is far from being closed. This section will focus particularly on the opportunities for retrospection provided by the encounter with Cato, paying particular attention to the relevance of the Exodus pattern and the relevance of the desert.

As noted above, Exodus offers a key structuring motif for the opening cantos of *Inferno* and *Purgatorio.* Singleton has demonstrated that the story of Exodus underpins the *Commedia,* an event which is 'conceived to point beyond itself to another event', namely, the Incarnation and the salvation of humankind through Christ's sacrifice.[73] In *Purgatorio* I, the presence of the Exodus structure is accentuated by the emphasis on liberty, which is strictly connected to Cato and, interestingly, his suicide:

> libertà va cercando, ch'è sì cara
> come sa chi per lei vita rifiuta.
> Tu 'l sai, ché non ti fu per lei amara
> in Utica la morte, ove lasciasti
> la vesta ch'al gran dì sarà sì chiara. (*Purg*. I, 72-75)

Piciché has recently argued for a legal understanding of the word 'libertà', pointing out that emancipated Roman slaves were automatically awarded Roman citizenship. He thus reads the pilgrim's (re)quest of for liberty as an application for citizenship which

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was enough for salvation. Augustine argues that salvation is only possible through explicit belief in Christ. See *Confessions*, trans. by William Watts, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass.–London: Harvard University Press, 1912; repr. 1989) II, bk 7, ch. 18, pp. 386-89. However, he does accept that pagans were given divine knowledge of Christ. See Augustine, *Epistolae*, in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J.P Migne (Paris: Migne, 1961-1865), PL 33, II (1861), Epistle 102, q.2, 15 (p. 376). Aquinas argues that prior to the Incarnation, you could be saved by implicit or explicit faith. See *Questiones Disputatae. De Veritate*, Leonine edition (1972), ed. Roberto Busa, consulted online via the *Corpus Thomisticum*. www.corpusthomisticum.org [accessed 9 April 2022], q.14, a.11. See John Marenbon, *Pagans and Philosophers: The Problem of Paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015), esp. pp. 23-41 and pp. 127-159.

[72] Erich Auerbach, 'Figura', in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature: Six Essays* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1984), pp. 11–76 (p. 66). Giuseppe Mazzotta, '*Opus Restaurationis*' in *Dante Poet of the Desert: History and Allegory in the Divine Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 14-65. George Corbett, 'Pagan Dawn of a Christian Vision', in *Vertical Readings*, I, pp. 13–23.

[73] Singleton, *Elements of Structure*, p. 26.

looks ahead to the end of *Purgatorio* and the famous description of Paradise, 'quella Roma onde Cristo è romano' (*Purg.* XXXII, 102).[74] Indeed, Angiolollo has argued that Cato risolves 'l'ambiguo e difficile rapporto […] tra la libertà dello spirito e l'obbedienza alle legge,'[75] but beyond Cato's manifestation as a figure of law, the rhetoric surrounding liberty and slavery clearly informs an understanding of the exit into Purgatory as an exit from Egypt, an emancipation from slavery.

Cato's strong connection with Exodus is additionally strengthened through his resemblance to depictions of Moses. Firstly, the pagan's old age and long beard, though it may draw on Lucan's depiction of Cato, is also suggestive of depictions of the Old Testament prophet.[76] Hollander argues that Cato must 'first be considered as figured in Moses,'[77] and notes the medieval iconographical tradition of depicting Moses with a forked beard which is present in the poet's description of Cato's beard: 'de' quai cadeva al petto doppia lista' (*Purg.* I, 36).[78] Secondly, the description of Cato also recalls Moses in his function as a lawgiver. While Moses is tasked with bringing God's Law to Israel, in Virgil's *Aeneid,* Cato is depicted on Aeneas' shield 'giving laws' ('dantem iura Catonem').[79] What is more, the description of his face ablaze with light echoes Moses' face which shone after he descended from Mount Sinai.[80] As suggested above,

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[74] The argument was presented by Bernardo Piciché, 'Dante and Cato in Search of Liberty', Conference for Dante Alighieri's 750th Birthday Anniversary in Library of Congress, 3rd December 2015. Now published as 'The Mystery of Dante's Cato in the Light of Roman Law' in *The Unexpected Dante: Perspectives on the Divine Comedy*, ed. Lucia Alma Wolf (Lewisburg-Washington DC: Bucknell University Press, 2021), pp. 34–46.

[75] Giuliana Angiolillo, 'Catone', in *La nuova frontiera della tanatologia: le biografie della Commedia*, 3 vols (Florence: Olschki Editore, 1996), II, 17–29 (p. 21).

[76] For Lucan's depiction of Cato, see *Civil War* bk 2, 238-391. On Cato's beard of mourning, see bk 2, 372-379, pp. 84–85. Francesco da Buti insists on Cato's beard as a mark of honesty in itself. See his commentary to *Purg.* I, 28-39 and 40-48.

[77] Robert Hollander, *Allegory*, pp. 124-26. Hollander also points to the Fonte di Piazza in Perugia of Niccolò Pisano, to the exterior of the Cathedral of Siena, and to an illustration of the *Corbolinus Bible* from 1140 all showing Moses with a forked beard. See note 20 on p. 125. On the relationship between Cato and Moses, see also Mazzotta, *Poet of the Desert*, pp. 62-65.

[78] Serravalle suggests the forked beard signifies 'virtus et scientia'. *Purg.* I, 34-36.

[79] *Aen.* VIII, 667-70. See also *Mon.* I, xiv, 9.

[80] Exodus 34.29: 'et ignorabat quod cornuta esset facies sua ex consortio sermonis Domini' ('Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.' *NSRV*, p. 132).

Cato also functions as a *figura Christi,* and indeed, the same line, 'ch'i' 'l vedea come 'l sol fosse davante' also recalls (arguably more closely) Christ's transfiguration.[81] In Cato we find a *figura* of Moses and of Christ; the Old Testament fulfilled by the New Testament.[82]

The desert is a prominent feature in both the story of Exodus and Lucan's account of Cato in the *Pharsalia*, but as Mazzotta notes it has 'a conceptual ambivalence'.[83] It is a space of temptation but also of discovery; a space of liberation but also of spiritual and physical trial.[84] In *Inferno* XIV, Dante makes reference to Cato's connection with the desert: 'Lo spazzo era una rena arida e spessa | non d'altra foggia fatta che colei | che fu da' piè di Caton già soppressa' (13-15).[85] This simile refers to *Pharsalia* IX 378-950 where Cato leads his army through the desert to reach Egypt.[86] Mazzotta, focusing on the relationship between *Purgatorio* I and *Inferno* XIV, has read Dante's Cato as a re-writing of the allegory of the Old Man of Crete, and he notes that both the statue inspired by Nebuchadnezzar's dream in *Inferno* XIV and Cato inhabit a desert. He argues that 'Cato's desert, then, is the same condition of nature as the desert in Crete, but it is visited by grace which regenerates and literally recreates the land and the old man on it.'[87] However, the 'orribil sabbione' (*Inf.* XIII, 19) is not the only barren wasteland linked to Cato; the forest of suicides is equally figured as a

[81] Matthew 17.2: 'et transfiguratus est ante eos. Et resplenduit facies ejus sicut sol: vestimenta autem ejus facta sunt alba sicut nix' ('And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light', *NSRV*, p. 1771).
[82] Moses was established as *figura Christi* in Tertullian's definition: 'Moyses, qui populum suum e servitute Aegyptiorum liberavit, fere per omnes suae vitae eventus Christum Salvatorem mundi exprimebat', in *Patrologia Latina* I, col. 667. Cit. in Gian Roberto Sarolli, 'Mosè', *ED,* III, p. 1044.
[83] Mazzotta, *Poet of the Desert,* p. 37.
[84] George Huntston Williams, *Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought: the Biblical Experience of the Deser in the History of Christianity & the Paradise Theme in the Theological Idea of the University* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962).
[85] *Inferno* XIV also opens with the pilgrim's sense of 'carità del natio loco'. See Gianferrari, 'Pro patria mori'. On 'spazzo' as opposed to 'spazio' see Singleton, *Inf.* XIV, 13.
[86] See also *Inf.* XXIV, 85 for reference to Lucan's *Civil War* bk 9 where Dante adapts Lucan's term for serpent; *pestis.* For passage on snakes in *Civil War* bk 9, see ll. 700-879.
[87] Mazzotta, *Poet of the Desert,* p. 38.

wilderness, so that Cato's 'lito deserto' (*Purg.* I, 130) might also be seen to stand in contrast with the forest of suicides.[88]

While Mazzotta has primarily paid attention to a relationship between *Inferno* XIV and Cato's presence in Purgatory, I will focus on the relationship between the sterile wood of the suicides and its relationship with the controversial pagan in Purgatory.[89] The sterility of the wood of suicides defined by negation, 'non fronda verde, ma di color fosco' (*Inf.* XIII, 4), contrasts dramatically with the rebirth of the plant at the end of *Purgatorio* I. Similarly, the baren, sterile, and colourless forest in *Inferno* XIII can be juxtaposed with emphasis on light and colour at the beginning of *Purgatorio* I. Furthermore, the term 'fronda' is notably used by Cato to refer to the reed: 'null' altra pianta che facesse fronda | o indurasse, vi puote aver vita.' (*Purg.* I, 103-104). The humble and flexible reed which is immediately reborn stands in dramatic distinction to the 'fraschetta' (*Inf.* XIII, 29) which the pilgrim snaps off from the tree in which the soul of Pier delle Vigne is enclosed.[90] Mazzotta argues that Dante strategically inserts Cato after the forest of suicides in *Inferno* XIV to ask the reader to contrast Cato's 'voluntary death of the self' with Pier delle Vigne's 'sin of false transcendence'.[91] If we are to view suicide as a denial of divine ownership of life and membership to the social body, then the image of the humble reed also contributes to a distinction between Cato's suicide and the suicides of *Inferno* XIII through his submission to higher authority, namely liberty: 'per lei vita rifiuta'. Finally, Virgil's assertion that Cato's body will return to him on the Day of Judgement, 'la vesta ch'al

[88] See *Inf.* XIII, 1-9.
[89] Hollander discusses echoes with *Inferno* XIII, focussing on the 'figural density of Cato'. See Hollander, *Allegory,* pp.129-131.
[90] The reed is often read in reference to the renwing golden bough in *Aen.* VI, 143-44: 'Primo avulso non degicit alter | aureus ('when the first is torn away, a second fails not, golden too.'), *Virgil*, trans. H.R. Fairclough, rev. G.P. Goold, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass.-London : Harvard University Press, 1916-18; repr. 1999-2000) I (1999), pp. 542-43.
[91] Mazzotta, *Poet of the Desert,* p. 60.

gran dì sarà sì chiara' (*Purg.* I, 75), recalls the same clothing metaphor employed to explain the fact that the suicides will not regain their bodies at the end of time: 'ma non però ch'alcuna sen rivesta, | ché non è giusto aver ciò ch'om si toglie' (*Inf.* XIII, 104-105). The fact that the return of Cato's body is affirmed in direct relation to his suicide, suggests another contrast with the suicides of the seventh circle of Hell.[92] Indeed, in *Monarchia*, Dante quotes Cicero's *De officiis* to justify Cato's suicide making direct comparison with other cases of suicide[93] and concludes that 'quod quicunque bonum rei publice intendit finem iuris intendit.'[94] Cato's sacrifice for the freedom of others parallels Christ's sacrifice which lead to the possibility of new and eternal life for all. Cato is thus associated with the Christian fecundity which dominates the opening canto, contrasting with the stagnancy and damnation of Hell, and, in particular the suicides.

The forest-desert in *Inferno* XIII is not the only wilderness evoked in *Purgatorio* I by Cato's presence and the foregrounding of the Exodus theme. At the beginning of the poem, the *selva oscura* is also referred to as a 'gran diserto' (*Inf.* I, 64), a place of trial and fear, haunted by the prospect of death.[95] The pilgrim attempts to continue towards the sunlit hill through a 'desert', 'ripresi via per la piaggia diserta' (29) and, seeing Virgil, cries out to him across the 'gran diserto' (64). As noted above, Cato's sudden appearance arguably recalls that of Virgil. Furthermore, the word 'amara' in *Purgatorio* I, 74 in reference to Cato's suicide ('Tu 'l sai, ché non ti fu per lei amara')

[92] Marti reads this clothing metaphor in the context of baptism. Kevin Marti, 'Dante's 'Baptism' and the Theology of the Body in Purgatorio 1-2', *Traditio*, 45 (1989), 167–90.
[93] *Mon.* II, v, 17: 'Atque ceteris forsan vitio datum esset si se interemissent […] Catoni vero cum incredibilem natura tribuisset gravitatem […] moriendum ei potius quam tyrampni vultus aspiciendus fuit' ('Yet if the others had killed themselves it would perhaps have been accounted a fault in them, […] but since nature had bestowed on Cato an austerity beyond belief […] it was fitting that he should die rather than set eyes on the face of the tyrant').
[94] *Mon.* II, v, 18 ('whoever has the good of the community as his goal has the achievement of right as his goal').
[95] 'morte' and 'paura' are words which govern the first two cantos of *Inferno.* See Roberto Rea, 'Psicologia ed etica della "paura" nel primo canto dell'*Inferno*: la "compunctio timoris", in *Dante Studies*, 130 (2012) 183-206.

recalls the poet's assertion in *Inferno* I: 'Tant'è amara che poco è più morte' (*Inf.* I, 7). While in *Inferno* I, the desert appears as a place of fear, in *Purgatorio* I, this bitterness has vanished.[96] The lack of bitterness Cato feels in death renders his suicide akin to an act of Christ-like sacrifice.[97] After Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, death loses its bitterness and the wilderness becomes a space of emancipation, no longer haunted by the fear of death as seen in *Inferno* I. The appearance of two pagans in different deserts invites the reader to look back to the pilgrim's failed journey up the hill, or what Freccero has termed, 'an exodus that failed, a temporary escape that was not a definitive departure from "Egypt", but merely a disastrous sortie.'[98] The disparity between the two appearances of the pagans will become more pronounced following Cato's dismissal of Virgil's mention of Marcia and his rebuke in *Purgatorio* II which leaves Virgil 'da sé stesso rimorso' (*Purg.* III, 7).

Dante exploits Cato's association with the desert to recall the desert-forest of *Inferno* I and *Inferno* XIII so that two sterile wildernesses emerge in contrast with the Christian fertility of the shores of Purgatory. Cato's presence in Purgatory as a suicide, though it remains a much-debated issue for critics, can nevertheless be understood within this network of recalls which help to establish the difference between Cato and the suicides of *Inferno* XIII. His 'voluntary self-death' is stripped of any implications of narcissism or false transcendence and instead becomes a Christ-like sacrifice and vehicle to transcendence. On the other hand, Dante does nothing to the resolve the issue of Cato's paganism. Instead, the parallels between Virgil's appearance in the 'gran diserto' and Cato's appearance on the 'lito diserto' serve to further problematize the

[96] Dante had already conceived of Cato's death in terms of a Christ-like sacrifice in *Conv.* IV, xxvii, 3: 'Onde si legge di Catone che non a sé, ma alla patria e a tutto 'l mondo nato essere credea.'
[97] See also *Conv.* IV, xxviii, 15: 'E quale uomo terreno più degno fu di significare Dio che Catone? Certo nullo.'
[98] Freccero, *The Poetics of Conversion*, p. 56.

issue of pagan salvation and Virgil's damnation which will become a major theme in Ante-Purgatory as Virgil adjusts to his changing role as guide.[99]

2.2. Movement and Stasis

The presence of Cato on the shores of Purgatory dramatizes Virgil's status as damned pagan in the second realm and casts aspersions over his authority as guide. This section will examine how *Purgatorio* I looks back to *Inferno* II, with particular reference to the manner in which Virgil's speech to Cato recalls Beatrice's reported speech in *Inferno* II. Patterns of retrospection between *Inferno* II and *Purgatorio* I emerge once again through linguistic echoes and the structural and thematic similarities, including the use of the rhetorical technique of *captatio benevolentiae* deployed both by Virgil and Beatrice in these cantos. Through an examination of these patterns of retrospection, two key themes will be highlighted. Firstly, there is the issue of authority, most obviously highlighted by Cato's sharp words to the pilgrim's *maestro,* but also set in contrast to Beatrice's authority which, despite her physical absence (in both *Inferno* II and *Purgatorio* I) is far more powerful. Secondly, there is the theme of movement or lack of movement. [100] In both cantos very little narrative action takes place, but both have a particular interest in the relationship between physical movement, emotional movement, and the role of language in triggering such motions.

While the destabilization of Virgil's authority begins in *Inferno*,[101] in *Purgatorio,* Virgil finds himself on unfamiliar ground and his status as a damned soul among the

[99] Chapter 2 will explore the problematic presence of Virgil as pagan guide in Ante-Purgatory.
[100] *Inferno* II is both proleptic and analeptic and critics like Jacoff and Stephany argue that it is particularly preoccupied with movement. See Rachel Jacoff and William A. Stephany, *Lectura Dantis Americana: Inferno II* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).
[101] See particularly *Inf.* VIII, 115-120 and *Inf.* XXIII, 145-148. See Teodolinda Barolini, 'Vergil: 'Poeta fui'', in her *Dante's Poets: Textuality and Truth in the Comedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 201–55.

saved is frequently brought into sharp relief.[102] Authority is one of the central concerns of *Inferno* II, stemming from the pilgrim's famous aporia: 'Ma io, perché venirvi? o chi 'l concede? | Io non Enëa, io non Paolo sono' (*Inf.* II, 31-32). The pilgrim's concern lies with his unworthiness for a journey so unprecedented that it has only been undertaken previously by a great Trojan hero and founder of the Roman Empire, and by St Paul. At a narrative level, it is for this reason that Virgil recounts his meeting with Beatrice in order to persuade the pilgrim of his worthiness and to help him overcome his 'viltade',[103] or rather, in order to authorize his journey. Elena Lombardi has recently suggested that we ought to see Beatrice as a hybrid figure, arguing that the 'lyric Lady Theology' derives her eloquent authority from the 'melding of masculine models of authority with positive models of female loquacity'.[104] Unique in her hybridity, she alone is able to bypass the pilgrim's anxieties in *Inferno* II as 'she is both the former courtly beloved and a blessed soul, woman and allegory, lyric character and initiator of a new Christian epic.'[105]

When on the shores of Purgatory, Cato questions the legitimacy of the travelers' arrival in Purgatory, the issue of authority arises once again, and Beatrice's authority is recalled (in fact it is recalled three times by Virgil)[106] precisely at the point where Virgil's *parola ornata* fails:

> Ma se donna del ciel ti move e regge
> come tu di', non c'è mestier lusinghe:
> bastisi ben che per lei mi richegge.' (*Purg.* I, 91-93)

[102] See, for example, *Purg.* III, 37-45; 50-66; *Purg.* VI, 28-33; *Purg.* VII, 28-35; *Purg.* VIII, 88-90.
[103] *Inf.* II, 45 and 122, also *Inf.* I, 76.78. George Corbett has recently suggested that the pilgrim demonstrates the sin of sloth in the opening cantos. Corbett, 'The Terrace of Sloth and the Sin of Scholars', in *Dante's Christian Ethics,* pp. 133.165, esp. pp. 158-162 on *Inferno* I and II.
[104] Elena Lombardi, 'Bea(ta lec)Trix', in *Imagining the Woman Reader in the Age of Dante* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 117–54, (p.128).
[105] Lombardi, 'Bea(ta lec)trix', p. 131.
[106] *Purg.* I, 52-54; 61-63; 67-69.

Here, Virgil's 'parola ornata', previously highlighted by Beatrice as fundamental to the pilgrim's salvation, is reduced by Cato to mere flattery. Indeed, the word 'mestier' recalls *Inferno* II directly: 'Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata | e con ciò c'ha mestieri al suo campare' (*Inf.* II, 67-68). The failure of Virgil's *parola ornata* in *Purgatorio* I dramatizes the difference between Beatrice's authority which commands Virgil, 'I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare' (*Inf.* II, 70), and Virgil's authority which is limited to his role as author and guide: 'Tu se' lo mio maestro e 'l mio autore,' (*Inf.* I, 85). Furthermore, though Virgil declares his role as guide in *Inferno* I*,* this role is immediately qualified with his limitations: 'io sarò la tua guida … se tu vorrai salire, | anima fia a ciò più di me degna: | con lei ti lascerò nel mio partire' (*Inf.* I, 103, 121-123).[107] While Virgil's words are efficacious in *Purgatorio* I (Cato is convinced of the authorization of the pilgrim's journey), Cato's response reveals that Virgil's attempt to appeal to Cato through earth-bound affection is out of place in Purgatory. Virgil derives his authority/*auctoritas* from his eloquence, but this is not enough to authorize the pilgrim's journey before Cato. Instead, it is Beatrice's authority which Cato accepts over Virgil's rhetoric.

It is worth looking more closely at Virgil's speech to Cato alongside *Inferno* II. Both addresses evoke a courtly setting through a lexical field associated with lyric poetry, the use of *captatio benevolentiae,* and the nature of the scene. Virgil's meeting with Beatrice in *Inferno* II is framed by reference to her eyes (55 and 116), her voice is described as 'angelica' while her words are 'soave e piana'.[108] Beatrice fulfils the role of a courtly lady, entreating and commanding Virgil to go to the pilgrim's aid. In *Purgatorio* I, courtly vocabulary is especially prominent in Virgil's mention of Marcia:

[107] See also *Inf.* I, 125-126 and 131.
[108] See Lombardi, 'Bea(ta lec)trix', p. 132 on references to 'soave e piana' in lyric poetry. Cato's simple acceptance of Beatrice's authority without mention of her name perhaps reflects the simplicity of Beatrice's speech in *Inferno* II.

ma son del cerchio ove son li occhi casti
    di Marzia tua, che 'n vista ancor ti priega,
o santo petto, che per tua la tegni:
per lo suo amore adunque a noi ti piega.
    Lasciane andar per li tuoi sette regni;
grazie riporterò di te a lei,
se d'esser mentovato là giù degni.' Purg. I, 70-84

The mention of Marcia's 'occhi casti' and Virgil's assertion that 'che 'n vista ancor ti priega […] che per la tua la tegni' describes a courtly narrative of a lady's loyalty. Virgil could be forgiven for his reference to Marcia's eyes, as the parting image of Beatrice in *Inferno* II with her 'occhi lucenti lagrimando' (116), appears to be picked up by the pilgrim in his reference to Beatrice as 'pietosa' (*Inf.* II, 133). Similarly, at the end of the pilgrim's journey up the mountain, Virgil motivates the pilgrim to pass through the fire by evoking Beatrice 'Or vedi, figlio: | tra Bëatrice e te è questo muro […] 'Li occhi suoi già veder parmi.' (*Purg.* XXVII, 35-36 and 54). Though Beatrice's eventual appearance is rather different from the expectations Virgil sets up, his attempt to appeal to earthly ties at the summit of the mountain is not completely erroneous and is shown to be effective. The issue with his evocation of Marcia is perhaps more to do with the fact that no such relationship can exist between the damned and the saved.[109]

Just as Virgil's reference to Marcia appears problematic, so too does his promise to Cato: 'grazie riporterò di te a lei.' The use of the word *grazie*, given its theological significance, is awkward in a promise made by a soul damned to Limbo.[110] Furthermore, this promise acts as a hollow echo of Beatrice's promise to praise Virgil before God:

[109] See also *Par.* XIV, 61-66.
[110] See 'grazia' in *Inf.* IV, 76-78. Comenico Consoli and Andrea Ciotti cite this use of 'grazie' as an example of its non-doctrinal meaning as '"cosa gradita" a chi la riceve, grazie sta anche per 'favore', 'beneficio'.' Domenico Consoli and Andrea Ciotti, 'grazia', *ED*, III, pp. 273-277.

'Quando sarò dinanzi al segnor mio, | di te mi loderò sovente a lui.' (*Inf.* II, 73-74). However, Beatrice's promise is equally problematic and ambiguous. It is not clear whether anything would result from her praise of Virgil before God. Though its results are uncertain, the promise does clearly draw attention to Beatrice as a central authority, again re-affirming the limitations of the pagan guide. Interestingly, this echo of Beatrice's ambiguous promise occurs as Virgil affirms he will return to Limbo: ('grazie riporterò di te a lei, | se d'esser mentovato là giù degni.'). Beatrice's physical descent to Hell is recalled alongside Virgil's future return to Limbo, but while Beatrice's descent affirms her privileged status among the blessed, Virgil's return is a mark of his limitations. The echo of *Inferno* II and Beatrice's promise of praise affirms Virgil's limits, serving to contrast dramatically with the appearance of Cato, a Christ-like symbol of freedom. The damnation of one pagan is thus set against the salvation of another.

Virgil's discourse is further contrasted with Beatrice's through issues of movement (or lack of movement). As damned pagan poet, Virgil, like Marcia, is 'tra lor che son sospesi' (*Inf.* II, 52) contrasting with Beatrice's free movement and her role as mediator.[111] Virgil's state of suspension is arguably recalled in Cato's rejection of sentiment for his former wife which simultaneously recalls *Inferno* II and IV:

> 'Marzïa piacque tanto a li occhi miei
> mentre ch'i' fu' di là', diss'elli allora,
> che quante grazie volse da me, fei.
> Or che di là dal mal fiume dimora,
> più muover non mi può, per quella legge
> che fatta fu quando me n'usci' fora.
> Ma se donna del ciel ti move e regge
> come tu di', non c'è mestier lusinghe:
> bastisi ben che per lei mi richegge.' *Purg.* I, 88-93

[111] See also *Inf.* IV, 44-45 for 'sospesi' and Lombardi's discussion of suspension in Limbo, *The Wings of the Doves*, p. 33-47.

Cato echoes Virgil's use of the word *grazie* but appears to 'correct' his usage of the term to describe the relationship between a damned soul and a saved soul. Cato instead refers to *grazie* strictly in terms of his earthly relationship with Marcia. Furthermore, Dante plays on the polysemy of the verb *muovere* to refer to physical movement and emotional affect. Marcia's stasis is underlined by the use of the verb *dimorare*, but Cato asserts her inability to move him emotionally through the negative phrase 'più muover non mi può'. This lack of movement (physically and emotionally) stands in contrast with the verb *muovere* used to refer to Beatrice ('donna del ciel ti move e regge'). In order to understand how Beatrice can 'move' Virgil and the pilgrim both physically and emotionally, we must turn back to *Inferno* II where there is a clear relationship between affect, movement, and speech.[112]

Having immediately accepted Beatrice's task, 'che l'ubidir, se già fosse, m'è tardi' (80), Virgil asks why Beatrice has descended to hell (82-84). Beatrice's response prompts a second analepsis, recounting a series of three supplications for the pilgrim's aid beginning with the Virgin Mary ('Donna è gentil nel ciel' [91])[113] who appeals to Lucia (97), who in turn goes to Beatrice (103), who descends to Hell to ask for Virgil's intervention. Jacoff and Stephany have argued persuasively that this chain of interventions highlights the canto's concern with the mediating role of language in triggering movement, noting that 'characters move physically only after they have been moved spiritually, and it is words that move them'.[114] As Beatrice puts it: 'I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare […] amor mi mosse | che mi fa parlare' (*Inf.* II,70-72). Indeed, the canto closes with the pilgrim's declaration that Virgil's speech triggers his

[112] See Pierantonio Frare, 'Il potere della parola: su *Inferno* II e II', *Lettere Italiane* 56.4 (2004), 543-69 and Fabio Finotti, 'Il poema ermeneutico (*Inferno* I-II)', *Lettere Italiane,* 54.4 (2001), 489-508.
[113] Though modern commentators see Mary in the 'donna gentile', early interpreters did not. See Hollander, *Inf.* II, 94 and Jacoff and Stephany, *Inferno II*, pp. 26-29.
[114] Jacoff and Stephany, *Inferno II,* p. 5.

own movement: 'così li dissi; e poi che mosso fue | intrai per lo cammino alto e silvestro.' (141-142).[115] Though differing from Jacoff and Stephany in her attention to stasis in *Inferno* II, Barolini also highlights the relationship between language and movement, arguing that speech becomes the 'prerequisite for action rather than the other way around, signifying the end of stasis and the readiness of the narrative to recommence.'[116] Moving someone through language in *Inferno* II results in actual movement, namely, the beginning, or re-commencing, of the pilgrim's journey.

By recalling *Inferno* II's interest in movement alongside the suspension of Marcia and Virgil in Limbo, *Purgatorio* I highlights Beatrice's divine authority and role as mediator. A contrast emerges between Beatrice who 'move e regge' and Marcia who cannot move Cato, and who is, along with Virgil, 'tra color che son sospesi' (*Inf.* II, 52). Dante further dramatizes Virgil's damnation by recalling Beatrice's problematic promise of praise in *Inferno* II in combination with the presence of Cato. This begins a continued interest in the transformation of Virgil's role in Purgatory which we will explore more fully in Chapter 2. The theological reasoning behind Cato's salvation is never made explicitly clear to the reader (as with the Limbo of the pagans), and in this way pushes to the limits the mysterious nature of the border between salvation and damnation.

3. *Purgatorio* II: Charon and 'il celestial nocchiero'

As Durling and Martinez have noted in their *inter cantica* notes to *Purgatorio* II, the canto 'continues the elaborate parallelism with the opening cantos of the *Inferno* begun in Canto 1'.[117] While I have made some reference throughout this chapter to the

[115] See also *Inf.* II, 133-138.
[116] Barolini, *Undivine Comedy*, p. 30
[117] Durling and Martinez, *inter cantica* notes to *Purgatorio* II, in *Purgatorio,* p. 46.

manner in which retrospective elements from *Purgatorio* I are developed in *Purgatorio* II, in this section I will focus closely on the manner in which the angelically piloted vessel in *Purgatorio* II recalls the encounter with Charon in *Inferno* III. I will argue, however, that retrospective reading may provide an alternative mode for reading the critically fraught encounter with Casella and the Cato's rebuke, suggesting that, in addition to the more well-established readings of this narrative sequence, the second half of *Purgatorio* II also emphasizes an absence of the masochistic desire for punishment which souls exhibited in *Inferno* III.

The most commonly noted echo of *Inferno* in *Purgatorio* II, is, of course, the striking parallel developed between the demonically piloted vessel on the river Styx and the angelically piloted vessel which arrives across the ocean in *Purgatorio* II.[118] The encounter with Charon in *Inferno* III is also frequently compared with Virgil's *Aeneid* VI with which Dante clearly and deliberately dialogues.[119] There are a number of striking similarities between the Virgilian episode and *Inferno* III. Dante evokes the burning eyes and unkempt beard of Virgil's Charon ('Charon, cui plurima mento canities inculta iacet, stant lumina flamma')[120] and Dante's Charon similarly expresses displeasure and shock at the living souls who have dared to approach which echoes the Charon of *Aeneid* VI's warning that he cannot carry living bodies in his vessel ('corpora viva nefas Stygia vectare carina').[121] Both Dante's Charon and Virgil's Charon must be convinced of the journey's legitimacy, but in *Inferno* III, the infernal

[118] See Benvenuto da Imola, on Charon *Purg.* II, 31-36 and 43-45 in which he compares the multitude of souls in Charon's infernal boat and the lesser number in the angelic vessel. On Charon, see also Picchio Simonelli, 'Charon', in *Inferno III,* pp. 62-70, on comparison with *Purg.* II, p. 69; Italo Bertelli, 'Il canto degli ignavi e di Caronte (*Inf.* III)', in his *Il canto di Caronte. Saggi e appunti danteschi* (Pisa-Rome: Fabrizio Serra, 2019), pp. 11-31; Alberto Chiari, 'Dalla selva oscura al vestibolo dell'Inferno', in his *Saggi danteschi e altri studi (1980-1990)*, (Florence: Le Lettere, 1991), pp. 5-25.
[119] Cf. *Aen.* VI, 298-301 and *Inf.* III, 82-84, 97-99, and 109; *Aen.* 384-391 and *Inf.* III, 84-93.
[120] *Aen.* VI, 299-300 ('Charon, on whose chin lies a mass of unkempt, hoary hair; his eyes are staring orbs of flame'), *Virgil,* I, pp. 552-553.
[121] *Aen.* VI, 391 ('living bodies I may not carry in the Stygian boat'), *Virgil,* I, pp. 560-561. See, ll. 388-410 for the whole exchange.

helmsman is rather rebuked and patronized by Virgil ('Caron, non ti crucciare'), where in the *Aeneid* the Sybil seeks to reassure ('nullae hic insidiae tales') and convince through revealing the golden bough beneath her cloak ('se te nulla movet tantae pietatis imago, | at ramum hunc').[122]

While Benvenuto da Imola appears to draw a contrast between Charon and the angelic vessel, the parallels and contrasts between the arrival of the two vessels are considered more fully, if still somewhate tentatively, by Guido Mazzoni in a *lectura dantis* published in 1904.[123] Interestingly, Charles Singleton recalls Charon's role in *Aeneid* as 'boatman for all souls going to Hades, hence for those as well whose destination is Elysium, who thus correspond, in a sense, to these who cross to Purgatory.'[124] The role of Virgil's Charon as transporter of both the fortunate and unfortunate is conceptually divided in Dante's poem into Charon in *Inferno* and his angelic counterpart in *Purgatorio*.

As is frequently pointed out, both Charon and the angelic pilot are referred to as 'nocchier' (*Inf.* III, 98) and 'nocchiero' (*Purg.* II, 43) – though a clear contrast is established in the twinned use of this term as Charon described as 'nocchier de la livide palude' while the angel in *Purgatorio* II is heralded as 'il celestial nocchiero'.[125] Both

[122] *Aen.* VI, 399 ('No such trickery is here'); *Aen.* VI, 405-406 ('If the picture of such piety in no wise moves you, yet know this bough'), *Virgil,* I, pp. 560-561.
[123] Benvenuto da Imola is the first to mention Charon in his commentary to *Purg.* II, 31-36 noting that the angel 'dirigit animas ad coelum, ubi Charon ad infernum.' ([..]directs the souls towards Heaven, where Charon directs them towards Hell). Guido Mazzoni, *Lectura Dante Genovese: Il canto III dell'Inferno* (Florence: Le Monnier 1904); repr. in *Letture dantesche,* ed. by Giovanni Getto (Florence: Sansoni, 1955), pp. 45-58, p. 54: '[b]el parallel potrebbe farsi, chi sapesse, tra l'arrivo del Vecchio 'bianco per antico pelo', che viene remigando per l'acqua livida, […] e tra l'arrivo dell'angelo, bianco nel vestimento e nelle ali, che viene, per solà virtù delle ali sue dritte verso il cielo'. John S. Carroll, whose commentary dates to the same year as G. Mazzoni's tentative observation (1904), is more assertive, affirming that the angel in *Purgatorio* is 'the obvious antithesis of Charon.' *Purg.* III, 27-40. As Picchio Simonelli notes, Mazzoni's observation is later supported by Francesco Mazzoni. See Picchio Simonelli, *Inferno III,* p. 69; Francesco Mazzoni, *Saggio di un nuovo commento alla Divina Commedia. Inferno, Canti I–IIII* (Florence: Sansoni, 1967), p. 424, who adds a comparison with Cato for the solemnity of both figures.
[124] Singleton, *Purg.* II, 43. See *Aen.* VI, 298-304 and 387–415.
[125] The same term is also used for Phlegias (*Purg.* VIII, 80) and in *Purg.* VI, 77 to describe the state of Italy as 'nave sanza nocchiere in gran tempesta' and in *Par.* XXIII, 69.

nocchieri, however, are introduced dramatically and suddenly with the demonstrative marker 'Ed ecco':

> Ed ecco verso noi venir per nave
> un vecchio, bianco per antico pelo,
> gridando: 'Guai a voi, anime prave! […] (*Inf.* III, 82-83);

> Ed ecco, qual, sorpreso dal mattino,
> per li grossi vapor Marte rosseggia
> giù nel ponente sovra 'l suol marino,
> cotal m'apparve, s'io ancor lo veggia,
> un lume per lo mar venir sì ratto,
> che 'l muover suo nessun volar pareggia. (*Purg.* II, 13-18)

Though both boats appear suddenly, Dante clearly evokes the appearance of Charon in *Purgatorio* II to then diverge from it. While Charon is immediately visible to the pilgrim (and thus the reader) as 'un vecchio' and arrives already shouting across the Styx, the poet dwells much longer on the arrival of the angelic vessel. Indeed, the description of the boat's arrival lasts thirteen *terzine* (13-51), and it is not until the fifth *terzina* that the two travelers make out the angelic wings (*Purg.* II, 25-26). The vessel does not actually arrive and disembark its passengers until line 49 and then, in contrast to the long, drawn-out arrival, departs suddenly 'ed el sen gì, come venne, veloce' (*Purg.* II, 51).

Patrick Boyde has read the arrival of the angelic boat in terms of the five *sensibilia communia* which Dante lays out in *Convivio:* 'la figura, la grandezza, lo numero, lo movimento e lo stare fermo.'[126] The arrival of the boat is described through the *sensibilia communia* and epitomises the poet's narrative technique in which he does

[126] *Conv.* III, ix, 6. The organ associated with controlling and interpreting information from the senses was commonly termed the *sensus communis* (common sense). Located in the frontal lobe of the brain, the *sensibilia communia* interpreted or 'apprehented the *sensibilia communia* (shape, size, number, and movement) as distinct from the *sensibilia propria* (colour, sound, odour, taste, and touch) which belong to the five senses proper. See Patrick Boyde, *Perception and Passion in Dante's Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 47-8.

not narrate with hindsight, causing the reader to share in the pilgrim's perceptions and misapprehensions.[127] Boyde sees this process as intrinsic to the poet's efforts to 'educate the reader's mind and emotions by simulating what he knew to be the natural process of learning.'[128] Sarah Stanbury, in her survey of discourses on vision in late medieval England (1380-mid 1400s) notes that discussions on vision often involved '*how* to see, as if seeing were a personal and social *habitas* or practice that one learns through individual and group discipline.'[129] Indeed, the reader's eye is drawn in multiple directions and to multiple details by use of the repeated imperative *Vedi* in Virgil's commands to the pilgrim, as he takes on the role of guiding the pilgrim's gaze:

> Vedi che sdegna li argomenti umani,
> sì che remo non vuol, né altro velo
> che l'ali sue, tra liti sì lontani.
> Vedi come l'ha dritte verso 'l cielo,
> trattando l'aere con l'etterne penne,
> che non si mutan come mortal pelo. (*Purg.* II, 31-36)

Here, attention is drawn to the angel's behaviour, his lack of an oar or sail, the distance of the journey and the manner in which the angel holds his wings. The choice of the verb *sdegnare* echoes the bearing of the intervening angel at the Gate of Dis in *Inferno* IX who appeared 'pien di disdegno' (*Inf.* IX, 88), wafting away 'quell'aere grasso' (82), as is perhaps recalled by movement of the air by angelic pilot's immutable wings: 'trattando l'aere con l'etterne penne' (*Purg.* II, 35). In contrast to Ulysses, who has been evoked repeatedly in *Purgatorio* I, the angel emphatically needs no oar or sail to make the long journey to the island of Purgatory. While Ulysses' 'folle volo' is wingless and doomed to failure, the angel's is propelled across the water by his wings

[127] See also *Inf.* XXXI, 21-33 where the pilgrim mistakes the giants for towers.
[128] Patrick Boyde, *Perception and Passion in Dante's Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 95.
[129] Sarah Stanbury, *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 13.

and his journey is assured and willed by God. Similarly, this truly winged and angelic flight contrasts with Charon's movement across the Styx with his oar. Moreover, the poetic 'pointing' used in the arrival of the boat in Dante's poem is perhaps evocative of such a practice in that it is not only a narrative technique but is also a didactic one. The arrival of the boat in *Purgatorio* II appears to have a pedagogical function which aims at re-orientating and re-educating the reader and which goes beyond that of Charon's approach in *Inferno* III.

The manner in which souls arrive at and cross the Acheron also presents a notable point of contrast with the arrival of souls at the shores of Purgatory.[130] In *Inferno* III, there is firm emphasis on the universal nature of the crossing:

> Poi si ritrasser tutte quante insieme,
> forte piangendo, a la riva malvagia
> ch'attende ciascun uom che Dio non teme.
> Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia
> loro accennando, tutte le raccoglie;
> batte col remo qualunque s'adagia. (*Inf.* III, 106-111)

The repetition of the pronoun 'tutte quante' and 'tutte' within these two *terzine* emphasizes the mass movement towards the 'riva malvagia' and renders the gerund 'piangendo' a communal action. By contrast, in Virgil's text, souls are divided into the buried and unburied and the crowd of souls anxious to cross the Styx is differentiated by gender, age, and described with elements of pathos: 'matres atque viri, defunctaque corpora vita | magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae | impostitique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum'.[131]

[130] See Picchio Simonelli, *Inferno III,* pp. 63-64.
[131] *Aen.* VI, 306-308 ('mothers and men and bodies of high-souled heroes, their life now done, boys and unwedded girls, and sons placed on the pyre before their fathers' eyes'). *Virgil,* I, pp. 554-555. See also *Aen.* VI, 317-330.

