DANTE AND HIS LITERARY PRECURSORS

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A READING OF *PURGATORIO* XXVI

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> No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead.
>
> T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919)

No canto of the *Commedia* "compelled the imagination" of English-speaking poets of the twentieth century more powerfully than Canto XXVI of *Purgatorio*. When T. S. Eliot added the famous dedication to the second English edition of *The Waste Land*—For Ezra Pound, *il miglior fabbro*—, echoing line 117 of our canto and making it an obligatory point of reference for any literate English reader, he not only paid his friend and fellow poet an exquisite compliment but also completed what with hindsight seems a necessary trajectory.[1] From the earliest drafts of the final section of *The Waste Land*, the last line of our canto ("Poi s'ascose nel foco che li affina") had been one of the "fragments I have shored against my ruins" with which the poem closes; with the

1 The first (American) edition of *The Waste Land* (New York, Boni and Liveright, 1922), like the first English edition published the following year (Printed and published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, Hogarth House, Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey, 1923), had no dedication. The poem had already appeared in *The Criterion*, 1, i (October 1922) and *The Dial* (November 1922), likewise without a dedication. The dedication was added when *The Waste Land* was reprinted in *Poems 1909–1925* (London, Faber and Gwyer, 1925).

new dedication the whole poem comes to be inscribed, as it were, between lines 117 and 148 of *Purgatorio* XXVI.[2]

The creation of meaning by explicit reference or implicit allusion to other texts is a large part of Eliot's method, and not only in *The Waste Land*. By citing Dante he places himself, as a poet and as a Christian, in relation both to his contemporaries and to his predecessors, to the culture of his own age and the literary heritage of the past. This of course is precisely what Dante himself is doing in Canto XXVI, which exploits the resources and techniques of intertextuality—the many ways in which one literary text echoes, or is inescapably linked to, other texts—to create a density and richness of meaning and poetic effect which make this one of the great cantos of the poem.

The immediate connotations in Eliot of the dedication to Pound—poetic distinction, poetic indebtedness, the generous acknowledgement of another's superiority—are very much to the fore in our canto. But in Dante the situation is more complex, and yet simpler: more complex in the scale and scope of the literary relationships involved; simpler in that it is embedded in a narrative in which poets themselves are among the principal *dramatis personae*, and the narrative line can make explicit much that in Eliot remains allusive, and even elusive. In Eliot, only the "familiar compound ghost" of *Four Quartets* is, possibly, a poet—some have recognized in him the figure of Yeats, others Mallarmé.[3] In Canto XXVI Dante the protagonist is a poet. He meets and talks to two poets, Guido Guinizzelli (line 92) and Arnaut Daniel (line 142), the supreme masters of vernacular literature in its two principal linguistic variants, Italian and Provençal. The talk is in part about another two poets, Guittone d'Arezzo (line 124) and "the man from Limoges" (line 120), Giraut de Bornelh, both of whom, in Dante's mature estimation, enjoyed falsely inflated reputations, and whose true worth is assessed here with a robust disregard for prevailing critical opinion. Two further groups of poets are alluded to, those whom Arnaut Daniel surpasses

2 The manuscript first draft of the final section of the poem is reproduced in T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land, a Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts, Including the Annotations of Ezra Pound*, edited by Valerie Eliot (London, Faber and Faber, 1971), pp. 70–81.

3 Indeed a "compound" ghost could signify any or all of Eliot's poetic mentors.

(line 119) and those who, along with Dante, think of Guinizzelli as their poetic mentor, or, in Dante's more emotionally charged word, father (line 97). And of course Dante is accompanied by two poets, Virgil and Statius, the great masters of the Classical school: the one a pagan, the other, according to Dante's fiction, a secret convert to Christianity—silent after the opening lines of the canto, but witness to Dante's encounter with his vernacular precursors. At least four of the poets who are physically present are also textually present, their own poetry echoed or consciously alluded to in Dante's text; and there are echoes of and allusions to yet other poets who are not present in the narrative.

Canto XXVI is then pre-eminently a canto about poetry. The closing lines which so haunted Eliot form a natural climax not just to the canto itself, as they magnificently do; not just to the story of the journey up the mountain and Dante's witnessing of the processes of purgation (these are the last sinners he is to talk to before emerging into the Earthly Paradise); but to one of the central thematic strands which has unfolded over the length of the poem so far: the theme of Dante's relationship to the poetic tradition which preceded him, both his immediate vernacular precursors and his more distant Classical forerunners. To appreciate the full force of Canto XXVI we must not lose sight of the crucial points of reference in the working-out of this wider theme: the scene where Dante is welcomed by the great poets of antiquity as one of their number (*Inferno* IV); the two episodes where Guido Guinizzelli has already been quoted or named (*Inferno* V, where Francesca's "Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende" echoes Guinizzelli's "Al cor gentil rempaira sempre amore" in a tendentious context, and *Purgatorio* XI, where the eclipsing of "l'uno" by "l'altro" Guido (line 97) is cited by Oderisi as an example of the transience of earthly fame); the encounter with the father of the other Guido, who learns that for all Cavalcanti's "altezza d'ingegno", intellectual or ideological error has made him unfit to be Dante's companion (*Inferno* X). Then we have the cluster of encounters with poets as Dante nears the top of Mount Purgatory: first Statius, who becomes a travelling companion, and whose conversation with Virgil is listened to with professional interest by an attentive Dante, who follows in their footsteps literally and metaphorically ("ascoltava i lor sermoni,/ch'a poetar mi davano intelletto"—"I listened to their talk, which gave me understanding about the writing of

poetry"—;[4] then Forese, implicated in some shaming episode in a shared past, referred to allusively in a way which leaves open the question of whether the fault is biographical or literary; then Bonagiunta, eager to discuss with Dante just what it was that distinguished the new vernacular poetic manner from the old, and in so doing to acknowledge Dante's own role and distinction as innovator. Finally, before Dante emerges onto the terrace of the lustful, as he does just before our canto begins, the long climb between the terraces has provided an opportunity for Statius to enlighten him on the nature of the shadow bodies of the souls, on human conception and embryonic development and the moment at which the foetus ceases to be merely animal and becomes a human being. Statius's account, apparently a digression, is a vital piece in the pattern, adding to what Dante has learnt from Virgil about love in the central doctrinal cantos of *Purgatorio*, and showing, if only by implication, that the proper end of sexual union is procreation and not mere sensual gratification.

For if Canto XXVI is a canto about poetry, it is also a canto about lust, about human sexuality, the proper ordering of sexual appetite and the loss of humanity which ensues when passion is not bridled by the controlling force of reason. Where the second half of the canto is dominated by the figures of the two poets and their eloquence, the first half is filled with two groups of souls (the heterosexual lustful and the homosexuals, as Dante-pilgrim learns to identify them) and it is dominated by the compelling and disturbing image of Pasiphae, who disguised herself as an animal in order to satisfy her lust—the only explicit image of the sexual act the canto offers us, and offers us twice.

