



CANTO 26

1 Godi, Fiorenza, poi che se' sì grande
che per mare e per terra batti l'ali,
e per lo 'nferno tuo nome si spande!
4 Tra li ladron trovai cinque cotali
tuoi cittadini onde mi ven vergogna,
e tu in grande orranza non ne sali.
7 Ma se presso al mattin del ver si sogna,
tu sentirai, di qua da picciol tempo,
di quel che Prato, non ch'altri, t'agogna;
10 e se già fosse, non saria per tempo.
Così foss' ei, da che pur esser dee!
ché più mi graverà, com' più m'attempo.
13 Noi ci partimmo, e su per le scalee
che n'avean fatto i borni a scender pria,
rimontò 'l duca mio e trasse mee;
16 e proseguendo la solinga via
tra le schegge e tra ' rocchi de lo scoglio,
lo piè senza la man non si spedia.
19 Allor mi dolsi, e ora mi ridoglio
quando drizzo la mente a ciò ch'io vidi,
e più lo 'ngegno affreno ch'i' non soglio,
22 perché non corra che virtù nol guidi,
sì che, se stella bona o miglior cosa
m'ha dato 'l ben, ch'io stessi nol m'invidi.
25 Quante 'l villan ch'al poggio si riposa,
nel tempo che colui che 'l mondo schiara
la faccia sua a noi tien meno ascosa,
28 come la mosca cede a la zanzara
vede lucciole giù per la vallea,
forse colà dov' e' vendemmia e ara:

CANTO 26

*Denunciation of Florence—eighth bolgia: counselors of fraud—Ulysses
and Diomedes—Ulysses' last voyage*

1 Rejoice, Florence, since you are so great that
sea and land you beat your wings, and your nam
spreads through Hell!
4 Among the thieves I found five such citizens
yours that I feel shame, and you do not rise to
honor by them.
7 But if near morning one dreams the truth, yo
will feel, a short time from now, something of w
Prato, not to speak of others, desires for you;
10 and if it had already come, it would not be ea
Would it already were, since it must come! for i
weigh on me more, the older I grow.
13 We left, and up along the steps made for us
earlier by the projecting bourns, my leader mou
carrying me;
16 and as we pursued our solitary way among the
splinters and rocks of the ridge, our feet could n
proceed without our hands.
19 Then I grieved, and now I grieve again, wher
consider what I saw, and I rein in my wit more t
is my custom,
22 that it may not run without virtue guiding it,
that, if a good star or something better has given
what is good, I may not deprive myself of it.
25 As many fireflies as the peasant—resting on th
hillside in the season when he who lights the wo
least hides from us his face,
28 when the fly gives way to the mosquito—sees
down along the valley, perhaps where he harvest
and plows:

31 di tante fiamme tutta risplendea
 l'ottava bolgia, sì com' io m'accorsi
 tosto che fui là 've 'l fondo parea.

34 E qual colui che si vengìò con li orsi
 vide 'l carro d'Elia al dipartire,
 quando i cavalli al cielo erti levorsi,

37 che nol potea sì con li occhi seguire
 ch'el vedesse altro che la fiamma sola,
 sì come nuvoletta, in sù salire:

40 tal si move ciascuna per la gola
 del fosso, ché nessuna mostra 'l furto,
 e ogni fiamma un peccatore invola.

43 Io stava sovra 'l ponte a veder surto,
 sì che s'io non avessi un ronchion preso,
 caduto sarei giù sanz' esser urto.

46 E 'l duca, che mi vide tanto atteso,
 disse: "Dentro dai fuochi son li spirti;
 catun si fascia di quel ch'elli è inceso."

49 "Maestro mio," rispuos' io, "per udirti
 son io più certo; ma già m'era avviso
 che così fosse, e già voleva dirti:

52 chi è 'n quel foco che vien sì diviso
 di sopra, che par surger de la pira
 dov' Eteòcle col frater fu miso?"

55 Rispuose a me: "Là dentro si martira
 Ulisse e Diomede, e così insieme
 a la vendetta vanno come a l'ira.

58 E dentro da la lor fiamma si geme
 l'agguato del caval che fé la porta
 onde uscì de' Romani il gentil seme;

61 piangevisi entro l'arte per che, morta,
 Deidamia ancor si duol d'Achille;
 e del Palladio pena vi si porta."