The sense of universality or mass movement in the collection of souls at the shores of the Acheron is subsequently emphasized by Virgil's explanation to the pilgrim:

> quelli che muoion ne l'ira di Dio
> tutti convegnon qui d'ogne paese;
> e pronti sono a trapassar lo rio,
> ché la divina giustizia li sprona,
> sì che la tema si volve in disio. (*Inf.* III, 122-126)

Though the souls who arrive at the shore of the infernal river collectively curse 'Dio e lor parenti, | l'umana spezie e 'l loco e 'l tempo e 'l seme | di lor semenza e di lor nascimenti' (*Inf.* III, 103-105), when they gather on the shores of the Styx they are driven to cross by a masochistic desire.[132] Elena Lombardi has shown how desire, which she explores as an unresolved tension, is essential to the crossing of the Styx in both *Aeneid* VI and *Inferno* III.[133] She notes the difference between well-directed desire (*amor*) and desire as folly (*dira cupido*) in *Aeneid* VI, noting that the expression 'mad desire' (*dira cupido*) 'is employed twice to illustrate two conflicting ideas: Palinurus' deranged desire for the other world, and (Aeneas' judgement of) the souls desire for embodiment'.[134] In Virgil's text, then, we find the well-directed desire to cross over into the otherworld, balanced by the blind desire for embodiment. In *Inferno* III, by contrast, we find a 'mad desire' in the souls for punishment.

Lombardi has also noted elsewhere the 'striking parallel' between the transformation of fear into desire in *Inferno* III and the pilgrim's fear of beginning his

[132] In Virgil's text, Charon thrusts back those who try to board his boat prematurely: 'navita sed tristis nunc hos nunc accipit illos, | ast alios longe submotos arcet harena', *Aen.* VI, 315-315; 'But the surly boatman takes now these, now those, while others he thrusts away, back from the brink'. *Virgil,* vol. 1, pp. 554-555. In *Inf.* III, Charon hits slow souls with his oar: 'tutte le raccoglie; | batte col remo qualunque s'adagia' (*Inf.* III, 111).
[133] Elena Lombardi, 'Hell', *The Wings of Doves: Love and Desire in Dante and Medieval Culture* (Motreal; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), pp. 20-50, esp. § 'Canto 3: Tension', pp. 26-33.
[134] Lombardi, *Wings of Doves,* p. 29.

journey through Hell and his desire to undertake the journey. She writes: 'Dante too is suspended between the fear of the enterprise and his desire to undertake it – as expressed by the dialectic of "viltade" (*Inf.* II, 45) and "desiderio" (*Inf.* II, 136).'[135] This suspension causes a narrative pause in *Inferno* II, which must be resolved by Virgil through the complete transformation of fear into desire, or, as Lombardi puts it, Virgil 'rescues him by turning his fear into desire'.[136]

This same desire for punishment marks the experience of souls in Purgatory – though in Purgatory punishment becomes productive.[137] When new souls arrive on the shores of Purgatory, however, they exhibit no clear sense of direction or desire to progress towards the mountain:

> La turba che rimase lì, selvaggia
> parea del loco, rimirando intorno
> come colui che nove cose assaggia. (*Purg.* II, 52-54)

After the long description of the celestial vessel's arrival, this lack of direction is anticlimactic. The newly arrived souls are not driven by any supernatural or masochistic impulse when they arrive in Ante-Purgatory. In the absence of a clear sense of direction, they are distracted by the pilgrim's living body (67-69), 'quasi oblïando d'ire a farsi belle' (75). In this lull in the action, Casella recognizes the pilgrim, greets him (76-93), explains how he arrived in Purgatory (94-105) and performs a song at the pilgrim's request (106-114). The souls are so entranced by the song 'come a nessun

[135] Elena Lombardi, 'Plurilingualism *sub specie aeternitatis.* Language/s in Dante's Commedia', in *Dante's Plurilingualism. Authority, Vulgarization, Subjectivity*, ed. by S. Fortuna, M. Gragnolati, and J. Trabant (Oxford: Legenda, 2010), pp. 133-47, p. 134.
[136] *Ibid.*
[137] Lombardi, *Wings of Doves,* p. 30-31. See also Gragnolati, 'Gluttony and the Anthropology of Pain in Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*', in *History in the Comic Mode: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person,* ed. Rachel Fulton Brown and Bruce Holsinger (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 238-50. Barolini suggests that '[i]f desire in the *Inferno* is eternally misplaced, in the *Purgatorio* it functions dialectically as both the goad that keeps the souls moving upward and the source of the nostalgia that temporarily slows them down. *Purgatorio* II is a paradigm for the rest of the canticle in this respect, dramatizing both these aspects […]', in her *Dante's Poets,* p. 33.

toccasse altro la mente' (117), causing Cato to burst back into the scene, rebuking the souls for their 'negligenza' (118-123). Surprised by Cato, the souls scatter 'ver la costa' (131) like frightened doves along with Virgil and the pilgrim.

This narrative sequence has attracted much attention and criticism from readers of Dante and readings of the canto seem to oscillate between those, on the one hand, which highlight the affectionate elements of the pilgrim's encounter with Casella,[138] and, on the other hand, those which condemn Casella's song as a temptation which exemplifies a moment in which the pilgrim 'backslides'. Singleton was perhaps the first to expound the latter theory and viewing Casella's song in this light has been chiefly developed by American critics such as Hollander, Kaske, and Freccero, but has also been discussed by Italian commentators such as Chiavacci Leonardi and Nicola Fosca.[139]

As a result of Dante's auto-citation in *Purgatorio* II, the canto has been interpreted in a palinodic key, that is, as a correction of the *Convivio* from which

[138] Arguments which focus on the sentimentality of the episode and the use of stilnovistic language to soften the pilgrim's supposed error. See, Ignazio Baldelli, 'Linguistica e interpretazione: l'amore di Catone, di Casella, di Carlo Martello e le canzoni del 'Convivio' II e III', in *Miscellanea di studi linguistici in onore di Walder Belardi*, 3 vols (Rome: Il Calamo, 1994), ii, 535–55; Giuliana Angiolillo, 'Casella', in *La nuova frontiera della tanatologia. Le biografie della Commedia*, 3 vols (Florence: Olschki Editore, 1996), ii, 31–44. Chiavacci Leonardi's commentary to the canto also tends towards a more sentimental reading of the canto. Surrounding the musicality of the episode see: Amilcare Iannucci A., 'Casella's Song and the Tuning of the Soul', *Thought*, 65.1 (1990), 27–46. For the interesting argument that the embrace is only delayed, see Nicolae Iliescu, 'Gli episodi degli abbracci nelle strutture del purgatorio', *Yearbook of Italian Studies*, 1 (1971), 53–63. See also Gragnolati's most recent consideration of embraces: 'Ombre e abbracci. Riflessioni sull'inconsistenza nella *Commedia* di Dante', *Chroniques Italiennes,* web 39.2 (2020), 30-43, or earlier reflections in 'Nostalgia in heaven'.

[139] See Singleton, 'In Exitu'; Hollander, 'The New Song and The Old'; Carol V. Kaske's 'Mount Sinai and Dante's Mount Purgatory', *Dante Studies* 89 (1971), 1-18; John Freccero, 'Casella's Song (*Purg,* II, 112)', *Dante Studies*, 91 (1973), 73-80, repr. *The Poetics of Conversion,* pp. 186-94; R.A. Shoaf, 'Dante's *colombi* and the Figuralism of Hope in the *Divine Comedy*', *Dante Studies,* 93 (1975), 25-59. See Fosca's extended note to *Purg.* II, 120-123. Also on *Purgatorio* II, see: Dunstan Tucker, 'The Divine *Comedy* in the Light of the Easter Liturgy', in *American Benedictine Review*, 11 (1960), 43-61; Marco Cerocchi, '*Purgatorio* II. Il fascino pericoloso dell'"amoroso canto" di Casella, *Forum Italicum*, 43.3 (2008), 243-62; Claudia Crevenna, 'La dolcezza del canto tra memoria e oblio nel *Purgatorio* dantesco' in *Stella forte. Studi danteschi*, ed. by Francesco Spera (Naples: M. D'Auria, 2010), pp. 107-29; Luca Marcozzi, '"…Sì dolcemente | che la dolcezza ancor dentro mi suona': Il *Purgatorio* e la rinascita dell'armonia', *Chroniques italiennes*, web 40.1 (2020), 49-69.

Casella's song ('Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona') is drawn.[140] The canto has been discussed in relation to *Inferno* V for its evocation of lyric poetry, for its use of a dove simile, and for the common engagement with desire. Freccero sees a linear progression from *Inferno* V to *Purgatorio* II, arguing that '[t]he 'Amore' celebrated here [in *Purgatorio* II] marks and advance over the 'Amore' of Francesca's verses.'[141]

As far as I am aware, however, no-one has yet considered the newly arrived souls' behaviour on the shores of Purgatory in contrast with the souls which arrive at the shores of Acheron. Indeed, the comparison is encouraged by Casella's explanation of his own journey to the shores of Purgatory: 'sempre quivi si ricoglie | qual verso Acheronte non si cala' (*Purg.* II, 104-105). The adverb *quivi* is in reference to the shores of the Tiber where souls must wait before they are transported to the 'lito diserto'. In this manner, the mouth of the Tiber is established in direct parallel with the shores of the Acheron. The use of the verb *raccogliere* (and the past participle *ricolto* in line 102) echoes the usage in *Inferno* III in reference to Charon: 'tutte le raccoglie; | batte col remo qualunque s'adagia.' (*Inf.* III, 110-11). Though both groups of souls are collected by their respective *nocchieri,* the damned souls are spurred on by Charon's blows and by their own 'mad desire' for punishment, while the saved souls are left on the shores of Purgatory with no clear sense of direction or clear desire.

[140] However, one issue with this interpretation is that the *Convivio* was not circulated and so could not have been known by readers – though the canzone itself might have been. On the palinode in Dante more generally, see Ascoli, 'Palinode and history', in *Making of a Modern Author*, pp. 274-300 and Jennifer Rushworth, 'Conversion, Palinody, Traces' in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante,* ed. Manuele Gragnolati, Elena Lombardi, Francesca Southerden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), pp. 529-545, *Purg.* II, at pp. 540-545.

[141] Freccero, *The Poetics of Conversion,* p. 188. Freccero also suggests that the simile from *Purg.* II was probably drawn from the second meter of Book III of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, p. 190. See Boethius, *Theological Tractates. The Consolation of Philosophy,* trans. H.F. Stewart, E.K. Rand, S.J. Tester (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 238-239. Durling and Martinez also note the resonancies with *Inferno* V in their 'inter cantica' notes to *Purgatorio* II, *Purgatorio,* p. 46-47. See also Barolini, *Dante's Poets*, pp. 31-40.

The manner in which the souls in *Inferno* are drawn across the river while those in *Purgatorio* are hurried along by Cato can be compared through the use of two bird similes. *Inferno* III famously alludes to the Virgilian simile of autumnal leaves drifting from the trees and the movement migratory birds to describe the passage of souls across the Styx.[142]

> Come d'autunno si levan le foglie
> l'una appresso de l'altra, fin che 'l ramo
> vede a la terra tutte le sue spoglie,
> similemente il mal seme d'Adamo
> gittansi di quel lito ad una ad una,
> per cenni come augel per suo richiamo. (*Inf.* III, 112-117)

Dante modifies the Virgilian simile with a bird of prey, exchanging natural, instinctual migratory movement for the return of the falcon to the falconer. As Lombardi notes 'While Charon's gesture ('loro accenando,' 110) functions as the signal, the lure is not the most appetizing.'[143] Dante also compares the newly arrived souls in *Purgatorio* II to birds at the end of the canto in describing their rush towards the mountain after Cato's rebuke:

> Come quando, cogliendo biado o loglio,
> li colombi adunati a la pastura,
> queti, sanza mostrar l'usato orgoglio,
> se cosa appare ond' elli abbian paura,
> subitamente lasciano star l'esca,
> perch' assaliti son da maggior cura;
> così vid' io quella masnada fresca
> lasciar lo canto, e fuggir ver' la costa,
> com' om che va, né sa dove rïesca;
> né la nostra partita fu men tosta. (*Purg.* II, 124-133)

[142] See *Aen.* VI, 309-312 and *Inf.* III, 112-117. Compare also Aeneas' weight in Charon's boat and the pilgrim's weight in Phlegyas' boat; *Aen.* VI, 413-414 and *Inf.* VIII, 28-30.
[143] Elena Lombardi, *Wings of Doves,* p. 30.

Shoaf has considered the use of dove in the *Commedia* as a symbol of desire and hope, concentrating particularly on dove-similes in *Inferno* V, *Purgatorio* II and *Paradiso* XXV.[144] Regarding *Purgatorio* II, he notes the ambivalence surrounding the dove as a symbol both *in malo* and *in bono*, being associated with both negligence and hope.[145] In the dove simile of *Purgatorio* II, the souls are gathered ('adunati') like grazing doves, before scattering without clear intention: 'com'om che va, né sa dover rïesca'. By contrast, the damned souls in *Inferno* III jump into Charon's boat 'ad una ad una', as if to splinter linguistically the verb *adunare* and with it the gathered mass of souls on the shore of the Styx. Similarly, the souls' movement into Charon's boat is clearly inverted in *Purgatorio* II through the movement of the souls who disembark the angelic vessel as a unit: 'si gittar tutti in su la piaggia' (50). The use of the adjective *adunati* in the bird simile of *Purgatorio* II, however, offers an additional intriguing recall through sonorous play on 'ad una ad una' in *Inferno* III. The souls in *Inferno* III move from a state of unity, collectively weeping and raging, to boarding Charon's boat one by one, the souls in *Purgatorio* II disembark as a unit and are gathered until they scatter as a result of Cato's rebuke, but nonetheless all move in the same direction towards the mountain.

Though *Purgatorio* II is a complex canto which has triggered wide-ranging debate, it is interesting to note some of the more subtle contrasts with *Inferno* III. It is not the souls who arrive on the infernal shores who scatter or flee, but rather the saved souls who arrive in Ante-Purgatory. Similarly, while souls in *Inferno* III are clearly drawn towards their punishment by a masochistic desire, this desire does not appear to

[144] R. A. Shoaf, 'Dante's columbi'. More recently, see Giuseppe Ledda, '"Quali colombe dal disio chiamate": a Bestiary of Desire in Dante's *Commedia*', in *Desire in Dante and the Middle Ages*, ed. Manuele Gragnolati, Tristan Kay, Elena Lombardi, and Francesca Southerden (London: Legenda, 2012), pp. 58-70, now republished and developped in Italian under the title 'I baci delle colombe e il bestario d'amore' in his *Il bestiario dell'aldilà*, pp. 91-101.
[145] R. A. Shoaf, 'Dante's columbi', p. 39.

be present in the new-arrivals on the shores of Purgatory, allowing them to become distracted by the pilgrim's shadow and Casella's song and thus necessitating Cato's rebuke. The two similes of the predatory falcon drawn in by a lure and the peaceful doves scattered in a moment of panic offer an interesting contrast between modes of arrival in Hell and Purgatory.

Conclusions

This chapter has aimed to demonstrate that a cluster of retrospective echoes and structural patterns in *Purgatorio* I and *Purgatorio* II draw the reader back to multiple cantos from the first *cantica*, in particular, *Inferno* I, II, III, IV, XIII, and XXVI. These patterns can be identified through repetition of key words, phrases, through recurring metaphors, similes or imagery, or through thematic parallels. These echoes work to reinforce the absolute division between Hell and Purgatory, but also serve to problematize this same binary. On the one hand, by pointing the reader back to the beginning of *Inferno* (*Inf.* I and III) and the pilgrim's encounter with Ulysses (*Inf.* XXVI), the reader is encouraged to reflect on the progress the pilgrim has made since the beginning of his journey and the amount of distance he has put between himself and his dark double Ulysses. On the other hand, the reader is equally stimulated to look back to *Inferno* IV and XIII in strict relation to the problematic presence of Cato. Similarly, by recalling *Inferno* II and IV, the poet highlights the awkwardness of Virgil's presence as a damned pagan before a saved pagan. Cato challenges Virgil's authority, but also challenges the reader to consider why he has been saved while the beloved guide must return 'la giù'. While the pilgrim's progress is made measurable, highlighting the importance of humility, hope, and the Christ event in a journey to salvation, the presence of Cato and Virgil underlines the mysterious nature of grace.

The presence of clusters of retrospective elements in *Purgatorio* I appears to be particularly pertinent to the canto's structural placement. Reading retrospectively offers a more nuanced understanding of the borders between *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* which is important for understanding the peculiar nature of the uncertain borders of Ante-Purgatory. The souls' journey to salvation begins in earthly life, as is emphasized by the fact that souls must wait initially by the banks of the Tiber before reaching the mountain,[146] and by the attention to late penitents in the Ante-Purgatory cantos. Furthermore, retrospection appears as a fundamental difference between souls in *Inferno* and souls in *Purgatorio.* While in Ante-Purgatory and in Purgatory proper, souls look back on their mortal actions with a new and more enlightened perspective, in *Inferno,* there is no such spiritual progress. Though there is no active purgation in Ante-purgatory as on the terraces, retrospection nonetheless appears to be equally fundamental in the opening cantos and might lead us to question whether retrospection has a reformative or educational function in Ante-purgatory. The poet provides the reader with a new model for reading but also a new model for reflecting on their own life by requiring them to look back on the pilgrim's journey and his initial folly from a more enlightened perspective at the beginning of the second realm.

[146] *Purg.* II, 100-102.

Chapter 2
Virgil in Ante-Purgatory

Io cominciai: "El par che tu mi nieghi,
o luce mia, espresso in alcun testo
che decreto del cielo orazion pieghi:
e questa gente prega pur di questo:
sarebbe dunque loro speme vana,
o non m'è 'l detto tuo ben manifesto?"
(*Purg.* VI, 28-33)

In the lines quoted above from *Purgatorio* VI, Dante famously challenges Virgil's *Aeneid* in the most direct critical engagement with Virgil's text since *Inferno* XX.[1] Dante poses as a devoted reader of Virgil in *Purgatorio* VI, echoing the posturing of *Inferno* XX where Virgil affirms that the pilgrim knows the *Aeneid* perfectly: 'ben lo sai tu che la sai tutta quanta' (*Inf.* XX, 114). *Inferno* XX then departs from Virgil's account of Eurypylus, having already drastically 'corrected' the account of Manto,[2] causing Kleiner to describe Dante's stance in the canto as 'suspicious enthusiasm'.[3] In Ante-Purgatory, we find a similar conflation of 'mis-reading' or 'correction' of the *Aeneid* with apparent devotion to Virgil as a poet. The pilgrim appears to remind his guide of the Sibyl's harsh answer to Palinurus' request to be buried or to be carried

[1] See *Inferno* XX, 52-99. Barolini calls this 'The *Comedy's* most sustained correction of the *Aeneid*'. See Barolini, *Dante's Poets*, pp. 214 and see pp. 214-222 on this moment. See also Teodolinda Barolini, 'Canto XX: True and False See-ers,' in *Lectura Dantis: Inferno* (Mandelbaum *et al*), pp. 283-84; Robert Hollander, 'Dante's Misreadings of the *Aeneid* in *Inferno* 20', in *The Poetry of Allusion: Virgil and Ovid in Dante's Commedia,* ed. by Rachel Jacoff, Jeffrey T. Schnapp (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), pp. 77-93; John Kleiner, 'The Learned Dante', in his *Mismapping the Underworld: Daring and Error in Dante's Comedy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 57-84.
[2] See *Aen.* II, 108-119 for Virgil's original passage on Eurypylus where he is not linked with the incident mentioned by Dante, and *Aen.* X, 198-200 for Mantu who is not presented as the founder of Mantua.
[3] Kleiner suggests that Dante's claim to be a devoted reader is incongruous with his mis-citation or 'mis-readings' of Virgil's text in *Inf.* XX. See Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld*, p. 67.

across the Styx in *Aeneid* VI: 'desine fata deum flecti sperare precando'.[4] In other words, he points out what he believes to be an error in Virgil's text, namely, that prayers made by the living fall upon deaf ears and do nothing to save the dead or to alleviate their suffering. Despite the feigned humility in this exchange, the pilgrim's question strikes at the heart of an important issue within the Ante-Purgatory cantos which we began to explore in Chapter 1 through the encounter with Cato, namely, the fact that Virgil must inevitably return to Limbo despite his unquestionable merits, his poetic legacy, his fatherly affection towards the pilgrim, and his obedience in responding to Beatrice's request. When the pilgrim asks whether souls should rightly set their hopes in the prayers of the living, it is a hope which implicitly excludes his guide. Moreover, Dante uses Virgil's own text to illustrate and emphasise this exclusion.

Purgatorio VI is a particularly evident instance of a clear comparison being drawn between Virgil's state of damnation and the salvation of souls in Ante-Purgatory. In the *terzine* quoted above, the use of the key word *speme* at once draws the reader back to Manfred's recent reflection on the hope of salvation that remains for all those still alive as long as 'la speranza ha fior del verde' (135). The same word, however, also reminds readers of the existence of the pagans in Limbo 'sanza speme', pointedly articulating the difference between souls on one side of the 'mal fiume' (*Purg.* I, 88) and the other. Our understanding of these lines in *Purgatorio* VI is thus heightened by recourse to both *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* III, that is, through reflection on the nature of hope either side of an eschatological, historical, religious, and spatial divide.

This chapter has two main aims: firstly, once again drawing on Cherchi and Sarteschi's notion of a 'lettura a lunghe campate', I will argue that the reader is

[4] *Aen.* VI, 376 ('cease to hope that heaven's decrees may be bent by praying.'), pp. 558-9.

consistently encouraged to look back to Limbo. [5] I will argue that the new and striking emphasis on Virgil's limitations at the beginning of the cantica is essential to ensuring the reader looks back to Limbo. While Virgil's limitations in Purgatory have often been noted, I will suggest that the emphasis on these limitations in Ante-Purgatory is essential to the poet's re-orientation of the reader within this liminal zone through recourse to and comparison with *Inferno* IV.

The reorientation of the reader in Ante-Purgatory is in part achieved through engagement with a series of themes which are particularly pertinent to both Virgil's damnation and the last-minute salvation narrated by many of the souls. These include: the nature of true immortality as opposed to fame; the power of prayer; and the idea that a human's fate in the afterlife may depart drastically from expectation. These themes, as several critics have noted, are also pertinent to the Palinurus episode from Virgil's *Aeneid*.[6] I will argue that not only does the Palinurus episode function as a privileged intertext in *Purgatorio* III and V and VI, but that it is of particular relevance to Virgil's fame and damnation, encouraging the reader to weigh Virgil's own predicament against the other souls whose narratives equally recall the Palinurus episode. Such a carefully constructed set of parallelisms builds up to a climactic challenge to Virgil's text in the lines quoted from *Purgatorio* VI at the beginning of the chapter.

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[5] Cherchi Sarteschi, 'Il cielo del Sole'. See Introduction, section 5.

[6] In early commentaries, the Palinurus episode is only noted in reference to *Purgatorio* VI. See, for example: Codice Cassinese, VI, 29 and 40; Francesco da Buti, *Purg.* VI, 25-33 and 34-48, and Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* VI, 25-33. Later parallels established particularly with *Purgatorio* III and V come from the early twentieth century. See Michelangelo Picone, 'Canto V', in *Lectura Dantis Turicensis: Purgatorio*, ed. by Georges Güntert and Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Cesati, 2001), pp. 78-80, originally published as 'Il canto V del *Purgatorio* fra Orfeo e Palinuro', *L'Alighieri*, 40 (1999), 13, 39-52; Caron Ann Cioffi, 'Fame, Prayer, and Politics: Virgil's Palinurus in *Purgatorio* V and VI', *Dante Studies,* 110 (1992), 179-200; Ruggero Stefanini, 'Buonconte and Palinurus: Dantes Re-Working of a Classical Source,' in *Dante: Summa Medievalis. Proceedings of the Symposium of the Center for Italian Studies, SUNY Stony Brook*, ed. by Charles Franco and Leslie Morgan (Stony Brook, N.Y.: Forum Italicum, 1995), pp. 100-11; Saverio Bellomo, 'I destini del corpo e dell'anima: lettura di *Purgatorio* III', *L'Alighieri. Rassegna dantesca*, 58 (2017), 50, 79-91; Nick Havely, 'Brunetto and Palinurus', *Dante Studies,* 108 (1990), 29-38; Christine Perkell, 'Irony in the Underworlds of Dante and Virgil: Readings of Francesca and Palinurus', *Materiali e discussion per l'analisi dei testi classici* (2004), 52 'Re-presenting Virgil: Special Issue in Honour of Michael C.J. Putnam', 127-142.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section will outline critical debate surrounding Virgil's limitations in Purgatory (and *Inferno*). The second section and lay out over-arching similarities between Ante-Purgatory and Limbo. The third part will consider recalls between Ante-Purgatory and Limbo related to honour and fame, while the fourth section the role of the body and burial with particular reference to Virgil's depiction of Palinurus in *Aeneid*. The final section will explore and the issue of urgency and wasting time in Ante-Purgatory.

1. Virgil in Ante-Purgatory

The desire to find a theological loophole by which Virgil might be saved is a topic that has exercised many readers and students of the *Commedia* and serves as testament to the powerful narrative of Virgil's tragic damnation.[7] While the overall tendency in scholarship asserts that Dante's choice to damn Virgil is unnegotiable, scholars such as Ed King, Mowbray Allan, and Nicolae Illiescu (among others) have all enquired into how Virgil might be saved or seek to persuade us that Dante in fact did not want his readers to abandon hope for Virgil.[8] However, Dante's intention to damn his guide is rendered unambiguous by the presence of two saved pagans – Trajan and Ripheus – in the Heaven of Jupiter as another reopening of the emotionally-charged issue of Virgil's damnation,

[7] See Robert Hollander, 'Virgil: A Light that Failed', *Lectura Dantis*, 4 (Spring, 1989) [online] https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/LD/numbers/04/hollander.html [accessed 29/03/2022]; Mira Gerhard, 'Sacrificing Virgil', in *Dante and the Unorthodox,* pp. 107-120; John A. Scott, 'Dante magnanimo' in *Dante Magnanimo: Studi sulla 'Commedia'* (Florence: Olschki, 1978), pp. 239-346 on the implications of the notion of magnanimity on Virgil's role and the presence of Cato in the *Commedia.*

[8] See Mowbray Allan, 'Does Dante Hope for Virgil's Salvation?', *MLN*, 104.1 (Italian Issue) (Jan 1988), 193-205; Mowbray Allan, 'Much Virtue in Ma: *Par* XIX, 106 and Saint Thomas's *sed contra*', *Dante Studies,* 111 (1993), 195-211; Ed King 'Saving Virgil' in *Dante and the Unorthodox*, pp. 83-106; Nicolae Iliescu, 'Sarà salvo Virgilio?', in *Dante: Summa Medievalis*, pp. 112-133; Picone, 'La viva speranza di Dante e il problema della salvezza dei pagani virtuosi,' *Italianistica*, 10.1-2 (1989), 251-68; Kenelm Foster engages with the issue of pagan damnation / salvation in 'Limbo and Implicit Fate' and 'The Son's Eagle: *Paradiso* XIX', in his *The Two Dantes and Other Studies* (London: Longman and Todd, 1977), pp. 137-155 and pp. 156-189.

bringing the total number of saved pagans to three.[9] Indeed, Barolini argues that Ripheus' appearance is intended to shock and that '[b]y placing in Heaven a bit player from Vergil's text, on the sole recommendation of Vergil's text, while excluding the author of that text, Dante […] draws attention to the intentionality of Vergil's exclusion.'[10] Authorial intent lies behind each damnation and each salvation in the poem, and perhaps especially so in the case of the beloved pagan poet, whose damnation serves an important narratological function and 'provides the edge, the tension, the pain, and irresolution' in what would otherwise be a 'severely overdetermined' plot.[11]

This chapter will not contribute as such to this particular debate but will instead seek to understand why this 'tension' is so clearly emphasized in the Ante-Purgatory cantos. In other words, why and how does Dante accentuate Virgil's exclusion from the possibility of beatitude in Ante-Purgatory? This is not to suggest that a treatment of Virgil's role as guide in Purgatory should be limited to Ante-Purgatory, especially given the key encounter with Statius between the terrace of sloth and avarice (*Purg.* XXI-XXII). Indeed, Barolini has affirmed that 'there is no episode that dramatizes the tensions of Vergil's predicament more fully than that of Statius'.[12] In this encounter between two classical poets, Virgil is famously described by Statius as 'quei che va di notte | che porta il lume dietro e sé non giova' (*Purg.* XXII, 67-68). The image is most commonly read as a reflection on Virgil as an unknowing prophet due to the fact that it is followed by a translation from Virgil's fourth *Eclogue* (*Purg.* XXII, 70-72).[13] The painful presentation

[9] There was much greater precedent for the salvation of Trajan; see Gordon Whatley, 'The Uses of Hagiography: The Legend of Pope Gregory and the Emperor Trajan in the Middle Ages', *Viator*, 15 (1984), 25-63.
[10] Barolini, *Dante's Poet's,* p. 255.
[11] Teodolinda Barolini, 'Q: Does Dante hope for Vergil's salvation? A: Why do we care? For the very reason we should not ask the question (response to Mowbray Allan [MLN 104])', in *MLN*, 105.1 (1990), 138-144 (p. 142).
[12] Barolini, *Dante's Poets*, p. 256.
[13] In these lines Dante translates *Eclogue* IV, 5-7. See Virgil, 'Eclogues' in *Virgil*, I, pp. 48-49. Francesco da Buti associates this image with the work of a servant *ad loc. Purg.* XXII, 64-93. See also Nicola Fosca, *Purg.* XXII, 67-69.

of Statius as converted thanks to this prophecy which Virgil himself penned but did not understand, perhaps suggests that Dante held the belief, along with many of his time, that Virgil's Fourth Eclogue was evidence of the Holy Spirit moving through the classical poet.[14] Dante's invention of Statius' conversion by Virgil's own text adds tragic irony to the pagan guide's journey through Purgatory as he leads the pilgrim but is unable to benefit himself from the trek to the summit of the mountain. The meeting with Statius might perhaps be considered as a re-opening of the tragic drama of Virgil's damnation which is initiated in *Inferno* IV and greatly developed in the opening nine cantos of *Purgatorio*.

Much critical attention has been paid to the manner in which Dante emphasizes Virgil's limitations in both Hell and Purgatory. [15] In *Inferno* I, though he is hailed as poetic 'maestro' (*Inf.* I, 85), Virgil's exclusion from God's kingdom and the impossibility of his ascent to heaven with the pilgrim is immediately foregrounded (*Inf.* I, 121-126). In upper Hell cantos VIII-IX see Virgil refused entry to the gates of Dis and in *Inferno* XXIII, having escaped the devils by sliding down 'la ripa dura' into the sixth circle (*Inf.* XXIII, 37-51) the Malebranche's trickery is revealed (*Inf.* XXIII, 133-138) and Virgil is mocked for having gullibly believed the devils (*Inf.* XXIII, 142-144). Barolini, too, has also emphasized the pagan guide's limitations from the very beginning of the poem, and

[14] See, for example, Pietro Alighieri (first redaction), *Purgatorio* XXII, 89-90 in which he sites Virgil's Fourth Eclogue. The bibliography on Statius is vast, here a select few works: Richard Lansing, 'Statius's Homage to Vergil' in *MLN (Italian Supplement)* 27.1 (2012), 591-598; Janet Levarie Smarr 'Greeting Statius' and Christopher Kleinhenz, 'Virgil and Statius Discourse', in *Lectura Dantis. Purgatorio,* ed. Allen Mandelbaum, Anthony Oldcorn, and Charles Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp. 222-235 and pp. 236-251; Arturo De Vivo, 'Canto XXII. "Per te poeta fui, per te cristiano"', in *Cento canti per cento anni,* IV, pp. 652-686; Kevin Brownlee, 'Dante and the Classical Poets', in *The Cambridge Companion to Dante,* ed. Rachel Jacoff, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 141-160; Barolini, 'Statius: "Per te poeta fui"' in *Dante's Poets*, 256-689.
[15] Hollander, challenges purely allegorical readings of Virgil as Reason, see 'Virgil: A Light that Failed' and his *Il Virgilio dantesco. Tragedia nella 'Commedia'* (Florence: Olschki, 1983).

argues that, in Purgatory, Virgil is reduced to the role of time-keeper.[16] In order to consider the way Virgil's limitations are explored across Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory, however, it is useful and interesting to look at the distribution of dialogue in *Purgatorio*.

Attention to the amount of dialogue Virgil is given in Ante-Purgatory in comparison with the pilgrim and with other souls on the terraces, reveals a gradual diminishing of the pagan poet's active role in guiding the pilgrim across the *cantica*. In the Ante-Purgatory cantos, Virgil's voice dominates four out of nine cantos (I, IV, VI and IX),[17] and in *Purgatorio* III he shares an equal number of lines with Manfred.[18] By contrast, in the rest of Purgatory, Virgil consistently speaks more than the pilgrim (he has 390 lines in cantos X-XXX compared with the pilgrim's 211 lines),[19] but the interaction with the souls on each terrace is frequently the dominating source of discourse. In Ante-Purgatory there is less emphasis on souls' dialogue with the pilgrim compared with on the terraces. Souls are given more dialogue than either Virgil or the pilgrim in only a third of the cantos (three out of nine) compared with over half (eleven out of twenty) in Purgatory proper.[20]

[16] 'In Purgatory in particular, one feels that Vergil's insistence on time is his attempt to operate within the spiritual context of the second realm; he senses the importance of time here, and although he cannot participate in its true purpose by growing spiritually, he mimics its purpose by insisting on their tardiness,' quotation in Barolini, *Dante's Poets*, p. 244.

[17] In *Purg.* III he shares an equal number of lines with Manfred. Virgil almost always speaks more than the pilgrim, with the exception of canto VIII. The pilgrim is completely silent in *Purg.* I, VII and IX while Virgil is never without some dialogue in Ante- Purgatory.

[18] Manfred and Virgil both have 39 lines each in *Purgatorio* III, while the pilgrim has only four. There are 145 lines in the canto and 82 lines feature dialogue.

[19] Most of Virgil's dialogue of course is found in cantos XVII (64 lines out of 139 lines, 73 of which are spoken) and XVIII (62 lines out of 145 lines, and 101 spoken lines). Without these major sections (which are of course crucial to our understanding of Virgil's role in the *Purgatorio*), the total is much closer to that of the pilgrim: 264 lines.

[20] In Ante-Purgatory, *Purgatorio* V and VII give a dramatically noticeable amount of space to other souls over Virgil and Dante. In *Purg.* V, 81 lines are given to other souls while Virgil and the pilgrim have 18 and 9 lines respectively. In *Purg.* VII, Sordello speaks much more than Virgil (79 lines compared with 30) and the pilgrim is silent. In *Purg.* VII, the difference is less stark, but Sordello, Nino and Malaspina (7, 18 and 16 lines respectively) all speak more than Virgil who only interrupts briefly in this canto (4 lines).

This being said, Dante dedicates the heart of *Purgatorio* (and, indeed, the heart of the *Commedia*) to Virgil when he delivers the important discourse on the theory of love across *Purgatorio* XVII and XVIII. This is the last major discourse afforded to Virgil in the poem, and the longest given to Virgil in the second cantica. Statius suggestively takes over in explaining certain phenomena on the mountain after his appearance in *Purgatorio* XXI and dominates in cantos XXII and XXV.[21] In the Earthly Paradise, most space is, of course, afforded to Beatrice who becomes the pilgrim's new guide and teacher while Virgil remains entirely silent. Though Virgil's importance in the poem does not diminish, he seems to move away from the role he had in Hell of engaging souls, introducing the pilgrim and his mission, and encouraging the pilgrim to approach the souls in the afterlife.

The change in role is demonstrated by the fact that, in Ante-Purgatory, Virgil almost always speaks more than the pilgrim (with the exception of canto VIII),[22] whereas in Purgatory-proper, there are eight cantos where the pilgrim speaks more than Virgil (XI, XIII, XVI, XX, XXIII, XXIV, XXVI, XXVIII).[23] While Casella and Nino Visconti both approach and engage the pilgrim in conversation, the pilgrim does not address any souls of his own accord until the terrace of envy, where he appears to mimic Virgil's previous addresses to souls: 'Volsimi a loro e: "O gente sicura", | incominciai, "di veder l'alto lume | che 'l disio vostro solo ha in sua cura […]"' (*Purg.* XIII, 85-87).[24] Similarly, in *Purgatorio* XIX, the pilgrim turns to Virgil for permission to address the 'eletti di Dio'

[21] Statius has 65 and 78 lines respectively in cantos 22 and 25, explaining the mountainquake and the embodiment of a soul.
[22] This is also the first time the pilgrim explains his presence in Purgatory as a living person as a result of Nino's assumption that he is dead and arrived by angelic vessel to the shores of Purgatory. See *Purg.* VIII, 58-60.
[23] It is perhaps important to note that the pilgrim's voice is never dominant throughout the entire *Purgatorio,* that is, he always has fewer lines than Virgil or the other souls with whom he interacts. For the purposes of identifying patterns of dialogue, I have grouped souls on the terraces together as one group of voices beyond the pilgrim and Virgil. I have not counted the *laude* sung by souls as these are often only cited as a few words, but often asks the reader to fill in the rest of the words to these hymns.
[24] Compare with, for example, Virgil's address to the excommunicates in *Purg.* III, 73: 'O ben finiti, o già spiriti eletti […]'.

(*Purg.* XIX, 76) whom Virgil has already asked for directions: 'e volsi li occhi a li occhi al segno mio: | ond'elli m'assentì con lieto cenno' (*Purg.* XIX, 85-86).[25] In Ante-Purgatory, then, the pilgrim continues to rely almost entirely on Virgil to explain his exceptional presence in Purgatory and to announce their mission on the mountain.[26] We can thus read the manner in which the pilgrim gradually begins to introduce himself and question souls independently of his guide as a steady movement away from total reliance on Virgil. While in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, there is a sustained interest in comparing Virgil's spiritual condition with the souls waiting outside the gates, in Purgatory-proper (with the notable and important exception of the Statius episode), the reader is drawn into comparisons between the vices purged by sinners on the mountain, Dante's own vices, and into a reflection on their own spiritual short-comings.[27]

Such data help to confirm what many readers sense quite instinctively, namely, that Virgil, though he has limitations in Hell, is still more restricted in his role as guide in Purgatory.[28] Alternatively, we could also read Virgil's changing role through Purgatory as an alternative measure of the pilgrim's progress and spiritual growth. From either perspective (Virgil's limitations or the pilgrim's growth), the development in Virgil's role from Ante-Purgatory to the terraces serves as another distinguishing feature between the liminal area outside the gates and Purgatory-proper.

In Ante-Purgatory, Dante foregrounds the issue of Virgil's changing role as guide and his unorthodox presence as a pagan in Purgatory. The ambiguity surrounding Virgil's status is, for example, evident in the opening lines of *Purgatorio* III. Here we find two

[25] Cf. *Inf.* XXVII, 33: 'Parla tu; questi è latino'.
[26] See, *Purg.* I, 58-72; *Purg.* II, 61-66; *Purg.* III, 73-78 and 94-99; *Purg.* V, 31-36. Exception to this rule is *Purg.* VIII, 55-60.
[27] The pilgrim's own involvement with vice is underlined in Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics,* esp. 'The Terrace of Pride, and the Poet As Preacher', pp. 107-132.
[28] As recently observed in Giuseppe Ledda, 'Il mondo classico nei canti dell'antipurgatorio'.

rhetorical questions which at first glance appear to alert us to the continued importance of Virgil for the pilgrim, but nonetheless hint at the reality of Virgil's limitations:

> i' mi ristrinsi a la fida compagna:
> e come sare' io sanza lui corso?
> chi m'avria tratto su per la montagna? (*Purg.* III, 4-6)

Barolini argues that these rhetorical questions are 'ideally suited to pointing out the underlying ambiguity: while, theoretically, we must acknowledge that Vergil is not irreplaceable, emotionally he is perceived as such.'[29] Indeed, Virgil's own rhetorical questions to the pilgrim appear to hint at this same reality:

> e 'l mio conforto: 'Perché pur diffidi?'
> a dir mi cominciò tutto rivolto;
> 'non credi tu me teco e ch'io ti guidi?' (*Purg.* III, 22-24)

Virgil appears to take offence at the pilgrim's momentary lapse in faith.[30] However, there is an irony to Virgil rebuking the pilgrim for his lack of faith, and the rhetorical questions in this *terzina* perhaps reveal more about Virgil's status as guide than they do about the pilgrim's faith. The reader might even recall Virgil's own doubt and impatience in *Inferno* IX when their passage into the city of Dis is blocked: 'Pur a noi converrà vincer la punga […] se non… Tal ne s'offerse | Oh quanto tarda a me ch'altri qui giugna!' (*Inf.* IX, 7-9).[31] Notably, while Virgil momentarily doubts the arrival of divine aid (and thus

[29] Barolini, *Dante's Poets*, p. 241.
[30] Note, however, that Chiavacci Leonardi suggests 'tutto rivolto' suggests attentiveness. *Purg.* III, 23: 'a indicare premura e protezione'. However, Virgil appears more severe, as Benvenuto da Imola's paraphrase of the lines might suggest, beginning 'o modicae fidei', 'you of little faith'. Hollander points out the Biblical echoes of *modicae fidei:* Matthew 6.30; 8.26; 14.31; and 16.8. See, Hollander, *Purg.* III, 22-24.
[31] See Mark Musa, *Advent at the Gates: Dante's Comedy* (Bloomington-London: Indiana University Press, 1974), p. 73: 'because during his lifetime [Virgil] could not believe in the coming of Christ, so now he can not believe in the coming of the angel – in spite of his having learned from Beatrice that the Pilgrim's journey is willed in Heaven.' The line itself is ambiguous, 'se non... Tal ne s'offerse', as Chiavacci Leonardi notes: 'la reticenza non è spiegata; il lettore, proprio come il Dante personaggio, deve supplire con la sua immaginazione' *Inf.* IX, 8. 'Tal' is usually taken to refer to Beatrice's descent as narrated by Virgil in *Purg.* II. Contrast with Virgil's previous assurances regarding the success of the

the divine will which commands and propels the journey), the pilgrim appears only to doubt his guide's continued presence. The rhetorical questions at this point thus also hint at the notion that, in fact, Virgil's departure at the end of Hell would not have been entirely unexpected or illogical. After all, he knows very little about the new landscape.