In a canto which is concerned with what bodies do, we find an insistence on Dante's own physicality (not just his limbs, but his blood and his joints: lines 56–7); just as in a canto where the notion of literary composition as craftsmanship is central we find Dante-character referring with unusual precision to the tools of the poet's trade ("carte", the pages of the manuscript, which are *vergate*, ruled, and thus written on in lines, with "incostri", inks (lines 64 and 114); and Dante-poet displaying a notable stylistic resourcefulness. We find too an abundance of animal images—

4 In this essay Dante's text is quoted in the Petrocchi edition: Dante Alighieri, *La "Commedia" secondo l'antica vulgata*, edited by G. Petrocchi, second edition, 4 vols (Florence, Le Lettere, 1994). All translations are my own.

more than in any other canto of *Purgatorio*; and an overriding interest in language, speech and communication. Canto XXIII and the meeting with Forese was related intertextually, though implicitly, to the scurrilous sonnets the two had exchanged as young men; Canto XXIV and the encounter with Bonagiunta was linked explicitly with *Vita Nova*; and Canto XXVI connects with yet another of Dante's earlier works, *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, his theoretical treatise on vernacular speech (the "parlar materno" of line 117), a text which at a number of points it echoes or tacitly corrects.[5]

Canto XXVI brings into balance images of man when he is less than human, merely a body satisfying instinctual animal drives, and man when he is supremely human, exercising the gift of speech in its noblest form, poetry. Lust is represented by poets in Purgatory, by a reader of poetry (Francesca) in Hell: the connection with literature seems inescapable. The choice of poets to represent lust here leads us away from intertextuality, literature as a self-referential activity, a closed system, and back to the relationship between literature and life, the reality of human experience from which it is born, which it reflects, and which in its turn it influences—a relationship which for Dante was perhaps marginally less problematical than it is for us. In any event, a stay on this *girone* could almost be regarded as an occupational hazard for a poet of Dante's time: love was a mandatory theme for all poets who aspired to distinction, and it is the relationship between the erotic impulse, however sublimated, rarefied or intellectualized, and lust, that our canto urgently calls into question.

At the end of Canto XXV we are already on the last terrace of the mountain, where the lustful are punished in fire. The fire is unleashed from the mountain wall with some force, engulfing the whole of the flat surface where the souls are walking. At the very edge, the flames are deflected upwards by a wind blowing from below, which creates a path on the extreme outer rim; but the path is so narrow that the poets must walk in single file, as they will do throughout Canto XXVI, Virgil leading, Statius following and Dante bringing up the rear. The situation is dangerous, requiring concentration and effort to avoid being burnt by the fire on the

5 I am indebted to Giulio Lepschy for pointing out to me that this is considered the first attestation in Italian of the expression "mother tongue", making use of the word *materno*.

one hand or falling off the cliff on the other. Dante feels himself threatened as by no other form of punishment on the mountain. (Compare his reaction in the previous episode to the skeletal emaciation of the gluttonous, a reaction primarily of bafflement and intellectual curiosity.) His acute fear is coupled with unusually insistent warnings from Virgil about the need both for alertness and for a willingness to let himself be guided—already once at the end of Canto XXV as they emerge onto the terrace, and again, repeatedly ("spesso": line 2), at the beginning of our canto. Whether or not we accept Boccaccio's perhaps suspect testimony that Dante himself was guilty of lust ("and not only when he was young, but in middle age as well"),[6] the text itself emphasizes his vulnerability; and, uniquely for the punishments in Purgatory, he will himself briefly share the condition of the sinners, for he must pass through the fire in order to emerge from this last circle into the Earthly Paradise.

Throughout the canto we are aware of fire as a distinct and separate medium in which the souls move and operate. They are as meticulously careful not to come out of the flames as Dante is not to get burnt (14–15). As they move away from the foreground they blur and fade from view altogether, like fish going down through water to the bottom (134–5)—a simile deservedly famous for its economy and precision, the verbal equivalent of a cinematic dissolve. The distinctiveness of the visual effects created by fire provides the starting-point to the encounter with the shades, an elegant variation on the theme of the amazement caused by Dante's condition as living man visiting the afterlife.

As the canto opens, the sun is low in the western sky, which turns pale in the late afternoon of Dante's third day on the mountain; the pilgrim's shadow falls, not on the ground, but laterally, onto the flames; where it falls, the flame appears redder, more glowing ("piú rovente": line 7). This visual clue catches the attention of a group of shades; they first murmur among themselves, then move towards Dante, and one of them courteously questions him. But Dante's attention has been caught by the arrival of a second group of souls moving in the opposite direction to the first

6 G. Boccaccio, *Opere in versi. Corbaccio. Trattatello in laude di Dante. Prose latine. Epistole*, edited by P. G. Ricci (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1965), p. 627: "Tra cotanta virtú, tra cotanta scienzia quanta dimostrato è di sopra essere stata in questo mirifico poeta, trovò ampissimo luogo la lussuria, e non solamente ne' giovani anni, ma ancora ne' maturi."

group. The two groups now intermingle, exchange rapid kisses, call out examples of lust and then move off. The first group again draws closer to Dante and he, matching the exquisite courtesy of his interlocutor, satisfies their curiosity about himself before in turn articulating his own intense curiosity. He is puzzled by the seemingly anomalous behaviour of the second group, who are moving around the mountain in a direction unprecedented in his experience of the other terraces, and he now puts his own question: who are these two groups? The original speaker reveals that they are the homosexuals and the heterosexual lustful.

The first half of the canto is remarkable for a number of reasons: the intricate patterning of the narrative; the concentration of similes, which are often marked by the use of rare or unique rhymes; the contrasting presentation of homosexuals and heterosexuals.

The narrative patterning interweaves curiosity and satisfaction, eagerness and hesitation, speech and silence, briskly purposeful activity and long pauses. The interlude which separates the shade's question from Dante's answer (lines 31–51) is all movement and animation, a penitential imperative which takes precedence over the satisfaction of merely contingent curiosity. It provides a striking example of Dante's *tecnica ad incastro*, the "embedding" technique by which one episode interrupts or is inserted into another. But the interlude, if not dramatically unprecedented in the poem, is grammatically unprecedented. Normally Dante preserves a clear distinction between the past tense of narrative (reserved for Dante-character), and the present tense of writing the poem (reserved for Dante-poet, and used in invocations to the Muses, comments on the difficulty of his theme, asides to the reader and so on; it is also used in similes which refer to constants of human experience which lie outside the temporal sequence of the narrative). Occasionally at moments of great drama or tension he slips into the historic present for narrative, but rarely for more than three lines. Here, exceptionally, he sustains the narrative present for twenty-one lines, so that the interlude is demarcated from the surrounding action which it interrupts by a grammatical marker. The effect created, with extraordinary vividness and immediacy, is of a suspension of time, as we witness a recurring ritual of penance which for these souls is a part of their purgatorial routine. We revert to the normal past tense of narrative only in line 53, with "incominciai"

["I began"], where Dante picks up the thread of his conversation with the soul.