64 "S'ei posson dentro da quelle faville
 parlar," diss' io, "maestro, assai ten priego,
 e ripriego che 'l priego vaglia mille,

67 che non mi facci de l'attender niego
 fin che la fiamma cornuta qua vegna:
 vedi che del disio ver' lei mi niego!"

31 with so many flames the eighth pocket was all
 shining, as I perceived when I was where I could
 see its depths.

34 And as he who avenged himself with the bear
 saw Elijah's chariot departing, when the horses rose
 so steeply to Heaven

37 that he could not follow them with his eyes so
 to see more than the flame alone, like a little cloud
 rising up:

40 so each moves along the throat of the ditch, for
 none displays its theft, and every flame steals away
 a sinner.

43 I was standing erect on the bridge in order to see
 so that if I had not grasped a projection, I would
 have fallen without being pushed.

46 And my leader, who saw me so intent, said:
 "Within the fires are the spirits; each is swathed in
 that which burns him inwardly."

49 "My master," I replied, "hearing you I am sure
 but already it seemed to me that such was the case
 and already I wanted to ask you:

52 who is in that fire that comes so divided above
 that it seems to be rising from the pyre where
 Eteocles was put with his brother?"

55 He answered me: "There within are punished
 Ulysses and Diomedes; thus together they go to
 punishment as they went to anger.

58 And within their flame they bemoan the deceit
 the horse that made the gate to send forth the
 Romans' noble seed;

61 there within they weep for the art that makes
 Deidamia, though dead, still grieve for Achilles; and
 there they bear the punishment for the Palladium."

64 "If they can speak within those flames," I said,
 "master, much do I beg you, and beg again that
 each prayer may be worth a thousand,

67 that you not refuse to wait until the horned fiend
 comes here: see that I bend toward it with desire!"

70 Ed elli a me: "La tua preghiera è degna
di molta loda, e io però l'accetto;
ma fa che la tua lingua si sostegna.
73 Lascia parlare a me, ch'ì ho concetto
ciò che tu vuoi; ch'ei sarebbero schivi,
perch' e' fuor greci, forse del tuo detto."
76 Poi che la fiamma fu venuta quivi
dove parve al mio duca tempo e loco,
in questa forma lui parlare audivi:
79 "O voi che siete due dentro ad un foco,
s'io meritai di voi mentre ch'io vissi,
s'io meritai di voi assai o poco,
82 quando nel mondo li alti versi scrissi,
non vi movete; ma l'un di voi dica
dove per lui perduto a morir gissi."
85 Lo maggior corno de la fiamma antica
cominciò a crollarsi mormorando,
pur come quella cui vento affatica;
88 indi la cima qua e là menando,
come fosse la lingua che parlasse,
gittò voce di fuori e disse: "Quando
91 mi diparti' da Circe, che sottrasse
me più d'un anno là presso a Gaeta,
prima che sì Enèa la nomasse,
94 né dolcezza di figlio, né la pieta
del vecchio padre, né 'l debito amore
lo qual dovea Penelopè far lieta,
97 vincer potero dentro a me l'ardore
ch'ì ebbi a divenir del mondo esperto
e de li vizi umani e del valore;
100 ma misi me per l'alto mare aperto
sol con un legno e con quella compagna
picciola da la qual non fui disertò.
103 L'un lito e l'altro vidi infin la Spagna,
fin nel Morrocco, e l'isola d'i Sardi
e l'altre che quel mare intorno bagna.
106 Io e ' compagni eravam vecchi e tardi
quando venimmo a quella foce stretta