Virgil's exclusion from the community of the blessed is is by no means affirmed for the first time in Ante-Purgatory. At the beginning of the poem and before the journey is begun in earnest, Virgil sketches the pilgrim's journey through the three realms:

> e vederai color che son contenti
> nel foco, perché speran di venire
> quando che sia a le beate genti.
> A le quai poi se tu vorrai salire,
> anima fia a ciò più di me degna:
> con lei ti lascerò nel mio partire; (*Inf.* I, 118-123)

From *Inferno* I, then, there is a clear division between, on the one hand, 'le beate genti' whom the pilgrim may join, and, on the other hand, Virgil. Indeed, the pilgrim's ascent to Paradise is always contingent on Virgil's departure. In the following *terzina,* the pagan poet then explains why he will have to leave the pilgrim, describing his status as damned soul in terms of a loss of citizenship in *Inferno* I, 'perch'i' fu' ribellante a la sua legge, | non vuol che 'n sua città per me si vegna' (*Inf.* I, 125-126),[32] standing in contrast to Beatrice's words to the pilgrim, affirming his eventual integration into the heavenly community, soon after Virgil's departure: 'Qui sarai tu poco tempo silvano; | e sarai meco sanza fine cive | di quella Roma onde Cristo è romano.' (*Purg.* XXXIII, 100-102). Indeed, this well-known *terzina* which arrives after Virgil's disappearance is perhaps all the more charged by the fact that Virgil is, of course, the poet of Rome *par*

journey, see: *Inf*. III, 95-96; V, 23-24: VII, 11-12. On 'punga' for 'pugna' see Chiavacci Leonardi, *Inf.* IX, 7-9.

[32] Nicola Fosca's commentary on these lines is particularly useful. Fosca, *Inf.* I, 124-128. See also Nicola Fosca, 'Virgilio, la grazia, l'impero', *La Parola del testo*, 22.1-2 (2018), 29-51.

excellence.[33] While the Roman Empire was chosen for the entry of Christ into human history, Virgil is inevitably excluded from Christ's Rome.

2. Recalling Limbo in Ante-Purgatory

Dante's Limbo, Iannucci asserts, 'flies in the face of the entire preceding theological tradition'.[34] Not only does the poet place Limbo within Hell itself, where orthodox belief placed it outside Hell,[35] but he also flouts the established division between *limbus patrum* (Limbo of the Fathers) and *limbus puerorum* (Limbo of unbaptized children),[36] grouping men, women, and children together in the same space: 'd'infanti e di femmine e di viri' (*Inf.* IV, 30). Doctrine surrounding the *limbus patrum* developed from reflections on Christ's descent into Hell and was frequently termed 'the bosom of Abraham' (in reference to Luke 16:22).[37] It is important to note, however, that scholastic thinkers maintained that the *limbus patrum* was empty after the Harrowing of

[33] But see Rachel Jacoff, 'Canto XXX: At the Summit of Purgatory', *Lectura Dantis: Purgatorio* (Mandelbaum *et al.*), pp. 341–352 for additional Virgilian echoes after Virgil's departure.
[34] Iannucci, 'Dante's Limbo', p. 69. For a useful account of Aquinas on Limbo, see Christopher Beiting, 'The Idea of Limbo in Thomas Aquinas', *Thomist,* 62.2 (1998), 217-224. See further Donald Mowbray, 'The Intellectual Development of Limbo: Pain, Children and Original Sin', in his *Pain and Suffering in Medieval Theology: Academic Debates at the University of Paris in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 81-103. On Dante's Limbo, see Fausto Montanari, 'Limbo', in *ED,* III, 651-54; Fiorenzo Forti, 'Il Limbo e i megalopsicoi della *Nicomachea*', in his *Magnanimitade. Studi su un tema dantesco* (Bologna: Pàtron, 1977), pp. 9-48; Giorgio Padoan, 'Il Limbo dantesco', *Lettere Italiane,* 21.4 (1969), 369-388; Chiara Franceschini, *Storia del Limbo* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2016), esp. 'Dante e il limbo dei pagani', pp. 76- 93.
[35] According to Aquinas, the Limbo of the Fathers was to be placed above the Limbo of Children, but both were outside Hell. See *Summa Theologica,* 3a, *Supplement,* q. 69 a. 5-6 (pp. 145-146).
[36] Albert the Great was the first to suggest a bipartite division of *limbus inferni*. Albert the Great *Commentarii in quartum librum Sententiarum,* in *Opera Omnia,* ed. by Auguste Borgnet, 38 vols, (1890-1899) XXIX (1894), d.1(F), a. 20, 1 (p. 35-36). The division was then developed and systemized by his student, Aquinas. Iannucci points out that early commentators were shocked by Dante's unorthodox depiction of Limbo, see Iannucci, 'Dante's Limbo', p. 64. See Guido da Pisa, *Inf.* IV, 82-84: 'Sed nostra fides non tenet quod ibi sint nisi parvuli innocents […] loquitur non theologice sed poetice' ('But our faith does not allow that there is anyone in this place except innocent children […] he was speaking, not theologically, but poetically').
[37] For the manner in which the bosom of Abraham is also linked to the development of Purgatory itself (specifically through the idea of eternal refreshment, or *refrigerium*), see Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* pp. 43, and 46-47, 56, and 122-124. See also Amilare A. Iannucci, 'Limbo', in *DE*, 565-569. (p. 566).

Hell, while the narrative intrigue in *Inferno* IV centres around the new Dantean category of noble pagan souls who were left behind.[38] Still more unorthodox is Dante's celebration of the 'nobile castello' where the virtuous pagans reside, secluded from the sighs of the rest of Limbo.[39]

On the one hand, Dante's Limbo is extraordinary in that he devises an exceptionally lenient space in which the magnanimous might suffer only *poena damni.* On the other hand, there was some theological precedent for the salvation of virtuous pagans through the doctrine of implicit faith, making the poet's decision not to save Virgil, beloved, virtuous pagan guide, all the more marked. Dante chooses to disregard this possibility for most pagans, saving only Cato, Ripheus, and Trajan, and instead inventing a special, privileged section for virtuous pagans in Limbo.[40] Though there was some precedent for Trajan's salvation, the discovery of Cato on the shores of Purgatory, and Ripheus in the Heaven of Jupiter are surprising and quite unprecedented.[41] The poet chooses to save Cato (for which there was no model in folklore or in theological texts) and saves a character from Virgil's text, but damns his pagan guide Virgil who, conversely, had been depicted as saved alongside the Hebrew

[38] See Iannucci, 'Limbo', *DE*, p. 567.
[39] The description in *Inferno* IV appears inconsistent with *Purg.* VII, 28-30.
[40] Aquinas argues that prior to the Incarnation, you could be saved by implicit or explicit faith *Questiones Disputatae de Veritate*, q.14, a.11. See John Marenbon, *Pagans and Philosophers*, esp. pp. 23-41 and pp. 127-159. See also John Marenbon's vertical reading of the 4's in which he gives a succinct summary of the theological context in Dante's time, 'Virtuous Pagans, Hopeless Desire, and Unjust Justice', in *Vertical Readings,* I, pp. 77-95 (esp. pp. 78-86 on *Inf.* IV).
[41] Benvenuto da Imola reads Ripheus' presence as a fiction: 'istam fictionem de salvatio Riphei' (*Par.* XX, 67-72) but, in the case of Trajan, references the legend of his salvation thanks to St Gregory's intervention (43-48). On the tradition of Trajan's salvation see: Jeffrey A. Trumbower, 'Gregory the Great's Prayer for Trajan', *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 142-154. Recent publications on *Par.* XX include: Alison Cornish, 'Music, Justice, and Violence in *Paradiso* XX', *Dante Studies,* 134 (2016), 112-141; Nicola Fosca, 'Il canto XX del *Paradiso.* Giustizia e predestinazione', *Studi Danteschi*, 79 (2014), 209-266; Adriano Giuffrè, 'Il cielo di Giove: l'impero e la salvezza dei pagani', *L'Alighieri*, 60 (2019), 139-154.

Prophets in some works.[42] Virgil may be an exceptional poet, but he is not quite exceptional enough (or not exceptional in the right way) to find himself in Purgatory like Cato, or in heaven like Trajan and Ripheus.[43] Why then does Dante choose to damn Virgil, and why does he make his *maestro*'s tragic narrative so prominent in Ante-Purgatory?

Dante's representation of the noble pagans in Limbo is original and heterodox, but also ambiguous. By placing the noble pagans within Hell, but nonetheless separated from other souls, Dante affords them a unique poetic treatment, and, in the fiction of the work, suggests they are worthy of special dispensation in the afterlife. This ambiguous treatment is seen in the detail of the flame which the pilgrim spots from afar: 'un foco | ch'emisperio di tenebre vincia' (*Inf.* IV, 68-69). This line has offered variant readings owing to the ambiguity of 'vincia', which can be read as light overcoming darkness, or darkness enclosing light. [44] Similarly, the noble pagans appear to suffer less than those outside the seven walls of the castle where the air trembles with sighs: 'per altra via mi mena il savio duca, | fuor de la queta, ne l'aura che trema.' (*Inf.* IV, 149-150).[45] However, these lines present the reader with another ambiguity; whether the absence of sighs represents a lack of relief or a lack of pain.[46] As we will see, in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, Dante appears to return to and build on the more ambiguous aspects of his representation of Limbo in *Inferno* IV.

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[42] Cindy L. Vitto, 'The Virtuous Pagan in Legend and in Dante', in her *The Virtuous Pagan in Middle English Literature* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1989), pp. 36-49 in which she points to the 'First Shepherds Play' in the Towndey Cycle.

[43] Ripheus and Trajan are two of the five souls which make up the Eagle's eybrow. Ripheus' presence here is presented as a surprise 'chi crederebbe giù nel mondo errante | che Rifëo Troiano […] fosse la quinta.' (*Par.* XX, 67-69). Trajan is referred to as 'colui che più al becco mi s'accosta, | la vedovella console del figlio' (*Par.*, XX, 44-45), recalling *Purg.* X and the relief of Trajan as an example of humility. Cf. *Purg.* X, 73-93 and see Whatley, 'The Uses of Hagiography'.

[44] See Fosca *Inf.* IV, 68-69 for a summary of the syntactical difficulties of this line. The meaning of 'vincia' is much contested as it could result from the Sicilian 'vincea', meaning 'overcome' or can be read as a Latinism from 'vincire', 'to tie'.

[45] Cf. *Inf.* IV, 25-30.

[46] See Lombardi, *Wings of Doves,* pp. 41-43.

The most sustained engagement in *Purgatorio* with Virgil's damnation and permanent suspension in Limbo appears to take place in Ante-Purgatory. Before looking at a number of intratextual allusions to Limbo in Ante-Purgatory, it is worth briefly summarizing the explicit references to Limbo or to Virgil's fate as a damned soul. In *Purgatorio* I, Virgil references his position in Limbo through Marcia and Minos (76-81). In *Purgatorio* III, we find the first reference to Virgil's body (25-27) and a greater exploration of the fate of the pagans (37-45), and in *Purgatorio* VII, Virgil once again mentions his body (4-6) and Limbo is once again explicitly discussed with Sordello (8 and 22-36).

By contrast, on the terraces, Limbo is only mentioned once again in Purgatory proper in the encounter with Statius (*Purg.* XXI, 16-18) which Hollander observes 'is a moving reminder of his [Virgil's] tragic situation in this comic poem.'[47] This meeting with Statius is prefigured by the encounter with Sordello in *Purgatorio* VI–VIII, looking ahead to Statius' own shock at discovering he finds himself before Virgil and through the emphasis on Virgil's exceptionality and his status as representative of the pinnacle of classical poetry: 'O gloria d'i Latin' (*Purg.* VII, 16).[48] No other souls pay any particular attention to Virgil.

Ante-Purgatory is also saturated with more subtle allusions to Virgil's damnation, such as Virgil's address to the souls in *Purgatorio* III which reminds us of his damnation through the contrast with the salvation of the souls on the beach: 'O ben finite, o già spiriti eletti | […] per quella pace | ch'i' credo che per voi tutti s'aspetti' (72-75). Here, the emphatic use of the second person plural pronoun 'voi tutti' reminds the reader that only Limbo awaits Virgil. Though there is no direct reference to Limbo in

[47] Hollander, *Purg.* XXI, 16-18.
[48] Statius will similarly venerate Virgil, to the extent that he asserts he would trade another year in Purgatory to have lived in Virgil's time, *Purg.* XXI, 94-102.

Belacqua's canto, Virgil references the limits of his ability as guide in *Purgatorio* IV in his search for 'alcuna scorta saggia' (38-39). In the Valley of the Princes, when Virgil asks the pilgrim 'Figliuol, che là su guarde?' (*Purg.* VIII, 88-93) in reference to the three stars representing the theological virtues, the reader is reminded that these are three virtues which Virgil does not possess, and perhaps, was not permitted to see.[49] Finally, in *Purgatorio* IX, in a close re-phrasing of Cato's indignant questioning of the two travelers' arrival in Purgatory (*Purg.* I, 40-48 and *Purg.* IX, 85-87), Virgil's response to the guardian's questions are now short, as if correcting his previous mistake before Cato (*Purg.* IX, 88-90). Notably, Virgil does not at this point mention his role in leading the pilgrim through *Inferno* as he did before (*Purg.* I, 61-66), glossing over the angelic gatekeeper's second question: 'ov'è la scorta?' (86) where on the shores of Purgatory he proudly affirmed his role as infernal guide.[50]

The density of references to Virgil's place in Limbo in the Ante-Purgatory cantos is particularly interesting given some of the similarities between the two areas of Dante's vision of the afterlife. Firstly, both zones are associated with liminality and exile. In Ante-Purgatory, souls are excluded from the community of penitent souls on the terraces and, of course, the community of the blessed. Limbo is located in the first circle of Hell but, intriguingly, it falls outside Virgil's explanation of the moral topography of Hell in *Inferno* XI (13-66), just as – equally intriguingly – Ante-Purgatory is excluded form Virgil's discourse on love which also maps the mountain's structure (*Purg.* XVII, 93-139).

Limbo and Ante-Purgatory can also be compared through the parallel eschatological condition of the souls. In Hell, all souls suffer eternal punishment in the

[49] This reading resonates particularly with Barolini's notion of 'a dialectic between vision denied and vision vouchsafed' in *Inferno* XXVI. See Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 112.
[50] Cato asks who they are, who guided them, and (rhetorically) whether the laws of the afterlife have been broken. The angel gatekeeper asks what they want and where their guide is.

form of *poena damni*: a state of deprivation of the divine vision and *poena sensus,* that is, pain of sense or physical suffering.[51] The only exception to this rule is made for the souls in Limbo who only suffer eternal *poena damni*.[52] A similar division is present in Dante's Purgatory and is equally found in Aquinas' commentary on the Sentences: 'in purgatorio erit duplex poena: una damni, inquantum scilicet retardantur a divina visione; alia sensus, secundum quod ab igne corporali punientur.'[53] In Dante's poem, all souls Purgatory-proper suffer temporary *poena sensus* (and perhaps implicitly temporary *poena damni*), while in Ante-Purgatory 'souls experience the *poena damni* – which manifests itself as frustrated desire to be close to God – but no *poena sensus.*'[54]

The division between *poena sensus* on the terraces and *poena damni* in Ante-Purgatory has driven Manuele Gragnolati to suggest that in inventing Ante-Purgatory Dante in fact 'highlights the necessity of physical pain' as souls are not changed or 'matured' by their experience in Ante-Purgatory.[55] In other words, in Purgatory proper, pain becomes productive.[56] *Inferno* IV provides us with the only exception to *poena sensus* in Dante's vision of Hell where the noble pagans and unbaptised children suffer 'duol sanza martìri' (*Inf.* IV, 28). The absence of physical pain in this circle of Hell is a

[51] Elena Lombardi's description of *poena damni* as an Ur-punishment is useful. See *Wings of Doves,* p. 35.
[52] See Aquinas, *Summa Theo.* q. 52, a. 2 where he argues that unbaptised children do not suffer *poena sensus*, only *poena damni.*
[53] Aquinas, *In Sent.* IV, d. 21, q. 1 response to q. 3, p. 482 ('in purgatorio there are two punishments : one of loss, namely, inasmuch as souls are held back from the divine vision ; the other of sense, according as they are physically punished by fire').
[54] Manuele Gragnolati, 'Gluttony and the Anthropology of Pain', p. 246. Corbett argues similarly in *Dante's Christian Ethics*, p. 33: '[a]ccording to a novel kind of *contrapasso*, the souls in Ante-Purgatory – deprived temporarily of the purifying pain of sense (*poena sensus*) – are forced to experience exclusively the lack fo the divine vision (*poena damni*).' Peter Armour takes issue with using the term *contrapasso* for Purgatory, but this is in reference to the terraces and he does not mention Ante-Purgatory specifically. See Peter Armour, 'Dante's *Contrapasso*: Texts and Contexts', *Italian Studies,* 55.1 (2000), 1-20 (pp. 15-16). See also Pasquazi, 'Antipurgatorio' where he links *poena damni* with Ante-Purgatory: 'senz'altra pena che quella dai teologi detta del danno (*poena damni*), consistente nella ritardata fruizione di Dio'.
[55] Manuele Gragnolati, 'Gluttony and the Anthropology of Pain', p. 246. See also the presentation of Pope Hadrian in *Purg.* XIX, 91-93.
[56] Gragnolati, 'Gluttony and the Anthropology of Pain', p. 244. Gragnolati sees Capaneus' continued arrogance in *Inf.* XIV as a 'blueprint of hell'. See also Lombardi, *Wings of Doves,* p. 49 in which she argues that souls in Limbo 'are given the questionable grace of appreciating their own loss.'

marked, highly unorthodox, exception which Dante makes for the pagans to set them apart for their merit. In Ante-Purgatory, however, there is the promise of physical pain as a force for spiritual maturity. It is precisely this hope of progress through pain which is denied the virtuous pagans. A clear parallel is thus established between Limbo and Ante-Purgatory, simply through the nature of punishment; souls are either temporarily or permanently 'sospesi' (*Inf.* IV, 45).

Some of the ambiguities we already identified in *Inferno* appear to be recalled in Ante-Purgatory in the retrospective representation of Limbo. In *Purgatorio* III, Virgil reflects on the impossibility of understanding God's workings, arguing that, if humankind were able to see God's plan, there would have been no need for Christ.

> State contenti, umana gente, al *quia;*
> ché, se potuto aveste vedere tutto,
> mestier non era parturir Maria,
> e disïar vedeste sanza frutto
> tai che sarebbe lor disio quetato,
> ch'etternalmente è dato lor per lutto:
> io dico d'Aristotile e di Plato
> e di molt'altri'; e qui chinò la fronte,
> e più non disse, e rimase turbato. (*Purg.* III, 37- 45)

The memory of the pagans in Limbo interrupts an overwhelmingly Christian discourse, casting the coming of Christ and the Harrowing of Hell as the dividing line between souls in Ante-Purgatory and souls in Limbo. If Virgil and the noble pagans had known about Christ, their desire would have been fulfilled ('quetato'), but instead, their desire is turned to grief ('lutto') in Limbo. The verb *quetare* is used sixteen times in the *Commedia*, four times in *Purgatorio* and is often linked to a notion of spiritual peace as is famously seen the use of the Latin verb *requiescere* in the opening of Augustine's

Conefessions: 'ed inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te'.[57] While in *Inferno* IV, *quetare* was used ambiguously to suggest contrast between the cries in the rest of Hell, the sighs of the unbaptsied and the quiet of the 'nobile castello', in *Purgatorio* III it points to the lack of spiritual peace. In *Purgatorio* III, the use of the verb thus appears to contradict the description of Limbo in *Inferno* IV. Notably, in these lines, the names of Plato and Aristotle are now no longer hierarchized as they had been in *Inferno* IV where Aristotle was hailed as ''l maestro di color che sanno' (131). Moreover, the word *lutto* was last used in rhyme position in *Inferno* XXXIV to describe the origin of all sorrow and tribulation from Lucifer: 'ben dee da lui procedere ogne lutto' (36). In this manner, Dante revives the impossibility of finding spiritual peace in the afterlife for the noble pagans, but via *Inferno* XXXIV, so that, despite Virgil's nobility, we are reminded that 'lutto' in Hell proceeds from the ignoble and impotent Lucifer. We also find a shift in the description of Limbo in *Purgatorio* VII:

> Non per far, ma per non fare ho perduto
> a veder l'alto Sol che tu disiri
> e che fu tardi per me conosciuto.
> Luogo è là giù non tristo di martìri,
> ma di tenebre solo, ove i lamenti
> non suonan come guai, ma son sospiri.
> Quivi sto io coi pargoli innocenti
> dai denti morsi de la morte avante
> che fosser da l'umana colpa essenti;
> quivi sto io con quei che le tre sante
> virtù non si vestiro, e sanza vizio
> conobber l'altre e seguir tutte quante. (*Purg.* VII, 25-36)

In *Inferno* IV the first area of Limbo populated by the unbaptized 'non avea pianto mai che di sospiri' (*Inf.* IV, 26). Here in *Purgatorio* VII, however, the contrast between the

[57] See also *Inf.* XXXIII, 164; *Purg.* II, 108; III, 41; V, 48; and XVII, 129; *Par.* I, 86; III, 70; XII, 25; XV, 5; XVIII, 98 and 106; XIX, 100; XXVI, 131; XXVIII, 108; XXVII, 106; XXX, 52. In *Paradiso* the verb appears with the alternate spelling 'quïetar'. Augustine's *Confessions*, I, i ('and our heart cannot be quieted till it may find repose in thee'), p. 2-3.

first circle and the rest of Hell is made again, but the ambiguity over the silence of the 'nobile castello' is removed. Virgil appears to be talking about the whole of Limbo in the *terzina* quoted above: 'Quivi sto io coi pargoli innocenti […] quivi sto io con quei che le tre sante | virtù non si vestiro' (*Purg.* VII, 31-35). Indeed, Benvenuto argues that the discrepancy between *Purgatorio* VII and *Inferno* IV is due to the fact that in *Purgatorio* VII Virgil is describing 'de toto circulo limbi'.[58] However, it is striking that the division between the two areas of Limbo appears to be glossed over. There is nothing to suggest that Virgil is referring to sighs *only* among the unbaptized.

In his vertical reading of the IV's, John Marenbon argues that there is an echo of the 'sospiri' in Limbo in the encounter with Belacqua. In *Purgatorio* IV, Belacqua is pointed out by the pilgrim to Virgil as 'colui che mostra sé più negligente | che se pigrizia fosse sua serocchia.' (*Purg.* IV, 110-111).[59] The lazy lute maker explains to the pilgrim that he must wait outside the Gates of Purgatory: 'per ch'io 'ndugiai al fine i buon sospiri' (*Purg.* IV, 132). Marenbon argues that 'these "buon sospiri", the sighs of regret for sins committed, recall and contrast ironically with the "sospiri" which make the air of Limbo tremble, the sighs of despair from those who are forever excluded from the beatific vision.'[60] Though it could be argued that Marenbon's reading does not take the ambiguities over the nature of the sighs in *Inferno* IV, his argument for a recall to Limbo is strengthened by a further linguistic echo. Marenbon also sees a recall to *Inferno* IV when the pilgrim gazes up at the steep ascent up the 'alta ripa':

> ma qui convien ch'om voli;
> dico con l'ale snelle e con le piume
> del gran disio, di retro a quel condotto
> che speranza mi dava e facea lume. (*Purg.* IV, 27-30)

[58] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* VII, 28-30. See Franceschini, *Storia del Limbo,* p. 80.
[59] Anonimo Fiorentino, gives a description of Belacqua ad loc. *Purg.* IV, 123-126. See also George D. Econoumou, 'Belacqua' in *DE*, p. 96.
[60] Marenbon, 'Virtuous Pagans', p. 87.

Here the words 'disio' and 'speranza' recall the fate of the noble pagans in Limbo who live 'sanza speme' and 'in disio' (*Inf.* IV, 42). Virgil, he notes, 'is condemned to live in desire without hope, yet it is he who gives hope to Dante, whose "gran disio" will be satisfied.'[61] Belacqua's hopelessness expressed through his rhetorical question at the end of the canto thus reflects the condition of the souls in Limbo: – 'O frate, andar in sù che porta?' (*Purg.* IV, 127). Importantly, Belacqua's desperation is only temporary and can be shortened by prayers, where Virgil's hopelessness and desire will be eternal. The contrast between the 'good sighs' of Belacqua and the sighs in Limbo would thus appear to fit into a series of references back to Limbo which emphasize Virgil's eternal hopelessness. It would appear, then, that in retrospect the presentation of Limbo changes and the division between the unbaptized and the noble pagans is given less prominence.

3. Making Exceptions: Fame, Honour, and Grace

The notion of exceptionality in *Inferno* IV is essential to our understanding of Limbo as a space of lenient punishment for virtuous pagans. All souls in Hell suffer *poena sensus*, except for the souls in Limbo. However, Cato's presence in Purgatory presents the reader with a new understanding of what exceptionality might entail. We now have a new exception to the rule established in *Inferno* IV: all pagans who did not demonstrate the correct adoration for the Christian God ('adorar debitamente a Dio' [*Inf.* IV, 38]) are damned to Limbo – except Cato. Cato's very presence challenges some of the distinctions Dante had previously affirmed were unquestionably necessary for salvation, namely, baptism and faith in God and Christ. This pagan's presence as

[61] Marenbon, 'Virtuous Pagans', p. 88.

purgatorial guardian raises obvious questions regarding Virgil's damnation: why is an exception made for Cato, but not for Virgil?

Justin Steinberg notes that in the face of an exception to the laws of Dante's literary creation (as is the case with Cato), scholars 'tend to search for doctrinal answers that safeguard and reconfirm its normative structure […] they explain – or explain away – any apparent contradictions.'[62] He argues that, rather than trying to fit the exception to the rule or trying to find a rule that can reabsorb the exception, Dante in fact intends these exceptions as incitements for reflection by the reader.[63] Cato's provocative presence initiates an enquiry into Virgil's complex and problematic role as damned soul from Limbo and his place in Purgatory as guide, inviting the reader to consider the dividing line between damnation and salvation, and what it means for Virgil to travel between the two.[64]

We see, then, that exceptionality is crucial to our understanding of Cato's presence on the shores of Purgatory, as it will be for Manfred's presence among the excommunicates despite his horrible sins. At the heart of the notion of exceptionality in *Inferno* IV lies the importance of fame and honour to souls who must remain in Limbo eternally, but in Ante-Purgatory, exceptionality is understood through the lens of God's grace. This thematic recall (the first of three to be explored in the rest of this chapter), serves to further link the liminal zone of Ante-Purgatory together with Limbo and, in particular, the Limbo of the noble pagans.

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[62] Steinberg, *Dante and the Limits of the Law* (Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 3. On Cato, see also esp. subsection '*Privilegium* and Violence: Cato', pp. 111-114. On exceptionality in Medieval law see:

[63] 'Sustaining this faith in 'judgement calls', the poem encourages readers to think through these individual exceptions, to explore their contours as part of a collectively shared enterprise rather than relegating them to an amorphous sovereign decision.' Steinberg, *Limits of the Law,* p. 3-4.

[64] Cato also appears to have left Limbo for Ante-Purgatory, see *Purg.* I, 90.

The souls who reside in the castle in Limbo are described as 'li spiriti magni' (119). This particular collocation has received much critical attention because of its links with classical and medieval ideas of magnanimity. Scott and Forti have paid attention to the importance of magnanimity to *Inferno* IV and its depiction of the noble pagans. Scott traces the development of the term from its Greek origins '*megalopsychoi',* as described by Aristotle, to its usage in Duecento culture.[65] The Latin reformulation of the epithet, *magnanimous,* is used by Virgil to indicate courage in the *Aeneid* (*Aen*. I, 260; V. 17, 207: IX, 204; X.771) and in *Georgics* to describe the souls stirred by Orpheus' song: 'matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita | magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae' (*Georgics,* IV, 475-476).[66] Scott notes that these lines may well have contributed to Dante's formation of Limbo.[67]

The term is used of Virgil-character himself in *Inferno* II: 'rispuose del magnanimo quell'ombra, | "l'anima tua è da viltade offesa […]"' (*Inf.* II, 44-45). The labelling of Virgil as 'magnanimo' thus establishes a contrast between courage and cowardice; a contrast which will be seen subsequently at a structural level as the pusillanimous souls of *Inferno* III preceed the 'magnanimous' virtuous pagans in *Inferno* IV. As Forti has shown, this opposition serves to place magnanimity as the virtue which opposes pusillanimity.[68]

Though the use of the term *magnanimo* in *Inferno* II is suggestive of a juxtaposition between cowardice and courage, it should also be noted that there is a clear contrast between fame and obscurity across *Inferno* III and IV. None of the pusillanimous souls on the fringes of Hell are identified by name; they are rejected by

[65] Scott, 'Dante Magnanimo', p. 242.
[66] Translation: 'women and men, and figures of great-souled heroes, their life now done, boys and girls unwed…'.
[67] Scott, 'Dante Magnanimo', p. 244.
[68] F. Forti, 'Il limbo dantesco'. See also, Montanari, 'Limbo'.

both the Heavens and 'lo profondo inferno' (41), because they lived 'sanza 'nfamia e sanza lodo' (*Inf.* III, 36). Here, Dante conspicuously foregrounds the poetic power to give or deny fame as Virgil instructs his student: 'non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa' (*Inf.* III, 51). While Dante buries the pusillanimous in obscurity, he affords a canto to the praise of noble pagans and affords eight *terzine* to a list of the inhabitants of Limbo (*Inf.* IV, 121-144). The renown of the souls in Limbo is re-enacted through Dante's list and accentuated by the contrast with the nameless pusillanimous and places fame and obscurity at the heart of these cantos.

Many commentators have identified honour as a key word in the canto and note its usage seven times in twenty-nine lines (vv. 72, 73, 74, 76, 80, 93, 100).[69] The issue of honour (and, in particular, Virgil's honour) was underlined in *Inferno* I by the pilgrim who proclaims Virgil the 'honour and light' of the other poets ('O de li altri poeti onore e lume' (*Inf.* I, 82). Similarly, in *Inferno* II, Beatrice (albeit as re-told by Virgil) also makes reference to the classical poet's honourable qualities:

> venni qua giù del mio beato scanno,
> fidandomi del tuo parlare onesto,
> ch'onora te e quei ch'udito l'hanno.' (*Inf.* II, 112-114)

Here, Beatrice's descent to Limbo appears to be entirely reliant on her faith in Virgil's rhetorical and poetic skill. In both *Inferno* I and *Inferno* II, then, the question of Virgil's 'honour' is, unsurprisingly, directly linked to his use of language. Beatrice adds in *Inferno* II, however, that it also brings honour to all who hear him.

The pilgrim's subsequent question to his guide in *Inferno* IV, further serves to underline the exceptional achievements and noble endeavours of the pagans:

> 'O tu ch'onori scïenzïa e arte,
> questi chi son c'hanno cotanta onranza,

[69] Hollander, *Inf.* IV, 72. 'This new place, the only place in hell in which light is said to overcome darkness (Inf. IV.68-69), is immediately linked to the "key word" of this section of the canto, "honor". See also, Forti, *Magnanimitade,* p. 27.

che dal modo de li altri li diparte?' (*Inf.* IV, 73-75)

The noble pagans are separated from other souls in Hell because of their honour: 'c'hanno cotanta onranza', suggesting that their placement in Limbo and thus lesser punishment is a direct consequence of their honour. Virgil furthers this connection in his explanation to the pilgrim:

E quelli a me: 'L'onrata nominanza
che di lor suona sù ne la tua vita,
grazïa acquista in ciel che sì li avanza.' (*Inf.* IV, 76-78)

Virgil appears to suggest that their glorious and honorable reputation on earth, 'sù ne la tua vita', has acquired them special treatment in the afterlife. While he prefaces the descent into Limbo with the affirmation: 'ch'ei non peccaro' (*Inf.* IV, 34), Virgil does not appear to attribute their exceptional position in Limbo to their virtuous behaviour, but rather to their fame. Indeed, the word 'onore' and its derivatives is frequently used by Dante as a synonym for fame, glory, renown, or reputation.[70]

Virgil's use of the word *grazïa* in reference to the damned but virtuous souls in Limbo is peculiar here.[71] The literal sense of the *terzina* cited above is that the honour (fame and glory) the pagans have acquired or gained in life has afforded them special favour in heaven and thus a special place in hell, set apart from other inhabitants of Limbo. There is, however, an interesting contrast between 'che sì li avanza', and the static state of suspension previously used to describe the fate of the magnanimous souls. The verb *avanzare* can refer to physical advancement or movement ahead or the rendering of value or importance which echoes the use of the verb *acquistare* (which can mean both bought or gained).[72] However, in *Inferno* IV, the grammatical subject of

[70] See Sebastiano Aglianò, 'onore', *ED*, IV, 158-60. See also *Conv.* I, xxi, 17 and III, x, 7.
[71] See, similarly, *Purg.* I, 83 and 87. For discussion of Virgil's reference to grace in *Inf.* II, see Chapter 1, section 2.2.
[72] *Inf.* IV, 78 is listed in *TLIO* under '3.1 Rendere migliore, di maggior valore, più importante, maggiore.' Chiavacci Leonardi glosses *Inf.* IV, 76-8: 'l'elemento fondamentale di questa scena, che è la distinzione

the verb remains 'l'onrata nominanza' (or, Virgil's fame). This formulation is undoubtedly problematic from a Christian perspective – for surely grace is something that can only be given by God, rather than acquired or gained by fame?

Virgil's problematic use of the word *grazïa* reveals its complex usage as both a theological term and as an adjective to refer to certain qualities and virtues.[73] In *Inferno* IV, the acquisition of grace appears to be linked to remembered behaviours, deeds, and writings and is thus similarly and unavoidably linked to fame among the living. By contrast, *grazia* in *Purgatorio* is used with reference to divine grace and frequently used to refer to the pilgrim's presence in Purgatory: 'vieni a veder che Dio per grazia volse' (*Purg.* VIII, 66).[74] When the pilgrim refers to his own acquisition of grace it is through Beatrice as mediator and with no reference to his own fame or actions: 'donna è di sopra che m'acquista grazia' (*Purg.* XXVI, 59). The pilgrim's journey, facilitated by Beatrice who acquires grace on his behalf, is ultimately a journey to salvation which contrasts dramatically with the acquisition of grace in Limbo which would appear to be linked more to earthly fame. Virgil's use of the term *grazia* here thus appears as an early example of a pagan lexis which will become inappropriate in Purgatory.

In *Purgatorio,* grace is demonstrated to be something one cannot acquire for oneself. We see this equally in the frequent requests for prayer among the souls of Ante-Purgatory and in Lucia's acceleration of the journey up the initial mountain slopes:

'Donna del ciel, di queste cose accorta,'

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di queste anime da tutti gli altri abitanti del Limbo, e dell'Inferno in genere. È questa la figura poetica con cui Dante riconosce e onora la grandezza umana dei filosofi, dei poeti e degli eroi antichi, rimasti in un'eterna 'sospensione' del desiderio.'

[73] For example, in *Convivio,* Dante suggests that in youth 'comincia l'uomo ad essere grazioso, o vero lo contrario'. *Conv.* IV, xxv, 1. See also Consol and Ciotti 'grazia'. Though she focusses on the Italian Renaissance, see Ita Mac Carthy's discussion in *The Grace of the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

[74] For pilgrim's bodily presence as grace, see also: *Purg.* XIV, 10-15 and 79-81; *Purg.* XX, 40-42; *Purg.* XXIII, 42.

ripuose 'l mio maestro a lui, 'pur dinanzi
ne disse: 'Andate là: quivi è la porta''
'Ed ella i passi vostri in bene avanzi' (*Purg.* IX, 88-91)

While the verb *avanzare* in Limbo refers to the acquisition of grace and reflects the value of the virtuous pagans in terms of earthly fame, this glory does not result in salvation or physical movement, but rather suspension.[75] By contrast, in Ante-Purgatory and on the terraces, real 'advancement' is enabled by incercession (as we see with Lucia) and by prayer (as Manfred affirms): 'ché qui per quei di là molto s'avanza' (*Purg.* III, 145).

Honour and fame have a very different role in the Ante-Purgatory cantos. Though the most obvious textual space in which honour and fame (or rather the relinquishing of them) are of primary consideration is, of course, cantos X-XIII where the pilgrim and Virgil travel through the Terrace of Pride, there is nonetheless some early re-thinking of what honour and reputation might mean in Purgatory in the first nine cantos. Souls in Purgatory repeatedly judge the merits and failings of their living relatives, at times distancing themselves from those they believe to have failed them and exalting those who have helped them in the afterlife. Now among the saved, souls notably define their familial relations in selective terms. Manfred does not mention his famous father Emperor Fredrick II who is condemned by Dante to Hell for heresy (*Inf.* X, 119) and Buonconte makes no mention of his damned father Guido da Montefeltro (*Inf.* XXVII, 19-132). Jacopo del Cassero asks for prayers from anyone in Fano (*Purg.* V, 70-71), while La Pia makes her request directly to the pilgrim, perhaps implying that neither has any living relatives or friends of merit that might speed them through Ante-

[75] Other uses of the verb *avanzare*: *Inf.* XIX, 71; XI, 108; XXII, 128; XXV, 12; *Purg.* III, 145 and IX, 91; XII, 24; XXVI, 120; XXXI, 28; *Par.* XIII, 24 and XVIII, 60.

Purgatory.[76] Indeed, Jacopo's open request for prayer is perhaps particularly odd given that in *Inferno* XXVIII, reference is made to Guido del Cassero (presumably a relation) and Angiolello da Carignano as the 'due miglior da Fano' (*Inf.* XXVIII, 76) when Pier da Medicina asks the pilgrim to let them know of their impending betrayal by Malatestino Malatesti.[77] Through selective requests for prayers, Dante thus establishes a new hierarchy among the living where titles, reputation, honour, and fame no longer have the significance they held in Limbo for the virtuous pagans.[78]

Let us look more closely at some of the references to honour in Ante-Purgatory. In *Purgatorio* III, Manfred identifies himself, not as the son of the damned Emperor Frederick, then, but rather as the grandson of Costanza who appears in *Paradiso* III:

> Poi sorridendo disse: 'Io son Manfredi,
> nepote di Costanza imperadrice;
> ond' io ti priego che, quando tu riedi,
> vadi a mia bella figlia, genetrice
> de l'onor di Cicilia e d'Aragona,
> e dichi 'l vero a lei, s'altro si dice.

Manfred singles out his daughter, whom he named after his paternal grandmother Costanza, as the only member of his family whom he thinks might be able to shorten his stay in Ante-Purgatory: 'Vedi oggimai se tu mi puoi far lieto, | revelando a la mia buona Costanza […]' (*Purg.* III, 142-143). The word *onor* is not used, however, in reference to the only good member of his family. Instead, the 'honour' of Sicily is Costanza's third son by Pedro III of Aragon, Frederick, while the 'honour' of Aragon,

[76] This particular element is also found in the exchange with Pope Hadrian who names only his granddaughter Alagia as a viable option for prayer (*Purg.* XVII, 142-145).
[77] See Roy Rosenstein, 'Del Cassero, Guido' and 'Del Cassero, Jacopo', in *DE,* p. 296. Rosenstein notes that the event was supposed to take place in 1312, but the date is debated. See Robert Hollander's gloss to *Inf.* XXVIII, 76-81.
[78] Dante does not totally reject earthly fame, as is evident in *Par.* IX, 37-39 and XVII, 31-33. Hollander points to this ambiguity in his commentary to *Par.* IX, 38-42: 'Dante would seem to hold to two positions, one "orthodox" in its condemnation of vainglory […] and one less so, if still more or less welcome in a Christian universe, acceptance of renown for the performance of good deeds.' Interestingly, Hollander specifically recalls *Inf.* IV, 76-78 at this point 'where we are presented with the (strange) information that the renown of non-believers in Limbo somehow "advances" their cause with God'.