Also remarkable in this first half of the canto is the high incidence of similes, the ants in lines 34–6, the cranes in lines 43–5 and the mountain-dweller in lines 67–9. The ants and the cranes to which the thronging souls are likened as they first come together and then separate are creatures of impeccable literary pedigree. (The chiastic disposition of the comparisons within the intermezzo is striking: they come, like ants... like cranes, they go.) Ants had been used by Virgil in a famous extended simile in the *Aeneid* (IV. 404–7)—his "nigrum agmen" becomes Dante's "schiera bruna". Cranes had been used by Virgil in a brief simile in the *Aeneid* (X. 264–6), and then by Statius, at much greater length and consciously echoing Virgil, in the *Thebaid* (V. 11–16). But in Virgil and Statius the people had been warriors; here they are saved souls—one of the most active groups of souls we meet on the mountain, and those most clearly behaving in a specifically Christian way. They greet each other with the kiss of chastity and charity recommended by St Paul,[7] which stands in unmistakable *contrapasso* relationship to the lingering, lascivious kisses of lust. It is the exchanging of kisses between individuals within the group that is likened by Dante, with an almost instantaneous shift of focus from long-shot to close-up, to the gesture of ants who rub their muzzles together. The final line of the simile is strictly gratuitous, adding nothing in visual terms, but conveying very relevant notions of solidarity, helpfulness, community spirit; and doing so in the very Dantesque form of conjecture about whether the gestures of the ants are a form of non-verbal communication, a notion already in Pliny, who uses the words "conlocutio" ["conversation"] and "percontatio" ["enquiring"]—Dante's "spiar"—in his description of ants in the *Natural History*,[8] but no commentator to my knowledge has identified a source for the description of the movement by which the ants appear to communicate. This, we must suppose, like so much else of the physical detail in the canto—the effect of shadow on flame, the blurring of outline as an object sinks through

7 Romans 16. 16: "Salutate invicem in osculo sancto" ["Greet one another with a holy kiss"].

8 Pliny, *Natural History*, with an English translation by H. Rackham, 10 vols (London, Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1967), XI. 36 (vol. III, p. 500).

water—came from direct observation: a perfect example of how Dante effortlessly and magically combines the very literary and the utterly everyday to produce an image of uniquely Dantesque stamp. The impression of intense originality is reinforced on this occasion by the knowledge that "s'ammusa" is a Dantesque coinage, one of a number of examples in our canto where lexical inventiveness seems to have been stimulated by the pressure of figurative utterance.

The image of the ants has been universally admired, the reaction one of delighted recognition at the freshness and accuracy of its observation of the natural world. Up to this point in the *Commedia* birds (cranes, storks, starlings, doves) have been caught with just this same exactness and delicacy. The simile of the cranes in lines 43–5 is therefore disconcerting: it describes what never occurs in nature, two flocks of cranes flying in opposite directions, one heading north, one south. The description starts as if it were naturalistic; only at the beginning of the second line, with the dislocating past subjunctive "volasser", does it become clear that this is a hypothetical situation. The third line seems consciously to counter the reader's mounting perplexity: one group would be shunning the cold, the other the heat. Some critics are frankly disappointed with Dante for what they see as a falling-away from his usual impeccable standards of descriptive realism. Porena, for example, comments that the simile is so absurd that Dante "avrebbe fatto meglio a rinunciare alle gru"—he would have done better to do without the cranes.[9] But there are several reasons why Dante might have been reluctant to "rinunciare alle gru". The lustful in *Inferno* V had been likened to cranes, and to find them here reinforces the web of connections between these two cantos, which for so many reasons form a pair. The rhyme in *-ife* (a supremely difficult, precious rhyme, which occurs nowhere else in the poem) bears witness to Dante's own technical brilliance—his stylistic resourcefulness and virtuosity—in a canto where the notion of craftsmanship, skill as a wordsmith, is central. The Rhiphaean mountains were located vaguely by medieval cartographers somewhere in the extreme north of Europe. Both Virgil's and Statius's cranes had been flying to named geographical destinations in the north (whereas

9 *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri commentata da Manfredi Porena. Purgatorio* (Bologna, Zanichelli, 1973), *ad loc.*

Lucan's cranes in *Pharsalia*, v. 711–16, and VII. 832–4, sometimes cited in this connection, were flying south and were described naturalistically, not in a simile). That Dante mentions a named northern destination suggests that the Virgilian model, and its elaboration in Statius, were uppermost in his mind.

Most importantly, as has often been noted, the image is functional on another level altogether. It is the only way in which Dante signals to us, obliquely, that there is something odd or deviant in the way the second group of souls is going around the mountain. The laws of nature are broken in the simile which describes those who broke the natural law, just as their punishment includes a symbolic element of "unnaturalness" in the direction in which they move. Homosexuality is for Dante a sin against nature—so much seems clear from *Inferno*, where the homosexuals are in a different circle and indeed a different section of Hell from the heterosexual lustful, whose sin is merely one of incontinence or excess. But he nowhere states that explicitly here. Indeed the notion of an infraction of the natural order seems more pertinent to the heterosexuals than to the homosexuals, since the example they shout out, an example of bestiality, is much more clamorously a violation of that order.

The heterosexuals and the homosexuals are distinguished only by the direction in which they move around the mountain and the examples of lust they call out as they go. But whereas the homosexuals call out simply "Sodom and Gomorrah", the Biblical archetype which requires and receives no further elucidation, the heterosexuals call out not just the name of Pasiphae (the mythological queen of Crete who coupled with a bull and gave birth to the Minotaur) but the story of her infatuation, telescoped into its single, significant moment, the brutal, dehumanized sexual act, the monstrous coupling of human being and animal. Again, Dante's question about the identity of the groups elicits in the case of the homosexuals only a second classic, but anecdotally oblique, instance of the practice. They sinned in the way which caused Caesar to be hailed as "Queen" as he rode in triumph through Rome, a reference to his reputed homosexual relationship with the king of Bithynia. We are offered no definition of their sin, no description of their activities; anonymity reigns. No such reticence inhibits the statements about the heterosexuals. (In dramatic terms, the greater degree of explicitness reads as self-recrimination, for it is a heterosexual speaking, but the

choice of emphasis is, as always, Dante's.) These sinners failed to observe human law (line 83), pursuing their appetites like beasts (line 84), hence they call out the name of the woman "che s'imbestiò ne le 'mbestiate schegge" ["who became an animal in the timbers shaped to animal form"]. The original example is repeated periphrastically in a line which is surely one of the most remarkable in the poem.

Dante's choice of Pasiphae as sole representative of heterosexual lust is shocking and meant to shock. What makes her case so much more disturbing than conventional images of sexual excess such as promiscuity is the perverse ingenuity required in order to act out her lust. Having become enamoured of a bull, she had a cow fashioned out of timbers or planks of wood (the "schegge" of line 87), which were then covered with an animal hide. The deluded bull mated with the cow, thus mating also with the woman concealed inside it. Bestiality is the extreme case, the end of the spectrum of physical desire unrestrained by "human law". In the *Convivio* Dante had said that the man who abandons reason and lives only by the senses "non vive uomo ma vive bestia" ["lives not as a man, but as an animal"]:[10] Pasiphae's story literally and emblematically enacts this moral truth. The explosive harshness of the consonantal clusters in line 87 suggests both the violence of the transgression enacted against the natural order and the urgency of the speaker's moral revulsion: sexual and moral energy fuse with verbal energy, for *imbestiare* is yet another Dantesque coinage. The reflexive verb implies not just that Pasiphae "became an animal", but that she "made an animal of herself", she "turned herself into an animal". Where modern moralists might locate the offence of lust in the denial of the sexual partner's humanity, in the treating of a fellow human being as a thing, an object, Dante's *exemplum* invites us to see lust as self-injury, a wilfully and wantonly self-inflicted loss of humanity and human dignity.[11]

The extraordinarily vivid simile which describes the reaction of the souls to the revelation that Dante is alive—like the mountain-dweller who comes to the city and gazes dumbstruck

10 *Conv.*, II. 7. 4.