70 And he to me: "Your prayer is worthy of mu
praise, and therefore I grant it; but see that your
tongue restrain itself.
73 Let me speak, for I have conceived what you
wish; for perhaps they would shun, because
they were Greeks, your words."
76 When the flame had come to where my leader
thought it the time and place, in this form I hear
him speak:
79 "O you who are two within one fire, if I dese
from you while I lived, if I deserved from you
greatly or little
82 when in the world I wrote my high verses, do
move away; but let one of you tell where, lost, h
went to die."
85 The greater horn of the ancient flame began to
shake, murmuring, like one a wind belabors;
88 then, moving its peak here and there, as if it w
a tongue that spoke, it cast out a voice and said:
"When
91 I departed from Circe, who held me back mor
than a year there near Gaeta, before Aeneas gave
that name,
94 neither the sweetness of a son, nor compassion
my old father, nor the love owed to Penelope, w
should have made her glad,
97 could conquer within me the ardor that I had t
gain experience of the world and of human vices
worth;
100 but I put out on the deep, open sea alone, with
one ship and with that little company by which I
not been deserted.
103 The one shore and the other I saw as far as Spai
as far as Morocco, and the island of the Sardinians
and the others whose shores are bathed by that sea
106 I and my companions were old and slow when
came to that narrow strait which Hercules marked
with his warnings

109 acciò che l'uom più oltre non si metta;
 da la man destra mi lasciai Sibilia,
 da l'altra già m'avea lasciata Setta.
 112 'O frati,' dissi, 'che per cento milia
 perigli siete giunti a l'occidente,
 a questa tanto picciola vigilia
 115 d'i nostri sensi ch'è del rimanente
 non vogliate negar l'esperienza,
 di retro al sol, del mondo sanza gente.
 118 Considerate la vostra semenza:
 fatti non foste a viver come bruti,
 ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza.'
 121 Li miei compagni fec' io sì aguti
 con questa orazion picciola al cammino,
 che a pena poscia li avrei ritenuti;
 124 e volta nostra poppa nel mattino,
 de' remi facemmo ali al folle volo,
 sempre acquistando dal lato mancino.
 127 Tutte le stelle già de l'altro polo
 vedea la notte, e 'l nostro tanto basso
 che non surgëa fuor del marin suolo.
 130 Cinque volte raccesso e tante casso
 lo lume era di sotto da la luna,
 poi che 'ntrati eravam ne l'alto passo,
 133 quando n'apparve una montagna bruna
 per la distanza, e parvemi alta tanto
 quanto veduta non avëa alcuna.
 136 Noi ci allegrammo, e tosto tornò in pianto,
 ché de la nova terra un turbo nacque
 e percosse del legno il primo canto.
 139 Tre volte il fé girar con tutte l'acque,
 a la quarta levar la poppa in suso
 e la prora ire in giù, com' altrui piacque,
 142 infin che 'l mar fu sovra noi richiuso."

109 so that one should not go further; on the right
 hand I had left Seville, on the other I had already
 Ceuta.
 112 'O brothers,' I said, 'who through a hundred
 thousand perils have reached the west, to this so
 brief vigil
 115 of our senses that remains, do not deny the
 experience, following the sun, of the world with
 people.
 118 Consider your sowing: you were not made to
 like brutes, but to follow virtue and knowledge
 121 My companions I made so sharp for the voyage
 with this little oration, that after it I could hardly
 have held them back;
 124 and, turning our stern toward the morning, with
 oars we made wings for the mad flight, always
 gaining on the left side.
 127 Already all the stars of the other pole I saw at
 night, and our own pole so low that it did not rise
 above the floor of the sea.
 130 Five times renewed, and as many diminished
 been the light beneath the moon, since we had
 entered the deep pass,
 133 when there appeared to us a mountain, dark
 the distance, and it seemed to me higher than any
 I had seen.
 136 We rejoiced, but it quickly turned to weeping
 from the new land a whirlwind was born and struck
 the forequarter of the ship.
 139 Three times it made the ship to turn about with
 the waters, at the fourth to raise its stern aloft and
 the prow to go down, as it pleased another,
 142 until the sea had closed over us."



NOTES

1–3. Rejoice, Florence . . . through Hell: The text leaves it to the reader to infer the nature of the winged creature representing Florence in this bitter apostrophe. After the reptilian metamorphoses of the previous two cantos, it is natural to think of a reptile with wings: a dragon. The commentators note that an inscription in hexameters, dated 1255, still visible on the Florentine Palazzo del Bargello, describes Florence as “que mare, que terram, que totum possidet orbem” [who possesses the sea, the land, and the whole globe]; curiously, the phrase is a quotation from Lucan’s *Pharsalia* 1.109, where it describes the self-destructiveness of Rome (it is quoted by Dante in *Monarchia* 2.8). The inscription continues: “per quem regnantem fit felix Tuscia tota” [through whose reign all Tuscany is made happy], to which Dante seems to allude sarcastically in line 9.