Charles Singleton notes, could be either Alfonso (who died in 1291) or James who succeeded him in ruling Aragon.[79] While we might reason that Manfred's mention of honour here is perhaps biased by his perspective as grandfather, this seems unlikely, as he does not suggest that either grandson is good enough that their prayers might shorten his stay in Ante-Purgatory. Moreover, in *Purgatorio* VII, Sordello points out Costanza's husband and father to James and Frederick, Pedro III, affirming that his sons did not inherit his valour: 'Iacomo e Federigo hanno i reami; | del retaggio miglior nessun possiede' (*Purg.* VII, 118-119). The use of the term *onore* in *Purgatorio* III would thus appear to be either insincere or irrelevant to Manfred's request for prayer from his daughter. The worldly 'honour' and fame associated with the rulership of two powerful states has no standing in the second realm, demonstrating a clear re-prioritization of what is needed for a soul to 'advance' in Ante-Purgatory.

Honour is rendered similarly problematic in *Purgatorio* V. Having spotted the pilgrim's shadow, a few souls come to question the two travelers before swiftly returning to the group of late repentant:

> E 'l mio maestro: "Voi potete andarne
> e ritrarre a color che vi mandaro
> che 'l corpo di costui è vera carne.
> Se per veder la sua ombra restaro,
> com' io avviso, assai è lor risposto:
> fàccianli onore, ed esser può lor caro." (*Purg.* V, 31-36)

Virgil instructs the souls to welcome the pilgrim warmly, a phrase which Sebastiano Aglianò notes tended to be used to denote 'far lieta, festosa accoglienza'.[80] Here, Virgil's suggestion of a warm welcome is made because the pilgrim, mortal as he is, may be useful to their advancement in Ante-Purgatory. This is the first and only time

[79] See Singleton, *Purg.* III, 115 and 115-116.
[80] Aglianò, 'onore'.

that Virgil will suggest that souls in Purgatory ought to honour the pilgrim in order to receive his aid. The trade-off seems out of place among the saved where, surely, an offer of aid would be motivated by Christian charity. Indeed, Jacopo later affirms the faith all souls have in the pilgrim's good offices: 'Ciascun si fida | del beneficio tuo sanza giurarlo, | pur che 'l voler nonpossa non ricida' (*Purg.* V, 64-66). There is no bargaining, nor anything contractual about this exchange; only a lack of power could stop the pilgrim's good intentions.[81]

The same expression, *fare onore,* is used in reference to the welcome the noble pagans give Virgil when he returns from saving the pilgrim under Beatrice's orders: 'fannomi onore, e di ciò fanno bene' (*Inf.* IV, 93). A few lines later, the expression is used once again by the poet to retrospectively describe the honour bestowed upon him at being welcomed into the company of the 'bella scola': 'e più d'onore ancora assai mi fenno, | ch'e' sì mi fecer de la loro schiera' (*Inf.* IV, 100-101). Benvenuto da Imola recalls this reception in his commentary to *Purgatorio* V: 'quia magni poetae honoraverunt eum in inferno, ideo isti multo magis qui sunt salvandi'.[82]

It is worth contrasting the reception the pilgrim actually receives among the late repentant with the welcome he and Virgil received in Limbo. Virgil is welcomed in an elevated manner in *Inferno* IV, 'Onorate l'altissimo poeta; | l'ombra sua torna, ch'era dipartita' (*Inf.* IV, 80-81), here the pilgrim's shadow ('la sua ombra'), caused by his physical body is shocking. In contrast to the slow progression of souls in Limbo which gives Virgil time to point out Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan (*Inf.* IV, 88-90),[83] in *Purgatorio* V the souls run towards the pilgrim 'come schiera che scorre sanza freno'

[81] On the use of 'nonpossa' see also 'nonpoder' *ad loc. Purg.* VII, 57.
[82] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* V, 31-36 ('because the great poets honoured him in inferno, therefore these souls, who are saved, should honour him much more').
[83] See also on slow movement *Inf.* IV, 112-114. Forti discusses these lines in relation to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, bk 4. Forti, *Magnanimitade,* p. 29-30.

(*Purg.* V, 42) and press against the pilgrim in such numbers that he must continue listen as he walks on (*Purg.* V, 45). This is a far cry from the reception in Limbo where we are left with the impression of a leisurely stroll towards the castle: 'Così andammo infino a la lumera, | parlando cose che 'l tacere è bello, | sì com' era 'l parlar colà dov' era' (*Inf.* IV, 103-105). Virgil's suggestion that the souls should greet the pilgrim in the correct manner in *Purgatorio* V for their own advantage appears to be largely overlooked or ignored in their urgency to be heard by a mortal. Here in Purgatory, then, Virgil's recommendation is unobserved by the overexcited souls. In other words, in Ante-Purgatory, the excitement of making contact with a mortal pilgrim (and with the rest of the living through him) trumps any ceremonious or dignified reception.

Finally, the issue of honour and reputation returns in *Purgatorio* VIII through the exchange between the pilgrim and Currado Malaspina. Dante never met Currado as he died in 1294 but praises the family – perhaps because they will offer him aid during his exile in 1306.[84] The pilgrim enthusiastically celebrates the fame of the family, but their honour appears to be specifically linked to their unique moral rectitude, despite corrupt leadership: 'Uso e natura sì la privilegia, | che, perché il capo reo il mondo torca | sola va dritta e 'l mal cammin dispregia' (*Purg.* VIII, 130-32). This honour is notably not linked to a request for prayer but is instead firmly set in worldly perceptions of the family: 'ma dove si dimora | per tutta Europa ch'ei non sien palesi?' (*Purg.* VIII, 122-123). Similarly, when Currado asks for news of the living from the pilgrim, he affirms that he once *was* great: 'se novella vera | di Val di Magra o di parte vicina | sai, dillo a me, che già grande là *era*' (*Purg.* VIII, 115-117). The good reputation and honour of Currado's family, simultaneously appear to be venerated by the pilgrim but disregarded by Currado himself. The situation is further complicated by the fact that Currado

[84] On Currado Malaspina, see R. A. Malagi, 'Conrad II' in *DE,* p. 216.

appears humble in his casting off of his earthly fame, but his location in the Valley of the Princes equally affords him some (if uncertain) form of distinction from the other souls in Ante-Purgatory.[85]

Dante's reverence for the moral, intellectual and literary achievements of the pagan figures is remarkable and manifests itself in the unorthodox decision to afford the pagans a separate and privileged space in Limbo. However, this enthusiasm is nuanced by Dante's damnation of the same figures he admires. This ambiguity is central to the tragic drama of Virgil's damnation, not only because it allows the reader to form an attachment to Virgil throughout the *Inferno,* but also because it lays the ground for the uncertain role the pagan poet will take on in *Purgatorio*, and most notably Ante-Puragory. Dante prompts the reader to look back to Limbo in Ante-Purgatory through direct reference to Virgil's damnation and through structural similarities in the two areas of the afterlife. The honour, fame, and glory attributed to the pagans at once sets them apart from other souls in Limbo and in Hell, but, in Ante-Purgatory, this same earthly fame will be shown, retrospectively, to be inherently limited and of little consequence in the afterlife. Exceptions are not made for the famous; only for the penitent, and the saved have little interest in their most famous or 'honorable' relatives.

4. Moving Bodies and Missing Bodies (*Purg.* III and V)

Our second thematic recall across Ante-Purgatory and Limbo will involve the status of the body. The return of the body after the Day of Judgement is an important element in Christian eschatology.[86] Gragnolati asserts that during the Trecento there

[85] Dante's ambiguous treatment of the rulers in the Valley will be addressed in Chapter 3.
[86] Caroline Walker Bynum's volume on the resurrection of the body is fundamental: *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). See also Rachel Jacoff, ''Our bodies, our selves': the Body in the *Commedia*', in *Sparks and Seeds: Medieval*

was a shift in focus in which: 'una nuova enfasi venne quindi posta sull'idea di un giudizio personale dell'anima subito dopo la separazione dal corpo e sull'intensità della sua esperienza nell'aldilà anche nel periodo che precede la resurrezione finale.'[87] This is first highlighted in *Inferno* VI (where the *vanità* of shades is first mentioned) when the pilgrim's question about the nature of punishment after 'la gran sentenza' is framed with particular relation to the quality of the experience; torments in Hell will be more painful, but beatitude will be more perfect (*Inf.* VI, 103-111).[88]

The individual body is particularly important to souls in Ante-Purgatory and within this liminal zone, it is the souls 'per forza morti' (*Purg.* V, 52) and Manfred (who, though he appears with excommunicates, died violently in the battle of Benevento 1266) who demonstrate the clearest awareness or attachment to their bodies on earth.[89] Caroline Walker Bynum has pointed out that the 'somatizing' of the spirit in Dante's *Commedia* (the giving of an individualized aerial body to a human soul) emphasizes the centrality of the body within the poem but also points to an understanding of self.[90] The focus on the body in cantos III and V foregrounds it as essential to individual identity, and dramatic retellings of violent deaths are linked to the fate of the individual body, staging salvation as a personal moment of ultimate existential drama between each soul and God. Souls at once recall their deaths and the location of their remains, while also asserting the triviality of burial within their

Literature and its Afterlife, ed. by Dana E. Stewart, Alison Cornish, introd. di Giuseppe Mazzotta (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 119-137. Kirkpatrick also highlights the problematic nature of individual identity and the intimate connections between matter and form in the *Commedia*, see Robin Kirkpatrick, 'Dante and the Body', in *Framing Medieval Bodies,* ed. by Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 236-253.

[87] Manuele Gragnolati, *Amor che move. Linguaggio del corpo e forma del desiderio in Dante, Pasolini e Morante* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 2013), p. 70.

[88] See also *Inf.* XIII, 103-108.

[89] See Peter Armour, 'Words and the Drama of Death', *Word and Drama in Dante: Essays on the Divina Commedia* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993), pp. 93-122, p. 100

[90] Walker Bynum, 'Faith Imagining the Self'.

personal salvation story. In this way, they offer an interesting contrast with the sepulchered and celebrated body of Virgil.[91]

The dramatic and violent deaths suffered by the souls in *Purgatorio* III and V have a clear resonance with the fate of Palinurus in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Cioffi, follows Shapiro in the suggestion that the helmsman from Virgil's epic is 'a symbolically freighted image'.[92] She illuminates particularly Dantean concerns within his tragic story, namely, the power of prayer, the prominence of violence, the subversion of political peace, the nature of true immortality as opposed to fame, and the idea that a man's fate in the afterlife may depart drastically from expectation.[93] I will suggest, in addition to her helpful discussion, that the Palinurus episode offers a useful intertext not only for understanding the experiences of souls in Ante-Purgatory, but also for interpreting Virgil's tragic narrative within the first nine cantos.

It is worth providing an outline of Palinurus' tragic narrative within the *Aeneid.* The ill-fated helmsman first appears in Book III where, amid a storm, Palinurus asserts that he knew not night from day nor how to navigate the waters.[94] He appears again in Book V where he demonstrates skepticism towards the gods (13-259) and later in the book this distrust is proved to be warranted. Somnus, in the form of Phorbas, offers to steer the boat so that Palinurus might rest, but the helmsman, still distrusting of the sea ('mene huic confidere monstro?'),[95] refuses the offer and is put to sleep by the god and flung into the sea (854-861). Aeneas then meets him in Hades in Book VI where he is

[91] For death as a 'leaving behind' of the body see Armour, 'The Drama of Death', p. 97. Cf. *Inf.* XV, 114; *Inf.* XX, 85-87; *Inf.* XXX, 75; and *Purg.* I, 74-75.
[92] Cioffi, 'Fame, Prayer, and Politics', p. 180. See Marianne Shapiro 'Virgilian Representation in Dante', *Lectura Dantis* 5 (Fall 1989), 14-29. On Palinurus in *Purgatorio* III, see Giovanni Aquilecchia, 'Il Manfredi dantesco e il Palinuro virgiliano' in his *Schede di italianistica* (Turin: Einaudi, 1976), pp. 29-44.
[93] See Cioffi, 'Fame, Prayer, and Politics', pp. 178–79.
[94] *Aen.* III, 201-202. Cioffi draws attention to the foreboding *'Palinurus in unda'* echoed in *Aen.* III, 563: '*Palinarus ad undas*', 'Fame, Prayer, and Politics', p. 180.
[95] *Aen.* V, 849 ('Me put faith in this monster?'), *Virgil*, I, pp. 528-29.

found among the 'helpless and graveless'. Interestingly, Palinurus' account of his own death differs substantially from the omniscient narrator's account, affirming that he was not flung into the sea by a god ('nec me deus aequore mersit'), but rather that he was flung overboard because of a storm (*Aen.* VI, 348-362).[96] The helmsman then begs him to cast earth on his body or to take his hand and take him across the Styx (363-371), but the Sybil rebukes him for his request and famously asserts 'desine fata deum flecti sperare precando' (*Aen.* VI, 376)[97] – the origin of the pilgrim's query to Virgil in *Purgatorio* VI. At the same time, the Sybil also appeases him with the promise that a tomb will be built for him and that the coast where he died will be named after him (*Aen.* VI, 373-381).

Let us turn now to the issue of bodies and burial in the cantos in question. *Purgatorio* III continues the action of the previous canto with reference to the 'subitana fuga' (*Purg.* III, 1) of the souls after Cato's rebuke. The poet reflects on Virgil's apparently disproportionate remorse for such a 'picciol fallo' (*Purg.* III, 9) and then begins to look around his new environment and notices the return of his shadow, due to the reappearance of the sun in the second realm. The pilgrim believes himself abandoned by 'la fida compagna' (*Purg.* III, 4) when he does not see Virgil's shadow next to him and his shock at the 'missing' shadow triggers the guide to reflect for the first time in the poem on the location of his body:

> Vespero è già colà dov'è sepolto
> lo corpo dentro al quale io facea ombra;
> Napoli l'ha, e da Brandizio è tolto.
> Ora, se innanzi a me nulla s'aombra,
> non ti maravigliar più che d'i cieli
> che l'uno a l'altro raggio non ingombra. (*Purg.* III, 25-30)

[96] On the inconsistencies between the narrator's account of Palinurus' death and Palinurus' own account see: Perkell, 'Irony in the Underworlds'.
[97] *Aen.* VI, 376 ('Cease to dream that heaven's decrees may be turned aside by prayer.'), *Virgil*, I, pp. 558-59.

Shapiro has suggested that the rhyme pattern *ombra*: *s'aombra*: *ingombra* implies that Virgil views the body as fundamentally cumbersome.[98] A similar notion of the body as a burden is discernable in *Aeneid* VI where, just after Aeneas and his father Anchises are reunited and fail to embrace (684-702), Aeneas spots throngs of shades ('innumerae gentes' [706]) in a vale; the spirits who will be reincarnated ('animae, quibus altera fato corpora debentur' [713-714]). Aeneas asks his father if there can be anyone who would wish to return to 'bodily fetters' ('ad tarda reverti corpora'[720]). Anchises' response reveals a comparable conception of the body as slow and sluggish:

> igneus est ollis vogor et caelestis origo
> semininbus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant
> terrenique hebetant artus moribundaque membra
> hinc metuun cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, neque auras
> dispiciunt clausae tenebris et carcere caeco.[99]

In these lines we see the Stoic view of the body as cumbersome; a burden slowing the spirit that is born only to die. The later description of Limbo as the 'primo cinghio del carcere cieco' in the encounter with Statius (*Purg.* XXII, 103) clearly resonates with the *Aeneid's* 'carcere caeco', but also perhaps recalls *Inferno* X where Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti uses the same formular (*Inferno* X, 58-9). Similarly, in *Purgatorio* VII, Limbo is described as a place 'non tristo di martìri, | ma di tenebre solo' (28-29). In the *Aeneid,* attachment to the body is problematized and seen as a form of spiritual blindness. The accounts of souls' bodies in *Purgatorio* III and V have caused many readers to suggest that souls in Ante-Purgatory have an unhealthy attachment to their past terrestrial lives and forms. However, in Dante's text the same lexical field is in fact

[98] Marianne Shapiro, *Dante and the Knot of Body and Soul* (London: MacMillan, 1998), p. 19.
[99] *Aen.* VI, 730-734 ('Fiery is the vigour and divine the source of those seeds of life, so far as harmful bodies clog them not, or earthly limbs and frames born but to die. Hence their fears and desires, their griefs and joys; nor do they discern the heavenly light, penned as they are in the gloom of their dark dungeon.'), *Virgil*, I, pp. 582-83.

used to describe the fate of the souls in Limbo (not Ante-Purgatory). The saved souls' relationships with their bodies does not appear as a hinderance to spiritual progress, but rather, when read against the Palinurus episode, illustrates a disinterest in ceremony and burial.

The focus on the ceremonial pomp of the movement of Virgil's tomb by Emperor Augustus in *Purgatorio* III is usefully read in the context of classical beliefs about burial, and the fear of dying unburied in Virgil's lifetime is demonstrated in Virgil's own depiction of the afterlife. In Book VI of *Aeneid,* Aeneas comes across the helpless and graveless who plead with Charon to be carried across the Styx but are denied passage until a hundred years have passed, or until their bones are buried.[100] This enforced period of waiting is clearly echoed in the logic of Ante-Purgatory, while delayed passage with Charon is reformulated in *Purgatorio* II (though without reference to gravelessness) when Casella explains to the pilgrim that the angelic boatman refused to take him and other souls from the banks of the Tiber until the Jubilee declared by Boniface on 22 February, 1300.[101] While in the *Aeneid,* delay is the result of improper burial, casting the body again as a hindrance to spiritual happiness in the afterlife, Dante places emphasis on the unimportance of burial rites and excommunication to salvation.

It is in the encounter with Sordello that Virgil mentions his body for the second and final time in *Purgatorio* VII, with reference to ceremony and burial:

> 'Anzi che a questo monte fosser volte
> l'anime degne di salire a Dio
> fur l'ossa mie per Ottavian sepolte
> Io son Virgilio; e per null'altro rio
> lo ciel perdei che per non aver fé.' (*Purg.* VII, 4-8)

[100] *Aen.* VI, 329-330: 'centum errant annos volitantque haec litora circum; | tum demum admissi stagna exoptata revisunt.' ('A hundred years they roam and flit about these shores; then only are they admitted and revisit the longed-for pools'), *Virgil*, I, pp. 554-55.
[101] Cf. *Purg.* II, 94-102. See discussion in Chapter 1, section 3.

Virgil references his original burial by one Emperor, and the transference of his tomb by another, Augustus, before being addressed by Sordello as 'O gloria d'i' Latin' (*Purg.* VII, 16). The Provençal poet's subsequent veneration of Virgil contributes to a clear focus on Virgil as exceptional poet:

> 'O gloria di Latin,' disse, 'per cui
> mostrò ciò che potea la lingua nostra,
> o pregio etterno del loco ond' io fui,
> qual merito o qual grazia mi ti mostra?
> S'io son d'udir le tue parole degno,
> dimmi se vien d'inferno, e di qual chiostra.' (*Purg.* VII, 16-21)

Sordello's praise of Virgil reflects previous concerns with his fame and renown as seen in *Purgatorio* III. His description of the poet as 'pregio etterno del loco ond' io fui' presents an interesting contrast between the enduring and everlasting fame of Virgil as poet and what Sordello views to be his own impermanence in Mantua as suggested by his use of the *trapassato remoto*, 'ond' io fui'. The use of the words 'merito' and 'grazia' which we have come to understand as particularly loaded terms when used in reference to Virgil is striking. Though Sordello's words are clearly intended as a hyperbolic expression of deference, they equally remind us of the relationship between Virgil's tomb, the ceremonious transference of his body, and his fame as poet. Virgil's entombed body thus appears to play an important role in Dante's reflection on fame, burial, and salvation within the Ante-Purgatory cantos and clearly resonates with the Palinurus episode through these common themes.

Palinurus' story has obvious parallels with the bodies of the souls 'morti per forza' in *Purgatorio* V, though, according to Cioffi, Manfred's body also purposely recalls Palinurus' bones, showing the tiller's concern with his burial to be 'a vain

obsession and as a synecdoche of the flaws of pagan religion.'[102] Manfred's description of the current state of his body with that of Palinurus is strikingly similar:

> Or le bagne la pioggia e move il vento
> di fuor dal regno, quasi lungo 'l Verde (*Purg.* III, 130-131)
>
> *nunc me fluctus habet versantque in litore venti.* (*Aen.* VI, 362)
> [Now the wave holds me, and the winds toss me on the beach.]

Despite the similarity of these two bodies left to the mercy of the waters (*in unda*), Palinurus appears to be attached to his body as a result of the use of the personal pronoun 'me' alongside the present tense. While Manfred also uses a first-person possessive pronoun, he does so to refer to his bones rather than the body as a whole, hinting at an understanding of bodily decay: 'l'ossa del corpo mio' (*Purg.* III, 127). Manfred's detachment from the body at the moment of death is equally supported by the change from the use of the first person a few lines earlier, 'Poscia ch'io ebbi rotta la persona…. io mi rendei' (*Purg.* III, 118-119) which gives way to a more disconnected use of the third person with reference to his body ('le mie osse').[103]

There is a clear parallel between the movement and conservation of Virgil's body for the purposes of veneration and Manfred's moving bones. Manfred's body was moved from the hasty grave he was given after falling in battle to Carlo d'Angiò, in an attempt to desecrate his grave, re-enacting his excommunication through physical displacement of his body:[104]

> Se 'l pastor di Cosenza, che a la caccia
> di me fu messo per Clemente allora,

[102] Cioffi, 'Fame, Prayer, and Politics', p. 118.
[103] Detachment from previous earthly identity is repeated throughout the *Commedia* by use of the formula, 'Io fui…. Sono…' as is seen in the case of both Buonconte and La Pia in *Purgatorio* V (88 and 133-134) and in the dialogue between the pilgrim and Virgil in *Inferno* I, 67-79: 'Non omo, omo già *fui* […] poeta *fui* […] Or *se'* tu quel Virgilio…' See also, *Inf.* II, 70; *Inf.* XIII, 58; *Purg.* XI, 58-67; *Par.* III, 46-49; *Par.* VI, 7-10.
[104] 'la grave mora' refers to a pile of stones piled on top of the grave he was given.

avesse in Dio ben letta questa faccia,
l'ossa del corpo mio sarieno ancora
in co del ponte presso a Benvenuto,
sotto la guardia de la grave mora.
Or le bagna la pioggia e move il vento
di fuor dal regno, quasi lungo 'l Verde,
dov' e' le trasmutò a lume spento. (*Purg.* III, 124-132)

The Bishop of Cosenza, under the orders of Pope Clement IV, moved Manfred's body from its make-shift military grave near Benvenuto under cover of darkness ('a lume spento') outside the Kingdom of Sicily. The location of Manfred's body 'fuor dal regno' reflects the Church's desire to excommunicate him; to place him outside society and outside the Kingdom of God. Maurizio Fiorilla observes that Manfred's body, if we follow its path 'lungo 'l Verde', now the River Garigliano, would end up in the Tyrennian Sea where the river has its mouth, near modern-day Borgo Centore, some fifty kilometers from Virgil's tomb in Naples.[105] Manfred's body is wounded and thrown out of the Kingdom of Sicily, re-enacting his excommunication at a physical level after death. By contrast, Virgil's body is venerated and 'risplende ancora insieme ai suoi versi nel mondo terreno', yet his soul, unlike Manfred's is excluded from God's city.[106]

In *Purgatorio* V, Iacopo and Buonconte narrate their watery and violent deaths. Iacopo is the first soul among those who suffered a violent death to address the pilgrim. He narrates his death due to exsanguination, entangled in the reeds and mud of the marshes when he falls, demonstrating a similar detachment from his body as he watches the blood form a lake around him, (*Purg.* V, 82-84). In so doing, the final description builds on the earlier reference to his blood as the seat of the soul: 'ond' uscì 'l sangue in

[105] Maurizio Fiorilla, '"State contenti umana gente al quia": Virgilio e Manfredi tra mondo degli uomini e vita ultraterena', in *Cento canti*, III, p. 65-87 (p. 82).
[106] Fiorilla, 'State contenti', p. 83

sul quale io sedea' (*Purg.* V, 74). Buonconte's body, echoing that of Manfred, is washed away by torrential rain which the devil conjures up after he is deprived a soul for the sake of a 'lagrimetta'.[107] Though Manfred and Buonconte still clearly expresses an awareness of their bodies which appears to be unique to the souls in Ante-Purgatory (perhaps due to the trauma of their violent deaths), they do not ask the pilgrim to search for and bury their bodies, nor do they express any concern over burial or last rites.

Attention to the location of Virgil's entombed body and the double reference to the ceremonial transference of his body serves as a means of contrasting Virgil's earthly fame against the missing bodies of the murdered souls which have been lost to obscurity. The Palinurus episode emerges as central to understanding Dante's portrayal of burial rites and funerary ceremony as being of little importance in matters of salvation, and it again encourages a reflection on the limitations of Virgil's fame.

5. 'Perder tempo a chi più sa più spiace': Losing time and Losing

In *Purgatorio* V, VI, and VII the reader is encouraged to look back to *Inferno* to consider Virgil's place in Limbo from the vantage point of Ante-Purgatory. Firstly, I will examine how the urgency of the souls in *Purgatorio* V and VI and Virgil's repeated assertions to continue progressing up the mountain are ironically counterposed against his own 'late' knowledge of Christ. We are repeatedly reminded throughout these cantos of everything that Virgil has lost. Furthermore, it is in *Purgatorio* VI that

[107] There is a clear parallel in the watery medium of the 'lagrimetta' and the storm which follows it. See Nicolò Crisafi and Manuele Gragnolati, 'Weathering the Afterlife: The Meteorological Psychology of Dante's Commedia', in *Weathering: Ecologies of Exposure*, ed. by Christoph F. E. Holzhey and Arnd Wedemeyer (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2020), pp. 63–91 [online] https://doi.org/10.37050/ci-17_04, pp 75-79 and Gilson, 'Medieval Magical Lore and Dante's *Commedia*: Divination and Demonic Agency,' *Dante Studies* 119 (2001), 27-66 (pp. 48-53 on the Aristotelian description of the storm and demonic agency in *Purgatorio* V).

we find the major correction to Virgil's text cited at the beginning of the chapter which is equally revealing of his spiritual insufficiency.

Sabrina Stroppa underlines the theological understanding of the danger of penitence *in extremis* in her reading of *Purgatorio* V, with particular reference to Bonaventure's and Thomas Aquinas' commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Two key issues emerge from her discussion of late repentance: firstly, the hope that any sinner has the potential to redeem themselves while still alive and, secondly, the danger of gambling with the fate of one's souls and delaying repentance until the end of life. While the episode with Manfred appears to focus particularly on the issue of hope and God's *larghezza,* the encounter with the souls in *Purgatorio* V emphasizes the risks of delaying repentance until one's final moments because, as the murdered souls know all too well, death could arrive unexpectedly.

Stroppa notes that the danger of repenting in one's final moments is echoed in the insistence on movement in the first cantos of *Purgatorio.* The insistence on speed which is triggered by Cato's command 'correte al monte' is returned to again by Virgil in his address to the excommunicates, entreating them to show them an easier way up the initial mountain slopes: 'ché perder tempo a chi più sa più spiace' (*Purg.* III, 78). Though the urgency of the journey was already present in Hell, it appears to be magnified in Purgatory through the presence of the sun which provides consistent reminders of the passage of time.[108] On the terraces, the importance of time in the second realm is underlined more explicitly by Forese when he leaves the pilgrim behind in order to continue with his penance: 'l tempo è caro | in questo regno, sì ch'io perdo troppo | venendo teco sì a paro paro' (*Purg.* XXIV, 91-93).[109]

[108] See, for example, *Inf.* XI, 13-5. On time-telling in *Purgatorio* see Introduction, 4.2.
[109] In *Purg.* XII, 85-86 the pilgrim reflects on Virgil's 'time-keeping': 'Io era ben del suo ammonir uso | pur di non perder tempo'.

While Forese's words capture the urgency to continue penance, in Ante-Purgatory the value of time must be understood quite differently. Delaying repentance has come at the cost of years spent in Ante-Purgatory and urgency is now manifest in their requests for prayers to shorten this period and in a desire to start penance on the terraces. Virgil's words quoted above ('ché perder tempo a chi più sa più spiace') appear particularly relevant to the souls in Ante-Purgatory, who now understand the value of time and the dangers of wasting it.[110] On the one hand, Virgil's words on wasting time thus relate directly to the logic of Mount Purgatory in general, but more specifically, and more immediately, to the late penitents who have learnt the dangers of procrastination. On the other hand, the phrase equally sounds like a proverbial request for haste and a reflection of classical wisdom. Indeed, Chiavacci Leonardi notes the resonance with Seneca's reflections on using the time we have to the best of our ability because of the inevitability of death: 'qui diem aestimet, qui intellegat se cotidie mori? […] Sic fiet, ut minus ex crastino pendeas, si hodierno manum inieceris.'[111] Anonimo Fiorentino cites Seneca's first epistle in relation to Virgil's aphorism.[112] Similarly in the *Aeneid* we read: 'stat sua cuique dies, breve et inreparabile tempus | omnibus est vitae; sed famam extendere factis, hoc virtutis opus.'[113] Virgil's plea for haste thus at once resonates with a stoic understanding of the brevity of life, making a specific appeal to wisdom ('chi più sa') in his suggestion that those who are wise, understand the importance of not wasting time.

[110] Jacopo della Lana, *Purg.* III, 73-78. See also Francesco Da Buti, *Purg.* III, 73-78, and Cristoforo Landino, *Purg.* III, 76-78.
[111] Seneca, *Epistles*, I, 1-3 ('who reckons the worth of each day, who understands that he is dying daily? […] Lay hold of today's task, and you will not need to depend so much upon tomorrows.'), pp. 2-3.
[112] Anonimo Fiorentino, *Purg.* III, 78: 'Concordasi con quella prima pistola che Seneca scrive a Lucillo, dove, fra l'altre parole, nel principio: Omnia, Lucili, aliena sunt, tempus tantum nostrum est.'
[113] *Aen.* X, 467- 469 ('Each has his day appointed; short and irretrievable is the span of life for all: but to lengthen fame by deeds – that is valour's task'). See also *Georgics* III, 66-68.

The reference to fame in the *Aeneid* as a means of extending one's life also offers an interesting and pertinent contrast with a Christian conception of eternal life. Virgil's maxim demonstrates a point of collision between a stoic and Christian understanding of the importance of not procrastinating. On the one hand, the pagan understanding of the value of time stems from the notion that death is inevitable. On the other hand, for Christians (and, importantly, for the delayed souls in Ante-Purgatory) we should not delay repentance because, while death is inevitable, salvation is not.

The call to speed which opens *Purgatorio* V when the pilgrim appears distracted by the souls' interest in him: 'pur me, pur me, e 'l lume ch'era rotto' (*Purg.* V, 9) thus feeds into an already established concern with the value of time. The repetition of 'pur me' expresses the disorientation and shock the pilgrim experiences at suddenly being the centre of attention and, indeed, in *Purgatorio* V and VI there will be particular emphasis on the urgency of the souls' requests for prayers through the repeated interjection *Deh* and description of the large crowd of souls which press against the pilgrim. Virgil, however, chastises the pilgrim for his distraction: '"Perché l'animo tuo tanto s'impiglia" | Disse 'l maestro, "che l'andare allenti? [...]"' (*Purg.* V, 10-11). This desire to progress swiftly with the journey arguably continues from Virgil's closing words in *Purgatorio* IV as he draws the pilgrim away from Belacqua: 'Vienne omai; vedi ch'è tocco | meridian dal sole, e a la riva | cuopre la notte già col piè Morrocco' (*Purg.* IV, 137-139). His rebuke to the pilgrim in *Purgatorio* V, though it may appear overly harsh considering the pilgrim only glanced back momentarily ('li occhi rivolsi al suon di questo motto' [7]), does underline the importance of every step in Purgatory – as Virgil affirmed in the previous canto: 'nessun tuo passo caggia' (*Purg.* IV, 37).[114]

[114] Frankel has pointed out that Virgil's urgency seems to have waned by the time he meets Sordello in *Purgatorio* VI. See Margherita Frankel, 'La similitudine della zara [Purg. VI, 1-12] ed il rapporto fra Dante e Virgilio nell'antipurgatorio,' in *Studi Americani su Dante,* ed. by Gian Carlo Alessio and Robert Hollander (Milan: F. Angeli, 1989), pp. 113-144.

Stroppa points out that by *Purgatorio* V, the pilgrim and Virgil have paused their journey four times: firstly, for Casella's song (*Purg.* II, 85-133), secondly for the discussion with Manfred which caused the pilgrim to lose track of time (*Purg.* IV, 1-18), thirdly to catch his breath after climbing 'l'alta ripa' (*Purg.* IV, 52-136), and now in the brief glance back to the whispering souls. Virgil's rebuke at this point reminds us once again of the importance of maintaining momentum and not falling prey to distraction.

The concern with urgency and the passage of time in these cantos becomes particularly relevant in the meeting with the souls who repented 'a l'ultima ora'. The use of the verb 'impigliar' to refer to Dante's distracted soul echoes with its later usage to refer to Iacopo's body, trapped in the reeds: 'Corsi al palude, e le cannucce e 'l braco | m'impigliar sì ch'i' caddi' (*Purg.* V, 83). Stroppa notes that, though the pilgrim's brief glance back 'può sembrare poca cosa in sé' it can imply death: 'perché *periculosissimum est* non far buon uso del tempo, "non avvedersi" di come esso trascorra, e rinviare la decisione della conversione, del "ben fare", *in finem*.'[115] Virgil's insistence on the importance of not wasting time in the encounter with the souls in *Purgatorio* V and VI, thus evokes a certain situational irony as Virgil himself was born at the wrong time. Indeed, Iannucci notes that '"tardi" è un avverbio che sfugge dalle labbra di Virgilio in più di una occasione,'[116] but it is perhaps most tellingly linked with his paganism in *Purgatorio* VII when he affirms that 'l'alto Sol […] fu tardi per me conosciuto.' (26-7).[117] While the murdered souls of *Purgatorio* V and Manfred in *Purgatorio* III did not lead exemplary lives, their turn to God in their final moments

[115] Stroppa, '*De his qui in fine*', p. 78
[116] Amilcare A. Iannucci, 'Dante e la "bella scola" della poesia (Inf. 4.64-105)', in Dante e la 'bella scola' della poesia. Autorità e sfida poetica, ed. by Amilcare A. Iannucci (Ravenna: Longo, 1993), pp. 19-39 (p. 32).
[117] See also Virgil's prayer to the sun in *Purg.* XII, 16-21.

was not too late and afforded them salvation. Virgil's virtuous life, however, has afforded him only fame which was not enough to save him from damnation.

The emphasis on swift progress and on not wasting time is ironic coming from a damned poet who repeatedly describes himself as having 'lost' the beatific vision. A shared rhyme pattern between *Purgatorio* V and *Inferno* IV brings together the issues of Virgil's fame, the emphasis put on swift progress, and the urgent requests for prayer made by the souls in Ante-Purgatory. A group of souls rushes towards the pilgrim 'sanza freno' (42) after they are told by Virgil that the pilgrim is still in a body of 'vera carne'. In this canto (and that opening of the canto which follows) more than in previous encounters, the enthusiasm for the pilgrim's living body is particularly evident through the rush of the crowd towards the two travelers:

> 'Questa gente che preme a noi è molta,
> e vegnonti a pregar', disse 'l poeta:
> 'però pur va, e in andando ascolta'.
> 'O anima che vai per esser lieta
> con quelle membra con le quai nascesti',
> venian gridando, 'un poco il passo queta.
> Guarda s'alcun di noi unqua vestesti,
> sì che di lui di là novella porti:
> deh, perché vai? Deh, perché non t'arresti? (*Purg.* V, 43-51)

The souls which 'press' against Virgil and the pilgrim are explicitly interested in the pilgrim ('vegno*ti* a pregar') and emphasis is placed on his position of grace as a soul traveling towards beatitude: 'che va per esser lieta'. The pilgrim's movement towards the summit of the mountain contrasts with their own stasis but also implicitly excludes Virgil from this address and reminds us that only one of the two travelers is actually moving towards beatitude. In a similar fashion, Virgil's previous address in *Purgatorio* III (73-75) also highlighted his status as damned soul in Purgatory: 'ben finiti, o già spiriti eletti […] per quella pace | ch'i' credo che per *voi* tutti s'aspetti'. Virgil's auto-

exclusion from the community of the blessed manifests itself in *Purgatorio* V through contrast with the pilgrim's grace and his ability to help the delayed souls in a way a damned soul cannot. Furthermore, Virgil's command to listen while walking, coupled with the request by the souls for the pilgrim to slow down, maintain the emphasis on the importance of continuing to move forwards.

The same rhyme pattern *poeta*: *lieta*: *queta* is found in *Inferno* IV when Virgil is greeted by the souls upon returning to Limbo having gone to the pilgrim's aid – a passage which we have already marked as being recalled through the common theme of fame. In contrast to the emphasis on continued movement in *Purgatorio* V, there is a particular indulgence to this encounter with the 'bella scola' in Limbo which provides narrative pause as Dante-poet aligns himself with the famous classical poets while equally highlighting a fundamental difference between himself and these damned poets through their 'ironically (tragically) privileged infernal location'.[118]

> Intanto voce fu per me udita:
> 'Onrate l'altissimo poeta:
> l'ombra sua torna, ch'era dipartita'
> Poi che la voce fu restata e queta,
> vidi quattro grand'ombre a noi venire:
> sembianz'avevan né trista né lieta. (*Inf.* IV, 79-84)

The sedately composed encounter with the Homer, Horace, Ovid and Lucan who are among the souls 'con occhi tardi e gravi' (112) contrasts provocatively with the souls who rush frantically 'gridando' towards the pilgrim in *Purgatorio* V. The slow, measured, and serious authority of the inhabitants of the noble castle offers a dramatic contrast with the clamour and haste of the saved souls in Ante-Purgatory. A further situational parallel is perhaps to be found in Virgil's command to listen as they walk,

[118] Kevin Brownlee, 'The Classical Poets', p. 144. See also: Michelangelo Picone, 'Modelli e antimodelli della 'Commedia', *Letteratura italiana anitca,* 9 (2008) 105-120; Lucia Battaglia Ricci, '*Inferno* IV', in *Lectura Dantis Bononiensis*, I, pp. 77-102, esp. pp. 99-102.

just as in Limbo the group of poets walks towards the light as they talk among themselves while in *Purgatorio* V the pilgrim continues 'ascoltando'. Reading retrospectively, then, we find that there is a marked contrast between the pilgrim's reception among the noble pagans and among the souls saved *in extremis* in Ante-Purgatory.

The anonymous voice which greets Virgil hails him for his honour as poet. Virgil subsequently introduces the 'bella scola' (94) who only turn to the pilgrim after they have spoken among themselves: 'Da ch'ebber ragionato insieme alquanto | volsersi a me con salutevol cenno' (*Inf.* IV, 97-98). Here the word 'poeta' in rhyme position occurs with a re-emphasis of Virgil's authority as poet and his inclusion in what is frequently considered as 'il canone letterario implicito nell'invenzione e nella scrittura della *Commedia.*'[119] Iannucci notes that Dante's auto-inclusion within the 'bella scola' is a double act of inclusion,[120] which firstly welcomes Dante as the sixth among the classical poets, but also folds the works of Homer, Ovid, Horace, and Lucan into the *Commedia,* recognizing their influence. In other words, Dante's auto-inclusion is also a poetic auto-definition which declares at once his literary ambitions and the poetic models from which he will draw inspiration in order to fulfill these same ambitions.[121]

However, Dante's insertion of the five celebrated classical poets in Limbo also signals an 'incompletezza non solo spirituale ma anche testuale'.[122] When it appears in *Purgatorio* V, the shared rhyme pattern (*quieta*: *poeta*: *lieta*) also reminds us of Virgil's unavoidable return to Limbo despite his long journey with the pilgrim. While the pilgrim makes his journey up the mountain to eternal happiness, Virgil must inevitably return to be among the suspended souls who are neither happy nor sad.

[119] Battaglia Ricci, '*Inferno* IV', p. 99.
[120] Iannucci, 'Dante e "la bella scola"', p. 24.
[121] *Ibid.*
[122] Iannucci, 'Dante e "la bella scola"', p. 29.