11 Compare Shakespeare in Sonnet 129, on the spiritual barrenness of lust in action and the damaging social effects of lust frustrated: "Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame/Is lust in action; and till action, lust/Is perjur'd, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,/Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust [...]."

at what he finds, they fall silent in astonishment—appears to have no literary source. Benvenuto da Imola tells us that Dante drew the image from his own experience of people from the Apennine foothills coming to Florence. Again there is a high degree of lexical inventiveness: "s'inurba" and "ammuta" are both Dantesque coinages. If it is difficult to tease out the full implications of the curious inverse symmetry between vehicle and tenor of the simile (Dante, a city-dweller, is visiting the inhabitants of a mountain; it is not the visitor who registers amazement but the visited), its function in the broader pattern of the narrative is clear. It offers a powerful image of inarticulacy in a context notable for its concern with speech and degrees of skill in its use. In *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Dante had dismissed the language of mountainous regions—"montaninas loquelas"—as uncouth.[12] The linguistic resources of this mountain-dweller are so limited that he is speechless—he could almost be added to the bestiary with the ants, cranes and fish. The image adds another piece to the patterning of speech and silence through the canto, setting off not only the eloquence of the soul who will now answer Dante's question, but perhaps more significantly the quality of Dante's silence when, only a few lines further on, he too will be unable to speak—a silence of a different order entirely.

Dante falls silent when the shade, who until now has acted as spokesman for the group, abandons the collective plural and begins to speak for himself alone. This he does in line 90, declining to name his companions, for time is pressing, but identifying himself: "son Guido Guinizzelli" ["I am Guido Guinizzelli"].

Dante's silence at this news reflects not the unedifying inarticulacy of the "montanaro" but complex and conflicting feelings—it conveys an intense inwardness of experience. The simile he now uses is not descriptive and realistic, but literary and allusive. There is an almost palpable sense that we are approaching an emotional climax. The episode to which the simile alludes is recounted by Statius at the end of Book v of the *Thebaid* (the book which opens with the cranes). Hypsipyle, the unnamed "madre" of line 95, had been entrusted with the care of King Lycurgus's infant son, but had failed to be sufficiently alert, and the child had been bitten by a snake and had died. As she was being taken off by soldiers to be put to death, her two sons

12 *DVE*, i. 11. 6.

came upon her unexpectedly: they rushed forward, embraced her and pulled her to safety. But none of this is explained by Dante. By not detailing the circumstances in which the mother and sons found themselves, by not naming them or discursively elaborating on their reactions, Dante gains a notable compression and resonance.

On learning the identity of the man he has been talking to Dante feels the same surge of emotions as the sons of Hypsipyle (shock, delight, dismay, affection, filial concern…); but unlike them he does not act. A second switch to the narrative present, arrestingly in mid-line and very briefly, marks this moment of stasis, the failure to respond physically to the emotional climax ("ma non a tanto insurgo"—"but I do not rise to such heights"). The failure to embrace Guinizzelli in the flames not only stands in counterpoint to the earlier scene, where the shades do precisely rush forward and kiss each other in the flames (as Dante himself will do in the afterlife, we may suppose), but also becomes the latest element in the series of embraces or failures to embrace which mark out the action of *Purgatorio*—Casella and Dante, Sordello and Virgil, Statius and Virgil. Dante's affection extends not just to the man and his poems, but to the very ink with which he wrote them (*caro* in lines 111 and 114): all the tenderness and warmth in the canto are here.

But for all Dante's feelings of affection and gratitude, Guinizzelli cannot draw him into the fire. There is a long pause as the two walk along in parallel, Dante gazing at Guinizzelli, unable to express the filial feelings which Dante-poet articulates for us in lines 97–8. When Dante-character does manage to speak, voicing his admiration for Guinizzelli's poems, he will address the older poet in the deferential *voi* form, which Guinizzelli's use of *tu* implicitly and tactfully corrects, as does the appellation "frate", echoing Virgil to Statius at a similar moment of recognition and high emotion.

It is unremarkable that Guinizzelli should deflect Dante's compliment by pointing to a better artist—Oderisi had done just this in *Purgatorio* xi. Like the illuminator he has transcended all pride in his own earthly achievement. What has made some critics uneasy is the animus with which he elaborates the point. He is still, it seems, deeply involved in literary matters, and now becomes curiously exercised on the question of true value and false reputation. The figure he points to in the flames, as yet

unnamed, was better than all the others, even though fools persist in overvaluing the man from Limoges, "quel di Lemosí" (line 120; the periphrasis is dismissive, yet paradoxically confirms Giraut's fame: he does not even need to be named to be identified). In Italy the same thing happened with Guittone, who likewise enjoyed a falsely inflated reputation. But truth triumphed in the end. The repetition of the word "ver", the emphatic alliteration of lines 121 and 126 ("voce", "ver", "volti", "vinto", "ver"), the Biblical echo in line 126,[13] all convey the vehemence of Guinizzelli's belief in the objective nature of literary value and achievement, which is not a matter of opinion or whim, of taste or fashion. The asperity of this attack on the fools who get it wrong, surprising in a soul who is supposedly beyond earthly rivalries, is doubly so in the light of the parallel episode in *Purgatorio* XI, where Oderisi's disclaimer is followed by an impassioned denunciation of the vanity of earthly fame.

Literary polemic erupts into the afterlife as Dante, through Guinizzelli, imposes his own pattern of meaning on recent literary history. The double denigration of Giraut and Guittone serves his purpose in two ways: it adds further detail and emphasis to the picture of the history of vernacular poetry which began to emerge in Canto XXIV (and in so doing corrects and amplifies *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, his first systematic attempt to map out the terrain of vernacular literature); more importantly, it introduces the "miglior fabbro" (whose identity Dante-character must surely suspect) as the figure for whom Guinizzelli feels the kind of admiration that Dante feels for Guinizzelli. The poetic perspective lengthens and broadens, temporally and geographically, as we are carried back to the Provençal tradition from which Italian lyric poetry took its origins and which the closing lines of the canto so memorably celebrate.