Mention of Italian cities is frequent in the Malebolge: Mantua (Canto 20), Prato (25.1–3), Venice (Canto 21), various cities of Romagna (Canto 27), and Arezzo (Canto 29); there are many denunciations: 18.58–63 (Bologna), 21.37–42 (Lucca), 25.10–15 (Pistoia), and 29.121–32 (Siena); beyond Malebolge: 33.79–90 (Pisa), 33.151–57 (Genoa), and *Purg.* 6.127–51 (Florence) (cf. Luke 10.13–15 for Jesus’ denunciations of wicked cities.)

4. five such citizens of yours: Those identified in 25.43, 68, 140, 148, and 151.

7–12. But if near morning . . . the older I grow: The idea that early-morning dreams are prophetic is ancient; the commentators cite Ovid, *Heroides* 19.195–96: “namque sub auroram iam dormitante Lucina/ tempore quo cerni somnia vera solent” [for near the dawn, after the moon has set, in the time when true dreams are usually seen] (cf. *Purg.* 9.13–18 and 27.92–93). The disaster Dante predicts is not known (various possibilities have been suggested, but the text plainly states that when Dante was writing it had not yet taken place).

9. Prato: The reference is uncertain: it may be to the city of Prato, a few miles from Florence and traditionally under her control, or to Cardinal Niccolò di Prato, who excommunicated the city in 1304; we prefer the first alternative: even the traditionally most faithful subject city yearns to see Florence punished, for Tuscany is not happy.

13–15. We left . . . carrying me: In 24.79–80, the pilgrim and Virgil descended from the bridge to the bank.

19–24. Then I grieved . . . deprive myself of it: These lines, explicitly connecting grief in the moment of writing with the grief experienced in the

journey (clearly penitential in nature in this instance), would seem to have a special relation of the poet to the sin even before it has been identified as a metaphor of spatial motion in line 22 already implicitly involves a voyage, which must have something to do with *unrestrained* wit.

21. rein in my wit: For the meaning of “wit” (*ingegno*), see 1.2.7–8; note the horse metaphor.

23. if a good star or something better: The influence of the star on human nativity, to which *Par.* 22.112–14 attribute “all my wit . . . , what be” (see notes there); “or something better” refers to God’s grace.

24. what is good: This phrase (Italian, *’l bene*, literally, the good) refers to salvation, since salvation is never owed to the stars; it must refer to the gift of wit itself, which may be the gift either of nature or, in certain circumstances, of grace.

25–33. As many fireflies . . . depths were revealed: The vivid contrast between the fireflies, implicitly contrasting the peaceful natural scene of dusk with the intense suffering of the *bolgia*, creates a sense of distance between the hillside and the valley, reducing the sinners’ flames to minute proportions. The scene began with an extended winter scene, also involving a peasant.

26. when he who lights the world . . . his face: When the sun is visible, in the summertime; the first of many references to the sun in

34–39. And as he who avenged . . . rising up: A complex reference to the account of Elijah (Elias) and Elishah (Eliseus) in 2 Kings [Vulgate 2.7–14:

. . . but they two stood by the Jordan. And Elias took his mantle and folded it together, and struck the waters, and they were divided and thither, and they both passed over on dry ground. And when they were gone over, Elias said to Eliseus: Ask what thou wilt have for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Eliseus said to thee that in me may be thy double spirit. And he answered and said: I have asked a hard thing: nevertheless if thou see me when I am taken away from thee, thou shalt have what thou hast asked: but if thou see me when I am not taken away from thee, thou shalt not have it. And as they went on, walking and talking, behold a fiery chariot, and fiery horses parted them both: and Elias went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Eliseus said and cried: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the driver thereof: and he saw him no more. . . . And he took up the mantle of Elias.

The episode of the bears is related in the same chapter, verses 23–24:

... as he was going up by the way, little boys came out of the city and mocked him, saying: Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And looking back, he saw them, and he cursed them in the name of the Lord: and there came forth two bears out of the forest, and tore of them two and forty boys.