The description of the souls suspended between happiness and sorrow (*Inf.* IV, 84) resonates particularly with Bonaventure's description of Limbo: 'perpetualiter eos consolidat, ut nec proficiant nec deficiant, nec laetentur nec tristentur, sed semper sic uniformiter maneant.'[123] The use of 'lieta' in rhyme position to describe a state of future beatitude in *Purgatorio* V and a state of suspension in *Inferno* IV is provocative. In looking back to *Inferno* IV and the encounter with the 'bella scola' at this point, we are once again reminded of Virgil's spiritual insufficiency, but in *Purgatorio* V, this is additionally placed in direct contrast with the pilgrim's privileged spiritual status as mortal in the afterlife. Dante re-stages his spiritual surpassing of the pagan poets, re-emphasizing the clear division between Christian poet in a state of grace and the damned pagan poet.

The attention to the souls' preference for the pilgrim over Virgil continues to be developed in *Purgatorio* VI. The much-debated incipit of this canto builds on the sense of commotion and urgency from the previous canto by comparing the souls to a crowd gathering around the winner of a game of dice:[124]

> Quando si parte il gioco de la zara,
> colui che perde si riman dolente,
> ripetendo le volte, e tristo impara:
> con l'altro se ne va tutta la gente;
> qual va dinanzi, e qual di dietro il prende,
> e qual dallato li si reca a mente. (*Purg.* VI, 1-6)

[123] Bonaventura, *I Sent*., d. 33, a. 3, q. 2, p. 797 ('they are perpetually stuck (*consolidat*) so that they neither progress nor decline; neither rejoice nor lament, but always maintain this uniform state'), translation my own. See Mowbray, 'The Intellectual Development of Limbo', pp. 97-98.

[124] Baldelli is particularly useful on the history of the game, referencing its mention in Brunetto's *Tesoretto,* 2775-2777: 'E un altro per empiezza | a la zara s'avezza | e gioca con inganno'. See Ignazio Baldelli, 'I morti di morte violenta: Dante and Sordello', *Dante Studies*, 115 (1997), 111-83, (p. 133). See also Singleton's gloss to *Purg.* VI, 1 in which he affirms that the game's name originates from Arabic *zahr*, a die, through French *hazard* and Provençal *azar.*

The metaphor has typically been read as an example of Dante's realism.[125] However, Nicolò Maldina has recently noted the particular association between games of dice and a failure to repent before death.[126] He notes that in Giovanni da San Gimignano's *Summa de exemplis et rerum similitudinibus,* we find the portrait of an individual who is continuously distracted by the game ('cogitat apud se') and 'semper in ludo tentationum succumbit'. [127] Maldina notes that the same scene is used by both Dante and Giovanni to refer to those who have waited until to death to repent and suggest that metaphors which drew comparison between the 'giocatore d'azzardo e il penitente in morte' may have circulated among preachers in Dante's time.[128] The simile at the opening of *Purgatorio* VI thus casts those who wait until their final moments to repent as gamblers.

Beyond the metaphor's clear relevance to the souls who repented *in extremis* as outlined by Maldina, the metaphor is equally of interest to Virgil's role as damned soul in Purgatory. Frankel suggests that the figure of the loser in this metaphor corresponds to Virgil. [129] If we agree with Frankel here, we find that this is not the first time he has been 'left behind' while others pursue the victor. In *Inferno* IV, Dante ingeniously

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[125] See, for example, Singleton's commentary to the lines, *Purg.* VI, 2: 'This figure of the loser, though serving to make the whole scene more graphic, finds no correspondence in the second term of the simile.' See also Silvio Pasquazi, 'Canto VI' in *Lectura Dantis Scaligera: Purgatorio*, ed. by Mario Marcazzan (Florence: Le Monnier, 1967); Robert Lansing, *From Image to Idea. A Study of the Simile in Dante's 'Commedia'* (Ravenna: Longo, 1977), p. 92-93.

[126] Nicolò Maldina, 'Due schede su Dante e l'enciclopedismo medievale' in *L'Italianistica oggi: ricerca e didattica. Atti del XIX Congresso dell'ADI (Roma, 9-12 settembre 2015),* ed. by B. Alfonzetti, T. Cancro, V. Di Iasio, E. Pietrobon (Rome: Adi, 2017), available online: https://www.italianisti.it/pubblicazioni/atti-di-congresso/laitalianistica-oggi-ricerca-e-didattica [accessed 18 March 2021].

[127] Giovanni da San Gimignano, *Summa de exemplis et rerum similitudinibus,* IX, VIII, Lugduni, in Officina Phillipi Tinghi, 1585, 317va ('and always succumbs to the temptation of the game'). Cited by Maldina, 'Due schede', p. 3.

[128] Maldina, 'Due schede', p. 3.

[129] Literary fame is a central focus in the encounter with Brunetto Latini. See Teodolinda Barolini's commentary on the canto available online: https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/inferno/inferno-15| [accessed 31 March 2021]. See also, Thomas Nevin, 'Ser Brunetto's Immortality: *Inferno* XV', *Dante Studies,* 96 (1978), 21-37; Justin Steinberg, 'Beneath the Law: *Infamia'* in *Dante and the Limits of the Law*, pp. 13-52 and esp. pp. 36-40 on Brunetto Latini.

retells the Harrowing of Hell from the perspective of those left behind. Christ, described as victor, 'un possente, | con segno di *vittoria* coronato' (*Inf.* IV, 54), frees the Hebrews from Limbo but leaves the noble pagans behind: 'e fece*li* beati' (*Inf.* IV, 61). In contrast to Christ's victory and the freedom of the Hebrews, the noble pagans have lost the vision of God eternally and remain in Limbo. The image of the loser of a game of dice left behind while the crowd pursue the winner also arguably recalls Virgil's experience of the Harrowing of Hell.

Frankel argues that Virgil himself 'sottolinea il suo stato di perdente nel canto seguente'.[130] Virgil's recall of Limbo in *Purgatorio* VII is worth quoting in full:

> Non per far, ma per non fare ho perduto
> a veder l'alto Sol che tu disiri
> e che fu tardi per me conosciuto.
> Luogo è là giù non tristo di martìri,
> ma di tenebre solo, ove i lamenti
> non suonan come guai, ma son sospiri.
> Quivi sto io coi pargoli innocenti
> dai denti morsi de la morte avante
> che fosser da l'umana colpa essenti;
> quivi sto io con quei che le tre sante
> virtù non si vestiro, e sanza vizio
> conobber l'altre e seguir tutte quante. (*Purg.* VII, 25-36)

Here too, Virgil refers to himself as one who has lost something. Virgil's claim that his damnation is due to a lack of action 'non per far, ma per non fare' reprises his words at the beginning of the canto: 'Io son Virgilio; e per null'altro rio | lo ciel perdei che per non aver fé' (7-8). Here we find another strong recall of *Inferno* IV through rhyme. The rhyme pattern *disiri*: *martìri*: *sospiri* notably comes very close to *martìri*: *sospiri*: *viri* in *Inferno* IV, 25-30 with *disiri* nonetheless functioning as a clear lexical recall of *Inferno* IV. Guzzardo has argued that here '[o]nce again the thrust of Virgil's words describes

[130] Frankel, 'Similitudine dell zara', p. 115.

situations of insufficiency and falling-short, both general, regarding all those in Limbo and more specifically about those in the noble castle: they followed all the other virtues (the Cardinal Virtues) but lack the Theological ones.'[131] He argues that the inhabitants of the noble castle are the best expressions of this state of insufficiency. Indeed, this 'falling short' is similarly evident in *Purgatorio* VIII where Virgil appears not to see the three stars which represent the three theological virtues (85-93) complementing the four stars (cardinal virtues) seen in *Purgatorio* I.

Conclusions

In Ante-Purgatory, Dante-pilgrim and Virgil encounter souls who have been saved against expectations. Despite horrible sins, excommunication, negligence, and late repentance, Manfred, Belacqua, Iacopo del Cassero, Buonconte da Montefeltro, and Pia de' Tolomei stand as testament to God's 'bontà infinita' (*Purg.* III, 122), that is, the divine willingness to embrace and save all those who turn towards Him.[132] The reader is encouraged to consider the conceptual affinities between Limbo and Ante-Purgatory because of the liminal placement of both zones of the afterlife, and through the fact that neither souls in Limbo nor in Ante-Purgatory suffer *poena damni*.

Moreover, we find a series of direct references to Limbo or to Virgil's damnation which appear alongside more complex thematic recalls of *Inferno* IV which appear *Purgatorio* III, V, and VI, namely, contrasting attitudes towards fame and honour, the

[131] John Guzzardo, 'The Noble Castle and the Eighth Gate,' *MLN (Italian Issue),* 94 (Jan 1979), 1, 137-145 (p.139).
[132] As Manfred explains: 'la bontà infinita ha sì gran braccia, | che prende ciò che si rivolge a lei.' (*Purg.* III, 122-23). Cf. *Par.* XX, 98-99 in which Eagle explains that God desires to be won over.

importance given to burial, and the contrast between the urgency of souls in Ante-Purgatory to move towards the Gates of Purgatory and Virgil's own "lateness".

The lasting fame of the pagans is shown to have little influence over their lot in the afterlife, fitting into a wider critique of fame and reputation in the *Commedia* such as in the encounters with Brunetto Latini and Cacciaguida in Hell, and Oderissi da Gubbio in Purgatory. By contrast, in Ante-Purgatory, the limitations of Virgil's fame appear to be set in contrast with requests for prayer from souls who pay no heed to status or fame of the living While Virgil's body is sepulchered and his memory celebrated and revered, the souls in cantos III and V are graveless and have been forgotten in the prayers of loved ones. By comparing Virgil's reference to the transference of his remains from one location to another with the washing away of Manfred's and Buonconte's bodies, Dante interrogates the futility of fame and honour in the afterlife, encouraging the reader to compare Virgil's damnation with the salvation of souls in Ante-Purgatory. Finally, the urgency of souls to move towards the Gates of Purgatory in Ante-Purgatory is set in contrast with the slow, stately movements of souls in Limbo, and, moreover with Virgil's own admission of a late knowledge of God. The souls who repented *in extremis* now demonstrate urgency, but Virgil's timekeeping and calls to maintain momentum in their journey up the mountain become painfully ironic; voiced by the only individual in the *cantica* who will not see salvation.

In the act of weighing Virgil against other souls in Ante-Purgatory, Dante infuses the first nine cantos with Virgil's tragic drama, but also influences our understanding of Ante-Purgatory as a liminal space where (mysterious) exceptions are made, and where God's grace is central.

Chapter 3

The Landscape of Ante-Purgatory

Within Purgatory-proper there are the seven terraces, so that the whole of the second realm can be divided into nine or ten zones, depending on whether the shore in *Purgatorio* I-III is distinguished from the rest of Ante-Purgatory.[1] This ambiguity concerning the shore and its inclusion or exclusion from Ante-Purgatory is indicative of the uncertainty surrounding the landscape of the liminal zone. One thing we can be sure of is where Ante-Purgatory ends.[2] The Gates of Purgatory are a particularly clear topographical marker, made all the more striking by the entrance ritual, the re-echoing of the door, and the command not to look back (*Purg*. IX, 131-132).[3] The clear division between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory-proper has contributed, it seems, to a relative lack of critical attention to the landscape of Ante-Purgatory other than concern with this section as a space of exile.[4] Another contributory factor to this neglect is the scarcity of references to topographical markers and the fact that the landscape of Ante-Purgatory,

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[1] See Lino Pertile, 'Narrative Structure' in *Companion to the Commedia*, pp. 4-27, esp. pp. 7-8. Pertile argues for ten sections of Hell (Ante-Inferno and nine circles), Purgatory (the shore, Ante-Purgatory, the seven terraces and Earthly Paradise), and Paradise (nine spheres plus the Empyrean outside time and space). Contrast with Corbett who argues for nine moral zones, 'Moral Structure'. See also Illiano, *Sulle sponde.* See Introduction, section 3.

[2] On the critical tendency to make the distinction between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory 'too hard and fast', see Barolini, *The Undivine Comedy*, p. 34.

[3] On the Gates of Purgatory, see Peter's Armour's seminal work *The Door of Purgatory*. See also Barańksi, 'Without Any Violence'.

[4] Various critics and commentators have discussed the theme of exile or the status of exile of various souls in Ante-Purgatory. For an in-depth discussion of the notions of inclusion and exclusion, see Honess, *From Florence*, esp. 'The Purgatorial Pilgrimage', pp. 88-95. See also, Armour, *The Door of Purgatory* who casts Ante-Purgatory as a 'negative waiting world', p. 100; Singleton, '*In Exitu*' on Exodus pattern throughout the poem, but especially in *Purg.* I and II. Recent useful studies on exile include: Catherine Keen 'The Language of Exile in Dante', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 27 (2001), 79-102; Johannes Bartuschat, 'Exile', in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante*, pp. 399-414. For a detailed account of Dante's own exile, see Peter Armour, 'Exile and Disgrace', in *Dante in Oxford. The Paget Toynbee Lectures,* ed. by Martin McLaughlin, Michelangelo Zaccarello, and Tristan Kay (Oxford: Legenda, 2001), pp. 39-68.

at times, appears to be quite featureless. In this chapter, I will explore the ways in which landscape in the first nine cantos, though sparse in detail, is far from being a neutral background. I will concentrate on three important shifts in landscape of Ante-Puragtory from the 'ambito del 'meraviglioso cristiano''[5] on the beach, to the demanding 'alta ripa' (*Purg.* III, 71 and *Purg.* IV, 35) which the pilgrim ascends in *Purgatorio* IV, and finally, the most developped landscape in Ante-Purgatory, the luxuriant valley in cantos VII and VIII.

Following the methodology developed in Chapters 1 and 2, this chapter will assess the ways Ante-Purgatory's landscape often recalls earlier infernal landscapes. This chapter is made up of three main parts. Firstly, an introduction to landscape reading in medieval studies and in Dante. Then in the second main part I will move onto considering the manner in which movement across the Antepurgatorial landscape recalls *Inferno*, concentrating firstly on the landscapes of *Purgatorio* I-III and then on the steep cliff-face in *Purgatorio* III-IV. I will argue that the emphasis on hesitation and uncertainty in the empty landscape in *Purgatorio* I-III recalls and contrasts with both the crowded chaos of Hell and Ulysses' unhesitating pursuit of his desire to become 'del mondo esperto'. I will then suggest that the description of, and the climbing up, the 'alta ripa' in *Purgatorio* III and IV recalls the climb up the *ruina* in *Inferno* XXIV, thus tying together two moments in which Virgil's knowledge of the landscape failed.

In the third main section, I will turn to *Purgatorio* VII in which we find the well-known description of the Valley of the Rulers. This final section will be divided into two sub-parts. The first sub-part will look at Dante's landscape description of the Valley, while the second will consider the implications of the descent into the Valley in *Purgatorio* VIII. I will argue that through the evocation of the Valley as a 'pleasant

[5] Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, p. 54

place', Dante both looks back to Limbo and ahead to the Earthly Paradise, situating the *valletta* in the centre of a triptych of *loci amoeni.* I will concentrate particularly on the relationship between Limbo and the Valley, arguing that the inclusion of a high vantage point in both *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* VII provides a strong landscape echo but one which is used to strongly differentiate Ante-Purgatory from Limbo. I suggest that in *Purgatorio* VII the poet makes a sustained engagement with complex metaliterary and artistic discourses through the landscape of the Valley. When the pilgrim and Virgil descend into the Valley, I will argue that they move into the *locus ameonus* which they had previously observed externally and thus step into the action of the 'rappresentazione sacra' detailed in *Purgatorio* VIII. While this movement into the Valley contrasts with the observation of the noble pagans in *Inferno* IV and places increased emphasis on participation and community, I will also argue that the notion of descent at this point in the poem is revealing of the poet's ambivalent treatment of both the noble pagans and the negligent rulers.

1. Landscape Reading

Let us first examine how Dante studies has paid attention to landscape. Early critical interest in space and place was framed through a study of Dante's geography,[6] motivated by over 900 geographical references to more than 450 locations around the world within the *Commedia*.[7] An interest in the topography of the afterlife, in measuring and calibrating the realms of the afterlife and their subdivisions, has also

[6] Allison DeWitt, 'Visualizing Dante's World: Geography, History and Material Culture' (unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Columbia, 2019), provides an excellent overview of geographical approaches to the *Commedia,* see pp. 5-13. See, for example, Edward Moore, 'The Geography of Dante', in *Studies in Dante*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), III pp. 109-143 in which he looks at the authorities which inform the geographical elements in Dante's work. More recently, see Giulio Ferroni, 'La misura dello spazio. La geografia dantesca', *Leggere e rileggere la Commedia*, ed. by Barbera Peroni (Milan: Unicopli, 2009), pp. 37-46; Peter Armour, 'Dante e l'*imago mundi* del primo Trecento, in *Dante e la scienza,* ed. by Patrick Boyde and Vittorio Russo (Ravenna: Longo, 1995), pp. 191-202.
[7] DeWitt, 'Visualizing Dante's World', p. 1.

been a prominent feature from the Trecento onwards,[8] but by the 1540s, a keen interest had also developed in the site of Purgatory in the lectures of academicians such as Pierfrancesco Giambullari and in commentaries such as that Alessandro Vellutello (1544).[9] Recent Dante criticism has developed a range of approaches in relation to this material, such as considering the topography of the afterlife alongside popular representations of the three realms, exploring the hydrography of Dante's vision of the afterlife, the poet's astounding knowledge of Italian cities and countryside, medieval understandings of citizenship and belonging, the harsh realities of travelling as an exile, and the influence of the visual arts on descriptions of landscapes.[10]

Theodore Cachey has suggested that the poet's imagination was stimulated by a 'cartographic impulse', which develops from a 'rationalist "bird's-eye" cartographic projection of Dante's linguistic treatise, the *De vulgari eloquentia,* to the highly subjective and autobiographically rooted mental mapping of Italy that characterizes the

[8] Though the first attempt to calculate the dimensions of Hell is found in the *Ottimo Commento*, as Kleiner argues, 'the heyday of infernal cartography was unquestionably the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.' John Kleiner, 'Mismapping the Underworld'*, Dante Studies*, 107 (1989), 1-31 (p. 2). Kleiner looks at Landino's calculations as well as more extensive studies by Benivieni, Giambullari, Vellutello, and Galileo Galilei. On Dante in the Renaissance, see Simon Gilson, *Reading Dante in Renaissance Italy: Florence, Venice and the 'Divine Poet'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) and his earlier *Dante and Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) and Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 1993).

[9] See Pierfrancesco Giambullari, 'Lezione 1. Del sito del Purgatorio', in *Lezioni di messer Pierfrancesco Giambullari, aggiuntivi l'origine della lingua fiorentina, altrimenti 'Il gello' dello stesso autore*, (Milan: G. Silvestri, 1827, first published 1544), pp. 3-34. See Gilson, *Reading Dante in Renaissance Italy,* for useful bibliography.Of particular interest to the topography of Ante-Purgatory are the drawings attributed to Vellutello at the Morgan Library. See Appendix 4. On these drawings, see Matthew Collins, 'The Forgotten Morgan Dante Drawings, Their Influence on the Marcolini *Commedia* of 1544, and Their Place within a Visually-Driven Discourse on Dante's Poem', *Dante Studies,* 135 (2018), 93-132 and Rhoda Eitel-Porter, 'Drawings for the Woodcut Illustrations to Alessandro Vellutello's 1544 Commenrary on Dante's Commedia', *Print Quarterly*, 36 (2019), 3-16.

[10] On citizenship and urban life see: Keen, *Dante and the City*; Honess, *From Florence*; Elisa Brilli, 'Civitas / Community', in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante*, pp. 353-367. On hydrography see: Ricardo Lucio Perriello, *Acqua passata, gloria futura. I fiumi nella Divina Commedia* (Rome: Aracne, 2020); Ambrogio Camozzi, 'Il veglio di Creata alla luce di Matelda: una lettura comparativa di *Inferno* XIV e *Purgatorio* XXVIII, *The Italianist*, 29 (2009) 1, 3-49; Donato Pirovano, 'Idografia dantesca. Dalla livida palude al fiume di luce', *Rivista di Letteratura Italiana*, 38.2 (2020), 9-25.

thirteen Malebolge cantos'.[11] As noted in the Introduction, when it comes to the fictional topography of the afterlife, it is often noted that the 'maps' the poet gives us of Hell in *Inferno* XI and Purgatory in *Purgatorio* XVII-XVIII leave areas of these realms out (namely, the neutrals outside the Gate of Hell, Limbo, the circle of Heretics, and Ante-Purgatory) and, in Virgil's charting of Hell, *Malebolge* appear in an apparently random order.[12] By providing these incomplete and 'faulty' maps, Dante invites his reader to become involved in their own charting of the pilgrim's journey.[13]

We might define the physical topography of the *Commedia* as the textual representation of forms and features of the realms of the afterlife (for example, the hydrological system of Hell, the valleys of the *Malebolge*, and the seven terraces).[14] Indeed, the topography of *Inferno, Purgatorio* and even (though perhaps more abstractly) *Paradiso*, it is frequently noted, reinforces moral categories, so that Dante scholars are able to refer to 'moral topography' within the *Commedia*. Topographical features or markers within the *Commedia* thus often serve as 'further delineators of moral structure' and, as George Corbett observes, these are particularly clear in Purgatory on the seven terraces of the mountain.[15] However, as we will see, in Ante-

[11] Theodore J. Cachey Jnr, 'Cartographic Dante', *Italica*, 87.3 (2010), 325-54 (pp. 325-26). See also by Cachey 'Travelling / Wandering / Mapping' in *The Oxford Handbook of Dante*, pp. 415-430 and, 'Dante e le Isole Fortunate: un "locus deperditus" nella geografia del poema,' in his *Le Isole Fortunate. Appunti di storia letteraria italiana* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1995), pp. 17-81. See also Scafi, *Mapping Paradise*; Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld*.

[12] Virgil lists the types of fraud contained in the ten *malebolge* in no particular order, leaving out false counsellors and sewers of discord, see *Inf.* XI, 58-60. See Cachey, 'Cartographic Dante', p. 326. See Benvenuto da Imola who notices this in *Inferno* XI, 55-60: 'et vide quod autor non servavit ordinem in numerando dictas species fraudium'. See also Barański, 'Canto XI', in *Lectura Dantis Turicensis: Inferno,* ed. by Georges Güntert and Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Franco Cesati, 2003), pp. 151-163; Corbett, *Dante's Christian Ethics*, p. 26.

[13] See Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld* on error and contradiction in Dante's *Commedia.* This is a problem that continues to engage readers, see for example Giovanni Agnelli, 'Di una topo-cronografia del viaggio dantesco', *L'Alighieri. Rivista di studi danteschi.* 1 (1889), 162-68, 240-47, 316-32 and Allan H. Gilbert, 'Can Dante's *Inferno* Be Exactly Charted?', *PMLA*, 60.2 (1945), 287-306.

[14] See Corbett, 'Moral Structure'. See Morgan, *Medieval Other World*, on topographical features used in other visions of the afterlife and in Dante.

[15] Corbett, 'Moral Structure', p. 62.

Purgatory, topographical markers are few and far between and the division between groups of souls is not always separated by clear, topographical features.

Let us now turn to the field known as landscape reading. Elaine T. James has succinctly defined landscape in a poetic context as 'a materially grounded textual representation of human experience in a locale'.[16] Though topographical features remain important in reading landscape, we are also driven to consider additional features of the environment, such as the vegetation, colours, perfumes, and sounds of a given landscape. We might also consider the meteorological conditions; the perspective from which a landscape is viewed; the manner in which it is populated; and the way in which the landscape is moved across, alongside considerations of emotional response to and experience of the surrounding environment. [17] In the *Commedia*, in as much oaslandscape relates to a 'materially grounded' representation, landscape reading is limited to the first two *cantica* – though the pilgrim's instantaneous and often unexpected movements through the spheres in the *Paradiso* offer interesting points of comparison with travel in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*.[18]

Anna Pegoretti has considered the *paesaggio* of Purgatory, beginning with an analysis of the cosmological positioning of Dante's Purgatory and going on to consider Purgatory's *paesaggi* exploring the classical, liturgical, Biblical and intertextual

[16] Elaine T. James, 'Introduction', *Landscapes of the Song of Songs: Poetry and Place* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2017), pp. 1-25, p. 15. See James 'Introduction', p. 13 for the etymology of the 'landscape' and Chris Fitter, *Poetry, Space, Landscape: Toward a New Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 10.

[17] On Dante, see the recent essay Crisafi and Gragnolati, 'Weathering the Afterlife'. On medieval landscape more broadly, see Derek Pearsall and Elizabeth Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World,* (London: Elek, 1973). See also the collection of essays in *Inventing Medieval Landscapes: Senses of Place in Western Europe,* ed. by John Howe and Michael Wolfe (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002); *Place, Space, and Landscape in Medieval Narrative*, ed. by Laura L. Howes, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2007). Thomas Goddard Bergin explores the overlap between topography and landscape (though not explicitly), 'Hell: Topography and Demography', in his *A Diversity of Dante* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969), pp. 47-64.

[18] On different modes of movement across the *cantica,* see Sabrina Stroppa, '"Solo pede tangens terram": l'antipurgatorio e il rinnovarsi del viaggio', *Chroniques italiennes*, web 40 (2021), 1, 137-154 (esp. p. 140).

resonances present in the landscape of the second cantica.[19]. She affirms that 'a partire dal terzo canto del *Purgatorio*, la montagna diventa un vero e proprio protagonista del racconto' and remains a continuous and imposing presence. Though the landscape of the mountain is undoubtedly harsh, it nonetheless signals a departure from the 'infernalized' landscapes of visions of Purgatory in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries where the realm was frequently represented underground as a 'receptacle' and with little variation from its infernal counterparts.[20] The landscape of Dante's Purgatory, though it remains challenging and rocky, is crucially differentiated from the rivers of blood, dark woods, and boiling pits of Hell. Indeed, Dante renders Purgatory the only earth- and time-bound of the three realms in his poem, and, as Sabrina Stoppa notes, '[l]o spazio dei fianchi rocciosi del monte rimanda invece direttamente all'esperienza del *viator*.'[21]

Landscape is additionally used to convey human experience and emotion, shaping the reader's understanding of certain episodes in the poem. For example, the *selva oscura* of *Inferno* is strongly connected to the pilgrim's psychological and emotional state at this point in the poem. [22] Indeed, in *Inferno* I, the metaphor of the heart as lake ('il lago del mio cor' [*Inf.* I, 20]) is a striking example of the manner in which the pilgrim's passions are conveyed through landscape features. Furthermore,

[19] Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, p. 69. See also p. 74 where she notes that the mountain functions as 'un sottofondo costante della cantica, cioè la presenza continuamente sottolineata di una roccia dura, di una montagna pietrosa e dirupata.'
[20] See Introduction, section 2 on visions of the afterlife.
[21] Stroppa, 'Il rinnovarsi del viaggio', p. 143.
[22] *Inferno* I has been read alongside the Augustinian concept of a *regio dissimilitudinis,* a region of unlikeness, affirming the pilgrim's distance from God at this point in the poem. See Pegoretti, 'La 'selva oscura' come *regio disimilitiudinis*,' in *Dal 'lito diserto'*, pp. 43-52. For the notion of *regio dissimilitudinis* in Augustine, see Augustine, *Confessions*, I, VII, 10, 16, p. 373: 'et inveni longe me esse a te in regio dissimilitudinis' ('and I perceived myself to be far off from thee in the region of utter unlikeness'). John Freccero also remarks that the landscape of *Inferno* I 'is a region whose outlines are decidedly blurred […] the scenery seems to have no real poetic existence independent of the allegorical statement it was meant to convey.' See Freccero, 'Dante's Prologue Scene' in his *The Poetics of Conversion*, pp. 1-29 (p. 1).

there is an interesting interplay between landscape and body where landscape is described with recourse to anatomy and anatomy with recourse to landscape. The hill which the pilgrim looks up at is described through a body-landscape metaphor: 'le sue spalle' (*Inf.* I, 16), while the pilgrim's heart is metaphorically described as a 'lago' (20). Richard Lansing, opting to translate *lago* as 'pit' rather than 'lake', points out that *lago* appears within a context which is 'engaged in deploying landscape imagery to express the invisible reality of the pilgrim's state of spiritual fallenness.'[23] He argues that *lago* (from the Latin *lacus*) refers to the heart as a receptacle where the *spiriti* dwell, that is, it refers to 'the container and not what is contained.'[24] Nonetheless, the 'lago del mio cor', resonates both sonorously and conceptually with the 'pe*lago*' (which we might term a spiritual landscape) from which the sailor escapes in the following *terzina* (22-24).[25] In this manner, the poet dissolves boundaries between physical landscape of the *selva oscura*, the pilgrim's body, and the spiritual, or emotional drama of the scene. The potency of Dante's chosen landscape in *Inferno* I is all the more striking when one notes how few adjectives are used to describe the *Commedia*'s most famous landscape, and that these adjectives ('oscura', 'selvaggia e aspra e forte') 'tendono a evocare uno stato d'animo, piuttosto che a descrivere la realtà fisica del luogo'.[26] Instead, it is the

[23] Richard Lansing, 'The Pageantry of Dante's Verse', *Dante Studies*, 127 (2009), 59-80 (p. 68).
[24] Lansing, 'The Pageantry of Dante's Verse'. On this metaphor, see the section 'The Matter of the Heart', pp. 62-69. On the etymology of 'lago' he writes: 'the word derives from the Latin word *lacus,* which means 'opening,' 'hollow,' 'cavity,' 'basin,' 'tank,' 'tub,' and, in a sense that subsequently developed out of this primary definition, a container filled with water, thus a 'lake,' 'pond,' or 'pool.' The Italian vernacular ar preserved both these connotations.' p. 62. Cf. 'l'infima lacuna' in *Par.* XXXIII, 22. See also Heather Webb, *The Medieval Heart* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 123-131 on this metaphor. See Charles Singleton, *Inf.* I, 20 on this metaphor.
[25] See Antonio Lanci, 'pelago', *ED,* IV, 367. While *pelago* is mostly used to refer to the open sea, it nonetheless contains a sense of depth. In *Purg.* XIV is used in the plural to indicate a deep basin in reference to the Arno Valley, echoing Lansing's reading of *lago* as 'pit' or 'basin'.
[26] Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, p. 45.

pilgrim's fearful reaction to the landscape, rather than any sustained description of the landscape which allows the reader to associate the *selva oscura* with sin.[27]

Landscapes like that of *Inferno* I, or to use Kenneth Bleeth's term 'inner landscapes,' are employed by the poet to demonstrate the pilgrim's spiritual development and human emotion[28] Anna Pegoretti has shown that the 'lito diserto' of *Purgatorio* I recalls the landscape of *Inferno* I but with notable differences which draw attention to the progress the pilgrim has made from the *selva oscura*.[29] Distant echoes and recalls of previous landscapes across the poem thus serve, in part, as a method of reflection on the pilgrim's journey, highlighting both the physical distance travelled, but also, as a result of the strong connection between landscape and inner spiritual state, serving as a means of demonstrating the pilgrim's progress. We see this phenomenon in the case of the Earthly Paradise, the 'selva antica' (*Purg.* XXVIII, 23) or 'la divina foresta spessa e viva' (*Purg.* XXVIII, 2), which looks back to the *selva* of *Inferno* I. However, at this point in the poem, the pilgrim's reaction to the landscape is, naturally, very different; where 'the first forest was 'as bitter as death', this one is divinely alive.'[30]

It is useful to recall again Charles Singleton's seminal essay on retrospective reading in the *Commedia*, since, even though the essay does not engage specifically with the concept of landscape reading, it is telling that he draws on the example of the three *ruine* in Hell to demonstrate patterns of retrospection across the poem, arguing that the infernal landscape 'bears witness to that Death which is our salvation from the

[27] See Kenneth A. Bleeth, 'Narrator and Landscape in the *Commedia:* An Approach to Dante's Earthly Paradise', *Dante Studies,* 88 (1970), 31-49, esp. pp. 32-35 on *Inferno* I.
[28] Bleeth 'Narrator and Landscape', p. 34.
[29] See Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, pp. 52-54 and 61-62. The *selva oscura* also clearly resonates with 'mesta selva' of the forest of suicides (*Inf.* XIII, 106-7) and the *selva antica* (*Purg.* XXVIII, 23) in the Earthly Paradise.
[30] Peter Dronke, 'Dante's Earthly Paradise: Towards an Interpretation of *Purgatorio* XXVIII', in his *The Medieval Poet and his World* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1984), pp. 387-406 (p. 390).

second death: three *ruine* mark off that moment in the rock of Hell, registering there three eternal reminders of it.'[31] In the example of the *ruine* in Hell, therefore, we see, not only how the poet is able to impart theological meaning through landscape, but we also glimpse some of the possibilities landscape contains for triggering the reader's memory and linking textual moments together.

In my reading of landscape in Ante-Purgatory, and particularly the Valley of the Rulers, I will build on practices of landscape reading outlined above and the methodology employed over the previous two chapters to consider the manner in which we can also read landscapes retrospectively, focusing particularly on the way in which Dante looks back to Limbo in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII, asking the reader to recall the landscape of *Inferno* IV. Before reaching the Valley, however, I will first consider the way in which we understand the landscapes of Ante-Purgatory in the first six cantos.

2. Landscape Echoes in Ante-Purgatory

Though the division between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory-proper appears to instil a moral divide between those who delayed repentance or who were negligent in life, there are very few topographical features in the first nine cantos, offering limited divisions between groups of souls. As we learn from Sordello in *Purgatorio* VII, there appear to be no spatial limitations on souls' wandering: 'loco certo non c'è posto' (40). While in Purgatory-proper souls are restricted to the physical confines of a given terrace during their penance of a certain vice, in Ante-Purgatory, only two groups of souls appear to be separated from others by a topographical feature: the excommunicates and the negligent rulers. The former must wait on the beach at the bottom of the 'alta ripa' for thirty times

[31] Singleton, 'The Vistas in Retrospect', p. 70.

the duration of their contumacy on earth (*Purg.* III, 136-141), while the latter 'dwell' in the *valletta* (*Purg.* VII and VIII) – though it is never made explicitly clear whether this is merely a regular evening gathering or fixed abode for the duration of their wait in Ante-Purgatory. In the case of the excommunicates, their separation via a wall of rock from the rest of the community of Ante-Purgatory (and Purgatory) clearly reflects their state of exclusion from the Church on earth,[32] however, in the case of the Valley, the rulers' location within what is arguably the only other distinctive topographical feature in Ante-Purgatory has been seldom noted or discussed.

Ante-Purgatory itself can be divided into four topographical zones: the beach (*Purg.* I and II), the base of the mountain (*Purg.* III), the area after the initial steep ascent which the negligent occupy (*Purg.* IV), and the Valley of the Rulers (*Purg.* VII and VIII). Though some readers of Dante have attempted to find order, symmetry, or hierarchy in the groupings of souls,[33] it is obvious that in Ante-Purgatory Dante does not establish a complex, hierarchical order as he did in Hell, where sins were ordered according to natural ethics, or as he will do in on the terraces.[34] As George Corbett summarizes succinctly, in Purgatory, vices are ordered according to severity; the first two terraces, pride and envy, are graver because they are associated with the intellect. While wrath and sloth are associated with the irascible appetite and avarice, gluttony and lust are associated with the concupiscible appetite.[35] From the journey through the nine circles of Hell, the reader has learnt that a new group of souls usually merits a new, separate space and a new type of sin – but in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, these

[32] See, for example, Robin Kirkpatrick, 'Canto III. The Sheepfold of the Excommunicates', in *Lectura Dantis: Puragtorio* (Mandelbaum *et al.*), pp. 21-38 (p. 25).
[33] Cogan, 'The Antepurgatory' and corresponding discussion of this idea in 'Introduction', p. 20-21.
[34] On the structure of Hell, see Corbett, 'Moral Structure', pp. 63-68.
[35] Corbett, 'Moral Structure', p. 71. Corbett also notes that pride is established by the worst of the sins in the order proposed by Gregory the Great. See also Siegfried Wenzel, 'Dante's Rationale for the Seven Deadly Sins (*Purgatorio* XVII), *MLR* 60.4 (1965), 529-533; and *Dante and the Seven Deadly Sins: Twelve Literary and Historical Essays*, ed. by John C. Barnes and Daragh O'Connel (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017).

distinctions are less clear-cut. As Genaro Sasso puts it: '[n]on c'è niente, in effetti, che, salvo errore, induca a pensare che, poiché si muovevano su una zona più alta del monte, le genti che cantavano il salmo L, e cioè i negligenti, rappresentassero un peccato più, o, eventualmente, meno grave di quello commesso da chi aveva meritato la scomunica.'[36]

Indeed, maps and diagrams of the mountain, though they aim to aid the reader, often overdetermine the specificity of space in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, whereas Dante's own text actually provides very few topographical indications.[37] For example, diagrams and commentaries typically give a separate, higher, demarcated space to the area in which those killed violently wander the mountain; however, there is no real topographical distinction between this area and the space where Belacqua is found. Indeed, the poet gives very limited information about the landscape of *Purgatorio* V, dedicating much more space to the earthly landscapes where Jacopo and Buonconte die. The souls who sing *Miserere* are first located 'per la costa di traverso' (*Purg.* V, 22), suggesting that they are above the pilgrim and Virgil on a slope, before they run towards the pilgrim and Virgil ('corsero incontr' a noi' [29]) and then return back to the group above ('tornasser suso in meno' [40]). However, there is no indication that the pilgrim and Virgil climb up to this ridge where the group of late penitents were first spotted. Neither do the pilgrim and Virgil appear to ascend any higher in order to reach the Valley. Indeed, Sordello informs the two travellers that the rulers are actually only located far away to the right: 'destra qua remote' (*Purg.* VII, 46). Our understanding of these two encounters as taking place in two distinct spaces is formed through the change in the manner in which souls move across the landscape. The late-penitent souls

[36] Sasso, *Purgatorio e Antipurgatorio,* p. 37.
[37] See Appendix 4.

rush from above to greet the pilgrim below, while the negligent rulers are observed by the pilgrim from above as they sit within the Valley below.

Due to this lack of distinctive divisions in Ante-Purgatory, the more subtle changes in landscape are particularly important to our understanding of the liminal zone. Though the landscape of Ante-Purgatory merits more in-depth study, I will limit my exploration to a few key elements which I believe provide particularly strong recalls to *Inferno* and which contribute to the poet's staging of the re-orientation of pilgrim and the re-orientation of his readers. To this end, I will focus firstly on the manner in which the poet explores uncertainty and a lack of expertise as an essential part of landscape experience within the second realm, contrasting notably with Ulyssean expertise already recalled at the end of *Purgatorio* I. Secondly, I will suggest that Virgil's interaction with the landscape in *Purgatorio* III and IV provides a strong recall for *Inferno* XXIV where he is deceived about the nature of the landscape by the Malabranche.

2.1 Inexpertise: 'noi siam peregrin come voi siete'

Towards the end of *Purgatorio* I, the poetic voice dominates after the lengthy exchange between Virgil and Cato. Though Cato's instructions have given the reader some key clues about the landscape of the opening cantos (*Purg.* I, 100-108) the final seven *terzine* add the important (and oft-cited) details of 'lo solingo piano' (118) and the 'lito diserto' (130) in quick succession which recall the 'piaggia diserta' of *Inferno* I (29), picking up the Exodus motif already established in the poem's prologue in this 'new beginning'.[38] Anna Pegoretti notes that for all the wonder and marvel of the beach, 'ciò

[38] On the link between the shore in *Purgatorio* I and the 'piaggia diserta' (*Inf.* I, 29), see Pegoretti, *Dal lito diserto,* p. 52. See also Luigi Blasucci, 'piaggia' in *ED*, IV, pp. 473-474.

che salta agli occhi è la solitudine dei luoghi rappresentati.'[39] Indeed, Benvenuto da Imola in his gloss on the solitude of the scene equates crowdedness to sinfulness and emptiness to the virtuous path.[40]

This return to the solitary but virtuous path is achieved through another recall to *Inferno* I and through recourse to the figure of the *homo viator*, a well-established figure for the notion of humankind as traveler and which is also intertwined with the theme of isolation.[41] The simile: 'com' om che torna la perduta strada' (*Purg.* I, 119), echoing the loss of the right way in *Inferno* I ('ché la diritta via era smarrita' [3]) presents a strong contrast with the beginning of the poem through a return to the lost path.[42] The figure of the *homo viator* emerges again in relation to the experience and uncertainty of the landscape at the beginning of *Purgatorio* II. The precision of *Purgatorio* II's opening astronomical periphrasis (1-9) gives way to a landscape of uncertainty and wandering with no affirmative movement towards the mountain:

> Noi eravam lunghesso mare ancora,
> come gente che pensa a suo cammino,
> che va col cuore e col corpo dimora. (*Purg.* II, 10-12)

A similar reflection on journeying accompanies emphasis on isolation at the beginning of *Inferno* II: 'e io sol uno | m'apparecchiava a sostener la guerra | sì del cammino e sì de la pietate'. However, while in *Inferno* II the pilgrim doubts his suitability for the

[39] Pegoretti, *Dal lito diserto,* p. 53. For Pegoretti the emptiness of the landscape in *Purgatorio* I is an important recall of *Inferno* I.
[40] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* I, 115-120. Cf. his commentary *ad loc. Inf.* I, 28-39. Cf. crowdedness in *Inf.* III, 56-57 and *Inf,* IV, 29-39. See also Eccl. 7.34: 'et de neglegentia purga te *cum paucis*' ('and purge yourself of negligence with the few', translation my own).
[41] On the figure of the *homo viator*, see Michael W. Twomey, 'homo viator' in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. by Larissa Taylore *et al.* (Brill: Leiden, 2012) [consulted online 25 October 2021], Franco Cardini, *Homo viator: il pellegrinaggio medievale* (Viareggio: La Vela, 2019), esp. pp. 238-239 on the etymology of *pellegrinus*; Gerhart B. Ladner, '*Homo Viator*: Medieval Idea on Alienation and Order', *Speculum*, 42.2 (1967) 233-259.
[42] Singleton notes, the strong sense of return in *Purgatorio* I 'this scene matches the prologue in so many essential features that the whole prologue action seems somehow to happen again – but with the all-important difference noted: the conversion is unsuccessful in the first instance, and succeeds in the second.' Singleton, '*In Exitu*', p. 168.

journey ('Io non Enëa, io non Paulo sono' [32]), in *Purgatorio* II the will to ascend ('va col cuore') and reflection on the journey ahead is present and it is instead the body presents a barrier to the beginning of the journey.