Dante evidently changed his mind about the man from Limoges, for reasons we can only guess at and which bear direct-

13 The phrase "ha vinto il ver" ["the truth prevailed"] echoes "vincit veritas" ["the truth prevails"] of the Vulgate (III Esdras 3. 12): "Fortiores sunt mulieres, super omnia autem vincit veritas" ["Women are stronger, but truth prevails over all things"] (*Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, edited by R. Weber, R. Gryson et al., fourth edition [Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994], p. 1915 col. 1); compare also III Esdras 4. 41: "Magna veritas et praevalet" ["The truth is great and shall prevail"]. The context in the Biblical source is especially suggestive here on the terrace of lust: see P. Shaw, "A Note on *Purgatory* XXVI, 126", *Modern Language Review*, 84 (1989), 615–20.

ly on his revised estimate of the stature of Arnaut Daniel. In *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Giraut had ranked higher than Arnaut, by clear implication if not by explicit comparison, in accordance with the received opinion which proclaimed him to be the finest of all the troubadours.[14] The treatise's judgement on Guittone is, however, confirmed. There Dante had used the damning word "plebescere", to write in a plebeian or commonplace manner, without distinction—to lack precisely the stylistic refinement Dante admired in Guinizzelli.[15] The key adjective *dolce* ("sweet, harmonious") of *Purgatorio* XXIV is twice repeated here at lines 99 and 112. Dante's fierce consistency in his harshly negative assessment of Guittone is matched by the unfailing constancy of his admiration for Guinizzelli, who had been "il saggio" ["the wise man"; *Vita Nova*, §11. 3 (formerly XX. 3)], "maximus" ["supreme"; *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, I. 15. 6], "nobile" ["noble"; *Convivio*, IV. 20. 7], and now, movingly, has become "padre" ["father"]—a *pater electionis* in the vernacular field to stand alongside Virgil ("dolcissimo patre" and even "piú che padre") in the Classical.

But Dante's "padre/mio" (lines 97–8), on the face of it no more than a moving declaration of poetic indebtedness, is laden with intertextual implications. Guinizzelli had in fact admired Guittone early in his career, and had acknowledged him as literary mentor in a poem which had addressed him as "caro padre meo".[16] Dante's "padre/mio", the possessive "mio" made more emphatic by the *enjambement*, is clearly intended as a corrective to Guinizzelli's sonnet, the point being underlined by the deliberate echoing of the rare rhyme "imbarche":"marche" from that same

14 Thus in the *vida*: "E fo meiller trobaire que negus d'aquels qu'eron estat denan ni foron apres lui; per que fo apellatz maestre dels trobadors" ["He was a better troubadour than any of those who had lived before him or who lived after him; thus he was called the master of the troubadours"]. Text cited from J. Boutière and A-H. Schutz, *Biographies des troubadours. Textes provençaux des XIII^e et XIV^e siècles* (Paris, Nizet, 1964), p. 39. See also G. Folena, *Vulgares eloquentes: Vite e poesie dei trovatori di Dante* (Padua, Liviana, 1961), p. 28; G. Favati, *Le biografie trovadoriche* (Bologna, Palmaverde, 1961), p. 134.

15 See *DVE*, II. 6. 8: "Subsistant igitur ignorantie sectatores Guictonem Aretinum et quosdam alios extollentes, nunquam in vocabulis atque constructione plebescere desuetos" ["So let the devotees of ignorance stop exalting Guittone d'Arezzo and certain others, who were never anything but commonplace in vocabulary or construction"]. On the significance of *plebescere* see Peter Hainsworth's essay "Dante and Monte Andrea" on pp. 153–77 of the present volume (p. 157).

16 *Poeti del Duecento*, edited by G. Contini, 2 vols (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1960), II, 484.

poem.[17] The purgatorial encounter in effect rewrites the record, polemically asserting the true line of poetic succession. There is an implicit acknowledgement of human fallibility—Guinizzelli had been wrong about Guittone as Dante had been wrong about Giraut—, but Guinizzelli now speaks with authority from a world beyond the human, setting the seal on a radical and definitive realignment of poetic reputations. To suggest, as some critics do, that the celebration of Arnaut is Guinizzelli's tribute, not necessarily or not fully endorsed by Dante, is surely wrong, for it ignores the authority which the Biblical echoes confer on his words.[18] It is ultimately as unsatisfactory as the view (now generally abandoned) which grudgingly limits the sense of "miglior fabbro" to the acknowledgement of a merely technical brilliance.

Arnaut is presented as the supreme master of vernacular literature, who surpassed all other writers, whether of verse or prose. (The reference to "prose di romanzi" in line 118 is now widely accepted in this sense.) His influence on Dante, already acknowledged in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* as profoundly important, must in retrospect have come to seem decisive. He had provided the indispensable model or exemplar for Dante's stylistic apprenticeship in the *aspro* (harsh) register, whose immediate fruit was the *rime petrose*, but without which, in the longer view, the lower cantos of Hell could not have been conceived or written. The experience of writing *Inferno* lies between *De Vulgari Eloquentia* and *Purgatorio* XXVI and is perhaps in itself sufficient to account for the revaluation of Arnaut.

Guinizzelli's influence had proved equally decisive for the mature poet: the praise style of *Vita Nova*, inspired by his example and always seen by Dante as a turning-point in his own poetic development, leads ultimately to the celebration of Beatrice in *Paradiso*. The exact sense in which Guinizzelli can be said to be the

17 See E. H. Wilkins, "Note on *Purgatorio* XXVI, 71ff", *Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the Dante Society* (1917), 30–2. This brief article was the starting-point for studies of intertextuality and Dante's rewriting of literary history in the canto.

18 G. Folena, for example, in "Il canto di Guido Guinizzelli", *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 154 (1977), 481–508 (p. 501), maintains: "Qui l'accento [è] posto sulla relatività del giudizio di valore storico-letterario. Questa è la prospettiva di Guido, non quella di Dante." M. Marti, by contrast, and surely correctly, speaks in "Il XXVI del *Purgatorio* come omaggio d'arte: Guinizzelli e Daniello nel cammino poetico di Dante", *L'Albero*, fasc. 29, no. 60 (1978), 5–26 (p. 19), of a Guinizzelli "plagiato dalla prepotente personalità di Dante".

"father" of a group or school of poets (a collective indebtedness is emphatically asserted in line 98) is more problematical. Much critical work has been done in recent years on disentangling and interpreting the complex currents of literary debate and interaction in the closing decades of the thirteenth century.[19] The difficulty is that the pattern of significance Dante detects in his own experience is imposed on a historical reality on which it does not always sit comfortably. Guittone's stature and true importance in the history of Italian literature, and indeed the extent of his very considerable influence on both Dante and Guinizzelli, could hardly be suspected by a reader of Dante's lines. At the same time Dante's pattern is so persuasive, and so powerfully projected, that it affects our perception of that historical reality. It is a critical commonplace that we still discuss early Italian poetry in the terms dictated by Dante.