Note the motifs important in our canto: fire, whirlwind, horses/vehicle, the crossing of a body of water, and the question of seeing Elijah in the flames (cf. Eccles. 48.1: "Elias the prophet stood up as fire, and his word burned like a torch"). Implicit in Dante's comparison is the relevance to the context of the theme of prophecy, including that of the inheritance of the prophet's mantle (see Mazzotta 1979). Eliseus/Elishah (Eliseo) was the name of the brother of Dante's great-great-grandfather (*Par.* 15.136, another context involving Dante's prophetic mission).

40–42. so each . . . a sinner: The basis of the comparison is Elijah's being hidden by the flames. The metaphor of theft is discussed, in connection with line 48; it recurs in 27.127.

43–45. I was standing . . . grasped . . . without being pushed: These lines are often interpreted as being parallel to lines 21–24 (since "reining in" and "grasping" involve the hands), and thus as further emphasis on Dante's sense of being drawn to this sin.

48. each is swathed . . . burns him inwardly: In other words, the flame that hides each sinner is the externalization of the fire within him: the fire of intellect, of the malice that motivated his counsels, and of the power of his rhetoric (called by Alain de Lille, in his *Anticlaudianus*, "ignis in ore" [fire in the mouth]). The Italian *inceso* [fired within] (cf. 22.18) is, like *invola* [steals away], line 42, compounded with the preposition "in"; it is derived from Latin *incensus*, used repeatedly by Vergil to describe the burning of Troy (*Aen.* 2.327, 353, 374, 555, and 764; cf. *ardeo*, *ardere*, used of warriors: *Aen.* 2.316, 475, 529, and 575).

52–54. who is in that fire . . . with his brother: In Statius's *Thebaid*, Oedipus's sons, Eteocles and Polynices, kill each other at the main gate of the city; their mutual hatred divides the fire of their funeral pyre. The clear implication is that Ulysses and Diomedes now hate each other also. Dante introduced the Theban material in Canto 14, with the figure of Capaneus (lines 46–72); explicit references to it (as well as to the saga of Troy) become increasingly frequent in Malebolge and Cocytus: 20.31–45 (Amphiarus, Tiresias) and 52–93 (Manto), 25.97–99 (Cadmus and Harmonia), 30.1–12 (Athamas), 32.10–12 (Amphion), and 130–32 (Tydeus and Menalippus). In Dante's adaptation of Augustine's paradigm of the City of God versus the Earthly City, Thebes and its

Earthly City (for the foundation of Rome as the preparation of the 1 and the papacy, see 2.13–33).

55–56. There within are punished Ulysses and Diomedes: U only major Homeric figure who speaks in the *Comedy*; Dante's rep of him is an important focus of his effort to surpass the *Aeneid*.

56–57. together they go . . . to anger: In other words, being paire their punishment, just as they fired each other when they were sinnr incurred God's anger.

58–63. And within their flame . . . Palladium: Dante has Virgil : principal sinful acts to Ulysses and Diomedes (discussed in the note to l he clearly considers that Ulysses was their principal inventor, as in *A* 81. The first and third are based on the *Aeneid*, the second on Ovid anc *Achilleid*. Note the insistently parallel syntax of the three independent , assigned to one sin, each emphasizing the internal nature of the suffe

58–60. And within their flame . . . noble seed: According to the tenth year of the Trojan War, the Greeks pretend to sail home behind the Trojan Horse and Sinon. Sinon pretends to have been sacrifice (a repetition of the events at Aulis; see the note to 20.11C hostility of Ulysses, but to have escaped; gaining the Trojans' con with many oaths to his veracity, he explains (falsely) that the theft dium (see the note to line 63) had displeased Athena, the horse bein to placate her. He also claims that Calchas has prophesied that if taken into Troy, Troy will bring war to Greece. The Trojans enla vertically to admit the horse, filled with Greek soldiers, including U eval tradition, unlike Vergil, placed Diomedes in the horse also). Sinon, Ulysses and the others open the gates to admit the rest of the Gr account describes the destruction of Troy in terms of the gradual, sna of fire (see Knox 1950). In addition, the hollow horse is repeatedly a pregnant belly (*Aen.* 2.38, 51, 238, and 243): a fair exterior, rep religious offering, but pregnant with destruction. See Additional N