As we have seen, *Purgatorio* II has received much treatment as a canto which warns against the dangers of spiritual 'backsliding', or, to use Augustinian terminology, of the perils of confusing *uti* and *frui*; of becoming distracted by our enjoyment of the journey the things of the world and thus, like the newly arrived souls 'quasi oblïando d'ire a farsi belle' (*Purg.* II, 75), forgetting the destination.[43] In addition to such moralistic readings of the canto, it is worth noting that the pilgrim's hesitancy at this point appears to feed into the canto's wider interest in the uncertainty of the landscape. This uncertainty is not only demonstrated by the pilgrim, but also by the souls who arrive from the river Tiber via the angelically piloted vessel discussed in Chapter 1:

> La turba che rimase lì, selvaggia
> parea del loco, rimirando intorno
> come colui che nove cose assaggia. (*Purg.* II, 52-54)

The adjective 'selvaggia' may be evocative of the 'selva selvaggia e aspra e forte' of *Inferno* I (5) – though it is used here to describe the souls' state of ignorance rather than the landscape for which only the neutral 'loco' is used. The adjectives 'aspra e forte' occur a few lines later when Virgil describes the path they have taken to Purgatory, 'per altra via, che fu sì aspra e forte' (65), offering here a strong recall to line 5 of *Inferno* I (where the same formula appears in rhyme position) and thus, paradoxically, returning to the beginning of the journey while also marking it as completed. The newly arrived souls ask Virgil for directions, causing Virgil to admit to their inexperience of the new place:

[43] For Augustine's discussion of *uti* and *frui* see, Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, bk 1, 4, pp. 15-16.

> E Virgilio rispuose: 'Voi credete
> forse che siamo esperti d'esto loco;
> ma noi siam peregrin come voi siete. (*Purg.* II, 61-63)

The imprecise deictic element *esto loco* echoes the previous use of the noun *loco* (53) and the way it too had suggested an indefinite and uncertain landscape a few lines earlier. As we saw in Chapter 1, the reader has arguably been prepared for the re-appearance of the Ulyssean lexeme *esperti* by the shared rhyme pattern with *Inferno* XXVI in *Purgatorio* I (130-136) and the use of the adjective *esperto* (132). When *esperti* is again pronounced on the shores of the island of Purgatory, which Ulysses only glimpsed from a distance, the reader is thereby invited to contrast the Ulyssean desire to become 'del mondo esperto' (*Inf.* XXVI, 98) with desire for the summit of the mountain within the context of pilgrimage, that is, with the desire that recognizes the limits of expertise and the status as traveler.[44] Here, Dante provocatively contrasts the adjective *esperti* with the noun *peregrin*, implying that to be a pilgrim entails being *inesperti.* Perhaps, more precisely, being a pilgrim entails navigating in a non-Ulyssean mode, that is, not following one's own unrestrained and exclusively human desire for superior knowledge, but rather waiting for guidance. Through this recall to Ulysses, then, Dante thus instills a moral and religious value into a state of uncertainty and hesitancy, building on the importance given to humility and the recognition of limits established through the recalls to *Inferno* I and XXVI in *Purgatorio* I as discussed in Chapter 1.

The excommunicates whom the pilgrim and Virgil encounter in *Purgatorio* III continue this representation of uncertainty and timorousness through the comparison with sheep slowly exiting their pen:

[44] On pilgrimage and desire, see Elena Lombardi, *The Wings of Doves,* p. 98-100. More recently see her '*Purgatorio* 1 e 2'.

Come le pecorelle escon del chiuso
a una, a due, a tre, e l'altre stanno
timidette atterrando l'occhio e 'l muso;
e ciò che fa la prima, e l'altre fanno,
addossandosi a lei, s'ella s'arresta,
semplici e quete, e lo 'mperché non sanno: (*Purg.* III, 79-84)

This simile clearly recalls the *topos* of the Christian community as a sheepfold, evoking the Biblical parable of the one lost sheep which must be sought against logic and utility.[45] The simile invites the reader to imagine the landscape through the Biblical parable: 'quis ex vobis homo qui habet centum oves et si perdiderit unam ex illis nonne dimittit nonaginta novem *in deserto* et vadit ad illam quae perierat donec inveniat illam.'[46] The excommunicates, who have gone astray enough to cause their excommunication, are here found in a deserted landscape. Charles Singleton additionally notes the resonance with verses from Psalm 78 which commemorates Exodus: 'et perduxit eos tamquam gregem in | deserto; et deduxit eos in spe et non timuerunt' where the Israelites are compared to sheep whom God leads through the desert.[47] The simile of the sheep is thus evocative of the landscape of the parable of the one lost sheep from the New Testament and of the Israelites being led out into the desert in Exodus from the Old Testament, continuing the Biblical resonances from *Purgatorio* I and II. Perhaps the most intriguing element in both of these Biblical references is the emphatic need for guidance. The sheep-like souls encountered in *Purgatorio* III thus represent the Christian community as one which is fallible and which requires direction and supervision.

[45] See Kirkpatrick, 'The Sheepfold of the Excommunicates' p. 33-34.
[46] Luke 15.4 ('Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?' *NSRV,* p. 1859). See also Matthew 18.12-14.
[47] See Charles Singleton, *Purg.* III, 79-87. Psalm 78, 52-53 ('Then he led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid', *NSRV*, p. 838).

Durling and Martinez note the parallels between the exclusion of the neutrals and cowards in *Inferno* III and the exclusion of the excommunicates in *Purgatorio* III, suggesting that 'the solidarity and shyness of the elect (especially in lines 79-84, where they are like sheep […]) is meant to recall the despairing separateness of the damned souls'.[48] It is worth adding to this observation that while the excommunicates follow each other 'e lo 'mperché non sanno', the damned souls in *Inferno* III appear less ignorant and uncertain in their movements: 'pronti sono a trapassar lo rio, | ché la divina giustizia li sprona' (*Inf.* III, 124-125).[49]

The ignorance of the excommunicates is also placed in contrast with the wise inhabitants of *Inferno* IV. The rhyme pattern *stanno*: *fanno*: *sanno* is used on one other occasion in the *Commedia,* in *Inferno* IV in reference to the philosophers who reside eternally in Limbo, including, of course, Aristotle and Plato who were mentioned by Virgil earlier in the canto in Virgil's speech 'contenti … al *quia*' (*Purg.* III, 37-45). As we saw in Chapter 2, Virgil had here signaled their damnation in Limbo and the limitations of human knowledge – though human knowledge had previously been celebrated in *Inferno* IV. Interestingly here, while the excommunicated souls 'lo 'mperché *non sanno*' (repeated in line 93: 'non sappiendo 'l perché'), in Limbo the pilgrim spots ''l maestro di color che *sanno*', opposing ignorance and the Christian humility of the sheep-like excommunicates with the grandeur and wisdom of the noble pagans.[50] Later, in *Purgatorio* XVI, Marco Lombardo will again validate simplicity and a lack of knowledge in the discussion on free will: 'l'anima semplicetta che sa nulla' (88).[51] The knowledge and 'suspension' ('sospesi' [*Inf.* IV, 45]) of the philosophers in

[48] See Durling and Martinez, 'Inter cantica' notes to Canto 3 in *Purgatorio*, p. 63.
[49] See discussion in Chapter 1, section 3.
[50] See also Virgil's insistence on the pilgrim's understanding of the noble pagans' virtue and damnation: 'Or vo' che sappi' (*Inf.* IV, 33) and 'E vo' che sappi' (*Inf.* IV, 62).
[51] See also *Conv.* IV, xii, 16.

Limbo appears to be opposed with the ignorance and wandering of the souls in *Purgatorio* III, highlighting the importance of Christian virtue and humility over rationality and knowledge alone.

In *Purgatorio* II and III the mode in which the newly arrived souls and the excommunicates navigate and move across the empty landscape with uncertainty and trepidation contrasts with the crowded infernal chaos of *Inferno* III and IV, but also places new value in inexpertise. This state of relative ignorance is contrasted with Ulysses' desire to become 'del mondo esperto' in *Purgatorio* II, while in *Purgatorio* III the portrayal of the excommunicates as lost sheep contrasts with the pagan knowledge in *Inferno* IV while also serving as a powerful reminder of the need for guidance. Indeed, at the beginning of the pilgrim's journey, Cato asserts this same need for guidance: 'lo sol vi mosterrà' (*Purg.* I, 107).[52] Through an exploration of modes of moving across the landscape in early cantos which recall and contrast with modes of movement in *Inferno* we can develop alternative readings of Ante-Purgatory where hesitancy is perhaps not reflective of a state of negligence, but rather acts as a humble admission of the need for guidance.

2.2 *Ruine* in Ante-Purgatory

The landscape of *Purgatorio* IV is one of strenuous ascent. Though the pilgrim experiences some difficulty in the climb between the Gates of Purgatory and the Terrace of Pride (*Purgatorio* X, 7-21), the climb in *Purgatorio* IV is the most physically demanding part of the journey on Mount Purgatory. The height of the cliff was first presented in *Purgatorio* III where it is described as 'l'alta ripa' (71) and then

[52] See Introduction, section 4.2.

referred to again by Manfred as 'questa ripa' (138). The formula *alta ripa* is again used once the pilgrim and Virgil have scaled the cliff and arrived at 'la scoperta piaggia' (*Purgatorio* IV, 35). The noun *ripa,* Antonio Lanci notes, 'ricorre spesso nella descrizione topografica dell'Inferno,'[53] denoting the high walls of the various circles and *bolge* but is also used in *Purgatorio* in reference to the mountain's steep cliff face.

The formula *alta ripa* appears in *Inferno* XI, and *Inferno* XVII. In *Inferno* XI it is in reference to the entrance into the seventh circle (Violence) where Dante notes the 'alta ripa' (*Inf.* XI, 1) as a topographical feature at the beginning of the canto. It is on the extremity of this cliff-edge that the two travelers must wait for their senses to adjust, triggering Virgil's explanation of Hell's structure. In *Inferno* XVIII it marks the important transition into the eight circle (Fraud) in the description of the Malebolge (XVIII, 8). In *Purgatorio* III and IV the formula appears in quick succession, before and after the climb and is used on one final occasion in *Purgatorio* X to describe the first impression of the terrace of pride: 'al piè de l'alta ripa che pur sale, | misurrebbe in tre volte un corpo umano' (*Purg.* X, 24-15), additionally echoing the pilgrim's arrival at the 'piè del monte' in *Purgatorio* III (46).

The *alta ripa* formula recalls infernal topography through use of the noun *ripa* to denote a steep slope or 'wall' of rock. The difficulty of the climb also appears to recall movement across infernal topography, though in *Purgatorio* IV the narrowness of the path represents an important development on Hell's cavernous landscape. The two travelers enter through ''l sasso rotto' (31) indicated by the excommunicates (18) and

[53]Antonio Lanci, 'ripa', *ED*, IV, pp. 968-69. Lanci notes the overlap between *ripa* and *riva*, but suggests that *ripa* is usually used to mean *pendio* or *costa* while *riva* tends to refer to the *sponda, spiaggia* or *costa.* In *Purg. riva* is only used three times to refer to the 'parete' of a terrace, and always in rhyme position (*Purg.* IV, 138; XI, 49; XXVII, 7-9) where it appears to refer to an edge. The noun *ripa* appears 28 times in the *Commedia,* 18 times in *Inferno* and 10 in *Purgatorio.*

begin the steep climb.[54] Both the height of the cliff-face and the narrowness of the path are communicated through two pseudosimiles, in quick succession. The first describes the narrowness of the entrance (*Purg.* IV, 19-22),[55] and the second re-articulates the height of the cliff face, affirming that the initial slopes in Ante-Purgatory are steeper than any mountain pass in Italy:

> Vassi in Sanleo e discendesi in Noli,
> montasi su in Bismantova e' n Cacume
> con esso i piè; ma qui convien ch'om voli;
> dico con l'ale snelle e con le piume
> del gran disio, di retro a quel condotto
> che speranza mi dava e facea lume. (*Purg.* IV, 25-30)

Christopher Kleinhenz has noted that these toponyms represent the four compass points: East (San Leo), West (Noli), North (Bismantova) and South (Cacume) so that 'these four places thus reinforce the sense of geographic totality: no place else on earth is so rugged.'[56] While in the northern hemisphere these summits are achievable with just physical effort, here in Ante-Purgatory, a spiritual element is also required. In Ante-Purgatory, then, we see that an alternative mode of climbing is required, namely with 'wings of desire'. This alternative mode of travel is again explored in Virgil's explanation of the nature of the mountain later in the same canto (88-96) in which he explains that the climb gets easier the closer one is to the summit: 'quant'om più va sù, e men fa male' (90).

Virgil's dismay before the imposing height serves to undermine his authority as a guide, but also creates the opportunity for the pilgrim to resolve the problem by

[54] On images of 'brokenness' in Ante-Purgatory, see: Stern, '"What Good Would Climbing Do?", pp. 46-60.
[55] See Nicola Fosca, *Purg.* IV, 19-24 who notes two biblical resonances. Matthew 7.14: 'quam angusta porta et arta via quae ducit ad vitam et pauci sunt qui inveniunt eam' ('For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it' *NSRV*, p. 1756). Proverbs 15.19: 'iter pigrorum quasi sepes spinarum via iustorum absque offendiculo' ('The way of the lazy is overgrown with thorns, but the path of the upright is a level highway' *NSRV*, p. 914).
[56] Christopher Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View: Dante's Use of Perspective', *MLN*, 127.1 (2012), (Italian Issue Supplement), 225-232 (p. 229).

looking around for help (something which was not possible in *Inferno*). Furthermore, Dante appears to employ different perspectives here in his shaping of the landscape, combining a horizontal interest in the narrow width of the passage, followed directly by an affirmation of imposing height.[57]

Furthermore, these lines are strikingly similar in formulation to the first description of the steep ascent in *Purgatorio* III:

> Tra Lerice e Turbìa la più diserta,
> la più rotta ruina è una scala,
> verso di quella, agevole e aperta. (*Purg.* III, 49-51)

Initially compared to the landscape of the Ligurian coastal mountains, the poet seems to expand his geographical frame of reference to the whole of Italy which nonetheless falls short of describing the *alta ripa* as the rugged coast is a stairway by comparison. [58] Besides generally recalling infernal topography, the re-emergence of the infernal lexeme *ruina* is used to describe the rugged landscape between two points on the Ligurian coast.[59] As mentioned above, Singleton's celebrated essay on retrospection takes the use of the word *ruina* as an example of 'pattern visible only from the end an "in memory"', but his consideration of the *ruina* does not extend to an exploration of landscape or to the unique use of the noun to describe landscape in *Purgatorio.*[60] However, I suggest that in *Purgatorio* IV, the recall of infernal *ruina* informs an

[57] See Kleinhenz, 'The Bird's-Eye View' for additional examples. Kirkpatrick also notes of *Purg.* III that the events takes palce in 'hinterland, dominated equally by the daunting vertical of the mountainside and by a vast horizontal distance', 'The Sheepfold of the Excommunicates' p. 25.
[58] See Lanci, 'ripa', on the variants of this line '*la più romita riva* in luogo di *la più romita via* nel controverso passo di *Pg* III 50, ove l'edizione Petrocchi sceglie invece la lezione *la più rotta ruina*.', p. 968.
[59] Lerici is a seaport on the eastern side of the gulf of La Spezia (Liguria). La Turbie, formally on the Ligurian coast, is now a village near Nice, France. The two points thus mark the most eastern and western points on the coast of Liguria in Dante's day. See Singleton's note to *Purg.* III, 49.
[60] Singleton, 'The Vista in Retrospect', p. 62. Other uses of the noun *ruina* in *Purgatorio* are both in reference to the destruction of a town or community rather than as a landscape feature: *Purg.* XII, 55-56 and *Purg.* XXIV, 81.

important landscape echoe which, in turn, informs the reader's understanding of Virgil's limitations.

Dante previously had to scale a *ruina* in *Inferno* XXIV (22-75) where, after Virgil had been deceived by the devils, the two travelers were forced to escape down the ruin of the bridge, broken at the moments of Christ's crucifixion, into the circle of the hypocrites. Interestingly, this topographical feature is also termed 'la ripa dura' (*Inf.* XXIII, 43) in the famous passage which describes Virgil's fleeing down the rockface with the pilgrim in his arms. As in the case of the gates of the City of Dis, the *ruina* in *Inferno* XXIV is a topographical feature which is particularly associated with Virgil's limitations as a pagan guide. Indeed, the ruins were not there on his previous journey through Hell before Christ's crucifixion and thus draw our attention to the manner in which the landscape of Hell has changed since Dante's first journey through Hell, shortly before the crucifixion.[61]

As was also seen in *Inferno* XII, Virgil's ignorance of the changed landscape parallels his ignorance of Christ. In *Inferno* XII he speaks hesitantly of the event: 'se ben discerno' (37); 'ch'io pensai che l'universo sentisse amor' (41-42), and the formula 'Or vo' che sappi' (34) recalls its double usage in *Inferno* IV when Virgil stresses his damnation with the other noble pagans (*Inf.* IV, 33 and 62).[62] The same insistent formula is used here at another moment where Virgil stresses his exclusion from Christian knowledge and salvation alongside an encounter with a second *ruina.* Similarly, in *Purgatorio* III and IV, the *alta ripa*, more ruinous than the Ligurian coastline, serves to demonstrate Virgil's limitations as a guide, causing him to despair at the height: 'Or chi sa da qual man la costa cala […] sì che possa salir chi va

[61] See *Inf.* IX, 22-24: 'Ver è ch'altra fiata qua giù fui, | congiurato da quella Eritón cruda | che richiamava l'ombre a' corpi sui.' See Simon Gilson, 'Medieval Magical Lore', esp. pp. 41-45.
[62] Howard notes the repeated use of this formula in *Inf.* IV and XII. See *Virgil, the Blind Guide*, pp. 30-31.

sanz'ala?' (*Purg.* III, 52-54). The description of the *alta ripa* with its recourse to infernal *ruine* thus appears to recall the moments Virgil struggled with the topography of Hell. The difference in Purgatory, of course, is that this landscape is non-threatening, and Virgil is not tricked by devils or concerned with avoiding the Minotaur in this instance.

In the climb up the *ruina* in *Inferno* XXIV and the *alta ripa* in *Purgatorio* IV, there are a number of similarities. In *Inferno* XXIV, the poet repeatedly draws attention to the pilgrim's weight and physical fatigue: 'ma tenta pria s'è tal ch'ella ti reggia' (30); 'Non era via da vestito di cappa' (31); 'ei lieve e io sospinto' (32); 'ben vinto' (36); 'La lena m'era del polmon sì munta' (43); 'non potea più oltre' (44). Similarly, the steepness and the difficulty of the climb in *Purgatorio* IV is communicated through reference to the pilgrim's body, so that the reader understands the steep ascent through the pilgrim's exhaustion: 'e piedi e man volea il suol di sotto' (*Purg.* IV, 33); 'io era lasso' (43); 'infin quivi ti tira' (46); 'mi sforzai carpando' (50); 'Là ci traemmo' (103); 'quella angoscia | che m'avacciava un poco ancor la lena' (115-116). In both climbs, the pilgrim calls out to Virgil to wait and is motivated by Virgil to continue on (*Inf.* XXIV, 43-45 and *Purg.* IV, 43-45). However, in *Purgatorio* IV, Virgil's words are far kinder ('"Figliuol mio", disse, "infin quivi ti tira"' [46]), while in *Inferno* XXIV, the guide is harsher, interpreting the pilgrim's fatigue as laziness, triggering a speech from Virgil on the need for valiant resolve ('Omai covien che tu così ti spoltre…' [46-57]). Furthermore, Virgil cites fame as a motivation for battling up the *ruina* in *Inferno* XXIV, 'ché, seggendo in piuma, | in fama non si vien' (47-48), while in *Purgatorio* IV the goal is clearly not fame, but rather the 'lo sommo' (40) of the mountain.[63]

[63] See also Virgil's explanation of the mountain's logic (*Purg.* IV, 88-96) which places focus on the continuous upward ascent. On the thorny issue of Virgil's appeal to fame, see Robert Hollander, *Inf.* XXIV, 49-51 and Margherita Frankel, 'Dante's Anti-Virgilian *villanello*', *Dante Studies* (1984), 102, 94-95. See also Chapter 2, section 2.1 on fame.

The recall of the climb in *Inferno* XXIV is triggered by the use of the word *ruina* in *Purgatorio* III, and by situational and landscape echoes in the climb described in *Purgatorio* IV. Additionally, the twin pauses in the two climbs offer diverse reflections on the surrounding landscapes. While in *Purgatorio* IV, the pause in the climb is used as an opportunity to look back to the 'bassi liti' (55) and reflect on the position of the sun and the position of Purgatory in the southern hemisphere (61-84), in *Inferno* XXIV the bottom of the previous *bolgia* cannot be seen 'per lo scuro' (71). Moreover, in *Inferno* XXIV, Virgil appears to anticipate the landscape of Purgatory and perhaps even specifically the climb up the initial mountain slopes in *Purgatorio* IV: 'Più lunga scala convien che si saglia; | non basta da costoro esser partito' (*Inf.,* XXIV, 55-56). Through this landscape echo in *Purgatorio* IV, then, Dante reminds the reader of the physical challenges of Hell, but installs key differences, including the opportunity for reflection and re-orientation in *Purgatorio* IV and the assurances that in Purgatory, the journey will get increasingly easier.

3. Retrospection in the Valley of the Princes

3.1 A Triptych of 'Pleasant Places'

The ideal landscape of the Earthly Paradise is one of the more studied landscapes within the *Commedia.*[64] The landscape at the summit of the mountain, which Richard Lansing has termed the 'dramatic middle' of the poem,[65] is a 'remarkable literary *tour*

[64] See Bleeth 'Narrator and Landscape'; Pegoretti, *Dal lito diserto*; Pertile, *La puttana e il gigante*; A. Bartlett-Giamatti, *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Simone Bregni, *Locus amoenus. Nuovi strumenti di analasi nella Commedia* (Ravenna: Longo, 2020); Masciandaro, *Dante as Dramatist*; Caron Ann Cioffi, '"Il cantor de' bucolic carmi": The Influence of Virgilian Pastoral on Dante's Depiction of the Earthly Paradise', in *Dante: The Critical Complex*, ed. by Richard Lansing, 8 vols (New York; London: Routledge, 2003), II, *Dante and Classical Antiquity: The Epic Tradition*, pp. 387-413; Peter Dronke, 'Dante's Earthly Paradise'.

[65] As opposed to the formal middle which occurs between *Purg.* XVI and XVII. Richard Lansing, 'Narrative Design in Dante's Earthly Paradise,' *Dante Studies,* 112 (1994), 101-113 (p. 101).

de force',[66] drawing on pagan pastoral, the myth of the Golden Age, and the biblical myth of the Earthly Paradise. Therefore, before exploring the manner in which the landscape of the Valley of the Rulers strongly recalls Limbo, I will briefly outline some of the literary traditions informing the depiction of the ideal landscape.

The cantos concerning the Valley of the Princes have been more usually considered within a different triptych; 'i tre canti di Sordello': *Purgatorio* VI, VII, and VIII.[67] *Purgatorio* VI is itself particularly noted for its part in a vertical reading of the 'political 666s', leading Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi to signal its role in 'il grande trittico di ispirazione politica'.[68] Picone argues that *Purgatorio* VII reframes the political discourse of the previous canto in the famous apostrophe 'Ahi serva Italia' as the seventh canto 'passa al quadro europeo dall'Italia, quasi anticipando la visione universale dell'impero Cristiano in *Paradiso* VI.'[69] Moving away from a strictly political relationship between the three cantos, Franco Masciandaro argues that many of the themes and impulses which drive the episode in the *valletta* are already found in *Purgatorio* VI; chiefly, he signals the desire for what he terms 'a hasty return to Eden'.[70]

The relationship between the cantos of the Valley, the Earthly Paradise, and *Inferno* IV, however, has not gone unnoticed. The Valley in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII

[66] Lansing, 'Narrative Design', p. 102.
[67] Michelangelo Zaccarello notes that is a habit of modern Dante scholarship, see 'Lettura di *Puragtorio* VIII,' *Dante Studies* 124 (2006), 7-23 (p. 8 and note 3). See also Scott, 'The Sordello Episode (*Purgatorio* VI-VIII)', in his *Dante's Political Purgatory,* pp. 96-127; Honess, 'Divided City, Slavish Italy, Universal Empire'. Giuseppe Ledda has read *Purgatorio* VII, VIII and IX together as part of the *Esperimenti danteschi* series, though with no pretensions to establishing an alternative triptych across these cantos. See Ledda, 'VII-VIII-IX', pp. 71-104.
[68] Chiavacci Leonardi, *Purg.* VIII, *Proemio.*
[69] Michelangelo Picone, 'All'ombra di Sordello: una lettura di *Purg.* VII', *Rassegna europea di letteratura italiana*, 12 (1998), 61-77, pp. 62-63. Simon Gilson and Brenda Deen Shildgen have explored *Purgatorio* VII and VIII with their vertical counterparts. See Simon Gilson, 'The Wheeling Sevens' and Brenda Deen Schildgen, 'Civitas and Love: Looking Backward from Paradiso viii', in *Vertical Readings*, I, pp.143-160 and pp. 161-179.
[70] Masciandaro, *Dante as Dramatist.* See particularly pp. 146-158 on *Purg.* VI.

has been frequently and readily associated with the Earthly Paradise due to the description of the *valletta* as a *locus amoenus,* a topos which Simone Bregni has defined as 'la rappresentazione, in letteratura o nelle arti figurative, di un luogo ameno descritto come un magnifico giardino'.[71] The Valley has also been associated with Limbo.[72] Benvenuto da Imola explicitly reflects on the similarity of the two *loci amoeni* in his commentary: 'et quia descripserat locum illustrium paganorum IIII capitulo Inferni herbosum et clarum sub divo, nunc maiori arte describit locum illustrium christianorum modernorum sub tecto montis.'[73]

Giuseppe Ledda, in a reading of *Purgatorio* VII, VIII and IX, briefly notes the fact that the pleasant place, the lush, green grass and the narrative structure of *Purgatorio* VII and VIII tie the Limbo of the Pagans and the Valley of the Princes together.[74] Others have noted the tie between Limbo and the Valley for their magnanimous occupants.[75] Anna Pegoretti, who focusses on the creation of Purgatory's *paesaggio*, points out the resonances between Earthly Paradise, the Limbo of the noble pagans and the Valley of Rulers, arguing that, in both *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* VII, 'le delizie del Giardino sono solo "umbriferi prefazi" di quella che è la vera casa dei beati.'[76] Masciandaro offers a sustained reflection on the myth of the Earthly Paradise,

[71] Bregni, *Locus amoenus,* p. 13.
[72] The link is not uncommon in the commentary tradition, made by Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* VII, 73-81 and most recently by Nicola Fosca, *Purg.* VII, 133-136: 'L'episodio fa pensare al Limbo, che però non è un vero e proprio "luogo ameno": risalta ancor di più, di conseguenza, la situazione di Virgilio, che proprio in questo canto discute della propria condizione ultraterrena'. See also, Ledda, 'VII-VIII-IX,' p. 77; Bregni, *Locus amoenus*; Masicandaro, *Dante as Dramatist*; Luigi Surdich, '*Purgatorio* VII', in *Lectura Dantis Bononiensis*, VI, pp. 94-121.
[73] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* VII, 73-81 ('and as he described the grassy, light and open illustrious place of the pagans in chapter IV of *Inferno,* now with greater art he describes the illustrious place of the modern Christians under the summit of the mountain').
[74] Ledda, 'VII-VIII-IX,' p. 77.
[75] Fiorenzo Forti, 'Il drama sacro della "mala striscia". Grazia e magnanimità', in his *Magnanimitade*, pp. 83-101; Tito Bottagisio, 'Capo VIII. Parallelo tra il nobile castello dei Spiriti Magni nel Limbo e l'amena Valletta delle grandi Ombri nell'Antipurgatorio', in *Il limbo dantesco. Studi filosofici e letterati,* (Padova: Editrice Antoniana, 1898), pp. 143-191.
[76] Anna Pegoretti, *Dal 'lito diserto'*, p. 132. But see entire section 'I giardini lungo il cammino', pp. 124-132.

with attention to *Inferno* I, *Inferno* IV, *Purgatorio* I, *Purgatorio* VII and VIII and the Earthly Paradise cantos, as he traces the myth across the poem.[77]

Most recently, Simone Bregni has devoted a volume to considering the *locus amoenus* motif across the *Commedia,* arguing that Dante combines references to classical and Biblical texts to establish the *topos* of the pleasant place before undermining it through reference to Scripture.[78] Bregni argues that Dante develops this trajectory in order to incite desire in the reader for the true Earthly Paradise (and by extension the Celestial Paradise), but also that this deliberate tension between pagan and Christian intertexts nurtures the notion of the superiority of Christian revelation over the limited pagan vision. Bregni's reflections on intertextuality and the *locus amoenus* topos are undoubtedly useful. However, he concentrates particularly on topographical features and his argument is particularly teleological, focusing more on the Earthly Paradise and the Celestial Rose as endpoint and thus viewing Limbo and the Valley exclusively as steps on the way. Though Limbo and the Valley undoubtedly prefigure the Earthly Paradise, I am more interested in exploring landscape echoes of Limbo in the Valley of the Princes and how these effect our reading of the Valley as a space and, more generally, Ante-Purgatory.

Following the approach developed in Chapter 2, I will suggest that landscape echoes are also used to develop links between Limbo and the Valley of Rulers. I will focus primarily on this retrospective relationship, but my exploration of the Valley as a landscape will be underpinned by the understanding that Valley's landscape is inescapably influenced by Dante's recourse to the *locus amoenus* topos, one which, medieval Christian readers would have associated with Eden. We have already seen

[77] Masciandaro, *Dante as Dramatist.* Though Masciandaro's work clearly draws Limbo, the Valletta and The Eathly Paradise together, he is more interested in the tragic elements present in each of these scenes and in tracing the arc of the pilgrim's return to Eden.
[78] Bregni, *Locus amoenus.*

how certain landscapes or modes of movement across landscapes in Ante-Purgatory appear to echo infernal landscapes. I will additionally suggest that the Valley nonetheless stands out as a particularly well-developed, complex, and striking landscape with prominent links to the landscape of Limbo. Furthermore, I will argue that *Purgatorio* VII differs particularly from *Inferno* IV in its artistic and meta-literary concerns so that the landscape description is designed to encourage the reader to examine the landscape and the events which take place within it more closely, or as Dante will put it in *Puragtorio* VIII, to 'sharpen their eyes' (*Purg.* VIII, 19-21).

Robert Curtius offers a seminal discussion of the *locus amoenus* topos, tracing its development from Homer's landscapes, through Theocritus' seventh *Idyll*, to the Arcadia of Virgil's *Eclogues* and the Elysian Fields of the *Aeneid.*[79] The use of the *topos* in the Virgil's afterlife is frequently cited by commentators as a source for the landscapes of both Limbo and the Valley, and in particular the following passage:

> Devenere locos laetos et amoena virect
> Fortunatorum nemorum sedeque beatas.
> Largior his campos aether et lumine vestit
> Purpereo, solemque suum, sua sidera norunt.[80]

Curtius notes that *amoenus* is 'Virgil's constant epithet for "beautiful" nature'.[81] In Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid*, this beautiful place is glossed as a place pertaining only to love where nothing is without utility: '"amoena" autem quae solum amore praestant, vel, ut supra (V, 734) diximus, quasi amunia, hoc est, sine fructu'.[82] From

[79] See Ernst Robert Curtuis, 'The Ideal Landscape', in his *European Literature*, pp. 183-202.
[80] *Aen.* VI, 638-641 ('[T]hey came to a land of joy, the pleasant lawns and happy seats of the Blissful Groves. Here an ampler ether clothes the meads with roseate light, and they know their own sun, and stars of their own.'), p. 576-7.
[81] Curtuis, 'The Ideal Landscape', p. 192.
[82] Servius, *Servii grammatici qui ferunur in Vergilii carmina commentarii,* ed. by Georg Thilo and Hermann Hagen, 3 vols in 4 (Leipzig: B.G. Teubneri, 1878-1902, repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), II, *Vol. 2. Aeneidos librorum VI-XII commentarii* (1883-84; repr. 2012), p. 89 ('lovely, but moreover, one which bestows only love, even, as we said above (V, 734), almost *amunia*, without fruitfulness', translation my own). See also Servius' commentary to *Aen.* V, 734, I, *Aeneidos*

Servius' commentary we also see that the *locus amoenus* topos, used to demonstrate satisfaction, peace, and harmony, also establishes strong connections between natural beauty and love.[83] In medieval poetry, the influence of this classical model continues, though there is some debate regarding how uniform and coherent the use of the topos was.[84] Nonetheless, the influence of the classical topos is seen in nature descriptions in lyric poetry, courtly romance, and philosophical works,[85] interwoven alongside religious imagery of Eden, the Song of Songs, the pagan Golden Age, Elysium, and pastoral poetry.[86] Indeed Caron Anne Cioffi argues that '[e]arly Christian depictions of the earthly paradise owed nearly as much to Virgil and other pagan authors as they did to the Bible'.[87]

In Ante-Purgatory, we find a second recourse to the *locus amoenus* topos in the Valley of the Rulers in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII. Dante pertinently begins the canto, however, with an explicit glance back to Limbo articulated through the exchange between Sordello and Virgil ('Luogo è là giù non tristo di martìri, | ma di tenebre solo' [*Purg.* VII, 25-26]) as discussed in Chapter 2. With Limbo in mind from the outset of *Purgatorio* VII, the situational and topographical echoes of *Inferno* IV appear all the more pertinent. In both *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* VII, the pilgrim is given a view of

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librorum I-V commentarii (1978-81; repr. 2012), p. 644: '"amoena" sunt loca solius voluptatis plena, quasi "amunia", unde nullus fructus exsovitur: unde *etiam* nihil praestantes "inmunes" vocamus' ('"lovely" denotes places which places filled only with pleasure, almost "amunia", from which nothing fruitful can be loosed: this is why we can that which produces nothing "inmunes" [unbound]', translation my own).

[83] Cioffi notes that it etymologically links *amor* and *amoenus.* Cioffi, 'The Influence of Virgilian Pastoral', p. 392.

[84] See Nathaniel B. Smith, 'In Search of the Ideal Landscape: From '*locus amoenus*' to '*parc du champ joli*' in the *Roman de la Rose*', *Viator,* 11.1 (1980), 225-243 who points to Dagmar Thoss' argument that Curtius has exaggerated the coherence. Smith cites Thoss in *Studien zum Locus amoenus im Mittelalter* (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1972).

[85] See for example, Alan of Lille's portrayal of the garden of Natura in his cosmological epic *Anticlaudianus,* as noted and cited by Dronke, 'Dante's Earthly Paradise', p. 392.

[86] See Smith, 'In Search of the Ideal Landscape,' p. 226. On the garden landscape in the Song of Songs see James, *Landscapes of the Song of Songs.* See also Derek Pearsall and Elizabeth Salter, 'The Landscape of Paradise', in *Landscapes and Seasons,* pp. 56-75. On Dante's use of the Golden Age myth, see Florence Russo, *Dante's Search for the Golden Age* (New York: Forum Italicum, 2011).

[87] Cioffi, 'The Influence of Virgilian Pastoral', p. 392.

the souls who inhabit the respective *loci amoeni* from an elevated bank or ridge. This topographical feature in fact looks back to *Aeneid* VI where Anchises shows Aeneas the future rulers in a valley from a high vantage point, providing obvious strong parallels with both the long list of pagans in *Inferno* IV and Sordello's pointing out of past negligent rulers in *Purgatorio* VII.[88] The relevance of this situational echo is additionally persuasive for the occurrence of a shared rhyme pattern which coincides in both cases with the description of the elevated point of view:

> Genti v'eran con occhi tardi e gravi,
> di grande autorità ne' lor sembianti:
> parlavan rado, con voci soavi.
> Traemmoci così da l'un de' canti,
> in loco aperto, luminoso e alto,
> sì che veder si potien tutti quanti. (*Inf.* IV, 112-117)

> Di questo balzo meglio li atti e 'volti
> conoscerete voi di tutti quanti,
> che ne la lama giù tra essi accolti.
> Colui che più siede alto e fa sembianti
> d'aver negletto ciò che far dovea,
> e che non move bocca a li altrui canti, (*Purg.* VII, 88-93)

The rhyme pattern *quanti*: *sembianti*: *canti* is used in both cantos at the moment in which the poet describes the position from a higher vantage point. Indeed, the syntagm 'tutti quanti' is repeated in both cases in an almost identical context, that is, in reference to being able to better observe all the souls below. These are the only two cases of this rhyme pattern in the *Commedia.*[89]

The manner in which the pilgrim and Virgil reach Limbo and arrive at the viewpoint invites comparison of *Inferno* IV and *Purgatorio* VII. In Limbo, the pilgrim

[88] See Ledda, 'Canti VII-VIII-IX', p. 73 and Joan Ferrante, *The Political Vision of the 'Divine Comedy'* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 218. The *planh* by Sordello on the death of Blacatz is another important source Sordello's speech at the end of *Purg.* VII.
[89] See Punzi, *Rimario*, p. 75.

passes through 'la selva […] di spiriti spessi' (*Inf.* IV, 66) before he glimpses the fire (68-69) which distinguishes the noble pagans from the thick crowd of unbaptized souls. Virgil is greeted by Homer, Ovid, Horace, and Lucan (79-90) and the pilgrim is also accepted among them (100-102). Welcomed by these honorable poets, Dante is escorted towards the light, across the river, and through the seven walls of the 'nobile castello' to 'un prato di fresca verdura' (111) where the pilgrim sees the other noble inhabitants of Limbo. In Limbo, then, the area inhabited by the noble pagans is distinguished and demarcated by a number of features (the fire, the river, the castle, and the green grass), and Virgil and the pilgrim are welcomed and led from what would appear to be the outskirts (somewhere near the fire) into the heart of the Limbo of the noble pagans, the 'loco aperto, luminoso e alto' where the pilgrim sees the ranks of famous heroes, heroines, and philosophers. Though we know the noble pagans are clearly separated from the other unbaptized souls there is nonetheless no one, clear topographical division separating them from the rest of Limbo.