When Arnaut himself at last addresses Dante, in courteous response to the pilgrim's eager solicitation, he speaks Provençal. The narrative convention that all souls, even foreigners, speak Italian is, on this one occasion and to brilliant dramatic effect, abandoned. (Pluto and the giants in Hell had spoken gibberish, Pope Hadrian in Purgatory had spoken Latin, but only for a single line; there has been nothing to prepare us for a sustained passage in a foreign language.) Everything in the canto has led to this moment, to Arnaut's unexpected and arresting speaking in his own voice. As we analyse the marvellous complexities of the canto, we should not lose sight of the dramatic simplicity which underlies the complexity, or at any rate emerges from it:

> Tan m'abellis vostre cortes deman,
> qu'ieu no me puesc ni voill a vos cobrire.
> Ieu sui Arnaut, que plor e vau cantan;
> consiros vei la passada folor,
> e vei jausen lo joi qu'esper, denan.
> Ara vos prec, per aquella valor
> que vos guida al som de l'escalina,
> sovenha vos a temps de ma dolor!
> (*Purgatorio*, XXVI. 140–7)

[Your courteous request so pleases me that I cannot nor would I wish to conceal myself from you. I am Arnaut, who weep

19 See the Bibliographical Note below.

and go singing; grieving I see my past folly, and I see rejoicing the joy I hope for before me. Now I beg you, by that goodness which guides you to the summit of the stair, remember my pain in good time.]

The effortless switch into Provençal, in addition to its simple surprise value and its poetic effectiveness in surrounding the figure of Arnaut with an aura of remoteness and isolation, reinforces the notion of the modern vernacular tradition (the "uso moderno" of line 113) as a continuum, geographical and temporal, clearly set off from the literary heritage of antiquity. It sets the seal on the new linguistic and stylistic ideal of the *Commedia*, which definitively abandons the theoretical position of *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, substituting for a rigorous selectivity a willingness to exploit all the expressive possibilities of human speech.

But Dante's boldness was not without its risks. The language which was accessible to his own generation was less so to copyists only a generation or two later: from the earliest surviving manuscripts of the poem the textual tradition of Arnaut's speech presents an unusually high frequency of variants. These lines will be familiar to many readers, as they were to Eliot, in a form which differs at two points from the Petrocchi critical text, quoted above: "condus" ["leads"] instead of "guida" ["guides"] at line 146 and "jorn" ["day"] instead of "joi" ["joy"] at line 144—but "joi" would seem to be a deliberate echo of Arnaut's poetry, the *replicatio* of "jausen [...] joi" recalling the same word-play in his *sestina*.[20] A particular difficulty is that the word "escalina" exists neither in Provençal nor in Italian: this has been a focus in recent years for scholarly dissatisfaction with the received text, and there have been several attempts to suggest alternative readings for line 146, all of which start from the assumption that "escalina" must be a scribal corruption of a genuine Provençal word *calina* ["heat"].[21] (That the "som de l'escalina" proved such

20 "[...] sivals a frau, lai on non aurai oncle,/iauzirai ioi, en vergier o dinz cambra" ["then at least by stealth, there where I'll have no (guardian) uncle, I will enjoy love's joy, in bower or in bedroom"; XVIII. 5–6]; text cited from Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja (Florence, Sansoni, 1960), p. 375.

21 On the textual problems posed by Arnaut's speech see Petrocchi's edition, III (*Purgatorio*), 456–9. Variants are also recorded in Sanguineti's critical edition, p. 336. Three scholars have proposed emendations to line 146: G. Folena in his *lectura* of the canto cited in n. 18 above (pp. 504–6); M. Perugi in "Arnaut Daniel in Dante", *Studi danteschi*, 51 (1978), 59–150 (pp. 124ff); and M. Braccini in "Paralipomeni al 'Personaggio-Poeta' (*Purgatorio* XXVI 140–7)", in *Testi e interpretazioni: Studi del seminario di filologia romanza dell'università di Firenze* (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1978), pp. 169–256, especially "Appendice I: Sul testo dei vv. 140–7" (pp. 224–9). Their respective suggestions for line 146 are: (Folena) "qu·us guida al som ses freg e ses calina" ["which guides you to the summit (which is) without cold and without heat"]; (Perugi) "que vus guida ses dol e ses chalina" ["which guides you without pain and without heat"]; (Braccini) "que·us guida al som ses dol e ses calina" ["which guides you to the summit, without pain and without heat"]. Folena takes the second half of the line to refer to the Earthly Paradise; Perugi and Braccini take it to refer to Dante the living man.

a potent image for Eliot—"Stand on the highest pavement of the stair"—may make English readers reluctant to accept any radical emendation of the line.)[22] Less controversial is Contini's elegant suggestion that instead of the traditional reading of line 144, "lo joi qu'esper denan", understood as "the joy I hope for, in front of me", we read "lo joi qu'es per denan" ("the joy which is to come, which lies ahead").[23] This removes a syntactic awkwardness and might even be thought to fit the context better, for Dante himself has reminded us (line 54) that all these souls have the certainty of peace, the sure knowledge that it awaits them.

Dante, in this ultimate act of homage to a waning poetic tradition, has Arnaut speak words which are representative—a distillation, as it were, of the essence of troubadour poetry—and yet also personal. His lines are on one level a skilful mosaic of poetic fragments from his own poems and those of others: "Tan m'abellis" is the *incipit*, already cited in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (II. 6. 6), of a poem by Folquet of Marseille (the only poet Dante is to meet in Paradise, the one love poet who transcended the profane); there is a tissue of reminiscences of poems by Lanfran Cigala and Guillem de Berguedà; and there are other generic echoes of Provençal poetry.[24] "Ieu sui Arnaut" is a self-citation from Arnaut's own most famous poem, quoted in his *vida* ("signing" his poems by naming himself was a habit, attested in fourteen of his eighteen extant compositions); here it is linked with the very Dantesque theme of weeping while speaking, recalling, not fortuitously, Francesca's "dirò come colui che piange e dice" ["I will speak as one who weeps and speaks"]. The themes of joy

22 Eliot intended at one point to use the phrase *som de l'escalina* as a heading for one of the poems in the Ash Wednesday sequence, and *jausen lo jorn* for another. See P. Ackroyd, *T. S. Eliot* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1984), p. 179.

23 G. Contini, note in *Studi danteschi*, 51 (1978), 150.

24 See the Bibliographical Note below.

and suffering in love, and the vocabulary associated with them, are generically troubadour rather than distinctively Arnaldian, as has rightly been emphasized;[25] yet the words here do stand in counterpoint to Arnaut's own poetry. *Joi* is almost a leitmotif in his poems, where it is characteristically associated with the lady's favour, sometimes even more explicitly with her bedchamber;[26] suffering is caused by her aloofness or her absence; while value belongs to her or (less frequently) to the poet or his words. Everything is recognizable here, yet everything has taken on an opposite significance. Arnaut's poems give a powerful sense of time as a dimension of human life, with the poet experiencing and expressing his passion in relation to the natural cycle of the seasons, in a physical world full of material objects. Here in Purgatory time has been reduced to its essence: Arnaut, a ghostly figure in an insubstantial medium, is poised between past and future, folly and joy. *Folor* (like Petrarch's *vaneggiar*) encompasses biography and literature, the lived experience and the poetry which grew out of it: the folly of obsession with an earthly love, the folly of turning his poetic talents to the celebration of such a love.