In Vergil's account, as in Dante's, the destruction of Troy is, of essay for the founding of the new Troy, Rome, by the descenda (the noble seed of the Romans, line 60). The Romans eventually d Greece, which they subjugate. Thus this clause, hinging on the ' that leads both into the city and out of it, shows the ultimate futili and Diomedes' sin, from which God's Providence will bring forth

61–62. there within . . . grieve for Achilles: In Statius's version les story (*Achilleid* 1), Achilles' mother, the sea nymph Thetis, knows ecy that Achilles will die at Troy; she persuades the beardless boy girl and hide among the daughters of King Lycomedes of the isla

Achilles agrees because he has seen the king's daughter Deidamia, whom he soon impregnates. Calchas has seen in a trance that Achilles, necessary for the conquest of Troy, is on Scyros, and Ulysses and Diomedes go to recruit him. Posing as merchants and pretending to be spying on the Trojans, they are entertained by the king; they soon single Achilles out: their task is to persuade him to drop his own pretense (still motivated by love for Deidamia). At dinner, Ulysses' glowing account of the glories of the war visibly affects Achilles, and the next day, among many harmless gifts for the young women, Ulysses includes a spear and shield; as Achilles greedily handles them, Ulysses has a trumpet sounded; Achilles' true nature blazes forth: he burns with desire for war. Deidamia's pregnancy and the birth of Neoptolemus have so far been concealed; now the baby is brought forth, the king accepts Achilles, the wedding is celebrated, and the next morning Achilles sails off with Ulysses and Diomedes, never to see Deidamia again (*Purg.* 22.114 places her in Limbo). Ulysses' art makes Deidamia grieve, clearly, because it led to her husband's death.

Dante accurately saw that Statius, following suggestions by Ovid in *Met.* 13.162–70, established a parallel between this stratagem of Ulysses' and the Trojan Horse, involving the penetration of defenses and the bringing forth of fire from where it is hidden. Both Vergil and Ovid represent Ulysses, even more than Achilles, as the principal cause of the fall of Troy. In *Met.* 13.123–380, Ovid has Ulysses claim (rightly) that at every turning point in the war his counsel led to success; though he was only one man, he was the Greeks' steering oar (see the note to lines 85–90).

63. and there . . . Palladium: According to the *Aeneid* and the *Metamorphoses*, Ulysses and Diomedes entered Troy at night and by stealth, penetrating as far as the highest citadel, from which, after killing the guards, they carried off the statue of Pallas Athena (goddess of wisdom) on whose possession the safety of Troy was supposed to depend. According to Sinon's (lying) account in *Aeneid* 2, this act caused Athena to turn against the Greeks; he reports that when the statue was set up in the Greek camp, its eyes emitted flames and it brandished its spear and shield three times, and that from then on the Greeks' fortunes declined. Thompson (1972) suggests that Dante follows the later account according to which Ulysses and Diomedes did not steal the Palladium themselves but counseled the traitor Antenor to do so. In either case, this third sin also involves the motif of the emergence of hidden fire, as well as the use of stealth; Virgil's phrasing here is sufficiently general for the line to refer to Sinon's deceptive account of the Palladium as well as to the theft itself.

64–69. If they can speak . . . with desire: The next lines suggest that Virgil sees in the pilgrim's words only the laudable desire to hear a great Homeric figure speak. However, one should note the parallel between the pilgrim's *bending toward the flame with desire* and his earlier need to prevent himself from falling.

73–75. Let me speak . . . your words: The usual explanation for Virgil's

ditional attribution of arrogance (including linguistic) to the Gre always Virgil who addresses figures from classical antiquity, not the there is a sharp focus on Virgil's special relation to Ulysses and Diomedes, poet of the *Aeneid*, thus the mediator of Dante's knowledge. (Vergil's treatment of Ulysses and Diomedes in the *Aeneid* is entirely negative.)

80. if I deserved: An echo of Dido's words to Aeneas in *Aen.* 4.689–90: "bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam/ dulce meum" [if I had done all well of you, or anything of mine has ever been sweet to you]

84. let one of you . . . to die: Since Diomedes was supposed to have died in Italy and to have died there, this can only refer to Ulysses; *per* refer to the fact that Ulysses' fate had been unknown, as well as to his way or being damned (cf. the fact that Elijah's body is not found) [Vulgate 4 Kings] 2.15–17).