In *Purgatorio* VII, from the edge of the valley, the pilgrim and Virgil have a chance to observe the landscape from a raised viewpoint before Sordello points out the rulers in the Valley (*Purg.* VII, 91-136).[90] While in Limbo the poet does not develop the landscape in detail, in *Purgatorio* VII three *terzine* are dedicated to the Valley's appearance and perfumes:

> Oro e argento fine, cocco e biacca,
> indaco, legno lucido e sereno,
> fresco smeraldo in l'ora che si fiacca,
> da l'erba e da li fior, dentr' a quel seno
> posti, ciascun saria di color vinto,
> come dal suo maggiore è vinto il meno.
> Non avea pur natura ivi dipinto,

[90] On the descriptions of souls in Limbo and the Valley, Mark Musa points out that 'Dante has learned from Virgil the technique of clearly outlining individuals in a group, yet at the same time showing them as a group.' Mark Musa, *Advent at the Gates,* p. 102. Cf. *Aen.* VI, 757-866.

ma di soavità di mille odori
vi facea uno incognito e indistinto. (*Purg.* VII, 73-81)

The *enumeratio* of precious materials is constructed with sounds alternating between open, liquid sounds 'oro e argento fine |legno lucido e sereno' and the harsher, plosive 'cocco e biacca', 'indaco' and the almost onomatopoeic 'fiacca'. The adjectives used to qualify these already rich materials, 'fine', 'lucido e sereno' again denote delight.[91] Commentators have frequently suggested that Dante draws on the model of the Provençal *plazer* which lists a series of aesthetically pleasing things.[92] This detailed description of the landscape is all the more marked due to the particular scarcity of landscape description in *Purgatorio* V and VI so that the Valley jumps out as '[l]'unica zona di verde nell'asprezza pietrosa della montagna'.[93]

Dante's description, it is often noted, draws greatly on a lexical field associated particularly with artists' materials in the Trecento; gold and silver powders were used by painters, while 'cocco' was a crimson colour and 'biacca' was a pure white extracted from lead.[94] Similarly, 'indaco' refers to a bright-blue colour, an exotic material obtained from Indian wood which was also used by painters, while the 'fresco smeraldo in l'ora che si fiacca' offers an obvious tie to precious gemstones.[95]

It is interesting to note that the bright emerald-green grass described in *Purgatorio* VII recalls the verdant grass in Limbo which is similarly described with recourse to technical artistic materials, namely, enamel or glaze: 'Colà dritto, sovra 'l

[91] Michelangelo Zaccarello suggests this passage is linked to the building of God's altar in *Exodus.* '"*Te lucis ante* sì devotamente…": The Depiction of a Liturgical Space in the Princes' Valley (*Purgatorio* VIII)', in *I luoghi nostri. Dante's natural and cultural spaces*, ed. Zygmunt G. Barańksi, Andreas Kablitz, Ülar Ploom (Tallin: Tallin University Press, 2015), pp. 161-175, at pp. 161-162. See also Surdich, '*Purgatorio* VII', p. 104 on 'diletto'.
[92] See especially Guido Cavalcanti, 'Biltà di donna', in *Rime,* ed. by Roberto Rea and Giorgio Inglese (Rome: Carocci editore, 2016), pp. 52-55. *Purg.* VII, 73 appears to echo Guido's 'oro, argento, azzuro 'n ornamenti' (8).
[93] Anna Pegoretti, *Dal lito diserto*, p. 129.
[94] Chiavacci Leonardi, *Purg.* VII, 73.
[95] See Chiavacci Leonardi, 'Nota integrativa' to *Purg.* VII.

verde smalto | mi fuor mostrati li spiriti magni' (*Inf.* IV, 118-19).[96] Not only does the use of artistic materials offer an interesting echo across the two landscapes, but 'smalto' occurs again in rhyme position in *Purgatorio* VIII as a metaphor for verdant grass to indicate the Earthly Paradise: 'Se la lucerna che ti mena in alto | truovi nel tuo arbitrio tanta cera | quant'è mestiere infino al sommo smalto' (*Purg.* VIII, 114-16). In this manner, the three 'pleasant places' are linked together in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII through reference to artistic materials in the description of their landscapes.

Through the use of these precious materials, we are also reminded of the opening lines of the *narratio* in *Purgatorio* I: 'Dolce color d'orïental zaffiro, | che s'accoglieva nel sereno aspetto' (*Purg.* I, 14), through the adjective 'sereno' and the reference to a precious stone.[97] Here, in *Purgatorio* VII, however, Dante takes the comparison a step further. These vibrant colours, we are told (unlike the pre-dawn sky in *Purgatorio* I) would be incomparable to the colours of the flowers and the grass in the valley. The flowers are not the grammatical subject of these *terzine* and the description is more evocative of an artist's colour pallet or a collection of gems than of flora and fauna. This relationship with artistic materials is further supported by the poet's punning use of the verb 'dipingere' at line seventy-nine. Bartlett-Giamatti has argued that the reference to precious materials and gems gives the Valley 'the aura of an 'artifact', that is, a thing consciously created by Nature (and the poet) as Eden was created by God.'[98] This artificiality can be seen as an indication of the Valley's imperfection, and its status as a 'pale reflection'[99] of the ultimate *locus amoenus* which

[96] See Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso, 'smalto' in *ED*, V, pp. 274-5. See also *Inferno* IX, 52 for the process of petrification with reference to Medusa.
[97] For the suggestion that this comparison the vivid image of emerald being broken 'ci fa entrare nelle botteghe fiorentine dei tagliatori di pietre preziose' see: Gino Casagrande, ''Fresco smeraldo in l'ora che si fiacca' (*Purg*. 7.75) e l'interpretazione di André Pézard', *EBDSA* (12 February 2013) https:||www.princeton.edu|~dante|ebdsa|casagrande021213.html [accessed 2 April 2022].
[98] Bartlett-Giammatti, *The Earthly Paradise*, p. 99. See also Denise Heilbronn for a reading of the valley's beauty as artificial: 'Dante's Valley of the Princes', *Dante Studies* 90 (1972), 43-58 (p. 50).
[99] Joan Ferrante, *The Political Vision,* p. 218.

the pilgrim will find on the summit of the mountain. However, as Bartlett-Giamatti goes on to suggest, this artificiality equally suggests that 'the Valley is *too* overtly made, that too much care is expended on its visible aspects.' The rich and exotic materials referenced in the description of the Valley perhaps gesture to the earthly riches its guests possessed in their earthly lives, providing 'the proper setting for those who tended to the external and secular world to the detriment of higher concerns.'[100]

However, though the rich materials used to describe the valley may be evocative of the rulers' own riches or even their overly acute interest in earthly wealth, it is important to remember that Nature is overpowering human art in these *terzine*: 'come dal suo maggiore è vinto il meno' (78), painting the landscape not only with supernatural colours, but also with incomparable perfumes.[101] However, it is of course explicitly *not* Nature who is doing the 'painting' here, but rather the poet who is poetically shaping and adorning this landscape for the reader. The *terzine* devoted to the landscape description, then, function meta-poetically. On the one hand, we appear to be asked to look beyond the surface appearance of the Valley with its 'artificial' or artistic elements and link this artificiality with the Valley's inhabitants and their specific form of negligence. On the other hand, the engagement with complex arguments surrounding art and nature is much more expansive. The concern with art and landscape not only serves as a fundamental distinction between the landscape of Limbo (where there is no overt concern with art linked to the landscape) and that of the Valley, but also looks ahead to the divine art of the landscape of the Terrace of Pride in *Purgatorio* X-XII, and ultimately the Earthly Paradise where Nature responds directly linked to God's will.[102]

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[100] Bartlett-Giammatti, *The Earthly Paradise*, p. 99.
[101] See Michelangelo Zaccarello, '*Purgatorio* VIII', 7-23. Simon A. Gilson, 'Divine and Natural Artistry in the *Commedia*', in *Nature and Art in Dante: Literary and Theological Essays*, ed. by Daragh O'Connell and Jennifer Petrie (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013), pp. 153-187. See p. 175 on *Purg.* VII.
[102] See *Purg.* XII, 64-9. In Earthly Paradise, Matilde explains that the rivers do not follow the water-cycle, but rather 'dal voler di Dio riprende, | quant'ella versa' (*Purg.* XXVIII, 125-126).

In the final section of this chapter, I will argue that the descent into the Valley physicalizes the action of 'pushing beyond the surface appearance' via a movement *into* the landscape, requiring the reader to participate in the 'sacra rappresentazione'. This call to engage actively with the spectacle in *Purgatorio* VIII is equally reflected in the poet's address to the reader: 'Aguzza qui lettor gli occhi al vero'. However, in *Purgatorio* VIII the landscape also shifts from a secure, luxuriant and enclosed valley, to a landscape which is suddenly and surprisingly open and which is ritually invaded each evening by the serpent.

3.2. 'Or avvalliamo omai': The Descent into the Valley

As has been explored so far in this chapter, the landscape of the Valley looks back to Limbo and ahead to Earthly Paradise, through the use of the *locus amoenus* topos. The 'sacra rappresentazione' also gestures towards the Earthly Paradise with its Edenic references, two angels with flaming swords (evoking the angels charged with guarding the way to the tree of life) descend to protect the rulers from the serpent which invades the Valley each evening. [103] Indeed, Iannucci describes this ritual performance as 'a kind of mystery play which contains both paradise lost and paradise regained'.[104] Though much has been written on the spectacle of *Purgatorio* VIII and the particularly accentuated liturgical elements in the Valley, I will continue my focus on landscape to explore how some of the ambiguities surrounding the Valley might impact on our understanding of 'la rappresentazione sacra' and reflect the landscape of Limbo.[105]

[103] Genesis 3.24.
[104] Amilcare Iannucci, 'The Nino Viconti Episode in *Purgatorio* VIII', *La Fusta: Journal of Italian Literature and Culture*, 3.2 (1978), pp. 1-8.
[105] On the performative elements of liturgy, see particularly Helena Phillips-Robins, *Liturgical Song and Practice in Dante's Commedia* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2021). See also Matthew Treherne, *Dante's Commedia and the Liturgical Imagination* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020). On liturgical elements in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII, see Musa, 'In the Valley of the Princes', in *Advent at the Gates,* pp.

Though Dante does not leave his readers in doubt over the fate of the noble pagans who are all eternally damned to Limbo, the landscape of Limbo is used to separate them from the unbaptized and looks ahead to the Earthly Paradise, offering the noble pagans a more pleasant abode and more dignity than any other souls in Hell. The landscape of the Valley functions in a similar manner in Ante-Purgatory, separating the rulers from the other negligent souls in a luxuriant and restful space. However, just as Dante's noble pagans are both venerated and damned, the poet's treatment of the negligent rulers is similarly double-edged; they are fortunately placed within verdant and beautiful valley, but they are nonetheless classed as negligent and inept in performing their duties as rulers in *Purgatorio* VII (91-136).

The topographical feature of the ridge first highlighted in *Purgatorio* VII, 70-72 functions, in part, as a frame, moving the reader from the role of passive observer, gazing at the landscape, to active participant in the scene which takes place *within* the landscape:

> E Sordello anco: 'Or avvalliamo omai
> tra le grandi ombre, e parleremo ad esse;
> grazïoso fia lor vedervi assai'.
> Solo tre passi credo ch'i' scendesse,
> e fui di sotto, e vidi un che mirava
> pur me, come conoscer mi volesse. (*Purg.* VIII, 43-48)

With the fact that in only three paces the pilgrim is already among the souls, the Valley is revealed to be surprisingly shallow. In *Purgatorio* VII, Sordello's promise of a better view of 'li atti e ' i volti' of the rulers was arguably suggestive of a higher vantage point and the reader's impression of the height of the Valley's 'balzo' would have been feasibly influenced by the echoes of *Inferno* IV, with its grand list of forty noble

185-110, Andrew McCracken, '*In Omnibus viis tuis*': Compline in the Valley of the Rulers, *Dante Studies* 111 (1993), 119-127.

pagans, and the strong links to the intertext of *Aeneid* VI where the high vantage point gives Aeneas a prophetic vision of future rulers of Rome. There is a sense of grandeur associated with the landscape in *Inferno* IV and in the *Aeneid* which appears to be absent in the Valley.

The scene instead becomes suddenly more intimate; with only three steps the pilgrim is already in the valley and instantaneously greeted affectionately by Nino Visconti (49-60) with the warm detail of the darkness not concealing their identities from one another: 'tra li occhi suoi e' miei | non dichiarisse ciò che pria serrava.' (*Purg.* VIII, 50-51). The pilgrim's swift descent into the valley and subsequent interaction with souls in the Valley and participation in the 'sacra rappresentazione' contrasts with the grandeur of the list of noble pagans in *Inferno* IV who remain at a distance. Moreover, while in Limbo the grand list of pagans is followed by separation as 'la sesta compagnia' divides, in *Purgatorio* VIII, the pilgrim descends swiftly into the Valley where he is immediately welcomed.

The intimacy and warmth of the pilgrim's welcome by Nino contributes to a sense of refuge and protection within the Valley. This is arguably set in motion, however, before the pilgrim glimpses the valley when Sordello points it out from afar:

> 'Colà,' disse quell' ombra, 'n'anderemo
> dove la costa face di sé grembo;
> e là il novo giorno attenderemo.' (*Purg.* VII, 67-69)

The noun *grembo* has an anatomical significance, referring to the lap and thus being particularly suggestive of warmth and affection, but also of refuge and protection.[106] The protective element becomes clearer with the second use of the noun in *Purgatorio* VIII to describe the provenance of the angels 'del grembo di Maria'. This is typically

[106] Bruna Cordati Martinelli, 'grembo', *ED*, III, pp. 473-474: '*grembo*, in generale indica rifugio e protezione' (p. 473). Cf. *Inf.* XII, 119; *Purg.* V, 75.

read with reference to the Bosom of Abraham as Lazarus is carried there by two angels: 'et portaretur ab angelis in sinum Abrahae.'[107] The use of the noun in relation to Mary renders the protective element associated with the Valley particularly Marian, a quality which resonates especially with the liturgical performances in the two cantos. The souls sing the Marian antiphon *Salve Regina* and subsequently in *Purgatorio* VIII, *Te lucis ante,* a request for protection from the darkness.[108] Though Virgil refers to Mary and her role in the Incarnation in *Purgatorio* III, 39, and Buonconte da Montefeltro dies with Mary's name on his lips (101), Marian imagery in Ante-Purgatory is generally not as pronounced as it is on the terraces where Mary is the first example of each virtue on every terrace. The nexus of Marian and maternal imagery and references in *Purgatorio* VII-VIII thus perhaps signals a transition to Mary's prevailing presence in Purgatory-proper.

Interestingly, the landscape of the Valley is also described metaphorically with another body part: the chest. In the description of the valley's vegetation, the flowers and grass are 'dentr' a quel seno' (*Purg.* VII, 76) with *seno* being used here used to indicate the curved or concave shape of the valley. Moreover, Domenico Consoli notes that 'per altra assunzione figurata, ha analogia col "grembo" materno'.[109] The anatomical terms associated with the valley's shape, a lap, and a chest, paired with the appearance of angels from Mary's bosom are suggestive of a hollowed-out place of refuge, perhaps even associated with human embrace.

These anatomical terms used to describe the form of the Valley represent the Valley as a space of enclosure (the souls cannot be seen from outside the Valley), but

[107] Luke 16.22 ('and was carried away by the angels to the Bosom of Abraham' translation my own).
[108] The full text and translation to both of these hymns can be found in Singleton's commentary.
[109] Domenico Consoli, 'seno' *ED*, V, p. 163. Consoli points to *Conv.* I, iii, 4 'Poi che fu piacere de li cittadini de la bellissima e famosissima figlia di Roma, Fiorenza, di gettarmi fuori *del dolce seno* – nel quale nato e nutrito fui in fino al colmo de la vita mia…' (italics my own). See also *Purg.* VI, 85-87 where it is used to refer to conscience.

also of refuge and protection. The landscape thus appears to reflect (or to be reflected in) the requests for protection voiced in *Salve Regina* and *Te lucis ante*. However, despite this protective element distinguishable in the landscape, the Valley is also a space which is ritually invaded by the serpent each evening. In her consideration of the influence of Virgilian pastoral on Dante's Earthly Paradise, Caron-Anne Cioffi draws attention to the presence of death which often mars the idyllic Arcadian world which points to 'the tenuous nature of human happiness within the pastoral landscape' and suggests that Dante's Earthly Paradise is not free from conflict.[110] It is a *locus amoenus* where the pilgrim is finally reunited with Beatrice, but it is equally a space associated with lust through the encounter with Matilde, where he must confront his disloyalty to Beatrice, where Virgil disappears and where the violent events afflicting the Chariot and its horrific transmogrification take place in the allegorical pageant. Similarly, in the Valley, the ritual invasion of the serpent so succinctly affirmed through Sordello's use of the future tense ('lo serpente che *verrà* vie via' [*Purg.* VIII, 39]), reflects this theme of the tenuous nature of human happiness. Indeed, at an allegorical level, the certainty with which the serpent will approach at the same time each evening is suggestive of the inevitability of the Fall.

Crucially, however, in the Valley, souls are beyond temptation. When Sordello first signals the serpent's impending arrival, the pilgrim glances around in fear: 'Ond' io, che non sapeva per qual calle, | mi volsi intorno' (*Purg.* VIII, 40-41) while Sordello remains unperturbed. The pilgrim's fear of the serpent is contrasted with Sordello's lack of concern as he points out the serpent to Virgil, interrupting his reflection on the 'quattro chiare stelle' (91) seen on the shore:

> Com' ei parlava, e Sordello a sé il trasse
> dicendo: 'Vedi là 'l nostro avversaro';

[110] Cioffi, 'The Influence of Virgilian Pastoral', pp. 388-89. See, for example *Eclogue* 1 and 9.

e drizzò il dito perché 'n là guardasse.
Da quella parte onde non ha riparo
la picciola vallea, era una biscia,
forse qual diede ad Eva il cibo amaro.
Tra l'erba e' fior venìa la mala striscia,
volgendo ad ora ad or la testa, e 'l dosso
leccando come bestia che si liscia. (*Purg.* VII, 94-102)

Here the landscape, coloured by the pilgrim's fear of the serpent, becomes a landscape to be invaded imminently and the serpent enters the valley by the part which is not sheltered, 'onde non ha riparo', suggesting a section in the valley which merges with the slope and therefore has no bank, or, perhaps as Benvenuto da Imola and Anonimo Fiorentino suggest, the part of the valley which is not sheltered by the mountain.[111] The landscape that previously seemed entirely enclosed and safe, now, all of a sudden, has a point of entry. The Valley is now termed 'picciola vallea' – the first and only instance in which a diminutive adjective is attached to the noun.[112] We realise that the snake would always have approached from this unsheltered part of the Valley, and this space of refuge begins to look like the perfect place for an ambush. The image of the snake slithering through the grass and flowers is particularly powerful. Our perspective of the landscape has changed completely. Formerly on the 'lembo' Dante had described the beauty of the flowers and grass and the souls who sat singing '*sul* verde e '*n su*' fiori'. Here, the snake slides '*tra* l'erba e' fior'. We are at the centre of the action and viewing the landscape now from within the valley, and, briefly, we feel the pilgrim's fear for the presence of the serpent, the 'mala striscia'.

So far, we have seen that the Valley is a space of protection and refuge, but also of ritual invasion. The souls who reside there are beyond temptation, yet the temptation

[111] Benvenuto da Imola, *Purg.* VIII, 97-99 and Anonimo Fiorentino, *Purg.* VIII, 97-99.
[112] Despite the fact that critics and readers frequently refer to *la valletta,* the diminutive form is never used by Dante. In *Purg.* VII: 'a guisa che i *vallon* li sceman quici' (66) and 'che per *la valle* non parean di fuori' (84). In *Purg.* VIII: 'a guardia de *la valle*' (38).

of Eden is staged and thwarted each evening. If there is supposed to be any pedagogical value to this repeated encounter with the serpent each evening, then it appears to be lost on the princes who remain unconcerned and do not even watch the performance (110-11) – though this could equally be due to the pilgrim's unprecedented and unusual presence in the Valley that evening. Furthermore, the descent into a valley is more typically associated with movement through the landscape of Hell where *valle* stood metonymically for the conical shape of Hell, but also for its various undulations. Descent is also memorably present in *Inferno* I when the pilgrim descends into a valley before he is rescued by Virgil, retrospectively reflecting on this moment to Brunetto as the location of his perdition: 'mi smarri' in una valle' (*Inf.* XV, 50).[113] While descent in *Purgatorio* I was a clear marker of humility (*Purg.* I, 112-114), in *Purgatorio* VIII there is no clear indication of an allegorical significance and, indeed, the line is usually glossed literally.

Why, then, does Dante place the negligent princes in such an ambiguous and problematic landscape? Edward Peters has considered the motif of the *rex inutilis* in *Purgatorio* VII and notes that such rulers were characterized by negligence, and inability to produce a capable heir, military incompetence, and other vices such as *acedia*.[114] He points out that the princes in Dante's Valley as listed by Sordello at the end of *Purgatorio* VII appear to demonstrate these qualities in abundance.[115] Moreover, Pope Innocent IV wrote the category of *rex inutilis* into canon law, thereby giving legal significance to a much older political *topos.* Peters traces the complex history of the *topos*, noting that at the time of writing the *Commedia* Dante's representation of the

[113] See, for example, *Inf.* IV, 8; 'la valle d'abisso doloroso'; *Inf.* XVII, 98; *Inf.* I, 14.
[114] See Edward Peters, 'I principi negligenti di Dante e le concezioni medioevali del *Rex inutilis*', in his, *Limits of thought and power in Medieval Europe* (Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 741-757 (p. 746) and more broadly in his *The Shadow King: 'Rex Inutilis' in Medieval Law and Literature,* 751-1327 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).
[115] Peters, 'I principi negligenti', p. 741-747.

negligent princes reflects an ambivalent position concerning kingship: '[s]ebbene non sembrasse di poterlo condannare per la sua mancanza, neppure lo si perdonava completamente'.[116]

A similarly ambiguous attitude towards rulers is perhaps seen in a fresco by Buonamico Buffalmacco located in the Camposanto in Pisa, 'Il trionfo della morte' (1328).[117] The right half of the fresco depicts a richly dressed group, clearly at leisure, surrounded by trees and with two cherubim with green wings and flaming swords hovering above them. Though there can clearly be no clear claim for direct influence on Dante's poem, the fresco bears a striking resemblance to Dante's valley.[118] However, despite their relaxed postures, Death clearly makes his way towards this group, scythe in hand, while they appear ignorant or unconcerned by his approach. Though the fresco is dated after Dante's death, it was nonetheless painted around the time in which Edward Peters suggests that attitudes towards rulers where changing. Furthermore, the separation of these figures within an ideal landscape echoes the separation of the rulers in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII and both idyllic landscapes are under threat but without any reaction from the individuals placed within the landscape.

The pleasant, enclosed landscape in both Buffalmacco's fresco and Dante's poem, then, perhaps speaks to the ambivalent and changing attitudes towards inept rulers in Dante's time. The Valley of the Rulers is a place of beauty and luxury which, as discussed above, has been read as revealing materiality and concern with earthly goods, but might equally serve to mark the rulers as more worthy (as is the case in Limbo). The Valley is a space of refuge and protection but equally a space of staged ambush and, though the souls in the Valley may not be at risk, the allegorical

[116] Peters, 'I prinicipi negligenti', p. 757.
[117] Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della Morte* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974; repr. Milan: 5 Continents, 2003).
[118] I am grateful to George Corbett for this observation.

significance of the invasion of a garden-like space remains clear. Are we simply to read the ritual invasion as innocuous, staged temptation, or is the poet hinting at how the rich and powerful are more easily tempted on earth? In *Purgatorio* VIII, the pilgrim's fear serves to provide what we as readers might consider to be an apt reaction to the imminent arrival of the serpent, while the negligent princes appear unconcerned by the imminent invasion. This may perhaps point towards the military ineptitude associated with the old political *topos*, or at a spiritual level, to the ease with which the rich and powerful fail to notice and defend themselves from temptation.

Dante appears to exploit the topographical feature of the raised viewpoint, not only to look back to *Inferno* IV, but also to negotiate and dramatize a change in the reader's view of the landscape. The descent into the Valley marks a transition from the view of the Valley of Rulers as a quasi-idyllic space of refuge, to a space which is ritually invaded by the serpent. The shift in perspective from the external, raised view-point to a more horizontal perspective from within the Valley itself emphasizes the transition from observer to active participant, encouraging the reader to consider the implications of the 'sacra rappresentazione' for the rulers (who seem unconcerned by its arrival), but for the living who are still vulnerable to temptation. The complexities of landscape are enhanced by the staging of the ritual invasion which threatens the protective space each evening. The ambiguities surrounding this landscape perhaps indicate ambivalence or indecision on the part of the poet (but also by society at the time) towards inept rulers.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that landscape reading can provide previous unexplored grounds for retrospective reading within the *Commedia.* Landscape reading appears particularly important within the Ante-Purgatory cantos because of the ambiguous

topography provided by the poet. I have concentrated on two important shifts in the landscape of Ante-Purgatory, exploring the new value given to inexpertise in *Purgatorio* II and III and the manner in which *Purgatorio* IV recalls the landscape of *Inferno* thereby contributing to the exploration of Virgil's problematic role as guide within the second *cantica*.

The Valley of the Negligent Rulers stands out within the Ante-Purgatory cantos, (and within *Purgatorio* as a whole) as particularly developed landscape. The marked attention given to the landscape of the Valley as something to be observed or gazed upon in *Purgatorio* VII is notable within the Ante-Purgatory cantos where arguably no other landscape is 'framed' and described in the same manner. Indeed, the next moment in which Dante will require his reader to gaze so intently upon a material feature of the environment is in the reliefs on the Terrace of Pride which emphasize awe-inspiring divine creative power. Dante exploits the landscape of the Valley to look back to Limbo, and in particular the common topographical feature of a ridge which offers a high-vantage point to look down on the souls in Limbo and the Valley. However, in the *Purgatorio* VIII, the landscape shifts between a series of opposites: refuge and trap, luxuriant leisure and shadowy artifice; a space where temptation is staged yet never truly feared. These ambiguities reveal conflicting elements in the treatment of the negligent princes which reflect societal changes at the time, but also recall the poet's ambiguous treatment of the virtuous pagans.

Epilogue

‘Di fuor torna chi ’n dietro si guata’: Looking Back to Ante-Purgatory

Dante’s most concise (and probably most-quoted) description of Ante-Purgatory comes relatively late in *Purgatorio*. It is found in canto XXIII in the exchange with Forese Donati where the liminal zone is described as ‘dove tempo per tempo si ristora’ (84) and ‘la costa ove s’aspetta’ (89).[1] These two ‘glosses’ on Ante-Purgatory highlight three key aspects of Ante-Purgatory: firstly, the centrality of time within the logic of Ante-Purgatory and the importance place on the time spent poorly; secondly, the sense of exclusion conveyed through the liminal geographical element, *costa*; and finally, the emphasis on waiting.

It is striking that the poet continues to ask his readers to look back to Ante-Purgatory even once the pilgrim and Virgil have already passed through the liminal zone. As Nicolò Crisafi has recently pointed out in his discussion of Dante’s teleological masterplot, narratives can be interpreted both forwards and backwards. The narrative unfolds forwards through a sequence of actions towards an unspecified outcome (proairetic), but narrative can also be understood backwards towards a known outcome which has been specified from the beginning (hermeneutic).[2] In the case of the *Commedia*, it would seem that even though we know from *Inferno* I the trajectory that the pilgrim’s journey will take towards Paradise (112-120), this journey nonetheless unfurls through a sequence of unknown actions. Thus, as Barolini has pointed out, the *Commedia* has a ‘severely overdetermined plot’: and yet it is not without surprise and

[1] Genaro Sasso discusses these lines in terms of ‘un problema strutturale’, see Sasso, *Purgatorio e Antipurgatorio: questioni di struttura,* p. 11-13

[2] See Crisafi, *Dante’s Masterplot,* p. 34-35. Crisafi uses terminology from Roland Barthes’ work, *S/Z.*

narrative interest.[3] As the narrative sequence of Dante's journey through the afterlife drives the poem forwards, the reader is often encouraged to piece together additional elements and details in retrospect. This impulse to look back, as we have seen, is particularly prominent in the Ante-Purgatory cantos, but even as the journey to the summit of the mountain continues, the reader is often encouraged to reflect on and re-evaluate the first day spent in Purgatory in retrospect. As Prue Shaw puts it, rephrasing Kirkegaaard's famous aphorism: 'We live forward, but we understand backwards'.[4]

In this epilogue, I will briefly consider some of the moments on the terraces which look back to Ante-Purgatory. In this manner, I will suggest that not only does retrospection remain important to our understanding of Ante-Purgatory throughout the *cantica*, but also that the recollection of Ante-Purgatory higher up the mountain appears to remain important to our progressive understanding of this realm. Ante-Purgatory continues to function as a central area for re-orientation as glances back to the liminal realm remain essential to the reader's understanding of the relationship between the damned and the saved, and between the living and the dead.

The frequent glances back to Ante-Purgatory from the terraces are perhaps particularly intriguing given the fact that the angel gatekeeper warns against looking back:

> Poi pinse l'uscio a la porta sacrata,
> dicendo: "Intrate; ma facciovi accorti
> che di fuor torna chi 'n dietro si guata." (*Purg.* IX, 130-31)

This warning has both classical and Biblical echoes. Firstly, the warning resonates with the story of Orpheus and Eurydice.[5] Secondly, as is commonly noted, the angel's words

[3] Barolini, *The Undivine 'Comedy',* p. 16.
[4] Prue Shaw, *Reading Dante: From Here to Eternity* (New York: Liveright, 2014), p. 134, cit. in Crisafi, *Dante's Masterplot,* p. 35.
[5] *Metam*. X.50-52

here allude to the episode in Genesis 19 in which Lot is instructed by angels not to look back to Sodom as he flees with his family. His wife, who does look back, is turned to a pillar of salt while Lot and his children go on to save themselves on the mountain ('in monte salvum').[6] The pilgrim resists the temptation to look back at the Gates of Purgatory as they swing shut behind him ('e s'io avesse li occhi vòlti ad essa, | qual fora stata al fallo degna scusa? [*Purg.* X, 5-6]), but Dante persistently asks the reader to re-consider Ante-Purgatory as the pilgrim and Virgil make their way up the mountain, establishing a clear difference between textual retrospection and the action of looking back within the narrative.

Furthermore, the climb up to the first terrace immediately recalls the climb up the 'alta ripa' in Ante-Purgatory. In the opening lines of *Purgatorio* X, there are several elements which appear to look back to and synthesize the landscape of Ante-Purgatory: the 'pietra fessa' (7) recalls the 'sasso rotto' (*Purg.* IV, 31); 'amendue incerti | di nostra via' recalls the hesitation of *Purgatorio* I and II, and 'un piano | solingo più che strade per diserti' (20-21) echoes 'lo solingo piano' (*Purg.* I, 118) and 'lito diserto' (*Purg.* I, 130).[7] Furthermore, in *Purgatorio* IX and XI, the pilgrim's mortal body is underlined with reference to Adam. Just before the pilgrim is carried up to the Gate of Purgatory by Lucia, he falls asleep for the first time in the poem: 'che meco avea di quel d'Adamo, | vinto dal sonno […]' (*Purg.* IX, 10-11), and upon meeting the first souls on the Terrace of Pride, Virgil informs them that the pilgrim is slow because of his mortal

[6] Genesis 19.17. Lot's wife is at Gen. 19. 26. Augustine interprets this passage in *De civitate Dei* bk 16, 30: 'Nam quo pertinet quod prohibiti sunt qui liberabantur ab Angelis retro respicere, nisi quia non est animo redeundum ad veterem vitam, qua per gratiam regeneratus exuitur, si ultimum evadere iudicium cogitamus? ('just as the command of the angels bidding those who were rescued not to look back was a reminder to us all, who hope to escape that ultimate doom, not to allow our wills to look back to the old life we put off when we put on the new life of grace.') Cited in Singleton, *Purg.* IX, 130. See also Fosca, *Purg.* IX, 130-132.

[7] See Enrico Rebuffat, 'Dentro la cruna (*Purg.* X, 7-16),' *L'Alighieri,* 53 (2019), 123-38 for some of the interpretative difficulties associated with this passage.

body: ‘questi che vien meco, per lo ’ncarco | de la carne d'Adamo onde si veste, | al montar sù, contra sua voglia, è parco.’ (*Purg.* XI, 43-45). Both the landscape echoes in *Purgatorio* X and the reference to Adam in *Purgatorio* XI serve to highlight the pilgrim’s fatigue and his fleshy body. Surprisingly, upon learning that the pilgrim is mortal, however, the prideful souls do not ask for prayers or suffrage from the pilgrim as souls in Ante-Purgatory did. Instead, one soul (who we eventually learn is Guglielmo Aldobrandeschi [59]) merely instructs Virgil and the pilgrim to follow them: ‘A man destra per la riva | con noi venite, e troverete il passo | possibile a salir persona viva’ (*Purg.* XI, 49-51). This very practical response to Virgil’s question is indicative of a change in behaviour on the terraces, serving to emphasise the urgency of souls in Ante-Purgatory in retrospect. However, the fact that Virgil and pilgrim are accompanied by the prideful souls the point where the pilgrim can ascend to the next terrrace equally recalls the manner in which the excommunicates conduct them to the opening in the wall of rock where they are able to begin their climb (*Purg.* IV, 18). In this manner, the motif of collective pilgrimage is continued, having been initiated in the Ante-Purgatory cantos by Virgil’s affirmation ‘noi siam peregrin come voi siete’ (*Purg.* II, 63) and which we explored in Chapter 3.[8]

This contrast with the requests for prayer in Ante-Purgatory and prayer in Purgatory-proper is apparent in the fact that on the Terrace of Pride, instead of asking for prayers, the souls pray for others:

> Nostra virtù che di legger s’adona,
> non spermentar con l’antico avversaro,
> ma libera da lui che sì la sprona.
> Quest’ultima preghiera, segnor caro,
> già non si fa per noi, ché non bisogna,
> ma per color che dietro a noi restaro. (*Purg.* XI, 19-24)

[8] The motif is returned to and developed in *Purg.* XIII, 94- 96: ‘ciascuna è cittadina | d'una vera città; ma tu vuo’ dire | che vivesse in Italia peregrina.’

As Singleton notes in his commentary to this canto, the modified *Paternoster* which opens *Purgatorio* XI is the only complete prayer recited in the entire poem.[9] The request to free ('libera') the living from temptation here looks back to opening canto and Virgil's affirmation that the pilgrim 'libertà va cercando' (*Purg.* I, 71). On the Terrace of Pride, however, the dynamic previously found in requests for prayer in Ante-Purgatory is reversed. Instead of souls beseeching the pilgrim for the prayers of others, the souls on the mountain pray for the living who can still be tempted by the devil. The striking contrast between souls asking for prayers from the living and souls praying for the living offers another example of the manner in which Dante strategically marks out difference between Ante-Purgatory and Purgatory-proper. All souls in Ante-Purgatory are saved and thus, like the souls on the terraces, are beyond temptation, as is evident even in the Valley of the Princes through the angel's ritual defense of the Valley against the serpent's nightly invasion which is recalled here through the noun 'avversario' ('Vedi là 'l nostro avversaro' [*Purg.* VIII, 95]). And yet there are and can be no prayers made for the living in Ante-Purgatory.

Other references to Ante-Purgatory on the terraces are made in the context of relating how some souls have skipped or had their time drastically shortened in Ante-Purgatory. This is the case with Provenzan Salvani (*Purg.* XI, 121-142), Sapia (*Purg.* XIII, 124-129) and Forese (*Purg.* XXIII, 76-90). In the case of Salvani, the pilgrim enquires as to how he has arrived at the first terrace so quickly, conveniently providing a recapitulation of the liminal zone now left behind:

> E io: "Se quello spirito ch'attende,
> pria che si penta, l'orlo de la vita,
> qua giù dimora e qua sù non ascende,
> se buona orazïon lui non aita,

[9] Singleton, *Purg.* XI, 1-21. See also Nicolò Maldina, 'L'"*oratio super pater noster*" di Dante tra esegesi e vocazione liturgica. Per *Purgatorio* XI, 1-24', *L'Alighieri*, n.s. 40 (2012), 89–108.

prima che passi tempo quanto visse,
come fu la venuta lui largita?" (*Purg.* XI, 127-132)

The pilgrim's question is framed using a particularly Ante-Purgatorial lexis. The verbs *attendere* and *dimorare*, the references to 'buona orazïon' and 'l'orlo de la vita' all compress key elements explored within the first nine cantos into two *terzine.* Furthermore, the deictic elements *qua giù* and *qua sù* underscore the geographical hierarchy between the liminal area below the Gates and Purgatory-proper. Dante clearly does not want his readers to forget about Ante-Purgatory quite yet.

In the encounter with Forese, the pilgrim is similarly surprised to see his friend so far up the mountain, as only five years have passed since his death: 'come se' tu qua sù venuto ancora? | Io ti credea trovar là giù di sotto' (*Purg.* XXIII, 83). This question recalls the pilgrim's first surprised address to a soul in Purgatory in *Purgatorio* II, when, having failed to recognize Casella (as he fails to recognize Forese), he asks his old friend: 'ma a te com' è tanta ora tolta?' (*Purg.* II, 93). While at the beginning of Ante-Purgatory the pilgrim was surprised to see his friend arriving three months after his death, on the Terrace of Gluttony he is shocked to see that Forese has reached the penultimate terrace in less than five years. Furthermore, Forese's swift ascent is usefully contrasted with the very precise and long timeframes stipulated by Statius in the previous canto (*Purg.* XXI, 67-68 and 91-92).

An even more striking recall to Ante-Purgatory is present in Forese's reply to the pilgrim:

Ond' elli a me: "Sì tosto m'ha condotto
a ber lo dolce assenzo d'i martìri
la Nella mia con suo pianger dirotto.
Con suoi prieghi devoti e con sospiri
tratto m'ha de la costa ove s'aspetta,
e liberato m'ha de li altri giri. (*Purg.* XXIII, 85-90)

In Forese's reply to the pilgrim, which includes the frequently cited gloss of Ante-Purgatory, we also find the rhyme pattern *martìri: sospiri: (ag)giri* that is found in Belacqua's lament to the pilgrim in *Purgatorio* IV:

> Ed elli: "O frate, andar in sù che porta?
> ché non mi lascerebbe ire a' martìri
> l'angel di Dio che siede in su la porta.
> Prima convien che tanto il ciel m'aggiri
> di fuor da essa, quanto fece in vita,
> per ch'io 'ndugiai al fine i buon sospiri, (*Purg.* IV, 127-132)

While Belacqua bemoaned the fact that he could not go 'a' martìri', here we find Forese on the other side of the Gates having been conducted to the terraces and having rapidly moved through various forms of *poena sensus* on the 'altri giri' which Belacqua was so desperate to begin. Through this shared rhyme pattern, which occurs between the two most quoted and succinct descriptions of Ante-Purgatory (*Purg.* XXIII, 84 and 89), the poet also recalls the encounter with Belacqua, perhaps the most memorably negligent soul in the first nine cantos, urging a contrast between souls who are accelerated up the terraces and those who are left behind, and spurring the reader to look back once again to Ante-Purgatory.

In this manner the poet encourages his readers to look back to Ante-Purgatory from the terraces on several occasions, just as the reader is spurred to look back to *Inferno* from the liminal zone. This thesis has demonstrated how Ante-Purgatory functions as a privileged textual space for retrospection, frequently looking back not only to opening cantos of the *Inferno* and the very beginning of the pilgrim's journey (I-IV), but also to key episodes within the first *cantica* such as *Inferno* XIII and *Inferno* XXVI. The retrospective echoes which look back to these two episodes underlines their centrality within the poem as a whole and prompts the reader to retain these cantos as markers or measures of the pilgrim's progress. I have argued that through these

retrospective elements – often with precise textual echoes and recalls of the earlier cantos – the poet encourages the reader's re-orientation in the new realm and establishes a number of contrasts between Hell and Purgatory. However, not all of these contrasts are separated into clear binaries, the most obvious and most powerful example of a residual 'problem' in Ante-Purgatory being Virgil's damnation and Cato's salvation. The question of Virgil's damnation will, of course, again return in the encounter with Statius, again cueing the reader to look back to Ante-Purgatory, and perhaps particularly the encounter with Sordello. In the Ante-Purgatory cantos, the difficult and unresolved issue of Virgil's damnation is developed through a programme of retrospective glances back to Limbo in which the fate of the virtuous pagans is repeatedly set against the often unexpected salvation of souls in Ante-Purgatory.

At a methodological level, this thesis has contributed to the investigation of intratextuality within the *Commedia*, building on earlier studies and recent growing interest in this field through a focussed and specific case study on Ante-Purgatory. By considering the manner in which a whole area of text looks back to earlier and important moments in the *Inferno*, I have shown how intratextual reading does not have to be limited to specific episodes. Instead, we can read a 'programme' of intratextuality through a whole series of retrospective elements which combine to encourage the reader to consistently look back to earlier moments in the text. Not only has this thesis pointed to a rich proliferation of allusions and echoes within the Ante-Purgatory cantos back to earlier parts of the poem, but it has also worked to broaden the manner in which we consider retrospective elements within the *Commedia* in three keys ways: firstly, by encouraging the freedom to read multiple recalls, echoes, and allusions to different cantos within a single canto. In this sense, strict adhesion to vertical reading of cantos of the same number appears to be of less value in the Ante-Purgatory cantos – though,

of course, the sixes offer a particularly strong example of the benefits of vertical reading and *Purgatorio* VI is, of course, found in this zone. Secondly, I have suggested that the poet strategically develops a series of retrospective elements across multiple cantos which gives us good cause to consider retrospection across blocks or groups of cantos. Finally, I have built on traditionally accepted and well established forms of intratextuality such as vertical echoes, parallel episodes, the repetition of formulas and rhyme patterns, by exploring less frequently referenced modes of allusion such as similarities in the presentation of certain figures, thematic correspondences between cantos. Finally, I have built on work done on landscape outside of Dante studies to suggest that landscape echoes also offer us a valid and useful mode of reading retrospection in Dante's work.