But Arnaut does not talk of poetry. Where Bonagiunta was still absorbed in his own practice as a poet, and eager to understand his own shortcomings; where Guinizzelli brushed aside references to his own distinction, yet was still concerned to set the literary record straight; Arnaut has transcended literature both as a topic for discussion and as a pretext for display. The most striking of all the ways in which his words here in Purgatory contrast with his own poetry is the directness, the lack of artifice with which he expresses himself. He had been a poet whose dazzling technical virtuosity was inseparable from the difficulty, the obscurity of his poems, as his *vida* testifies.[27] In line 141 he seems consciously to

25 M. Bowra, "Dante and Arnaut Daniel", *Speculum*, 27 (1952), 459–74, incautiously asserted that Arnaut's "characteristic phrases" are "picked up and turned to a special purpose" in *Purg.*, XXVI. 140–7, and has been repeatedly taken to task for so doing.

26 As in the lines cited in n. 20 above; compare, also from the *sestina* (XVIII. 33): "q'ill m'es de joi tors e palaitz e cambra" ["for she is to me joy's tower and palace and bedroom"]; and from one of Arnaut's *canzoni* (XV. 29): "Iois e solatz d'autra·m par fals e bortz" ["Joy and solace from any other (woman) appear to me false and abortive"]; texts cited from Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja, pp. 377, 340.

27 "[...] e deleitet se en trobar en caras rimas, per que las soas chanssos non son leus ad entendre ni ad aprendre" ["and he delighted in writing poems in *caras rimas*; and so his *canzoni* are not easy to understand or to learn"]; text cited from Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja, pp. 165–6; see also G. Folena, *Vulgares eloquentes*, p. 49. J. Boutière and A-H. Schutz, *Biographies des troubadours* (p. 59), give a slightly different version of the text, as does G. Favati, *Le biografie trovadoriche* (p. 210).

renounce the hermetic manner. The hint of a chiasmus in "consiros vei [...] e vei jausen" is the one rhetorical flourish. The only ambiguity is in his final line (another line which haunted Eliot),[28] which can mean, as it has usually been glossed from Benvenuto onwards, "remember my suffering and pray for me" (and in this sense it is exactly symmetrical to Guinizzelli's closing request in line 130). It can also mean (and surely does also mean) "remember my suffering and act on it, take heed, learn your lesson." These are the last words Dante hears from any soul in Purgatory. Their ambiguity perfectly encapsulates the double aspect of his relationship to the penitent shades on the mountain (his prayers can help them, their example can help him), just as Arnaut's whole speech—Dante's leave-taking from sinful humanity—reminds us (in the rhyme-words "folor":"valor":"dolor") of the three constants of the purgatorial experience: human folly, God's goodness, which offers the possibility of redemption, and the suffering through which that redemption is achieved.

28 The whole line "Sovegna vos al temps de mon dolor" [*sic*] had been used in a section of *The Waste Land* ("Exequy") which Pound advised against including in the final version; in the typescript it is cancelled and the line "Consiros vei la pasada folor" is substituted for it in pencil, and then in its turn cancelled: see T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land, a Facsimile*, pp. 100–1. In the definitive version lines 145–8 of Canto XXVI are cited in the notes to the text (there had been no notes in the version published in *The Criterion* in October 1922 and in *The Dial* in November 1922, preceding the New York edition of December 1922). According to Pound, cited in P. Ackroyd, *T. S. Eliot* (p. 127), it was the presence of the notes which provoked the attention of the reviewers. The question of whether the notes were to be regarded as an integral part of the poem or as extraneous to it subsequently became a central issue for the New Critics; see, for example, the discussion in W. K. Wimsatt Jr and M. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy", *Sewanee Review*, 54 (1946), 468–88, reprinted in W. K. Wimsatt Jr, *The Verbal Icon* (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1954) and many times thereafter. Eliot's obsession with the closing lines of Canto XXVI was not confined to *The Waste Land*. He had already given the title *Ara Vus Prec* [*sic*] to a small volume of poems published in 1919 (T. S. Eliot, *Ara Vus Prec* [London, Ovid Press, 1919]), which used as its epigraph the concluding lines of *Purgatorio* XXI, in which Statius expresses his indebtedness to and affection for Virgil: "Or puoi la quantitate/comprender de l'amor ch'a te mi scalda,/quand' io dismento nostra vanitate,/trattando l'ombre come cosa salda." The expression *Sovegna vos* later became line 11 of *Ash Wednesday* IV. The familiar compound ghost of *Four Quartets* speaks of the "refining fire".

But if Arnaut's words invite us to look back, they also compel us to look forward. In the protective custody of Virgil and Statius—indeed now sandwiched between them—and with their active and solicitous encouragement, Dante must pass through the fire; in spite of his terror he will emerge unscathed on the other side. Virgil and Statius, and the mention of Beatrice's name, bring him through; and after the ordeal the three poets will settle down to pass their third night on the mountain, "io come capra, ed ei come pastori" (*Purgatorio*, XXVII. 86), Dante like the goat and Virgil and Statius like the shepherds, an image of perfect harmony restored between the animal and human worlds. Guinizzelli and Arnaut, the revered vernacular precursors, must be left behind, trapped in the fire, the penitential reality which has replaced the poetic metaphor for passion. The fire refines the poets as they had once refined the language: the artisan image of purifying and tempering a resistant medium, implicit in the verb "affina" as it had earlier been implict in the noun "fabbro", but now transposed from the artistic endeavour to the spiritual one, is the haunting image with which the canto closes.

Bibliographical Note

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Purgatorio: Letture degli anni 1976–79, edited by S. Zennaro [Rome, Bonacci, 1981], pp. 601–25, and in his *Studi su Dante* [Galatina, Congedo, 1984], pp. 153–72); T. R. Nevin, "Regenerate Nature in *Purgatorio* XXVI", *Stanford Italian Review*, 3 (1983), 65–81.

T. S. Eliot's obsession with the closing lines of the canto is documented in the notes.

Critical studies of the *Commedia* which emphasize the element of Dante's confrontation with his own poetic past include G. Contini's seminal essay "Dante come personaggio-poeta della *Commedia*", now in his *Un'idea di Dante* (Turin, Einaudi, 1970), pp. 33–62; T. Barolini, *Dante's Poets: Textuality and Truth in the "Comedy"* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984). On Dante's literary judgements as those of a "militant" critic see P. V. Mengaldo, "Critica militante e storiografia letteraria", in the introduction to his edition of *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (Padua, Antenore, 1968), pp. lxxviii–cii; M. Marti, "Gli umori del critico militante", in his *Con Dante fra i poeti del suo tempo*, second edition (Lecce, Milella, 1971), pp. 69–121.

On echoes of Guinizzelli's poetry in Canto XXVI and their significance for our understanding of the canto, the article by E. H. Wilkins cited in n. 17 above was reprinted with the title "Guinizzelli Praised and Corrected" in his *The Invention of the Sonnet* (Rome, Storia e Letteratura, 1959), pp. 111–13; see also G. Gorni, "Guido Guinizzelli e la nuova 'mainera'", in *Per Guido Guinizzelli* (Padua, Antenore, 1980), pp. 37–52.