85–90. The greater horn . . . cast out a voice: The emphasis is on the struggle to impart to the flame the articulatory motions of a tongue (cf. Pier delle Vigne's struggle to speak, 13.91–92—including the wind) becomes even greater in the case of Guido da Montefeltro (2 the insistent sound effects involving *m*: *maggior*, *mormorando*; see *M* (of Circe's transformation of Ulysses' men): "nec iam posse loqui edere raucum/ murmur" [already I could no longer speak, but instead I produce a hoarse murmur]. The idea of the tongue as a flame is fu the whole episode; a number of commentators have pointed to

For we put bits into the mouths of horses, that they may ob turn about their whole body. Behold also ships, whereas they are driven by strong winds, yet are they turned about helm, whithersoever the force of the governor willeth. Even is indeed a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold fire kindleth a great wood. And the tongue is a fire. . . .

All four major motifs of the canto appear in this passage: tongue, fire, ship. For the connection of flame and wind with Pentecost, see *M*

90–142. When I departed . . . closed over us: Ulysses' last speech is discussed in Additional Note 11.

90–93. When I departed . . . that name: Dante knew Ovid's account of Ulysses' stay with Circe, put in the mouth of a former follower, *M* 14.233–440; line 308 states: "annua nos illic tenuit mora" [a year lay us there]. According to both Vergil and Ovid, Aeneas repeats the name of Ulysses' voyage; he encounters the Cyclopes near Scylla and Charybdis.

near Circe's dwelling, near both Cumae (where Aeneas is taken by the Sybil to the underworld) and the promontory of Gaeta, named by him for his nurse, who died there. The mention of Aeneas here calls attention to the parallel/contrast between his voyage and Ulysses'.

97. ardor: Italian *ardore* [literally, burning]. This is an important instance of the fire imagery that dominates the canto, and a major interpretive issue is whether it is to be seen as the same fire that now envelops him and has its origin within him.

98–99. to gain . . . vices and worth: Dante is adapting Horace's quotation of the beginning of the *Odyssey* (*Ars poetica* 141–42): "virum . . . / qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes" [the man . . . who saw the customs of many men, and their cities]. Compare also *Epistles* 1.2.17–22.

101–2. but I put out . . . deserted: Macareus's account states that when he arrived at Circe's dwelling Ulysses had lost almost all his men and all but one ship (a principal element of the contrast between Aeneas and Ulysses established by Vergil is that Aeneas is accompanied by his entire fleet and most of his followers).

103–5. The one shore . . . by that sea: In other words, he saw all of the northern and all of the southern shore of the Mediterranean; the implication is that he circumnavigated the entire Mediterranean. No cities are mentioned (though cf. lines 110–11), nor any "human vices and worth."

107–9. that narrow strait . . . not go further: The Straits of Gibraltar. The tradition that Hercules set pillars there (the two opposing mountains) is ancient, as is the tradition that they were a prohibition, which appears, for instance, in Pindar's Fourth Nemean Ode (Kay 1980; Boitani 1992). See Additional Note 11.

110–11. on the right . . . Ceuta: Seville is on the south shore of Spain, just east of Gibraltar; Ceuta is at the tip of the African promontory opposite Gibraltar. The passage derives from Ovid's description of Daedalus's and Icarus's flight (*Met.* 8.220–25):

. . . et iam Iunonia laeva
parte Samos—fuerant Delosque Parosque relictæ—
dextra Lebinthos erat fecundaque melle Calymne:
cum puer audaci coepit gaudere volatu
deseruitque ducem caelique cupidine tractus
altius egit iter. . . .

[. . . and already on the left
hand was Juno's Samos—they had left Delos and Paros be
and on the right Lebynthos and Calymne rich with honey
when the boy began to delight in the audacious flight
and abandoned his guide and, drawn by greed for the sky
flew higher. . . .]

Audaci . . . volatu [in audacious flight] lies behind Dante's *folle vo*

112–20. O brothers . . . virtue and knowledge: Ulysses' "li clearly crucial to Dante's conception, but critics are sharply divided who accept Ulysses' characterization of the voyage—that it is a noble goals of virtue and knowledge (here critics divide further i applaud the pursuit and those who identify Ulysses' quite gene some particular philosophical school or position Dante is rejec Neoplatonism, "humanism," and radical Aristotelianism)—and th it as fraudulent, arguing that no wisdom, no knowledge of men the "world without people," citing Seneca's *Epistle* 88, in terms of Ulysses would have to be seen as abandoning his duties. One n Ulysses travels only on the surface of the globe, while the pilgrin the center, always in contact with human souls.