In the Ante-Purgatory cantos, though vertical readings and parallel episodes often present interesting resonances, the retrospective impulse in the opening cantos of *Purgatorio* is generally more wide ranging. I have revealed a number of recalls within the Ante-Purgatory cantos that previously went unnoticed and which contribute in significant ways to our understanding of the ambiguous zone and the role it plays in Dante's re-orientation of the reader. However, what really emerges from a consideration of retrospection in the Ante-Purgatory cantos as a whole is a consistent interest in select themes which cut across traditional formal boundaries. The result of this extended exploration of themes across nine cantos is the blurring of formal boundaries as thematic nuclei are spread across the entire zone, looking back in turn to specific areas of *Inferno* – namely the *Inferno* I-IV and *Inferno* XXVI. It is therefore advantageous to consider the Ante-Purgatory cantos as a coherent narrative block which purposefully and meaningfully looks back to the beginning of *Inferno*, to Limbo, and to the encounter with Ulysses.

Beyond the well-established parallels of the 6s, *Purgatorio* I and *Inferno* I offer particularly strong grounds for reading vertically – though, as we saw in Chapter 1, the echoes in the first canto go far beyond *Inferno* I. We saw how, in *Purgatorio* I the poet uses retrospective elements to return to a specific character – namely Ulysses. This recall of a specific figure functions as a method of measuring the pilgrim's progress not only since the beginning of his journey, but also the distance he has put between himself and Ulysses. Ulysses will of course return at other calculated points in the poem and will be evoked through similar strategies of retrospective echoing of earlier language associated with him, but his presence at the beginning of the second *cantica* is undeniably strategic. In *Purgatorio* I and II, the proximity to the specific location of Ulysses' shipwreck, the thematic exploration of divine prohibition and allowances emphasised through the encounter with Cato, the theme of journeying, and the use of Ulyssean lexis all spur the reader to recall the damned Greek hero in Hell and his fateful journey.[10] Furthermore, the opening two cantos of *Purgatorio* contain a particularly high concentration of retrospective elements which consistently look back to the beginning of the poem and to the 'key' episodes of *Inferno* XIII and XXVI. In this manner, it seems that in *Purgatorio* I and II, Dante establishes a retrospective mode that is then subsequently developed throughout the Ante-Purgatory cantos.

As we saw in Chapters 1 and 3, *Purgatorio* II presents strong recalls to both *Inferno* II and *Inferno* III, but also to *Inferno* XXVI. The pilgrim's hesitancy on the shores of Purgatory is reminiscent of the uncertain (re)beginning in *Inferno* II and appears to continue a pattern of multiple beginnings which Barolini identified in the

[10] Ulysses is particularly present in the mention of 'barca', 'legno' and seafaring in *Par.* II, 1-9 and in the repeated rhyme pattern *amore: l'adore*: *valore* in *Par.* XIV, 38-42 (Cf. *Inf.* XXVI, 95-99). The vertical correspondence with Adam's 'trapassar del segno' is well noted *Par.* XXVI, 117; as is the shadow of the Argo in *Par.* XXXIII, 96.

opening cantos of *Inferno*.[11] As we saw in Chapter 1, however, the most obvious echo of *Inferno* in the second canto, is found in the figure of the celestial *nocchiero* who recalls his infernal counterpart Charon, but also gestures to Ulysses' failed voyage to the same shores. We also saw how the movement of souls into Hell or Purgatory in *Purgatorio* II and *Inferno* III offers an interesting and new mode of reading the closing *terzine* of *Purgatorio* II. As seen in Chapter 3, Ulysses is additionally present in *Purgatorio* II through the interest in modes of travel and movement. The overreaching Ulyssean desire for expertise and knowledge is contrasted with the uncertainty and ignorance of the newly arrived souls. In this manner, new value is attributed to inexpertise on the shores of Purgatory.

Throughout this thesis, the issue of Virgil's damnation emerges time and again. This issue is initiated through the surprising presence of Cato as guardian in *Purgatorio* I (as was explored in Chapter 1) but is repeatedly returned to through recalls to Virgil's *Aeneid*, and through engagement with the interrelated themes of fame, the body, burial, and requests for prayer. While Limbo and Ante-Purgatory are physically distant in Dante's vision of the afterlife, they are both theologically innovative, and there is a degree of conceptual affinity between the two liminal zones where souls are 'sospesi' temporarily or eternally. By repeatedly recalling Limbo and Virgil's inevitable and eternal place in it, the poet encourages the reader to ponder the difference between natural and theological virtue, between pagan and Christian knowledge, between fame among the living and eternal life among the dead. These themes continue to be developed in the rest of *Purgatorio* and even into *Paradiso*, but the Ante-Purgatory cantos serve as a particular space for dramatizing and developing Virgil's fate. It is, however, important to note that the binaries which the poet appears to establish are

[11] Barolini, 'Infernal Incipits'.

similarly interrogated. Pagan fame, virtue, and knowledge do not go unadmired, and the poet's choice to damn the virtuous pagans and his beloved guide is not without a sense of regret which still affects readers today.

A similarly ambiguous representation of figures is found in *Purgatorio* VII and VIII where Dante places the negligent rulers in a lush, verdant Valley of flowers. In the most developed and decorative landscape of the *Purgatorio* (bar the Earthly Paradise), the rulers are both revered and disparaged. As we saw in Chapter 3, Dante recalls the landscape of *Inferno* IV in his presentation of the negligent rulers, but in *Purgatorio* VII our reading of the landscape is far more complex and meta-literary. The Valley of the Rulers is presented as both a place of refuge and of ritual invasion, an enclosed space of safety and a space of ambush. Dante does not offer his readers a clear mode for reading this particular landscape, instead leaving us hovering between reading the landscape as a space of privilege and luxury and a space which reveals the inadequacies of these earthly rulers.

Dante, then, uses retrospective elements persistently within the Ante-Purgatory cantos in order to re-orientate the reader at the beginning of the new *cantica*. We are encouraged to measure the pilgrim's progress since the beginning of the journey and since his encounter with Ulysses, to probe the thorny issue of Virgil's damnation, and to consider the manner in which salvation is often granted against expectations. The narratives of souls who are surprisingly saved in Ante-Purgatory affirm the boundless nature of grace, yet this grace is not extended to 'lo più che padre'. Though much of this is achieved through contrast with *Inferno*, the issue of Virgil's damnation which is explored consistently in cantos I-VIII remains unresolved and suspended, much like the souls who temporarily inhabit Ante-Purgatory and who eternally inhabit Limbo. Reading Ante-Purgatory retrospectively does not necessarily provide resolutions to

many of the complex theological issues explored within the first nine cantos. Nor are we able to narrate with any greater certainty the precise nature of souls' experience of the liminal zone. Instead, what we are left with after reading the Ante-Purgatory cantos with close attention to retrospective elements, is a sense of the importance and complexity of liminality and liminal figures in the first nine cantos. It is the liminal placement of Ante-Purgatory (at both a topographic and textual level) that provides us with the opportunity for retrospection and therewith an important lens for re-orientation after *Inferno* and for (re-)interpretation of *Inferno.*

Appendix 1: References to the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Nightfall in *Purgatorio*

Ante-Purgatory

Purg. I, 19-21	Lo bel pianeta che d'amar conforta faceva tutto rider l'oriente, velando i Pesci ch'erano in sua scorta	Venus (as morning star)
Purg. I, 22-24	I' mi volsi a man destra, e puosi mente a l'altro polo, e vidi quattro stelle non viste mai fuor ch'a la prima gente.	Stars
Purg. I, 28-30	Com'io da loro sguardo fui partito, un poco me volgendo a l'altro polo, là onde 'l Carro già era sparito	Stars
Purg. I, 107-108	lo sol vi mosterrà, che surge omai, prendere il monte a più lieve salita	Sun
Purg. I, 115-117	L'alba vinceva l'ora mattutina che fuggia innanzi, sì che di lontano conobbi il tremolar de la marina	Sun (implicit through dawn)
Purg. II, 1-9*	Già era 'l sole a l'orizzonte giunto lo cui meridian cerchio coverchia Ierusalèm col suo più alto punto; e la notte, che opposita a lui cerchia, uscia di Gange fuor con le Bilance, che la caggion di man quando soverchia; sì che le bianche e le vermiglie guance, là dov'i' era, de la bella Aurora per troppa etate divenivan rance.	Sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. II, 13-14	Ed ecco, qual, sorpreso dal mattino, per li grossi vapor Marte rosseggia	Mars (as morning star)
Purg. II, 55-57	Da tutte parte saettava il giorno lo sol, ch'avea con le saette conte di mezzo 'l ciel cacciato Capricorno	Sun
Purg. III, 16-18	Lo sol, che dietro fiameggiava roggio, rotto m'era dinanzi a la figura, ch'avea in me de' suoi raggi l'appoggio	Sun
Purg. III, 25-27*	vespero è già colà dov'è sepolto lo corpo dentro al quale io facea ombra; Napoli l'ha, e da Brandizio è tolto	Sun

Purg. IV, 13-15	Di ciò ebb'io esperienza vera, udendo quello spirito e ammirando; ché ben cinquanta gradi salito era lo sole, e io non m'era accorto, […]	Sun
Purg. IV, 55-60	Li occhi prima drizzai ai bassi liti; poscia li alzai al sole, e ammirava che da sinistra n'eravam feriti. Ben s'avvide il poeta ch'ïo stava Stupido tutto al carro de la luce, ove tra noi e Aquilone intrava.	Sun
Purg. IV, 67-75*	Ond' elli a me: "Se Castore e Poluce fossero in compagnia di quello specchio che sù e giù del suo lume conduce tu vedresti il Zodïaco rubecchio ancora a l'Orse più stretto rotare, se non uscisse fuor del cammin vecchio. Come ciò sia, se 'l vuoi poter pensare, dentro raccolto, imagina Sïòn con questo monte in su la terra stare sì, ch'amendue hanno un solo orizzòn e diversi emisperi; onde la strada che mal non seppe carreggiar Fetòn, vedrai come a costui convien che vada da l'un, quando a colui da l'altro fianco, se lo 'ntelletto tuo ben chiaro bada."	Sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. IV, 76-84	Certo, maestro mio," diss' io, "unquanco non vid' io chiaro sì com' io discerno là dove mio ingegno parea manco, che 'l mezzo cerchio del moto superno, che si chiama Equatore in alcun' arte, e che sempre riman tra 'l sole e 'l verno, per la ragion che di', quinci si parte verso settentrïon, quanto li Ebrei vedevan lui verso la calda parte.	Sun Pilgrim's rephrasing of Virgil's words.
Purg. IV, 135-139*	E già il poeta innanzi mi salvia, e dicea: "vienne omai; vedi ch'è tocco meridian dal sole, e a la riva cuopre la notte già col piè Morrocco"	Sun
Purg. VI, 52-57	E io: "Segnore, andiamo a maggior fretta, ché già non m'affatico come dianzi, e vedi omai che 'l poggio l'ombra getta."	Sun (implicit through reference to shadow of mountain)
Purg. VI, 52-57	Noi andrem con questo giorno innanzi ripuose, "quanto più potremo omai;	Sun

	ma ’l fatto è d’altra forma che non stanzi. Prima che sie là su, tornar vedrai colui che già si cuopre de la costa, sì che ’ suoi raggi tu romper non fai.	
Purg. VII, 43-44	Ma vedi già come dichina il giorno, e andar su di notte non si puote:	Sun
Purg. VII, 85	Prima che ’l poco sole omai s’annidi	Sun
Purg. VIII, 49	Temp’era già che l’aere s’annerava ma non sì che tra li occhi suoi e ’ miei non dichiarisse ciò che pria serrava	Nightfall
Purg. VIII, 85-93	Li occhi miei ghiotti andavan pur al cielo, pur là ove le stelle son più tarde, si come rota più presso a lo stelo. E ‘l duca mio: ‘Figliuol, che là su guarde?’ E io a lui: ‘A quelle tre facelle Di che ’l polo di qua tutto quanto arde’. Ond’elli a me: ‘Le quattro chiare stelle che vedevi staman, son di là basse, e queste son salite ov'eran quelle.’	Stars
Purg. IX, 1-9*	La concubina di Titone antico già s’imbiancava al balco d’oriente fuor de le braccia del suo dolce amico di gemme la sua fronte era lucente, poste in figura del freddo animale che con la coda percuote la gente e la notte, de’ passi con che sale, fatti avea due nel loco ov’eravamo, e ’l terzo già chinava in giuso l’ale quand’io, […]	Sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. IX, 44	e ’l sole er'alto già più che due ore	Sun

Purgatory-proper

Purg. X, 13-16	E questo fece i nostri passi scarsi, tanto che pria lo scemo de la luna rigunse al letto suo per ricorcarsi che noi fossimo fuor di quella cruna	Moon
Purg. XII, 73-75	Più era già per noi del monte vòlto e del cammin del sole assai più speso che non stimava l’animo non sciolto	Sun (not position)

Purg. XII, 80-81	[…] vedi che torna Dal servigio del dì l'ancella sesta. Di reverenza il viso e li atti addorna, sì che i diletti lo 'nviarci in suso; pensa che questo dì mai non raggiorna!'	Sun (midday)
Purg. XIII, 13-15	Poi fisamente al sole li occhi porse; fece del destro lato a muover centro, e la sinistra parte di sé torse. "O dolce lume a cui fidanza i' entro per lo novo cammin, tu ne conduci," dicea, "come condur si vuol quinc' entro. Tu scaldi il mondo, tu sovr' esso luci; s'altra ragione in contrario non ponta, esser dien sempre li tuoi raggi duci."	Virgil's 'prayer to the sun'
Purg. XV, 1-6*	Quanto tra l'ultimar de l'ora terza e 'l principio del dì par de la spera che sempre a guisa di fanciullo scherza, tanto pareva già inver' la sera essere al sol del suo corso rimaso; vespero là, e qui mezza notte era. E i raggi ne ferien per mezzo 'l naso, perché per noi girato era sì il monte, che già dritti andavamo inver' l'occaso […]	Sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. XV 139	Noi andavam per lo vespero, attenti Oltre quanto potean li occhi allungarsi Contra i raggi serotini e lucenti.	Evening
Purg. XVII, 9	Lo sole in pria, che già nel corcar era	Sun
Purg. XVII, 61-63	Or accordiamo a tanto invito il piede; procacciam di salir pria che s'abbui, che poi non si poria, se 'l dì non riede.	Nightfall
Purg. XVII, 70-72	Già eran sovra noi tanto levati li ultimi raggi che la notte segue, che le stelle apparivan da più lati.	Stars
Purg. XVIII, 76-81*	La luna, quasi a mezza notte tarda, facea le stelle a noi parer più rade, fatta com'un secchion che tuttor arda e correa contra 'l ciel per quelle strade che 'l sole infiammo allor che quel da Roma tra ' Sardi e ' Corsi il vede quando cade"	Moon, stars, sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. XIX, 1-6	Ne l'ora che non può 'l calor diurno	Moon

	intepidar più ’l freddo de la luna, vinto da terra e talor da Saturno – quando i geomanti lor Maggior Fortuna veggiono in oriente, innanzi a l’alba, surger per via che poco le sta bruna – mi venne in sogno una femmina balba […]	Saturn
Purg. XIX, 37-39	Su mi levai, e tutti eran già pieni de l’alto dì i giron del sacro monte, e andavam col sol novo a le reni.	Sun
Purg. XXII, 118-120	e già le quattro ancelle eran del giorno rimase a dietro, e la quinta era al temo, drizzando pur in su l'ardente corno	Sun
Purg. XXV, 1-3	Ora era onde ’l salir non volea storpio; ché ’l sole avea il cerchio di merigge lasciato al Tauro e la notte a lo Scorpio […]	Sun
Purg. XXVI, 4-6	feriami il sole in su l’omero destro, che già, raggiando, tutto l’occidente mutava in bianco aspetto il cilestro	Sun
Purg. XXVII, 1-6*	Sì come quando i primi raggi vibra là dove il suo fattor lo sangue sparse, cadendo Ibero sotto l’alta Libra, e l’onde in Gange da non riarse, sì stava il sole; onde ’l giorno sen giva come l’angel di Dio lieto ci apparse.	Sun Astronomical periphrasis
Purg. XXVII, 61-66	‘Lo sol sen va’, soggiunse, ‘e vien la sera; non v’arrestate, ma studiate il passo, mentre che l’occidente non si annera’. Dritta salia la via per entro ’l sasso verso tal parte ch’io toglieva i raggi dinanzi a me del sol ch’era già basso. Ed di pochi scaglion levammo i saggi, che ’l sol corcar, per l’ombra che si spense, sentimmo dietro e io e li miei saggi.	Sun / Nightfall
Purg. XXVII, 88-90	Poco parer potea lì del di fori; ma, per quel poco, vedea io le stelle di lor solere e più chiare e maggiori	Stars
Purg. XXVII, 94-96	Ne l’ora, credo, che de l’oriente, prima raggiò nel monte Citerea, che di foco d'amor par sempre ardente,	Venus (as morning star)

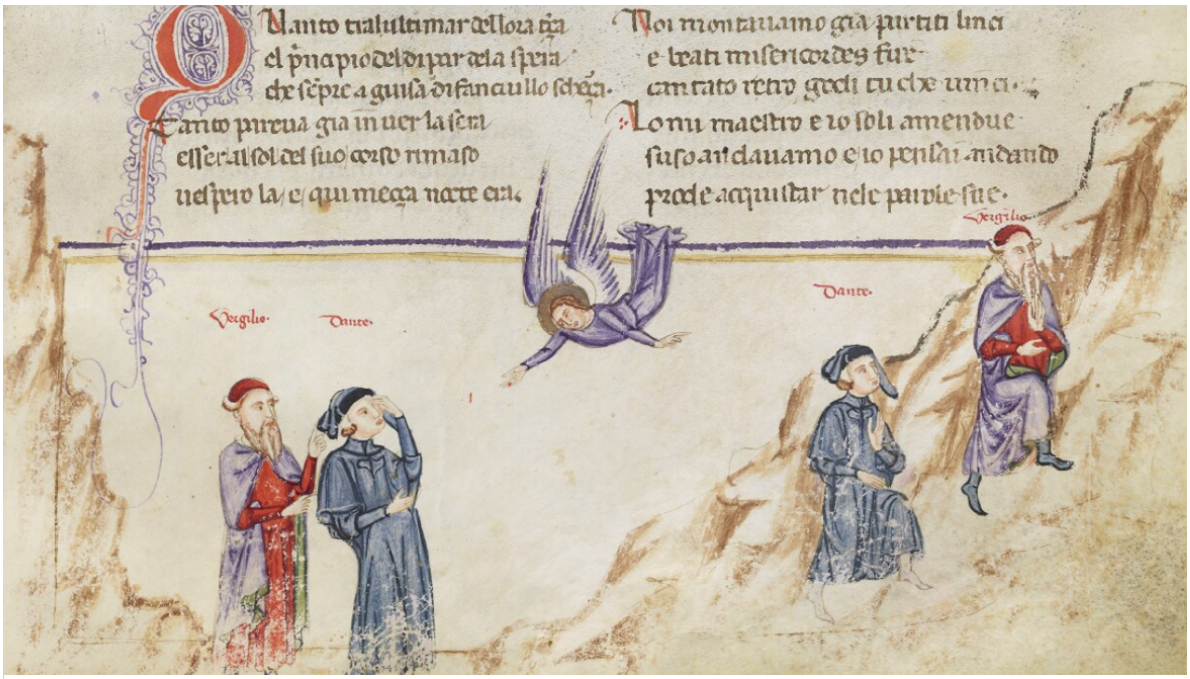
Purg. XXVII, 109-112	E già per li splendori antelucani, che tanto a' pellegrin surgon più grati, quanto, tornando, albergan men lontani, le tenebre fuggian da tutti lati e 'l sonno mio con esse […]	Sun
Purg. XXVII, 133	Vedi lo sol che 'n fronte ti riluce	Sun
Purg. XXXIII, 103-104	E più corusco e con più lenti passi teneva il sole il cerchio di merigge,	Sun

Appendix 2: Modes of Identification of the Pilgrim's Mortal Body in *Purgatorio*

Purg. II, 67-69	L'anime, che si fuor di me accorte, per lo spirare, ch'i' era ancor vivo, maravigliando diventaro smorte	Breath
Purg. III, 16-18	Lo sol, che dietro fiameggiava roggio, rotto m'era dinanzi a la figura, ch'avea in me de' suoi raggi l'appoggio	Shadow
Purg. III, 88-93	Come color dinanzi vider rotta la luce in terra dal mio destro canto, sì che l'ombra da me a la grotta restaro, e trasser sé in dietro alquanto, e tutti li altri che venieno appresso, non sappiendo 'l perché, fenno altrettanto.	Shadow
Purg. V, 4-9	[…] 'Ve' che non par che luca lo raggio da sinistra a quel di sotto, e come vivo par che si conduca!' Li occhi rivolsi al suon di questo motto, e vidile guardar per maraviglia pur me, pur me, e 'l lume ch'era rotto.	Shadow
Purg. V, 25-27	Quando s'accorser ch'i' non dava loco per lo mio corpo al trapassar d'i raggi, mutar lor canto in un 'oh!' lungo e roco	Shadow
Purg. VIII, 58-60	'Oh', diss'io lui, 'per entro i luoghi tristi venni stamane, e sono in prima vita, ancor che l'altra, sì andando, acquisti'.	Declaration by pilgrim
Purg. XI, 38-45	Mostrate da qual mano inver' la scala Si va più corto; e se c'è più d'un varco Quel ne 'nsegnate che men erto cala; ché questi che vien meco, per lo 'ncarco de la carne d'Adamo onde si veste, al montar su, contra sua voglia, è parco.'	Declaration by Virgil
Purg. XIII, 130-132	Ma tu ch se', che nostre condizioni vai dimandando, e porti li occhi sciolti, si com'io credo, e spirando ragioni?'	Breath and pilgrim's sight
Purg. XIV, 1-3	'Chi è costui che 'l nostro monte cerchia prima che morte li abbia dato il volo, e apre li occhi a sua voglia e coverchia?'	Pilgrim's sight

Purg. XVI, 25-27	‘Or tu chi se’ che ‘l nostro fummo fendi, e di noi parli pur come se tue partisse ancor lo tempo per calendi?’	Body
Purg. XVIII, 109-110	questi che vive, e certo i’ non vi bugio, vuole andar sù, pur che ‘l sol ne riluca;	Declaration from Virgil
Purg. XIX, 94-96	‘Chi fosti e perché vòlti avete i dossi Al su, mi dì, e se vuo’ ch’io t’impetri Cosa di là ond’io vivendo mossi’	Declaration from the pilgrim
Purg. XX, 37-39	Non fia sanza mercé la tua parola, s’io ritorno a compiér lo cammin corto di quella vita ch’al termine vola’	Declaration from the pilgrim
Purg. XXI, 25-27	Ma perché lei che dì e notte fila non li avea tratta ancora la conocchia che Cloto impone a ciascuno e compila,	Declaration from Virgil
Purg. XXIII, 112-114	Deh, frate, or fa che più non mi ti celi! vedi che non pur io, ma questa gente tutta rimira là dove ’l sol veli’	Shadow
Purg. XXVI, 4-9	feriami il sole in su l’omero destro, che già, raggiando, tutto l’occidente mutava in bianco aspetto di cilestro; e io facea con l’ombra più rovente parer la fiamma; e pur a tanto inidizio vidi molt’ombre, andando, poner mente.	Shadow
Purg. XXVI, 122-24	Dinne com’è che fai di te parete al sol, pur come tu non fossi ancora di morte intrato dentro de la rete.’	Shadow

Appendix 3: Ante-Purgatory in Early Manuscripts

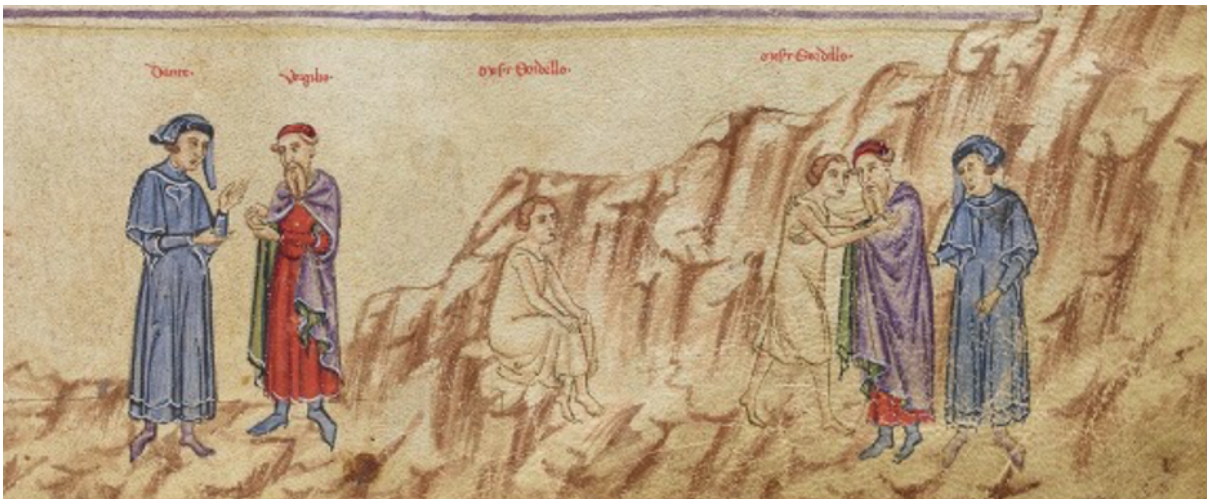


'Dante and Virgil ascend to the terrace of wrath (*Purg*. XV)'. 1350-1375, Bodleian Library, Oxford. MS. Holkham misc. 48, f. 85.

'Dante and Virgil leave the excommunicates (*Purg*. IV)'. 1350-1375, Bodleian Library, Oxford. MS. Holkham misc. 48, f. 63.

‘Dante and Virgil meet Cato (*Purg.* I)’. 1350-1375, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Holkham misc. 48, f. 57.

‘Dante and Virgil meet Belacqua (*Purg.* IV)’. 1350-1375, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Holkham misc. 48, f. 64.



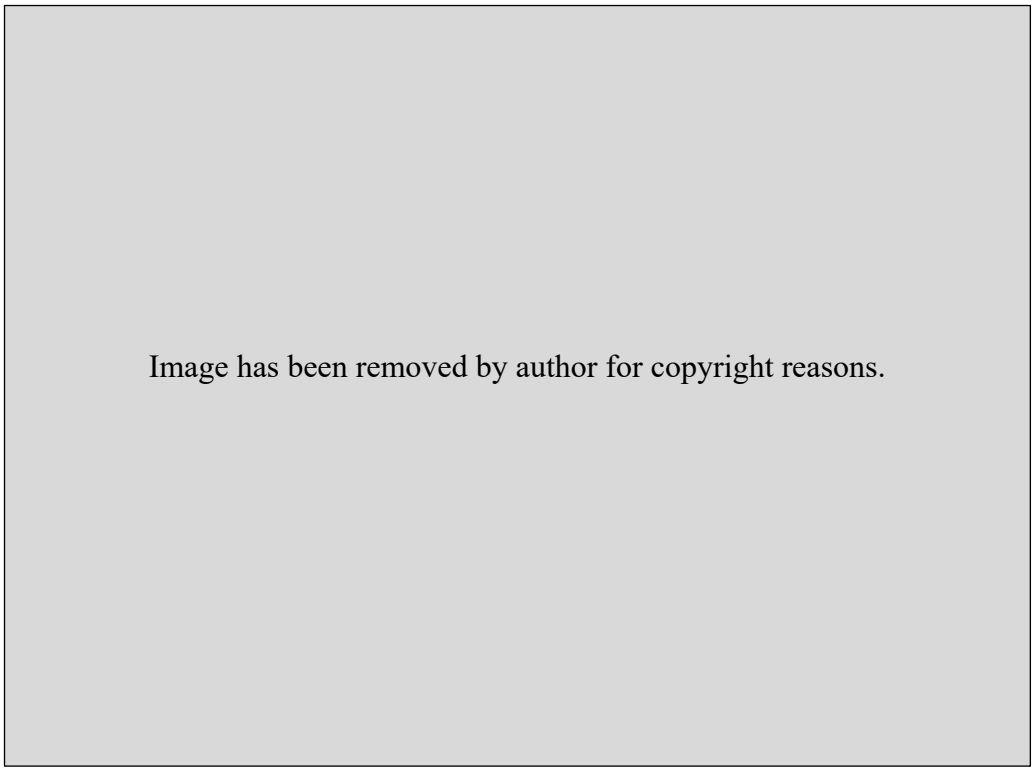
‘Dante and Virgil meet Sordello (Purg. VI).’ 1350-1375, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Holkham misc. 48, f. 67.

© British Library Board, ‘Dante encountering Casella and Cato (*Purg.* II).’1444–c. 1450. British Library, London, MS. Yates Thompson 36, f. 68.

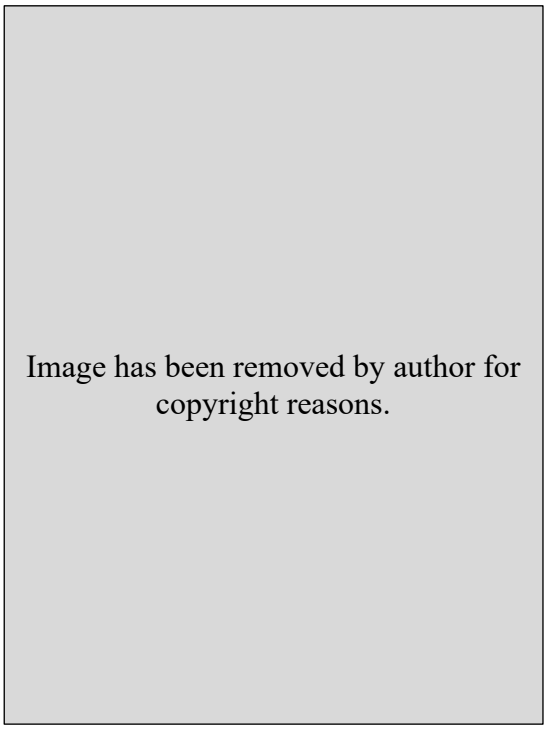
© British Library Board, ‘Dante with Virgil and Sordello (*Purg.* VI-VIII)’. 1444–c. 1450. British Library, London, MS. Yates Thompson 36, f. 76v.

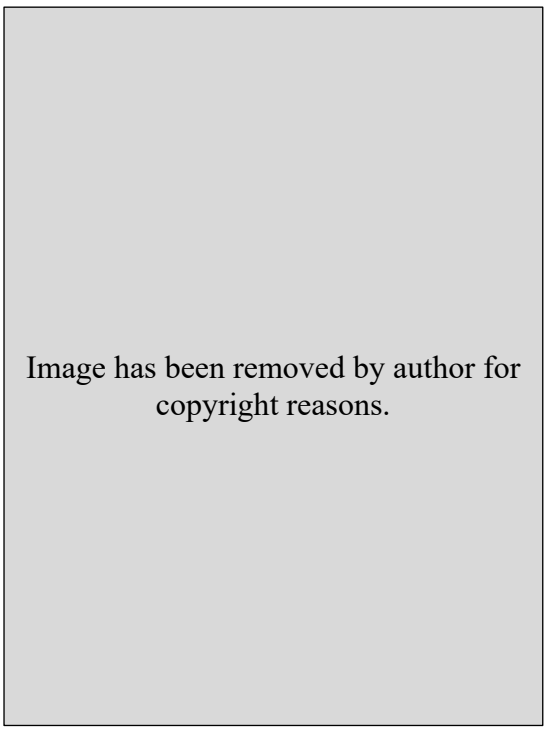
© British Library Board, ‘Dante at the Gates of Purgatory and the Proud carrying heavy stones’ (*Purg.* IX-X). 1444–c. 1450. British Library, London, MS. Yates Thompson 36, f.

Appendix 4: Diagrams and Drawings of Ante-Purgatory



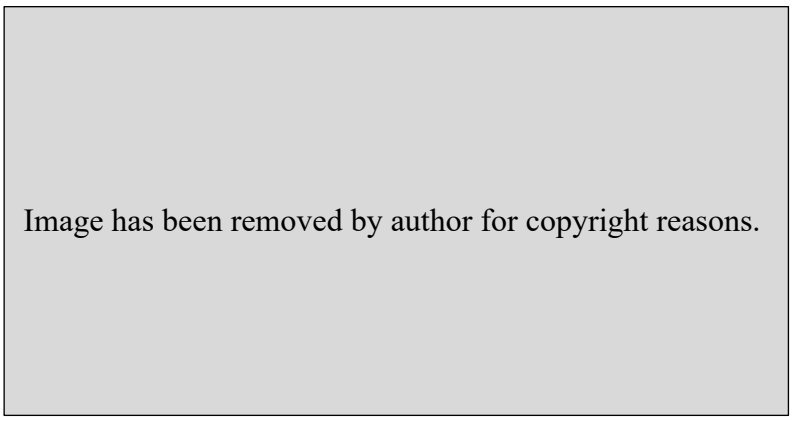
'A particularly detailed map of Ante-Purgatory from 1950s study guide to *Purgatorio.*'
Andrea Gustarelli, *Il poema sacro. Riassunti e schemi per lo studio della Divina Commedia. Il Purgatorio (Milan: Carlo Signorelli, 1953).*





Diagrams of Purgatory from Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi's commentary. Left: *La Divina Commedia. Purgatorio* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 2000). Right: *La Divina Commedia. Purgatorio* (Milan: Mondadori, 2014).

‘Right Half of Purgatorio, Canti I, II, III, IV, IX: Right Section of Mountain Surrounded by the Sea and the Sun at Top; Sun and Sign of the Zodiac (Capricorn?) at Lower Right; In the Center, Round Hole Through Which Virgil and Dante Leave Inferno; Virgil Washes Dante's Face to Purify Him Before Entering the Purgatorio; Virgil and Dante Climb up the Mountain Through a Narrow Passage; Meeting with Belacqua; They Ascend Further Up the Mountain; St. Lucy Carries the Sleeping Dante to the Gates of Paradise?’

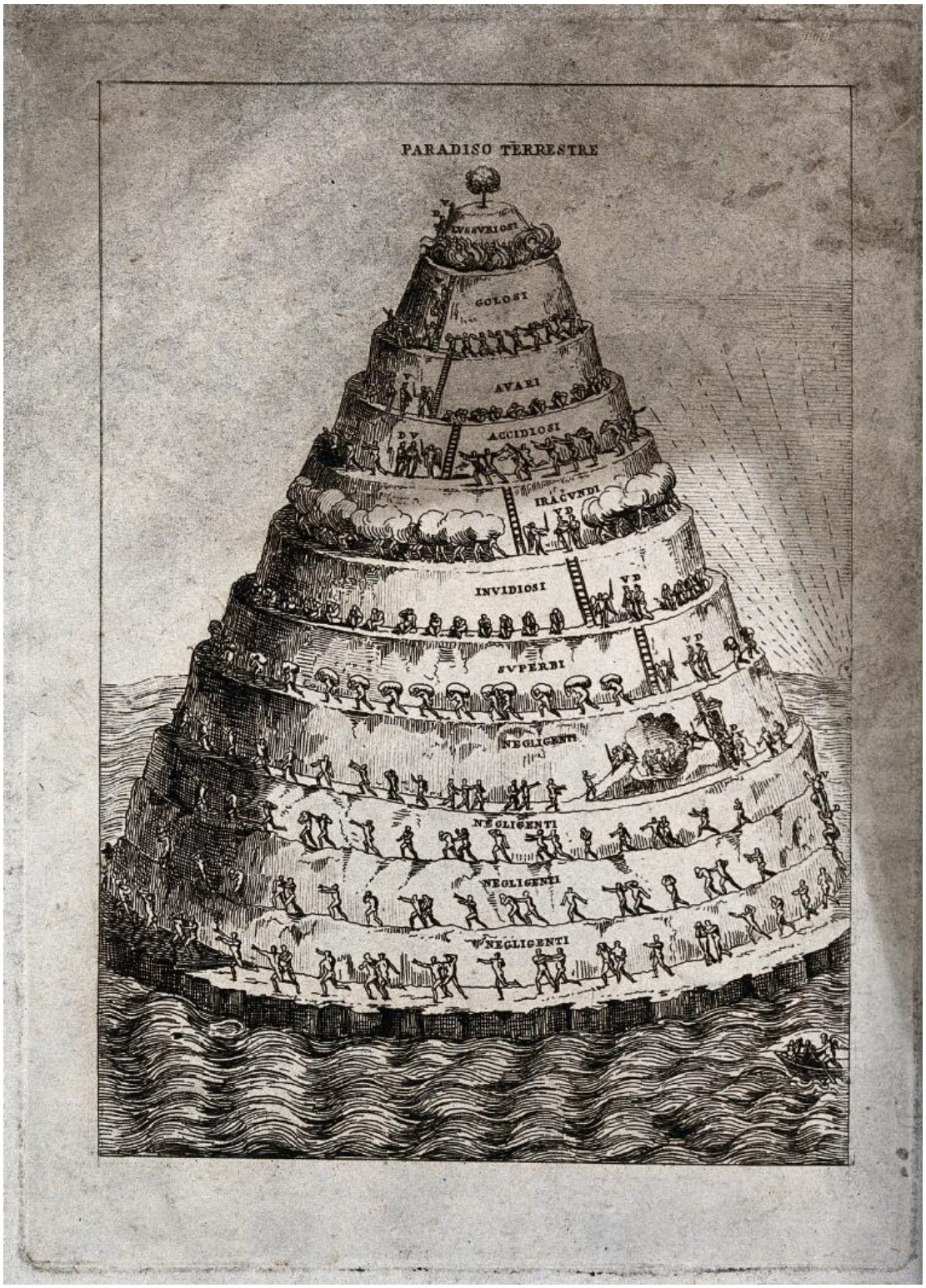


‘Left Half of Purgatorio, Canti I-II, III: Left Section of the Mountain and Beach Surrounded by the Sea, with the Sun and the Heavenly Steersman on the Ship of Souls at Upper Left and Cato Speaking to the Souls on the Beach; Virgil Picks Reeds with which he Crowns Dante; They Meet Casella, Who Embraces Dante; They Meet Manfred’.

‘*Purgatorio*, Canto IV, VI: Left Section of the Mountain Top Surrounded by the Sea, the Setting Sun and Stars; Constellation of Three Stars on the Right; Virgil and Dante Exit the Mouth of the Narrow Passage; Virgil and Dante Sit on a Bench; They Pass the Negligent Princes Sitting by a Large Boulder and Dante Talks to Belacqua; Sordello Embraces Virgil; Sordello Guides Virgil and Dante; Sordello Points Out Some of the Souls to Virgil and Dante’.

‘*Purgatorio*, Canti IX-X: Section of the Mountain, with Sun on the Right and Half Moon to the Left; Lucia Carries the Sleeping Dante Up to the Next Rim of the Mountain; Dante Kneels Before the Angel-Gatekeeper, Who Guards the Door of Purgatory; Penitential Climb Through a Narrow Cleft in the Rock to Arrive Where the Mountain Falls Back to the Open Above’.

All drawings attributed to Alessandro Velutello. ‘Series of 20 drawings, illustrating the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* of Dante’s *Divina Commedia*’. 1544.
Morgan Library and Museum, New York. Pen and brown ink on paper.
https://www.themorgan.org/drawings/item/141948



© Public Domain. 'A cone-shaped mountain rises out of the sea, crowned by a tree over flames and divided into twelve levels, on each level people are either working, sitting or running. On the far right a boat delivers more people; representing Earthly Paradise'. Etching. Wellcome Collection, London, Ref. no. 38964i. https://wellcomecollection.org/works/vmaxbt5x

The same image can be found elongated in *ED* under 'Purgatorio', IV, p. 745.
'Il *Purgatorio*'. Rome, Casa di Dante, *Dante con l'espositione di M. Bernardino Daniello* (Venice: Pietro da Fino, 1568), f. 230.

Bibliographical Note
Lectura Dantis on Ante-Purgatory cantos 2000-2022

Reading Projects and Workshops

Notre Dame Ante-Purgatory Online Workshop Series (2021-2022)

22nd January 2021, Giuseppe Ledda, *Purgatorio* I and II
12th February 2021, George Corbett, *Purgatorio* III and IV
5th March 2021, Heather Webb, *Purgatorio* V and VI
15th October 2021, Caroline Dormor, *Purgatorio* VI and VIII
3rd December 2021, Federica Pich: *Purgatorio* IX

21st January 2022, James Kriesel, 'Marvels'
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Jeremy Tambling, *Purgatorio* IV.
Justin Steinberg, *Purgatorio* V.
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Though this list is not exhaustive, it aims to provide a useful overview of recent articles and chapters relevant to Ante-Purgatory. It also serves to show which cantos have received privileged critical interest. Articles which make passing reference to elements from Ante-Purgatory cantos but do not take a canto or set of Ante-Purgatory cantos as their principal focus have not been included. Where more than one canto is the focus of the article, the item has been listed under the first canto.

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