On echoes of Arnaut Daniel and other Provençal poets in Canto XXVI see G. Contini's introduction to the Toja edition of Arnaut Daniel cited below; R. M. Ruggieri, "Tradizione e originalità nel lessico 'cavalleresco' di Dante: Dante e i trovatori provenzali", in his *L'umanesimo cavalleresco italiano da Dante al Pulci* (Rome, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1962), pp. 67–83 (especially pp. 80–3); M. Braccini, "Paralipomeni al 'Personaggio-Poeta' (*Purgatorio* XXVI 140–7)", in *Testi e interpretazioni: Studi del seminario di filologia romanza dell'università di Firenze* (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1978), pp. 169–256; N. B. Smith, "Arnaut Daniel in the *Purgatorio*: Dante's Ambivalence towards Provençal", *Dante Studies*, 98 (1980), 99–109; and in particular M. Perugi, "Arnaut Daniel in Dante", *Studi danteschi*, 51 (1978), 59–150, which reassesses Dante's debt to Arnaut over his whole poetic career.

On the textual problems posed by Arnaut's speech, and recent attempts to resolve them, see n. 21 above. Editions of the texts of the vernacular poets who appear or are mentioned in Canto XXVI include the indispensable *Poeti del Duecento*, edited by G. Contini, 2 vols (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1960); Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja (Florence, Sansoni, 1960); *Le canzoni di Arnaut Daniel*, edited by M. Perugi (Milan–Naples, Ricciardi, 1978); G. Folena, *Vulgares eloquentes: Vite e poesie dei trovatori di Dante* (Padua, Liviana, 1961).

An exemplary brief account of Dante's literary relationships with Guinizzelli and Guittone is offered in the *Enciclopedia dantesca* entries by M. Marti under their respective names. A bibliography covering every aspect of critical response to Dante's celebration of Arnaut is provided in Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja, pp. 389–90, and in M. Perugi, "Arnaut Daniel in Dante", pp. 150–2. On Dante and Giraut see M. Picone, "Giraut de Bornelh nella prospettiva di Dante", *Vox Romanica*, 39 (1980), 22–43; on Guinizzelli as "father" to the *dolce stil novo* see G. Favati, *Inchiesta sul Dolce Stil Novo* (Florence, Le Monnier, 1975), pp. 138–48; M. Marti, "Il XXVI del *Purgatorio* come omaggio d'arte"; G. Gorni, "Guido Guinizzelli e la nuova 'mainera'". On the poet as artisan or craftsman (*fabbro*) who shapes and moulds a difficult medium the canonical references are to *Conv.*, I. 11. 11–13, and to two of Arnaut's poems: II. 12–14 and X. 1–4 (Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, edited by G. Toja, pp. 195 and 271–2); see also M. Braccini, "Paralipomeni al 'Personaggio-Poeta'", pp. 250–6 ("Appendice VIII: 'fabbro del parlar materno'"); on the barrier of fire see G. Contini, "Alcuni appunti su *Purgatorio* XXVII", in his *Un'idea di Dante*, pp. 171–90; on languages other than Italian in the *Commedia* see M. Braccini, "Paralipomeni al 'Personaggio-Poeta'". On Dante's stylistic resourcefulness in this canto, and the use of rare and difficult rhymes (*-ife, -altro, -urba, -urgo* and *-erghi* are all rhymes found only once in the more than 14,000 lines of the poem), see the *lecturae* of the canto by A. Roncaglia, A. Monteverdi, G. Folena and M. Marti cited above. The placing of Guinizzelli among the lustful (always seen as more problematical than that of Arnaut, whose poetry is often an expression of intense sexual longing) hardly requires us to assume that Guinizzelli left "ideal lyrics, but beastly memories" (V. Crescini, "Tra i pentiti dell'amore", p. 191). Modern critics assume that "Guido's lust, like Arnaut's, had verbal (i.e. textual) origins" (G. Folena, "Il canto di Guido Guinizzelli", p. 497), and point to lines in his poem "Chi vedesse a Lucia" (*Poeti del Duecento*, II, 479): "Ah, prender lei a forza, ultra su' grato/e bagiarli la bocca e 'l bel visaggio/e li occhi suoi, ch'èn due fiamme de foco!/Ma pentomi [...]" ["Ah, to take her by force, against her will, and kiss her mouth and her fair face and her eyes, which are two fiery flames. But I repent (...)"]. Ezra Pound seems to have been the first to connect "Ieu sui Arnaut" in line 142 of our canto with Arnaut's Canzone X, line 43 ("Ieu sui Arnautz q'amas l'aura"), in the essay entitled "Il miglior fabbro", in his *The Spirit of Romance* (London, Dent, 1910), pp. 30–1 (revised edition, London, Peter Owen, 1952).

Studies of *Purgatorio* XXVI which have appeared since this *lectura* was written in spring 1986 include the following: L. Blasucci, "Autobiografia letteraria e costruzione narrativa nel XXVI del *Purgatorio*", *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, third series, 18 (1988), 1035–65; A. Corsaro, "The Language of Love: *Purgatorio* XXVI", in *Word and Drama in Dante*, edited by J. C. Barnes and J. Petrie (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1993), pp. 123–42; M. Dell'Aquila, "*Purgatorio*: canto XXVI", in *Lectura Dantis Neapolitana* (Naples, Loffredo, 1989), pp. 503–14 (reprinted as "Il canto XXVI del *Purgatorio*", in his *Al millesmo del vero: letture dantesche* [Fasano, Schena, 1989], pp. 125–43, and in *Lectura Dantis (Potenza 1985–1986)* [Galatina, Congedo, 1990], pp. 77–92); F. Fido, "Writing Like God—or Better? Symmetries in Dante's 26th and 27th Cantos", *Italica*, 63 (1986), 250–64; J. Pequigney, "Sodomy in Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*", *Representations*, 36 (1991), 22–42; L. Pertile, "*Purgatorio* XXVI", in *Dante's "Divine Comedy": Introductory Readings: II, "Purgatorio"* (= *Lectura Dantis Virginiana*, vol. II), edited by T. Wlassics (Virginia, University of Virginia, 1993), pp. 380–97; L. Pertile, "Dante's *Comedy* beyond the *Stilnovo*", *Lectura Dantis*, 13 (1993), 47–77; G. E. Sansone, "Varia ermeneutica di *Purgatorio* XXVI", *Medioevo romanzo*, 13 (1988), 55–74; G. Savarese, "Dante e il mestiere di poeta (Intorno al XXVI del *Purgatorio*)", *Rassegna della letteratura italiana*, 90 (1986), 365–81; R. Stefanelli, "Il canto XXVI del *Purgatorio*", in his *Dante: nel mezzo del cammin di nostra lingua* (Bari, Adriatica, 1986), pp. 109–51 (reprinted in *La ricerca*, 3 [1987], 7–32); A. Vallone, "L'esaltazione della poesia volgare: G. Guinizelli e A. Daniello", in *Lectura Dantis modenese: Purgatorio* (Modena, Banca Popolare dell'Emilia, 1985), pp. 143–63 (incorporating part of the chapter "*Cortesia* e stile in tre canti della *Commedia* [*Purg.* VIII e XXVI; *Par.* XI]" from his *Studi sulla "Divina commedia"* [Florence, Olschki, 1955], pp. 69–128).