113. the west: Dante's term is *l'occidente*, still close to its Latin : ting of the sun."

117. following the sun: Toward its setting.

118. Consider your sowing: That is, your descent as human pare "the Romans' noble seed" (line 60).

121. sharp: There is a strong suggestion of fire imagery here; Plato's *Timaeus* 56, fire was often identified as sharp (hence its d

124. turning our stern toward the morning: Since the ship r its direction has not been determined until this point: they cou east rather than west. Iconographically, of course, the east is the which illumination comes.

125. of our oars . . . flight: Many commentators have noticed the phrase *folle volo* [mad flight] with the pilgrim's fear of a *venuta* journey] in 2.35 (also with *Par.* 27.82–83: "il varco folle d'Ulisse' of Ulysses]). Dante is adapting a line of Vergil's describing Daedal Crete to Italy (*Aen.* 6.18–19): "sacrauit/ remigium alarum" [he c oars of his wings]. Modern scholars (Freccero 1966a; Shankland the reference to wings (and the reference to Daedalus) with Neot

ries of the ascent of the soul. Shankland discusses Dante's conception of the significance of his family name, Alager [wing-bearer], as one of the reasons for the importance of the Ulysses antitype.

126. always gaining on the left side: Why this should be the case is not explained, but in medieval symbolic terms it is a very bad sign, no doubt to be connected with the pilgrim's dragging left foot (1.30) and the fact that Virgil and the pilgrim usually turn to the left in Hell, to the right in Purgatory. Of course, a southwest course is necessary if Ulysses and his men are to approach the only island Dante places in the hemisphere of water, at the antipodes of Jerusalem.

127–29. All the stars . . . floor of the sea: They have passed the equator.

130–32. Five times . . . deep pass: Five months have elapsed. Commentators have pointed out that there are no references to the light of the sun after line 124, as if the voyage were taking place entirely at night.

132. the deep pass: Dante has associated the term *pass* with damnation since the beginning of the poem ("the pass that has never yet left anyone alive," 1.26–27, would seem to be the one where Ulysses perishes; cf. 5.114); the phrase *l'alto passo* [the deep pass] occurs verbatim in 2.12, referring to the pilgrim's journey to the other world.

133–35. a mountain . . . I had seen: This is, as we learn in the *Purgatorio*, the mountain at whose summit is the Garden of Eden, forbidden to man (Gen. 3.24); it also recalls the mountain of Canto 1.

136. We rejoiced . . . weeping: The line echoes James 4.9.

138. the forequarter of the ship: The Italian, "del legno il primo canto," puns on *canto*; in the first canto of the poem the pilgrim was metaphorically shipwrecked, too.

140–41. stern aloft . . . prow . . . down: Note the progression from line 124.

141. another: God.

142. until the sea had closed over us: Lines 58–60, on the Trojan Horse, draw a parallel between its penetration of the gate of Troy and the escape of Aeneas and his followers; they also establish a parallel between the Trojan Horse and Aeneas's ship: one moves inward, the other outward; one carries the seeds of destruction, the other the seeds of Rome; as Clausen (1987) points out, several of Verriil's terms for the horse are borrowed from shipbuilding. This paral-

lel mediates a further one, fundamental to the canto, between the T and Ulysses' ship: both carry Greeks; both carry Ulysses and his f one moves inward, the other outward; and both cause death.

In the sins listed in lines 58–63, Ulysses' characteristic activity h of imparting the fire within himself to others, for the sake of the de Troy (cf. James 3.5: "Behold how small a flame sets fire to a great fore: going out through the Pillars—the gate—of Hercules, to him a vio cause forbidden, is a kind of inversion of the violent entrance of the T into Troy, and also, in its results, a negative parallel to Aeneas's pas gate of Troy. Thus when the waters close around Ulysses there is a plosion: the fire that he has loosed upon the world returns upon him form of water, then in the fire of the Malebolge. This is perhaps L elaborate version of the idea that the devices of the fraudulent are th catch and punish them.